



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Prince Rupert Port Authority

May 2024 (Updated September 2024)

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Message from the Prince Rupert Port Authority

Diversity is one of the corporate values that distinguish us and is fundamental to what we deliver at the Prince Rupert Port Authority (PRPA). As part of our commitment to our corporate values, inclusion is integral and access to our offices essential. In developing this plan, we have learned we are doing well, but we can do better.

PRPA is a key economic driver for northern British Columbia and Canada's supply chains, supporting an estimated 3,300 direct jobs in the operations of the Port and the transportation services supporting the movement of goods and passengers. We are responsible for the overall planning, development, marketing, and management of the commercial port facilities within the Port of Prince Rupert. This includes ensuring competitive, efficient, and timely responses to customer needs and business opportunities.

It also means ensuring that PRPA facilitates these interactions in a manner that is safe, responsible, and sustainable. Accessibility is fundamental in meeting that promise.

At its core, accessibility removes the barriers that prevent people from safe access to the opportunities we all deserve. By considering accessibility in our approach, we honour the responsibility we have in delivering the sustainable future we are proud to be building together and honouring PRPA's commitment to diversity expressed in our corporate values.

Here at PRPA we are always working hard to improve on behalf of our team, our partners, and all Canadians. This plan, in alignment with the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA), is a key contributor to achieving a barrier-free Canada by 2040.

Sincerely,

Shaun Stevenson

President & CEO

General

Contact Information for Comments and Requests

PRPA is committed to providing the highest standards of accessibility and values your feedback. For inquiries, to provide feedback on PRPA's accessibility plan, accessing PRPA locations and services, or to request alternate formats of the plan, please contact PRPA at accessibility@rupertport.com, by phone at 250-627-8899, or by mail at the address listed below. All correspondence will be replied to in the format it was received unless requested otherwise. You can also comment or provide feedback anonymously on accessibility through [PRPA's accessibility page](#).

The Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing is responsible for receiving and monitoring feedback from the public and employees on the accessibility plan and accessibility related inquiries.

Email: accessibility@rupertport.com

Phone: 250 627 8899

Address:

PRPA Accessibility Plan Feedback
215 Cow Bay Rd #200,
Prince Rupert, BC
V8J 1A2

About the Accessible Canada Act

PRPA is a port authority established by Letters Patent issued by the Minister of Transport, with the approval of the Governor-in-Council, pursuant to Section 8 of the Canada Marine Act (Canada). As such, it must comply with the requirements of the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) and its associated regulations.

The core principles of the ACA state that:

- everyone must be treated with dignity,
- everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have,
- everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society,
- everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire,
- laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect,
- persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures, and

- accessibility standards and regulations must be made with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility.

In support of these principles, PRPA is required to:

- prepare and publish an accessibility plan every three years that identifies, removes, and prevents barriers related to policies, programs, practices, and services, along with progress reports on years where no plan is required,
- consult people with disabilities to inform these plans, and
- establish a process to receive and incorporate feedback into accessibility planning.

Learn more about the [requirements set out in the *Accessible Canada Act*](#).

Consultations

External Consultations

In 2018, PRPA engaged a qualified consultant, Universal Access Designs Inc. to provide comprehensive analysis to guide facility upgrades and renovations, enhancing inclusivity and accessibility for both visitors and employees. The consultant team included staff with mobility disabilities. This lived experience-based specialist analysis was key to informing PRPA's accessibility plan, offering valuable insights into the practical needs and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in our physical spaces.

Areas assessed included the PRPA's Scott Road office and maintenance building, Atlin Terminal mixed use building, and Northland Cruise Terminal, which is currently operated by a contracted terminal operator.

The majority of recommendations have since been, or are in the process of being, implemented and are primarily included in the Built Environment, Transportation, and Communications (other than Information Communication Technology) sections of this plan.

In regard to short-term and long-term disability support for PRPA's workforce, in 2023, the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) conducted a Workplace Disability Management Assessment (WDMA) of PRPA's disability management program with a critical focus on PRPA's Disability Management Policy and Workplace Resources, Disability Prevention, and Early Intervention and Timely Return to Work Process. This assessment provided valuable insights which informed the improvement of PRPA's disability management program

and supporting its workforce with safe and efficient return to work and return to work accommodations for those with longer term disabilities.

Internal Consultations

In 2024, PRPA conducted an anonymous internal digital survey for employees to identify barriers to accessibility within PRPA and present possible solutions to help remove and prevent those barriers. Employees were given the option to disclose whether they identify as persons with disabilities. Several employees anonymously self-identified as being a person with a disability.

The internal digital survey provided staff the opportunity to comment on all seven priority areas outlined in the *Accessibility Canada Act* requirements. The questions were designed to gather input on accessibility barriers related to these areas and allowed staff to suggest ways PRPA could remove or reduce these barriers. The majority of PRPA's staff replied to the survey and their responses informed all sections of the PRPA Accessibility Plan.

In addition, working groups including leadership and staff (including employees comfortable with self-identifying disabilities) from all parts of the organization were created to identify barriers to accessibility, present solutions, and identify actions their respective groups and departments could take to remove and prevent these barriers in support of PRPA's accessibility plan. The information gathered from these working groups informed all sections of the PRPA Accessibility Plan.

Future Consultations

PRPA will continue to publicly offer an [open and anonymous feedback channel on its public website](#), with questions set to encourage actionable results. Also, existing PRPA committees will continue to be used to encourage commentary and inclusion by staff with disabilities. These actions will work in concert with future public in-person consultation sessions with local advocacy groups and persons with disabilities to ensure the public are always able to guide PRPA on where progress can still be made.

Priority Area: Employment

PRPA is built on the shared values of integrity, innovation, diversity, teamwork, and sustainability. Having an accessible employment environment is fundamental in delivering on those values, both in how we support our staff and in creating opportunities for all people at PRPA.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Recruitment postings require inclusive language review.	<p>Review and update job postings to include gender neutral, person centric language.</p> <p>Ensure all postings include diversity and accommodation strategy.</p>	Ongoing
The Careers page on www.rupertport.com does not include a diversity and accommodation statement.	Development of new Careers webpage to ensure an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) and Accommodation statement is featured for all applicants.	Q3 2024
PRPA career events could provide a wider range of accommodations for persons with disabilities.	<p>Ensure PRPA is building in specific time for people who require accommodations (For example: low lighting, quieter environment, less crowds) into career events PRPA hosts.</p> <p>Strategies include opening doors to events early to offer pre-access for persons who may wish to use this option.</p>	Ongoing
While PRPA encourages diversity in its hirings, more effort could be made to seek out persons with disabilities that are seeking opportunities.	Investigate and, where practical, utilize job boards and posting locations that cater to persons from diverse groups including persons with disabilities.	Ongoing

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Hiring managers require greater knowledge in accessible hiring practices.	<p>Teach hiring managers to remove barriers by offering virtual interviews, flexible time, and accommodations as requested.</p> <p>Ensure that hiring managers use neutral language and understand reasonable accommodations.</p> <p>Create a support question library for hiring managers.</p>	Ongoing
Improve organizational knowledge of reasonable accommodation practices.	Ensure employees and leaders are aware of the tools available for reasonable accommodation.	Ongoing
Data collection methodology options have room for improvement.	Improve our data collection regarding people with disabilities (visible & invisible) and ensure “chooses not to disclose” is offered as a possible response in surveys.	Q3 2024
Improve accessibility in meetings, as well as PRPA hosted employee events and activities.	<p>Gather employee feedback and recommendations on how to ensure activities and events are accessible to all.</p> <p>Continue to integrate and enhance accessibility into all PRPA meetings and events.</p>	Ongoing
Build a more inclusive organization through the right practices and programs by focusing on Employee Engagement and Accessibility	Reinforce policies, practices, and procedures that support Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) initiatives and opportunities specific to persons with disabilities.	Ongoing

Priority Area: Built Environment

PRPA has always designed our buildings and properties for the public and our staff to ensure safe dignified access to all, working with qualified consultants to inform our strategy.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Building Entrances/Exits	As part of the building improvement plan, upgrade staff and public access doors to include power door openers.	Medium-term
Atlin Terminal accessibility lift access, signage and lift to be improved to better support users.	Review and upgrade lift as needed, if needed, to be more user-friendly for all.	Ongoing
Traction/Mobility aids require updating	Apply non-slip surface treatment to all areas in need of updating.	Ongoing
Seating, rest areas, and physical supports are not always adequate for rest or breaks by those with disabilities.	<p>As part of the office improvement plan provide accessible seating options where appropriate.</p> <p>As part of long-term built environment improvement plan to provide weather coverage for external seating to ensure a range of needs are met.</p> <p>Install handrails, where needed, to provide support, balance, and directional guidance.</p>	Near-term for office improvements. Long-term for built environment improvements.
Lighting and visual indicators are insufficient in some locations.	<p>Provide additional lighting or sunscreens as needed.</p> <p>As part of long-term built environment improvement planning add high visibility markings where needed to inform and guide pedestrians.</p>	As needed work is ongoing. Long-term for built environment improvements.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Washrooms require overall assessment to ensure they meet current code and accessibility standards	<p>As part of long-term office improvement planning ensure doors can be opened reasonably by all.</p> <p>Add accessible features as needed (may include changes to flush mechanism, emergency call button, unique handles or support bars, and/or coat hooks).</p>	Long-term
Emergency response and evacuation instructions require updating to better meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	<p>Review emergency evacuation instructions to ensure they meet code and accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Review all fire emergency equipment is accessible in both function and availability. Remediate as needed.</p>	Ongoing
Kitchens require updates to make space more accessible.	<p>As part of long-term office improvement planning ensure all lunchrooms have appropriate seating and that appliances are situated at an accessible height with clear space in front.</p> <p>Provide knee clearance under sinks in all the kitchens.</p>	Long-term

Priority Area: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

While PRPA developed its information and communications technology platforms with the goal of flexibility and inclusion, there is still work to be done to ensure alignment with the ACA. PRPA is currently undertaking a review of its information and communications technologies to deliver platforms that meet accessibility standards moving forward.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Users of PRPA's website may not realize most materials are available in other formats (on request) that may better meet their accessibility needs.	Include an "active offer," where appropriate, to notify users to "please contact PRPA if you require this content in another format."	Q3 2024
Prince Rupert Port Authority (PRPA) website was not originally built to the WCAG 2.0 AA standard for accessibility.	Review existing web code and technological platform at www.rupertport.com to determine compliance and ability to be adapted to comply with WCAG 2.0 AA standard.	Q4 2024
The above review may determine that the existing website cannot be adapted as is to fully meet the WCAG 2.0 AA standard.	If needed, rebuild www.rupertport.com platform according to WCAG 2.0 AA best practices.	Q4 2026
Staff internal communications platforms were not tested for accessibility during implementation.	PRPA will review current platforms and ensure accessibility functionality required by staff is made available as needed.	Ongoing
Terminals are operated by external partners responsible for meeting expectations set out in the <i>Accessible Canada Act</i> .	PRPA will ensure partners continue to receive guidance on regulatory responsibilities and will monitor for compliance.	Ongoing

Priority Area: Communication (other than Information Communication Technologies)

PRPA has an established design approach that encourages clearly understood physical signage with large bold fonts presented against high contrast backgrounds. Building off this approach, PRPA aims to also standardize review and training processes to ensure all staff understand expectations and ensure continual improvement is made in all forms of communication.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
Consultations have identified areas in which signage at physical PRPA locations could be more effectively implemented to meet end user needs.	Ensure signage at all PRPA managed locations is clearly visible, easy to understand, and in a logical placement for users.	Ongoing
PRPA does not currently have a formal process for accepting feedback and inquiries related to accessibility.	Add accessibility page with dedicated feedback channel for public to comment or inquire on PRPA accessibility.	Q2 2024
PRPA does not currently have an annual review process to evaluate and communicate accessibility progress and needs.	Develop annual regular review, reported to appropriate PRPA committee, to ensure standards are continually understood and upheld by leadership and staff.	Q3 2024
Staff may not be trained in communicating and developing communications materials in alignment with the ACA.	Develop and present "Accessibility 101" presentation to ensure PRPA staff understand accessibility requirements, along with how to access the tools and support to deliver accessible work both in person and in products.	Q2 2025

Priority Area: Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

PRPA has enlisted a qualified consultant to assist in developing a framework to ensure accessibility is supported in all applicable areas of procurement.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
An accessibility framework is not in place to encourage accessible requirements in the procurement process.	Engage consultant services to assist in the development of the framework.	Engagement in Q2 2024
Accessibility requirements are not part of standard evaluation criteria.	Modernize procurement practices to ensure goods & services are procured in accessible and inclusive manner.	Organizational rollout in 2025
Supplier diversity program which would encourage individuals with disabilities to provide goods or services is not in place.	Consider potential approach as part of above-mentioned framework development.	As above
Consideration has not been given to accessibility needs in furniture purchasing.	Consolidate all furniture purchasing to the Procurement department to ensure adaptability is considered.	Ongoing
There is a general lack of understanding of what accessible procurement means.	Incorporate an accessible procurement resource centre into the procurement function.	To be implemented following framework activation
There is no means to measure accessibility performance.	Research tool to capture KPIs to help inform areas of improvement.	To be implemented following framework activation

Priority Area: Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

PRPA worked with qualified design consultants to develop an inclusive and adaptable Port Interpretive Centre (PIC) to be the primary location for hosting staff, partner, and public events and experiences. PIC staff are trained to support persons with disabilities through Destination BC and are equipped to accommodate individual accessibility needs on a person-by-person basis.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
While the PIC is designed to accommodate a wide variety of accessibility needs, it is best practice to continually review standards to ensure community events, PIC tours, and educational opportunities are accessible to all.	Audit community events planning and current programs to identify potential opportunities to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities.	Q4 2024
The audit may identify recommended actions to improve accessible outcomes.	If needed, plan and enact recommendations identified in the audit to improve accessibility in the delivery of programs and services.	2025 if needed

Priority Area: **Transportation**

Transportation, and the access related to it, is key to the PRPA providing an open and safe experience to staff and those that visit PRPA's public facilities.

Potential Barrier	Action	Timeline
No formal process to assess accessibility requirements for participants on PRPA lead site tours.	Create process for assessing accessibility requirements for PRPA lead site tours.	Ongoing
There is a lack of accessible parking space adjacent to Northland Terminal.	As part of the long-term built environment improvement planning, need to designate and visually identify accessible parking stall near Terminal entrance.	Medium-term
Accessible parking stalls at Atlin Terminal and Scott Rd. require clear identification.	Ensure surface paint reapplied annually and add vertical signage to the accessible parking stalls as needed.	Ongoing
Passenger pick up/drop off locations at Northland and Atlin Terminals are not clearly indicated on outside of terminal building area.	As part of long-term built environment improvement planning provide clear signage indicating passenger drop-off location.	Long-term

Provisions of Canadian Transport Agency Accessibility - Related Regulations

As a Transportation Service Provider (TSP), PRPA must comply with Canadian Transport Agency's (CTA) Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR). These regulations apply to the Northland cruise ship terminal. This facility is owned and maintained by PRPA and operated by an externally contracted terminal operator. This is the only area of PRPA whose purpose is to transport passengers via cruise ships.

PRPA will regularly monitor the regulations that apply to these port facilities to ensure compliance and will work diligently to ensure passengers have a positive travel experience when leaving the Port of Prince Rupert.