

Greater Victoria Harbour Authority Accessibility Update

May 2026



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CONTENTS

- [Acknowledgement](#) 1
- [Background](#) 1
- [General](#) 2
- [Contact Us](#) 2
- [Consultation and Feedback](#)..... 3
- [Employment](#) 4
- [Built Environment](#) 4
- [Information and Communication Technologies](#) 5
- [Communication \(non-ICT\)](#) 5
- [Procurement](#) 5
- [Programs and Services](#) 6
- [Transportation](#) 6
- [Conclusion](#) 6

This document describes the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority's (GVHA) progress in meeting accessibility obligations under the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) and the Accessible Canada Regulations (ACR).

Acknowledgement

The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority respectfully acknowledges that we manage and operate properties on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the ləkʷəŋən People, known today as the x̱wsepsəm (Esquimalt) Nation and Songhees Nation. The Nations' connection to these lands continues to this day, and the knowledge and guidance of the ləkʷəŋən People have supported the stewardship of the harbour since time immemorial. As visitors and residents, it is important that we recognize and pay respects to the ləkʷəŋən People, be mindful of our impact on the land and be gracious and respectful guests in ləkʷəŋən territory.

Background

The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) is a not-for-profit organization that is committed to the stewardship and sustainable growth of Victoria's dynamic working harbour. GVHA owns and operates 11 waterfront properties in Victoria, B.C., including the Breakwater District at Ogden Point, with its cruise ship terminal, Fisherman's Wharf, the Lower Causeway, Ship Point Pier, a fuel dock, a public boat launch, and Inner Harbour marinas. The properties include public and private spaces, marine assets, upland areas, workspaces, and visitor destinations. GVHA also has a corporate office and a maintenance shop. We currently employ 40 full-time employees and 11 seasonal employees.

As a federally regulated organization, GVHA is committed to complying with the Accessible Canada Act (ACA).

GVHA works with SSA Marine, a third-party company contracted to manage GVHA's cruise ship business and operate the deep-water terminal at Ogden Point. The terminal operates under the jurisdiction of Transport Canada. The terminal facilitates the transportation of members of the public arriving on cruise ships into Greater Victoria. SSA Marine is responsible for publishing its own accessibility plan and updates relating to these cruise terminal operations.

General

In May 2024, GVHA published its [first accessibility plan](#), which is publicly available on the organization's accessibility webpage.

It states: "Our vision is to create a strong and vibrant working harbour that everyone has the ability to enjoy and experience. That vision is only possible through a strong commitment to creating accessible spaces as part of everything we make and do. We have developed this Plan to support our vision for a strong working harbour, to making a commitment to accessibility for not only our public spaces, but also our commercial and digital spaces with design excellence and infrastructurally sound spaces. The Plan is a working document that outlines our approach to build accessibility into our existing structures and policies, providing guidance on the unique elements specific to our properties, including public boat launches, private marinas and waterfront walkways. The focus is the creation of an approach to eliminate accessibility barriers so everyone living with a disability, or supporting someone with a disability, can fully participate on any of our waterfront properties. The Plan will be applied to all future infrastructure and digital projects at the direction of our leadership team and board."

The plan was developed by GVHA's Accessibility Committee. After publication of the plan, GVHA created teams to address key barriers to accessibility and develop solutions. A Work Plan, which is internal to GVHA, tracks its actions.

Contact Us

GVHA welcomes feedback on accessibility matters regarding all elements of our business.

We accept feedback in the following ways:

- **Online survey:** gvha.ca/accessible-survey/
- **Email:** IDEAS@gvha.ca
- **Telephone:** 250-383-8300
- **In Person:** GVHA, 100-1019 Wharf Street, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y9.
- **Social Media:** Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and X.

GVHA employees, who are recognizable by their uniforms, also receive feedback in person from the public at our properties. GVHA also hosts public-facing engagement sessions on a variety of topics, including cruise and planning initiatives.

GVHA's accessibility report is available as a webpage and an accessible PDF. GVHA has indicated that anyone requiring a copy in an alternate format is able to contact the organization and we will strive to provide a copy in the preferred format within 20 days, although Braille and audio formats may take longer.

Consultations and Feedback

In the 2025/26 reporting period, GVHA did not have any official consultations with members of the disability community. However, it collects feedback from members of the public, businesses, and partners on a daily basis about our properties and services. This feedback is broad in nature. It ranges from suggestions for infrastructure improvements to questions about access, parking, lighting, moorage, transit, website content, and events on or close to our properties. This feedback is communicated to managers and leadership to inform decision-making.

Any direct feedback can also be sent to:

- Janet Lapaire: Human Resources, Manager at IDEAS@gvha.ca

Employment

GVHA's objective is to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities, eliminate physical barriers to employment with GVHA, and provide access to training for all employees.

During the timeframe of this report, GVHA completed the following updates:

- Every job posting on the GVHA website includes an accessible PDF and information on how candidates can request additional accommodations.
- Short-listed candidates are also offered additional accommodations.
- GVHA implemented new human resources (HR) software, ADP, providing accessible and inclusive workplace support to employees of all abilities. ADP is compliant with WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) and has built-in assistive technology. Accounts can be customized by the individual to support specific needs, and it provides flexibility for access to payroll and policies outside of a GVHA network.

Built Environment

GVHA's objective is to focus on short-term actions to reduce and remove existing barriers and incorporate universal design into long-term facility planning.

In April 2025, GVHA launched an RFP to find a proponent to provide Professional Multidisciplinary Consulting Services for the completion of an Integrated Plan for GVHA properties. The Integrated Plan for the Victoria Harbour (IP) will provide a forward-thinking strategic framework that enables sustainable marine, commerce, recreation and tourism to grow harmoniously over several decades. IP recognizes the diverse and layered interest holders that are located within the harbour. Within this contract and scope of work, GVHA has included that all plans made for the Integrated Plan include all requirements set out by the ACA with the direct intention that accessibility will be purpose-built into all future projects.

During the 2025/26 reporting period, the GVHA team completed the following upgrades on our properties:

- Ramps and steps for the public washrooms were added at Ogden Point cruise terminal.
- Replaced all marina ramps with a higher quality 'dimple plate' for increased grip strength, creating safer walking conditions to reduce slips and falls.
- Lighting was added to railing, fences, and footpaths to increase visibility and safety.
- Loose material and tripping hazards were removed from all marinas.
- Tide table information was posted at Fisherman's Wharf and the Inner Causeway to help users impacted by the steepness of ramps during low tides.
- The Inner Harbour Causeway Marina staff kiosk was renovated and expanded to allow for more space with an accessible entrance.
- Public seating was added at the James Bay public boat ramp and near the entrance to the Breakwater.
- A temporary washroom trailer was installed for the summer near the Breakwater for seasonal visitors.
- 16 EV chargers were installed at Ogden Point.

Information and Communication Technologies

GVHA's objective is to improve communication means, methods and styles to make information accessible to everyone.

During this reporting period, GVHA completed the following actions for ICT:

- Added a virtual component to all internal staff and public meetings, allowing for greater flexibility to join meetings.
- QR codes were included with GVHA's new Indigenous placemaking installation, allowing users to access on our website and receive the information in a different format.
- All images posted to social media and used in email newsletters had alternative text.

Communication (non-ICT)

GVHA's objective is to apply accessibility principles to internal and external communications to ensure ease-of-access for all.

In this reporting period, GVHA has completed the following:

- GVHA offers employees the option to install a ɬəkwəŋən keyboard on their desktop if needed. This is provided by Keyman, which helps fill a digital accessibility gap for GVHA's Indigenous partners. GVHA regularly uses ɬəkwəŋən language as part of its commitment to the local First Nations.
- HR has budgeted for accessibility training for employees in the upcoming year.
- We have researched available grants to support GVHA's accessibility initiatives and begun preparing applications.

Procurement

GVHA's objective is to ensure that opportunities for contractual and vendor-based relationships with GVHA are equitably accessible to all.

During this reporting period, GVHA has completed the following:

- GVHA creates and provides accessible PDFs for all RFPs issued.
- On all client contracts, GVHA clients agree to abide by terms and conditions regarding GVHA accessibility as well as the City of Victoria by-laws around accessibility.
- All GVHA client contracts now include accessibility provisions upon request for GVHA staff or visitors.

Programs and Services

GVHA's objective is to establish partnerships with First Nations, municipal, provincial, federal and public partners to ensure that property development and business operations are carried out with accessibility in focus.

During the reporting period, GVHA completed the following:

- All electronic contracts are signed using Adobe Sign.
- GVHA is pursuing joining the City of Victoria's monthly Accessibility Committee to have a cohesive strategy for developing accessibility infrastructure over multiple shared property lines.

Transportation

GVHA's objective is to realize the best practices and improved standards with regards to barrier-free transportation in areas over which GVHA has oversight.

During the reporting period, GVHA completed:

- SSA has produced their own [Accessibility Report](#) and are ruled under the CTA regulations.
- GVHA has rejoined the City of Victoria's transportation committee.

Conclusion

Accessibility remains a priority. GVHA will continue to collect and monitor feedback, which will inform decision-making and guide our actions. We will continue to identify barriers to accessibility and work to remove them. We will look for solutions that can be implemented in the next 12 months and ensure accessibility is part of our long-term work, especially in our Integrated Planning work to ensure the future and sustainability of our 11 properties. GVHA will publish its next accessibility plan at the end of May 2027.



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