



City of Surrey's

# Accessibility Action Plan

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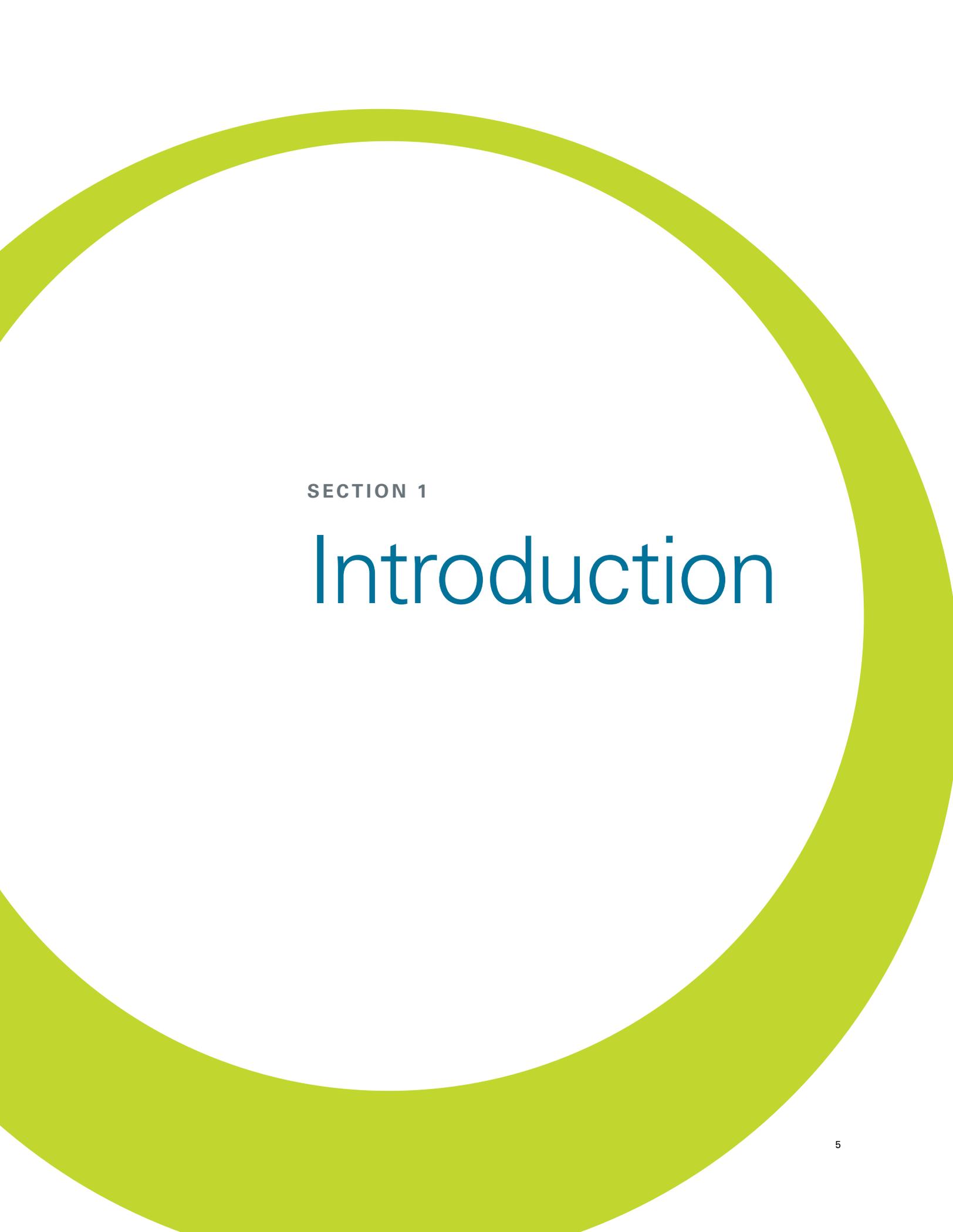


## Acronyms

<b>AAP</b>	Accessibility Action Plan
<b>ABCA</b>	Accessible British Columbia Act
<b>ACA</b>	Accessible Canada Act
<b>ASL</b>	American Sign Language
<b>CoS</b>	City of Surrey
<b>IAAC</b>	Internal Accessibility Advisory Committee
<b>PWD</b>	Person with Disabilities
<b>UD</b>	Universal Design
<b>SALT</b>	Surrey Accessibility Leadership Team



Photo: Youth on  
the Move Summer  
Camp participant



SECTION 1

# Introduction



The City of Surrey is situated on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the səmyámə (Semiahmoo), ǵícəy (Katzie), and ǵʷa:ńłəń (Kwantlen) land-based Nations who have been stewards of this land since time immemorial.



## Message from Mayor

On behalf of City Council, I am pleased to present the City of Surrey's new Accessibility Action Plan developed in full alignment with the Accessible British Columbia Act. This initiative reflects our commitment to fostering an inclusive and accessible Surrey for all members of our community. By embracing the principles outlined in this plan, we are taking vital steps toward removing barriers and ensuring equal opportunities for everyone. Through collaboration with various stakeholders, we have crafted a comprehensive strategy that will address physical, digital, and societal barriers that prevent some of our residents from fully participating in all that our beautiful city has to offer. This plan not only complies with legal requirements, but it aims to create an environment where diversity is celebrated, and all individuals can thrive.

As we move forward in putting this plan into action, public feedback will be crucial to ensuring we are on track with our accessibility goals. Your support is essential as we continue to build accessible infrastructure, enhance public services, and raise awareness about the importance of inclusion. In Surrey everyone matters, so let's work together to ensure that our city becomes a shining example of an inclusive and accessible place for all.

Mayor Brenda Locke  
City of Surrey

# Commitment to Accessibility

The City will identify, remove, and prevent barriers in all areas of service, programs, and buildings to provide residents with an inclusive and accessible experience.

## What we will do

- > Ensure that our programs, services, and spaces are accessible to all.
- > Create an inclusive space for everyone, including visitors and workers with disabilities.

## How we will do it

- > Offer clear information and services that everyone can easily understand.
- > Design our buildings and spaces to be user-friendly for everyone.
- > Support our employees in assisting you effectively.
- > Follow guidelines and use tools to create an inclusive and helpful environment.

## Values

The values of the City of Surrey guide the way we serve our residents, engage in our community, and work with each other.

### COMMUNITY

We care about and contribute to the broader well-being of the community. We strive to make Surrey a great place for our citizens to live, work, invest, recreate, and raise a family.

### INNOVATION

We welcome change. We actively look for leading-edge initiatives and welcome new approaches and original thinking. We are committed to continuous improvement; we recognize all experiences as important learning opportunities.

### INTEGRITY

We are honest. We are accountable for our decisions. We meet our commitments. We are forthright in our communications. We understand and comply with all laws, regulations, and policies.

### SERVICE

Customers are important to us. We want to help our customers. We seek to understand our customers' needs, and actively work to achieve responsive balanced solutions.

### TEAMWORK

We support each other. We trust each other. We respect each other. We take a City-wide view of the challenges we face. We value everyone's ideas.

## Definitions

For the purpose of the Accessibility Action Plan, the City of Surrey defines the following terms to create a common language to further the work:

<b>Accessibility</b>	Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Accommodation</b>	Accommodation refers to the employer’s responsibilities to tailor the workplace to meet the needs of the individual employee under the BC Human Rights Code. The purpose of accommodation is to provide access to employment opportunities and fair treatment in the workplace. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Barrier</b>	Means anything — including anything physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice — that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment or a functional limitation. <sup>3</sup>
<b>Disability</b>	Means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society. <sup>4</sup>
<b>Impairment</b>	Includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic. <sup>5</sup>
<b>Universal Design</b>	Process of creating services and environments that are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities, disabilities, and other characteristics. <sup>6</sup>

## Acknowledgement of Key Contributors

The City of Surrey extends its sincere gratitude to the Surrey Accessibility Leadership Team and Internal Accessibility Advisory Committee for their invaluable contributions and unwavering dedication in shaping and implementing the City’s Accessibility Plan in alignment with the Accessible BC Act.

Their sharing of lived experiences, insightful guidance, expertise, and collaborative efforts have played a pivotal role in creating an inclusive and accessible environment for all members of our community. We applaud their commitment to championing accessibility and enhancing the quality of life for individuals of all abilities within our city.

1 Government of British Columbia <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/accessibility/legislation/summary#01>

2 Government of British Columbia “Managing Employee Accommodation in the Workplace” Last updated: 2019-04-23 <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/managers-supervisors/employee-labour-relations/managing-accommodation>

3 Government of Canada: Accessible Canada Act (S.C. 2019, c.10) <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/page-1.html#h-1153395>

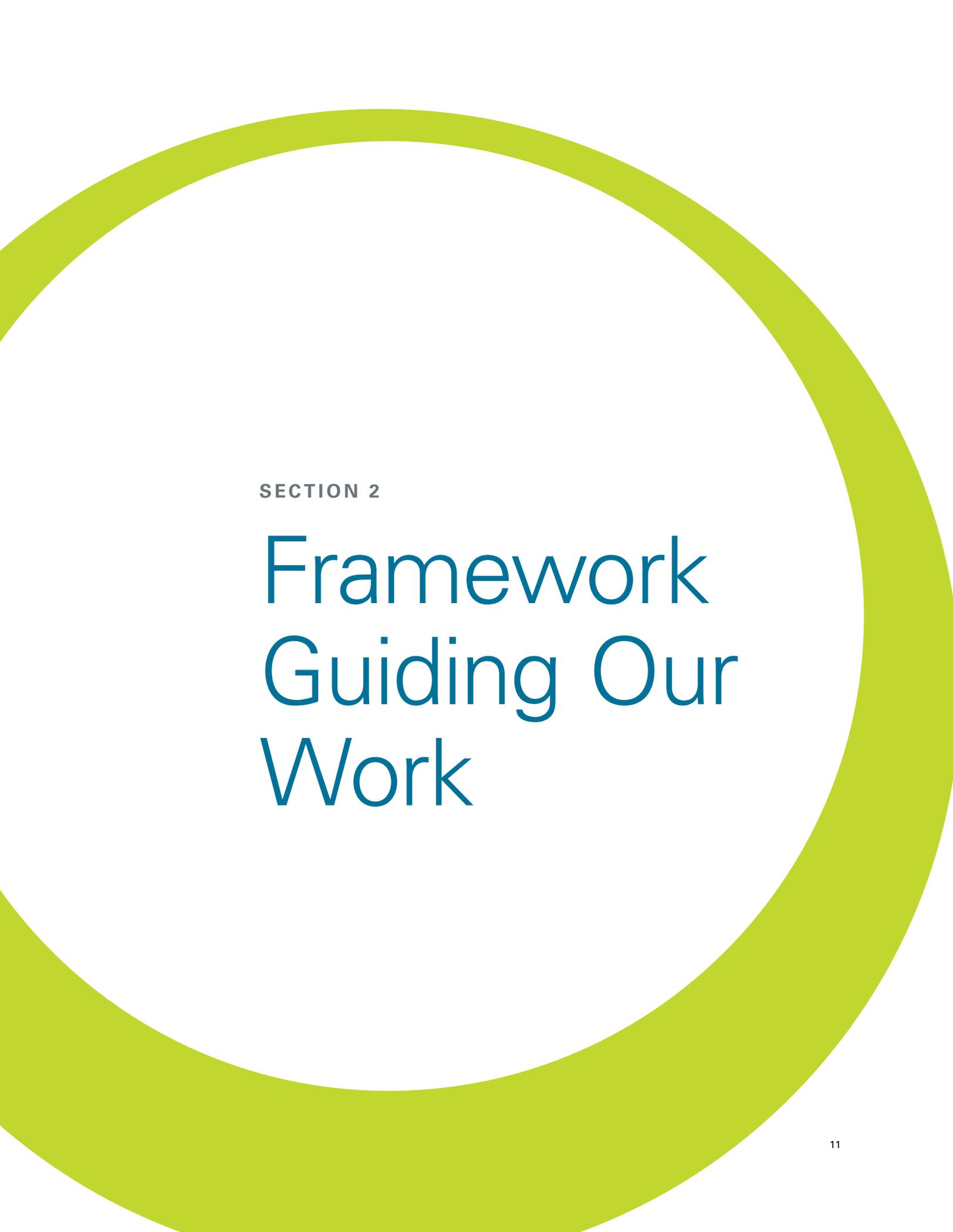
4 Government of Canada: Accessible Canada Act (S.C. 2019, c.10) <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/page-1.html#h-1153395>

5 Accessible British Columbia Act, SBC 2021, C 19 <https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/21019>

6 BC Accessibility Hub <https://bcaccessibilityhub.ca/resources/glossary/>



Photo: Adapted  
Boccia participant



SECTION 2

# Framework Guiding Our Work

The purpose of the Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) is to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for individuals working for or interacting with the City of Surrey. These actions will help the City make services and places easy to use for everyone. We will follow accessibility legislation, including:

- > UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- > Canadian Human Rights Act;
- > BC Human Rights Code;
- > Accessible Canada Act;
- > Accessible BC Act; and
- > City of Surrey People Practice – Human Rights Policy.

The AAP builds on legislation focused on accessibility within the Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA) and the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). The next sections provide information on the laws at the provincial and national levels.

## Accessible British Columbia Act

The Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA) became law in June 2021. It's an important piece of legislation that sets the way for future regulations that will address barriers to access for persons with disabilities in a range of areas including employment, service delivery, the built environment, information and communications, transportation, health, education, and procurement.

The Accessible British Columbia Regulations under the ABCA came into effect on September 1, 2022 and require certain organizations to meet the following requirements by September 1, 2023:

- > Establish an accessibility advisory committee;
- > Develop an accessibility plan; and
- > Create a public feedback mechanism.

## Accessible Canada Act

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) was passed in 2019, with the goal to make Canada barrier free by January 1, 2040. The legislation benefits all Canadians, especially persons with disabilities, through the proactive identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to accessibility in seven priority areas:

- > Employment
- > The built environment
- > Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- > Communication other than ICT
- > The design and delivery of programs and services
- > The procurement of goods, services and facilities
- > Transportation

# Develop an Accessibility Plan

An accessibility plan should outline how it will identify and prevent barriers for people interacting with or working in local government. The plan must be reviewed and updated at least once every three years.

The development of this Accessibility Action Plan meets the ABCA requirements for the City of Surrey to have an accessibility plan.

In the development of the Accessibility Action Plan, the City of Surrey considered the following principles identified in the ABCA:

<b>Inclusion</b>	All residents of the City of Surrey, including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equally in their communities.
<b>Adaptability</b>	Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change as services, technology, and attitudes change. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Diversity</b>	Every person is unique. People with disabilities are individuals with varied backgrounds. Individual characteristics including race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and lived experience greatly inform the experiences of individuals. Accessibility legislation should acknowledge the principle of intersectionality and the diversity within the community.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Promoting accessible communities is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play. Legislation should create opportunities for government, community, and business to work together to promote access and inclusion.
<b>Self-determination</b>	Accessibility legislation should seek to empower people with disabilities to make their own choices and pursue the lives they wish to live.
<b>Universal design</b>	Process of creating services and environments that are accessible to people with a wide range of abilities, disabilities and other characteristics. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/about-the-bc-government/accessible-bc/disability-consultation/2019-consultation/framework-for-accessibility-legislation.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> BC Accessibility Hub <https://bcaccessibilityhub.ca/resources/glossary/>

## Create an Accessibility Advisory Committee

Under the ABCA, a committee must be created to help the municipality to identify barriers and advise on how to prevent barriers that individuals face when interacting with the organization. The committee should, as much as possible, include:

- > At least 50% persons with disabilities or those who represent those with disabilities; and
- > At least one person of Indigenous background.

The Surrey Accessibility Leadership Team (SALT) is reviewing the current terms of reference and membership to continue to ensure compliance with the ABCA.

## Create a Public Feedback Mechanism

The City of Surrey must create a process for receiving public comments on its Accessibility Action Plan and on the barriers individuals face when interacting with and working within the organization.

The City of Surrey values input and feedback from residents, to better meet the needs of the community. The City provides various channels for residents to submit their feedback including online forms, email and phone.



Photo: Summer camp participant



Photo: Child playing at the inclusive playground at Unwin Park

## Guiding Documents

The City of Surrey sees accessibility as an important part of its equity and inclusion work. Accessibility is included in a number of plans and strategies that guide the organization. By including accessibility as a focus in guiding documents, the City emphasizes its commitment to making Surrey a more accessible place to live and play, both now and in the future.

### **Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Strategic Plan 2018-2027**

The [Parks, Recreation and Culture \(PRC\) Strategic Plan](#) is a blueprint for determining PRC facility and service decisions until 2027. The plan is a forward-looking strategy that identifies the greatest needs and opportunities for residents, and presents a vision of a healthy, green, inclusive community, where individuals, culture and the environment thrive. The PRC plan will guide future decision-making while allowing the City to be responsive to changing needs and demographics. The plan has two primary purposes: to set direction and to guide investment.

### **Museum of Surrey (MoS): Accessibility Plan 2022-2025**

The Museum of Surrey aspires to be accessible in every sense of the word: physically, intellectually, culturally, and economically. MoS is committed to making visitors feel welcome, comfortable, and safe. The MoS Accessibility Plan was updated in February 2023 and focuses on three themes: programming, building partnership and community. Within these three themes, the MoS Accessibility Plan is further broken into six key areas of action.

### **Parks, Recreation and Culture: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (EDI)**

The intent of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (“EDI”) Policy is to maintain a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment that encourages positive engagement and equitable access to services, programs, parks, and facilities in the City’s Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.

### **Surrey Libraries: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIA) and Wellness Action Plan**

The EDIA and Wellness Action Plan are designed as an ongoing and continuous improvement action plan for implementing the recommendations of the EDIA Committee, stakeholder and community consultation and asset audits. The purpose is to ensure that Surrey Libraries reflects, represents, and sustains the values and principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

### **Surrey Art Gallery (SAG): Accessibility Plan**

The purpose of the plan is to draft and map out the Surrey Art Gallery’s efforts towards integrating accessibility considerations into all work. This includes building on past initiatives to increase our learning and new initiatives in the long term. The plan will include:

- > Formation of an internal working group;
- > Integration of accessibility considerations across departments, such as SAG communications, event planning, language initiatives, website, wayfinding, courses, camps, workshops, family programs, training and knowledge sharing, library, exhibitions, collections, and buildings; and
- > Creation of an accessibility commitment statement involving artists with lived experiences with disabilities.

## Age Friendly Strategy

The Age Friendly Strategy for Seniors was adopted in May 2014 as an outcome of an inclusive consultation process that included key elements of an age-friendly city which were developed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The City of Surrey has experienced significant changes since the initial development of this strategy and while the framework of the Age Friendly Strategy continues to be a solid foundation, the City updated the Age Friendly Strategy in 2023 ensuring it stays comprehensive, inclusive, and adaptive to the evolving trends and challenges faced by our aging population. In addition, the Age Friendly Strategy builds on the City's many overarching plans and strategies to provide an integrated approach to address the comprehensive needs of older adults across the city.

## Accessibility Action Plan Community Input

To ensure our plan meets community needs, we engaged with residents during the fall of 2023 through an online survey and six in-person feedback sessions, including five City of Surrey facilities and Semiahmoo House Society. We asked for feedback on community priorities related to the plan's five key focus areas and incorporated this valuable input to update our plan.

### Who We Heard From

**75,883** informed residents

visited the website, received a direct email, or engaged through social media.

**1,383** engaged residents

attended an open house or completed the survey.

\*41% of online survey respondents self-identified as having lived experiences as defined as having an accessibility need or being a caregiver or therapist of someone with an accessibility need.



Photo: Inclusive playground at Unwin Park - colour splash sensory play

# Our Approach

City of Surrey's Accessibility Action Plan is organized into five key focus areas, aligning with the seven focus areas of the ACA, the standards areas within the ABCA and the City of Surrey's values.

## **1. Inclusive Service Design and Delivery:**

Provide services and programs that are accessible for all abilities.

## **2. Accessible Communication and Engagement:**

Communication and information provided are accessible to all. Ensure that people with disabilities are consulted and can easily share feedback and information through accessible feedback mechanisms.

## **3. Built Environment and Public Spaces:**

Ensure buildings and public spaces are accessible to community members following universal design guidelines.

## **4. Accessible Employment Practices:**

Create an inclusive and accessible workplace for all focused on attracting, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce that includes individuals with disabilities.

## **5. Accessible Procurement:**

Ensure goods and services purchased are accessible by design, where possible, so that individuals with disabilities can use them without adaptations.

## About Our Committees

### **SURREY ACCESSIBILITY LEADERSHIP TEAM (SALT)**

Established in 2008, the Surrey Accessibility Leadership Team (formerly Measuring Up Committee) is a network of community leaders dedicated to full inclusion and accessibility across all stages of life. The purpose of SALT is to make City of Surrey buildings and services more accessible and inclusive by embracing all abilities. This includes educating the community by using the group's diversity and resources to create inclusive environments, remove barriers, develop relationships, and promote accessibility and inclusion. The SALT meets the membership requirements for an accessibility committee.

### **INTERNAL ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IAAC)**

The Internal Accessibility Advisory Committee was created in 2023 in response to the Accessible BC Act. The purpose of the IAAC is to work collaboratively to assess and improve community livability, inclusivity, and accessibility for persons with disabilities who are City of Surrey staff or patrons.

The committee will work alongside the SALT to provide recommendations and planned actions to the City of Surrey's Accessibility Action Plan in respect to the five areas of focus in accordance with the Accessible British Columbia Act.

The committee consists of internal department representatives that interact with the public and are knowledgeable about the City's Accessibility Action Plan and the five areas of focus. Additional representatives may be needed based on community need and departmental expertise in specific areas.

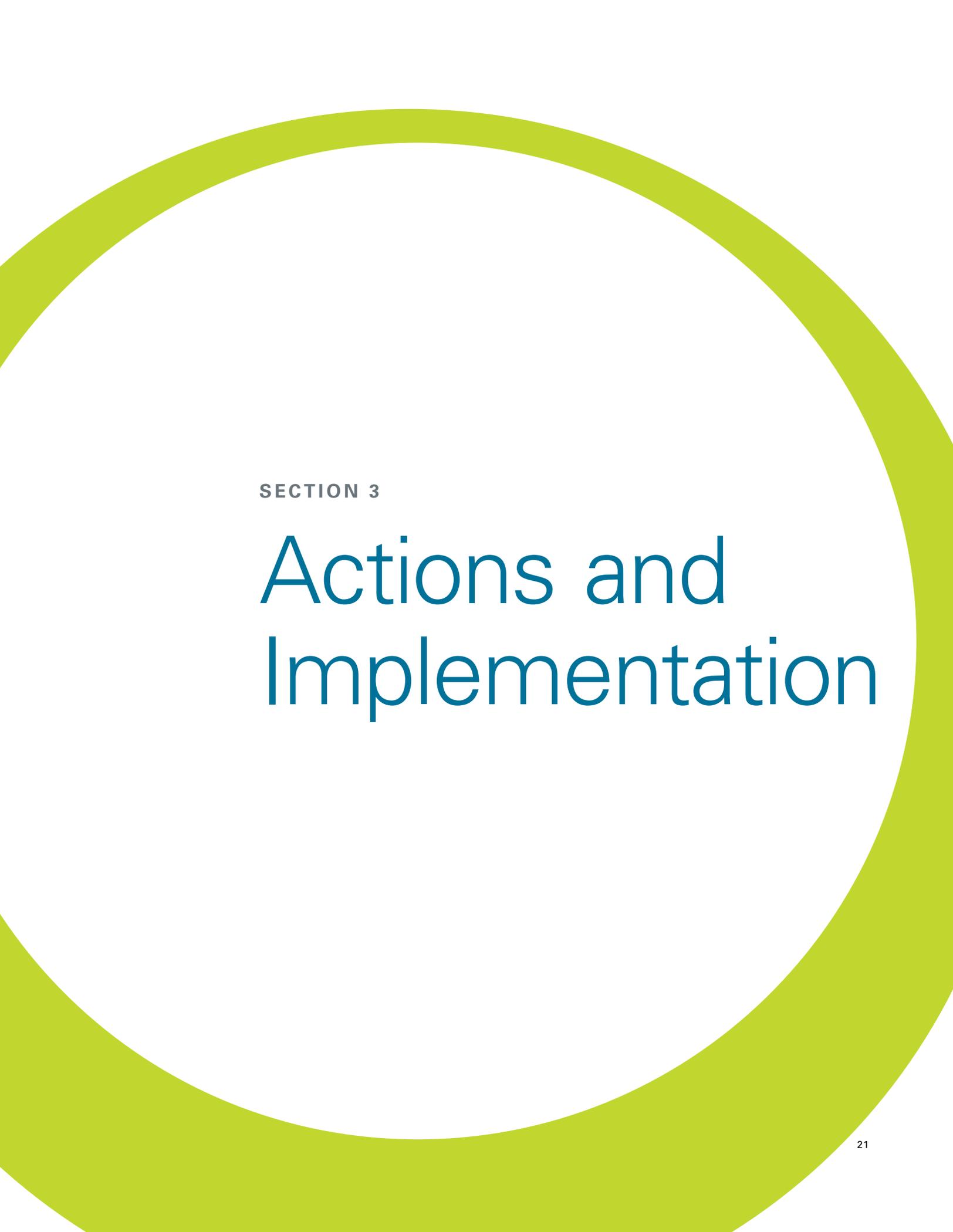


Photo: Inclusive playground at Unwin Park - braille panel

Key Focus Area	Service Areas
<b>Inclusive Service Design and Delivery</b>	Parks, Recreation and Culture Surrey Libraries Social Infrastructure and Community Investments Finance Surrey Fire Services
<b>Accessible Communication and Engagement</b>	Parks, Recreation and Culture Corporate Services
<b>Built Environment and Public Spaces</b>	Parks, Recreation and Culture Corporate Services Engineering Social Infrastructure and Community Investments
<b>Accessible Employment Practices</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Accessible Procurement</b>	Finance



Photo: Surrey Accessibility Leadership Team member at Newton Recreation Centre using the upper cycle ergometer



SECTION 3

# Actions and Implementation

The City has developed the Accessibility Action Plan that is organized around five key focus areas and takes into account all of the services, facilities and communications provided by the City. When creating the plan, the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design were considered.

<b>Leads</b>	
<b>SICI</b>	Social Infrastructure and Community Investments
<b>CS</b>	Corporate Services
<b>ENG</b>	Engineering
<b>FIN</b>	Finance
<b>PRC</b>	Parks, Recreation and Culture

As the City of Surrey moves forward with the actions listed below, we will continue to work with the SALT and do further community engagement to create an implementation plan and review the Accessibility Action Plan. This would include organizing the actions listed below based on importance. The AAP will be updated every 3 years, as required by the legislation.

## PRIORITY

S = Short Term

L = Long Term

O = Ongoing

# 1 Inclusive Service Design and Delivery



The City of Surrey provides services and programs that are accessible for all abilities.

	Action	Lead	Timeline	Priority
1.0	Continue to partner with organizations and persons with disabilities to increase offerings of programs that are innovative and inclusive.	PRC	Ongoing	O
1.1	Involve people with lived experience in service development to gather feedback.	PRC	Ongoing	O
1.2	Encourage all permitted events, City, corporate and private, to have an accessibility plan for before, during and after the event.	PRC	2024	L

## 2 Built Environment and Public Spaces



City of Surrey buildings and public spaces are accessible to all community members following universal design guidelines.

	Action	Lead	Timeline	Priority
2.0	Explore creating an accessible GIS mapping system allowing users to search for information on accessible buildings and services.	ENG PRC	2024	L
2.1	Incorporate accessibility standards into civic facilities and park development, considering the range of disabilities, to ensure new parks and public buildings are accessible.	PRC CS	2023-2024	O
2.2	Evaluate civic facility design and construction procedures to ensure requirements include accessibility needs and are designed or built according to universal design principles.	CS	2024	L
2.3	Develop an accessibility checklist for operators to use for facility and park audits.	PRC CS	2025	L

### 3 Accessible Communication and Engagement



Communication and information provided are accessible to all. Ensure that people with disabilities are consulted and can easily share information through accessible feedback opportunities.

	Action	Lead	Timeline	Priority
3.0	Develop procedures on the use of technology to make things more inclusive for people with disabilities, including the request process for new accessibility related software or applications.	CS	2024	O
3.1	Create an internal SharePoint accessibility directory site for staff that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility related policies, procedures, and guidelines</li> <li>• Appropriate and respectful language</li> <li>• Neurodiversity terms and definitions, when to use identity-first language</li> <li>• Images that convey independence instead of dependence</li> <li>• Accessibility and inclusion training</li> </ul>	PRC	2024	S
3.2	Develop an accessible communication procedure related to American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and communicating with persons with speech disabilities.	PRC CS	2024	S
3.3	Identify and address gaps in access to council meetings for persons with accessibility needs.	SICI PRC	2024	L
3.4	Increase awareness of accessibility features that are currently available through various communication channels including webpage updates, social media and signage.	PRC CS	2024-2025	O
3.5	Update the City's digital accessible approach and resource list (2021) and review/update actions.	CS	2024	S

## 4 Accessible Employment Practices

### Goal

The City of Surrey is an inclusive and accessible workplace for all, focused on attracting, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce that includes individuals with disabilities.

	Action	Lead	Timeline	Priority
4.0	Review and update recruitment processes to incorporate best practices in accessibility and inclusion.	CS	Ongoing	O
4.1	Advocate for inclusive and accessible work environments and support universal design principles in new constructions and renovations.	CS	Ongoing	O
4.2	Develop an accessibility and inclusion training plan for staff.	PRC CS	2024	L

## 5 Accessible Procurement



Ensure goods and services purchased are accessible by design, where possible, so that individuals with disabilities can use them without adaptations.

Action	Lead	Timeline	Priority
<b>5.0</b> Review and update the Purchase and Payment: Process Manual to incorporate accessibility into the principles of procurement where applicable.	FIN	2024-2025	L

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The City of Surrey is fully committed to the principles of inclusivity and accessibility as outlined in the Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA). In line with this commitment, our accessibility plan will go through a review every three years. This regular review will ensure that the plan remains aligned with the ABCA requirements and continues to address the needs of individuals with disabilities in our community. By doing a review, we aim to foster ongoing improvement, identify areas for growth, and ensure that our city remains a place where everyone can participate fully and equally.

