



August 2018

Destination BC's current initiatives to support people with disabilities and increase accessibility are:

People & Development

- Destination BC is an inclusive workplace, founded on the highest degree of collaboration and innovation. Destination BC believes that diversity is a strength, and welcomes applications from all qualified job seekers. All recruitment advertising clearly states that Destination BC is an inclusive workplace. We are committed to ensuring workplace accommodations are in place to enable our people to do their best work.
- Destination BC will participate in the BC Public Service's 2018/19 Work Able Internship Program. Through this program, Destination BC will offer a twelve month internship opportunity to a differently-abled individual in a project based role within our Destination Management division.
- In 2018, Destination BC hosted 'lunch and learn' sessions for employees on mental health in the workplace and inclusive hiring.
- All Destination BC employees participated in a leadership development session focused on unconscious biases, and how to mitigate the potential impact of biases in the workplace and in employee recruitment processes.
- Destination BC's CEO (Marsha Walden) is a member of the Presidents Group (<http://www.accessibleemployers.ca>), a CEO task force led by Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Services and Poverty Reduction, to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Destination BC human resources team is working with the Presidents Group, to better identify ways to recruit people with disabilities.

Corporate Communications

- Destination BC continues to promote accessible hiring within the tourism industry, and to share information about the work of the President's Group on its corporate social platforms (Twitter / LinkedIn) and in speeches given by Destination BC's CEO.

Destination Development

- As part of the Destination Development strategic planning work, Spinal Cord Injury BC representatives have actively participated in planning meetings.
- Opportunities to enhance accessibility have been identified in various Destination Development strategies, as they relate to:
 - Transportation (roadside amenities, transit providers, ferry);
 - Tourism workforce (hiring and advancement practices, physical work environment);
 - Tourism experiences and attractions (both private and public-owned); and
 - Tourism accommodation.

Consumer Marketing

- Information on accessible travel in British Columbia is available on <http://www.HelloBC.com>, including links and information on getting around, accommodation, things to do, and more.

- Destination BC's new consumer website, <http://www.HelloBC.com>, has been developed with ADA (Americans with Disabilities) compliance in mind – this guided the User Experience (UX), design and development phases of the project. The obligation to be ADA compliant includes compliance with current and generally recognized guidelines for website accessibility (e.g. the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 and Levels A / AA) as well as any applicable website accessibility laws and regulations.
- Part of building an accessible website is to ensure that assistive technology tools, such as screen readers, can access the information on a web page. In order to accomplish this, Destination BC is using the W3C standards for accessibility as a guideline. This takes into consideration the website layout, mobile friendliness, fonts, colors, meta data, use of alt tags, use of 'predictive text' in search and filter fields, keyboard control of navigation and content, and simplified navigation to name a few.
- In a future phase of the website, Destination BC will introduce voice search.

Industry Learning Centre

- A new industry Learning Centre on Destination BC's new corporate website, DestinationBC.ca, will be launched in Fall 2018 and will include video content which has been captioned to support accessibility.

Visitor Services Network Program

- Destination BC has encouraged locally-run Visitor Centres within its Network of 110+ operations to make their premises accessible. Over a number of years, Destination BC provided funding specifically for retrofitting premises to accommodate people with disabilities. Currently, 92% of the Visitor Centres in the Network Program are wheelchair accessible.
- Destination BC encourages communities to be creative and forward thinking about taking visitor services out to visitors via mobile kiosks, roaming ambassadors, state-of-the-art touch screen kiosks and via social media, making valuable information more accessible to all visitors, when and where they want it.

Regional Destination Management Organizations

- Destination BC funds Regional Destination Marketing Organizations (RDMOs) to provide services and represent Destination BC across the province. Three RDMOs have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Spinal Cord Injury BC to work on a coordinated approach to the development and promotion of accessible travel and tourism products and services in their regions:
 - Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association: <https://news.totabc.org/2018/02/26/manic-monday-february-26-2018> and <https://sci-bc.ca/access-bc-at-central-okanagan-tourism-industry-showcase>
 - Tourism Northern British Columbia: <https://mailchi.mp/nbctourism/special-announcement-on-accessible-tourism>
 - Tourism Vancouver Island: <https://www.tourismvi.ca/newsletter/>