



CUSTOMER CARE PROGRAM:



PASSENGER ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024-2027

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VERSION CONTROL

Revision	Effective	Changes	Prepared By	Approved By
0	2024-06-01	Original	D. Goulard	D. Devana
1	2024-08-12	Updated headings, order of sections, consultation section details, and added feedback verbiage	D. Goulard	D. Devana
2	2024-08-22	Improvements made to 1) feedback process verbiage, 2) consultation process including feedback received, and 3) pet relief area.	D. Goulard	D. Devana

1.0 GENERAL

Nanaimo Airport warmly welcomes everyone, irrespective of their backgrounds or abilities. We work together with a shared vision to remove barriers and create an environment that is fully accessible to all.

Our commitment to collaboration and open communication ensures that everyone’s needs are heard and addressed.

Our helpful staff are always ready to assist, making sure that your travel experience is smooth and enjoyable. We believe in fostering an inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels valued and respected.

So, come and enjoy your travel experience at Nanaimo Airport, your gateway to the world!

1.1 REGULATORY

This Accessibility Plan has been produced in accordance with the ***Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations (ATPRR)*** under the ***Accessible Canada Act (ACA)***.

A separate but related requirement is the ***Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR)*** under the ***Canada Transportation Act (CTA)***.

Both the ATPRRs and the ATPDRs are federal regulations enforced by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA). Please see details below in Table 1: Overview of Accessibility Regulations.

Federal Act	Accessible Canada Act (ACA) https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/a-0.6/	Canada Transportation Act (CTA) https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-10.4/FullText.html
Responsible Agency	Accessible Canada Directorate (ACD) in Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA)
Federal Regulation	<i>Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations (ATPRR)</i> SOR/2021-243 https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2021-243/FullText.html	<i>Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR)</i> SOR/2019-244 https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/sor-2019-244/FullText.html
Regulation Applicability	Part 4	Part 1, Part 4, & Schedule 1
Purpose / Jurisdiction	Identify, remove, and prevent barriers in federal jurisdiction.	Govern transportation in Canada in the air, rail, and marine sectors.
Enforcement Agency	Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA)	Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA)

Table 1: Overview of Accessibility Regulations

1.2 TERMINOLOGIES

As defined by the Accessible Canada Act:

BARRIER: means anything – including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice – that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

DISABILITY: means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment – or a functional limitation – whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.

1.3 CLASSIFICATION

As a part of the federal transportation network, the Nanaimo Airport is considered a terminal operator and transportation service provider (TSP). The Nanaimo Airport is categorized as a Class 3 TSP whose average number of employees is greater than 10 but fewer than 100. The regulated planning and reporting cycle for Class 3 TSP’s is as follows:

- June 1, 2024 – Initial Accessibility Plan
- June 1, 2025 – Progress Report
- June 1, 2026 – Progress Report
- June 1, 2027 – Updated Accessibility Plan

1.4 ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES

Accessible Canada Act (Section 6) sets out a series of principles as follows:

- a) All persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities.
- b) All persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities.
- c) All persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities.
- d) All persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they want, regardless of their disabilities.
- e) 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.
- f) Persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures.

1.5 ALTERNATE FORMAT(S)

Upon request, an accessible alternate format (e.g. print, large print, braille, audio format or an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology) of this Accessibility Plan or the feedback process can be provided. Please contact us at the mailing address, phone number or email outlined below in Section 1.6.

1.6 FEEDBACK PROCESS

We encourage passengers, individuals working in our community, and employees at YCD to provide feedback about how YCD is implementing this Accessibility Plan and share with us any barriers that have been encountered.

Feedback allows us to continually work on improving the airport experience by preventing and removing barriers. There are several ways to connect with the Airport Terminal and Customer Care Manager personally, or anonymously, including:

- In Person: Customer Service Desk located to the left of the check-in area inside the terminal building.
- By Mail: Box 149, 3350 Spitfire Road, Cassidy, B.C. V0R 1H0
- By Telephone: 250-924-2157 ext.1200
- By Email: customercare@ycd.ca
- Online Webform: <https://ycd.ca/contact-us/>

All feedback received will be tracked, including our responses to the sender to acknowledge receipt in the same manner that it was received.

1.7 ACCESSIBILITY PRIORITIES

This Accessibility Plan takes into consideration YCD's policies, programs, practices, and services to set out an actionable roadmap to help identify, prevent, and remove barriers in the following priority areas:

1. Employment.
2. Built environment.
3. Information and communication technologies (ICT).
4. Communication (other than ICT).
5. Procurement of goods, services, and facilities.
6. Design and delivery of programs and services.
7. Transportation.

2.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

At YCD, we are making a commitment to meeting the communication needs of all persons with disabilities. Technological adaptability plays a large role in meeting this goal and we will continue to invest in Information Technology (IT) solutions that support accessibility advancements. We understand

the importance of, and the reliance people have on technology to navigate through YCD and aim to create a better experience for all guests, passengers, and employees.

Accessible ICT at YCD includes:

1. Our website is compliant with Web Content Accessibility (WGAC) 2.1AA:
 - We utilize Userway, a digital accessibility program, that allows our website users to choose from different accessibility profiles including: the blind, visually or motor impaired profiles, dyslexia, seizure and epileptic profiles, ADHD, cognitive and colour-blind profiles. Users may customize and choose options that work best for them such as font size and scaling, colour contrast and saturation adjustments, reading text to speech, stopping animations and much more.
 - Our website undergoes third party monitoring to ensure we remain compliant.
 - We use alt text to improve accessibility using a screen reader.
 - By searching “accessibility” on our website www.ycd.ca passengers can learn about the accessible programs and services offered at YCD including booking curbside assistance.
 - A map identifying services, amenities and accessible features has been made available.
 - We offer feedback channels on our website to ensure passengers with various abilities can provide us with valuable information.
 - Our Customer Service team overcome language barriers with a T2S Portable Language translator device.
2. Our commitments to remove barriers in ICT includes:
 - In 2023, we investigated FID and PA upgrades with Atlas IED.
 - Currently we are in conversations with SITA and Simpleway Global passenger information systems to provide pre-recorded audio announcements and visual displays.
 - Currently reviewing quotes to install a hearing loop system to amplify sound and offer clearer communication.

3.0 COMMUNICATION (OTHER THAN ICT)

Effective communication is a necessary part of supporting a stress free and positive experience. To meet this commitment, we use best practices for interacting with people with disabilities at all points during the travel experience. Our staff and volunteers are all trained in how best to serve people in a manner that is respectful, informed, and accessible.

Accessible communications at YCD includes:

Customer Care Team:

- Our customer care team including a team of 32 volunteers are onsite throughout the Terminal to assist our guests and passengers. They complete Disability Awareness Training (Canadian Airports Accessibility Training- online) as part of their onboarding to ensure they are informed and ready to communicate and provide assistance as required for all those with disabilities. Our team shares awareness of the Sunflower Lanyard program and the lanyards identification of hidden disabilities and have the lanyards readily available for passengers requiring them for travel.

Signage and Wayfinding:

- Washrooms are identified with signage inclusive of braille.
- Overheard directional signage is free of advertisements ensuring clear, precise information and ease in ‘decision-making’. The messaging on the signage is thoughtfully displayed informing passengers with need-to-know information wherever they are in their passenger journey.

Communicating Accessibility Initiatives:

- Success of all accessibility initiatives rely on good communication. We make it a priority to continuously talk about, post about and educate our passengers and our workforce on our accessibility offerings.

Our commitments to removing barriers in accessible communication other than ICT includes:

- Continuing to share feedback and opportunities to improve services with all business partners, including ensuring all accessibility needs are managed with respect and consistent support.
- Maintaining consistent training and awareness of staff during onboarding to support all passengers with disabilities. Including but not limited to Disability Awareness Training and Sunflower awareness programs.
- Supporting our internal employee communication platforms to share information and enhance opportunities to build YCD culture and community surrounding accessibility and inclusion.

4.0 PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Accessibility needs to be considered in the procurement of all goods, services and facility upgrades to achieve a smooth airport experience for everyone. YCD depends on its services and facilities to operate in a manner that support its employees, partners, and passengers. Procurement is a way we build connections with our partners to reach the common goal of offering an excellent passenger experience for all.

Ethical contracting is at the forefront of accessible procurement with contracts being reviewed to ensure accessible needs are met. Accessible procurement at YCD includes:

Contracts:

- Administer and manage contracts for accessibility-related services, including but not limited to:
 - Providing curbside assistance for passengers with disabilities.
 - Building and construction of service dog and pet relief areas.
 - Parking services including shuttle and taxi operators.
- Business partners:
 - Ensuring all business partners provide accessible training to employees.

Our commitments to removing barriers through our procurement include:

- Ensuring our Requests for Proposals (RFP's) integrate accessibility requirements when creating RFPs for passenger facing services.

- When procuring new equipment and signage, ensure we consider colours, textures, and locations that meet the needs of those with disabilities.

5.0 DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

At YCD, we are building awareness of our programs and services to ensure an equitable, respectful and barrier free airport for everyone. We have collected input from the Community, Business partners, staff and stakeholders that is key to meeting a goal to allow everyone to participate in and experience all that YCD has to offer.

Accessible programs and services offered at YCD include:

Curbside Assistance:

- YCD offers curbside assistance to passengers with disabilities. Passengers may pre- book this service through our online form or by calling Customer Service directly. Passengers may book assistance from curbside to check-in for departing flights, and from arrivals to curbside for arriving flights. All our Air Carriers are equipped to assist from check-in to boarding of the aircraft as well as upon arrivals, assisting with off loading to the arrivals area. Air Carriers should be contacted directly to book assistance.

Wheelchair Service:

- Wheelchairs are conveniently located in the Terminal and available for anyone that requires their use and has not already pre-booked with their Air Carrier. Customer Care and/or volunteers are also available to assist when required.



Sunflower Lanyard Program:

- In 2021, YCD partnered with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard Program to increase accessibility, awareness, and compassion for people with invisible disabilities. This internationally recognized program offers sunflower lanyards to passengers with disabilities to help airport workers identify and understand that the passenger may need additional assistance and support. Sunflowers are available for pickup in advance of or on day of travel from our Customer Service Team. Air Canada passengers may also pick up lanyards at check in on the day of travel.

Pre-Booked Tours:

- YCD offers pre-booked tours of the terminal including the check-in , security screening and departure lounge to help individuals with concerns be prepared, confident, and comfortable with their travel experience.

Escort Passes:

- Passengers who require assistance may have a support person such as a family member or friend help escort them through the pre-board screening checkpoints and to their boarding gate. Escort passes are issued by the airline directly.

Our commitment to removing barriers through the design and delivery of programs and services includes:

- Ensuring awareness of accessibility features, information, programs, and services to both guests and passengers visiting YCD as well as employees working at YCD through the website, social media, internal and external media release.
- When procuring new equipment, particular attention will be paid to placement, colours and other factors that may create barriers.
- In 2025 engage with the Emergency Planning Committee for tabletop and full-scale exercise scenarios to ensure people of all abilities are included.

6.0 TRANSPORTATION

Accessible transportation is an integral component in the airport journey. Making sure our passengers and staff have access to transportation options that are accessible, flexible and offer options for personal choice is important to us at YCD. Transportation options available to get you to and from YCD include taxis, shuttle services, rideshare, car rentals, and public transportation (BC transit).

Accessible transportation options at the airport include:

Parking:

- Accessible parking stalls provided in all 3 parking lots in addition to accessible staff parking stalls located south of the Terminal.

Accessible Passenger Loading:

- Curbside drop off is available at all times, and curbside pickup may be accommodated by contacting customer service or airport security.
- Accessible parking stalls are identified with signage.

Car rental agencies with rental vehicles equipped with hand control options.

Accessible ground transportation services.

Accessible parking stall for electric vehicle EV charging station available:

- We have partnerships with taxis, and shuttles companies to provide transportation options for our passengers. Accessible vehicles can be reserved by calling the taxi or shuttle companies directly.

Accessible Transit:

- BC transit service provides routes heading north to Nanaimo, Lantzville, and Parksville and south to Ladysmith, and Duncan operating seven days a week with conveniently located pick up curbside south of the terminal.

Our commitments to removing barriers in accessible transportation include:

- Exploring modifications or replacements for existing parking ticket machines that offer improved accessibility features.

- Continual review of parking and signage requirements based on needs and numbers of passengers.

7.0 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

YCD takes pride in its build environment and strives to provide ease of flow, and a stress-free passenger experience from entry to the check-in counters through to the departure gates.

Our building design has centrally located airline check-in counters with easy access to the arrivals area and security screening checkpoint. The departure lounge offers a large open area with ample room to accommodate accessible needs. We work to providing a positive experience and effortless journey for all our passengers.



How we support accessibility throughout the build environment:

Information Desk:

- The information desk located near the arrival's entry includes an open area accessible for wheelchairs and support persons.

Window Coverings:

- Large floor to ceiling windows in the departure lounge are equipped with automatic blinds to help manage concerns related to bright sunlight and shadows, while still allowing a view of the airside areas.

Washrooms:

- All washrooms are equipped with accessible stalls, grab bars and options are available for doorless entry and automatic doors. Large individual gender-neutral family style washrooms for caregivers, families, or people who require more space for their mobility equipment or service animals are available in the non-secure area and secure area of the terminal. An accessible washroom equipped with bench seat and shower available is available.

Accessible Workstations and Charging Stations:

- The departure lounge offers workstations with lower counter levels for wheelchair access. All workstations include electrical outlets and USB ports. Additional outlets and charging ports are available under passenger seating.

Pet Relief Areas:

- The outdoor pet relief area is conveniently located adjacent to the terminal building accessed by a paved level walkway that is equipped with directional signage.
- The indoor pet relief area is located inside the airport terminal building in the secure area of the boarding lounge. The pet relief basin was constructed at floor level to eliminate tripping hazards. All fixtures are made from stainless steel. The room's location is clearly identified with directional signage including tactile and braille.



Designated Accessible Seating:

- Seating is clearly identified and located adjacent to each of the boarding gates. They provide easy access and communication with the agents as well as clear view of information related to departures.

Seating for Resting:

- Seating has been provided at intervals throughout the passenger route to support those that need to stop and rest.

Further, our commitment to removing barriers in the built environment also include:

- Continuing review off wayfinding signs to identify changes required to provide a seamless barrier free experience.
- Ongoing communication with an accessibility consultant to continue making improvements to be barrier free.
- Investigation into development of a plan to work with an Accessibility Committee to improve emergency procedures to be inclusive of people with disabilities.
- Integration of accessibility best practices criteria into built environment renovations.
- Researching installation of hearing loop systems at all check-in counters, service counters and counters at gates.

8.0 PROVISIONS OF CTA ACCESSIBILITY-RELATED REGULATIONS

The Nanaimo Airport's Accessibility Plan 2024–2027, dated June 1, 2024, strives to create a stress-free and enjoyable airport experience for all travellers. We are subject to guidance as set out by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) regulations and the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR), including the following provisions:

Part 1: Requirements Applicable to Transportation Service Providers

- Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10(2), 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17(a), 17(b), 17 (d), 17 (e), 18, 19(1), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(f), 20, 21, 22 and 23

Part 4: Requirements Applicable to Terminal Operators

- Sections 212(a), 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225(1), 225(2)(a), 226, 227, 228, 229, 230 and 231

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

Nanaimo Airport consulted with representatives of the accessible community, airport partners and internal departments in the creation of this plan.

The initial draft of this plan was shared via email with:

- **Autism Society of Central Vancouver Island.**
- **Nanaimo Disability Resource Center.**
- **Blue Navigator Ambassador Team** representing seniors in the community with varying disabilities.

Feedback was gathered over a 3-week period from May 9 to May 30, 2024.

Items for consideration during the consultation period were presented in a survey-format for feedback collection. Specific questions asked in the survey are noted below.

- Do you think this plan has been developed in accordance with the six (6) principles outlined in Section 1.4?
- Is the plan written in language that is clear, simple, and concise?
- Do the accessibility goals throughout this plan accurately reflect the requirements set out within the provisions of the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR)?
- Are the timelines for the accessibility goals reasonable and actionable?
- Do you have any other comments or feedback regarding this plan?

Feedback received indicated that the plan:

- Was developed in accordance with the six (6) accessibility principles (as outlined in Section 1.4 of this plan).
- Was written in language that is clear, simple, and concise.
- Does accurately reflect the accessibility goals and regulatory requirements.
- Has reasonable and actionable timelines for the noted accessibility goals.

Many of these individuals also attended an onsite accessibility tour and debriefing discussion allowing us to gain a better understanding of the needs of the passengers from a hands-on experience.

An additional onsite tour and consultation was conducted which included **community members with mobility, hearing, cognitive and mental disabilities.**

Following the tours, a discussion was held noting barriers identified and/or experienced during the tour. A questionnaire distributed amongst this group to capture input, identify barriers, and to gather recommendations for improvement.

The questionnaire included the following:

Please provide details of any accessibility barriers you experienced at the Nanaimo Airport in the following categories:

- Built environment (included physical building, layout, pathways of travel).
- Information and communication technologies (include in terminal announcements, website, social media, etc.).
- Communications (includes clarity of communication).
- Ease of access to services and products (includes Café, car rentals, kiosks, etc.).
- Do you have any suggestion on how we can improve accessibility to be more inclusive of passenger needs?
- Is there anything else about accessibility that you would like to share with us regarding built environment, information and communication technologies, programs, products and services?

Feedback from their experience was used to ensure our plan identified and addressed barriers, such as improvements to information and communications technologies, pet relief areas, curbside assistance, and website enhancements. All of which have been addressed.

Copley Inclusive Solutions joined us for a 3-hr tour and consultation which provided our team with information regarding immediate actions we could take as well as a discussion on best practices for future improvements that we can implement to meet the accessible needs of our passengers and guests. We captured this feedback related to identifying and removing barriers and incorporated these valuable insights into this plan to ensure that the lived experience for passengers with disabilities are represented here and throughout our ongoing efforts.

Feedback from internal **Nanaimo Airport departments and business partners** was also requested between the period May 9 to May 30, 2024. This information helped us better understand how to foster an accessible workplace and to help address any barriers there may be for our staff and business partners. This feedback provided insight into additional barriers to be addressed and which have been incorporated into this plan.

We recognize that people with disabilities are the experts of their own experiences and accessibility. This is why we have consulted with, listened to, and learned from the experiences of people with disabilities in the ongoing development of this Accessibility Plan.

At Nanaimo Airport we are proud to commit to working with our staff, community, stakeholders and business partners to identify challenges and risks that may impact how a person with a disability access or uses our goods, services or facilities to their full capacity. Ongoing feedback ensures accessibility is incorporated from the beginning stages of all new initiatives or projects.

10.0 EMPLOYMENT

Nanaimo Airport strives to create a workplace that embraces the diversity of the communities we serve. We have fostered a strong community of employees, partners and contractors who work well with each other to bring our passengers a better airport experience.

We value the contributions of all employees and are committed to the strategic advantages of a diverse workforce.

Our work to increase accessibility employment includes:

Employee Accommodations

- We provide supportive and flexible accommodations for employees with disabilities or medical conditions impacting their work, through:
 - Personalized accommodations.
 - To ensure we manage all needs of the employee, we consider the unique situations and accommodations required of the individual and we discreetly work together as a team with our employees, human resources and management to carefully and thoughtfully plan for suitable long- and short-term solutions.
 - Parking accommodations.
 - Dedicated accessible employee parking is provided. Special accommodations are also provided to accommodate workers with medical issues impacting their mobility.

Diversity and Inclusion Training- “Service for All”

- Onboarding training of our Customer Care team helps to champion our initiatives towards becoming an airport for everyone.

Disability Awareness Training (Canadian Airports Accessibility Training- online)

- Canadian Airports Accessibility Training is provided to our workforce to ensure a consistent foundation for understanding disability and accessibility.

Counseling Services and Mental Health Support

- All Nanaimo Airport Commission staff and their families have complimentary counseling available through Vancouver Island Counselling. Additional resources and support are provided to all employees through our Health Care Provider including mental health newsletters, virtual therapy, and links to support mental health and well being.

Further, our commitments to remove barriers to accessible employment include:

- Joining other airports in accessibility compliance training under the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations.
- Enhanced accessible customer service training for relevant employee groups.
- A commitment to continue to review training materials, transforming the language and terminology used within our internal employee documents towards inclusive language to support a welcoming culture.

11.0 TAKING ACTION 2024 TO 2027

Through this plan, the Nanaimo Airport is committing to take actions to improve accessibility by addressing any current barriers for people with disabilities. Each year we will invite our guests,

community, and business partners to share feedback to help assess the progress we have made as well as help with advance planning for future accessibility plans.

Our team at the Nanaimo Airport looks forward to achieving our vision to provide a positive, barrier and stress-free travel experience for all individuals within our community.