

Accessibility Requirements

- **Employment** (hiring, workplace standards, etc.)
- **Service delivery** (getting goods, services, or programs)
- **Built environment** (buildings, places, and spaces)
- **Information and communications** (human communication such as the way people interact and communicate in the way that works for them, and technical communication such as websites and documents)
- **Transportation** (buses, ferries, trains, etc.)
- **Education** (early childhood education)
- **Procurement** (buying services)

1. Need a committee
2. Seek community input
3. Draft a plan
4. Implement a feedback tool

City of Merritt 2020 Accessibility Standards

Built Environment

This guide outlines when buildings and occupancies must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and provides a number of illustrations as examples of the British Columbia Building Code 2018 (BCBC) requirements. This guide does not include an exhaustive list but is meant to highlight typical requirements. The BCBC Section 3.8 should be consulted for details and requirements for specific occupancies and situations.

2016 AF plan that relate to Accessibility:

Transportation:

Sidewalks, pathways and pedestrian crossings will be safe and accessible for all residents: The community identified areas within the city that impeded mobility (i.e. pedestrian crossings along Nicola Avenue).

Aging residents can easily access programs and services both locally and regionally using safe and reliable transportation options: The community identified difficulties when using public transportation (i.e. limited regional service).

Kamloops Plan

Develop and deliver an awareness campaign for snow removal contractors about the importance of snow removal in commercial areas, at pedestrian intersections and in accessible parker areas

Include accessibility considerations in transportation master plans and OCP through consultation with community and accessibility committee

Upgrade traffic signals with audible signals

Research feasibility of pilot community support driver program

Vernon Plan

Enhance walkability and rollability – Do an audit ([Study Details - SWAN - Simon Fraser University \(sfu.ca\)](#)).

Enhance walkability by working towards a linked multi-use trail and pathway system connecting the City Centre to neighborhoods, parks and other community recreational amenities

Ensure multi-use paths are graded, paved and where needed separated from higher speed users, so they are accessible to people of all abilities, including seniors and people living with dementia

Ensure that crosswalks are regularly maintained and visible 24 hours/day

Ensure wide, paved, low grade, continuous and accessible looped walking paths in major parks suitable for wheelchairs, walkers, and individuals with mobility needs

Prioritize managing snow and ice in key areas where seniors need access. Increasing snow clearing in commercial areas, bus stops and from sidewalks to plowed street level. Improve sidewalk and ramp maintenance

Built Environment

Local businesses respect aging residents and accommodate for their distinct needs: There are many existing buildings that do not meet accessibility standards (i.e. push-butt on accesses).

Residents of all ages will have access to affordable and diverse housing options: The community identified a need for more housing options as they age (i.e. seniors' specific housing facilities).

Home maintenance services and renovation options are affordable and available to aging residents: The community expressed the desire to better age in place (i.e. home modification services).

Kamloops Plan suggestions:

Seek grant opportunities annually to upgrade municipal buildings for accessibility

*Federal and Provincial accessibility grants, Rick Hansen Grants

-Ensure staff are using existing guidelines when doing renovations/retrofits/upgrades/new builds to municipal buildings/assets

*BC Building Code, Rick Hansen Design Guide, BC Accessibility Handbook

*Aim for [Rick Hansen Accessibility Certification](#) (60-79% level) for all new municipal facilities

-Assess current state (accessibility audit) to identify future improvements

-Consult with the Accessibility groups and persons with disabilities on new construction/renovation projects.

Notify the public and prioritize remediation when there are disruptions to community assets that would impact accessibility (eg. Sidewalk closures)

Review and address, when possible, the challenges faced by persons with disabilities living in a winter city.

Compile information and keep it updated about accessible infrastructure in parks, pub facilities, ped crossings for publication on the City website, and for distribution. Make it available in pdf format for screen readers or text breakdown.

Ensure funding for accessibility requirements/improvements is included in business cases for projects.

Vernon Plan

Prioritize accessibility in the design of public spaces

Improve signage in public parks and buildings with clear maps, symbols and landmarks to help with wayfinding and navigation. Place signage at lower levels so that people who use mobility aids can see them more easily

increase the number of accessible, clean and safe public washrooms

Encourage and incentivize the inclusion of studio and 1 bedroom units in subsidized and market rental housing projects, including those designated for older adults

Encourage and incentivize the inclusion of accessible and/or adaptable housing units in rental housing projects

Ensure that an adequate supply of land, especially near amenities, parks, and transportation is available and designated to meet the anticipated need for seniors supportive housing in the community

Service Delivery:

Local events and activities will be affordable and accessible to all residents: This will help individuals that are unable to participate in community activities due to financial stress or inaccessible venue locations (i.e. lack of voluntary transportation services).

Intergenerational programming will be encouraged and promoted: The community welcomes increased opportunity for more integration and interaction between residents of all ages.

Aging residents have access to adequate community services, programs and healthcare: The community identified a need for more information regarding services available to them as well as access to existing services (i.e. increased regional transportation services).

Kamloops Plan suggestions:

Promote accessible programs to the public

Increase representation of people with disabilities in community/publicity material

Review and incorporate accommodations for person with disability into customer services practices: eg. Provide training to public-facing staff to improve customer service around accessibility and best practices when serving persons with disabilities (e.g. working with clients who have guide dogs).

Vernon Plan

Increase awareness of housing resources and services that can help people age in the community, such as rent subsidies for low income seniors, e.g. BC Housing's Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)

Design programs and services for older adults that are culturally relevant, accessible, available and inclusive of people with diverse abilities and people living with dementia. Whenever possible, offer a continuum of programs for older adults that will serve them well as they progress through various stages of aging and/or dementia where applicable

Ensure that emergency preparedness and climate resilience plans, programs and initiatives consider the special needs of seniors and people living with disabilities

Communication and Information Sharing:

The City of Merritt will provide clear and transparent information to aging residents of the community: Aging residents were unaware of some community services and seniors-specific programming available to them.

Kamloops Plan

Build a process to ensure accessibility practices are incorporated into social media operations.

Vernon Plan

Improve the City website for older adult users and those with accessibility needs, including simplified navigation, and a more user friendly mobile interface

Ensure that public consultation opportunities consider the needs of older adults and people living with dementia. Where possible, prioritize face-to-face engagement through workshops and open houses.

Ensure that City messaging is inclusive and representative of community members from all walks of life, including older adults and people living with dementia. Project positive, diverse and respectful representations of older adults in all creative and written material. Wherever possible, promote imagery that shows intergenerational connections between seniors and other age categories. Wherever possible, encourage images that show diversity and challenge stereotypes about older adults and people with disabilities.

Employment:

Aging residents will have the opportunity to obtain meaningful employment: There are many aging residents that would like to continue to work but are unable to find employment options that fit with their post-retirement lifestyle (i.e. flexible part-time employment).

Kamloops Plan

Hiring processes should be inclusive: identify barriers in recruitment and remove to the greatest extent possible; explore accessibility partnerships to see where there are opportunities for meaningful work to be integrated through the organization.

Establish an employee resource group for employees with disabilities

Education:

Learning opportunities will be available to all residents: Aging residents would like to have access to a wider variety of educational programming (i.e. computer literacy programs).

Accountability/Evaluation:

Kamloops Plan

Develop an evaluation matrix to monitor progress and measure success (annual report to council?)

Provide updates to the Accessibility Committee

Increase options to receive comments from the public on barriers to individuals within or interacting with the City of Kamloops organization. (ongoing input mechanism).

Identify departments accountable for any action items, including implementation and reporting

*Consider broad goals with objectives and action items

Vernon Plan

Indicators for annual evaluation:

Accessibility improvements to existing City spaces, buildings and transportation infrastructure
New City-owned spaces, buildings and transportation infrastructure with accessibility features

age friendly representatives on Council Committees & Working Groups

new City plans and policies or plan updates reflecting Age friendly and accessibility goals

new City recreational programs for seniors and people with disabilities, including special events hosted or supported by the City

New residential housing projects for seniors

approved subsidized housing units designated for older adults, accessible units and adaptable units

approved accessible and/or adaptable rental housing units