



DRAFT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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Introduction

The City of Colwood, Township of Esquimalt, District of Highlands, City of Langford, District of Metchosin, District of Sooke and the Town of View Royal have partnered to show their commitment to making sure our services are available to, and inclusive of everyone including employees.

Together, our partnering municipalities form the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee recognizes that accessibility doesn't have borders, and when our communities work together, we are able to strive toward our goal of becoming a barrier-free region by sharing resources, knowledge, and skills.

The first accessibility plan, this plan, will begin to satisfy the requirements of the *Accessible BC Act* by providing clear instructions on how the partner municipalities will provide more accessible employment standards and improve service delivery through an accessibility lens. Accessibility Plans will be created and revised in consultation with the Committee, however the document will ultimately belong to each municipality to serve as a guiding resource.

In 2023, the Committee Terms of Reference were created. The membership of the Committee was comprised of staff members from the seven municipalities (City of Colwood, Township of Esquimalt, District of Highlands, City of Langford, District of Metchosin, District of Sooke and the Town of View Royal). The Terms of Reference outline the process for membership transition in early 2025 to comprise of citizen representatives from the member municipalities.

Territorial Acknowledgement

The member municipalities comprising of the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee sit upon the traditional territories of the following Nations:

- BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin)
- MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat)
- Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay)
- SṪÁUTW (Tsawout)
- T'Sou-ke
- WJOLEŁP (Tsartlip)
- WSIKEM (Tseycum)
- x^wsepsəm (Esquimalt)
- Songhees
- Lək^wəŋən, SENĆOŦEN, and Hul'q'umi'num speaking First Nations

We respect and acknowledge the rich diversity within each of these Nations.

Vision Statement

The Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee is looking forward to the accessibility journey across all partner municipalities. Through public feedback, Committee work, ongoing learning, and Federal and Provincial legislation, we are working towards a future where everyone is able to participate fully and equally and is empowered to live their life to the fullest. Municipal facilities, spaces, and services welcome all to explore, visit, and enjoy. Employment opportunities are meaningful and accessible, welcoming diverse applicants. The member municipalities continue to learn and adapt by receiving feedback from residents and visitors, while developing and implementing exciting advances towards universal design. With support from the CRD, Provincial and Federal Governments, things that were once viewed as “accommodations” or “accessible features” are now becoming the common standard.

Background

What is the Accessible BC Act?

Introduced in 2021, the *Accessible BC Act* was passed by the Provincial Government of British Columbia. The *Accessible BC Act*, or “the Act” enables improvements to accessibility to all residents and visitors. The Act also shares some similarities with the *BC Human Rights Code* and other pieces of legislation. There are eight (8) standards included within *the Act*:

1. Employment
2. Service Delivery
3. Built Environment
4. Information and Communications
5. Transportation
6. Health
7. Education
8. Procurement

This plan focuses on Employment and Service Delivery. As accessibility work continues within the member municipalities, the plan will be revisited and revised as we address the other standards prescribed by the legislation.

The *Act* recognizes several types of barriers that people experience including attitudinal, physical, informational or communication, systemic, technological, and sensory.

Over 750 organizations in the Province are required to take action to identify and remove barriers to accessibility. Municipalities are an example of one of these organizations and must meet the following requirements to the extent possible with a goal of:

- Committee makeup to be reflective of the diversity of persons within our communities including Indigenous perspectives. 50% of committee membership must be people with disabilities, or individuals who support persons with disabilities. As written in the Committee Terms of Reference, the membership of the Capital West Accessibility

Advisory Committee will be expanded to include citizen representatives from all partner municipalities. Working collaboratively with the Province of British Columbia, the first step identified for the partner municipalities was to focus on the aspects of Service Delivery and Employment.

- Establishing a committee to assist in identifying barriers to interacting with the local government and provide recommendations on the removal and prevention of these barriers.
- Create an Accessibility Plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the municipality, review and update at least once every 3 years, and consider comments received from public feedback.
- Create a feedback mechanism for receiving questions and comments from the public pertaining to accessibility.

To comply with the Act, and with support from the Province, the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee was formed. Working together, the Committee has produced an overarching Accessibility Plan which is customized for each municipality. While these areas are different, the plans unite us and share similarities that create an accessible experience for residents and visitors in each community.

Accessibility work is ongoing and requires continuous adaptation and review. The Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee will collaborate with the member municipalities as identified in the Terms of Reference.

Member Municipalities

The member municipalities are located on the Southern end of Vancouver Island within the Capital Regional District. All municipalities share serene natural beauty and unique connections to nature such as lakes, oceans, mountains, and forests. The region includes urban centers and is integral to the islands workforce and provides housing, shopping, and recreational aspects for residents while balancing rural charm, west coast character and stunning areas with untouched natural elements.

Our communities offer rich cultural heritage including community events including, festivals, markets and local artwork that support social connection. The member municipalities are places for people to discover, feel welcome, and belong. Our ongoing work regarding accessibility will further our commitment to vibrancy, resiliency, and diversity.

The table below provides some additional information regarding the makeup of our communities:

| | Colwood | Esquimalt | Highlands | Langford | Metchosin | Sooke | View Royal |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Total Population | 18,961 | 17,533 | 2,482 | 46,584 | 5,067 | 15,086 | 11,575 |
| Citizens over 65 | 3,655 | 3,625 | 450 | 6,405 | 1,320 | 3,055 | 2,415 |
| Parks | 50 | 30 | 7 | 57 | 6 | 80 | 72 |
| Land Area (square kilometers) | 17.66 | 7.08 | 38.01 | 41.43 | 69.57 | 56.62 | 14.33 |

Definitions

To work together effectively, we must first create a shared understanding for concepts and words you will find in this plan. Below are some helpful definitions:

“Accessibility” is the concept of making a product, service, or experience that can be used or interacted with by everyone – including individuals with disabilities or impairments.

“Barrier” Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with a disability

- (a) caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and
- (b) affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.

“Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee” Committee comprised of the City of Colwood, City of Langford, Town of View Royal, Township of Esquimalt, District of Sooke, District of Highlands, and District of Metchosin.

“Disability” means an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.¹

“Impairment” includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic.²

“Inclusion” is the practice of providing equitable access to opportunities and resources for anyone who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.

¹ Definition as written from the *Accessible BC Act* (Government of British Columbia , 2023).

² Definition as written from the *Accessible BC Act* (Government of British Columbia , 2023).

“Plain Language” is the use of basic sentence structure and simple language so that the audience understands the message clearly.

About the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee

Recruitment

The Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee was initially formed of staff representatives from each of the participating municipalities. The Terms of Reference for the Committee state that membership will transition to members of the public from each municipality.

Meetings and Information

Each member municipality has a webpage focused on accessibility where you can also find information about the Committee. The member municipalities will rotate hosting the Committee on an annual basis. If you are unsure who is hosting or where you can get information, please reach out to any of the member municipalities.

Public Consultation Conducted to Date

Summary

The Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee has completed two phases of formal public consultation between December 2023 and July 2024. In addition to the formal engagement, each member municipality, as required by the *Accessible BC Act*, has established an email address to receive input, ideas, and comments from the public pertaining to accessibility. Feedback received through this required mechanism helps inform the accessibility work of the communities.

If using email does not work for you, please contact your municipality. Our municipal partners are happy to work together to find a solution.

The first phase of public consultation consisted of two surveys that were available online through the Let’s Chat Langford platform, on paper, and could be emailed if requested. Survey #1 (Appendix 1) focused on finding out how people would like to engage with their municipality when talking about accessibility, where these engagement sessions should take place, and if they should be in person or online. Survey #2 (Appendix 2) explored accessibility needs from the perspective of individuals with disabilities and those who support individuals with disabilities in respect to municipal service delivery and employment. This survey was more in depth and robust asking participants questions about their personal experiences interacting with their municipality, accessing services provided, and applying for or working with their municipality in an employment or volunteer capacity.

The Committee reviewed the results of the surveys and discovered that more information was needed from the public regarding municipal service delivery and employment prior to the member municipalities drafting their accessibility plans.

The Committee released a Request for Proposals to retain a professional consultant with lived experience to guide the next phase of public consultation. Changing Paces, a professional firm which specializes in coaching, counselling, advocacy, and support for individuals with disabilities or accessibility needs was selected and awarded the contract. Beginning in July 2024, Changing Paces worked with the Committee to host in person and online accessibility engagement based around the findings of Survey #2. After the public consultation was complete, Changing Paces produced a final report for the Committee (Appendix 3). The feedback received during all phases of public engagement has informed this Accessibility Plan and will continue to shape and support the work undertaken by the partner municipalities as a result. All communities involved with the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee are committed to listening and learning from the public to increase accessibility throughout the region.

Who Was Consulted?

Participants of Phase 1 and 2 of the public consultation that helped inform this plan include members of the public, municipal staff members, families and caregivers of those with disabilities, community organizations, and service providers. This diverse participation resulted in rich and wholesome discussions including the sharing of personal experiences, suggestions, critical observations, and solution-based conversations.

In total, the Committee heard from 378 members of the public throughout all phases of engagement.

How Consultation Was Conducted

In Phase 1 of public engagement, Survey #1 and #2 were hosted through the City of Langford's "Let's Chat Langford" platform that offers online survey hosting capabilities and information sharing. This platform provides a simple and accessible survey format that can be easily accessed across many devices. Recognizing a need for multiple document formats, the partner municipalities also provided printed paper copies of the surveys and were able to email surveys directly to those interested in completing one.

After hearing from the public in Phase 1, the Committee worked with Changing Paces to deliver both in person and virtual engagement sessions. Our earlier feedback showed a need for engagement opportunities at different times of day and in different parts of the region. The partner municipalities were tasked with selecting locations in Esquimalt, Colwood, and Langford for people to gather and discuss accessibility. In addition, four online sessions were held at different times of day. While the sessions followed the same agenda, the conversations were shaped by the diversity and experiences of those present resulting in varying discussions.

Discussions and Key Themes – Phase 1

Survey #1 and #2 provided valuable feedback pertaining to public engagement, municipal service delivery, and employment.

Survey #1 – (December 2023 – January 2024): How and Where Should Public Engagement Take Place?

The purpose of this survey was to find out from the communities when, where, and how public engagement should take place. The Committee wanted to learn from the public prior to retaining a consultant and beginning robust public engagement.

The following key themes and discussions were captured regarding when public engagement should take place:

- Respondents wanted multiple opportunities to provide feedback at different times of days and on different days of the week.
- Proximity to transit routes and being mindful of transit schedules.

The following key themes and discussions were captured regarding where public engagement should take place:

- As the Committee represents a larger geographic area, respondents wanted to see engagement sessions in more than one municipality.
- The survey asked respondents to identify specific accessible locations that engagement could take place. Many respondents suggested schools, municipal facilities and government buildings, hotels, and community spaces (such as community halls, and cultural facilities).
- Importance of online sessions was stressed noting individuals' busy schedules, transportation needs, personal devices and accessibility assistive technology, and personal health requirements.

The following key themes and discussions were captured regarding how public engagement should take place:

- Respondents noted a need for more than one format of presentation at public engagement events such as oral speakers, accompanying presentation, Braille, large print copies of the presentation, and closed captioning.
- An open, inviting environment free of judgement and prejudice where those with lived experience can be heard and understood.

When retaining the services of Changing Paces, the Committee was able to accurately represent the needs and wishes of the public by providing the consultant with this information from Survey #1 to help them build engagement sessions that would meet the needs of the communities.

Survey #2 – (March 2024 – April 2024): Accessibility & You

This survey focused on respondents' interactions with the municipalities through the lens of service delivery and employment. Respondents were asked to share their personal experiences, challenges, and ideas regarding these topics.

The survey opened with questions about the individual responding, asking them to self-identify any accessibility challenges or disabilities they felt comfortable sharing. The survey also invited those who care for or support an individual with accessibility challenges or disabilities to participate.

The results of this section found that our communities have many individuals living with pain related disabilities, and physical or mobility related disabilities. The survey also found that many participants were completing this survey from the point of view of a caregiver.

The following key themes and discussions were captured regarding barriers encountered when accessing municipal information:

- Websites are difficult to navigate, contain outdated information, and lack accessibility tools and considerations.
- Accessing and interacting with Council, Committee, and Board meetings is challenging from an accessibility perspective.
- Wish for more formats of municipal information (online, physical print materials, emails, newsletters, social media, news releases).
- Difficult to interact with municipal staff and Council.

Most respondents noted difficulty accessing municipal parks, trails, and playgrounds as well as participating in municipal events.

The following key themes and discussions were captured regarding barriers encountered when applying for jobs or volunteer opportunities within the member municipalities:

- Opportunities are not advertised as accessible, or do not provide enough information about what is expected from an individual.
- Respondents were unsure if their specific needs could or would be accommodated.

When searching for a job or volunteer position, accessible parking, availability of adapted spaces such as accessible washrooms, breakrooms, and common areas, and flexibility within work schedules were identified by the most respondents as highly important.

Respondents were asked to identify their top three (3) accessibility improvements they would like to see their municipality make. While many diverse answers were provided, the following three were the most common:

- Accessible parking
- Accessible washrooms
- Sidewalk upgrades

Changing Paces Engagement (July 2024) In Person and Virtual Sessions:

The Committee retained the services of Changing Paces beginning in June of 2024. Working together, the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee and Changing Paces reviewed

Survey #1 and #2 agreeing that more engagement was needed relating to municipal services delivery and employment.

Changing Paces took Survey #2 and built a more robust engagement outline focusing on encouraging the public to expand further and provide more information to help inform the member municipalities' accessibility plans.

Public engagement sessions began in July of 2024 with Committee members and municipal staff working alongside Changing Paces to capture the thoughts and feedback of participants. Three (3) in person sessions were held in Colwood, Langford, and Esquimalt. In addition, four (4) online sessions were conducted. These sessions took place on different days of the week, at different times to accommodate the varying needs of the communities.

Participants were taken through an engaging introduction from Changing Paces, and then asked to discuss accessibility and their experiences, suggestions, and ideas in a judgement free environment. Questions about municipal service delivery and employment had participants considering the ways they interact with their municipal governments, and how these interactions could be improved or changed to enhance accessibility. Employment related questions had respondents thinking about their personal needs and accommodations within a workplace setting and how the municipalities could become more inclusive employers.

While all sessions online and in person followed the same agenda, each session was unique thanks to the diversity of the participants. Changing Paces was able to gather the feedback from the public and produce a final report (Appendix 3) that was presented to the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee at its Special Meeting held September 4, 2024.

The report summarized all feedback received throughout the public engagement campaign. Changing Paces then turned this feedback into identifiable barriers categorized as physical, communication, digital, customer service, policy related, systemic, and attitudinal. They also provided recommendations that municipalities could consider when addressing these barriers.

All feedback collected throughout Phase 1 and 2 of the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee's public engagement has helped form this Accessibility Plan. While some feedback collected throughout the public engagement campaign has been municipality specific, we shared many areas and aspects of municipal service delivery and employment that could be reviewed, changed, or enhanced to support accessibility in our communities.

While the City of Colwood, City of Langford, Town of View Royal, Township of Esquimalt, District of Sooke, District of Highlands, and District of Metchosin have worked together to develop this accessibility plan, these communities provide varying municipal services and employment opportunities. Working towards an accessible community is a journey, and we are all at different places. As a result, each member municipality has written their own unique section of this Accessibility Plan. There may be repetition and overlap showing that we have identified the same needs.

For ease of the reader, each Accessibility Plan is sorted into the following three (3) categories:

- What we have done (past)
- What we are doing (present)
- What we may explore (future)

Accessibility work is ongoing and continually modernizing. The following plan will support the member municipalities as they strive toward becoming barrier-free.

Individual Accessibility Plans

In this section of the Plan, each partner municipality will present their individual accessibility plans. These are based off of feedback received and differ from community to community. The plans are presented in the following order:

1. City Of Colwood
2. Township of Esquimalt
3. District of Highlands
4. City of Langford
5. District of Metchosin
6. District of Sooke
7. Town of View Royal

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COLWOOD'S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN SECTION**



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OF ESQUIMALT’S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
SECTION**



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OF HIGHLANDS' ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
SECTION**





Enhancing Accessibility in Langford: A Way Forward

This is the City of Langford’s first formal Accessibility Plan. This document, drafted in consultation with the public, accessibility consultants, the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee, and City staff strives to bring accessibility into all conversations at the municipal level, recognizing that the City is a place for all to feel welcome and valued.

This Accessibility Plan will guide the City's projects, strategic planning efforts, and day-to-day operations.

As described earlier in the Plan, the *Accessible BC Act* outlines eight objectives that municipalities must address over time:

- 1. Employment**
- 2. Delivery of Services**
3. Built Environment
4. Information and Communications
5. Transportation
6. Health
7. Education
8. Procurement

While this initial plan addresses the following two objectives, (Employment and Service Delivery,) it is important to note that there are impacts on several of the other objectives not specifically targeted:

Objective 1: Employment

The City prides itself on being a diverse, inclusive, and equitable employer. As such, it is important for City employees to have the required training, support and policies to carry out their duties efficiently.

Objective 2: Delivery of Services

“Service Delivery” is an all-encompassing term for all goods and services provided by the municipality, and how the public interacts with them.

Core Values and Strategic Plan Alignment

As presented in Council’s 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, the following *core values* support this Accessibility Plan as the City moves forward:

Community Involvement embodies inclusivity, collective progress, and active democracy. It is the commitment to engaging with the community, valuing every voice, and fostering equality. By going further together, we forge unity through diverse participation. Communicating democratic ideals of fairness and shared decision-making.

Continuous Learning is an ongoing and lifelong pursuit of knowledge, skills, and personal and organizational development. It involves staying receptive to new ideas, adapting to changing circumstances, and consistently acquiring fresh insights. This process fosters adaptability, growth, and improvement.

As accessibility work continues in Langford, inclusivity, education, engagement, and adaptability will remain important aspects of ensuring the community needs are met.

Strategic Initiative 6G “Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan” The Accessible BC Act requires all local governments to develop an Accessibility Committee and Accessibility Plan, and to provide a tool to receive feedback on accessibility concerns within the community. The City is working in collaboration with neighbouring communities on these requirements to ensure the unique needs of Langford’s residents and visitors are met.

This plan has been developed through feedback received including surveys and engagement opportunities and meets Strategic Initiative 6G as outlined above. Throughout the document, alignment with Council strategic priorities are referenced.

Accessibility Plan Objective 1: Employment

The City of Langford is dedicated to fostering an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workplace that addresses the needs of its staff. The City is enhancing the integration of accessibility practices across all areas of employment, from application to onboarding. Langford offers a chance for meaningful work that supports a diverse and vibrant community.

What We’ve Done:

The City has implemented the following practices pertaining to accessibility:

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| Offers the Option of Virtual Interviews When Recruiting New Employees |
| Virtual interviews are offered to accommodate a variety of needs. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Provides Sit-stand Desks at Most Working Spaces Within City Hall |
| Sit-stand desks are standard within City Hall providing users with a personalized and adaptable experience. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

What We’re Doing:

The City has been working toward implementation of the following accessibility solutions:

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| Developing Report Writing Standards and Training for Staff |
| The City is preparing report writing training that includes the use of plain language and accessibility standards. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G – Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

What We May Explore:

To improve the City's accessible employment model, all feedback has been reviewed, and the organization is dedicated to continual learning, and adopting standards and tools that support a diverse, adaptable workforce committed to serving the community.

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| Exploring Opportunities for Accessibility Training for Staff |
| The City may explore accessibility training for Council and staff to enhance awareness and improve service delivery. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Revising Job Descriptions and Advertisements to be More Inclusive and Accessible |
| Job descriptions and advertisements may be revised in order to promote accessibility and inclusivity for those currently employed or seeking employment with the City. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Revising Interview and Hiring Practices to Become More Inclusive and Accessible |
| The City may explore new interview and hiring practices that promote an accessible and inclusive experience. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Development of a Standardized Two-way Process for Requesting and Amending Workplace Accommodations in Which the Employer and Employee Work Together |
| The City may develop a standardized process to work with their employees to find suitable workplace accommodations and solutions. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Continue Implementation of Accessible Workspace Enhancements in City Owned Facilities |
| Accessible equipment may be added to City workspaces for employee use on an as needed basis to meet individual needs. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

Accessibility Plan Objective 2: Service Delivery

Providing services in the City of Langford reflects a dedication to:

- Providing the services our residents need and want.
- Delivering services in a helpful and courteous manner.

- Assisting all individuals in a meaningful way that addresses and accommodates their unique needs.

What We’ve Done:

The City has implemented the following pertaining to accessible service delivery:

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| Joined the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee |
| The City of Langford worked alongside partner municipalities to bring the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee forward. Langford served as the host municipality for the Committee’s inaugural year providing meeting Chair duties and administrative support. |
| <i>Strategic Plan Alignment: 6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Implemented Closed Captioning Capability on Council and Committee Meeting Recordings |
| Council, Committee, and Board meetings hosted in the City of Langford Council Chambers now have the ability for viewers to see live closed captioning during meetings and in the recordings. |
| <i>Strategic Plan Alignment: 5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Removed the Front Row of Chairs in Council Chambers to Create Space for Mobility Devices |
| The front row of chairs closest to the doors in Council Chambers have been removed to create a welcoming and accessible space for wheelchairs and other mobility devices. |
| <i>Strategic Plan Alignment: 6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Installed Screens at Council and Staff Seats in Chambers to View Presentations |
| Screens to display presentations were installed at every Council and Staff seat to enhance accessibility. |
| <i>Strategic Plan Alignment: 6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Purchased Assistive Tools for Use at Reception and Public Facing Areas |
| Purchased signing and cheque writing guides and magnifying glasses to assist individuals. |
| <i>Strategic Plan Alignment: 6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

Created a Page on the City Of Langford Website to Share Information About Accessibility and the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee

The City maintains a dedicated webpage focused on promoting and enhancing accessibility in Langford.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Created a dedicated Email Address to Receive Accessibility Correspondence from the Public

As required by the *Accessible BC Act*, the City has set up a feedback mechanism for the public to use (accessibility@langford.ca). In addition, the City works with individuals to provide alternate solutions for receiving feedback.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Implemented an Accessibility Menu on the Website

The City has implemented an accessibility tool (UserWay) within the website that customizes the experience on the website based on selections made by the user.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Created Standards for Social Media Posts and Promotional Materials Through an Accessibility Lens

When developing promotional materials for the City, contrast, adequate text size, and appropriate fonts are considered in development. Social media platforms include accessibility features that can be customized to the needs of each specific user offering an accessible and familiar experience.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Completed a Website Accessibility Audit

Based on the WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance criteria, the previous version of the City website was rated as semi-compliant. To address this, the City of Langford conducted a series of comprehensive updates aimed at achieving full WCAG 2.0 AA compliance. These updates included improvements to font readability, color contrast adjustments, and the addition of appropriate image tagging. Additionally, general code revisions were made to ensure the website is easily navigable by screen readers.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

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| <p>Online Payment Capability for Parking Infractions</p> <p>Langford offers an online payment module for members of the public to pay parking infractions. This module can be accessed through the City website.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i></p> |
| <p>Burning Permits, Campfire Permits, and Fireworks Permit Exams Available Online</p> <p>Langford offers an online module to obtain a Campfire or Burning Permit. Fireworks exams are also offered online through the City’s website.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i></p> |
| <p>Partnered With 4VI to Produce Accessible Travel Guides</p> <p>To best serve travellers of all abilities, 4VI, together with Spinal Cord Injury BC (SCIBC) and the City of Langford, developed travel information guides featuring accessible tourism products available within the City for those with physical mobility considerations or other barriers.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>3D – Implement the Five-Year Tourism Strategy</i></p> |
| <p>City Surveys Provided in Multiple Formats</p> <p>While the Let’s Chat Langford platform hosts many of the City’s surveys, they are also available on paper or can be mailed or emailed to promote participation.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5C – Expand Opportunities of Public Engagement</i></p> |
| <p>Designed Accessible and Inclusive Engagement Materials for the Urban Forest Management Plan</p> <p>Throughout the Urban Forest Management Plan development process, the City utilized an inclusive and accessible approach to public engagement.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>1G – Develop an Urban Forest Management Plan</i></p> |
| <p>Designed Accessible Public Engagement Materials for the Official Community Plan Refresh</p> <p>The Official Community Plan Refresh engagement materials were designed to be inclusive, accessible, and interactive to allow for diverse participation.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>1A – Refresh the Official Community Plan (OCP)</i></p> |

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| Included Accessibility Considerations When Drafting the Official Community Plan Refresh and Engagement Materials. |
| The Official Community Plan is the long-term vision for the community expressed through objectives and policies about land use and development. The Refresh places importance on equity and accessibility for all residents. When creating engagement materials, accessibility needs were considered. Accessibility related feedback will form an important component of the policy choices being considered as part of the OCP Refresh. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>1A – Refresh the Official Community Plan (OCP)</i> |

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| Implemented Construction Licences to Ensure Accessibility and Continued Access to Public Areas |
| The City requires developers wishing to utilize the road right-of-way for their exclusive use for a period of time to apply for a Construction Licence which includes provisions to minimize accessibility impacts to sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use lanes, parking stalls, and vehicle lanes. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>1F – Develop a Construction Impact Management Strategy and “Good Neighbour Policy”</i> |

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| Designed Inclusive Banners for Streetlights |
| The City produced streetlight banners that were installed throughout Langford that represent the diverse community. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>3F – Create an Arts and Culture Strategic Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6F - Develop and Implement a Placemaking Strategy</i> |

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| Included Accessibility Considerations When Drafting the Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Master Plan Scope of Work |
| When drafting the Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Master Plan scope of work, the City ensured that a variety of accessibility needs were incorporated. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>4A – Develop a Transportation Master Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>4B - Develop an Active Transportation Plan</i> |

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| Added Accessible Picnic Benches and Resting Places Throughout City Parks |
| Picnic tables designed for accessibility enable people to position their mobility devices right at the table. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A – Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |

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| New Signs at Jordie Lunn Bike Park to Indicate Terrain Difficulty and Key Information |
| Signage has been installed that recommends needed skill level, expected features, and directionality to help users determine which trail network suits their needs. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A – Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |

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| Included Accessibility Considerations in the Community Garden Policy |
| The Community Garden Policy indicates that a minimum of 10% of garden plots will be designed to include accessible features including but not limited to raised garden beds and pathing that allows for mobility devices. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>2C – Review and Action the Food Security Policy as Detailed in the OCP</i> |

What We’re Doing:

The City has been working toward implementation of the following accessibility solutions:

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| Designing and Implementing a Public Engagement Strategy |
| Standards have been created to enhance accessibility within public engagement opportunities. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5C - Expand Opportunities for Public Engagement</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Creating an Accessibility Checklist for City Events |
| A checklist is being created to ensure accessibility needs are considered when designing and facilitating City led events. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

Utilizing the Let’s Chat Langford Platform to Host City Information and Projects

Let’s Chat Langford provides details about the City’s major projects in one place, making it easier for users to participate and access information.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *5C - Expand Opportunities for Public Engagement*

Strategic Plan Alignment: *5D - Improve Access to City Information*

Improving Paper Copies of City Surveys

The City is researching ways to improve the format of paper surveys in order to meet accessibility standards.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *5C - Expand Opportunities for Public Engagement*

Producing Accessible Documents for Public Use

When creating new forms, print materials, and online documents, the City considers accessibility features including font type, size, contrast, and alternate text.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Improving Search Categorization on the Langford Website to Improve User Experience

The City is actively working on a solution to improve search functionality on the website.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan*

Considering Accessibility Needs When Drafting the Construction Impact Management Strategy and Good Neighbour Policy

The Construction Impact Management Strategy and Good Neighbour Policy will consider accessibility needs in areas undergoing development.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *1F - Develop a Construction Impact Management Strategy and “Good Neighbour Policy”*

Creating Accessible Features Within Existing and New Recreational Spaces and Parks

When planning new parks, playgrounds, and recreational spaces, accessible features are being added in the concept and design phase.

Strategic Plan Alignment: *6A – Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment*

What We May Explore:

The City of Langford is aware that the sections above do not encompass all needs and feedback received through the Committee’s consultation process. To address these gaps, accessibility needs will inform the City’s projects, strategic plan initiatives, and day to day operations.

Service Delivery:

Objective 2A: Staff and/or Council Training

The City will consider implementing the following regarding accessibility within the objective of Staff and/or Council Training:

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| Provide Additional Training Opportunities for Council and Staff Including but not Limited to Accessibility Topics and Service Delivery |
| The City may provide training opportunities for Council and staff to enhance skills and explore opportunities to improve accessibility. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Provide Funding for Staff to Complete the Rick Hansen Accessible Spaces Certification or Other Accessibility Training Opportunities |
| The City may offer training opportunities to staff who wish to further their education and credentials pertaining to accessibility. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Provide Accessible Document Creation and Communications Training for Staff |
| When developing forms, documents, and communications on behalf of the City, specific training may be provided to staff to ensure that accessibility needs are considered. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

Objective 2B: Technological Improvements or Enhancements

The City of Langford is evaluating the implementation of the following measures to enhance accessibility as part of its technological upgrades:

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| Accessibility Improvements to the Technology in Council Chambers |
| The City may consider improvements such as the installation of a hearing loop, closed captioning enhancements, podium wiring, and general functionality improvements that enhance public participation in Council Chambers. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Digital Upgrades and Regular Audits of the City’s Website to Promote and Enhance Accessibility |
| In order to provide an accessible and user-friendly experience, the City’s website will continue to receive audits and updates. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Review and Improve Access to the City Website on Mobile Devices |
| The City might consider updates to its mobile website to improve user experience and accessibility. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Revise City Produced Documents in Order to Meet Accessibility Standards |
| The City may update print materials, brochures, templates, and official municipal documents to meet accessibility standards. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| Design and Install Informational Signage at Parks, Trails, and Playgrounds |
| Additional signage may be designed and installed to provide users with information about parks, trails, playgrounds, or recreational spaces. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A - Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |

Objective 2C: Policy and Procedure Related to Accessibility

The City of Langford will consider implementing the following regarding accessibility within the objective of policy and procedures:

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| Research Online Payment Options for Municipal Fees and Taxes |
| Self-service modules and additional online payment options may be explored for a variety of municipal fees and property taxes. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

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| <p>Consider Accessibility Needs as the Disaster Mitigation Strategy Processes are Developed</p> |
| <p>Accessibility needs will be considered in the development of the Disaster Mitigation Strategy and accompanying programs and public engagement opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>2E - Develop an Overarching Disaster Mitigation Strategy with Respect to Climate Change and Build Resiliency as a Community Based on Specific Initiatives</i></p> |

| |
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| <p>Purchase, Upgrade, or Replace Specialized Equipment and Emergency Response Programming and Procedures That Reflect the Needs of the Community</p> |
| <p>While the City complies with emergency response requirements, new equipment, programming, procedures, processes, technology, and tools may be explored that benefit the community.</p> |
| <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>2E - Develop an Overarching Disaster Mitigation Strategy with Respect to Climate Change and Build Resiliency as a Community Based on Specific Initiatives</i></p> |
| <p>Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6H - Implement the Recently Developed Fire Master Plan</i></p> |

The Built Environment:

Through public engagement, it became clear that further awareness is needed with respect to the difference between a municipal service and the built environment (on-street parking, sidewalks, signage, facilities, etc.). The following section is intended to highlight both current initiatives and future goals with respect to the built environment.

Throughout public consultation, respondents discussed accessible parking issues including but not limited to:

- Accessible parking spot sizes (dimensions)
- Accessible parking locations
- Accessible parking minimums

The City of Langford understands that parking needs greatly impact residents and visitors which is why parking is mentioned numerous times within the Strategic

Plan. The BC Building Code acknowledges accessible parking, and as required, the City will defer to the BC Building Code for on-site parking requirements at non-municipal facilities.

Through parking reviews, the City may make recommendations and decisions regarding accessible parking, and parking minimums.

What We’ve Done:

While outside of the scope of this initial Accessibility Plan, the City has implemented the following pertaining to the built environment:

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| Commissioned an Accessibility Audit on the Langford Station Cultural District |
| The Langford Station Cultural District underwent an accessibility audit in 2023. The recommendations within are being actioned by staff in order to make the space more accessible for all, including the addition of ramps for use by visitors and vendors. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>3F – Create an Arts and Culture Strategic Plan</i> |

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| Installed an Accessible Washroom at The Langford Station Cultural District |
| An accessible washroom facility was built at The Langford Station Cultural District for use by the public. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>3F – Create an Arts and Culture Strategic Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G – Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Annual Sidewalk Inspection and Repair Program |
| Each year, Engineering staff inspect sidewalks throughout the City for damage and possible improvements. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>4C – Improve and Expand Active Transportation Infrastructure</i> |

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| Reception Area and Public Facing Upgrades Within City Hall That Promote Accessibility and Respond to Diverse Needs |
| The renovated reception area will include accessibility features such as varying counter heights. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Installed Motion Activated Automatic Doors at City Hall’s Second Floor Entrance |
| The doors to City Hall on the second floor can be opened by a motion activated panel to enhance accessibility. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Installed an Intercom Speaker at the Public Doors at Fire Hall No. 1 to Assist Visitors |
| The installation of an intercom system provides an accessible audio alternative for those visiting Fire Hall No. 1 to speak with administration. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

What We’re Doing:

While outside of the scope of this initial Accessibility Plan, the City has been working toward implementation of the following accessibility solutions:

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| Adding Sidewalks to Previously Unfinished Road Shoulders or Frontage Through the Sidewalk Infill Program |
| Through the Sidewalk Infill Program, the City continues to improve accessibility and connectivity throughout Langford. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>4C - Improve and Expand Active Transportation Infrastructure</i> |

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| Accessibility Condition Assessments will be Conducted on Existing Transportation Infrastructure When Drafting the Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Master Plan |
| When drafting the Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Master Plan, the condition of existing transportation infrastructure will be assessed for users of all ages, stages, and abilities. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>4A – Develop a Transportation Master Plan</i> |

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| Improvements to the Accessible Parking Area as Identified in The Langford Station Cultural District Accessibility Audit |
| Improvements such as paving and widening are underway at the Langford Station Cultural District accessible parking area. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>3F – Create an Arts and Culture Strategic Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G – Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

What We May Explore:

While outside of the scope of this initial Accessibility Plan, the City will consider implementing the following regarding accessibility within the built environment:

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| Conduct an Accessibility Audit on the City Hall Workspaces, Public Spaces, and Municipal Facilities |
| To provide the best service, the City may retain an accessibility consultant to provide recommendation for improvement. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

| |
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| Accessibility Improvements to Municipal Facilities That Enhance Public Participation, Access, and Useability |
| The City is committed to improving access and useability to increase participation in municipal initiatives and receive input from all individuals. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Improvements to Council Chambers That Enhance Physical Access and Participation |
| Features within Council Chambers that enhance physical accessibility and promote diverse participation may be considered including but not limited to, renovations and new furniture. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5 – Good Governance</i> |

| |
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| Upgrades and Renovations to Provide Accessible Washrooms in Municipal Facilities |
| Features may be installed to provide accessible washrooms within municipal facilities. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

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| Enhance Physical Accessibility Within Parks and Trail Networks |
| The City may explore the addition of accessible features such as boardwalks, grade softening, wider trails, and railings. Trails and parks may include accessible features such as wider trails, |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A - Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |

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| Install Accessible Surfacing or Replace Existing Surfacing Where Possible |
| Where possible, the City may install rubberized surfacing, pavement, or other recognized accessible options in parks, trails, recreational spaces, and municipal facilities. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A - Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |

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| Updated Wayfinding Signage |
| Signage and wayfinding tools such as braille and audio signage may be considered throughout the City. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6F - Develop and Implement a Placemaking Strategy</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

General Accessibility Feedback

While this Accessibility Plan focuses on **Service Delivery** and **Employment**, public engagement opportunities provided further information regarding additional accessibility aspects.

The following are examples of general accessibility feedback that was collected through public engagement that does not fall within the scope of this initial Accessibility Plan:

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| Advocate to Other Levels of Government for the Promotion and Enhancement of Accessibility |
| In order to reach the City’s goal of becoming a barrier free community, advocacy may be required through inter-governmental discussions and meeting opportunities. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5A - Be at the Table for Strategic Regional Discussions and Decisions</i> |

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| Look for Opportunities to Collaborate and Work With Neighbouring Local Governments to Promote and Enhance Accessibility |
| Opportunities may arise with neighbouring local governments to work collaboratively in order to promote cohesive accessibility needs. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>5A - Be at the Table for Strategic Regional Discussions and Decisions</i> |

| |
|---|
| Work With Recreational Partners to Provide Options That Promote Accessibility and Diverse Programming |
| When collaborating with recreational partners, think about improvements and cooperative efforts that can enhance accessibility. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6A - Undertake a Parks Needs Assessment</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6B - Develop a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan</i> |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6L - Increased Access to Recreation Infrastructure and Services</i> |

| |
|---|
| Hiring Consultants to Provide Advice and Complete Work That Promotes or Enhances Accessibility on Behalf of the Municipality |
| The City may benefit from working with professional consultants as required. Strategic partnerships can help the City complete work quickly and accurately. |
| Strategic Plan Alignment: <i>6G - Develop and Implement an Accessibility Plan</i> |

Conclusion

This Accessibility Plan will be reviewed by the City in collaboration with the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee every three years.

Working alongside our municipal partners within the Capital West Accessibility Committee, accessibility consideration will continue to be a priority of the City. The accessibility feedback mechanism, accessibility@langford.ca remains available for use. Comments and feedback will be reviewed and responded to accordingly.

The City aims to foster and advance accessibility, continually working toward the objective of creating a community without barriers.

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OF METCHOSIN’S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
SECTION**



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OF SOOKE’S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN SECTION**



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VIEW ROYAL'S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
SECTION**



Monitoring and Evaluation

Member municipalities will be utilizing this plan to develop more specific projects that will be undertaken to promote and enhance accessibility. The development of these sub-plans or specific projects will be a step forward towards implementing changes and developing accessible practices.

This plan is intentionally not prescriptive. Rather than outlining the exact steps that are to be undertaken, the plan recognizes that while member municipalities are similar, they provide diverse services and employment opportunities. The intent is that this plan will get member municipalities striving to continually enhance accessibility.

This plan will be reviewed by each partner municipality every three years.

Conclusion & Next Steps

Accessibility improvements, learning, and work will continue after the implementation of this plan. As mentioned earlier in this plan, the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee will be expanded to include members of the public with lived experience. Subsequent plans will focus less on internal operations such as employment and municipal service delivery, and more on community building and -improvements that will benefit residents and visitors as they access and interact with the member municipalities.

How to Give Feedback

Thank you for reviewing our plan! Do you have accessibility related feedback for your community? Feel free to reach out to your municipality to discuss your ideas!

City of Colwood

3300 Wishart Road, Colwood BC V9C 1R1

accessibility@colwood.ca

250-294-8157

Corporation of the Township of Esquimalt

1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt BC V9A 3P1

accessibility@esquimalt.ca

250-414-7177

District of Highlands

1980 Millstream Road, Victoria BC V9B 6H1

accessibility@highlands.ca

250-414-1773

City of Langford

2nd Floor, 877 Goldstream Avenue, Langford BC V9B 2X8

accessibility@langford.ca

250-478-7882

District of Metchosin

4450 Happy Valley Road, Victoria BC V9C 3Z3
accessibility@metchosin.ca
250-474-3167

District of Sooke

2205 Otter Point Road, Sooke BC, V9Z 1J2
accessibility@sooke.ca
250-642-1634

Town of View Royal

45 View Royal Avenue, Victoria BC, V9B 1A6
accessibility@viewroyal.ca
250-479-6800

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Survey #1 “How and Where Should Public Engagement Take Place?” Excerpt of Results

Appendix 2: Survey #2 “Accessibility & You” Excerpt of Results

Appendix 3: Final Report “What We Heard” from Changing Paces