



Comox Valley Airport Commission

Accessibility Plan

Progress Report

2025

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General

Introduction

The Accessibility Plan includes the requirement for a progress report to ensure that the airport continues to move in the right direction and eliminates or reduces the impact of all barriers to accessibility. Additional information about the Comox Valley Airport accessibility services, and contact links for feedback are available online at:

www.comoxairport.com/accessibility

Feedback Process

The Comox Valley Airport Operations Manager coordinates the plan and manages the feedback. The public is invited to provide input regarding the implementation of our Accessibility Plan, feedback process, or any barriers identified at the airport. Please contact us using the address, phone number, or email below. All feedback will be acknowledged promptly in the same form in which it was received. Comments may also be made anonymously.

Mailing Address:

Phone: 250-890-0829

Comox Valley Airport Commission

118-1250 Knight Road

Comox, BC, V9M 4H2

Email: accessibility@comoxairport.com

Principles of Accessibility

The Comox Valley Airport believes in, and is committed to upholding the following principles of accessibility:

1. All persons must be treated with dignity, regardless of their disabilities;
2. All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able to have and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
3. All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society regardless of their disabilities;
4. All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
5. Laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments, and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons;
6. Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures; and

7. The development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Consultation

In May 2024, the airport established an Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee (AACC). This group is comprised of persons with disabilities from the Comox Valley region, as well as two members of the airport management team. The committee was engaged to identify and assist in removing barriers to accessibility. They look at present challenges, customer feedback, and future plans. The airport works closely with the team to bring about positive change to our facility towards mitigating present barriers to access, as well as preventing new ones from being created. Ideally, the committee will always be made up of individuals who provide a wide range of insights into the challenges of accessibility.

The aim of this committee is to offer timely support to the airport management team and provide accessibility expertise through lived experience. The enduring work of this committee enhances our current review process by examining our practices outside of the five-year recertification assessment provided by the Rick Hansen Foundation.

The AACC assists in outreach and ensures its sustainability with a plan to broaden participation by others with lived experience.

The AACC meets twice a year (in person or virtually) unless more frequent consultation is needed.

Planning Framework

Plan Review Cycle

The Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee will meet twice a year to review the seven Focus Areas of Accessibility described above and make recommendations for improvement and/or to propose methods of mitigating barriers.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Comox Valley Airport Operations Manager after completing the consultations with the Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee. The review will include compliance with all elements of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA).

The Comox Valley Airport Accessibility Plan will be updated in 2027.

Progress Reports

A progress report will be published annually on the Comox Valley Airport website to highlight any changes to the current barriers and provide updates on remaining barriers.

Feedback received concerning accessibility issues must also be retained for a period of seven years.

Actions:

Short term

1. Establish an effective Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee;
2. Review the airport Human Resources manual to identify any barriers to accessibility;
3. Conduct an accessibility audit; and
4. Plan for the next Rick Hansen Foundation re-certification (Fall 2025).

Long term

5. Review of Master Plan by Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee; and
6. Rectification of any barriers or deficiencies identified in the most recent Rick Hansen certification.

Progress:

1. The Comox Airport has established an effective Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee. The committee has met twice since the inception of our Accessibility Plan in May of 2024. They have been a tremendous asset to the airport team and their dedicated approach to this work has been truly inspiring. The value of the Accessibility Committee in sharing their lived experience with the airport cannot be understated.

Items discussed:

- a. Hearing Loop - The group looked carefully at the airport hearing loop with the aim of increasing awareness of its existence. They also investigated how to ensure passengers with hearing aids understand the method for setting their devices to function with the hearing loop. Local hearing aid providers were also consulted and made aware of the airport hearing loop.
- b. Terminal Accessibility Walkthrough - The group conducted a complete walk through of the terminal to ensure that wheelchair access exists for both passengers and staff. The results indicated that this facility is accessible to both manual and powered wheelchairs.
- c. Public Transportation -The committee noted one item of concern: public transportation (although accessible) is very limited in its frequency to the airport. This came to light when coordinating our committee meetings around the Comox Valley Transit schedule. We understand that this is a challenging element for a

small community and although it is outside the airport's direct control, we are committed to raising this concern with local government and will continue to advocate for improved transit service.

2. A comprehensive review of the airport's Human Resources Manual was undertaken to identify any potential barriers to hiring, employment, and staff management. The language of the document was carefully examined to ensure it reflects accessibility standards.
3. The Accessibility Committee conducted an informal audit of the terminal during our tour and reviewed the Accessibility Plan and Feedback process. The Rick Hansen recertification process will result in a formal audit.
4. A member of the Accessibility Consultation Committee volunteered to oversee our airport staff accessibility training in November 2024. Their lived experience proved to be of tremendous value, providing both feedback to the airport training process, as well as suggestions for wheelchair maintenance.
5. The Rick Hansen Foundation has been contracted to complete the recertification of the Comox Valley Airport. The evaluation will begin in July of 2025, with completion expected by the Fall of 2025.

Feedback and Response:

No feedback has been received through the feedback process since the plan was implemented; therefore, no response/action was required.

Conclusion:

Our work to enhance accessibility at the Comox Valley Airport over the past year has been very rewarding. From raising awareness and enhancing staff training to identifying challenges within the built environment, our focus has remained on making the airport more inclusive and welcoming. We look forward to continuing the pursuit of removing all barriers to accessibility for everyone who passes through our doors.