

Accessible Community Forum: Accessible Housing in BC Summary Report

Table of Contents

1. Panelists
2. Forum
3. Survey Response Summary

PART I: Panelists

1. Rachel Skidmore
 - a. Southern Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands Regional Network Coordinator, Family Support Institute of BC
2. Ben Postmus
 - a. Kootenays Regional Network Coordinator, Family Support Institute of BC
3. Karin Pasqua
 - a. Accessibility & Universal Design Specialist and Co-Founder at Meaningful Access Consulting
4. Sharie Minions
 - a. Mayor of Port Alberni
5. Marika Albert
 - a. Policy Director at BC Non-Profit Housing Association
6. Paul Gauthier
 - a. Executive Director at Individualized Funding Resource Centre Society
7. Stephanie Allen
 - a. VP, Strategic Business Operations & Performance at BC Housing

PART II: Forum

- 113 total EventBrite registrants
- 57 total Zoom attendees (including ConnecTra staff, panelists and hosts)

PART III: Survey Responses Summary

- 81 respondents completed the Accessible Housing in BC Survey
- Respondents' connection with the disability community
 - 52 respondents had a visible disability
 - 29 respondents had a hidden or invisible disability
 - 6 respondents were the primary care aid for a person with a disability
 - 3 were healthcare professionals or aids for a person with a disability
 - Remaining respondents preferred not to say, did not have a disability or belonged to a different category
- Types of disabilities respondents are currently living with:
 - 63 respondents had a mobility impairment
 - 7 respondents a hearing impairment
 - 7 respondents had a visual impairment
 - 10 respondents had a cognitive disability
 - 9 respondents had a memory impairment
 - 9 respondents had a communication impairment
 - 23 respondents had a degenerative disease
 - 15 respondents had a mental health-related disability
 - 5 respondents indicated they did not have a disability
 - 3 respondents preferred not to say
 - 7 respondents selected "other"
- Types of mobility aids (if any) respondents used regularly
 - 29 respondents use a cane, walker and/or crutches
 - 48 respondents use an electric/manual wheelchair or a mobility scooter
 - 1 respondents use prosthetics
 - 10 respondents make use of human help
 - 17 respondents indicated they do not use mobility aids

- 6 respondents selected “other”
- The majority of respondents indicated they live in the Greater Vancouver Area or on Vancouver Island with the most frequent responses being Vancouver
- Respondents’ current housing situation
 - 29 respondents own their own home
 - 30 respondents rent their home
 - 4 respondents live with others but are not paying rent or mortgage
 - 7 respondents live with others and assist in paying rent or mortgage
 - 2 respondents currently do not have housing
 - 2 respondents preferred not to say
 - 7 respondents selected “other”
- Type of housing respondents live in
 - 23 respondents live in a detached house
 - 26 respondents live in an apartment
 - 2 respondents live in a room
 - 14 respondents live in a condominium
 - 1 respondent lives in a student dormitory
 - 5 respondents live in a housing co-operative
 - 2 respondents live in a long-term, assisted living, retirement home or something similar
 - 2 respondents preferred not to say
 - 6 respondents selected “other”
- Number of respondents living in the respondents' households
 - 27 respondents live alone
 - 32 respondents live with one other person
 - 10 respondents live with two other respondents
 - 7 respondents live with three other respondents
 - 2 respondents live with at least four other respondents
 - 2 respondents would rather not say
 - 1 respondent currently does not have housing
- Respondents’ approximate annual household income

- 23 respondents make less than \$25,000
- 15 respondents make between \$25,00 and \$50,000
- 10 respondents make between \$50,000 and \$75,000
- 10 respondents make between \$75,00 and \$100,000
- 2 respondents make between \$100,000 and \$150,000
- 7 respondents make more than \$150,000
- 14 respondents preferred not to say
- 88% of respondents indicated that they do not feel that there are adequate accessible housing options in BC, while 12% indicated they were not sure. Zero respondents indicated that they felt there were adequate housing options in BC.
- Barriers respondents faced when trying to find accessible housing:
 - 29 respondents indicated that they do not know where to find accessible housing
 - 35 respondents indicated that the listings they found did not provide sufficient information about accessibility features
 - 16 respondents indicated they do not have the time or energy to sift through listings to find accessible housing
 - 22 respondents indicated that the services and programs dedicated to helping respondents with disabilities find accessible housing are not accessible to them
 - 15 respondents said they were not eligible for accessible housing options in their area
 - 9 respondents indicated they never tried to find accessible housing
 - 3 respondents indicated they encountered other barriers outside or in addition to those listed above
- Minimum requirements needed for a home to be physically accessible for individual respondents and their needs
 - 54 respondents indicated wide doorways that are wheelchair accessible
 - 47 respondents indicated wide hallways and passageways that are wheelchair accessible

- 33 respondents indicated a downstairs bathroom
- 51 respondents indicated wheelchair ramps
- 59 respondents indicated zero step entrances and exits
- 49 respondents indicated residential lifts or elevators
- 39 respondents indicated door levers and accessible door handles
- 8 respondents indicated vision panels on doors
- 40 respondents indicated reinforced walls for grab bars
- 35 respondents indicated shelving, cabinets, light switches, electrical outlets, and door handles reachable from a sitting position
- 56 respondents indicated adaptations to make the bathroom easier to use
- 40 respondents indicated adaptations to make the kitchen easier to use
- 9 respondents indicated that they do not need accessible housing
- 14 respondents responded that they required other features outside or in addition to those listed above
- 40 respondents indicated that the accessible housing options available in BC do not meet their minimum accessibility requirements. 17 respondents were not sure and only 5 respondents indicated that BC's accessible housing options met their minimum accessibility requirements "moderately well" or "very well."
- 43 respondents indicated that they found it difficult or extremely difficult to determine whether potential housing would be physically accessible for them from a listing alone. 14 respondents indicated they had moderate difficulty in this area and 13 respondents indicated they were not sure.
- 57% of respondents indicated that they do not feel that they can afford accessible housing in their area with their current level of income without subsidy or financial assistance. 17% of respondents indicated that they can and 12% respondents indicated they were not sure.
- 65% of respondents indicated that they are not aware of any financial assistance programs dedicated to helping respondents with disabilities pay

for accessible housing. Only 22% were aware of such programs and the remaining respondents were unsure.

- 75% of respondents indicated that they currently receive or have previously received some type of funding, bursary or financial assistance to help them pay for their accessible home.
- Among those who have received financial assistance for accessible housing, 46% indicated that this financial assistance met their needs while 42% indicated that it did not.
- 10% of those who applied for financial assistance from a program or service provider were denied
- 78% of respondents believe that there is not enough funding or financial assistance available to help people with disabilities in BC to afford accessible housing
- 64% of respondents believe that there are not adequate financial resources available to help create more accessible housing options in BC
- 35% of respondents do not know how to apply to accessible housing in BC
- Only 36% of respondents have ever applied for accessible housing while the majority (62%) have not
- Most respondents (48%) were aware of programs, services or organizations that help people with disabilities find and secure accessible housing but a significant portion (36%) were not
- 36% of respondents have used programs, services or organizations that help people find and secure accessible housing but 56%, the majority, have not
- 14% of respondents found the application process for accessible housing in BC either inaccessible or very inaccessible. 20% found the process neither accessible nor inaccessible and 16% found it somewhat accessible.
- 14% of respondents found the application process for accessible housing in BC either non-inclusive or very non-inclusive. 26% found the process neither inclusive nor non-inclusive and 16% found it somewhat inclusive.
- 35% of respondents indicated they have been waitlisted for accessible housing in BC at some point.

- Among those who were on a waitlist before receiving accessible housing, 5 people had to wait up to 6 months to a year, 5 people waited more than 2 years, 7 people have never received housing after being put on the waitlist and 10 are still currently on the waitlist
- The most common barriers respondents faced when trying to secure accessible housing include
 - 35 respondents found that the waitlist for accessible housing was too long
 - 9 respondents found that the paperwork and legal/administrative processes were difficult to understand
 - 4 respondents found that the paperwork and legal/administrative processes were inaccessible for them
 - 9 respondents were not able to meet the disability criteria for securing accessible housing
 - 21 respondents found that the accessible housing options in their area do not meet their needs
 - 39 respondents indicated that there were not enough accessible housing options in their area
 - 17 respondents indicated that they do not know where to look for accessible housing options in their area
- 33% of respondents indicated that they experienced or felt some type of discrimination based on their disability at some stage of the housing process.
- If the respondents were unable to find accessible housing...
 - 42 respondents would live as best as they can in inaccessible housing
 - 33 respondents would make their current residence more accessible
 - 18 respondents move outside of their current neighbourhood
- 26% of respondents indicated that their current place of residence did not meet enough of their accessibility, 35% indicated it met most but not all their accessibility needs, 9% indicated it did not meet any of their accessibility needs and only 25% indicated it met all their needs.

- The most common barrier that respondents faced when attempting to make accessibility modifications to their home was that they did not have the financial capacity to make those adjustments. Other common reasons were that they did not have the time or energy to make the adjustments and did not know anyone who had the skills or qualifications to help them implement those adjustments.
- 49% of respondents were unaware of any funding programs, subsidies or bursaries that would help them pay for accessibility related modifications to their home. 69% have never received this kind of funding.
- 57% of respondents indicated that they have paid for accessibility-related modifications to their home themselves without financial aid.
- The majority of respondents (60%) indicated they would rather make modifications to their home to make it more accessible than find a more accessible home