



PRELIMINARY / DRAFT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (VERSION #1)
August 2, 2023

Draft Version	Updated
#1	August 2, 2023

**** Please note this document reflects the work-in-progress currently underway at the SLRD in respect of its Accessible British Columbia Act requirements.**

This document remains in Preliminary / Draft format until considered and approved by the Board at a future Board meeting.**

Introduction

The [Accessible British Columbia Act](#) (the “Act”) was enacted on June 17, 2021. The Act contains a framework for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) to work with people with disabilities and the broader community to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

The Act’s definition of a barrier is “anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment.” The Act states that barriers can be “caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies and affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.”

As a piece of enabling legislation, the Act paves the way for *future* standards to be made by the Provincial Cabinet (via regulation) that may address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in all areas, including employment; delivery of services; the built environment; information and communications; transportation; health; education; and procurement.

The Act also contains the requirements of establishing an accessibility committee (section 9), developing an accessibility plan (section 11) and establishing a process for receiving public feedback on accessibility matters (section 12) - these sections are reproduced in Schedule A.

In 2022, the [Accessible British Columbia Regulation](#) subsequently established September 1, 2023 as the date by which the process for developing an accessibility plan and the establishment of an accessibility committee were to be underway. An Accessibility Plan does not need to be completed nor comprehensive as of September 1, 2023 and is intended to be an evolving document, to reflect the priorities of the SLRD as informed by its Accessibility Committee and taking into consideration any public feedback on accessibility.

Existing Board Direction

At its May 24 & 25, 2023 Regular Meeting, the Board passed the following resolutions:

THAT the Accessibility Committee be established as a staff advisory committee reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer.

THAT the Board be updated on the work of the Accessibility Committee on a schedule to be determined by the Chief Administrative Officer.

*THAT the draft Terms of Reference for the Accessibility Committee be received.
THAT staff develop a tool to receive public feedback on accessibility to help identify barriers and build awareness of accessibility in the community.*

THAT the following matter be added to the Board Follow-Up Action List (FUAL) for prioritizing and actioning when workplan capacity allows:

Staff bring a report to a future Board meeting with options for providing stipends to members of the SLRD's various advisory committees (such as Area B Agricultural Advisory Committee, Area C Agricultural Advisory Committee, and Accessibility Committee) along with potential financial impacts associated with providing such stipends.

The Role of the Accessibility Committee

The Accessibility Committee is a recommendation-based committee that reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The Accessibility Committee has no ability to make any decisions with respect to accessibility matters nor to manage or direct the actions of staff on a day-to-day operational basis, nor to enter into agreements and contractual obligations.

The work of the Accessibility Committee consists of making recommendations to the CAO on the following matters:

- (a) Developing a draft Accessibility Plan for the organization.
- (b) Identifying and assessing accessibility barriers to people in the organization or to people interacting with the organization.
- (c) Removing and preventing accessibility barriers to people in the organization or to people interacting with the organization.
- (d) Once the Accessibility Plan is developed and as approved by the Board, implementing the Accessibility Plan.
- (e) Providing feedback on the SLRD's tool to receive public feedback on accessibility to help identify barriers and build awareness in the community of accessibility.

The CAO has the authority to incorporate into the Corporate Work Plan any accessibility initiatives arising out of the work of the Committee that:

- do not have financial impacts; or
- have financial impacts that can be incorporated into the current financial plan.

If the CAO wishes to advance accessibility initiatives arising out of the work of the Accessibility Committee that require dedicated funding, a staff report seeking allocation of dedicated funding will be brought to the Board as part the SLRD's normal budgeting processes.

On July 27, 2023, the CAO approved the Terms of Reference (Version #1) – these are attached as Schedule B.

Guiding Framework

Existing Provincial and SLRD Policy

- Accessible British Columbia Act

In developing and updating its accessibility plan, the Act requires the SLRD to consider the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design. However, the Act is not overly prescriptive and has considerable flexibility in terms of where and how to focus the accessibility plan or the work of the Committee (i.e. internal operations or external operations or both). For example, the SLRD could choose to focus internally on employee training and employment policies and practices or look externally to accessibility barriers.

- Regional Growth Strategy

The [Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008](#) is intended to manage population change, guide decision-making and collaboration, and provides a broad policy framework describing the common direction that the three Electoral Areas (i.e. Electoral Area A is not included) and the four member municipalities will follow in promoting development and services that are sustainable, recognizing a long-term responsibility for the quality of life for future generations.

The SLRD's Regional Growth Strategy includes some high-level references to accessibility; these references are reproduced in Schedule C.

- Official Community Plans

From a Planning perspective, the SLRD has the ability to address and implement accessibility design components through Form and Character Development Permit Areas. These typically apply to commercial, industrial, intensive residential, and multi-family residential developments; see the [Area D OCP](#) (pages 69-77) for details.

- Housing Needs Study

The [SLRD Housing Need and Demand Study - Electoral Areas A, B, C & D dated February 7, 2020](#) identifies challenges and priorities around housing, with accessibility being a component identified in survey responses. This report is due to be updated in 2024.

- Current SLRD Mission Statement

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District's mission is to enhance the quality of life of constituents through the facilitation of regional and community services for the benefit of present and future generations.

The SLRD's Approach

As noted above, the SLRD currently has a very limited amount of policy on accessibility matters. There is no funding currently allocated for this work (aside from a small amount of funding for the recruitment of committee members). The budget for any accessibility initiatives that could be approved by the Board in the future would have to be reflected in the SLRD five-year financial plan.

Therefore, the SLRD's approach to developing an accessibility plan is to start off simple and focused with the ability to grow over time adding breadth, depth and complexity in response to the following:

1. consideration of the input provided by the Accessibility Committee;
2. any approved financial allocations as part of the Board's usual budgetary process; and
3. any legislative changes.

About Our Committee

Initial Focus of Committee

The Committee will initially focus on outreach efforts to recruit members for the Accessibility Committee who meet the legislative requirements for membership. Potential Committee members who meet the legislative requirements for membership could consist of staff members and or individuals from outside of the organization. While this outreach work is proceeding, staff from the Strategic Services Department will also advance foundational work tasks as directed by the Accessibility Committee.

Current Committee Members and Background

The Sponsor of the Accessibility Committee is the Director of Strategic Services (Kristen Clark), who is also, at this time, a member of the Accessibility Committee and the Chair. The Sponsor has appointed the following staff members to the Accessibility Committee:

- Director of Corporate and Legislative Services (Angela Belsham)
- Human Resources Manager (Monica Halitzki)
- Communications and Engagement Manager (Patricia Westerholm)
- Director of Planning and Development Services (Kim Needham)



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All Committee members are voting members, until the occurrence of the following event:

- when there is a minimum of 4 Committee members meeting the legislative requirements for membership, those Committee members who are staff members not meeting the legislative requirements for membership cease to be voting members and become non-voting members.

Consultations Conducted

Consultations to Date

As first steps, a staff survey and a community survey are planned.

Who was Consulted

TBD

How Consultation Was Conducted

TBD

Key Discussion Themes

TBD

Feedback Mechanism

Feedback Mechanism Development

The SLRD's engagement platform will be used.

Barriers Identified

What the SLRD Found (internal review)

TBD

What the SLRD Heard (Community/committee feedback)

TBD

Actions Taken

TBD



The SLRD's Three-Year Plan

TBD

Summary

Priority #1

TBD

Priority #2

TBD

Priority #3

TBD

Detailed Plan - *TBD*

Action	Details	Timeline

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring

A monitoring report will be produced on an annual basis and delivered to the CAO (on a schedule as determined by the CAO).

Evaluating

The SLRD will conduct a review and evaluation of the accessibility plan every three years from date of adoption of the Accessibility Plan.

How to Give Feedback to the SLRD

Feedback can be provided through the Accessibility Plan webpage on the SLRD website or through the SLRD's community engagement platform. (More details to follow.)



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Schedules

Schedule A: Excerpts from Accessible British Columbia Act

Schedule B: Terms of Reference of the Accessibility Committee (Version #1)

Schedule C: Excerpts from the Regional Growth Strategy

draft

Schedule A
Excerpts of Accessible British Columbia Act

Accessibility committee

- 9(1) *An organization must establish a committee to*
- (a) *assist the organization to identify barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization, and*
 - (b) *advise the organization on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.*
- (2) *An accessibility committee must, to the extent possible, have members who are selected in accordance with the following goals:*
- (a) *at least half of the members are*
 - (i) *persons with disabilities, or*
 - (ii) *individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities;*
 - (b) *the members described in paragraph (a) reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in British Columbia;*
 - (c) *at least one of the members is an Indigenous person;*
 - (d) *the committee reflects the diversity of persons in British Columbia.*

Accessibility plan

- 11(1) *An organization must develop a plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.*
- (2) *An organization must review and update its accessibility plan at least once every 3 years.*
- (3) *In developing and updating its accessibility plan, an organization must consider the following principles:*
- (a) *inclusion;*
 - (b) *adaptability;*
 - (c) *diversity;*
 - (d) *collaboration;*
 - (e) *self-determination;*
 - (f) *universal design.*



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- (4) *In developing its accessibility plan, an organization must consult with its accessibility committee.*
- (5) *In updating its accessibility plan, an organization must*
 - (a) *consider any comments received under section 12 [public feedback], and*
 - (b) *consult with its accessibility committee.*

Public feedback

- 12 *An organization must establish a process for receiving comments from the public on*
 - (a) *the organization's accessibility plan, and*
 - (b) *barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.*



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Schedule B
Terms of Reference (Version #1)

Please see attached.



**Accessibility Committee
Terms of Reference
Version #1 dated July 27, 2023**

1. Legislative Authority of Committee

In accordance with Part 3 of the [Accessible British Columbia Act](#) and the [Accessible British Columbia Regulation](#), the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is required to:

- A. Establish an accessibility committee that to the extent possible reflects the diversity of persons in B.C. as well as the diversity of persons with disabilities in B.C., including at least 1 Indigenous person and at least half of the Committee members are persons with disabilities or individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities.
- B. Consult with the accessibility committee when developing or updating an accessibility plan.
- C. Develop an accessibility plan outlining how the SLRD will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people in the organization or interacting with the organization, taking into account six specified principles:
 - (1) Inclusion
 - (2) Adaptability
 - (3) Diversity
 - (4) Collaboration
 - (5) Self-determination (i.e. people choosing and setting their own goals, being involved in making life decisions, self-advocating, and working to reach their goals)
 - (6) Universal design (i.e. the process of creating services and environments that are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities, disabilities and other characteristics)
- D. Create a tool to receive public feedback on accessibility to help identify barriers and build awareness in the community of accessibility.

2. No Dedicated Funding for Accessibility Initiatives in Current Financial Plan

As of May 2023, no dedicated funding for accessibility initiatives has been allocated in the SLRD's current financial plan. Any accessibility initiatives requiring dedicated funding that the SLRD Board decides to approve will require associated budget allocations to be made as part of the SLRD Board's normal budgeting processes.



For clarity, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has the authority to incorporate into the Corporate Work Plan any accessibility initiatives that:

- do not have financial impacts; or
- have financial impacts that can be incorporated into the current financial plan.

3. Overview of Accessibility Plan and Committee

The SLRD endorses the principle that the Accessibility Plan is to start off simple and focused with the ability (subject to future Board consideration of any associated budget allocations) to grow over time adding breadth, depth and complexity.

The Accessibility Committee (the “Committee”) is a committee that works collaboratively and puts forward recommendations for the CAO’s consideration. The SLRD strives to have Committee membership that reflects the diversity of persons in B.C. as well as the diversity of persons with disabilities in B.C., including:

- at least 1 Indigenous person;
- at least half of the Committee members are:
 - persons with disabilities; or
 - individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities.

4. Purpose of Committee

The Committee is a recommendation-based committee and has no ability to make any decisions with respect to accessibility matters nor to manage or direct the actions of staff on a day-to-day operational basis, nor to enter into agreements and contractual obligations.

The work of the Committee consists of making recommendations to the CAO on the following matters:

- (a) In recognition of the principle that the Accessibility Plan is to start off simple and focused (with the ability to grow over time adding breadth, depth and complexity), developing a draft Accessibility Plan for the organization, by taking into account the specified principles of:
 - i. inclusion;
 - ii. adaptability;
 - iii. adversity;
 - iv. collaboration;
 - v. self-determination; and
 - vi. universal design.

- (b) Identifying and assessing accessibility barriers to people in the organization or to people interacting with the organization.
- (c) Removing and preventing accessibility barriers to people in the organization or to people interacting with the organization.
- (d) Once the Accessibility Plan is developed and as approved by the Board, implementing the Accessibility Plan.
- (e) Providing feedback on the SLRD's tool to receive public feedback on accessibility to help identify barriers and build awareness in the community of accessibility.

5. Role of the Chief Administrative Officer

The CAO is responsible for these Terms of Reference and may make revisions to them at any time. (See also section 10 regarding an annual review process.)

The CAO is responsible for determining if and how to address the recommendations of the Committee, including but not limited to reducing or increasing their scope. Without limited the generality of the foregoing, some of the pathways available to the CAO are as follows:

- Do not accept the recommendations, or portions thereof, with general feedback provided to the Committee as to the reason(s);
- Provide direction to the Committee or request more, less or different information in respect of the recommendations, or portions thereof, including but not limited to cost estimates;
- Accept the recommendations, or portions thereof, and incorporate them into the Corporate Work Plan for prioritizing and tracking (i.e. if there are no financial impacts or if there are financial impacts that can be incorporated into the current financial plan);
- Advance the recommendations, or portions thereof, to the Board for consideration via the following route:
 - Direct the Sponsor to develop, for the Board's consideration in an open meeting, a staff report with recommended accessibility initiatives and associated dedicated funding allocations as part of the SLRD's normal budgetary processes (i.e. if there are financial impacts that cannot be incorporated into the current financial plan).

6. Role and Responsibilities of the Sponsor

The sponsor of the Committee is the Director of Strategic Initiatives or their designate (the "Sponsor"). The Sponsor oversees these Terms of Reference under the direction of the CAO and makes recommendations to the CAO for proposed revisions to these Terms of Reference (see section 10). On a schedule to be determined by the CAO, the Sponsor develops staff reports with updates on the Committee's work for the Board's consideration in open Board meetings.

The Sponsor also provides administrative support to the Committee, including the following responsibilities:

- (a) recruits/invites individuals with the relevant membership requirements to be members of the Committee, which may include an application process;
- (b) makes Committee appointments (and re-appointments);
- (c) receives resignations of members of the Committee;
- (d) fills vacancies on the Committee by appointing new member(s) with the relevant membership requirements, which may include an application process;
- (e) attends meetings and oversee procedures;
- (f) arranges meeting logistics;
- (g) sets and prepares meeting agendas in consultation with the Committee and distributes the meeting agenda to Committee members no less than 7 days before the scheduled meeting date;
- (h) when necessary, cancels and reschedules meetings with as much notice to the Committee members as possible depending on the circumstances;
- (i) takes meeting minutes, which will record any recommendations (for clarity, a verbatim transcript of meetings will not be kept);
- (j) transcribes and distributes meeting minutes by email, approval of which by the Committee is to occur by email;
- (k) makes use of Committee meeting minutes to prepare staff reports when appropriate to inform the Board of the work of the Committee;
- (l) provides overall leadership to the Committee.

7. Membership of Committee

The Committee consists of a minimum of 4 and no more than 12 members, with the breakdown of voting members and non-voting members as set out in these Terms of Reference.

The Sponsor strives to recruit the following persons to be Committee members: (a) persons with disabilities; (b) persons who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities; and (c) at least one Indigenous person, with a term length of one year and consideration of extending the term for subsequent one-year term(s). At this time, there is no financial remuneration paid to these Committee members (if they are not staff members).



The Sponsor may invite any or all of the following staff members to be Committee members, with term lengths and potential term extensions as determined by the Sponsor:

- Human Resources Manager
- Representative from the Office of the CAO
- Representative from the Planning Department
- Representative from the Building Department
- Representative from the Communications Department
- Representative from the Legislative and Corporate Services Department
- Representative from the Protective Services Department
- Representative from the Strategic Services Department

All Committee members are voting members, until the occurrence of the following event:

- when there is a minimum of 4 Committee members meeting the requirements of section 1(A) of these Terms of Reference, those Committee members who are staff members not meeting the requirements of section 1A cease to be voting members and become non-voting members.

8. Meetings

As this is a committee that provides recommendations to the CAO, the Committee meetings are not open to the public.

The Committee meets a minimum of two times and a maximum of six times per year, on a schedule determined by the Committee in consultation with the Sponsor.

The meetings are chaired by the Sponsor, until the occurrence of the following event:

- when there is a minimum of 4 Committee members meeting the requirements of section 1(A) of these Terms of Reference, the Sponsor ceases to be the Chair and a new Chair is to be elected by the voting members. At this time, a Vice-Chair may also be elected by the voting members.

Quorum is a majority of the voting members of the Committee. If quorum is not reached, the meeting is to be rescheduled for another date.

A recommendation made by the Committee is supported by a simple majority vote. In the case of a tie vote, the recommendation is defeated.

Meetings are held in person and electronically to facilitate attendance and to be as accessible and inclusive for Committee members as possible. With the consent of the Sponsor, if all Committee members are available to attend in person and all Committee members agree to meet in person, meetings may be held in person at a mutually-agreed upon location.

As required, staff members will participate to provide subject-matter expertise and feedback including:

- Director of Environmental Services or designate
- Director of Planning and Development Services or designate
- Director of Legislative and Corporate Services or designate
- Director of Finance or designate
- Director of Protective Services or designate
- Communications Manager or designate
- IT Manager or designate

9. Duties of Committee Members

Be familiar with the Committee’s purpose and duties.

Advise the Sponsor whether or not they will be able to attend the upcoming meeting.

Attend meetings with regularity and punctuality.

Be prepared for meetings by reading agenda materials.

Participate actively at meetings and ensure others can participate fully at meetings.

Be respectful of each other, including ensuring others have their turn to speak and are not interrupted unless absolutely necessary.

Do not speak to media as representatives of the Committee or the SLRD.

Do not discuss meetings outside of the Committee, other than by reference to the meeting minutes taken.

Work in the public interest in order to improve accessibility in the community and resolve any potential conflicts with their personal interests.

10. Annual Review of these Terms of Reference

The Sponsor undertakes a review of these Terms of Reference on an annual basis starting with the first review by December 31, 2024 and taking into consideration any feedback received from the Committee. As part of this review process, the Sponsor submits any recommendations for revisions to the CAO for consideration of approval.

For clarity, the CAO may make revisions to these Terms of Reference at any time (and not only as part of this annual review process).

Version	Date Approved by the CAO
#1	July 27, 2023



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Schedule C Excerpts of Regional Growth Strategy

GOAL 1 Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to encourage compact, complete sustainable communities as the basis for land use planning throughout the region. 'Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities' refers to settlement that takes a long-term view of the quality of life for future generations, promotes the efficient use of land at higher population densities with greater transportation choices, protects agriculture, natural areas and open spaces, and provides an opportunity to live and work in the same community. Focussing settlements into compact, complete, sustainable communities or nodes moves us toward a vision of sustainable, highly liveable communities with accessible services, public spaces, parks, and cultural and recreation amenities.

Goal 2 Improve Transportation Options and Linkages

....

(v) Supports expanding preferred modes of transportation within and between communities, with a focus on safety, health, enjoyment and accessibility.

....

Transportation needs in the regional growth strategy have been identified as an expression of local priorities for improvements. Where the province has responsibility for local roads, improvement decisions will be based on a proper evaluation that considers cost and benefits and impact on safety. In the northern part of the region, safety concerns, the need for highway service improvement, and the lack of public and/ or private transportation options are the primary transportation issues. Ongoing improvements to the Duffey Lake Road segment of Highway 99 and other northern routes [Hurley Forest Service Road (FSR), In-Shuck-CH FSR, Highway 40, Highway and the Highline Road / Douglas Trail] are suggested in order to improve accessibility, enhance safety and support economic development.

Goal 3 Generate a Range of Quality Affordable Housing

....

d) Adopt financial tools that will assist in the delivery of accessible family housing and seniors housing, such as cash-in-lieu of social housing contributions, waiving development cost charges, property tax exemptions, and lands grants. This will be pursued as part of decision making by the Regional Board and Member Municipality Councils in regard to social housing proposals.

GOAL 6 Encourage the Sustainable Use of Parks and Natural Areas

....

Sustainable use of parks and natural areas will be encouraged by:

- *Promoting / ensuring a variety of accessible recreational facilities.*

GOAL 7 Create Healthy and Safe Communities

The Regional Growth Strategy supports the creation of healthy, secure, safe and accessible communities.

....

Healthy and safe communities will be created by:

- *Developing mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, complete communities and neighbourhoods.*
- *Maintaining and strengthening sense of place, with a strong community spirit.*
- *Creating opportunities for improving the quality of life so that people will choose to live and remain in the region.*
- *Enhancing accessibilities for people with disabilities.*

....

b) Ensure land use planning encourages the development of healthy, compact and walkable communities that promote safety through environmental design and Smart Growth Principles, natural hazards and environmental contaminants protection and FireSmart principles, and provisions for seniors and universal, accessible design. This will be pursued in the review and updating of Official Community Plans and master planning processes.