



Accessibility Plan

City of Regina

2024 - 2033



Land acknowledgement

The City of Regina is on a path of reconciliation. We begin by acknowledging we are on the traditional lands of the Treaty 4 Territory, a Treaty signed with 35 First Nations across Southern Saskatchewan and parts of Alberta and Manitoba, and the original lands of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakota, Lakota and the homeland of the Métis.

The City of Regina owes its strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory as well as those from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Regina home.

To recognize the land is an expression of respect and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous Peoples who have lived here for thousands of years. It is important that we understand our history that has brought us to reside on the land and seek to understand our place within history.

Table of contents

Land acknowledgement	2
Table of contents	3
Acknowledgements	4
Executive summary	5
Introduction	9
What is an accessibility plan?	11
Commitment to lived experience and intersectionality	12
Roles and jurisdiction	13
Guiding principles	18
Community engagement	19
Recommendations and actions	28
Key outcomes	41
Conclusion	42
Appendix A: Glossary of terms	43
Appendix B: Environmental scan and community snapshot	46
Introduction	47
Documents Reviewed	47
Current Accessibility-focused Policies	47
Cultural and Demographic groups	50
Accessibility by Service Areas	50
Principles	60
Future Work	61
Appendix	62
Appendix C: What we heard report	64
Executive summary	65
1 Introduction	71
2 What we did	73
3 Demographics and participation	82
4 What we heard	86
Appendices	121

Acknowledgements

This City of Regina Accessibility Plan (the Plan) is the result of a coordinated and collaborative effort from community members, including people with disabilities and older adults, community organizations, as well as City of Regina staff. We would like to thank all those who participated and contributed their valuable time, input and perspectives to help shape this Plan.

The following groups played an important role in contributing to this work:

- Age Friendly Regina
- Autism Resource Centre
- Big Sky Centre for Learning and Being Astonished!
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind Saskatchewan
- Creative Options Regina
- First Steps Wellness Centre
- Hope's Home
- Inclusion Regina
- Listen to Dis'
- REALM
- Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry
- Regina Immigrant Women's Centre
- Regina Public Schools
- SaskAbilities
- Saskatchewan Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services
- Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
- South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre

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- Happy Cities
- Meaningful Access Consulting
- Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services

Executive summary

Introduction and purpose

To build and foster an inclusive, accessible Regina, the City of Regina (the City) is developing an Accessibility Plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to access in City spaces, programs, and services.

The goals of the Accessibility Plan are:

1. Identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation in civic life.
2. Strengthening the City's ongoing commitment to becoming an age-friendly and accessible city.
3. Creating a centralized, strategic plan to coordinate accessibility efforts across all City departments.

The Plan reinforces the City's dedication to building and prioritizing meaningful access for all, including a commitment to understanding and addressing the unique experiences and needs of Indigenous Peoples with disabilities, who, in addition to facing barriers to accessibility, continue to face the ongoing effects of colonialism.

What we did

The Plan was developed through a robust, multi-phase community engagement process. This included engagement with Indigenous communities (through partnership with Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services); one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders; a digital, public-facing survey; facilitated focus group discussions (both in-person and digital); and community pop-ups at popular destinations and events in Regina.

To establish a structure, ensure accountability and facilitate implementation of the Plan, this work was organized around 6 service delivery areas:

- Transportation
- Built environment
- Communication
- Employment
- Programs, services and financial
- Procurement

What we heard

The key findings from engagement suggest that in general, accessing the built environment is the leading barrier to accessibility in the City of Regina. Across all forms of engagement, **sidewalks, including maintenance and snow removal, were consistently highlighted as the top priority area for improving accessibility.**

From the survey, the main areas of improvement suggested by respondents were:

1. **Roads and sidewalks**, as indicated by 79% of respondents
2. **Transportation**, as indicated by 54% of respondents
3. **Built environment**, as indicated by 48% of respondents

“For people like myself, the City is pretty much inaccessible from first snowfall until it all melts.”

— Focus group participant

“Until the City starts clearing sidewalks, they aren’t serious about accessibility.”

— Focus group participant

Table: Outreach by the Numbers

12
interviews

223
survey responses

160+
pop-up attendees

80+ focus group
participants

Through engagement, community members highlighted the following key barriers:

Table 1: Key barriers by service delivery area

Built environment

1. Poor sidewalk connectivity and maintenance
2. Insufficient accessible public washrooms
3. Parks and public spaces don't have enough accessible features

Transportation¹

1. Insufficient snow removal
2. Lack of sidewalks and maintenance
3. Public transit and paratransit services are not sufficient

Employment

1. Not enough employment opportunities for people with disabilities
2. Application and hiring process is a barrier
3. Lack of policy and procedures related to accommodations for staff with disabilities

Programs, services, financial

1. Limited adapted or inclusive recreation options
2. Insufficient staff training
3. Challenging online registration and payment systems

Communication

1. Reliance on digital materials
2. Lack of information on accessibility accommodations/services
3. Lack of American Sign Language, closed captioning, or note-taking services

Procurement

1. Procurement processes are not transparent or accountable enough
2. Smaller disability-led organizations face more barriers than larger ones that are not disability-led

¹ Note: within the survey, "sidewalks" and "snow removal" were listed as barriers under Transportation. During subsequent public engagement activities, these barriers emerged as priorities within both the Built Environment and Transportation. Based on feedback from public and staff engagement, resulting actions for these key barriers were re-categorized under the Built Environment for clarity.

Recommendations and actions

The Plan provides a framework to advance accessibility in Regina over the next ten years. Across the six service delivery areas, and one general area, the Plan includes over 60 specific actions. These actions are organized within 17 recommendations based on the key barriers identified through engagement. These recommendations are presented below:

Table 2: Recommendations by service delivery area

General	1. Ensure ongoing engagement and accountability through implementation of this Plan
Built environment	2. Improve snow removal on City sidewalks and streets 3. Improve sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure 4. Improve accessibility of City facilities 5. Improve accessibility of City parks and playgrounds 6. Support private sector to improve accessibility
Transportation	7. Improve accessible taxi service 8. Improve transit accessibility
Communication	9. Enhance communication regarding accessibility features and services 10. Improve the accessibility of City of Regina communications
Employment	11. Improve staff competency related to accessibility and disability 12. Increase recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities 13. Develop and improve policies and processes for workplace accommodations
Programs, services and financial	14. Improve accessibility of existing programs and services 15. Improve accessibility at City events 16. Remove barriers to accessing financial programs and services
Procurement	17. Improve accessibility of procurement processes

In order to achieve the above recommendations and intended outcomes of this work, dedicated, consistent funding is required.

Introduction

An accessible Regina is one where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can meaningfully participate in community life, without facing barriers.

A barrier can be defined as anything that prevents the equitable participation of a person with a disability or an older adult. In addition to physical barriers to access, this can include barriers related to attitudes, communication, systems and more.

See Glossary in Appendix A for more information and definitions.



"What does an accessible Regina mean to you?" responses from community engagement

In Saskatchewan, 29.8% of individuals over the age of 15 identify as having a disability.² People with disabilities are a dynamic group of individuals with diverse perspectives, priorities, needs and preferences.

To build and foster an inclusive, accessible Regina, the City must involve and collaborate with people with lived experience; this will ensure that decisions and solutions are meaningfully created together with those they are intended to serve. In adhering to the principle “Nothing about us, without us” the City is committed to building capacity and agency across its departments and centering the valuable insights and knowledge of people with lived experience.



² Government of Canada. (2023). New data on disability in Canada, 2022.

What is an accessibility plan?

The Government of Saskatchewan defines **accessibility** as follows:

“Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. Accessibility is about removing barriers so people can feel included and have independence. Accessibility is important for everyone, especially people with disabilities.”³

Accessibility plans are created to establish steps for municipalities to identify, address and prevent barriers to participation in civic life. This includes considerations for the built environment, facilities, transportation, inclusive programming and customer service, information and communication, accessible employment opportunities and more.

The goals of the Regina Accessibility Plan are:

1. Identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation in civic life.
2. Strengthening the City’s ongoing commitment to becoming an age-friendly and accessible city.
3. Creating a centralized, strategic plan to coordinate accessibility efforts across all City departments.

While the Plan seeks to remove barriers for people with disabilities and older adults, it will also improve access and quality of life for all community members. The Plan envisions a city where everyone—regardless of age, background or ability—is able to fully join in community life.

³ The Accessible Saskatchewan Act - Summary | Accessibility Legislation for Saskatchewan, 2023

Commitment to lived experience and intersectionality

Regina's commitment to becoming an age-friendly and accessible city stems from the City's recognition of our relationship to the land and our commitment to grow and improve quality of life for everyone. It also includes a commitment to understanding and addressing the unique experiences and needs of Indigenous Peoples with disabilities, who, in addition to facing barriers to accessibility, continue to face the ongoing effects of colonialism.

Indigenous people, 2SLGBTQIAP+ people and women face higher rates of disability due to the intersection of their identities⁴⁵⁶. Racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia and colonialism among other forms of discrimination negatively impact people's ability to access disability supports in healthcare, housing, and employment. Accounting for the intersection of identities will help coordinate action and reduce barriers to access⁷.

The Plan reinforces the City's dedication to building and prioritizing meaningful access for all. In doing so, the City commits to building the Plan based on the feedback and experiences of the experts: people with disabilities, older adults, and their care partners and family members. The City recognizes that Regina residents have many intersecting abilities and identities, and that many different actions will be required to meet the accessibility needs of diverse community members. As a result, the City aims to centre lived experience and intersectionality through the implementation of the Accessibility Plan.

⁴ Quinlan, Leah, "Accessibility and Disability for Indigenous Women, Girls, and Gender Diverse People, 2018

⁵ Casey, Bill, "The Health of LGBTQIA2 Communities in Canada", 2019

⁶ Statistics Canada, "Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report – Women with Disabilities", 2017

⁷ Casey, Bill, "The Health of LGBTQIA2 Communities in Canada", 2019



Roles and jurisdiction

Advancing accessibility requires a coordinated effort across all levels of government, including collaboration with the private sector, community organizations and members of the public.

Federal and Provincial government roles

The Federal Government is responsible for the laws that govern accessibility and the rights of people with disabilities in Canada, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Indian Act. In 2019, the Federal Government introduced accessibility legislation, with the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). The driving goal of the ACA is to

realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040, by establishing a framework for advancing accessibility and mandating the development of accessibility plans for federally regulated entities, among other requirements.

Provincially, the Accessible Saskatchewan Act came into force on December 3, 2023. The new legislation aims to remove and prevent accessibility barriers for persons with disabilities, creating a more accessible Saskatchewan. The City is required to prepare and make publicly available its accessibility plan by December 2, 2025.

City of Regina role

At the municipal level, the City of Regina has the opportunity to act as a leader in advancing accessibility ahead of outcomes from the provincial legislation. By working closely with people with disabilities, the City can advance accessibility initiatives that respond to the unique needs of local community members and residents. The City has the power to impact many of the main barriers that people with disabilities experience on a day-to-day basis. To guide actions, the Plan has been organized into the following six service delivery areas:

- **Built environment:** This includes City parks and open spaces, sidewalks and roads, snow removal at these locations and City facilities.
- **Transportation:** This includes parking (on streets and City-owned parking lots), licensing for vehicles for hire, and Regina Transit and Paratransit.
- **Communication:** This includes printed, digital and in-person communication, including the City's website, social media and promotional materials for programs and events.
- **Employment:** This includes ease of access to City hiring processes, procedures for providing accommodations, the types of accessibility supports provided throughout the hiring process, and employment with the City.
- **Programs, services, and financial:** This includes programs and services offered at the City's parks, recreation facilities (such as community centres, leisure centres and municipal arenas) and City Hall. This also includes financial procedures, permit applications, incentive programs, payment processing systems and financial reporting.

- **Procurement:** This includes how the City purchases goods and services. The aim of accessible procurement is to ensure that the City engages vendors that can deliver products, designs and services that include universal design and accessible best practices.

There are areas within Regina's built environment that are not in the City's jurisdiction, including private businesses, privately owned buildings and residences, railway lines and Wascana Park (which is regulated by the Province). However, the City can continue to advance accessibility in all areas in the community through advocacy and leadership.



Aligned policies

The City of Regina has a number of plans and policies with a clear focus on improving accessibility. These include:

- Indigenous Framework (forthcoming)
- Design Regina: Official Community Plan Bylaw
- Community Safety and Well-being Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Regina Transit Master Plan
- Recreation Master Plan
- Parks Master Plan
- Adapted Recreation Plan
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework
- Accessible Signage Policy

Recommended actions in this Plan build on these earlier initiatives and seek to bring together a cohesive approach for identifying, removing and preventing barriers to access across all City departments, spaces, programs and services.

See Appendix B for the Environmental Scan and Community Snapshot that outline Regina's existing context.





Guiding principles

Accessibility is multifaceted and evolving. Recognizing that additional aspects or areas of accessibility will likely emerge, the following guiding principles were developed to inform this project, while also offering a framework to guide further components.

“Planning for access shouldn’t envision a perfect scenario. Instead, the messiness of access needs to be acknowledged and trained for.”
— *Listen to Dis’, consultant’s report for City of Regina Adapted Recreation Plan*

Nothing about us, without us

Accessibility policy, plans, and decisions must be community-informed and led by people with disabilities, older adults and community members who are most impacted by this work.

Equal opportunity

All community members should have equal opportunity to fully and meaningfully participate in community life in Regina with autonomy and dignity.

Diversity & intersectionality

People with disabilities are a broad group of individuals with intersectional needs, priorities and perspectives. This includes Indigenous people who face the compounding barriers of accessibility, systemic racism and colonialism. Differences are respected and celebrated as a part of the diversity of the human experience.

Accountability

Accessibility initiatives must be clear and action-oriented, with tangible responsibilities, implementable outcomes and goals that are aligned across City departments.

Collaboration

Accessibility initiatives are a shared responsibility with collective effort required across City departments, all levels of government and the community.

Community engagement

Approach – What we did

This Plan is informed by a robust, multi-phase community engagement process. An engagement and communications plan was developed to reach and hear input from a wide variety of community members and organizations, including people with disabilities, older adults, advocates, community organizations, City staff and more. The project team applied a multi-layered approach to engagement that included the following components:



Phase 1

- Environmental scan and community snapshot:
 - A review of existing data, statistics, plans and policy—including provincial legislation—to assess the local context and the City’s efforts to-date in supporting accessibility in Regina.
- Indigenous engagement planning and partnerships
 - Partnership with Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (RT/SIS) in developing outreach strategies to conduct meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities across and near Regina.
- Stakeholder scoping
 - Development of a comprehensive list of key actors for this project, including residents living with disabilities, older adults, caregivers and organizations that support or advocate for these groups.
- Interviews

- One-on-one interviews with 12 key actors to discuss the state of accessibility in Regina and identify priority barriers to address. Interviewees were offered compensation for their lived-experience expertise and time.
- Digital survey
 - A concise, plain language survey designed for the public to share input on the barriers and challenges that people face when accessing services, spaces or programs across Regina.
- Focus groups
 - Facilitated sessions designed to discuss the purpose of the Accessibility Plan, the barriers and challenges faced by participants, and ideas for priority actions the City should take to address accessibility. This included three digital and two in-person sessions open to the public, one session with representatives from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and one session with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers at RT/SIS. Participants were offered compensation to reflect their lived-experience expertise and to value their time.
- Community Pop-ups
 - In-person, interactive events hosted at five popular destinations to reach people who might not otherwise participate in other engagement activities and to provide them with the opportunity to share their priorities for the Plan. These included a pop-up at the Sandra Schmirler Leisure Centre, two pop-ups at RT/SIS, a pop-up at The Nest shelter and a booth at Queen City Pride.

These activities were supported by a comprehensive communications campaign that included a project webpage (www.regina.ca/accessibility) to promote engagement activities and encourage the broader public to participate.

Over 475 people participated in the engagement process through a range of activities. This included:

- 12 interviews
- 223 survey responses
- 160+ pop-up attendees
- 80+ focus group participants
- 14+ non-profit organizations engaged

Phase 2

Following the development of draft recommendations and actions, there was a re-engagement process with community. This involved the following components:

- Online questions and feedback: An update on the engagement and summary of the draft recommendations and actions was shared on the City's BeHeard site. Residents could provide feedback or ask questions through a Q&A feature directly on the site, or by emailing accessibility@regina.ca.
- 2 focus groups (one online and one in person)
- Sector Reference Group – presentation and feedback from non-profit organizations working with people with disabilities
- Accessibility Advisory Committee – presentation and feedback

Information on the publicly accessible re-engagement opportunities (the first two bullets above) was shared on the City's social media networks. They were also distributed to community members who had previously engaged in the consultations and non-profit organizations that work with people with disabilities, with a request for them to distribute to their networks. The Sector Reference Group and Accessibility Advisory Committee sessions were only open to members of those groups, and communicated directly to them.

In total, 291 people viewed the project update page on BeHeard, 94 people downloaded the Summarized Priorities, 63 people downloaded the What We Heard Summary, and 17 people participated in the Q&A feature or re-engagement sessions.

Findings – what we heard

Participants identified a lack of clarity and consistency around what “accessible” means in Regina as a major challenge. They also shared that “an accessible Regina” should look like:

- A city that is accessible for all, regardless of age or ability.
- A city where people with disabilities are welcomed into the community.
- A city where every new building and space is accessible.
- A city that is:
 - Affordable.
 - Well-connected and safe for walking and rolling.
 - Educated and aware.
 - Accountable.
- A city that includes the perspectives of people with disabilities.

Three key community priorities emerged through discussion in focus groups, interviews and at pop-up events that apply to all service delivery areas:

1. “Nothing about us, without us” — people with disabilities must be included early in the stages of a project for decision-making and planning
2. Collaboration with community organizations
3. Dignity and respect

In general, survey results showed that the most common barriers faced by participants when using the City of Regina’s services and programs were:

1. **Roads and sidewalks**, as indicated by 79% of respondents
2. **Transportation**, as indicated by 54% of respondents
3. **Built environment**, as indicated by 48% of respondents
4. **Information and communication**, as indicated by 41% of respondents
5. **Cost**, as indicated by 35% of respondents

Specifically, the top barriers for each service area, as identified and ranked by proportion of survey respondents, are summarized in the following table:

Table 3. Top-ranked barriers by service delivery area

	Built environment	Transportation	Employment	Programs and services	Information and communication	Financial services and funding
1	Park features are not accessible (47%)	Sidewalks are in bad condition and or not accessible (75%)	Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (39%)	It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services (40%)	It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer (50%)	Online payment systems are not accessible (30%)
2	There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities (39%)	Snow removal is too slow (64%)	There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City (39%)	City programs or services are too expensive (31%)	Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English (25%)	
3	Recreation facilities are not accessible (33%)	Buses are not frequent enough (39%)	Hiring processes are not accessible (34%)	City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people (29%)		

Note: within the survey, “sidewalks” and “snow removal” were listed as barriers under Transportation. During subsequent public engagement activities, these barriers emerged as priorities within both the Built Environment and Transportation. Based on feedback from public and staff engagement, resulting actions for these key barriers were re-categorized under the Built Environment for clarity. See “Priorities and Actions” on page 24.

The overarching priority barriers under each service delivery area are summarized below. These barriers were heard across all engagement activities, including the survey, focus groups, interviews and pop-ups.

Built environment

1. Sidewalks: Regina is not a walkable or rollable city because sidewalks are not reliably available, are often in poor condition and are not well-maintained.
2. Washrooms: insufficient accessible washrooms across the city.
3. Parks, public and open spaces, specifically:
 - a. Many paths and trails are not accessible (lack of clear routes and proper paving).
 - b. Insufficient seating along City-owned parks and pathways.
 - c. Parks and other public and open spaces don't have enough accessible features (e.g., washrooms, playgrounds, drinking fountains).

Transportation

1. Snow removal: insufficient snow clearance creates significant barriers to transportation.
2. Sidewalks: lack of sidewalks and pedestrian ramps, as well as a lack of maintenance, creates challenges for accessing bus stops and transportation in general.
3. Public transit and Paratransit: services are not sufficient (hours, frequency, availability), making public transit an inefficient and unappealing option.



Employment

Many participants noted that they did not have significant experience with employment at the City, so they shared their input on employment barriers broadly:

1. Not enough employment opportunities for people with disabilities: lack of suitable, properly compensated roles, as well as a lack of flexibility for working reduced hours or remotely.
2. Application and hiring process is a barrier: accessibility is not often considered – from the online application process to job descriptions listing unnecessary requirements to the interview process.
3. Lack of policy and procedures related to accommodations for staff with disabilities: inadequate accommodations to support staff success and a lack of information about the accommodations that do exist.

Programs, services and financial

1. Limited adapted or inclusive recreation programs options for people with disabilities: particularly for young children, older adults and people needing low-stimulation or sensory safe zones.
2. Insufficient training: frontline staff require training on supporting all people with disabilities.
3. Online payment and registration processes for many programs and services is a barrier.

Communication

1. Reliance on digital materials: a barrier for those without access to digital tools.
2. Lack of information on accessibility accommodations/services in the city: including who to contact at the City.
3. Lack of American Sign Language (ASL), closed captioning, and Computerized Note-Taking Services (CNS) available and/or offered across Regina.

Procurement

Most feedback received about procurement was general:

1. City's procurement process could be more transparent and accountable.
2. Small organizations, including those that are disability-led, face more barriers than those that are larger, more established and not disability-led.

Ideas for motivating change

Participants shared their ideas on how the City can ensure the Accessibility Plan will motivate change and achieve its desired outcomes. Proposed ideas included:

- Prompt action with incentives and requirements.
- Monitor impacts and results.
- Invest in accessibility through a dedicated budget and resources.
- Adopt a forward-thinking mindset, starting with short-term wins.
- Engage and bring more awareness to accessibility.
- Involve and empower the community.
- Lead by example.

See Appendix C for the full What we heard report.



Recommendations and actions

The Plan provides a framework to advance accessibility in Regina through short, mid and long-term actions to be implemented over the next one to ten years. This includes over 60 recommended actions across six service delivery areas, as well as a “General” area, which includes actions that apply across all areas of service delivery. The actions include both City-wide initiatives and targeted approaches. Further, they build upon ongoing work that has been accomplished to date and respond to identified community needs. The Plan focuses on actions that advance accessibility in the City and are not currently addressed through existing City strategies.

The actions are organized into the following:

1. General
2. Built Environment
3. Transportation
3. Communication
4. Employment
5. Programs, Services, and Financial
6. Procurement

Within each service delivery area, the actions are organized into priority themes that reflect the key barriers identified through community engagement. During engagement, “sidewalks” and related barriers were categorized under both Transportation and the Built Environment. For clarity, and to ensure accountability and feasibility of implementation, the resulting recommended actions for sidewalks (and snow removal) have been arranged under the Built Environment only.

The service areas identified in the Plan are aligned with the Accessible Canada Act. The actions in the Plan are intended to be implemented on a timeline of **short-term (1-2 years)**, **mid-term (3-5 years)**, **long-term (6-10 years)** and ongoing. The Plan will be reviewed every two years with the work adjusted as needed.

The City has established a baseline for its current state and capacity to address accessibility in the community. The City is well-positioned to integrate new initiatives and policies that will make a tangible impact on accessibility for residents and visitors of Regina.

General

The following actions are not specific to one service delivery area.

1. Ensure ongoing engagement and accountability throughout implementation of this Plan

- 1.1. Develop a process to report annually on the progress achieved as outlined by the Accessibility Plan, and to review and update the Plan every two years – Short-term
- 1.2. Transition the project team for the development of the Accessibility Plan into an ongoing community of practice, where representatives from all departments meet on a regular basis to develop and sustain existing expertise on accessibility throughout the corporation – Short-term
- 1.3. Define corporate language and a City-wide approach to accessibility and universal design, to be applied consistently across all departments – Short-term
- 1.4. Create a plan for ongoing engagement with people with disabilities and older adults, ensuring that remuneration for lived expertise is included – Short-term
- 1.5. Explore opportunities to increase engagement and impact of Accessibility Advisory Committee – Short-term
- 1.6. Work with third-party vendors currently contracted by the City to ensure their platforms are accessible – Ongoing

Built environment

An accessible built environment directly enhances social inclusion by promoting dignity and independence for people accessing and participating in Regina's spaces, programs and services. Accessibility in the built environment refers to the ease with which individuals can move and navigate throughout the City's facilities and parks, regardless of their physical ability or disability. It involves the ability to safely and independently engage with programs in City facilities and effectively move through the urban landscape.

This plan addresses City-owned and -maintained aspects of the built environment, including City-operated parks, open spaces, trails, sidewalks, buildings (such as recreation facilities, cultural spaces and City Hall), and utility services infrastructure (such as solid waste, recycling, wastewater, snow removal).

Recommendations and actions:

2. Improve snow removal on City sidewalks and streets

- 2.1. Conduct a sidewalk plow pilot, alongside current road snow-clearing – Short-term
- 2.2. Review the current capacity of the Snow Angels Community Grant program and develop a plan to expand or supplement it – Short-term
- 2.3. Implement a new snow removal app and identify ways to integrate accessibility features and considerations into future app updates – Short-term
- 2.4. Define priority areas for sidewalk clearing and expand sidewalk snow removal accordingly. Consider including bicycle lanes and multi-use pathways – Short-term
- 2.5. Ensure snow on sidewalks is cleared within 24 hours downtown and 48 hours in other areas – Short-term
- 2.6. Encourage the public's participation in prompt snow clearing – Short-term

3. Improve sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure

- 3.1. Enhance accessibility and safety of pedestrian infrastructure for individuals who are blind or who have low vision.
 - a. Upgrade a minimum of 15 traffic signal locations annually from standard pedestrian activators to accessible pedestrian signals (APS) – Short-term/Ongoing
 - b. Continue to work with CNIB to expand access to audible wayfinding within the city – Mid-term
 - c. Ensure a pedestrian app compatible with the City's APS system is activated and working properly, enabling people to activate the APS by phone – Short-term
- 3.2. Review and implement signalized pedestrian crosswalks to increase safety and visibility of pedestrians crossing the street – Mid-term
- 3.3. Establish a sidewalk accessibility and quality working group, including members of all relevant City departments – Short-term
 - a. Communicate the objective for the number of sidewalk distresses repaired annually – Short-term
 - b. Ensure Pedestrian Connectivity Program upgrades are prioritized using an accessibility lens – Short-term
 - c. Ensure On-Street Bike Lane and Multi-Use Pathway Program upgrades are prioritized using an accessibility lens – Short-term

- d. Increase the budget dedicated to sidewalk maintenance, with additional funds to address the backlog of repairs including utility cuts, trip hazard removal, and irregular ramps – Short-term
- e. Review criteria for prioritizing sidewalks for inspections and repair – Mid-term
- 3.4. Communicate service-level agreements for timelines on repairs after sidewalks are torn out, disturbed or otherwise temporarily out of service – Short-term
- 3.5. Install new pedestrian ramps at all street corners when replacing sidewalks. Consider including park access locations. Ensure that the ramps logically connect on either side of the street, creating a complete path of travel – Short-term
- 3.6. Ensure that sidewalk design standards include pedestrian ramps at all corners and are perpendicular to crosswalks – Short-term
- 3.7. Fulfill the Transportation Master Plan's goal to create a Complete Streets Framework. Ensure the Framework includes best practices on material, slope, use of Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSIs), sidewalk-driveway interactions, median refuges, location of benches and potential obstructions (garbage cans, signs), crosswalks and pedestrian activated crossing signals – Mid-term

4. Improve accessibility of City facilities

- 4.1. Complete the Accessible Signage policy roll-out by communicating with all relevant business areas and developing a process to monitor and ensure that standards are being upheld – Short-term
- 4.2. Integrate the Accessible Signage Policy and the recommendations from the accessibility audits into the design of wayfinding when upgrading wayfinding in City facilities – Short-term
- 4.3. Complete the remaining accessibility audits for 40 public-facing City facilities – Complete
- 4.4. Complete accessibility audits for additional City buildings, including other public and non-public facilities – Mid-term
- 4.5. Develop a strategy to address priority recommendations, including emergency system upgrades, as identified in the accessibility audits of public-facing City facilities – Short-term
- 4.6.
 - a. Develop a universal design policy to inform all aspects of built environment utilizing industry best practices (such as The Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification, or CSA B651-23).

- b. Develop or adopt design standards for all new or renovated City facilities. Include interior and exterior elements.

5. Improve accessibility of City parks and playgrounds

- 5.1. Ensure an accessibility lens is applied to the City's forthcoming washroom strategy for parks – Short-term
- 5.2. Ensure an accessibility lens is applied when identifying parks for renewal and investment – Ongoing
- 5.3. Review and update standards for parks and outdoor recreation spaces to align with overarching accessible design policy developed in 4.6 – Ongoing
- 5.4. Complete the development of Accessible Playground Standards, in consultation with community – Short-term

6. Support the private sector to improve accessibility of privately owned properties and facilities

- 6.1. Review the Revitalization and Intensification Incentive Programs with an accessibility lens to ensure they support accessibility upgrades for privately owned buildings.

Transportation

Accessible transportation—including bus service, taxi and ride-hailing services—is essential for ensuring that people with disabilities and older adults are able to fully participate in the community and remain independent in their homes. Accessible transportation opens the door to greater opportunities for community integration, including employment opportunities, recreation, socialization and access to essential services like healthcare. Not everyone owns or can rely on a personal vehicle. An integrated, accessible transportation network supports environmental sustainability and the social fabric of the City.

Recommendations and actions:

7. Improve accessible taxi service

- 7.1. Approve and implement the proposed bylaw updates for providing additional accessible taxi licences – Short-term

- 7.2. Develop central scheduling and dispatch for all accessible taxi services, expanding the integrated transit service delivery model detailed in the Regina Transit Master Plan – Short-term
- 7.3. Develop and deliver comprehensive disability awareness training for both accessible and non-accessible taxi drivers, and securement training for all accessible taxi drivers. Require taxi staff to have refresher training every 24 months – Short-term

8. Improve transit accessibility

- 8.1. Fulfill the Regina Transit Master Plan goals and implement all recommendations related to accessibility. Consult the disability community around recommendations for prioritizing initiatives – Mid-term
- 8.2. Fulfill the integrated transit service delivery model detailed in the Regina Transit Master Plan. Conduct regular reviews of the model's impact on accessibility – Short-term
- 8.3. Increase transit funding to increase bus frequency and service hours – Short-Mid-term
- 8.4. Review transit and paratransit disability awareness training and improve accordingly. Require all transit and paratransit staff to participate in refresher training in disability awareness and securement every 24 months – Mid-term
- 8.5. Review braille signage at bus stops and ensure that it is at the right height/location and correctly communicates the intended information – Short-term

Communication

As technology advances, there are more opportunities and ways for individuals with disabilities to obtain information and participate in community discussions. Accessible information formats and diverse communication methods improve access to information for everyone.

Opportunities to access digital information have improved significantly in recent years, especially with the integration of closed captioning in digital meeting software and the ability to offer digital and hybrid events.

Many engagement participants shared that people need to be aware of the specific accessibility features that a given space, program or service offers, so that they can determine for themselves if it meets their individual needs. When people with disabilities have this level of

information, they can more effectively assess available opportunities, programs and services, which can then help increase participation in the community and reduce social isolation.

Recommendations and actions:

9. Enhance communication regarding accessibility features and services

- 9.1. Develop a strategy to communicate existing accessibility features to the public – Short-term
 - a. Communicate accessibility features of conventional transit – Short-term
 - b. Review and update the City of Regina’s “Accessibility” webpage. Ensure it is easy to find and provides information and links to adaptive and inclusive programs, information, and services – Short-term
 - c. Review and update listing of accessible features in City spaces, programs, and services. Make this list available both digitally and in print, and update and distribute it annually – Short-term
- 9.2. Develop a process for fielding questions or concerns related to accessibility – Short-term
- 9.3. Share “good news” stories about work the City is doing to advance accessibility – Ongoing

10. Improve the Accessibility of City of Regina Communications

- 10.1. Develop an Accessible Communication Policy that outlines the standards of practice and procedures for communications across all City documents, forms, bills, meetings and events – Short-term
 - a. Implement the Accessible Communication Policy across all City departments – Short-term
 - b. Hire a staff member—or engage a consultant—who specializes in accessible documents, digital accessibility, and technology – Short-term
 - c. Develop a policy or set of best practices for hiring ASL interpreters and providing captions and CNS (Computerized Note-taking Services) for City events, Council meetings, and announcements where important information is disseminated by the City – Short-term
- 10.2. Develop a system for ensuring that all key City communications are available in digital and non-digital formats – Mid-term

Employment

As a significant employer in the region, the City of Regina has a responsibility to offer inclusive employment opportunities. In doing so, it supports the representation of diverse perspectives in the City and allows members of the community to see themselves reflected in the workforce. Accessibility in employment includes ease of access to the City's hiring processes, procedures for providing accommodations, and the types of accessibility accommodations that are provided throughout the hiring process and overall employment cycle.

Inclusive employment, as part of the City's Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) framework, ensures that the entire community sees themselves as being able to participate in employment opportunities with the City. Hiring people with disabilities creates huge benefits to the organization as well. On average, an employee with a disability is 72% more likely to stay in their position, and 90% performed equally or better than their coworkers without disabilities. Due to the nature of managing barriers in everyday life, a person with a disability is also six times more likely to be innovative and effectively anticipate change.⁸

Recommendations and actions:

11. Improve staff competency related to accessibility and disability

- 11.1. Identify or develop appropriate disability and accessibility awareness training, and make training mandatory for all City staff including for all new hires through the onboarding process – Short-term
- 11.2. Establish equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility training as mandatory for managers, directors, and executive directors – Mid-term
- 11.3. Review current training offered to the Talent Acquisition team to identify ways of making it more inclusive – Mid-term

12. Increase recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities

- 12.1. Develop and implement an inclusive hiring strategy that addresses accessibility concerns related to recruitment (including the accessibility of job postings and ability to apply) and supports the entire onboarding and promotion cycle of an employee with a disability.

⁸ Hiring People with Disabilities is Good for Business in "New Normal." Presidents Group. 2020

- a. Review the application process and implement strategies to improve the accessibility of applying for jobs – Short-term
 - b. Reposition the City's Accessibility and Accommodation Statements from the bottom of job postings, to the top, to feature them more prominently – Short-term
 - c. Continue to deepen and strengthen the Talent Acquisition team's community partnerships with 4to40, Creative Options Regina, Autism Resource Centre, and other groups – Short-term
 - d. Re-work the employee declaration form to define when self-declaration is included and why it is useful to the organization. Describe the benefits of declaring – Short-term
 - e. Develop a job carving program to place people with disabilities in roles specifically designed to meet their needs and capacities, and then bridge those employees into standard City positions – Mid-term
- 12.2. Review new job postings to ensure that they are reflective of the true work requirements such as the need for a driver's license or being able to lift a minimum requirement – Mid-term/Ongoing

13. Develop and improve policies and processes for workplace accommodations

- 13.1. Explore opportunities to remove barriers to flexibility in working hours, including offering roles that are less than full-time or offering roles as Full Time Equivalent (FTE) – Mid-term
- 13.2. Improve and communicate the disability case management program (including accommodation process) – Short-term
- 13.3. Formalize workplace accommodation process for recruitment and onboarding of new employees – Short-term



Programs, services and financial

The goal of increasing accessibility of Regina's services and programs is to enhance meaningful participation in community life by people of all abilities and ages. Integrating accessibility in the planning processes for City services and programs minimizes the necessity for last-minute modifications or accommodations and encourages individuals to participate in community programming, rather than self-selecting out with the assumption that their accessibility needs may not be met. Improving access to programs and services contributes to a more interconnected, healthy and inclusive community.

Leveraging and learning from the Adapted Recreation Plan's initiatives, Regina has the opportunity to improve accessibility within all City programs and services – from events to grants to bill payments.

Recommendations and actions:

14. Improve accessibility of existing programs and services

- 14.1. Implement the Adapted Recreation Plan approved in 2022 – Ongoing
- 14.2. Consider expanding the Affordable Access program and Water, Tax and Waste Affordability programs to people with disabilities – Short-term

15. Improve accessibility at events organized by the City and/or within City spaces

- 15.1. Review accessibility offerings at City-run events and develop a plan to integrate best practices (such as elevated viewing platforms, accessible toilets, maps, parking, and ASL) – Mid-term
- 15.2. Develop an accessibility best practices checklist to support event coordinators during the planning process of events booked at City facilities and spaces – Short-term

16. Remove barriers to accessing financial programs and services

- 16.1. Review the grant application process and related forms for accessibility and improve accessibility during future updates to the program – Mid-term
- 16.2. Make accessibility upgrades explicitly eligible for funding under the Home Rental Repair and Revitalization Programs – Short-term
- 16.3. Ensure and publicize that opportunities to pay municipal taxes and fulfill other municipal financial obligations include both in-person and online options – Mid-term
- 16.4. When updating the design of utility bills, ensure the new design is reviewed with an accessibility lens – Short-term

Procurement

Procurement involves the process of seeking and obtaining goods and services. The goal of inclusive procurement is to ensure that the City not only collaborates with contractors who can supply fairly priced products or services promptly, but also incorporates considerations for accessibility and universal design during the bidding and proposal process.

An accessibility-oriented approach to evaluating the policies, practices and decision-making processes of vendors is essential to advancing accessibility in the City. Accessible procurement should incorporate accessibility into organizational structures, changing how the City purchases goods and services, weaving accessibility into the ethos of the organization, and allowing the City to offer more inclusive services for all residents.

Recommendations and actions:

17. Improve accessibility of procurement processes

- 17.1. Finalize and implement the Sustainable Procurement Protocol, including ensuring an accessibility lens is applied to the review of all proposals – Short-term
- 17.2. Clearly indicate in requests for proposals whether timelines are fixed, tentative, or flexible, and whether there are any other relevant accommodations – Short-term
- 17.3. Review Indigenous Procurement Policy and assess whether any of the strategies or approaches adopted in that policy should be adopted with regards to firms owned or operated by people with disabilities – Short-term
- 17.4. Review the impact of the Sustainable Procurement Protocol on accessibility, including representation of successful vendors with disabilities – Mid-term

Key outcomes

In addition to the priorities and actions outlined above, the following list summarizes the key outcomes that can be used to measure the Plan's mid- and long-term impact on increasing accessibility in Regina.

- Accessibility is regarded as a key, collaborative and corporate responsibility across all City departments.
- Staff capacity around accessibility and disability awareness has increased through training opportunities and educational resources.
- Each department has developed an understanding of its current state and level of progress towards advancing future accessibility efforts.
- Residents with lived experience are included in and contribute to early stages of planning and development for City-led projects, policies and plans.
- Transportation, including snow removal and sidewalk maintenance, are prioritized for accessibility.
- Communication of accessibility features, programs and services are made readily available to residents.
- Communications include accessibility best practices (such as captions, ASL, alt-text and transcriptions) on the website and other digital platforms and social media.



Conclusion

This Accessibility Plan represents the City's commitment to advancing accessibility and becoming an age-friendly city, while centering the voices of people with disabilities and older adults.

Alongside new provincial regulations, the City of Regina is demonstrating its commitment to accessibility by prioritizing strategies and actions that remove and prevent barriers to participation in civic life for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Accessibility has benefits for all people in Regina. When people with disabilities are given the tools to actively engage in and shape the community, their lived-experience perspectives can help create a City that is not only accessible, but welcoming and inclusive to everyone.

Appendix A: Glossary of terms

The terms of accessibility and disability are complex and ever-changing as society grows and develops. The Saskatchewan Government defines **Accessibility** as follows:

“Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. Accessibility is about removing barriers so people can feel included and have independence. Accessibility is important for everyone, especially people with disabilities.”⁹

Accessible Pedestrian Signage (APS): “Provides auditory, visual and tactile information so that a person with vision and/or hearing loss will know when it’s safe (i.e., when the walk phase begins) to cross at a set of traffic signals. In addition, an APS may provide information to help a person with blindness travel in a straight line across a street or roadway.”¹⁰ APS was previously referred to as audible pedestrian signals.

Accommodations: Reactive measures that seek to remove barriers caused by inaccessible design, programming or processes.¹¹

ALT-Text: Also known as ‘alternative text,’ explains the look or purpose of an image, chart or other visual information. Screen readers, used by individuals who are blind, read the ALT-text aloud, allowing them the full experience of the information provided that is otherwise only available to those with full vision.

American Sign Language (ASL): “A complete, natural language that has the same linguistic properties as spoken languages, with grammar that differs from English. ASL is expressed by movements of the hands and face”.¹²

Attitudinal barriers: When barriers are created by people acting upon false ideas when interacting with people with disabilities.

⁹ The Accessible Saskatchewan Act - Summary | Accessibility Legislation for Saskatchewan, 2023

¹⁰ Clearing our Path. CNIB Foundation, 2019

¹¹ Accessibility Vs. Accommodation, Accessibility @ UW-Madison, 2023

¹² What Is American Sign Language (ASL)?, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 2021

Barrier: “Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with [a disability]. Barriers can be caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.”¹³

Braille: “A form of written language for [people with sight loss], in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.”¹⁴

Communication Access Real Time (CART): “The live, word-for-word transcription of speech to text so that individuals can read what is being said in group settings and at personal appointments on a laptop or a larger screen. CART services can be provided on-site or remotely, in both English and French, via a secure website.”¹⁵

Disability: A complex term that is based on a person’s physical body experiencing barriers created by the environment that prevent a person from fully participating in the community to the greatest extent possible. Many members of the disability community prefer the term disability, however this is not necessarily the case for everyone, and other terms may be preferable for some members of the community.

The Accessible Saskatchewan Act defines disability as: “Any impairment that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual’s full and equal participation in society, and includes:

- (a) a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment; and
- (b) a functional limitation;

whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not.”¹⁶

¹³ Accessible British Columbia Act. Government of British Columbia, 2021.

¹⁴ Braille - The Reading Fingers. Translate Plus, 2015

¹⁵ CART – Communication Access Realtime Translation, Canadian Hearing Services, 2023

¹⁶ The Accessible Saskatchewan Act - Summary | Accessibility Legislation for Saskatchewan, 2023

Equity: “Equity is the fair treatment and access to equal opportunity (justice) that allows the unlocking of one’s potential, leading to the further advancement of all peoples. The equity pursuit is about the identification and removal of barriers to ensure the full participation of all people and groups.”¹⁷

Inclusion: “Inclusion is a universal human right and its objective is to accept, welcome and embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, medical or other need. Inclusion consists of the efforts and practices to ensure groups or individuals with different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and treated equally.”¹⁸

Inclusive employment: Inclusive employment refers to a work environment that actively seeks to accommodate and integrate individuals with disabilities into the workforce.

Invisible disability: “A physical, mental or neurological condition that is not visible from the outside, yet can limit or challenge a person’s movements, senses, or activities.”¹⁹

Plain language: “A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find and use that information.”²⁰

Multi-use pathways: “Off street pathways that are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and can be used by any non motorized user. This includes people walking, cycling, skateboarding, kick scootering, in-line skating, and using other active modes. Multi-use pathways may also be referred to as shared-use pathways, multi-use trails and boulevard multi-use pathways.”²¹

Neurodivergent/neurodiversity: An umbrella term used to describe differences in the way people’s brains work. The term often refers to individuals with autism spectrum disorder but also can refer to other neurological differences including ADHD, sensory integration disorders, etc.

¹⁷ Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 2021

¹⁸ What is Inclusion? Inclusion Ontario. 2022

¹⁹ What is an invisible disability? Invisible Disabilities Association, 2023

²⁰ What is Plain Language? Plain Language Network. 2023

²¹ British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide. Government of British Columbia, 2019.

Tactile: Tactile information, signals and wayfinding provide the means for individuals to access information through touch, either by input through their hands (e.g. raised print) or information received by tapping a white cane.

Universal Design: “The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.”²²

Wayfinding: “Wayfinding has the function to inform people of the surroundings in the (unfamiliar) built environment. It is important to show information at strategic points to guide people into the right directions.”²³

²² Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. National Disability Authority, 2020.

²³ Introduction to Wayfinding. Design Workplan. 2023

Appendix B: Environmental scan and community snapshot

Regina Accessibility Plan:

Environmental Scan and Community Snapshot

Prepared for the City of Regina - August 2023

Introduction

Regina, a city with a population of 226,404, stands out with a higher percentage (24.1%) of individuals aged 15 and over identifying as having a disability compared to the national average of 22% (based on 2017 census data). Further, the Age-Friendly Regina Report underlines that older adults, who currently make up 17.8% of Regina's population, are the fastest growing demographic group in Canada. It is therefore essential to make Regina more accessible to meet the needs of early one quarter of its population and ensure that seniors - a growing population that doesn't always identify as having a disability - are able to live and participate in society. Enhancing accessibility in the city will benefit many residents.

Examining the broader picture in Saskatchewan, people with disabilities face challenges in finding employment, with over half (50.3%) experiencing unemployment. Further, in 2012, 56.23% of the people aged 15 years and over living in Saskatchewan with disabilities who earned employment income, received below the equivalent of a living wage. Notably, disability-related complaints make up a significant portion of formalized complaints to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. On a positive note, there are several programs in place that offer accessible transportation and recreational activities for individuals with disabilities. For instance, the City has adapted transit and an agreement for Accessible Taxi services catering to paratransit customers. The Province also has issued a substantial number (24,608) of Accessible Parking Programs Permits.

Documents Reviewed

For the Environmental Scan and Community Snapshot, the following documents were reviewed:

- Regina Adapted Recreation Plan (ARP)
- Regina ARP - Consultant Report
- Age Friendly Regina Report and Survey
- 2SLGBTQIAP+ Regina report
- Regina Transportation Master Plan
- Regina Community Safety and Well-being Plan
- Design Regina Official Community Plan
- Indigenous Procurement Policy
- The Accessible Saskatchewan Act
- My Accessibility Plan - Toronto
- Vancouver Accessibility Strategy
- Accessible Canada Act
- Accessible BC Act

Current Accessibility-focused Policies

The City of Regina has several policies with a clear focus on improving accessibility: The *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*; the *Adapted Recreation Plan*; and an *Accessible Signage Policy*. The City is

also currently working on *Accessible Playground Standards*. Further, the City is advancing accessibility in numerous departments by improving accessible hiring practices, enhancing accessible communications, offering staff training around accessibility, and improving accessibility at bus stops and shelters.

The *Regina Community Safety and Well-being* report surveyed residents on the accessibility of a range of facilities (Figure 1). Greenspaces and parks are the service area that residents find are most accessible. Programs for developing skills and abilities were the least accessible, likely due to the multiple factors that need to align for such sessions to be accessible: the building, timing, cost, process for booking spaces, and the availability of support people. The most common response on all other services areas (except transit) is “somewhat accessible,” which both underlines the value of Regina’s existing efforts on accessibility, and the progress that needs to be made. Accordingly, accessibility became one of nine Foundational Commitments in the *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*.

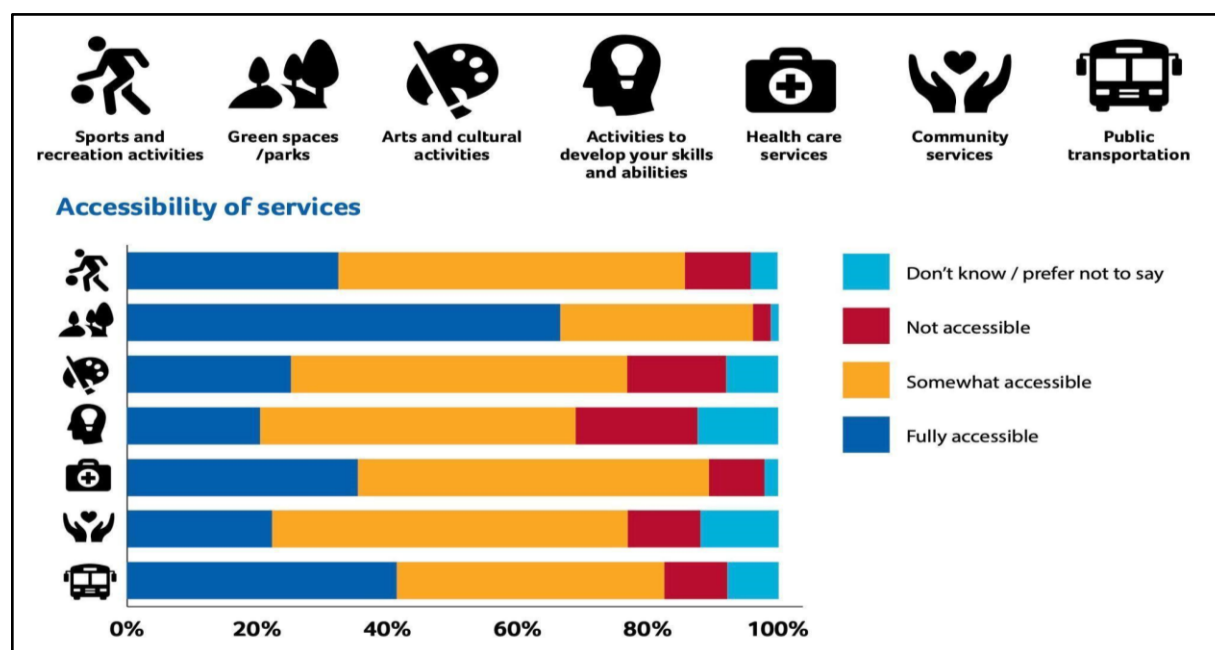


Figure 1: Survey results regarding the accessibility of services for the *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*

The Regina ARP Consultant Report found that the biggest barrier to residents accessing programming is the lack of information about these services (Figure 2). It is striking that this problem was mentioned more than accessibility barriers in the programs themselves, which was the second most common problem identified. Also notable were lack of trust, lack of transportation options, inaccessible entrances, and a lack of staff available to support people with physical and mental disabilities.

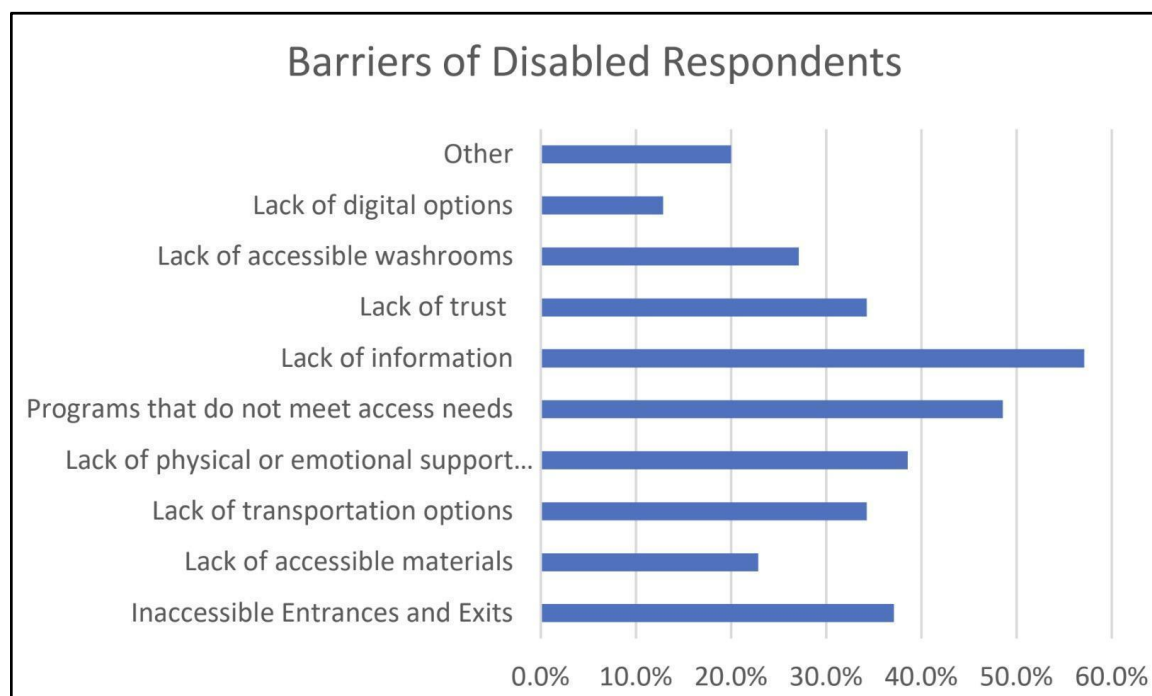


Figure 2: Survey results regarding barriers to accessibility, for the Adapted Recreation Plan

The ARP report emphasizes that substantial funding will be needed to address accessibility barriers, including for: improved communications, transit, paratransit, programming options, accessible recreation facilities, training current staff, and hiring staff with expertise and lived experience in accessibility. In response to this report, starting in 2022, the City allocated a \$1.02M budget to addressing these needs, with a focus on Recreation staff training, Paratransit expansion, communications improvements, program expansion and facility upgrades. From 2023 to 2027, \$2.5M of the capital budget (\$500,000 per year) has been allocated for accessibility upgrades to recreation facilities.

Cultural and Demographic groups

The *Accessible Canada Act* lists the following three groups that should be consulted in the development accessibility standards:

- A. “individuals with disabilities;
- B. individuals and other persons that support individuals with disabilities; and
- C. persons that are likely to be subject to the accessibility standards.”

There can be important distinctions between the needs of these groups, and one should therefore avoid adopting a “one size fits all” approach. Various reports emphasized the diversity of these needs: while neurodivergent people may need access to quiet rooms for mind-body regulation, diabetics may need access to safe needle-drop locations.

Key intersections within the disability community include: people with cognitive disabilities; people with physical disabilities; people with multiple disabilities; Indigenous and/or racialized people with disabilities; people with disabilities who are also low income; people with disabilities who identify as 2SLGBTQIA; youth with disabilities; and seniors.

Groups have different needs during consultation sessions as well. The CSWB report noted that many Indigenous consultation sessions were held online during the pandemic, which created challenges for how to conduct appropriate ceremonies for each session.

Accessibility by Service Areas

To help City staff apply an accessibility lens to work across all departments, without creating silos within each department, we have organized accessibility findings around six service areas. These service areas will also become the framework for actions to advance accessibility that emerge in the project recommendations. The service areas detailed below are:

- Built Environment
- Transportation
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Services and Programs
- Procurement and Financial Services

Built Environment

The reviewed documents identified the following priority areas in the built environment.

Barrier of Sidewalks and Maintenance. The lack of maintenance and snow clearing for sidewalks can greatly restrict mobility. Gravel paths can also prevent people in wheelchairs from enjoying many parks. Reports also noted the importance of sidewalk maintenance and safety for elderly people. Wide, dangerous, high-speed intersections were noted as a major problem. Crossing times at large crosswalks should also last longer to give older adults and other slower-moving people more time to cross. There is also a need for more benches, to give people time to rest. Some areas lack sidewalks entirely, such as much of Regina’s East end.

The Regina Transportation Master Plan emphasizes the central role of accessible sidewalks for transportation, and prioritizes many of these same issues: improved pedestrian signals, curb ramps, and sidewalk maintenance. To achieve this, it proposes to update sidewalk design standards, improve the inspection and maintenance policies for sidewalks, identify and fill gaps in the sidewalk network, and direct funding to audible crosswalk signals. The plan sets a goal of creating a “citywide ... universally accessible walking experience.”

- *According to [CBC News](#), in 2021, there were 500 service requests regarding sidewalks in the City of Regina. The City monitors and maintains approximately 1,400 kilometres of sidewalks. Only about half are in good or excellent condition.*

Accessible Buildings. Residents face a wide variety of barriers when attempting to access buildings. Some infrastructure that are intended to add accessibility can create barriers: participants in ARP engagement reported that often, door openers do not stay open long enough or are not functional.

- *The City proposes to commit \$500,000 in 2023-24 to implement the results of the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Audits at Recreation facilities.*
- *The City has also committed \$2,500,000 over the next five years.*

Barriers to accessing buildings can prevent residents from reaching programming that would benefit them. For example, people with diverse gender or sexual identities, who also have disabilities, struggle to access spaces that are intended for them in Regina, such as Q Nightclub, according to the 2SLGBTQIAP+ Regina Report.

Lack of Adequate Washrooms and Changing Spaces. One third of respondents to the ARP Consultation Report expressed frustration over the absence of fully accessible washrooms in community centers and rinks. The absence of accessible changing spaces means that many people with disabilities need much more time to participate in programming. These two gaps represent central barriers to using city facilities.

The 2SLGBTQIAP+ Regina report raises similar concerns about the lack of gender-neutral public washrooms and changing rooms for non-binary people, which means that a large number of people need to use a limited number of single-person, accessible washrooms, reducing their availability for people with disabilities.

- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 34% of respondents did not feel that there were enough accessible washrooms in Regina (45% did not know).
 - In the 2022-23 Age-Friendly City survey, 29% felt this way (52% did not know)

Accessibility for the Visually Impaired. The ARP Consultation Report notes the need for better lighting on streets, and for clearer yellow markings at the edge of roadways, to protect those with reduced vision. Intersections should also include audible pedestrian signals (APS) for people who are blind. The City has prioritized adding APS at intersections, however, many still do not have this important accessibility feature.

- According to the [City of Regina](#), the city currently has 69 intersections equipped with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (out of 232 traffic-signalized intersections within the city). The City is committed to retrofitting six signalized intersections with APS each year.

Accessibility for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Emergency alarm systems should not rely entirely on sound, but should also incorporate visual cues, such as flashing lights. Participants of the ARP consultation also expressed frustration with the over-reliance in some contexts (such as transit stations) on providing important information via loudspeaker. Providing information at City locations in both auditory and visual formats will ensure a greater range of Regina residents are able to access key communication around changes or even emergencies as they occur.

Neurodiversity Accessibility. ARP Survey respondents emphasized the need for people who are neurodivergent to have access to designated areas where individuals can retreat and re-regulate, so that they can then re-engage in programming. In this context, the focus was on recreation facilities; however, it is also relevant for other City facilities.

Lack of Accessible Equipment in Fitness Facilities. The majority of gyms are privately owned, and most do not provide accessible equipment. Participants of the ARP consultation recommended adding more hand bikes to City fitness facilities, or other machines that allow people in wheelchairs to easily transfer themselves into the active position.

Housing and Community

Design Regina emphasizes the need for accessible housing and communities. It calls for the construction of a greater abundance and diversity of accessible housing, so that people with disabilities can find housing appropriate for their needs and income. It calls for positioning accessible homes in accessible communities, in which residents can reach a range of transit, programs, services, parks, and employment opportunities without encountering barriers. In this way, people with disabilities can access everything they need, and older adults can age in place. The plan aims to achieve this, in part, through rules established in planning and subdivision.

According to [Statistics Canada](#), the share of publicly owned social and affordable housing assets that are barrier free²⁴ in Saskatchewan in 2020 were:

- 3.0% of single detached houses;
- 3.0% of semi-detached houses;
- 7.0% of row houses;
- 26.0% of apartment buildings fewer than five storeys and
- 100% of apartment buildings of five or more storeys.

Housing affordability was a major issue highlighted in Age-Friendly City engagement.

- In the 2020 survey, 55% of respondents felt that housing for older adults in Regina was not affordable.
 - In the ongoing 2022-23 survey, 51% of respondents report that housing in Regina is not affordable for older adults.
- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 48% of respondents felt there was not enough subsidized housing available for low-income older adults in Regina.
 - In the ongoing 2022-23 survey, 43% of respondents felt this way.

In 2016, the Mental Health Commission of Canada found that between 25% and 50% of people who are unhoused in Canada have a disability or mental health issue. A range of experts in the intersection

²⁴ Barrier free design: A building and its facilities can be approached, entered and used by persons with physical or sensory disabilities. They contain no architectural, design or psychological features that might prevent anyone, able-bodied or otherwise, from using the building or amenities.

of disability and homelessness recommend a Housing First approach for those experiencing homelessness and co-morbidities.

Transportation

Sidewalk Design, Maintenance and Snow Clearance

This issue is detailed above, under Built Environment; however, it is also important to note here.

Ensuring that all sidewalks include curb cuts and APS is an important step to advancing accessibility in Regina. The City is making advances in this regard, and having an annual measure of how many intersections have been improved - and how many remain in need of upgrade - will be important. Given that people with disabilities are less likely to own and drive their own car, accessible sidewalks are important for moving through the city, and even to simply reach a bus stop.

Sidewalk maintenance was also highlighted as a key issue in other documents, including the Regina Transportation Master Plan and Adapted Recreation Plan. Currently, about half of the 1,400 kilometres of sidewalk maintained by the City are in good or excellent condition. The remainder vary in condition; however, with such a large share in moderate, poor or unpassable condition, someone using a mobility device is unlikely to take a route that they don't know well because of the risk they reach a segment of sidewalk that they cannot pass. An adjacent issue here is lighting, which was highlighted as an issue in terms of walkability in the Regina Community Safety and Well-being survey.

- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 65% of participants did not feel sidewalks in most or all areas of their neighbourhood were well-maintained.
 - In the ongoing 2022-23 Age-Friendly City survey, 59% of respondents have felt this way.

Snow Clearance

As a city where snow may be present for nearly half the year, it is vital to accessibility that snow clearance on sidewalks be addressed in a comprehensive manner, by the City. The City has recently expanded its sidewalk snow clearance operations to cover approximately 250 kilometers of sidewalks. Snow clearance for the remaining 1100+ kilometers of sidewalks in Regina fall under the private responsibility of the adjacent property owners. The City recently instituted a new sidewalk snow-clearing bylaw, which requires homeowners to remove snow to the edges of the sidewalk, as close to the concrete as possible, or face a \$300 fine. However, there is still inconsistency in the clearance - timing, width and depth - and, crucially, also risks creating situations where people with disabilities, including seniors, who cannot shovel their own sidewalks, face penalization based on this new bylaw.

- In 2022, the [Snow Angels Community Grant](#) funded 11 organizations a total of \$100,003.33 to conduct the program that targets households where one or more members experience barriers to shoveling snow from their property and who would not otherwise be able to access snow removal services.
- The proposed 2023-24 City budget for Winter Roads Maintenance is \$8,597,000. This line includes winter maintenance activities to roads, alleys and sidewalks.
- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 55% of respondents did not agree that snow clearing in their neighbourhood was done in a timely manner so walking and driving were safe.
 - In the ongoing 2022-23 Age-Friendly City survey, 58% of respondents did not agree.

Public Transit

The Regina Transportation Master Plan underlines that transit “is especially important for residents with disabilities and reduced mobility,” and it is therefore a high priority to ensure it is accessible. It proposes to integrate accessibility as one of the central goals of its planning process. It will conduct an audit of all transit stops to ensure they are all accessible, and work with the city’s Accessibility Advisory Committee to find other improvements. It also expresses a desire to improve the paratransit system, but does not list specific actions. The Regina Community Safety and Well-being report notes that more frequent public transit stops are needed in accessible locations, or transit operators should have permission to let riders with disabilities off between stops

- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 29% of respondents felt that bus stops in Regina were convenient to use, and 29% also felt they were not convenient.
 - In the ongoing 2022-23 survey, 35% of respondents feel that bus stops are convenient to use, while 26% feel they are not convenient to use.

Paratransit

The ARP Consultation Report identifies transportation as a primary area of concern for people with disabilities and older adults. Paratransit in particular is a major area of concern. A major concern is the window of time in which people must be on the street or risk missing their ride. It can be hard for people to enjoy events when they feel anxious they may miss their transportation home. The 1-hour window for pickup makes it difficult for people to count on paratransit for appointments or fixed-start jobs; while the need to book well in advance undermines their ability to make spontaneous, flexible decisions. Respondents also expressed frustration that transit operators can be rough or rude while helping people onto vehicles.

- In 2022, the Paratransit system in Regina had 2,182 registrants.

- *The areas of the city where routes are most common are hospitals, recreation facilities, doctor offices, care facilities, churches, educational institutions, and malls.*
- *The average daily trips is 650 on weekdays and 225 during the weekend days.*
- *174,452 total rides took place in 2022.*
 - *35.6% of those passengers required a lift.*
- *The 2023-24 proposed City budget for Paratransit & Accessibility is \$7,302,000*
- *Regina received \$1,470,284 in grants from the Government of Saskatchewan as Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities in the 2021-22 budget.*
- *Starting in 2023, Paratransit added 2 new busses and 6000 additional service hours, specifically for recreation. This new service provides more flexibility than pre-existing Paratransit service.*

Parking

According to participants in the City's Age-Friendly Regina survey there is a shortage of accessible parking in busy areas. However, a comparison of survey feedback between 2020 and 2022-23 suggests this may be improving.

- In the 2020 Age-Friendly City survey, 40% of respondents said there was not enough accessible parking close to stores and services in Regina. This share has decreased to 27% in the 2022-23 survey, which remains open.

Accessible Taxis

There are limited accessible taxi services in Regina. In the last 10 years, the City has issued decals by lottery based on population. Currently, there are 18 decals in effect; however, there are only seven active accessible taxis operating in Regina. This gap has been attributed to rising costs of vehicles, broker fees, fuel and overall general cost of living increases. The City is currently revising the decal distribution process - moving from a lottery system to a system that rewards knowledge and experience around owning and operating an accessible taxi. As of July 2023, this bylaw change is in the process of taking place.

- *The proposed 2023-24 City budget allocates \$460,000 for Accessible Taxi Service Improvements*
- *The proposed 2023-24 City budget allocates \$646,000 for Transit On-Demand*

Information and Communications

Limited Awareness around Accessibility Offerings

Participants of both the Regina ARP Consultation Report and the Community Safety and Well-being Plan expressed that they often did not know about programs available to them, or whether programs

are accessible. This became evident during focus group sessions, when participants frequently let each other know about programs the others did not know about. Participants reported that they couldn't find a section on the City's website devoted to accessibility programs and services; however this section does exist. This suggests that greater awareness and digital wayfinding is required.

Accessibility Challenges on the City of Regina Website

Participants in the Regina ARP Consultation Report noted challenges in finding programs on the City's website or online leisure guide. This included limited screen-reader compatibility, not enough time to sign up for a program, "time-outs" while completing City forms and difficulty finding information about accessibility offerings for specific programs, or at specific facilities.

The City is currently updating the website to become WCAG compliant. In July 2023, the City also hired a Senior Communications Strategist with lived disability experience.

Defining Accessibility Offerings

Participants in the Regina ARP Consultation Report noted that accessibility offerings vary, even among City recreation facilities that are described as "fully accessible". The information on the City website about facilities does not equip people with the confidence that a facility is actually accessible. Rather than stating a facility is "wheelchair accessible" or "full accessible", participants recommended stating which accessibility offerings were available at each location and for specific programs.

- *In 2022 there were three communication panels in Gocki Park, Les Sherman Park and Regent Park that allow nonverbal individuals or people experiencing disabilities to share their needs or wants while using the park amenities.*

Employment

Employment issues in the documents reviewed focused on two issues: the widespread and chronic underemployment and diminished compensation for people with disabilities; and the need for employment access and meaningful roles within organizations such as the City of Regina. The first issue is detailed in an array of research on employment for people with disabilities in Canada. The second emphasizes the need for greater awareness and training among leadership and HR staff.

- *In 2017, the total number of employed persons with disabilities aged between 25 and 64 in Saskatchewan was 73,480. Of those employed persons, 32% required one or more workplace accommodations.*

- *In 2012, 56.2% of the people aged 15 years and over living in Saskatchewan with disabilities who earned employment income, received below the equivalent of a living wage for their work.*
- *Disability and employment complaints made up 67.1% of all complaints formalized by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in 2021-2022 .*
- *2.1% of the workforce in the Provincial Government were people with disabilities. (2018)*
- *From April 1, 2021-March 31, 2022, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities worked with 59 entrepreneurs with disabilities or health conditions of which 30 were new entrepreneurs, along with 26 persons who self-identified as women and five persons who self-identified as Indigenous persons. Thirty businesses were created, maintained or expanded during this fiscal year. The EDP staff provided a total of 261 business advisory services as well as 1,709 business information services to our entrepreneurs.*

Procurement

We did not identify any actions to enhance the accessibility of procurement in the documents reviewed. While no actions are currently being taken within these documents, there are steps – such as including accessibility as part of social impact evaluation criteria on RFPs and maintaining a list of firms owned by people with disabilities – that can be included to enhance accessibility in procurement processes. Following the completion of the document review, the project team learned that the City’s Procurement department is in the process of developing a Sustainable Procurement Protocol which will include a Supplier Assessment Tool that will score suppliers’ accessibility practices; this document was not reviewed within the scope of this environmental scan as it was not complete.

Programs and Services

Access

ARP Consultation respondents emphasized that the cost of programs and transit represents a major barrier. Older adults and people with disabilities are disproportionately low-income, and their disabilities often impose major costs, some obvious, some hidden. Relatively small fees can therefore be prohibitive. Participants recommended lower-cost transit and leisure passes for people with disabilities, older adults, or low-income people more generally. Lower-cost access to personal support workers would also enable people to attend more events. These recommendations align with a goal of Design Regina: to “establish programs and a fee structure to ensure that City programs, services and facilities are affordable, accessible, and welcoming to all residents of Regina.”

- *The [City](#) currently has 10 inclusive and adapted recreation programs (ranging from swimming to art).*

- *Informed by recommendations from ARP, the City also launched an Inclusion Support Service in 2023. The program is for anyone who may need support and/or guidance in program selection, overcoming barriers to participation and navigating the process of accessing recreation; as well as anyone who may need support staff within programs for emotional and social companionship, cognitive and behavioural support, adapting program activities and equipment.*

Intersectional Accessibility

The 2SLGBTQIAP+ Regina Report emphasizes that it is often difficult for people with disabilities to participate in programs intended for people with diverse genders or sexual preferences due to the lack of accessible spaces. One problem is that many of the spaces dedicated to these groups lack the necessary funding to make their spaces accessible. There is a need for specific space and programming for these groups. The report recommends creating all-body swimming and gym time, and all-gender youth sports, in contexts that are fully accessible.

- *The City budget includes an annual \$200,000 for a program intended to fund smaller facility improvement projects that will permit recreation program changes and accessibility improvements, improving the customer experience at the major recreation facilities.*
- *The City has started an All Bodies Swim pilot program for people who are transgender, non-binary and/or gender non-conforming, and their allies.*

Attitudes and Assumptions

Consultation respondents express that some city services are less accessible than they could be due to attitudes and mistaken assumptions. For example, many services are designed under the assumption that people with physical disabilities will arrive with someone to help them, which often is not the case. This assumption can place serious financial and social burdens on people with disabilities.

- *In 2022, the City granted \$1.7M to 50 community-based organizations through the Social Development stream of its Community Investment Grants Program.*
- *In 2022, the City funded \$203,790.90 to 12 different organizations under the [Adapted Sport & Recreation Grant](#)*

Integrated Public Health Strategy

There was a consensus among Community Safety and Well-being Plan consultation participants and many survey respondents that there is a lack of community services and programs to address multiple

issues in Regina, including addictions, mental health, homelessness, counseling, gangs, parenting, trauma, racism, stigma, poverty, employment, homophobia, ageism, etc.

Principles

The Community Safety and Well-being Plan details a series of Principles that are relevant to this project:

- **Accessibility:** We will ensure that everyone, including people with disabilities, has fair and equitable access to services, products and environments within Regina.
- **Anti-oppression:** We will recognize oppressions (systems of supremacy and discrimination perpetuated through differential treatment, ideological domination, and institutional control) that exist in society, seek to mitigate their effects and, ultimately, equalize the power imbalance in society.
- **Anti-Racism:** We will actively oppose racism by supporting changes and policies to advance economic and social life.
- **Collaboration:** We acknowledge the shared responsibility and need for collective action among all sectors to address local challenges and achieve change moving forward.
- **Diversity:** We value diversity and acknowledge that differences between people (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, country of origin, education, religion, geography, physical or cognitive abilities) are valued assets and commit to strive for diverse representation as a critical step toward equity.
- **Equity:** We commit to systemic equity, which is the pursuit of fairness, justice, and a focus on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group, recognizing different challenges, needs, and histories.
- **Intersectionality:** We acknowledge that multiple dynamics of privilege and oppression (i.e., race, gender, class, sexuality, age, ability, religion, citizenship/immigration status) operate simultaneously in complex and compounding ways and must be considered to fully understand oppression and how to address it.
- **Inclusion:** We will include and create space for different people and groups to engage in authentic and empowered participation, with a true sense of belonging and full access to opportunities.
- **Reconciliation:** We are committed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Calls to Action to establish and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada through awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted on Indigenous Peoples, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.

Additional principles that are key to the development of this plan are detailed below.

A principle held by accessibility advocates, noted in multiple reports, is: **“Nothing About Us Without Us”** People with disabilities expect to play a central role in making decisions about accessibility programs and implementation. This is also reflected in the expressed desire by ARP engagement participants for the City to actively engage people with disabilities on projects that will impact them.

One participant in the Regina ARP Consultation expressed another powerful principle that summarizes the consistency and quality that accessibility practices should achieve: **“I don’t want to wonder if I’m welcome, I want to know that I’m welcome.”**

Age Friendly Saskatchewan’s approach to creating **“Age Friendly Cities”** supports Design Regina’s strategic outcomes relating to serving the needs of “vulnerable and marginalized populations including seniors and older adults, and overall social inclusion.” The age-friendly movement also focuses on ensuring policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment enable people to ‘age actively’.

Not all principles are established locally. The Accessible Saskatchewan Act emphasizes that any accessibility act should meet the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, to which the consultant team would add that any accessibility act should also meet the **United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

Future Work

The Age Friendly Regina Report (2020) recommended against the City of Regina creating its own accessibility plan, while Saskatchewan developed its own Accessibility Act. However, the Accessible Saskatchewan Act is now going through readings, making this an appropriate time to pursue a plan for Regina specifically. Regina Community Safety and Well-being Plan (2021) also calls for creating a “shared policy frameworks to enhance the accessibility and inclusion of services” with 2-3 years.

The Accessible Saskatchewan Act sets the following top priorities:

- “making an accessibility plan;
- establishing the Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- creating the Saskatchewan Accessibility Office;
- identifying organizations required to follow the law; and
- making a process to provide feedback to government.”

The Act does not set deadlines for these actions, as the example of other provinces suggests that deadlines do not accelerate implementation.

The Regina Transportation Master Plan (2017) also lists a set of concrete actions for making the system more accessible:

- Create a “lead-by-example policy” in the short term, in which Regina will implement projects that demonstrate universal accessibility.
- Establish an internal Transportation Advisory Committee in the short term.
- “Integrate accessibility in overall transit planning process.”
- Invest in infrastructure to support more modes and accessibility in the medium term.

Appendix

Environmental Scan and Community Snapshot - Appendix A: Saskatchewan Statistics around Accessibility and Disability

- 24.3% of people aged 15 years and over living in Saskatchewan identify as living with a disability. 26% of women had a disability and 22% of men had a disability (2017) - [Statistics Canada](#)
 - In 2017, 22% Canadians aged 15 and older had a disability. 24% of women had a disability and 20% of men had a disability. - [Statistics Canada](#)
- In 2012, of the population aged 15 and over living in Saskatchewan without employment income, 29.9% were people with disabilities. - [Statistics Canada](#)
- In 2021, the [Accessibility Legislation Engagement Report](#) asked
 - “What type of disability do you, or someone you know, experience?” 891 participants responded. They could select more than one answer.
 - 64.8% Mobility
 - 39.6% Flexibility
 - 38.9% Mental Health
 - 38.6% Pain-Related
 - 34.1% Developmental
 - 32.5% Learning
 - 29.1% Dexterity
 - 23.9% Memory
 - 20.3% Seeing
 - 19.3% Hearing
 - 8.4% Other

- “What type of barriers do you, or someone you know, experience?” 886 participants responded. They could select more than one answer.
 - 75.6% Attitude Barriers
 - 74.8% Physical Barriers
 - 67.8% System Barriers
 - 55.0% Information and Communication Barriers
 - 40.4% Technology Barriers
 - 4.4% Other

Appendix C: What we heard report



What we heard report

Regina Accessibility Plan



September 28, 2023

Prepared by Happy Cities and Meaningful Access Consulting for the City of Regina

Executive summary

Introduction

The City of Regina (the City) is developing an Accessibility Plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to access in City spaces, programs, and services.

The goals of the Accessibility Plan (the Plan) are to:

- Gather input that is inclusive, meaningful, and respectful of the diverse voices in our community—of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities—in the spaces where they live, work, play, share, and learn. And, to ensure that the community feels represented in the plan.
- Identify, remove, and prevent barriers to equal participation that people with disabilities experience in the City’s public spaces, facilities, programs, services, and processes.
- Create a cohesive document that charts clear and tangible steps to improving accessibility across City offerings in Regina.

The Plan is being developed through a multi-phase process, led by a consultant team consisting of Happy Cities and Meaningful Access Consulting.

This report summarizes findings from community engagement, which included interviews with key stakeholders, a digital survey, focus groups, and pop-up events.

What we did

Overall, over 475 people participated in this engagement process through a wide range of activities. Community engagement included the following components:

- **Environmental scan and community snapshot:** A review of existing data, plans, and policy, including provincial legislation, to assess the City’s efforts to-date in supporting accessibility in Regina, and research on local statistics of people living with disabilities in Regina.
- **Indigenous engagement planning and partnerships:** Partnership with Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (RT/SIS) to develop outreach strategies to conduct meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities across and near Regina.

- **Stakeholder scoping:** The development of a comprehensive list of key stakeholders for this project, including residents living with disabilities, seniors, caregivers, and organizations that support or advocate for these groups.
- **Interviews:** One-on-one interviews with 12 key stakeholders to discuss the state of accessibility in Regina and identify priority barriers to address.
- **Digital survey:** A concise, plain language survey designed for the public to share input on the barriers and challenges they have faced when accessing services, spaces, or programs across Regina. In total, 223 people completed the survey using the Be Heard Regina platform.
- **Focus groups:** Seven sessions designed to discuss the purpose of the Accessibility Plan, the barriers and challenges faced by participants, and ideas for priority actions the City should take to address accessibility. This included three digital and two in-person sessions open to the public, one digital session with representatives from the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and one session with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers at RT/SIS. Over 80 people attended focus groups.
- **Pop-ups:** In-person, interactive events hosted at popular destinations to reach people who might not otherwise participate in other engagement activities and to provide them with the opportunity to share their priorities for the Plan. These included a pop-up at Sandra Schmirler Leisure Centre, two pop-ups at RT/SIS, a pop-up at The Nest shelter, and a booth at Queen City Pride. Over 160 people were engaged across all pop-up events.

These activities were supported through a comprehensive communications campaign that included the development of communications materials and a project webpage (www.regina.ca/accessibility) to promote the engagement activities and encourage the broader public to participate.

What we heard

In general, a major challenge shared by participants was the lack of clarity and consistency around what “accessible” truly means in Regina. Participants shared that “an accessible Regina” should look like:

- A city that is accessible for all, regardless of age or ability
- A city where people with disabilities are welcomed into the community
- A city where every new building and space is accessible
- A city that is:
 - Affordable
 - Well-connected and safe for walking and rolling
 - Educated and aware
 - Accountable
- A city that includes the perspectives of people with disabilities

Several key themes emerged through discussion in focus groups, interviews, and at pop-up events. These included several barriers that applied across all service delivery areas, namely:

1. “Nothing about us, without us” — people with disabilities and older adults must be included in decision-making and planning, early in the stages of a project
2. Collaboration with community organizations
3. Dignity and respect

In general, survey results showed that the most common barriers faced by participants when using the City of Regina’s services and programs were:

1. **Roads and sidewalks**, as indicated by 79% of respondents
2. **Transportation**, as indicated by 54% of respondents
3. **Built environment**, as indicated by 49% of respondents

The top priority barriers under each service delivery area are summarized below, with corresponding survey results, where relevant.

Built environment

1. Sidewalks — Regina is not a walkable or rollable city because sidewalks are not reliably available, are in poor condition, and are not well-maintained (*overlapping with transportation, this was noted as a barrier by 75% of survey respondents*)

2. Washrooms — insufficient accessible washrooms across the city (*noted as a barrier by 39% of survey respondents*)
3. Parks, public and open space (*noted as a barrier by 47% of survey respondents*), specifically:
 - a. Many paths and trails are not accessible (lack of clear routes and proper paving)
 - b. Insufficient seating along City-owned parks and pathways
 - c. Parks and other public and open spaces don't have enough accessible features (e.g., washrooms, playgrounds)
4. Buildings are not reliably accessible, specifically:
 - a. Leisure/recreation centres aren't accessible enough, particularly for people who require low-stimulus spaces, and are lacking adequate changing facilities (*noted as a barrier by 33% of survey respondents*)
5. Lack of consideration of people with vision loss

Transportation

1. Snow removal — insufficient snow clearance creates significant barriers to transportation (*noted as a barrier by 64% of survey respondents*)
2. Sidewalks — lack of sidewalks and curb cuts, as well as a lack of maintenance, creates challenges for accessing bus stops and transportation in general (*overlapping with the built environment, this was noted as a barrier by 75% of survey respondents*)
3. Public transit — services are not sufficient (hours, frequency, availability) making public transit an inefficient and unappealing option (*bus frequency noted as a barrier by 39% of survey respondents*)
4. Paratransit — can be difficult to access, inefficient or unreliable
5. Transportation affordability — high costs for taxis and ride-hail options are a challenge for people who don't have access to a private vehicle

Employment

Many participants noted that they didn't have significant experience with employment at the City, so they shared their input on employment barriers broadly.

1. Not enough employment opportunities for people with disabilities — lack of suitable, properly-compensated roles, as well as lack of flexibility for working reduced hours or remotely (*noted as a barrier by 39% of survey respondents*)
2. Application and hiring process is a barrier — accessibility is not often considered, from job descriptions listing unnecessary requirements to the interview process (*hiring process noted as a barrier by 34% of survey respondents*)
3. Not enough accommodations for employees with disabilities — including a lack of information about the accommodations that do exist
4. Stigma, attitudinal barriers, and misconceptions of cost and capacity — prevent employers from hiring employees with disabilities
5. People with disabilities are disincentivized from seeking employment — earned income means losing government financial support

Programs and services

1. Limited options for people with disabilities — particularly for young kids, older adults, and people needing low-stimulation or sensory safe zones
2. Insufficient staff training — frontline staff are not thoroughly trained on how to support people with disabilities, particularly neurodiverse people (*noted as a barrier by 29% of survey respondents*)
3. Registration process for many programs and services is a challenge — competitive and difficult even for able-bodied people to register
4. High cost of programs — low-income people and families face barriers to access (*noted as a barrier by 31% of survey respondents*)

Information and communication

1. Over-reliance on technology — a barrier for those without access to digital tools (*noted as a barrier by 50% of survey respondents*)

2. Lack of information on accessibility accommodations/services across the city — including who to contact at the City
3. Lack of ASL, closed captioning and CNS available and/or offered across Regina
4. Not enough accessible communication offered in languages other than English, including Braille *(noted as a barrier by 25% of survey respondents)*

Procurement and financial services

Most feedback received about procurement was general (not specific to accessibility).

1. City's procurement process could be more transparent and accountable
2. Small businesses face more barriers than larger and more established organizations
3. Online-only payment systems are not accessible to all people *(noted as a barrier by 30% of survey respondents)*

Ideas for motivating change

Finally, engagement participants also shared their ideas on how the City can ensure the future Plan will successfully motivate change and achieve its desired outcomes. Proposed ideas include:

- Prompt action with incentives and requirements
- Monitor impacts and results
- Invest in accessibility with dedicated budget and resources
- Adopt a forward-thinking mindset, starting with short-term wins
- Engage and bring more awareness to accessibility
- Involve and empower the community
- Lead by example

1 | Introduction

In Regina, 24.1% of individuals aged 15 and over identify as having a disability. This percentage is higher than the national average of 22%²⁵. The City of Regina (the City) has several policies with a clear focus on improving accessibility, including *The Community Safety and Well-being Plan*, the *Adapted Recreation Plan*, and the *Accessible Signage Policy*.

In October 2022, Regina City Council directed Administration to work with a consultant to develop a corporate Accessibility Plan (the Plan) for the City. This work aims to strengthen the City's ongoing commitment to advancing accessibility, and ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully participate in all aspects of community life.

Specifically, the Plan will seek to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to participation in civic life, including the built environment, facility development, building standards, transportation and roadways, inclusive programming and customer service, accessible communication, inclusive employment opportunities, and more. The Plan will be a comprehensive, strategic document with implications for all City departments moving forward.

The goals of the Accessibility Plan are to:

- Gather input that is inclusive, meaningful, and respectful of the diverse voices in our community—of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities—in the spaces where they live, work, play, share, and learn. And, to ensure that the community feels represented in the plan.
- Identify, remove, and prevent barriers to equal participation that people with disabilities experience in the City's public spaces, facilities, programs, services, and processes.
- Create a cohesive document that charts clear and tangible steps to improving accessibility across City offerings in Regina.

The Accessibility Plan is being developed through a multi-phase process. Starting in April 2023, the City contracted Happy Cities and Meaningful Access Consulting (MAC) to develop the project plan, lead the engagement process, and draft the Plan together with City staff.

²⁵ Statistics Canada. (2017). Persons with and without disabilities aged 15 years and over, census metropolitan areas [Data table].

Engagement with key stakeholders with lived experience of disability, and organizations who support and advocate for people with disabilities, was an important early step towards building a meaningful Accessibility Plan that will centre the voices of people in the disability community.

This report summarizes findings from community engagement for the Accessibility Plan.

2 | What we did

Engagement for this project sought to reach and hear from a wide variety of community members and organizations with an interest or stake in the Plan's outcomes. The project team applied a multi-layered approach to engagement that included the following components:

- Environmental scan + community snapshot
- Indigenous engagement planning and partnerships
- Stakeholder scoping
- Interviews
- Digital survey
- Focus groups
- Pop-ups

Each activity is detailed below.

2.1. Environmental scan + community snapshot

The project team conducted a detailed environmental scan to lay the foundation for early direction of the Accessibility Plan, prior to community engagement. The scan included a review of existing data, plans, and policy to assess the City's prior efforts that either directly or indirectly support accessibility in Regina. It also included a background document review (including best practice examples from other jurisdictions), and a snapshot of the local context in Regina, including statistics and demographics of people living with disabilities in the city.

The document review included:

- City of Regina. (2022). *Adapted Recreation Plan (2022-2025)*
- Listen to Dis'. (2022). *City of Regina Accessible Leisure and Recreation Final Report*
- Age Friendly Regina. (2020). *Age Friendly Community Survey Report*
- Ivy+Dean Consulting. (2023). *"There aren't enough safe spaces to exist here" A report on the experiences of 2SLGBTQIAP+ people with the City of Regina*
- City of Regina. (2017). *Transportation Master Plan*
- City of Regina. (2021). *Regina Community Safety and Well-being Plan*
- City of Regina. (2013). *Design Regina, Official Community Plan*
- City of Regina. (2023). *Indigenous Procurement Policy*
- Bill 103, The Accessible Saskatchewan Act, 2022

- City of Toronto. (2019). *Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020-2024*
- City of Vancouver. (2022). *Transforming Attitudes, Embedding Change: The City Of Vancouver's Accessibility Strategy (Phase 1)*
- *Accessible Canada Act*, SC 2019, c 10.
- *Accessible British Columbia Act*, SBC 2021 c 19.

During this stage of research, the consulting team worked with City staff to identify and define six key service delivery areas. Subsequent engagement focused around these six areas and resulted in recommended outcomes (actions) for the Accessibility Plan.

Service delivery areas

Built environment: This includes City parks and open spaces and City facilities, including community centres, recreation and leisure centres, and City Hall.

Transportation: This includes City sidewalks, parking (on streets and in City-owned parking lots), snow removal at these locations and City facilities, taxicabs and ride-hail licensing, and Regina Transit and Paratransit.

Information and communication: This includes printed, digital, and in-person communication, closed captioning, interpreters, alternative methods of communication, accessible websites, and documents.

Programs and services: This includes programs and services offered at the City's parks, recreation facilities (including community centres, leisure centres, and municipal arenas), and cultural facilities.

Employment: This includes ease of access to City hiring processes, procedures for providing accommodations, the types of accessibility supports provided throughout the hiring process, and employment with the City.

Procurement and financial services: This includes how the City purchases goods and services, financial procedures, payment processing systems (including tax and bill payments), and financial reporting.

2.2. Indigenous engagement planning and partnerships

During the early stakeholder scoping stages of work, the consultant team began the process of selecting an Indigenous engagement partner for the project. A portion of the project budget was allocated to

ensuring meaningful and intentional engagement with Indigenous communities across the Regina area. Recognizing the importance of engaging Indigenous people with disabilities in a manner that is respectful and focused on building an ongoing relationship of trust, the consultant team and the City invited Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services (RT/SIS) to collaborate on this work.

Together with RT/SIS, the project team developed a timeline of events, promotion and outreach activities to capture the distinct perspectives of Indigenous community members with disabilities and to hear their experiences facing barriers to access and care across the city. This included two pop-ups and one focus group discussion with Knowledge Keepers.

By establishing this relationship at the beginning of the project, the project team sought to ensure meaningful engagement that creates space for Indigenous people with disabilities to share some of the distinct experiences they have at the intersections of Indigeneity and accessibility. Findings from the RT/SIS engagement activities are interwoven throughout Section 4 (What We Heard).

2.3. Stakeholder scoping

The consultant team worked with City staff to comprehensively identify a list of key stakeholders for this project, including Regina residents living with disabilities, seniors, caregivers and organizations that support people with disabilities. Beginning with City stakeholder lists and their existing networks across the city, we identified a list of over 160 stakeholders through desk research, social media scans and outreach. To ensure the list represented the diverse perspectives of the disability communities in Regina, we applied an equity lens to this process, prioritizing the inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders with diverse, intersecting identities.

2.4. Interviews

Using the list of key stakeholders, the consultant team worked with City staff to identify 20 priority candidates for one-on-one interviews. Each stakeholder was invited to participate in an interview with the consultant team, conducted via phone call or Zoom call.

During interviews, the consultant team asked questions encouraging participants to reflect on the current state of accessibility in Regina, their interactions with the City and their areas of priority in terms of barriers to address. See Appendix A for the interview questions.

In total, 12 interviews were conducted. In addition to several self-advocates (whose names are not included to maintain confidentiality), representatives of the following organizations were interviewed:

- Age-Friendly Regina
- CNIB Saskatchewan
- Creative Options Regina
- Listen to Dis'
- Sask Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- First Steps Wellness Centre Regina
- Regina Public Schools
- Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry
- Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism

The valuable feedback collected during these sessions informed subsequent engagement activities, providing City staff and the consultant team with a deeper understanding of the current context and key stakeholders for accessibility in Regina. The interviews also allowed the project team to inform participants about the Accessibility Plan process and encourage these stakeholders to share further opportunities for engagement with their networks.

The full list of interview questions is included in Appendix A.

2.5. Communications

The project team implemented a comprehensive communications plan to promote the project and web page, and encourage the public to participate in the engagement activities. All communications included clear, informative text and creative graphics with a cohesive visual identity matching the City of Regina's branding. Promotional materials included:

- **Project web page:** Created a central project page on Be Heard Regina (www.regina.ca/accessibility) that people could visit to learn more and participate in the project. This webpage provided information on the project scope, timelines, and key engagement dates for public-facing activities, including registration links for focus groups (in-person and digital) and the schedule of pop-up events. The webpage also encouraged visitors to complete the digital survey and provided contact information for those who wanted to learn more.

- **Press release:** Prepared a press release to disseminate with local media through the City's communications channels.
- **Social media:** Posted creative graphic and text information about opportunities to participate in engagement through the City of Regina's Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts. Happy Cities provided a social media content calendar with suggested captions and alt-text descriptions for all graphics. Happy Cities and MAC also reshared posts from the City.
- **News advertisement:** Published an advertisement in *Eagle Feather News*, with a QR code and URL to fill out the project survey, and information about key pop-up dates.
- **Print posters:** Distributed eye-catching print posters with QR codes linking to the project webpage and survey, and with the pop-up dates and locations
- **Stakeholder invitations:** Emailed over 160 key stakeholders and organizations that serve people with disabilities to inform them about the project, including opportunities to participate. Emails included an informational graphic invitation that stakeholders could share with their networks and post on social media.
- **Media interview:** Marco Pasqua participated in an interview on *CTV Regina*, informing viewers about the Accessibility Plan and opportunities to participate.

2.6. Digital survey

The consulting team developed a concise, plain language, public-facing digital survey, which was hosted on Be Heard Regina. The survey asked participants to share the barriers and challenges they (or those they care for) face when accessing services, spaces, or programs across Regina. Specifically, participants were asked to note the barriers they face under the six service areas.

The full list of survey questions is included in Appendix C.

2.7. Focus groups

In addition to participating in the online survey, community members were invited to register and attend one of seven focus groups. RT/SIS invited Indigenous community members and Knowledge Keepers to attend an in-person focus group session at their office. Five focus groups were promoted publicly and led by Happy Cities and MAC (three online and two in person). An additional digital focus

group was held with representatives from the Accessibility Advisory Committee, which was only advertised through the Committee.

Each session began with an introduction on the project's purpose and goals, and an overview of the six service delivery areas. Participants were asked to reflect on the following questions:

- What does an accessible Regina mean to you?
- Where are you experiencing barriers?
- How can the Accessibility Plan motivate positive change?
- What steps need to be taken immediately? What should happen in the next five years?

The purpose of these questions was to prompt discussion and encourage participants to share their experiences with accessibility in Regina, including positive and negative experiences. Happy Cities and MAC facilitators guided each session through these questions, encouraging constructive discussion and equal, respectful dialogue.

All sessions were open to the public. Through the registration process, participants were asked about any accessibility accommodations they needed to attend the sessions. Over 80 people participated across all focus groups.

Compensation

With input from the City, the consultant team offered honoraria for participation, to reflect the value of people's time, knowledge, and lived experience. Honoraria were offered to all participants, noting that the purpose was to compensate community members from vulnerable, marginalized, and equity-seeking groups, and those who were not otherwise being compensated for their time. Participants were able to choose either a \$75 payment or a one-month family leisure pass from the City.

RT/SIS focus group

RT/SIS team members facilitated an in-person focus group session with local Knowledge Keepers at the Gathering Place, to discuss the accessibility barriers they face across the six service delivery areas.

Digital focus groups

Five digital focus group sessions were held online, using Zoom. ASL interpretation was provided at three of the four public sessions. Happy Cities and MAC facilitators described all visual content, and encouraged verbal, written, and signed participation to ensure all participants could meaningfully engage in the session. Discussion was captured digitally by note-takers in each session.

In-person focus groups

Two in-person focus groups took place on June 8 and 9 in Regina at the Core Ritchie Neighbourhood Centre and māmawêyatitân centre respectively. ASL interpretation and Computerized Note-taking Services (CNS) were provided at both sessions. The consultant team also provided free food and refreshments for participants. Discussion in each focus group was captured live on large boards, so that participants could see their feedback being recorded.

2.8. Pop-ups

The consultant team hosted four pop-up events across June and July 2023, including one at Sandra Schmirler Leisure Centre, one at Queen City Pride, and two at RT/SIS (including participation at a Treaty Days event). An additional pop-up was hosted at The Nest shelter, following a recommendation from participants at RT/SIS. These sessions allowed us to hear from a broader range of community members and reach passersby and community members who might not otherwise attend a focus group session. They also offered a critical opportunity to meet people where they are and reach those who may not have access to a computer or are less comfortable using the internet. These events invited the public to provide feedback on the state of accessibility in Regina and share input on priorities for the Accessibility Plan. In total, over 160 people were engaged across these sessions.



Above: Pop-up at Queen City Pride (left); Pop-up at Sandra Schmirler Leisure Centre (right)

Below: Pop-up at Queen City Pride (left); Pop-up at RT/SIS (right).



Happy Cities prepared engaging interactive boards to prompt discussion, and provided family-friendly activities and snacks to provide a fun and welcoming space for all. Pop-up visitors were asked to reflect on the barriers they face across the six service delivery areas, as well as their priorities for improving accessibility in Regina. Feedback and comments were captured on the engagement boards through sticky notes.

Digital examples of the pop-up engagement boards are included in Appendix D.

3 | Demographics and participation

Overall, over 475 people participated in this engagement process through a wide range of activities.

- 12 interviews
- 223 survey responses
- 160+ pop-up attendees
- 80+ focus group participants

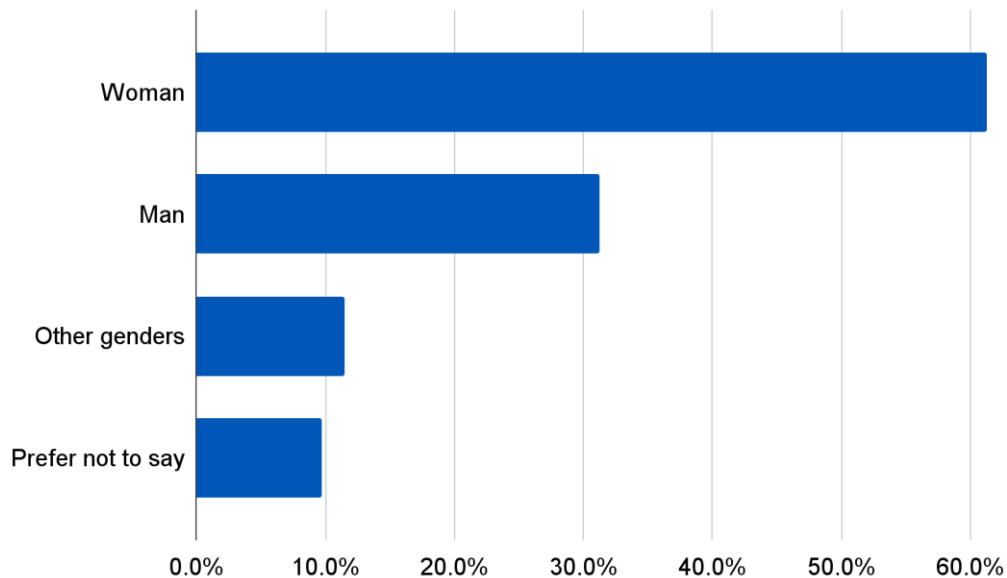
The survey included optional demographic questions, and the identity of all participants was anonymous. No demographic data was collected for the other engagement activities.

3.1. Survey demographics

The survey was completed by 223 people. The majority of survey respondents indicated that they have firsthand experiences relating to accessibility in the City of Regina. About 36% of respondents reported being a person with a disability, and 30% reported that they are a person caring for someone with a disability. In addition, about 38% of respondents also indicated that they are either older adults or care for someone who is an older adult. About 23% of survey respondents also advocate or work for a disability organization.

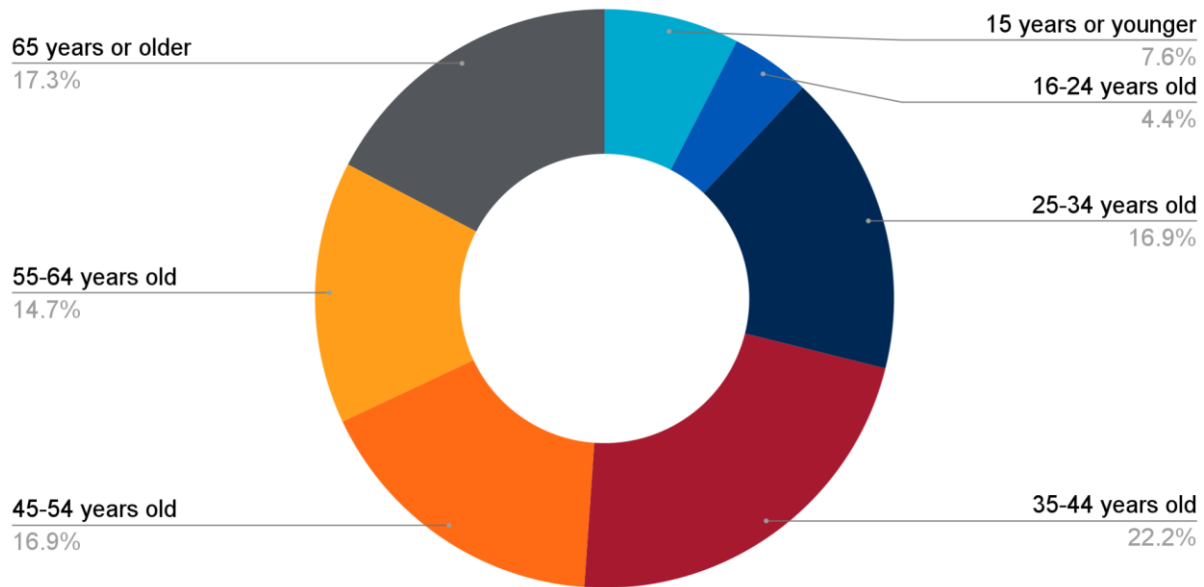
Of the 223 people who completed the survey, 14 identified as being Indigenous, representing 6% of respondents. About 11% of survey respondents (25 people) identified as LGBTQ2S+. A further 12% of respondents (28 people) indicated they were born outside of Canada, and 9% (20 people) indicated they were new to Canada within the last five years.

Figure 1. Genders of survey respondents



Close to two thirds of participants were women (61%), compared to around one third men (31%). Around one in 10 (12%) selected non-binary/gender diverse, two-spirit, transgender, and/or preferred to self-identify (represented as “other genders” in the chart above). Another tenth of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

Figure 2. Ages of survey respondents



The survey reached a relatively even split of participants aged 25 and over, with the most common age category being 35 to 44 year-olds (22% of respondents). Among older respondents, 17% were between ages 45 to 54, 15% were 55 to 64 years old, and 17% were 65 years or older. Only 12% of respondents were younger than 25 years old, and 17% were between 25 to 34 years old.

Figure 3. Connection to accessibility for respondents

Which options below describe your connection to accessibility? (choose all that apply)

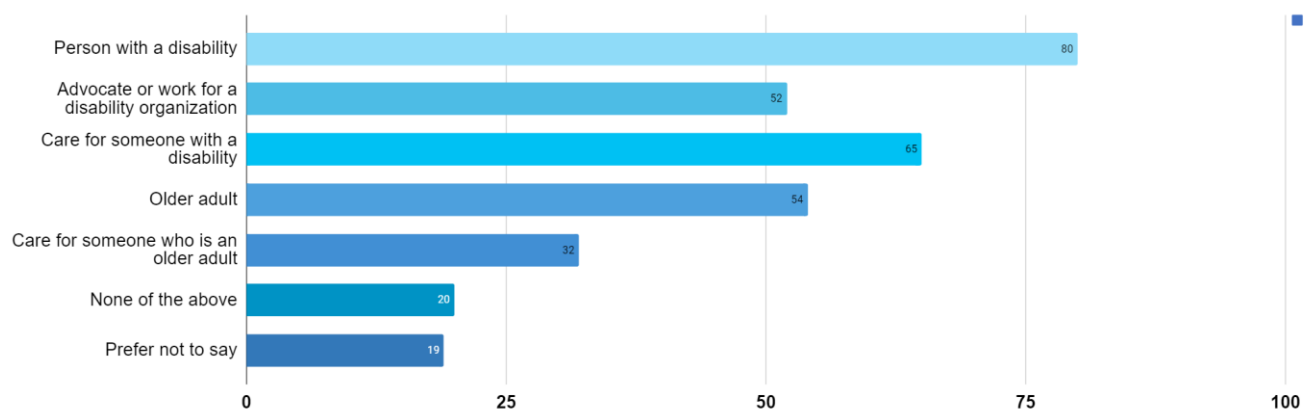
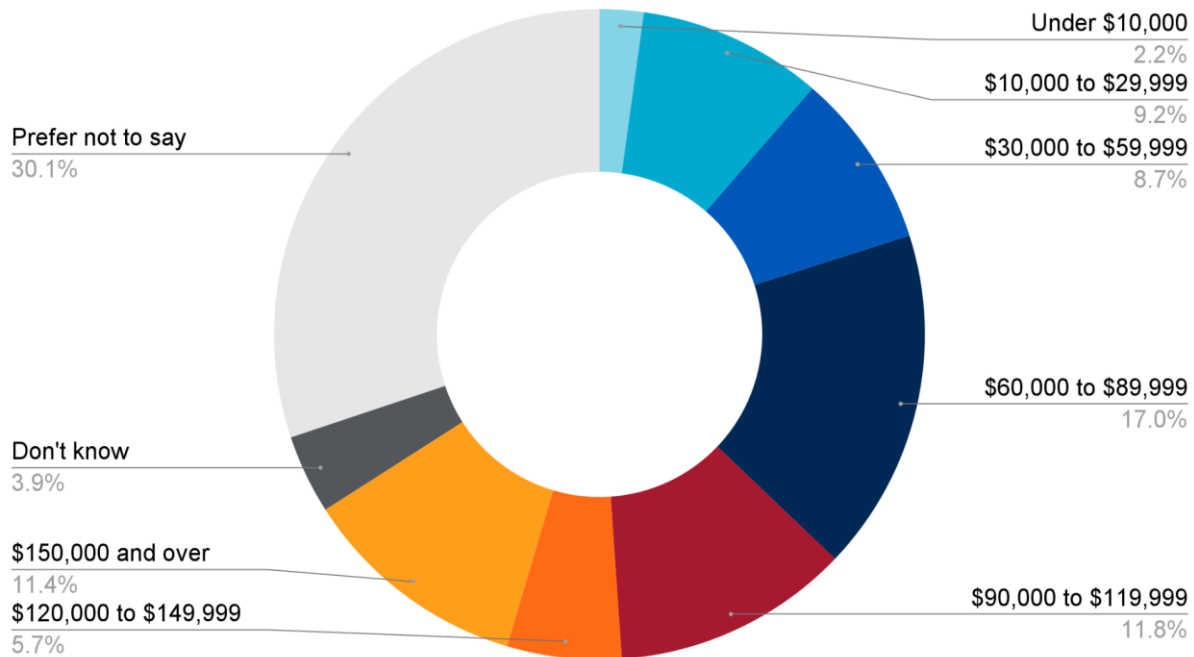


Figure 4. Incomes of survey respondents



Overall, the survey was completed by a relatively equal share of respondents from different household income groups. Just under one third (29%) of respondents indicated their household income is between \$60,000 to under \$120,000 each year. Respondents from households earning below and above this range are equally represented by roughly about 20% of survey respondents, with 39 people reporting they make over \$120,000 and 46 people reporting they make below \$60,000 each year.

4 | What we heard

Results and findings from all community engagement activities are summarized below. Qualitative and quantitative responses from the survey, interviews, focus groups, and pop-up events are compiled into key themes that emerged across the engagement period, in the following high-level categories:

1. Defining accessibility
2. Barriers to accessibility
3. Ideas for motivating change

4.1. Defining accessibility

A major challenge that many participants highlighted is that there are inconsistencies in the definition of what “accessible” means in Regina. Participants repeatedly shared examples of arriving at destinations that were described as “accessible” online, only to not be able to enter or properly access the space. Many people shared that the general public tends to think of physical accessibility, such as ramps and automated doors for mobility device users, when considering whether a space is accessible; however, invisible disabilities and barriers faced by neurodiverse members of the community are largely neglected. Several participants suggested that instead of seeking to label a place or program as accessible, a list of the specific accessibility features available would allow potential visitors to determine whether the space or activity would work for them. Education and destigmatization were also proposed solutions.

In focus groups as well as through the digital survey, participants were asked to reflect on the question, “What does an accessible Regina mean to you?” This question was posed both to encourage high-level reflections on the vision for this work, and to inform guiding principles for the Plan. Participants generally touched on how accessibility means that everyone should be able to experience equal dignity, autonomy and independence, inclusion, empowerment, safety, equity, mobility, comprehension, and universal design.



Broadly, participants shared that an accessible Regina means:

- A city that is accessible for all, regardless of age or ability
- A city where I can live the life I want to live, without attitudinal or physical barriers
- A city where everyone can participate in everything comfortably
- A city where I am welcomed into the community
- A city where every new building and space is accessible
- A city that is safe for walking and rolling
- A city that is:
 - Affordable
 - Well-connected
 - Educated and aware
 - Accountable
- A city that includes the perspectives of people with disabilities

A selection of quotes from the survey are shared below, which reflect the range of responses to the question, “What does an accessible Regina mean to you?”

“A community that [...] allows all abilities to access any areas, activities, or services with dignity, safety and autonomy.”

“A city that understands and prioritizes transportation (including the built environment) as the critical foundational element required for inclusion of people who experience disability.”

“Accessible Regina means that every single person can access every single part of Regina. It means freedom to move, freedom to discover and the ability to achieve independence.”

“A council with Indigenous members and visible and invisible disabilities, as well as a workforce that is representative of the population. If that is in place, then there is understanding which infuses every aspect of planning.”

“That no one struggles with getting around the city.”

“Easy access on city sidewalks 365 days a year for everyone.”

4.2. Barriers to accessibility

Across all engagement activities, several important barriers were identified in all six of the service delivery areas. During the interviews, many participants shared that the City of Regina is highly aware of the need to address accessibility issues in many aspects of its services and programming, and spaces. There was a general acknowledgement that the City has largely been willing to hear and learn more about the barriers and challenges that persons with disabilities are facing.

This section begins with cross-cutting themes heard through focus groups and interviews that apply to all service delivery areas, followed by a general discussion of the most commonly cited types of barriers in the survey. We then discuss barriers in greater detail under each of the six service delivery areas. The areas that consistently rose to the top as key priorities for the City to address were transportation and

mobility. This means ensuring that people with disabilities are able to easily move around the city during all seasons, such as through accessible public transit, Paratransit, and sidewalks. In general, improving mobility—including transit access and frequency—can benefit all residents by reducing dependency on cars for everyone.

Additional supporting graphs and charts from the survey are available in Appendix E.

4.2.1. Cross-cutting themes

In addition to the lack of a common definition for accessibility (discussed in Section 4.1), several additional themes emerged during focus groups and interviews that apply to all service delivery areas. These include:

“Nothing about us, without us”

Participants repeatedly emphasized that members of the disability community should be involved early in the planning and decision-making processes for all projects. Many expressed that it is much more cost effective to include accessibility features at the blueprint stages of a project, instead of trying to retrofit changes after something is built. Participants also emphasized the importance of including advisors from the disability community to review plans and conduct audits prior to moving ahead with solutions.

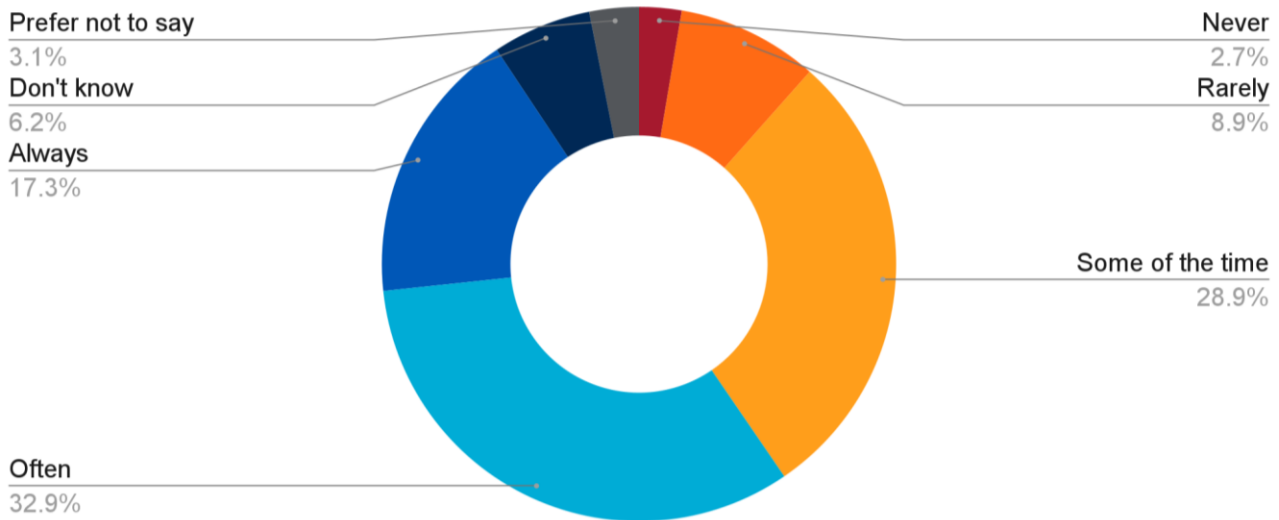
Collaboration with community organizations

In addition to ensuring people with disabilities are represented in decision-making processes, participants highlighted the value of collaborating with local organizations who are already doing excellent work to advance accessibility in Regina—instead of trying to do this work in isolation—to ensure outcomes build community capacity and have lasting impacts.

Dignity and respect

In addition to being asked about how they experienced specific barriers, survey respondents were asked whether they feel they are treated with dignity and respect when accessing the City of Regina’s spaces, services, and programs. Respondents were prompted with the following question, “*Do you feel like you are treated with dignity and respect when you use City spaces, programs, or services?*”

Figure 5. Do you feel like you are treated with dignity and respect when you use City spaces, programs, or services?

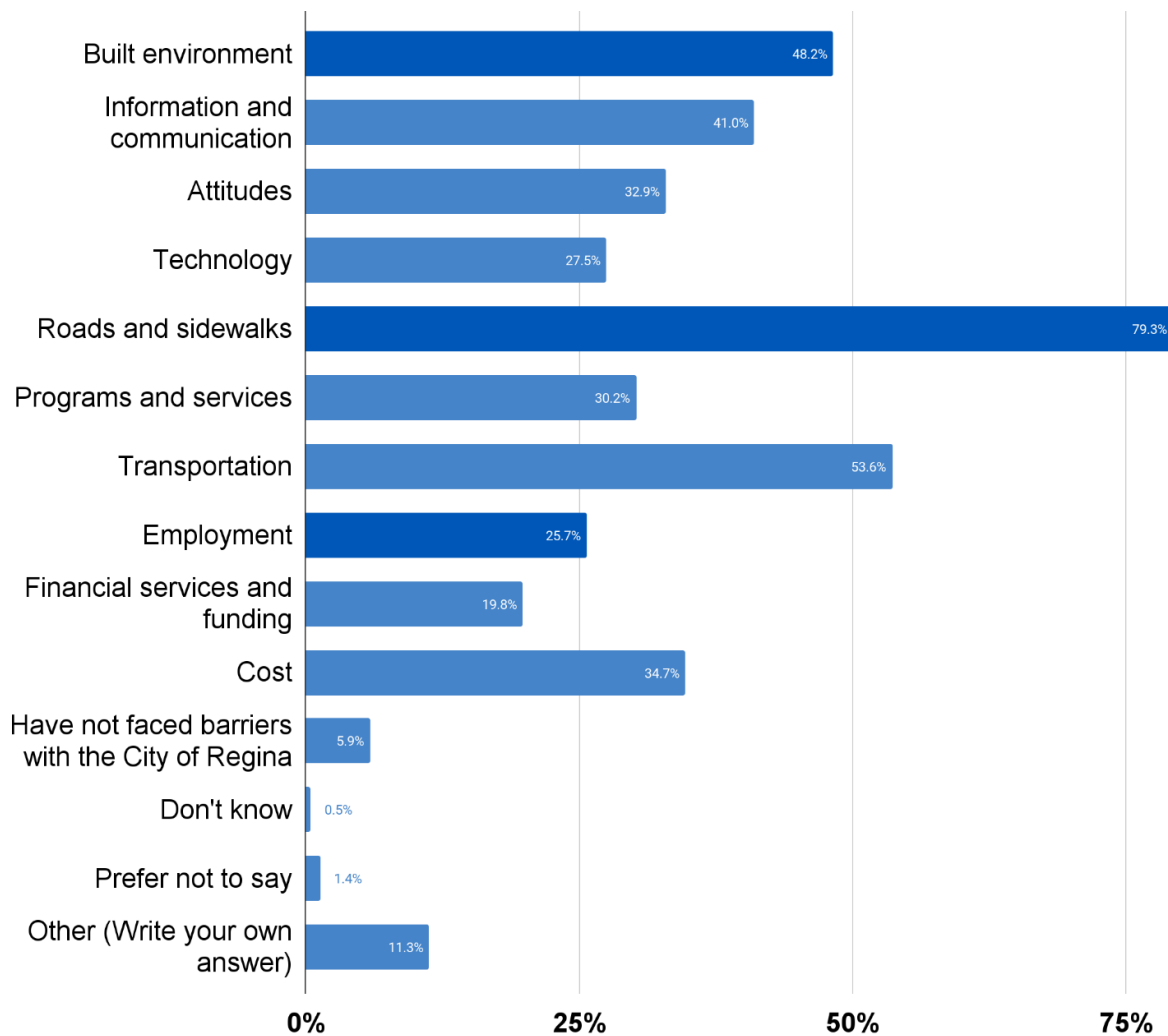


Half of survey respondents (50%) indicated that they are either always or often treated with dignity and respect when accessing the City's spaces, programs, or services, with 33% respondents saying that it happens often and 18% of respondents saying it is always the case. Around one third of respondents (29%) indicated that they feel treated with dignity and respect only some of the time, while just under one in 10 (9%) said rarely. Only 3% reported they never feel treated with dignity and respect.

4.2.2. Most common barriers

In the survey, respondents were prompted with the following question, *"Have you (or the person you are caring for) had a hard time (faced barriers) using services and programs from the City of Regina in the last year? If so, what kinds of barriers? (choose all that apply)"*

Figure 6. Most common types of barriers faced by survey respondents



In general, the majority of respondents of the survey indicated that they faced barriers when using Regina's roads and sidewalks, and transportation services. The most common barriers faced by respondents using the City of Regina's infrastructure, services and programs were:

1. **Roads and sidewalks**, indicated by 79% of respondents (176 people)
2. **Transportation**, indicated by 54% of respondents (119 people)
3. **Built environment**, indicated by 49% of respondents (107 people)
4. **Information and communication**, indicated by 41% of respondents (91 people)

5. **Cost**, indicated by 35% of respondents (77 people)

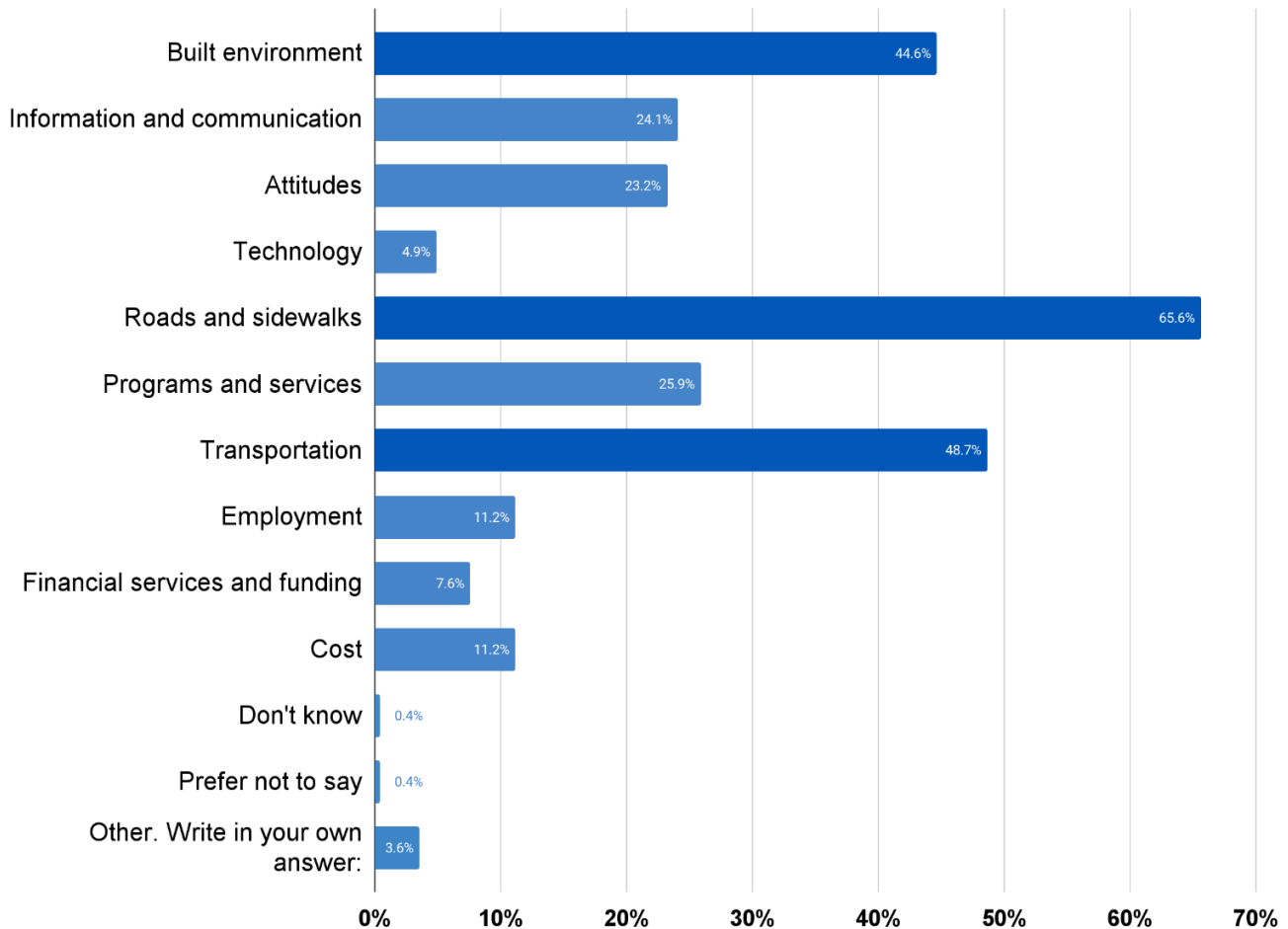
The key findings from the survey suggests that, in general, transportation is the leading barrier to accessibility in the City of Regina, especially with regards to the condition of sidewalks and snow removal. Trouble with accessing the built environment, especially at parks, is another major barrier, as is accessing information from the City in a non-digital format. These general survey findings closely align with major themes that came out of discussion in focus groups and interviews. Specifically, the top barriers for each service area, as identified and ranked by proportion of survey respondents, are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Top-ranked barriers by service delivery area

	Built environment	Transportation	Employment	Programs and services	Information and communication	Financial services and funding
1	Park features are not accessible (47%)	Sidewalks are in bad condition and or not accessible (75%)	Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (39%)	It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services (40%)	It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer (50%)	Online payment systems are not accessible (30%)
2	There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities (39%)	Snow removal is too slow (64%)	There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City (39%)	City programs or services are too expensive (31%)	Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English (25%)	
3	Recreation facilities are not accessible (33%)	Buses are not frequent enough (39%)	Hiring processes are not accessible (34%)	City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people (29%)		

Survey respondents were also asked to share their feedback on areas that the City of Regina could improve upon for accessibility. Respondents were asked, “Which areas are most important for improving accessibility? (select up to 3)”

Figure 7. Areas most important for improving accessibility, according to survey respondents



In alignment with the general barriers identified by survey respondents for the City of Regina's services and programs, the main areas of improvement suggested by survey respondents were roads and sidewalks, transportation, and the built environment:

1. **Roads and sidewalks**, as indicated by 66% of respondents (147 people)
2. **Transportation**, as indicated by 49% of respondents (109 people)
3. **Built environment**, as indicated by 45% of respondents (100 people)

Additionally, a few respondents wrote in the open-ended option of the question that other areas for the City to consider improvement on are signage and wayfinding, and greater education around accessibility.

Respondents were also asked to recommend one area for the City of Regina that would be critical to focus on for improving accessibility, being prompted with the following open-ended question, “*If the City of Regina could focus on making one area more accessible, what would you like to see?*” The question was answered by 174 respondents. From these responses, the leading suggestions for which areas the City should focus on the most were:

- **Sidewalks, paths, and walkways**, as mentioned by 31% of respondents (54 people)
- **Transit and Paratransit**, as mentioned by 21% of respondents (36 people)
- **Built environment**, especially parks and public spaces, as mentioned by 14% of respondents (25 people)

Demographic analysis

The top five most reported barriers by Indigenous survey respondents generally overlapped with priorities of the general population. However, Indigenous participants more frequently reported barriers related to accessing programs and services than the general population, while cost was reported as a barrier less frequently (see Appendix E for chart).

When comparing responses to reported barriers by gender, there were no notable differences between men, women, and people identifying with other genders (grouped together due to the small sample size). Specifically, when ranked, the top three most common barriers reported by each group were roads and sidewalks, transportation, and built environment—aligning with the major barriers identified by the general population as a whole.

Table 2. Top-ranked barriers by gender

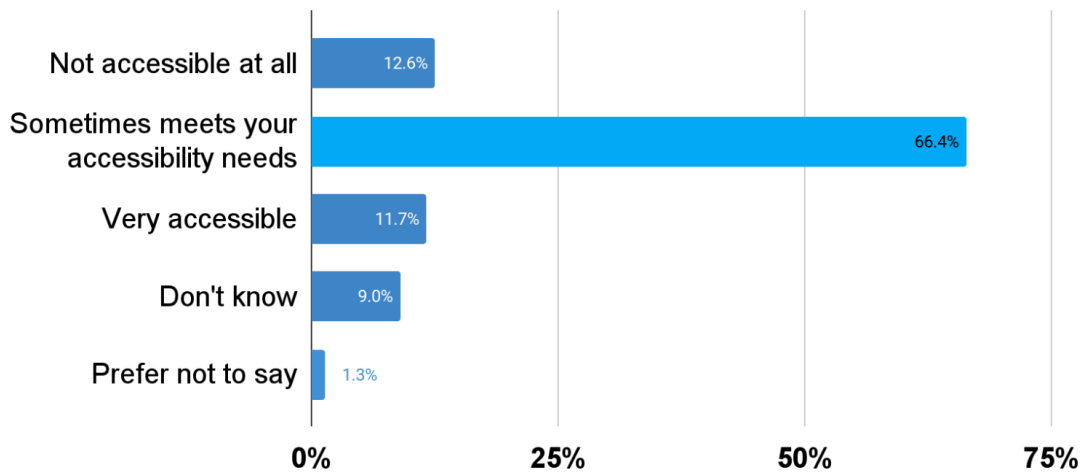
Men	Women	Other genders
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roads and sidewalks 2. Transportation 3. Built environment 4. Information and communication 5. Cost 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roads and sidewalks 2. Transportation 3. Built environment 4. Information and communication 5. Cost 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roads and sidewalks 2. Transportation 3. Built environment 4. Attitudes 5. Programs and services

Similarly, these three barriers—roads and sidewalks, built environment, and transportation—rose to the top for all age groups. Attitude was also relatively commonly identified as a barrier by most age groups, except for those in the middle age groups, who selected economic factors, like cost and employment, as barriers. Technology was one of the more frequently reported barriers for people 65 and older.

4.2.3. Built environment

In the survey, respondents were asked to give their assessment and experience of the City of Regina's built environment. Respondents were asked, *"In your opinion, how accessible is the City of Regina's built environment?"*

Figure 8. Accessibility of Regina’s built environment, according to survey respondents



The majority of survey respondents (66%) indicated that Regina’s built environment only sometimes meets their accessibility needs.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, “*When it comes to the built environment, what barriers do you face or experience?*” The most common built environment barriers identified by respondents included access to park features, recreation facilities, and public facilities, along with the lack of accessible toilets and low-stimulation spaces. Specifically, respondents indicated that:

1. Park features are not accessible, as indicated by 47% of respondents (105 people)
2. There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities, as indicated by 39% of respondents (87 people)
3. Recreation facilities are not accessible, as indicated by 34% of respondents (76 people)
4. Public spaces are not accessible, as indicated by 33% of respondents (73 people)
5. There are not enough low-stimulation spaces at City facilities, as indicated by 33% of respondents (73 people)

These survey findings generally align with what was heard during the focus groups and interviews. Notably, sidewalks emerged as a key barrier relating to the built environment in focus group discussions; however, this challenge has been detailed under transportation for the purposes of this report.

Across all other engagement activities, the top built environment barriers identified included:

Sidewalks — Regina is not a walkable or rollable city

- Sidewalk accessibility emerged as one of the major barriers in Regina, relating to both the built environment and transportation. Please see the following section (4.2.4) on transportation barriers for a more detailed discussion of sidewalks.

Insufficient accessible washrooms

- Many participants highlighted that there are not enough accessible washrooms in parks and open spaces—and across the city generally. In addition to a lack of accessible washroom facilities, we heard that some washrooms that are described as accessible do not offer sufficient features, like push buttons, lifts, grab bars, universal change tables, and intentional layout design.
- In addition to not having enough public bathrooms, participants felt there is not enough signage to show where existing public bathrooms are, especially in parks.

Parks and public and open spaces

- **Paths and trails are not accessible:** In addition to sidewalks, participants noted that paths and trails across the city are not always accessible, citing the slope, gravel, wood chips, cobblestone, potholes, and conflict with bike lanes as some of the barriers they have faced.
- **Lack of seating along City-owned parks and pathways:** A lack of seating options was highlighted as a barrier, particularly in the winter, when benches and seats are often covered in snow.
- **Lack of accessible features:** Generally, participants shared that City parks and open spaces lack accessible features like universally designed picnic tables and playgrounds. The spaces that are accessible are few and far between across the city, requiring extra travel and planning. People mentioned that the accessible spaces that do exist are often crowded with families, who also benefit from the inclusive features. A general need for more detailed, intentional design was

highlighted. For example, one person highlighted that an accessible swing, without an accessible pathway to the swing, is not accessible.

Buildings are not reliably accessible

- Generally, participants shared experiences with buildings that are inaccessible and not reliably barrier-free. Specifically, we heard examples of medical services being located in buildings that don't have features like curb cuts or automatic door operator features, and that older buildings are generally challenging in terms of access. Many participants highlighted a need to create more comprehensive standards beyond what is required in the building code. For example, building codes meet a very limited level of accessibility and do not consider features such as visual fire alarms for people who are deaf or the height of door handles.
- **New developments** were highlighted as a key opportunity for ensuring accessibility standards are implemented and prioritized from the beginning, when it is more cost effective to do so. Retrofitting solutions are often patched together, and are both insufficient and costly. Participants also highlighted that even within new buildings, some designs have missed the mark due to insufficient consultation with people with disabilities during the design process. Solely relying on the building code is not enough to ensure accessibility.
- **Leisure centres** were mentioned as an area for improvement in terms of accessibility. Particularly, a need for quieter, low-stimulus spaces was highlighted, as well as an increase in accessible change rooms and access routes to, from, and within the spaces.

"If I didn't have my support person with me, I would get stuck in places. Buttons are too high for me to reach for, etc. So I have to rely on other people who are able-bodied to help me."

Lack of consideration of people with vision loss

- Participants shared that there is a lack of consideration for those with vision loss in the built environment, with significant priority placed on addressing mobility barriers. Participants pointed to a need for things like tactile wayfinding indicator strips and more audio systems for crosswalks. It was highlighted that Mosaic stadium, despite being a gold standard for accessibility, remains challenging to navigate for people with vision loss.

Lack of information about construction

- Participants highlighted that they face challenges in navigating the built environment in and around construction areas, which are prevalent in the city. There is a lack of communication around the mobility barriers (and otherwise) that arise from these sites. Specifically, participants noted that there needs to be intentional thought given to accessibility during construction as it currently does not appear to be a consideration.

Not enough independent living options

- Although outside municipal jurisdiction, participants noted that there is a lack of stable, accessible housing options for people with disabilities in Regina. In addition to a lack of affordable options for low-income people, there are also a lack of housing options that are accessible, and not enough resources for the unhoused population.

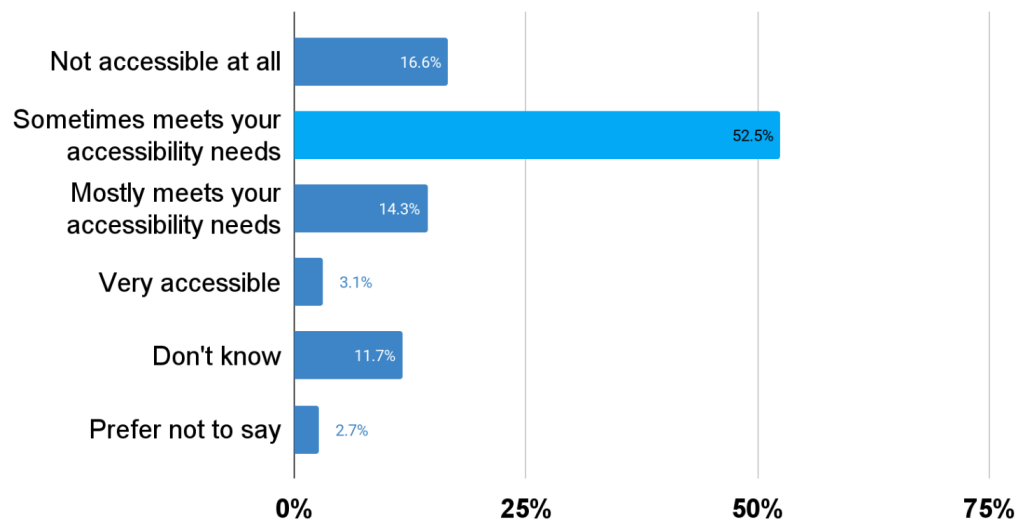
Accessibility discrepancies between neighbourhoods

- Participants highlighted that there is a lack of consistency and reliability of accessibility features across the city, with newer neighbourhoods being more accessible than older ones. This creates an unequal distribution of access for people living in different parts of the city. Participants proposed that the accessibility initiatives being developed in newer neighbourhoods should be integrated into older neighbourhoods as well.

4.2.4. Transportation

Survey respondents were asked to give their assessment and experience of the City of Regina's transportation. Respondents were asked, *"In your opinion, how accessible is transportation in the City of Regina?"*

Figure 9. Accessibility of Regina's transportation, according to survey respondents



In general, most people expressed that transportation in Regina is not meeting all of their access needs. Seven in 10 respondents (69%) indicated that transportation is either not accessible at all or only sometimes meets their needs. Only 14% reported transportation in Regina mostly meets their accessibility needs, and just 3% said it was very accessible.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, “*When it comes to transportation offered by the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience?*” The most common transportation barriers respondents selected related to the state of sidewalks and pathways, snow removal, and access to frequent transit options. Specifically, respondents indicated that:

1. Sidewalks are in bad condition and/or not accessible, as indicated by 75% of respondents (167 people)
2. Snow removal is too slow, as indicated by 64% of respondents (143 people)
3. Buses are not frequent enough, as indicated by 52% of respondents (117 people)
4. Buses and/or stops are not accessible, as indicated by 41% of respondents (91 people)
5. Paths and trails are not accessible, as indicated by 39% of respondents (87 people)

These survey findings align with the key themes that came out of the discussion from focus groups and interviews. Generally, a key finding is that it is hard for people with disabilities to travel around the city without a vehicle. In addition to challenges related to the built environment, access to and from public transit is a significant barrier, as is the reliability and practicality of taking transit. Participants described that Regina is a car-oriented city where people feel that taking public transit is only for those who do not have their own vehicles.

Across all other engagement activities, the top transportation barriers identified were:

Snow removal (or lack thereof) is a barrier to transportation

- One of the most commonly highlighted barriers to transportation (and generally to accessibility across Regina) was snow removal. Ice and snow build-up create significant mobility barriers for all residents during winter months, and exacerbate barriers for people with disabilities. Participants highlighted that without adequate, reliable, and timely snow removal along sidewalks and paths, many people become trapped in their homes during the winter. Participants also noted that even when snow removal does take place, it is often not done with accessibility in mind. Many participants shared examples of snow being dumped in parking lanes and sidewalks, creating large ridges and causing additional challenges for people with disabilities.
- Through discussions, participants acknowledged that efforts have been made in the past to address this challenge (including recent by-laws and penalties), but that nothing has felt

sufficient or impactful enough. They highlighted that while the City should be accountable for ensuring streets and sidewalks are clear, there are opportunities to engage community organizations who could help support this ongoing challenge.

“Until the City starts clearing sidewalks, they aren’t serious about accessibility.”

“For people like myself, the City is pretty much inaccessible from first snowfall until it all melts.”

Sidewalks — Regina is not a walkable or rollable city

- Sidewalks came up repeatedly as a top concern, with participants highlighting the need for better paving, and wider, clearer and safer routes around the city.
- **Maintenance** of sidewalks was one major concern. Due to Regina’s many months of cold and snow, the city’s sidewalks and roads are frequently cracked and damaged, which requires ongoing maintenance and repair. Participants noted that sidewalks are not well-maintained, pose tripping hazards, and need repair due to the effects of snow and moving soil in Regina. This was also highlighted during engagement with Knowledge Keepers, who highlighted that this is particularly an issue in neighbourhoods like North Central, where sidewalks cannot be used with walkers or wheelchairs.
- **Availability and accessibility** of sidewalks were other major barriers—in particular, the lack of curb cuts on many sidewalks. Many participants highlighted that sidewalks are also not reliably available in all areas of the city. This creates challenges in accessing public transit and independently navigating the city, particularly for those using mobility devices. Participants shared examples of streets where there are only sidewalks on one side of the road, of bus shelters with no sidewalk access, and of having to roll on the road instead of the sidewalk to avoid getting stuck.

Public transit — insufficient service and accessibility

- A key barrier that emerged in discussions about public transit is that **transit services are not frequent or widely available enough**. Specifically, people shared that reduced services outside of office hours present significant barriers, and that long wait times between buses discourage use and practicality of taking transit. Participants also highlighted that access to and from the hospital or medical appointments—and places that older adults frequent—should be prioritized by public transit routes.
- In addition to insufficient services, many participants shared that public transit vehicles and stops are **not accessible enough**. They pointed to aspects including loud volumes on buses, making it difficult to communicate important information. People also expressed general concerns around feeling unsafe on public transit or at transit stops, due to attitudinal barriers. The lack of accessibility at bus stops is another significant barrier to using public transportation. In the winter, snow build-up reduces access to bus stops, making public transit unreliable—and for many, unusable. Furthermore, many participants noted that access to and from bus stops is limited due to the lack of sidewalks. Without access to and from transit stops, even the most accessible buses are inaccessible to those who need them.

Paratransit — difficult to access and inefficient or unreliable

- Participants highlighted that the **Paratransit system does not meet their needs**. Specifically, it is hard to book services (meaning rides have to be booked well in advance, which is impractical), pick-up windows are unreliable, and service is not offered late enough into the night. People also shared that Paratransit rides feel inefficient because the routes are not direct, and vehicles are rarely on time, meaning that people have to account for significant extra travel time in an effort to not be late for appointments or for work. In addition, participants highlighted that the age limits mean young children are not able to access Paratransit services, which causes challenges for families.
- In addition to its challenges with reliability and efficiency, several participants shared that the **approval process to use Paratransit is unnecessarily complicated**, with strict definitions for eligibility (and a need to re-apply) that create additional barriers for people with disabilities.

Transportation affordability

- A common theme was that the cost of accessible transportation is a barrier for many residents, particularly people living with disabilities who are lower-income or who do not have their own vehicles. The alternative options to public transit and Paratransit—such as ride-hail, taxis, personal vehicles—are cost-prohibitive for many people.

Accessible ride-hail services and taxis are limited

- Cost aside, participants expressed that there are not enough accessible taxis or ride-hail vehicles available in Regina. Many participants highlighted that they have faced attitudinal barriers, disrespect, and refusal of service from drivers, even when the vehicles themselves are accessible. This lack of awareness and training creates unsafe environments for people with disabilities.

Insufficient accessible parking

- A lack of accessible parking spaces was highlighted as another barrier to transportation. Participants noted that there are not enough accessible parking spaces downtown and at major sport and entertainment events. Accessible parking spots may not be near entrances or sidewalks. Accessible parking spots that do exist are often not wide enough or do not have a designated access aisle to accommodate side-loading vans. Participants would like to see more oversized parking spots to accommodate larger and overheight adapted vehicles. An additional challenge is the lack of enforcement and awareness around misuse of accessible parking spaces. Many participants shared examples of seeing accessible stalls being taken by delivery drivers or others, who don't face sufficient consequences for these violations.

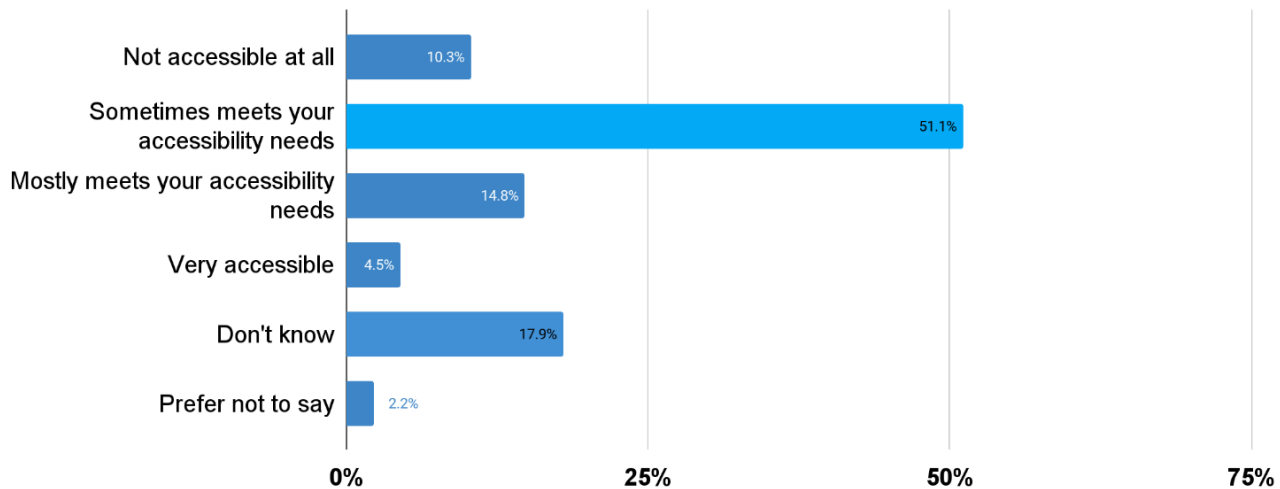
“City facilities locations are very difficult for me to access by transit outside the hours of my job, which are weekdays during daytime. Most City facilities require multiple transfers on transit, which makes my transit rides extremely long when I try to access those locations in the evenings or on weekends.”

"I try calling paratransit the week in advance as instructed and there are no rides available."

4.2.5. Programs and services

Survey respondents were asked to give general insights on the accessibility of the City of Regina's programs and services. Respondents were asked, *"In your opinion, how accessible are the City of Regina's programs and services?"*

Figure 10. Accessibility of Regina's programs and services, according to survey respondents



About half (51%) of all the survey respondents identified the City of Regina's programs and services as being only sometimes accessible.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, *"When it comes to programs and services offered by the City, what barriers do you face or experience?"* The most common barriers respondents identified were:

1. It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services, as indicated by 40% of respondents (89 people)
2. City programs or services are too expensive, as indicated by 31% of respondents (68 people)

3. City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people, as indicated by 29% of respondents (65 people)

The findings from this part of the survey align with the top barriers identified across all other engagement activities:

Limited options for people with disabilities

- Participants shared that there are not enough program options for people with disabilities. It is also hard to find information about inclusive programming on the City's website. Specifically, people highlighted a need for more programs for children, older adults, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and the neurodiverse community, as well as sensory-safe and low-stimulation spaces and options.

Insufficient staff training

- Participants highlighted that frontline staff lack training and awareness about how to support people with disabilities, leading to poor experiences (for example, stigma, insensitive responses, or inconsistent treatment) when interacting with program staff. Participants said this is a significant concern for the neurodiverse community. In addition, Knowledge Keepers shared experiences of facing discrimination from staff in customer service roles, and suggested that the City should hire more Indigenous people in frontline roles and implement specific anti-racism training to address this.

Registration process is a challenge

- Many participants described the process of registering for City programs to be a significant challenge, particularly for people who struggle with computers. They noted that programs fill up quickly and that registration becomes competitive and difficult, even for able-bodied people. They proposed that a slower-paced, intentional enrolment for people with disabilities would help.

High cost of programs

- Many participants shared that the cost of programs and services in Regina is a barrier for themselves and people they know, particularly in terms of accessing leisure centres. Cost was described as a barrier for people with disabilities as well as people with lower incomes and families. Some suggested approaches like allowing young children to use the spaces for free.

Limited childcare options for children with disabilities

- Participants noted they face challenges with getting suitable childcare for children, and that there is a lack of public-facing staff who are trained to work with kids with disabilities.

Lack of options for people with language barriers

- Participants pointed out that there are not enough programs or options for people who do not speak English as a first or fluent language. In addition to barriers for newcomers, participants highlighted that not everyone in the Deaf community speaks English. There is not enough accessible communication offered in languages other than English, including ASL and Braille. Some participants expressed that ASL interpreter services are rarely available for City programs. Some recreation programs like Aquacise are not welcoming for people who are hard of hearing.

Insufficient collaboration and partnership with local community organizations

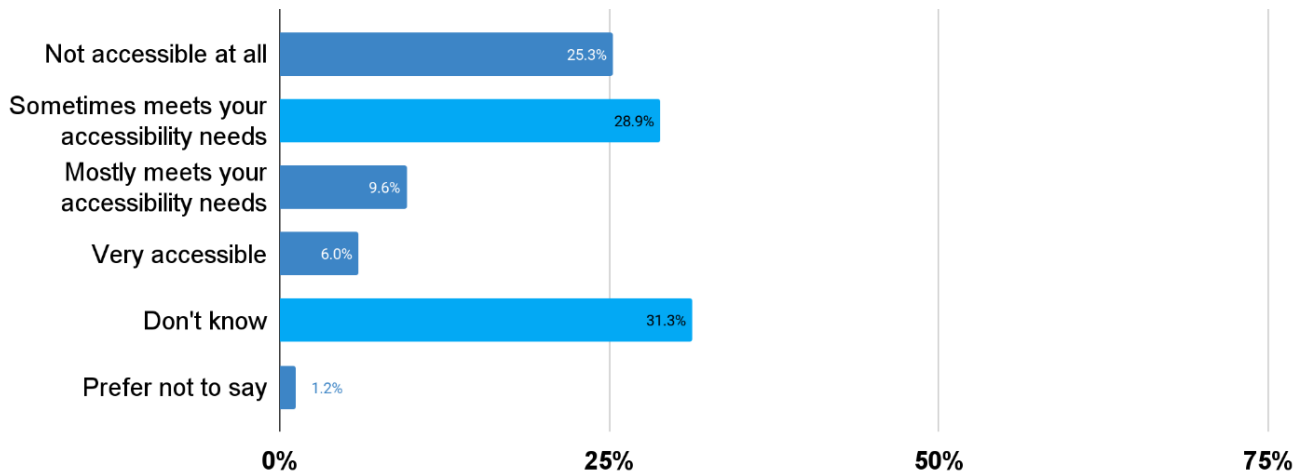
- Participants noted that there is not enough collaboration and integration of efforts between the City and other organizations. They suggested that the City would benefit from connecting with existing volunteer groups and like-minded people in the community to build momentum together and support each other's efforts, instead of providing redundant or overlapping programs.

4.2.6. *Employment*

Nearly two in five (37%) survey respondents indicated that they had previously applied or thought about applying to work for the City of Regina before. These respondents were asked to elaborate on their

perception of how accessible employment at the City is, being prompted with the question, *“In your opinion, how accessible is employment at the City of Regina?”*

Figure 11. Accessibility of Regina’s employment, according to survey respondents



Of the respondents who had previously applied or thought about applying to work for the City of Regina, around one quarter (25%) found it not accessible at all. Moreover, 29% of this subset of survey respondents (24 people) indicated that employment at the City of Regina only sometimes meets their accessibility needs. Interestingly, about a third of this subset of respondents (26 people) indicated that they do not know how accessible employment is at the City of Regina.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, *“When it comes to employment at the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience?”* The most common barriers respondents identified were:

1. Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (ex. a driver’s licence), as indicated by 39% of respondents (32 people)
2. There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City, as indicated by 39% of respondents (32 people)
3. Hiring processes are not accessible, as indicated by 34% of respondents (28 people)
4. There are not enough part-time or job sharing options to work at the City, as indicated by 34% of respondents (28 people)

These results from the survey generally align with the key findings from the focus groups and interviews. Many participants shared that they do not have direct experience with employment with the City specifically; however, people shared several general barriers and challenges related to their experience with employment more broadly. Many participants highlighted that people with disabilities generally struggle to find meaningful employment and/or are underemployed.

Not enough employment opportunities for people with disabilities

- **Lack of suitable, appropriately compensated roles:** Participants shared there is a perception that people with disabilities are only qualified for low-level jobs. As a result, the opportunities that do exist for people with disabilities are not well paid or appealing. Participants noted that suitable employment opportunities are particularly a challenge for people with intellectual disabilities, and that there is significant work to be done in addressing this stigma and equity gap.
- **Lack of flexibility:** Participants shared that the rigidity of traditional roles acts as a barrier to employment, particularly for those who can only work a certain amount of hours per day or month. Roles that require working on site, or that do not allow remote work, further limit people with disabilities because transportation to and from a place of work can be a significant barrier (both in terms of cost and availability of transit options). Finding accessible parking near one's workplace can also be a barrier.

Application processes

- A key barrier highlighted was the **application process** itself, as this process can be overly complicated. For example, participants highlighted that online-only applications create challenges for some applicants, and that the City's existing online system does not work well with screen readers. An intentional, accessible application process developed together with people with disabilities was highlighted as a way to ensure that potential applicants are not facing barriers to applying for roles from the start.
- Participants also highlighted that the **job descriptions** themselves create barriers to employment because requirements listed for a given role are often not necessary for successfully doing the job (such as possessing a driver's licence or the ability to lift certain weights). This leads potential applicants to self-select out. Some survey respondents also reported that they feel there is a lack

of understanding of disabilities at the City in terms of hiring processes, especially in recognizing education levels people with disabilities have.

Not enough accommodations for employees with disabilities

- A lack of accommodations was highlighted as a key barrier. Importantly, participants noted that information about accessibility is not often shared. This means that even when accommodations or programs are available, there is not enough information communicated from the City.

Stigma is a barrier to employment

- Stigma and attitudinal barriers were highlighted as key challenges for seeking and obtaining employment from prospective employers. Participants shared a perception of fear or hesitation from employers who believe it will be more costly or disadvantageous to hire someone with a disability. Participants also highlighted that they fear revealing their disabilities during the application process in case it may prevent them from being considered for a role. Further, Knowledge Keepers shared examples of ageism during job interview processes.

“I made it to the final round of interviews, was the most qualified for the job, and the in person interview happened and they saw I was in my wheelchair suddenly they treated me completely differently, talked down to me, and it was clear that I would not be offered the job.”

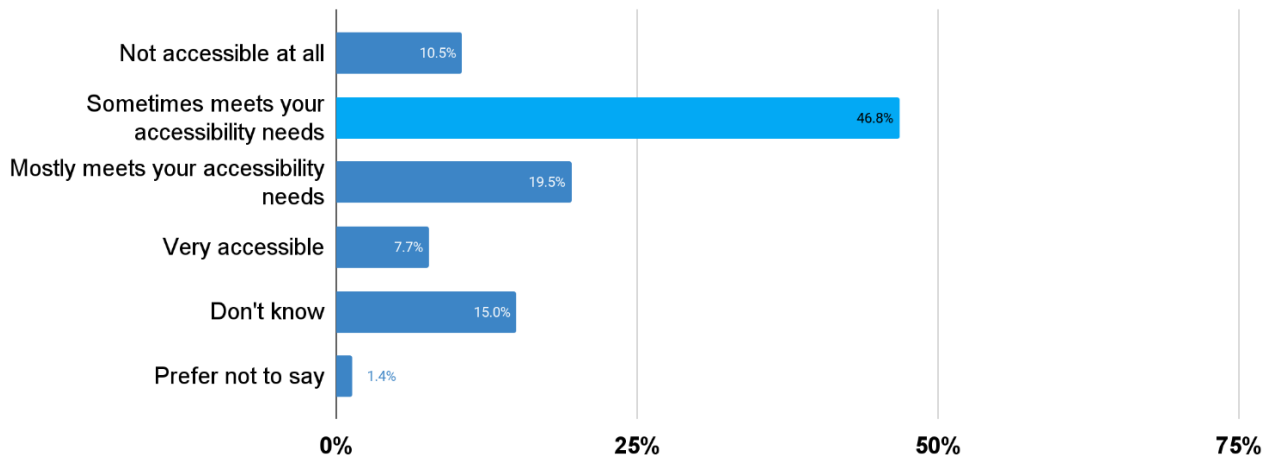
People with disabilities are disincentivized from seeking employment

- Participants, including Knowledge Keepers, shared that people receiving provincial government support are not properly motivated to find work because they will lose this support when they generate their own income directly. This creates challenges for people with disabilities—particularly if their potential employment opportunities are limited, or part-time—because these limited opportunities alone may not be sufficient as a source of income.

4.2.7. Information and communication

Survey respondents were also asked to share their view on how accessible information and communication are from the City of Regina. Respondents were asked, *“In your opinion, how accessible is communication and information from the City of Regina?”*

Figure 12. Accessibility of Regina’s information and communication, according to survey respondents



Nearly half of respondents (47%) indicated that communication and information from the City of Regina only sometimes meets their accessibility needs. One in five (20%) respondents indicated that the City mostly meets their accessibility needs in this regard.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, “*When it comes to communication and information from the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience?*” One critical barrier rose to the top: Half of respondents (50%) identified that it is hard to find information by phone or without a computer. Specifically, respondents reported:

1. It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer, as indicated by 50% of respondents (110 people)
2. Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English, as indicated by 25% of respondents (55 people)
3. City websites are not accessible, as indicated by 18% of respondents (39 people)
4. ASL (American Sign Language), CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), or CNS (Computerized Note-Taking Services) are not available, as indicated by 17% of respondents (38 people)
5. City forms and applications are not accessible, as indicated by 17% of respondents (38 people)

The key findings from this part of the survey closely align with the top barriers identified across all other engagement activities:

Over-reliance on technology is a barrier for those without access to technology

- Many people described that as the City moves away from traditional, manual, and paper communication processes, those without access to technology (due to cost, capacity, or other barriers) are left behind. Online approaches have benefits, but they cannot be the only option, particularly when communicating with older adults, Elders, or people with disabilities. Some reported that certain City services are only accessible online, which creates barriers. People repeatedly highlighted that the City should maintain print (with large font) and other more traditional forms of communication, such as phone or in-person services.

Lack of information on accessibility services and accommodations

- Participants highlighted a lack of easy-to-access information on the accessibility features that are available across this City. Many cited challenges in determining which spaces are accessible, and how to navigate the various programs and services available at the City and from local organizations. As several participants pointed out, this uncertainty can discourage people from leaving their homes and accessing much of what Regina offers. This was also highlighted in conversation with Knowledge Keepers, who suggested that Indigenous-focused information sessions or spaces could offer more comfortable environments for discussion with Indigenous community members.
- Participants also pointed to the need for clarity on who to contact at the City with their accessibility questions. In addition to not having easy access to the information they need, people highlighted that they often do not know who to contact for more help, noting that phone calls to the City are not always returned or effective in addressing their needs.

Lack of ASL, closed captioning, and CNS

- Participants highlighted that there is not enough closed captioning, American Sign Language, Computerized Note-taking, or CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) services offered at events, or more broadly even available across the City. These services are essential for

many people to participate in events, and ensure that people with diverse disabilities receive important information and communications in a timely manner.

Not enough accessible information and communication offered in languages other than English

- As many participants highlighted, Regina is a diverse and growing city that is home to people who rely on languages other than English to communicate. However, accessible communication efforts are predominantly in English. This presents barriers for newcomers and second-language speakers of English. Survey responses indicated a desire to see written communications available in large print and/or Braille. Some survey respondents shared that communication should reflect Regina's diversity of cultural identities, including those who have communication disabilities.

City communication is not always accessible

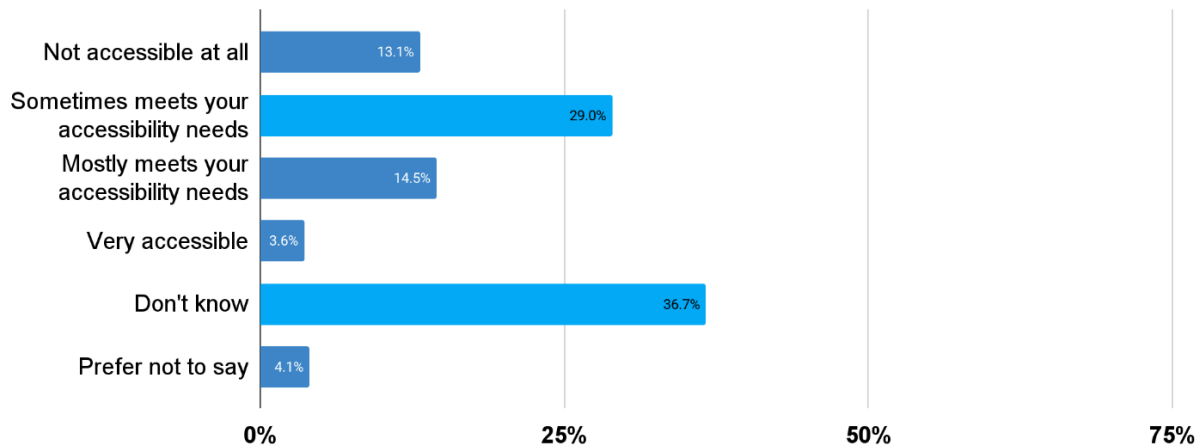
- Several participants noted that the City website is challenging to navigate and not accessible, particularly when trying to find new information. City reports and documents are often too long and without adequate synopsis. Some participants also noted that the language and jargon used in City communication and informational material is too technical for the average person to understand.

"It can be difficult to navigate the City webpage and find information you are looking for. For example, it was difficult to locate this survey from the City homepage. I eventually used Google to go directly to the page."

4.2.8. Procurement and financial services

Survey respondents were also asked about their experience with the City of Regina's financial services. Respondents were asked, *"In your opinion, how accessible are financial services and funding at the City of Regina?"*

Figure 13. Accessibility of Regina's financial services, according to survey respondents



About one third of respondents (29%) indicated that financial services and funding from the City of Regina only sometimes meets their accessibility needs. Over a third of survey respondents (37%) indicated that they do not know how accessible the City's financial services and funding are.

Respondents were prompted to elaborate with the following question, *"When it comes to financial services and funding at the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience?"* The most commonly cited barrier for accessing the City of Regina's financial services and funding was the City's grants, selected by 30% of respondents. A quarter of survey respondents (25%) indicated that they do not face barriers with accessing financial services. Another quarter (24%) indicated that the question does not apply to them. Similarly, in the focus groups and interviews, most participants did not have experience with or barriers to share for this service area.

The following high-level themes emerged from those who had experienced challenges and barriers related to financial services and funding from the City:

City procurement process can be more transparent and accountable

- Participants highlighted a general need for the City to be more transparent about who it is procuring services from, and how it holds service providers accountable to accessibility standards.

Small businesses face more barriers than larger, more established organizations

- Some participants highlighted that small businesses (particularly those led by people with disabilities) struggle to be competitive with larger businesses due to their size. The City can play a role in providing more support for these entrepreneurs.

Online-only payment systems are not accessible

- Many participants noted that payment solutions should provide in-person, phone, and paper options to ensure people without access to technology can continue to interact with the City independently. Online systems are useful for some residents, but they should not be the only option.

4.3. Ideas for motivating change

During interviews and focus groups, participants were asked if they had any ideas on how the City could achieve desired outcomes, and ensure the Accessibility Plan is effective in supporting Regina to become a more open, accessible, and inclusive place for everyone. Participants suggested the following ideas:

Prompt action with incentives and requirements

- Enforcing or incentivizing compliance with accessibility policies and bylaws that currently exist
- Setting higher requirements within building permits so inclusion and accessibility decisions are prioritized from the start
- Enacting and enforcing penalties for failure to comply with construction bylaws related to accessibility
- Incentivizing developers to achieve higher standards of accessibility, through subsidies or density bonuses
- Planning new building codes around accessibility to be effective in five years

Monitor impacts and results

- Monitoring progress to see where challenges and successes are
- Reporting back to both Public and City leadership on actions in the Plan to ensure the City is held accountable for promised changes and planned improvements to its programs, services, and spaces
- Acknowledging the reasons why certain accessibility measures and initiatives have failed to produce expected results in the past, and seeking a solutions-minded approach to address them

Invest in accessibility

- Dedicating a budget or greater resources and funding for accessibility initiatives, including snow removal

Adopt a forward-thinking mindset

- Starting with feasible short-term steps (“quick wins”) while having clear timelines for long-term plans that address larger, systemic changes

Engage the community and bring more awareness to accessibility

- Promoting, including, and celebrating people with disabilities and diverse backgrounds
- Launching education and awareness campaigns about accessibility and the barriers people face in Regina to prompt public support
- Promote the Accessibility Plan when it is completed

Involve and empower the community

- Mandating the involvement of people with disabilities and lived experience to help plan and implement accessibility measures (for example, going beyond just involving passive advisory committees for later stages of review)
- Establishing a committee or board of Indigenous Knowledge Keepers or Elders who can advise on Indigenous perspectives, mediate, and help address barriers
- Inviting people with disabilities to test new spaces and programs and participate in accessibility audits for all of the City’s facilities and spaces
- Collaborating with people with disabilities and community-based organizations to form partnerships for action

- Conducting more public engagement to identify specific gaps and barriers to accessibility in Regina, including more low-effort surveys
- Involving persons with disabilities and lived experience in all planning processes
- Clarifying or expanding the role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Lead by example

- Acting as a role model by highlighting best practices and holding all of the City's events, services, and programs to the highest accessibility standards
- Providing sensitivity training or other initiatives to help City staff be more aware and understanding of the diverse accessibility needs in the community
- Publishing and making widely available a formal list of accessibility features present at all City facilities and spaces
- Initiating more programs and services that improve quality of life for people with disabilities



Appendices

What we heard report —

Regina Accessibility Plan



REGINA



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Interview questions - Appendix A

City of Regina Accessibility Plan — interview questions

Questions:

1. Please introduce yourself. Why is an accessibility plan important to you and your community?
2. How would you describe your interactions and work with the City?
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility?
 - b. What are some opportunities?

This plan is being organized around six areas of program and service delivery. I will go through each of these with you.

3. Built Environment: This includes City parks and open spaces, sidewalks and roads, and City facilities, including community centres, recreation and leisure centres, and City Hall. Please note that there are areas in Regina's built environment that are not in the City's jurisdiction, including private businesses and privately-owned buildings and residences, and Wascana Park, which are regulated by the Province.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility of the built environment?
 - b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about the City's built environment?
4. Transportation: This includes City sidewalks, parking (on streets and City-owned parking lots), snow removal at these locations and City facilities, taxicabs and ride-hail licensing, and Regina Transit and Paratransit. Please note that there are aspects of Regina transportation that are not part of the City's jurisdiction, including private parking lots and railway lines.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility of transportation?
 - b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about the City's transportation?

5. Employment: (with caveat - *we understand that many folks won't have direct experience with this, but we want to ask to make sure we don't miss anything from you.*) This includes ease of access to City hiring processes, procedures for providing accommodations, the types of accessibility supports provided throughout the hiring process and employment with the City.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility of their employment practices?
 - b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about employment practices at the City?
6. Programs and Services: This includes programs and services offered at the City's parks, recreation facilities (community centres, leisure centres and municipal arenas), and cultural facilities. It also includes services like applying for a business license, tax payments, building inspections and services through the City's public works department.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility of their programs and services?
 - b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about the City's programs and services?
7. Information and Communication: This includes printed, digital and in-person communication, including the City's website, social media accounts, and promotional materials for programs and events. It also includes online content including the City program registration system and City social media.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to accessibility of their information and communication systems and practices?
 - b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about the City's information and communication systems and practices?
8. Procurement & Financial Services: This includes how the City purchases goods and services, financial procedures, payment processing systems and financial reporting.
 - a. What are some of the City's strengths when it comes to procurement and financial services?

- b. What are the accessibility priorities or opportunities that come to mind when thinking about the City's procurement and financial services?
- 9. What are some other organizations in Regina who are doing excellent work in supporting people living with disabilities?
- 10. We're nearing the end of our interview! Before wrapping up, is there anything that we haven't discussed that you would like to bring up?

Interview responses: City's existing strengths - Appendix B

During the one-on-one interviews with priority candidates, participants were asked to reflect on the City's existing strengths when it comes to accessibility. This section includes a list of what we heard from interview participants. It is not a complete picture or assessment of accessibility in Regina.

"The City seems to be quite aware of ageism and ableism."

The following strengths were identified during the interviews:

Built environment

- **Public buildings are relatively more accessible than before**
 - Most public buildings have accessible features like automatic doors and ramps, and City Hall has automatic door operators
 - Mosaic Stadium has brightly lit bathrooms, accessible seating options, and hand railings on the stairs
 - George Bothwell Branch library has good parking access, does not require access via stairs, and connects well with Southland Mall
 - Community centres and pools are becoming more accessible, especially for getting into and moving around
 - Accessible washrooms have been designed in public buildings like the Fieldhouse of the Sportplex
- **Parks, public, and open spaces are well-maintained**
 - A good share of residents live near parks or public spaces, many of which have a good degree of paved paths
 - The City does a good job of maintaining urban parks
- **Washrooms are becoming more visible**
 - There is more signage for where public washrooms are located

Transportation

- **Pedestrian conditions are improving**
 - Automated Pedestrian Signals (APS) are implemented in most of the core urban areas of the city and have been steadily increasing in number
- **Road signage change is more legible**
 - Road signs were formerly all in uppercase and have been updated
- **Low-floor buses are very helpful**
 - Kneeling or low-floor buses are used in special identified areas for people using mobility devices
- **Transportation training fosters independence**
 - The City has been willing to support bus training programming for persons with disabilities, allowing for more independence and makes the job easier for caregivers
- **Regina Paratransit Service is award-winning for innovation**
 - Some of the practices and ideas implemented by Regina Paratransit Service are very innovative and have been adopted across the country
- **Fare Assistance Program for Regina Transit is a good start**
 - The discount pass for riding Regina's transit service helps some persons with disabilities and low-income, but needs to expand who it serves

Programs and services

- **Programs and services are highly responsive to being more accessible**
 - The City often demonstrates willingness to listen to and collaboratively find solutions to make its programs and services more inclusive and safe
 - The City was adept at adapting services and programming to remain accessible for as many people as possible during the pandemic
 - The City goes beyond tokenistic change when presented with feedback
- **Staff make a big difference**
 - Roles like the Inclusion Support Advisor really help bridge people with different needs to find and access programs and services that fit them
 - Most staff at recreation centres and libraries are spectacular
- **Availability of programs and services for people with disabilities is generally good**
 - There seems to be quite a lot of programs tailored for older adults
 - Many of the City's programs have accessibility provisions for persons with disabilities

- There are generally not many complaints regarding access for the City's programs and recreation facilities
- **Regina Public Library is community-oriented and provides great special programs**
 - It is evident that the Regina Public Library values every member of the community through the resources and support it provides
- **Good partnerships between the City and local non-profit organizations**
 - City is receptive of providing support for programs to serve priority populations like seniors and youth

Employment

- **Some City jobs are accessible to people with disabilities**
 - The City has hired people with disabilities for certain types of jobs, mostly custodial and related to snow removal
 - Chief Layne Jackson and Regina Fire and Protective Services worked with 4to40, which works to hire for customized employment opportunities
 - Regina Paratransit Service hired persons with disabilities to train the public on how to use the service
- **Volunteer opportunities for the City can be meaningful and influential**
 - The City is good at reaching out for volunteers to join focus groups or committee advisory groups
 - Some people with disabilities were instrumental in making meaningful changes for the development of the recent Leisure Guide

Information and communication

- **Information from the City is easy to access with the Internet**
 - Online sources of information from the City is generally accessible
 - The City's Social media presence has improved recently, especially in terms of visual aesthetics
 - The website for the City is generally user-friendly for accessing key information (i.e., changes to garbage pick up times)
- **City takes on role as a central hub for communicating what services and programming are available**
 - The Communications department at the City works well with local organizations for distributing information about programming and services

- **Representation in City communications is getting better**
 - The City is doing a good job at further representing the diversity of Regina's communities in its communications and promotion efforts

Survey questions - Appendix C

Public survey — Regina Accessibility Plan

The City of Regina is developing an Accessibility Plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to access in all City spaces, programs, and services. We are asking for community input to ensure that the Plan reflects the diverse needs of people living, working, playing, and learning in Regina.

To inform the Accessibility Plan, the City of Regina is conducting a survey. The survey includes questions about what accessibility means to you; what barriers you may have faced in City-operated spaces, programs, and services; and what actions the City can take to remove these barriers.

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. There are 18 survey questions, followed by five optional demographic questions.

1. What does an accessible Regina look like to you?

- (Open answer) _____
- Prefer not to say.

2. Have you (or the person you are caring for) had a hard time (faced barriers) using services and programs from the City of Regina in the last year? If so, what kinds of barriers? *(choose all that apply)*

- **Built environment** (for example: not able to enter a City building; a City park or playground does not meet your needs, no accessible washroom, etc.)
- **Communication and information** (for example: the City only gives information online, City communication is not plain language, City signage is confusing, etc.)
- **Attitudes** (for example: City staff were not trained on disability, people made assumptions about your abilities, etc.)
- **Technology** (for example: no interpreter available in City facilities, programs, or services; not able to sign up for recreation programs; inaccessible City websites; etc.)
- **Roads and sidewalks** (for example: snow removal is too slow, snow is plowed into curb ramps or accessible parking spaces, sidewalks are in bad condition, etc.)
- **Programs and services** (for example: not able to register for programs, staff don't have training on disability, recreation equipment is not accessible, etc.)

- **Transportation** (for example: not enough transit in your area, not enough Paratransit services, not enough accessible taxicabs or rideshare services, etc.)
- **Employment** (for example: not able to get or keep a job at the City, job postings are confusing, etc.)
- **Financial services and funding** (for example: bill payment is not accessible, application forms are not accessible, etc.)
- **Cost** (for example: a City program or service is too expensive)
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- Have not faced barriers with the City of Regina in the last year
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

3. When it comes to the built environment, what barriers do you face or experience? (choose all that apply)

"Built environment" includes City parks, open spaces, and facilities (including community centres, recreation and leisure centres, and City Hall). Please note that some spaces in Regina are not under the City's control (for example, private businesses, privately owned buildings and residences, and Wascana Park, which are regulated by the Province).

- City buildings are not accessible.
- Recreation facilities are not accessible (for example: no adult change tables, no pool access, etc.).
- Park features are not accessible (for example: seating, playgrounds, washrooms, etc.).
- Public spaces are not accessible.
- There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities.
- There are not enough low-stimulation spaces at City facilities.
- There are not enough audible or tactile signals to help you find your way.
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with the built environment
- Does not apply to you
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

4. In your opinion, how accessible is the City of Regina's built environment?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meets your accessibility needs
- Mostly meets your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

5. When it comes to transportation offered by the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience? (choose all that apply)

"Transportation" includes City roads and sidewalks, parking (on streets and in City-owned parking lots), snow removal at these locations and City facilities, taxicabs and ride-hail licensing, and Regina Transit and Paratransit. Please note that some aspects of transportation in Regina are not operated by the City, including private parking lots and railway lines.

- Paths and trails are not accessible.
- Buses are not frequent enough.
- Buses and/or stops are not accessible.
- Transit is not available in my area.
- Paratransit is not reliable or available enough.
- Taxicabs and/or ride-hail services are not accessible or available enough.
- Snow removal is too slow.
- Sidewalks are in bad condition or not accessible (for example: not enough curb ramps, uneven pavement, etc.)
- There are not enough audible signals at crosswalks.
- There is not enough accessible parking.
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with transportation
- Does not apply to you
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

6. In your opinion, how accessible is transportation in the City of Regina?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meets your accessibility needs
- Mostly meets your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

7. Have you applied or thought about applying to work for the City of Regina before?

- Yes (jump to question 8)
- No (jump to question 10)
- Don't know (jump to question 10)
- Prefer not to say (jump to question 10)

**8. When it comes to employment at the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience?
(choose all that apply)**

"Employment" includes City hiring processes (including job applications and interviews) and jobs, including accommodations, opportunities, and supports for people with disabilities to work at the City.

- Hiring processes are not accessible.
- City work spaces are not accessible.
- Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (for example: a driver's license for a job that doesn't include driving).
- There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City.
- There are not enough part-time or job sharing options to work at the City.
- There is not enough support for City employees with disabilities.
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with employment at the City of Regina
- Does not apply to you
- Don't know

- Prefer not to say

9. In your opinion, how accessible is employment at the City of Regina?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meets your accessibility needs
- Mostly meets your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

10. When it comes to programs and services offered by the City, what barriers do you face or experience? (choose all that apply)

"Programs and services" includes programs and services offered at the City's parks, recreation facilities (community centres, leisure centres and municipal arenas), and cultural facilities. It also includes building inspections, and other City services.

- It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services.
- It is hard to sign up for City programs or services (for example: sign up is not accessible).
- City programs or services are too expensive.
- City staff are not trained to support people with physical disabilities.
- City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people.
- City programs or services are not in accessible buildings or spaces.
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with City programs or services
- Does not apply.
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

11. In your opinion, how accessible are the City of Regina's programs and services?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meet your accessibility needs

- Mostly meet your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

12. When it comes to communication and information from the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience? (choose all that apply)

"Communication and information" includes printed, digital, and in-person communication, including the City's website, social media accounts, and information about programs and events.

- It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer.
- It is hard to submit a Service Request online.
- ASL (American Sign Language), CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), or CNS (Computerized Note-Taking Services) options are not available.
- City websites are not accessible.
- Social media posts from the City are not accessible.
- City forms and applications are not accessible.
- Signage in City buildings or public spaces is not accessible.
- Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English.
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with communication and information from the City.
- Does not apply to you.
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

13. In your opinion, how accessible is communication and information from the City of Regina?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meets your accessibility needs
- Mostly meets your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know

- Prefer not to say

14. When it comes to financial services and funding at the City of Regina, what barriers do you face or experience? (choose all that apply)

"Financial services and funding" includes bill payments, financial procedures, point of sale systems, business license applications and financial reporting, as well as grants and the City's funding system.

- Online payment systems are not accessible.
- There are not enough ways to pay City bills offline (for example: in person, by mail, by phone).
- The City's grants are not accessible (for example: forms are hard to fill out, there are too many barriers to eligibility, etc.).
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- You do not face barriers with financial services.
- Does not apply to you.
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

15. In your opinion, how accessible are financial services and funding at the City of Regina?

- Not accessible at all
- Sometimes meet your accessibility needs
- Mostly meet your accessibility needs
- Very accessible
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

16. Do you feel like you are treated with dignity and respect when you use City spaces, programs, or services?

- Never
- Rarely

- Some of the time
- Often
- Always
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

17. Which areas are most important for improving accessibility? (select up to 3)

- Built environment
- Communication
- Attitudes
- Technology
- Roads and sidewalks
- Programs and services
- Transportation
- Employment
- Financial services and funding
- Cost
- Other. Write in your own answer: _____
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

18. If the City of Regina could focus on making one area more accessible, what would you like to see?

(Open answer) _____

Demographics

It is important to us to know who we are hearing from. These last few questions will help us ensure that we hear from a wide range of people and perspectives across Regina.

1. What gender do you (or the person you are caring for) identify as? (choose all that apply)

- Woman
- Man
- Non-binary/gender diverse

- Two-spirit
- Transgender
- Prefer to self-identify: _____
- Prefer not to say

2. What age group do you (or the person you are caring for) belong to?

- Under 15 years old
- 15-19 years old
- 20-24 years old
- 25-29 years old
- 30-34 years old
- 35-39 years old
- 40-44 years old
- 45-49 years old
- 50-54 years old
- 55-59 years old
- 60-64 years old
- 65-69 years old
- 70-74 years old
- 75 years or older
- Prefer not to say

3. Which options below apply to you (or the person you are caring for)? (choose all that apply)

- Indigenous
- Person of colour
- LGBTQ2S+
- Born outside of Canada
- New to Canada within the last five years
- Live with children (under age 18) in the household
- Live with seniors in the household
- None of the above
- Prefer not to say

4. Which options below describe your connection to accessibility? (choose all that apply):


- Person with a disability
- Advocate or work for a disability organization
- Care for someone with a disability
- Older adult
- Care for someone who is an older adult
- None of the above
- Prefer not to say

5. How much money does your household make each year before taxes?

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000 to less than \$30,000
- \$30,000 to less than \$60,000
- \$60,000 to less than \$90,000
- \$90,000 to less than \$120,000
- \$120,000 to less than \$150,000
- \$150,000 and over
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

D | Pop-up board example

Share your thoughts on Regina's new Accessibility Plan



What's happening?

The City of Regina is creating an Accessibility Plan to ensure that everyone can access City spaces, programs, and services. To make sure that the Plan reflects the diverse needs of people living, working, and playing in Regina, the City invites you to tell us about your experiences with accessibility in Regina.

Public input will directly inform the Accessibility Plan.

Your comments will help shape priorities and actions for the City to remove barriers to access in areas including:

- Built environment
- Communication
- Transportation
- Employment
- Technology
- Financial services



Project goals

1. Identify, remove, and prevent barriers to participation in civic life.
2. Strengthen the City's ongoing commitment to becoming an age-friendly and accessible city.
3. Create a centralized, strategic plan to coordinate accessibility efforts across all City departments.


To learn more and take the survey, scan here!



Timeline



Regina.ca/accessibility





Barriers to accessibility in Regina

Have you (or the person you care for) had a hard time (faced barriers) using services and programs from the City of Regina in the last year?

Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

Built environment (for example: not able to enter a City building; a City park or playground does not meet your needs, no accessible washroom, etc.)

Roads & sidewalks (for example: snow removal is too slow, snow is plowed into curb ramps or accessible parking spaces, sidewalks are in bad condition, etc.)

Communication (for example: City information is only available online, City communication is not plain language, signage is confusing, etc.)

Financial services and funding (for example: bill payment is not accessible, application forms are not accessible, etc.)

Attitudes (for example: staff were not trained on disability, people made assumptions about your abilities, etc.)

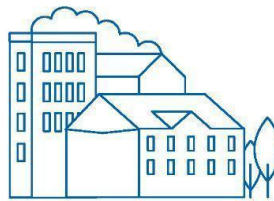
Cost (for example: a City program or service is too expensive)

Employment (for example: not able to get or keep a job at the City, job postings are confusing, etc.)

Other: _____

Technology (for example: no interpreter available in City facilities, programs, or services; not able to sign up for recreation programs; inaccessible City websites; etc.)

Programs & services (for example: not able to register for programs, staff don't have training on disability, recreation equipment is not accessible, etc.)



Transportation (for example: not enough transit in your area, not enough Paratransit services, not enough accessible taxicabs or rideshare services, etc.)

You have not faced barriers with the City of Regina in the last year.

Barriers to accessibility in Regina

Communication and information

Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer.	City forms and applications are not accessible.
It is hard to submit a Service Request online.	Signage in City buildings or public spaces is not accessible.
ASL, CART, or CNS options are not available.	Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English.
City websites are not accessible.	Other: _____
Social media posts from the City are not accessible.	



Which areas are most important for improving accessibility in Regina?

Please choose up to three. Use a sticker to show your choices.

Built environment	Roads and sidewalks	Financial services and funding
Communication	Programs and services	Cost
Attitudes	Transportation	Other: _____
Technology	Employment	

Barriers to accessibility in Regina

Employment

Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

Hiring processes are not accessible.	There are enough part-time or job sharing options at the City.
City work spaces are not accessible.	There is not enough support for City employees with disabilities.
Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (for example: a driver's license for a job that doesn't involve driving).	Other: _____
There are enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City.	



Programs and services

Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services.	City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people.
It is hard to sign up for City programs or services (for example: sign up is not accessible).	City programs or services are not in accessible buildings or spaces.
City programs or services are too expensive.	Other: _____
City staff are not trained to support people with physical disabilities.	



Barriers to accessibility in Regina

Built environment

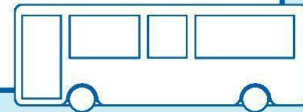
Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

City buildings are not accessible.	There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities.
Recreation facilities are not accessible (for example: no adult change tables, no pool access, no accessible gym).	There are not enough low-stimulation spaces at City facilities.
Park features are not accessible (for example: seating, playgrounds, washrooms, etc.).	There are not enough audible or tactile signals.
Public spaces are not accessible.	Other: _____

Transportation

Place a sticker next to the kinds of barriers that you have experienced.

Paths and trails are not accessible.	Sidewalks are not accessible or in bad condition.
Buses are not frequent enough.	Snow removal is too slow.
Buses and/or bus stops are not accessible.	Not enough audible signals at crosswalks.
Transit is not available in my area.	Not enough accessible parking.
Paratransit is not reliable or available enough.	Other: _____
Taxicabs and/or ride-hail services are not accessible or available enough.	



Survey analysis: Additional charts and graphs - Appendix E

Top barriers ranked by percentage of survey respondents:

Specific barrier	Category
1. Sidewalks are in bad condition and or not accessible (75%)	Transportation
2. Snow removal is too slow (64%)	Transportation
3. It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer (50%)	Communication and information
4. Park features are not accessible (47%)	Built environment
5. It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services (40%)	Programs and services
6. Job postings require things that are not needed for the job (39%)	Employment
7. There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities (39%)	Built environment
8. There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City (39%)	Employment
9. Buses are not frequent enough (39%)	Transportation
10. Hiring processes are not accessible (34%)	Employment
11. Recreation facilities are not accessible (33%)	Built environment
12. City programs or services are too expensive (31%)	Programs and services
13. Online payment systems are not accessible (30%)	Financial services and funding
14. City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people (29%)	Programs and services

15. Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English (25%)

Communication and information

If the City of Regina could focus on making one area more accessible, what would you like to see?

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Sidewalks, Paths, and Walkways	31.0%
Transit and Paratransit	20.7%
Built environment, parks, and public spaces	14.4%
Programming and services	9.2%
Snow removal	6.9%
Employment	5.2%
Parking	4.0%
City communication and information	4.0%
Language and newcomer services	2.9%
Public washrooms	2.9%
Educating staff	2.9%
Costs of programming and transit	2.3%
Financial support	1.7%
Lighting for walkways	1.1%
Signs and wayfinding	1.1%

Numbers of Indigenous respondents who reported facing barriers with the City of Regina (n=14)

Answer	Number of responses
Roads and sidewalks	11
Built environment	8
Programs and services	8
Transportation	7
Communication and information	5
Technology	5
Cost	5
Attitudes	4
Employment	2
Financial services and funding	2
Have not faced barriers with the City of Regina	1
Don't know	0
Prefer not to say	0

Percentage of respondents who have faced barriers with the City of Regina, by gender

Gender	Built environment	Communication and information	Attitudes	Technology	Roads and sidewalks
Man	35.7%	30.4%	14.3%	16.1%	66.1%
Woman	45.5%	42.3%	30.9%	25.2%	79.7%
Other genders	69.2%	50.0%	61.5%	46.2%	88.5%
Prefer not to say	54.5%	36.4%	45.5%	36.4%	77.3%

Gender	Programs and services	Transportation	Employment	Financial services and funding	Cost	Have not faced barriers
Man	14.3%	44.6%	21.4%	8.9%	23.2%	8.9%
Woman	28.5%	50.4%	18.7%	15.4%	30.9%	4.1%
Other genders	57.7%	84.6%	34.6%	42.3%	42.3%	3.8%
Prefer not to say	40.9%	45.5%	36.4%	27.3%	54.5%	0.0%

Men reported accessibility barriers proportionally less than women. Though there is only a small sample size of 26 persons who identify with all other genders, they reported barriers proportionally more frequently than both men and women. The results also suggest that attitude in relation to accessibility, as well as general access to programs and services, may be barriers encountered much more frequently by people who identify with other genders than compared to male and female participants.

Percentage of respondents who have faced barriers with the City of Regina, by age

Age	Built environment	Communication and information	Attitudes	Technology	Roads and sidewalks
15 years or younger	58.8%	29.4%	35.3%	29.4%	70.6%
16-24 years old	100.0%	40.0%	80.0%	60.0%	90.0%
25-34 years old	63.2%	47.4%	31.6%	21.1%	84.2%
35-44 years old	42.0%	26.0%	26.0%	20.0%	80.0%
45-54 years old	36.8%	34.2%	36.8%	26.3%	68.4%
55-64 years old	54.5%	57.6%	36.4%	24.2%	78.8%
65 years or older	25.6%	43.6%	17.9%	33.3%	76.9%

Age	Programs and services	Transportation	Employment	Financial services and funding	Cost	Have not faced barriers
15 years or younger	58.8%	23.5%	11.8%	11.8%	23.5%	0.0%
16-24 years old	70.0%	70.0%	30.0%	60.0%	60.0%	0.0%
25-34 years old	34.2%	57.9%	18.4%	23.7%	50.0%	5.3%
35-44 years old	28.0%	58.0%	30.0%	20.0%	28.0%	4.0%
45-54 years old	31.6%	52.6%	28.9%	15.8%	34.2%	7.9%
55-64 years old	18.2%	51.5%	27.3%	15.2%	33.3%	3.0%
65 years or older	12.8%	48.7%	10.3%	5.1%	17.9%	7.7%

Based on the percentage of survey responses for each age group, there may be a general trend in which younger people in Regina report barriers more frequently than older people when using programs and services provided by the City of Regina. It should be noted that only 17 survey respondents identified as

15 years or younger, and 10 survey respondents identified as between 16-24 years old, whereas all other age groups were represented by more than 30 respondents. Specifically, when ranked, the most common barriers faced by people in each age group when using the City of Regina's services and programs were:

	15 years or younger	16-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-44 years or younger	45-54 years old	54-64 years old	65 years or older
1	Roads and sidewalks	Built environment	Roads and sidewalks	Roads and sidewalks	Roads and sidewalks	Roads and sidewalks	Roads and sidewalks
2	Built environment	Roads and sidewalks	Built environment	Transportation	Transportation	Communication and information	Transportation
3	Programs and services	Attitudes	Transportation	Built environment	Built environment	Built environment	Communication and information
4	Attitudes	Programs and services	Cost	Employment	Cost	Transportation	Technology
5	Communication and information	Transportation	Communication and information	Programs and services	Communication and information	Attitudes	Built environment

*Note: coloured cells indicate difference with general findings

Built environment barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
Park features are not accessible	47.3%
There are not enough accessible toilets at City facilities	39.2%
Recreation facilities are not accessible (for example: no adult change tables, no pool access, etc.).	34.2%
There are not enough low-stimulation spaces at City facilities	32.9%
Public spaces are not accessible	32.9%
There are not enough audible or tactile signals to help you find your way	27.9%
City buildings are not accessible	22.1%
Other (Write your own answer)	11.7%
You do not face barriers with the built environment	9.9%
Does not apply to you	9.9%
Don't know	1.8%
Prefer not to say	1.4%

Transportation barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
Sidewalks are in bad condition and or not accessible	74.6%
Snow removal is too slow	63.8%
Buses are not frequent enough	52.2%
Buses and/or stops are not accessible	40.6%
Paths and trails are not accessible	38.8%
Paratransit is not reliable or available enough	35.7%
There is not enough accessible parking	32.1%
There are not enough audible signals at crosswalks	22.8%
Taxicabs and/or ride-hail services are not accessible or available enough	20.5%
Transit is not available in my area	15.2%
Other (Write in your answer)	8.9%
You do not face barriers with transportation	5.4%
Does not apply to you	3.6%
Don't know	0.4%
Prefer not to say	0.4%

Programs and services barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
It is hard to find out what accessibility features the City offers for specific programs or services	40.1%
City programs or services are too expensive	30.6%
City staff are not trained to support neurodiverse people	29.3%
City staff are not trained to support people with physical disabilities	23.9%
It is hard to sign up for City programs or services	23.0%
City programs or services are not in accessible buildings or spaces	17.1%
Don't know	12.6%
You do not face barriers with City programs or services	9.5%
Does not apply	9.5%
Other (Write your own response)	8.6%
Prefer not to say	2.3%

Employment barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
Job postings require things that are not needed for the job	39.0%
There are not enough jobs for people with disabilities to work at the City	39.0%
Hiring processes are not accessible	34.1%
There are not enough part-time or job sharing options to work at the City	34.1%
There is not enough support for City employees with disabilities	31.7%
City work spaces are not accessible	18.3%
Other (Write your own answer)	17.1%
Does not apply to you	15.9%
You do not face barriers with employment at the City of Regina	11.0%
Don't know	7.3%
Prefer not to say	1.2%

Information and communication barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
It is hard to find information by phone or without a computer	49.8%
It is hard to submit a Service Request online	16.7%
ASL, CART, or CNS options are not available	17.2%
City websites are not accessible	17.6%
Social media posts from the City are not accessible	14.0%
City forms and applications are not accessible	17.2%
Signage in City buildings or public spaces is not accessible	15.4%
Not enough accessible communication and information in languages other than English	24.9%
You do not face barriers with communication and information from the City.	15.8%
Does not apply to you	12.7%
Don't know	8.6%
Prefer not to say	0.5%
Other (Write in your own answer)	9.0%

Financial services and funding barriers faced by survey respondents

Answer	Percentage
The City's grants are not accessible	30.0%
You do not face barriers with financial services	24.7%
Does not apply to you	23.8%
There are not enough ways to pay City bills offline	14.8%
Online payment systems are not accessible	9.9%
Don't know	9.9%
Other (Write in your own answer)	8.1%
Prefer not to say	2.7%