



Capital Regional District

PARKS

Everyone's Parks and Trails

A Universal Access Plan for CRD Parks



March 2003

Table of Contents

The Universal Access Plan summary	1
1. The purpose of the Universal Access Plan	3
2. Definitions and perspectives	5
Understanding disability	
Understanding universal design	
3. A history of accessibility in regional parks and trails	7
4. Consulting with communities	9
Recreation needs	
Recreation trends	
More inclusive regional parks and trails	
5. Access audit of facilities and services	13
6. Towards accessible regional parks and trails	15
Changing attitudes	
Changing facilities	
Changing services	
Implementation plan	
Appendix 7.1 – Definitions	20
Appendix 7.2 – Principles of universal design	21
Appendix 7.3 – CRD Parks policy on accessibility and universal design.....	24
Appendix 7.4 – Community consultants	25

The Universal Access Plan summary

CRD Parks has developed Everyone's Parks and Trails, a Universal Access Plan to better accomplish its vision of providing opportunities to experience regional parks and trails. The plan identifies an integrated approach to establishing facilities and services for the widest possible range of park and trail visitors, including visitors with disabilities.



Ensuring that all visitors to regional parks and trails have equal opportunity to experience their natural and cultural heritage is the goal of accessibility and universal design for CRD Parks. Accessibility enables a person with a disability to make use of an area and its facilities without assistance. Universal design means taking into consideration the needs of as many people as possible, and incorporating those needs into facilities and services. While the focus of accessibility is to enable people with disabilities to experience regional parks and trails more fully, the benefits of universal design are safer and more welcoming parks and trails for all visitors.

The Universal Access Plan achieves four main objectives:

1. To identify criteria for universal design for facilities and services in representative regional parkland
2. To undertake an accessibility audit of existing CRD Parks facilities and services
3. To consult with organisations in the Capital Region that advocate for people with disabilities
4. To establish priorities for accessible service delivery throughout the regional parks and trails system

The Universal Access Plan provides direction for CRD Parks to improve facilities that are outdated or inadequate, and develop public programs and communications for the greatest possible number of visitors. Integration of all visitors into regional park and trail experiences is only possible through a holistic approach to service delivery. Planning universal access for regional parks and trails, and changing attitudes, facilities and services, requires an on-going and permanent commitment to all visitors. Universal access begins as a mandate to serve those who have encountered barriers to experiencing regional parks and trails. It will prevail as a means to serve all visitors today and in the future.

1. The purpose of the Universal Access Plan



Ensuring that all visitors to regional parks and trails have equal opportunity to experience their natural heritage is the goal of accessibility and universal design for CRD Parks.

CRD Parks has developed Everyone's Parks and Trails, a Universal Access Plan to better accomplish its vision of providing opportunities to experience the protected natural areas of the Capital Region. The Universal Access Plan identifies an integrated approach to providing facilities and services to the widest possible range of park visitors, including visitors with disabilities.

Ensuring that all visitors to regional parks and trails have equal opportunity to experience their natural heritage is the goal of accessibility and universal design for CRD Parks. Accessibility enables a person with a disability to

make use of an area and its facilities without assistance. Universal design means taking into consideration the needs of as many people as possible, and incorporating those needs into facilities and services. Accessibility is based on the BC Building Code. Universal design goes beyond the building code. While the focus of access projects is to enable people with disabilities to experience regional parks and trails more fully, the benefits of universal design are safer and more welcoming parks and trails for all.

The Universal Access Plan was developed by a CRD Parks project team represented by staff from Administration, Operations, Planning and Conservation, and Visitor Services. The plan focuses on the actions needed to make regional parks and trails more welcoming for all visitors. It provides direction to CRD Parks in planning accessible facilities and services in conjunction with park experiences.

Specifically, the Universal Access Plan achieves four main objectives:

1. To identify criteria for universal design for facilities and services in representative regional parkland
2. To undertake an accessibility audit of existing CRD Parks facilities and services
3. To consult with organisations in the Capital Region that advocate for people with disabilities
4. To establish priorities for accessible service delivery throughout the regional parks and trails system

With these objectives realised, CRD Parks can begin to integrate accessibility and universal design projects into its service delivery. This includes addressing universal access in all CRD Parks planning processes, including management plans and guidelines, communication plans, interpretive plans and project management planning processes.

The Universal Access Plan is based on an understanding of what disability means, a recognition that people with disabilities face discrimination, and a commitment to service delivery based on universal access. It recommends initiatives CRD Parks can undertake to meet the needs of visitors with disabilities, including operational guidelines in all areas of service delivery and a five-year implementation plan to make regional parks and trails more inclusive.

2. Definitions and perspectives

Statistics indicate that 12.4% of Canadians have some form of disability, or functional limitation (Statistics Canada 1998 Census). In BC, that figure rises to 16.7%. While there are no comparable figures available for the Capital Region, traditionally more people with disabilities live here than in any other community in BC.

The World Health Organization defines disability as “any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform activities in a manner or within a range considered normal for a human being.” Disability refers to the expression of a physical or mental limitation in a social context, to the gap between a person’s capabilities and the demands of her or his personal or physical environment. There are many different kinds of disabilities and a spectrum of degrees to which a given disability limits a person’s life activities.

Understanding disability

Because of the barriers they face, people with disabilities are less likely to participate in physical activity, though most indicate they would like to be more involved in sport, recreation, leisure activities and active living. However, they are more often limited by the myths, misconceptions and attitudes of others than by their own physical limitations. These myths include the beliefs that people with disabilities are more at risk than non-disabled people, are at greater risk of having an accident while engaged in physical activity, and that making environments accessible is very costly.



Statistics indicate that 12.4% of Canadians have some form of disability, or functional limitation.

Just as people with disabilities experience social and environmental barriers to full participation in society, they also experience barriers to full participation in regional parks and trails. When these barriers are removed, CRD Parks can focus on inclusion instead of exclusion. Inclusion in this context refers to the social interaction between people with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. It is based on the fundamental right to quality of life, individual empowerment, respect and dignity for all people, and the guarantee of equal access to and participation in society.

CRD Parks can take steps toward change by assessing current accessibility in service delivery, identifying barriers (attitudinal and environmental) to accessibility, consulting with organisations that advocate for people with disabilities, and providing staff training and awareness in disability issues. By creating an inclusive climate, CRD Parks can go beyond considering the practicalities to ensure that visitors with disabilities are not just able to enter buildings and access information, but feel truly welcome in regional parks and trails. Universal design is the place to begin.

Universal design refers to the design of facilities, services, programs and products that can be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

Understanding universal design

Universal design refers to the design of facilities, services, programs and products that can be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. The intent of universal design is to accommodate the broadest spectrum of people through a single, all encompassing design, rather than through the provision of multiple elements specially designed for use by distinct groups. Universal design is governed by seven principles (detailed in Appendix 7.2):

1. **Equitable Use:** the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities
2. **Flexibility in Use:** the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** the use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skill or current concentration level
4. **Perceptible Information:** the design communicates information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities
5. **Tolerance for Error:** the design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions
6. **Low Physical Effort:** the design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach and manipulation, regardless of user's body size, posture or mobility.

3. A history of accessibility in regional parks and trails

CRD Parks undertook access projects many years before it formalised its commitment to universal access. In 1981, the Elsie King Trail in Francis/King Regional Park was constructed. This popular boardwalk trail enabled visitors with mobility disabilities to experience the natural world of a Douglas-fir forest. In 1986, a viewing platform was constructed in Witty's Lagoon Regional Park. This facility, along with an accessible toilet building and picnic area, enabled visitors with mobility disabilities to access a viewpoint overlooking Sitting Lady Falls and the Witty's Lagoon estuary.

Ten years later, CRD Parks established the Barrier Free Group – staff representatives who assessed the current level of accessibility in regional parks and made recommendations for improvement to CRD Parks services and facilities.

Meanwhile, CRD Parks undertook two significant universal access projects in Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park:

- **Elk Lake float, parking area and toilet building**

This facility, popular with fishers and naturalists alike, is a perfect spot to fish or birdwatch. Built to universal design standards, the site contains an accessible float, ramp from parking area to float, parking area and toilet building.

- **Hamsterly Beach playground**

This facility is especially appealing to children with mobility disabilities. It enables them to move up a ramp into the centre of the playground structure, to enjoy its universally designed features.



In 1998, the CRD Parks Committee endorsed the CRD Parks Policy on Accessibility and Universal Design (Appendix 7.3). The policy and guidelines were designed to illustrate the commitment of CRD Parks to accessibility and universal design, consider the needs of as many visitors as possible, and incorporate those needs into facilities, signs and services. The policy was based on three key directions:

1. CRD Parks will provide accessible recreational opportunities that promote a sense of dignity and independence for the visitor, while respecting the natural and visual integrity of the park and its features.
2. CRD Parks will provide universal accessibility to representative natural landscapes and representative recreational experiences within the regional parks and trails system. Accessible facilities will be planned in conjunction with an accessible recreational experience.
3. CRD Parks will acknowledge accessibility and universal design as primary considerations in any new development project or retrofit in regional parks and trails. Projects are generally defined as signs, facilities and trails.

Also in 1998, CRD Parks embarked on its most ambitious access project to date: the redevelopment of the Elsie King Trail and park entrance facilities at Francis/King Regional Park. The highlight of this facility development was the trail itself, redesigned to be wide enough for people using wheelchairs or scooters to travel side by side. A series of trailside signs was installed to lead visitors on a self-guided, interpretive tour along the forest trail. Most of the Elsie King Interpretive Trail was surfaced with hard packed gravel, and boardwalk in areas of environmental sensitivity. Changes in trail surface material were intended to provide tactile information for visitors with visual impairments, to let them know when they were approaching rest areas. With this project completed, CRD Parks was recognised in the Capital Region for its commitment to making regional parks and trails more accessible to all visitors. Use of the trail and public support of the initiative has grown, and CRD Parks continues to receive requests for information on accessible design and building materials. The project was profiled on two separate occasions in "Accessible BC", a publication of the BC government, as well as in local media.

The Universal Access Plan is the next step in the commitment of CRD Parks to the principles and practice of universal access. The plan expands on the original policy to meet today's universal design standards, and the changing needs of people with disabilities. To develop the plan, CRD Parks undertook two important tasks: consultation with organisations in the Capital Region that advocate for people with disabilities, and an access audit of existing facilities and services in regional parks and trails.

4. Consulting with communities

The most important way any parks agency can ensure its facilities and services become more accessible is to ask people with disabilities what they require. While CRD Parks has undertaken householder surveys (in 1997 and '99), people with disabilities were not specifically targeted. However, in the process of developing the Universal Access Plan, CRD Parks consulted with a number of organisations in the Capital Region that advocate for people with disabilities (Appendix 7.4). Through meetings, e-mail discussions and written submissions, representatives from these organisations were asked to respond to three questions:

1. What are the recreational needs of your members?
2. Can you identify any recreation trends for people with disabilities?
3. How can regional parks and trails be more inclusive?

Recreation needs

People with disabilities are motivated to visit regional parks and trails for the same reasons as other visitors: to experience protected natural areas and to enhance the quality of their lives. They seek opportunities to learn about natural and cultural history, and participate in outdoor experiences and activities.

Adults and children alike don't want to just get close to nature; they want to get into nature. They want to get beyond parking lots and picnic areas, to explore forest and seashore. However, any outing requires detailed planning for someone who cannot walk (or see or hear). Essential questions must be answered in advance. Will public transit take wheelchairs? Are there stairs at the destination point? Are doorways wide enough? Are bathroom aids available? Accessibility is a major factor in the choice of outdoor destinations, and even with planning, some places are simply off limits.



Any outing requires detailed planning for someone who cannot walk (or see or hear). Accessibility is a major factor in the choice of outdoor destinations.

People with disabilities need access to information – including web pages, program brochures and trail guides – to prepare for their visits to regional parks and trails. They need to know if a park is fully or partially accessible, and whether they will need assistance to explore the park environment. They need information that identifies trail grades and trail surfaces, whether toilet buildings and parking lots are accessible, and if there is clear and unobstructed access from parking areas to park features. They need to know at what point a trail ceases to be accessible. Visitors with disabilities recommend that CRD Parks use the universal symbol (a wheelchair) for accessibility in all public information, as well as a simple grading system to indicate level of trail difficulty.

Recreation trends

The biggest trend in recreation for people with disabilities is in the area of independent travel. Walking frames were first designed as an inexpensive way to assist people with limited walking ability. Today people who have no walking ability whatsoever can travel independently by scooter. In addition to scooters, there are electric wheelchairs, tricycles, all terrain wheelchairs and hand cycles, all forms of transportation that enable people with disabilities to go where they want to go, when they want to go.

Despite the availability of choices for independent travel, limited destinations are available in regional parks and trails. The Galloping Goose Trail is the natural choice, with kilometres of paved trail or hard packed road base. However, access points with formal parking areas that meet universal design standards are non-existent. Community consultants suggested that CRD Parks explore partnerships with businesses and municipalities that have parking lots adjacent to the Galloping Goose Trail. As well, they recommended that park entrances, parking areas and main trails in regional parks be designed to meet the needs of visitors who are not able to hike far into parks for their outdoor experiences.

Finally, community consultants stressed that, given the distinct nature of regional parks and trails, the point of universal access is not to eliminate risk for park visitors with disabilities, but rather to equalise risk (“risk management with dignity”).

More inclusive regional parks and trails

Some adult visitors to regional parks and trails have disabilities; some children with disabilities visit parks and trails with their non-disabled parents. When there is a lack of accessible facilities and services, family members are cut off from sharing the same park experiences, or from having any park experiences at all. A child cannot explore a cedar forest without her parent, but if her parent has a disability and cannot navigate the trail, the result is that neither can experience the cedar forest.

Community consultants emphasised that CRD Parks should focus on policies and standards for inclusion, not on specifics about disability. They recommended that accessible facilities and services be provided where there are significant natural features, and that different types of parks be developed according to universal design standards. Examples included East Sooke, Elk/Beaver Lake and Island View Beach regional parks and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail. It was also noted that the marine environment is the reason so many people choose to live in the Capital Region, yet this is the least accessible of park environments.

Community consultants offered specific recommendations to make regional parks and trails more inclusive:

- Access to points of interest
- Smooth, even trail surfaces
- Opportunities to sit and rest along trail routes
- Use of grades and ramps instead of stairs
- Use of symbols to indicate trail difficulty
- Placement of park benches at accessible view points
- Public information identifying accessible park and trail experiences
- Development of universally designed picnic areas



When there is a lack of accessible facilities and services, family members are cut off from sharing the same park experiences, or from having any park experiences at all.

5. Access audit of facilities and services

As part of the process for developing the Universal Access Plan, CRD Parks completed a comprehensive accessibility audit of existing facilities and services in most regional parks and trails (regional park reserves were not audited). The purpose of the access audit was to:

- Identify where good universal access practice already exists
- Highlight where present provision of accessibility meets visitor needs or should be improved
- Identify ways of improving access to facilities and services in regional parks and trails

CRD Parks used the BC Building Code as a starting point for its access audit. Based on the National Building Code of Canada, the BC Building Code is a set of minimum provisions relating to the safety of buildings through the application of uniform building standards. It defines accessible as meaning “that a disabled person is, without assistance, able to approach, enter, pass to and from, and make use of any area and its facilities.”



The BC Building Code defines accessible as meaning “that a disabled person is, without assistance, able to approach, enter, pass to and from, and make use of any area and its facilities.”

The access audit covered four main categories and corresponding components:

1. Buildings (entrance and exit doors, public areas, corridors and stairs, ramps, washrooms)
2. Landscapes leading to facilities or park features (parking lots, trails, trash and recycling areas)
3. Facilities (drinking fountains, equestrian areas, developed fishing sites, information kiosks, signs, picnic areas, play areas)
4. Visitor services (interpretive exhibits, public information)

Each category was broken down into its detailed components. For example, washrooms in regional parks and trails were audited for access to the room, placement of the toilet, the presence of grab bars, and location of washbasins and change tables. Universal access standards were developed based on the BC Building Code and the technical requirements of universal design.

The access audit was comprehensive in scope. The universal access project team visited most regional parks and one regional trail, assessed all items on the audit checklist, made accurate measurements and took detailed notes. To ensure consistency, project staff worked together and compared notes frequently. The findings of the access audit were as varied as the park areas audited. Some had no level of accessibility whatsoever; others were moderately accessible, meaning that although some features did not meet current standards, they were generally useable by people with disabilities. These features needed only minor maintenance to meet universal access standards. The majority of parks and trails, however, needed the commitment of multiple resources (staff time, materials and/or budget) to meet a minimum level of universal access.

The findings of the audit, defined as barriers to access, fall under three main headings:

1. Barriers to access that can be addressed through regular maintenance upgrades. These types of barriers can be corrected immediately through routine maintenance and with no additional resources required.
2. Barriers to access that need to be addressed through structural upgrades. These types of barriers can be corrected in the short term (less than six months) with minimal additional resources.
3. Barriers to access that must be addressed as capital projects. These types of barriers will take significantly more time and resources to correct.

With only two regional parks currently meeting a minimum level of universal access, the Universal Access Plan recommends that priority focus be on facilities and services that:

- Serve the widest possible range of park visitors and have some existing level of accessibility (for example, East Sooke, Elk/Beaver Lake and Francis/King regional parks)
- Are considered representational regional landscapes (for example, Coles Bay and Witty's Lagoon regional parks, and the Galloping Goose and Lochside regional trails)
- Offer representative recreational experiences (for example, Island View Beach, Mount Work – Durrance Lake, and Sooke Hills Wilderness regional parks)

The Universal Access Plan recommends that, as part of annual budget considerations, resources be identified from the CRD Parks Capital Reserve Fund for maintenance and structural upgrades in regional parks and trails identified as priorities. Universal access in parks and trails other than the above will be addressed after completion of the five-year implementation of the Universal Access Plan.

6. Towards accessible regional parks and trails

CRD Parks is firmly committed to removing barriers for visitors to regional parks and trails. Integration of all visitors into park and trail experiences is only possible through a holistic approach to service delivery. The Universal Access Plan will start by changing attitudes. Only when that is under way can facilities and services be changed. Together these changes will lead to an understanding of the value and role of universal access. Universal access begins as a mandate to serve visitors who have encountered barriers to experiencing their regional parks and trails. It will prevail as a means to serve diverse audiences today and in the future.



Universal access begins as a mandate to serve visitors who have encountered barriers to experiencing their regional parks and trails. It will prevail as a means to serve diverse audiences today and in the future.

Changing attitudes

Changing attitudes begins by focusing first on CRD Parks staff, giving them the training and tools needed to provide the highest standard of service delivery to all regional park and trail visitors. Key actions in this area are to:

- Present awareness training on disability, accessibility and universal design to CRD Parks policy makers (Parks Committee members and managers) and staff
- Provide universal access training to all project managers
- Develop an accessibility checklist to be used in all project management and facilities planning processes

Changing facilities

Changing facilities is a long-term investment in providing a welcoming environment in regional parks and trails. The access audit provides the information needed for upgrades, updates and future access initiatives. Key actions in this area are to:

- Update current park facilities to minimum access standards as identified in the access audit
- Revise toilet building, picnic shelter and information kiosk designs and drawings to meet universal design standards
- Endorse priority access initiatives in representational regional landscapes: East Sooke, Elk/Beaver Lake and Island View Beach regional parks and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail
- Identify future large scale access projects as part of the CRD Parks 10-year capital projects plan

Changing services

Once accessible facilities have been provided to regional park and trail visitors, accessible services can be developed. Key actions in this area are to:

- Provide information (through media such as web pages or brochures) relating to accessible opportunities for regional park and trail experiences
- Develop environmental interpretation programs that will include people with disabilities in interpretive experiences
- Identify volunteer opportunities for people with disabilities and target recruitment to organisations that advocate for them

Implementation plan

Planning universal access for regional parks and trails, and changing attitudes, facilities and services, requires an ongoing and permanent commitment to all visitors. The Universal Access Plan will enable CRD Parks to improve facilities that are outdated or inadequate, and develop public programs and communications for the widest possible audience.

The actions in the following implementation plan are ordered from basic to more complex, from those actions that can be accomplished with existing resources to those that will require additional resources. Actions with significant financial implications will be presented to the CRD Parks Committee for consideration as part of the CRD Parks annual budget.

Phase 1 (year 2003)

1. Provide awareness training on disability, accessibility and universal design to CRD Parks policy makers (Parks Committee members and managers) and staff
2. Provide universal design training to all project managers
3. Develop an accessibility checklist to be used in project management and facilities planning processes
4. Bring current park facilities up to minimum access standards as identified in the access audit (priority focus: regular maintenance upgrades)
5. Update toilet building, picnic shelter and information kiosk designs and drawings to meet universal design standards
6. Provide information (through media such as web page or brochure) relating to accessible opportunities for regional park and trail experiences, as they become available



Phase 2 (year 2004 and 2005)

1. Bring current park facilities up to minimum access standards as identified in the access audit (priority focus: structural upgrades)
2. Develop environmental interpretation programs that include people with disabilities in interpretive experiences
3. Identify scope of priority access projects in East Sooke (Aylard Farm), Elk/Beaver Lake (Lake Loop Trail) and Island View Beach regional parks and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail
4. Complete East Sooke (Aylard Farm) access project

Phase 3 (year 2006 and 2007)

1. Develop first accessible visitor entrance area for the Galloping Goose Trail
2. Identify volunteer opportunities for people with disabilities and target recruitment to organisations that advocate for them
3. Undertake one significant access project
4. Identify future significant access projects as part of the CRD Parks 10-year capital projects plan



7. Appendices

Appendix 7.1 – Definitions

Appendix 7.2 – Principles of universal design

Appendix 7.3 – CRD Parks policy on accessibility and universal design

Appendix 7.4 – Community consultants

Appendix 7.1 – Definitions

Accessibility

Accessibility, when used in conjunction with structures or buildings, means these are to a design standard where people can approach, enter and use the structure unimpeded by their disability.

Active living

Active living is a way of life in which physical activity plays a part in one's daily life. The benefits of active living are not just physical, but emotional, social and spiritual as well. Active living enhances one's quality of life and opens the door to other community opportunities.

Barrier free design

Barrier free design promotes the elimination of barriers to access in the design and construction of buildings, features and sites.

Disability

Disability is "any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform activities in a manner or within a range considered normal for a human being" (the World Health Organization). It is the expression of a physical or mental limitation in a social context, the gap between a person's capabilities and the demands of the environment. It is the interaction of physical or mental limitations with social and environmental factors that determines whether one has a disability.

Handicap

A handicap is a situational disadvantage that prevents people with disabilities from fully participating in life's opportunities and activities. It is the impact of the social and physical environment on a person's functioning.

Impairment

An impairment is a deviation from normal development, structure or function.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the social interaction between people with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. This interaction strengthens communities. It is based on the fundamental right to quality of life, individual empowerment, respect and dignity for all people, and the guarantee of equal access to and participation in society.

Universal design

Universal design is the attempt to accommodate the broadest spectrum of people through a single, all encompassing design rather than the provision of multiple elements specially designed for use by special groups. Other terms used in the past were "Accessible Design," "Adaptable Design" and – along with the term "Barrier Free Design" – tend to refer to the needs of a specialised population, most often people who use wheelchairs.

Appendix 7.2 – Principles of universal design

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design is governed by seven principles:

1. Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Guidelines

- Provide the same means of use for all users – identical whenever possible, equivalent when not.
- Avoid segregating or stigmatising any users.
- Make provisions for privacy, security and safety equally available to all users. Make the design appealing to all users.

2. Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Guidelines

- Provide choice in methods of use.
- Accommodate right or left-handed access and use.
- Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

3. Simple and Intuitive Use

The use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skill or current concentration level.

Guidelines

- Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

4. Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Guidelines

- Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- Maximise "legibility" of essential information.
- Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e. make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

5. Tolerance for Error

The design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Guidelines

- Arrange elements to minimise hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated or shielded.
- Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- Provide fail-safe features.
- Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

6. Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Guidelines

- Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- Use reasonable operating forces.
- Minimise repetitive actions.
- Minimise sustained physical effort.

7. Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, and manipulation, regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Guidelines

- Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance

Appendix 7.3 – CRD Parks policy on accessibility and universal design

CRD Parks is actively committed to accessibility and universal design, considers the needs of as many visitors as possible, and incorporates those needs into facilities, signs and visitors services. This commitment places the emphasis on accessible experiences in regional parks and trails. Facilities, signs and services are considered support for those experiences.

1. CRD Parks will provide accessible recreational opportunities that promote a sense of dignity and independence for the visitor, while respecting the natural and visual integrity of the park and its features.
2. CRD Parks will provide universal accessibility to representative natural landscapes and representative recreational experiences within the regional parks and trails system wherever feasible. Accessible facilities will be planned in conjunction with an accessible recreational experience.
3. CRD Parks will acknowledge accessibility and universal design as primary considerations in any new development project or retrofit in regional parks and trails. Projects are generally defined as signs, facilities and trails.

Appendix 7.4 – Community consultants

BC Paraplegic Association

Canadian National Institute for the Blind

Community Living Services

Garth Homer Centre

Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Queen Alexandra Centre for Children’s Health

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Vancouver Island

Recreation Integration Victoria

Vancouver Island Housing Association for the Physically Disabled

Victoria Association for Community Living

