



#### Founding Tourism Partners

British Columbia  
Hotel Association

Tourism Vancouver

Tourism Whistler

Tourism Richmond

#### Regional Tourism Partners

Tourism Vancouver  
Island

Vancouver, Coast &  
Mountains Tourism Region

Thompson Okanagan  
Tourism Association

Kootenay Rockies  
Tourism Association

Cariboo Chilcotin Coast  
Tourism Association

Northern BC Tourism  
Association

## Accessible Tourism

### Simple Changes for Accessibility

2010 Legacies Now, the Province of B.C., Tourism B.C., and other tourism partners are working to help make British Columbia a premier travel destination for persons with disabilities. With one in eight people worldwide living with a disability, accessible travel is a quickly growing tourism market opportunity. For example, in North America alone, persons with disabilities and their families spend more than \$13 billion each year on travel, making this an important sector for growth.

Through the 2010 Legacies Now Accessible Tourism program, tourism businesses can determine how accessible they are for persons with disabilities by participating in an accessibility assessment. 2010 Legacies Now and its partners can then recommend steps to improve accessibility. Often, it only takes simple changes to make a business more accessible so they can welcome travelers with disabilities, as well as an increased number of local residents.

Here are some simple changes to consider for making your business more accessible:

- In winter, keep the sidewalk or access area to your building clear of snow and ice as much as possible. Also, clear any accessible parking stalls, including a path from the parking stall to your business.
- Keep any bushes, trees or flower arrangements near your business pruned and clipped so there are no low hanging hazards for persons with visual disabilities, and so overgrown bushes don't get in the way of persons using wheelchairs or other mobility aides.
- Arrange café tables, sandwich boards, or other outdoor signage in a way that doesn't block persons using wheelchairs or other mobility aides from accessing your business.
- Any safety hazards or obstructions that are not removable should be protected and marked appropriately.
- Install clear signage directing patrons from the accessible parking to the entrance of your business. Ensure clear signage is in a plainly visible location, with large **18** to **24** point font or symbols with high contrast between text/symbol and background (dark/light).
- If the main entrance of your business is not wheelchair accessible but there is an alternate accessible entrance, post clear signage by the main entrance giving directions.



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- Inside the business, clear all pathways and aisles so they are wide enough for someone using a wheelchair or other mobility aide. Aim for a path that is 1.1m (1100mm) wide, and free of obstructions. Common path barriers include temporary displays and storage boxes in retail businesses, and baby high chairs and side tables in restaurants.
- Clear accessible bathroom stalls of obstructions such as cleaning supplies, buckets, mops, wet floor signs, and baby high chairs to ensure there's enough space for maneuvering within the stall.
- Post current, accurate information about your business in any online ads or on the company website. Include accessibility information for your customers with disabilities, including information about access, parking or other services as applicable. As well, restaurants should post their menu online so persons with a visual disability can access it beforehand to choose what they would like to eat.
- Provide disability confidence training to your staff, especially front-line staff, so they feel comfortable serving customers of all abilities. Make sure staff is aware of all the accessibility options your business can offer, such as online menus, alternative entrances, help reaching items from high shelves (etc.) so they can provide good customer service.
- Develop an accessible evacuation plan for your business in case of an emergency. Think about how you will help all of your customers reach safety quickly and easily. Train your staff appropriately.
- Ask your website developers about "W3C compliance," which refers to different levels of standards that help make websites more accessible to all users. If you make any major changes to your website, consider making some changes involving these standards at the same time.
- Become more "disability confident" as an organization by learning more about how accessible the workplace is for any current or future staff members who may have a disability. Consider making some reasonable adjustments that will improve inclusion in the work environment.
- Contact 2010 Legacies Now's Accessible Tourism team. We're here to help. Feel free to contact us to share your own best practices, or to ask for more information on how to get involved in the program, access training opportunities for your staff, and make your business more accessible. Our webpage also has lots of helpful information.

#### Accessible Tourism team

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