Comox Valley Airport Commission

Accessibility Plan Progress Report

2025

Table of Contents

General 3

Introduction 3

Alternate Format(s) 3

Feedback Process 3

Principles of Accessibility 3

Consultation 4

Planning Framework 4

Plan Review Cycle 4

Progress Reports 5

Focus Areas of Accessibility 5

Employment 5

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) 5

Communication Technologies (other than ICT) 5

Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities 5

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services 6

Transportation 6

Built Environment 6

Provisions of CTA Accessibility-Related Regulation 6

Actions 7

Short term 7

Long term 7

Progress 7

Feedback and Response 8

Conclusion 8

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 eliminate or reduce the impact of all barriers to accessibility and additional information about the Comox Valley Airport accessibility services, and contact links for feedback, are available online at:

www.comoxairport.com/accessibility

Alternative Format

The plan can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Guidelines stipulate that the Comox Valley Airport must:

a. provide print, large print, and electronic formats of their plan within 15 days of a request; and

b. provide braille or audio versions of their plan within 45 days of a request.

Feedback Process

The public is invited to provide feedback about how the Comox Valley Airport is implementing this Accessibility Plan, our feedback process, or any barriers discovered at the airport. Please contact us by using the address, phone number, or email identified below. All feedback will be acknowledged promptly in the same manner which it was received. Feedback can be made anonymously.

Mailing Address:
Comox Valley Airport Commission
118-1250 Knight Road
Comox, BC, V9M 4H2

Phone: 250-890-0829

Email: accessibility@comoxairport.com

The Comox Valley Airport Operations Manager coordinates the plan and manages the feedback.

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). The group is comprised of persons with disabilities from the Comox Valley region as well as two members of the airport management team. The committee will be engaged to identify and assist in removing barriers to accessibility. They will look at present challenges, customer feedback, and future plans. The airport will work closely with the team to bring about positive change to our facility in mitigating present barriers to access and preventing new ones from being created. Ideally, the committee will be made up of individuals who can provide a wide range of insight 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 work of this committee will enhance our current review process by examining our practices outside of the five-year recertification assessment provided by the Rick Hansen Foundation.

The AACC met twice last year and once this year. The meetings were conducted in person, at the airport, and all members were in attendance. The meetings took place on 23 May 2024, 28 Oct 2024, and 30 May 2025. Items discussed are highlighted in the “Progress” section of this document. The meeting location (airport boardroom) was wheelchair accessible.

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 propose methods to mitigate 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 ensuring compliance with all elements of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA).

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

Progress Reports

All 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.

Focus Areas of Accessibility

Employment

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The aim of the Information and Communication Technologies section of the airport accessibility plan is to ensure the airport information is communicated via various methods so that it works for everyone.

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Communication (other than ICT)

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Procurement of Goods and Services

The Comox Valley Airport endeavors to purchase all goods in an ethical, inclusive, and accessible manner. The facility depends on the procurement of supplies to maintain the most basic functions (maintenance, cleaning, food, etc.) for passengers and employees. Obtaining cost-effective items is fundamental to the process but must be balanced with the other requirements of our accessible and inclusive culture.

The airport will ensure vendors are accountable to similar standards of accessibility. This will be balanced with assisting them when needed, such as support when receiving goods (i.e., convenient accessible parking, and assistance with moving products when they arrive).

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

The Comox Valley Airport is committed to ensuring that all programs and services we provide are implemented in a manner that includes everyone and respects the dignity of persons with disabilities. The Airport management team will review our present and future programs to ensure they effectively meet the aim of inclusion.

The review has not yet been completed but will be a focus for 2025.

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Transportation

A vital component of your journey through the Comox Valley Airport includes your transportation to and from our facility. We strive to ensure a variety of options are available and that your choices are accessible for both passengers and employees. Parking, drop-off, and loading also play an important role in the transportation element of making the airport accessible.

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Built Environment

The small size of our airport combined with its open architecture creates a pleasing space that is simple to navigate and while offering the conveniences of a much larger facility. We strive to maintain these fundamentals in our Built Environment, allowing all people to move easily through the terminal spaces.

No barriers identified. No action taken.

Provisions of CTA Accessibility-Related Regulations

The Comox Valley Airport is considered a terminal operator forming part of the federal transportation network as a transportation service provider (TSP) under the Canada Transportation Act (CTA). This Accessibility Plan Progress Report has been developed in accordance with the applicable regulations, principles and provisions of the accessibility-related legislation listed below. The means in which YQQ meets these requirements is identified throughout this document. (Easy links to the legislation can be used on the airport website www.comoxairport.com under "Accessibility").

- CTA - Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations Part 1 Plans; https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2019-244/page-1.html#h-1175933 ; and

- CTA - Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations Part 4 Divisions 1 and 2. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2019-244/page-1.html#h-1175944 .

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. Have airport Masterplan reviewed by Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee; and
6. Review the deficiencies in the last Rick Hansen certification and develop a plan to rectify these barriers.

Progress:

1. The Comox Airport has established an effective Airport Accessibility Consultation Committee. The committee has met three times since the inception of our Accessibility Plan in May of 2024. They have been a tremendous asset to the airport team. Their dedicated approach to this 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 how to set 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. That issue is the 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 service.

2. A comprehensive review of the 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 through 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 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 to everyone that passes through our doors.