



PENDER ISLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Accessibility Plan 2024 - 2026

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1. Introduction

Territorial Acknowledgement

The Pender Island Public Library acknowledges that we are located on the ancestral and unceded territories of the Coast Salish people, including SENĆOŦEN speaking WSÁNEĆ First Nations and the Hul'quimi'num Treaty Group.

Pender Island Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Mission: Provide access to a range of library resources to support the diverse needs of our community.

Vision: Be a dynamic and welcoming centre where all can learn, discover, explore and connect.

Guiding Principles: Respect, Responsive to Change, Collaboration, and Service.

Strategic Priorities: Partnerships, Sustainability, Diversity, and Library Facility.

Glossary of Terms

Adaptability: Adaptability often refers to home design, which will accommodate lifestyle changes, including reduced ability, without the need to substantially modify the existing structure. This means that the space is readily adjustable and retrofit-able. In terms of service, adaptability means that the service provided can be adjusted to meet the needs of someone requiring some additional support or alternate format.

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC): An official group established by one or more 'Prescribed Organizations' in collaboration with people with disabilities to develop an accessibility plan and feedback mechanism.

Assistive Device: any device that is designed, made, or adapted to assist a person to perform a particular task.

Accessibility plan: A plan, developed by an AAC, that identify accessibility barriers and solutions for addressing those barriers.

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.

Diversity: diversity refers to different characteristics in a group of people. This could include ethnicity, gender, gender identity, mental and physical disability, culture, income, and countless other domains.

Inclusion: Inclusion means making social and physical environments open to all human beings, regardless of age, gender, mental and physical disability, race, religion, etc.

Print disability (perceptual disability): can be permanent or temporary and includes three broad categories of people who require accessible formats.

- (a) Learning disability: An impairment relating to comprehension.
- (b) Physical disability: The inability to hold or manipulate a book.
- (c) Visual disability: Severe or total impairment of sight or the inability to focus or move one's eyes.

Support Person: A support person can be a paid personal support worker, volunteer, family member or friend. They provide support with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to goods, services or facilities.

Universal design (UD): UD aims to ensure that the design of products and environments are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

2. Framework Guiding our Work

Accessible BC Act – Principles and Standards

Public libraries commit to meeting their responsibilities under the Accessible BC Act in the following ways:

- communicating information through a variety of channels to account for the different needs of our patrons and community members.
- creating a welcoming and respectful environment in all our spaces, physical or virtual.
- designing and maintaining public spaces that can be navigated inclusively.
- delivering content in a variety of formats.
- delivering programs and services that accommodate the needs of Library patrons.
- championing community services and resources that foster inclusion and barrier-free access.
- providing the appropriate accommodations for staff and volunteers to undertake their responsibilities.
- maintaining feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement in the area of accessibility.

BC Required Accessibility Plans

The Accessible BC Act became law in 2021. The Act sets out accessibility requirements that an organization must meet in the areas of employment, delivery of services, the built environment, information and communications, and more. A short summary of the Accessible BC Act and regulations is outlined in Appendix A.

BC public libraries are required to:

- Establish an accessibility committee
- Develop an accessibility plan that takes into consideration at least the following six principles:
 - Inclusion

- Adaptability
 - Diversity
 - Collaboration
 - Self-Determination
 - Universal Design
- Build a tool to receive feedback on accessibility
 - Make their accessibility plans publicly available.
 - Accessibility plans must be updated at least once every three years and posted on the library website.

Libraries and Their Values

Public libraries strive to be a place where each diverse community can come together to imagine, create, learn and grow. To support this vision, public libraries are committed to providing service in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, fosters inclusion, and strives to identify, prevent and remove barriers to access and participation.

3. About our Accessibility Committee

Focus of Committee

The focus of the Committee is to give input and direction on the PIPL Accessibility Plan, including future revisions.

Recruitment

The Library Director recruited volunteer Committee members from the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and community individuals and organizations.

Committee Members

Trustee, OHS&A Committee, Pender Island Public Library

Trustee, Board Development Committee, Pender Island Public Library

Community Health Nurse, Island Health

Library Director, Pender Island Public Library

Library Technician, Pender Island Public Library

4. Consultation

To receive feedback on accessibility, the Library will seek input from patrons and the community on our Accessibility Plan through numerous mechanisms for public feedback, including:

- Spoken
- Written through mail or email
- Telephone

5. Identifying Barriers to Accessibility

To help identify barriers to accessibility, PIPL is conducting a gap analysis in 2023-2024. The purpose of a gap analysis is to identify the gaps or shortcomings that exist, and to develop a plan to overcome the shortcomings. In this context, PIPL compares our current status in terms of accessibility to our desired status (or goals) of accessibility. In the process of conducting a gap analysis, PIPL collects information and use that information to guide our actions. During this process, PIPL will learn a great deal about our patrons and community needs, and about ourselves as an organization (see Appendices B and C).

Information gathering at this stage consists of:

- documenting the existing conditions within each standard
- identifying and utilizing resources to learn what the desired condition or state is, within each standard (the goal)
- identifying steps and actions to take to achieve the goals

Creation of prioritized plan of actionable items based on:

Areas of Consideration	Defined Improvement Considerations
Built environment / design of public space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct audit to review accessibility barriers in current physical spaces - Learn about universal design improvements - Develop partnerships and work with accessibility-focused organizations - Consider including ongoing maintenance as part of capital improvement plans
Information and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine up-to-date web standards for accessibility as pertaining to the Library website - Work with BC Libraries Cooperative to learn about and test new accessibility applications utilizing best practices - Recruit people with disabilities to test and give feedback on the accessibility of Library resources, e.g., the website and digital resources - Continue to engage people with differing abilities, the public, organizations, businesses, library staff, and others not yet identified in the design of library services and programs
Education: Libraries support continuous learning and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn about different awareness training courses available - Consider including ongoing awareness training as part of training program.

From Gap Analysis to Goals

From the results of the gap analysis, goals will be set. The goals include the desired outcomes and may have intermediary goals, along with action items. An outline of the resources (staff, budget, etc.) needed to meet the goals will be included with the goals once they are developed.

PIPL will allocate existing resources and/or seek additional resources through grants, partnerships,

and/or volunteer services. While working to achieve the goals, PIPL will stay informed by monitoring information provided by the Province of BC (gov.bc.ca).

6. Our 3 Year Plan with Goals and Action Items

The objective of the gap analysis process outlined in this document is to provide a framework for PIPL to continue working towards accessibility. This plan aims to identify accessibility goals that are general and applicable to all libraries participating in this plan, while also being specific enough to be guiding. To ensure that our plan is successful in meeting the needs of library patrons and community members with disabilities, PIPL will partner with accessibility-focused organizations and individuals to learn and continually adapt our work.

7. Monitoring and Review

A review of the Accessibility Plan is required every three years, to ensure that the goals and action items within the document are still relevant. The review will also provide an opportunity to note which action items have been achieved and are now concluded and which are still ongoing. At each review cycle the Plan will be updated.

Action items have been given timelines based on the level of capacity, resources and partnerships currently available to make implementation viable. If necessary, the timelines of certain action items may need to be adjusted or modified, or the action item may need to be removed from consideration.

8. Conclusion

The Pender Island Public Library is committed to principles and activities that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, truth and reconciliation, and physical/social accessibility. The Library will undertake to meet its responsibilities under the Accessible BC Act by communicating information through a variety of ways to account for the different needs of our patrons and community members, by maintaining a welcoming and respectful environment in all our spaces, physical or virtual, upgrading public spaces, delivering

content in a variety of formats, delivering programs and services that accommodate the needs of Library patrons, providing the appropriate accommodations for staff and volunteers to undertake their responsibilities, and maintaining feedback mechanisms for ongoing improvement in accessibility.

9. How to give us Feedback/Share Your Thoughts

We welcome your feedback. Please let us know what you think about PIPL's Accessibility Plan and accessibility in general. You may submit feedback in person at your local library, by mail, telephone, email, and through your local library's website. You may attach photos, videos, and voice recordings to feedback submitted by email. Feedback may be submitted anonymously.

When submitting feedback, be sure to include

- A description of the event, program, material, or service you or someone else was trying to access
- A description of the barrier you or someone else encountered
- Recommendations and/or general feedback.

All feedback and suggestions will be carefully considered. Feedback may be used to improve library services, library infrastructure, or may be used when developing future accessibility plans. All feedback, except that submitted anonymously, will be acknowledged in the way in which it is received.

Please contact us at:

Telephone: 250-629-3722

Email: penderislandlibrary@crd.bc.ca

Mail: Pender Island Public Library, c/o Library Director, Box 12, Pender Island, BC, V0N 2M0

Appendix A: Accessible BC Act Overview

Quick Overview of *Accessible British Columbia Act* [SBC 2021], c. 19 or the ABC Act

Prepared by Andrea Davidson on June 1, 2023

- Context: Over 926,000 people in B.C. live with one or more disability
- The Act defines disability: ““disability” means an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier” [s.1]
- The Act became law on June 17, 2021 (Except for sections 21-27 not yet in force)
- On September 1, 2022, the government passed a regulation, *Accessible British Columbia Regulation* B.C. Reg. 105/2022, that required 750+ public sector organizations, including public libraries, to do the following:
 - Establish an accessibility committee
 - Develop an accessibility plan:
 - Each Accessibility Plan must consider the following 6 principles (Organizations are free to consider additional principles or values): Inclusion, Adaptability, Diversity, Collaboration, Self-Determination and Universal Design.
 - Build a tool to received feedback on accessibility
- Public libraries have one year - until September 1, 2023 - to meet these 3 requirements
- There is a [plain language summary of the Act](#) and an [FAQ for Organizations](#)
- The B.C. government has released its “[Accessible BC: Accessibility Plan for 2022/23-2024/25](#) (50 pages)” that includes two helpful appendices.
 - Appendix 1: Summary of the B.C. government’s 5 priorities
 - Creating a Culture of Accessibility and Inclusion
 - Information and Communications
 - Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Spaces
 - Employment in the B.C. Public Service
 - Delivery of Goods and Services
 - Appendix 2: [Implementation Timeline](#)
- The Act has no deadlines – work to comply must be an ongoing priority. The government can provide organizations with education, best practices & resources as needed

- The Province will appoint a director and inspectors in the future to enforce compliance
- Consequences for failure to comply? Organizations can be fined as much as \$250,000
- Organizations and individuals can give feedback on the Act and its implementation by:
 - Sending feedback via email to accessibility@gov.bc.ca
 - Submitting feedback to the [Provincial Accessibility Committee](#) the B.C. government established to develop accessibility standards
- An independent review of the Act will occur in 2027, 2032 and then every 10 years
- To find out more about Accessibility in B.C., you can visit the B.C. government [Accessibility Legislation home page](#) and/or read the [Act](#) itself [Note: the Act is current to May 10, 2023]
- More reading: The [United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons](#) and a quick primer on the [difference between the social and medical models of disability](#)

Appendix B. PIPL Current Accessibility Features

Current Physical Accessibility features

- Two designated, accessible parking spaces in the front of the Library
- Automatic door opener at the main entrance
- Low-level accessibility ramp in front of Library
- Two gender-neutral accessible washrooms
- Sheltered entryway
- Highly visible and easy to locate information/service desk
- Low service counter at the information/service desk
- Wide aisles and lots of mobility space for navigating inside the library
- Variety of seating options (seats with and without armrests, adjustable heights, fixed and movable)

Current Accessible Library Services

- Collection of physical books in Large Print format (155+ titles)
- Collection of digital books with options to set print size, font (including dyslexia font), page colour and brightness ([Libby](#): 27,800+ titles).
- Collection of audiobooks in physical CD format (100+ titles) and in digital format ([Libby](#): 12,500+ titles).
- The National Network of Equitable Library Service (NNELS): an online collection of downloadable ebooks and audiobooks for library members with print disabilities. See [NNELS: accessible books](#) for more information and how to register.
- Accessible Reading BC: [Accessible Reading BC](#) is a new collection of accessible eBooks from BC publishers available to all BC residents.
 - Unlimited access with no wait times.
 - Sign in with your PIPL barcode and password.
 - After downloading your eBook, you are able to load it into your favourite reading application.

- Interlibrary Loan Audiobooks/Large Print: You can request audiobooks and large print books from other BC libraries.
- Website Preferences Tool: visitors to the Library website can change the look of the page presentation according to their reading preferences and needs. These changes can help someone with vision challenges to improve their reading experience. For ex., bigger font, links underlined, table formatting removed for accessibility readers, and an accessibility formatting preference options button at the top of each page, labeled “show preferences”.
- Subject Guides
 - Literacy & Struggling Readers – a subject guide that contains links to local and government resources.
 - Resources for People with Disabilities – a subject guide that contains links to local and government resources

Appendix C. PIPL Accessibility Gap Analysis 2023-2024 (ongoing)

PIPL Accessibility Gap Analysis 2023-2024 DRAFT <i>Updated July 2024</i>	Detail	Completed
Committee		
Form an Accessibility Committee	Expanded PIPL's OHS Committee to PIPL Health, Safety, and Accessibility Committee	Aug. 2023
Select Accessibility Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PIPL Trustee, OHS&A Committee - PIPL Trustee, Board Development Cmt., - Community Health Nurse, Island Health - Library Director, PIPL - Library Technician, PIPL 	Feb.-May 2024
Consultation		
Obtain accessibility consulting support	Library Director attended webinar #1 with Chris Lytle (Untapped Accessibility); building codes, different learners, public surveys, feedback (surveys, emails, calls, year-round forms)	July 2023
Obtain accessibility consulting support	Library Director attended webinar #2 with Chris Lytle (Untapped Accessibility); process for feedback mechanisms on website, etc.	Sept. 2023
Obtain accessibility consulting support	Library Director received one-on-one training with Mike Prescott (BC Accessibility and Disability Alliance BC); list of online resources for more info; advice for forming an accessibility committee with members (discussions and priorities), then building assessment and feasibility; orientation package; "keep simple to start".	Sept. 2023

Library Website		
Upgrade library website with accessibility features	Library Technician worked with BC Libraries Cooperative LibPress staff; +10 hrs. for complete overhaul to meet accessibility standards (formatting, text, font, HTML, docs, tables removed, slideshow removed, menu bar updated). "Website Preference Tool" implemented for users to tailor text format.	Oct. 2023
Exterior Areas	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Exterior Parking Lot	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Front Entrance	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Rear entrances	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Interior areas	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Interior Signage and Markings	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Washroom Facilities	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Desks and Seating	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Interior Considerations	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	
Library Services	<i>Analysis ongoing</i>	