Condominium Home Owners Association of British Columbia
Leadership, Education and Resources for Strata Owners Across BC
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Checklist for Accessible Signs and Signage

Features of Accessible Signs and Signage	How does our building compare?	Determine next steps and timing
Are all accessible architectural features identified using the International Symbol of Access? ➢ The International Symbol of Access (ISA) is the blue and white square surrounding a figure seated in a wheelchair. This symbol indicates which locations have accessible features such as additional space, curb cuts or power-assisted entrances. ➢ Signs with this symbol direct users to these locations and identify the locations to be reserved or made a priority for people who require them. ➢ Signs with the ISA are installed in accessible floor or ground areas, and to denote locations of accessible entrances, access routes, spaces with seating or landing areas, facilities, personal care, circulation like elevators, parking stalls, and loading zones.		
Are areas with assistive hearing technology identified using the ISA for Hearing Loss? ➢ This symbol is a blue square with white graphic depicting a stylized ear with a diagonal line traversing it. It can accompany appropriate graphic and/or textural information that clearly provides information. ➢ People benefiting from assistive hearing technology scan their environments for this symbol to determine if this system is available in their environment. ➢ Assistive listening devices might increase communication options on environments where sound pollution such as road noise or ambient sound impedes with direct communication. ➢ Consider these signs for common gathering spaces—both inside and out—as well as security entrances and information		

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locations.		
Are all signs in the best locations? ➢ Signs are mounted in locations where people can easily see them from both standing and seated heights. As well, tactile and Braille signs are easy to locate within reaching range. ➢ Signs provide information about directions and specific locations. Both of these are easy to read, locate and understand. ➢ Ceiling-hung signs facing the travel of direction are suitable for directional signage. ➢ Each common room is labeled with a sign mounted on the adjacent latch-side wall (i.e. the wall that is on the side of the latch, not where the hinges are). ➢ Check lighting for the signs to make sure that there is neither glare nor shadows.		
Are the signs easy to read? ➢ Selected fonts are sans-serif. Characters are not italic, script, decorative, oblique, or any other decorative form. The characters have a thick enough stroke to be easily read from a distance. Appropriately use capitals and lower case to reinforce ease of natural reading; all block letters are harder to quickly decipher. ➢ The surface of signs are made of a non-glare, non-reflective material. Glare across the surface of a sign can impede the ability for the message to be visible or legible.		
Is colour used to increase readability of the signs? ➢ Larger properties or buildings can use colour as a visual language to provide information for easy recognition. ➢ The visual characters and symbols of the sign are in colours that are highly-contrasted to their backgrounds and with surrounding mounting surfaces. Preferred colour combinations are blue or black background with white letters or yellow background with black letters.		
Has the Tactile Warning/Surface Indicators program been included in the signage? ➢ Tactile warning/surface indicators is a floor-level tactile signage program of raised domes and stripes to provide information about the current location and safe direction of		

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travel along a barrier-free path of travel. These tactile elements are detectable by canes or through feet. ➢ Usually they are also colour contrasted to be visually apparent in addition to being tactilly distinct. ➢ Grooves or stripes run the direction of travel. Truncated or raised domes indicate a location for attention: an intersection, traversing traffic or a grade change. ➢ Locations suitable for tactile warning signs include top of ramps, stairs, edges of platforms, and before curb cuts or crossing vehicle traffic.		
Does the common space provide additional environmental cues for location and wayfinding? *Everyone relies on multiple opportunities to learn where they are currently and where they want to go; people with disabilities additionally rely on these. All of the cues in the space reinforce this information.* *Examine what cues are present that support or impair this understanding and which ones are absent*. Consider some of the following: ➢ Lighting: different levels and types of lighting cue people. e.g. soft lighting is conducive to contemplative seating while even ambient lighting is suitable for paths of travel. ➢ Audio: sounds can reinforce the nature and expected behaviour of a space. The gentle ticking of a grandfather clock is distinct from a radio tuned to the latest hits. ➢ Tactile: flooring is one common material that can easily be read by the body (through the feet) to understand location. Carpet denotes a different place than ceramic tile. ➢ Colour/contrast: use colour and/or contrast to denote features and their details. e.g. an entrance is easier to locate when its frame is painted in contrast and residents understand where doors lead if similar types of doors are painted the same colour. ➢ Arrangement: the configuration and furnishing of a space can reinforce how it's perceived. A formal sitting space will have a very different character than a sports lounge.		
Does the property and building have excellent signage for safety or fire? ➢ Each common space inside the building clearly marks the direction and location of emergency egress and exits. Those		

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that are accessible for people with mobility devices are clearly marked. ➢ Each vertical circulation element like stairs or elevators have a posted egress plan with instructions in graphic, text, raised/tactile and Braille. This information is clearly visible and reachable for both standing and seated heights. ➢ Information about locations of places of refuge and communication to emergency personnel is also provided for both occupants and visitors to the building. ➢ Outside, information about gathering point locations and evaluation plans including routes are available in multiple modes of communication for residents and visitors to the property.		
In the event of an emergency, does the alarm system communicate in multiple modes? ➢ Alarms are audio and include visual signaling devices. Audio instructions can include both signaling and verbal instructions for building residents and visitors to follow.		
Are manual alarm pulls able to be activated by any resident or visitor? ➢ All alarm pulls are within easy reach of people in both standing and seated heights. ➢ Each alarm pull has text, graphic, raised/tactile, and Braille instructions of when to activate it and what to do in the event of an emergency.		
Does each floor have good signs to tell residents and visitors of their location? ➢ Upon arrival on each floor by either elevator or stairs, each resident and visitor are able to easily identify their location. ➢ This can be achieved through a combination of environmental cues such as interior décor, signage and audio information. ➢ Floor location signs use Arabic numbers in contrasting colours to the surrounding area. These are located within lines of sight for both standing and seated heights.		
Is there a maintenance plan to keep all signage areas accessible?		

Note: This checklist presents suggestions for consideration. Consult with local authorities as well as agencies and governing bodies responsible for accessibility before planning for accessibility.

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