

Accessibility Plan 2024/26

Progress Report

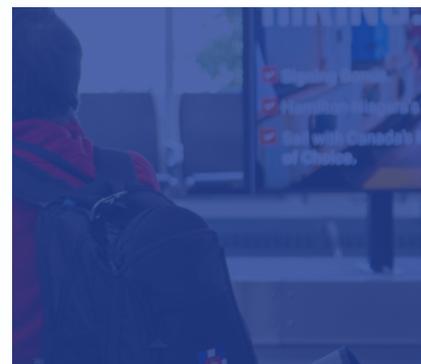
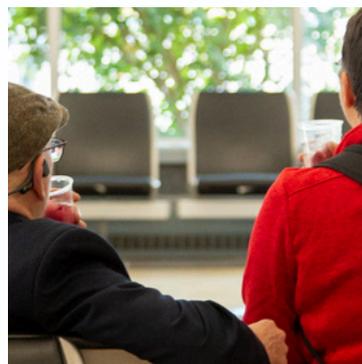
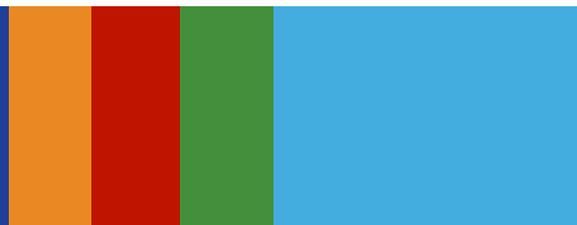


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the 2024-2026 Accessibility Plan, Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority (YDF) is committed to doing its part in providing a barrier free, inclusive, works-for-everyone travel experience, as well as transforming our airport facility to provide a dignified and respectful experience for guests with disabilities.

YDF remains dedicated to its commitment and compliance to all applicable accessibility legislation by continuously working to identify, prevent, and remove barriers on the property. The 2024-2026 Accessibility Plan continues to be a fundamental and frequented document for management when making business decisions. It will continue to be reviewed and evolve with improvements as consultations, recommendations and learnings arise.

As YDF experiences passenger traffic exceeding pre- covid numbers, with 330,106 traveling guests in 2024, it becomes increasingly important that a dignified, inclusive experience is offered to everyone when navigating our facilities on their travel journey. YDF is committed to finding meaningful solutions and improvements where all guests feel equally comfortable and considered in their travel experience. Our commitment is embedded in our business practices and reinforced when a dedicated goal to accessibility became part of YDF's renewed 2025-2029





VISION
A leading regional airport
creating opportunity
by connecting
Western Newfoundland &
Labrador to the world.




MISSION
We're here
to get you there.




CORE VALUES
Safety
Inclusion
Collaboration
Sustainability
Accountability



Strategic Plan.

The Plan includes the following objective:

“to strengthen and further develop partnerships with organizations representing persons with disabilities, and complete accessibility infrastructure provisions and elevated services”.

Additionally, the recently updated Strategic Plan includes accountability and inclusion as two of its five core values which represents and guides YDF’s actions and decision making in fostering a respectful and accepting environment for persons of all backgrounds and ability levels, and to be accountable in creating those meaningful outcomes to deliver on our commitments. Finally, YDF’s new mission statement of “We’re Here to Get You There” further exemplifies how our organizations driving force is our team and how each individual is here to play our part to ensure travelling guests have a successful journey, wherever that may bring them.

Our 2025 Progress Report will outline YDF’s progress on accessibility initiatives during its first year, initiatives still in progress, and key focuses as we move forward into 2026. YDF is committed to maintaining continuous consultation with stakeholders to ensure our accessibility plan remains effective and responsive, ensuring that accessibility remains an integral part of our planning and decision making.



GENERAL

YDF believes accessibility is a shared responsibility, and everyone is accountable for ensuring their work and interactions are inclusive and supportive of all passenger needs. Whether front line staff or leadership, we are all happy to assist and/or collect feedback to improve the accessibility of our services.

The Director of Corporate Services continues to be the organizational contact who receives and responds to all accessible feedback, as well as providing the Accessibility Plan in alternative formats. Any person may make a request for an alternative format of our Accessibility Plan through the feedback process on our website, by mail, phone, fax, or email.



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority respectfully acknowledges the province of Newfoundland and Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of many diverse populations of Indigenous people who have contributed to 9,000 years of history, including the Beothuk on the Island of Newfoundland. Today, this province is home to diverse populations of Indigenous people.

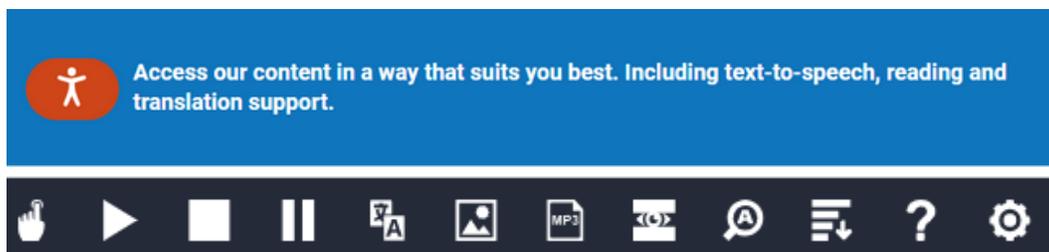
We also acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now and the seven generations to come.



INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

The Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority continues reviewing IT and communication systems for opportunities to improve and be accessible for all users. Each year, digital and technological platforms are utilized more in everyday life and are increasingly depended on by our passengers on their travel journey. Ensuring these systems are well integrated into YDF communication processes is vitally important as IT evolves each year.

Our airport website continues to be compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Levels A, AA, and AAA through a tool that maximizes the accessibility and readability of our online content, with capability to remove barriers to understanding and maximizing visitor engagement. These tools include text-to-speech with read along highlighting, translation into multiple languages, screen masking to reduce visual stress and improve focus, online content conversion to audio, text magnifying to enlarge text and read out loud, simplify page to remove any distracting graphics, dictionary options for cognitive assistance and more.



ACHIEVED

- GoodMaps was onsite in August 2024 to update mapping of the terminal in its new navigation application. This tool will assist travelers with autonomy and independence on key points of interest at YDF.
- YDF replaced its existing parking equipment. The new system features an enhanced pay station design, offering improved height and visibility for better accessibility.
- Our website accessibility tool had over 1,500 events and interactions in its first six months from all across Canada. The speech capability, translation, and page simplification tools were the most common categories of user interface.



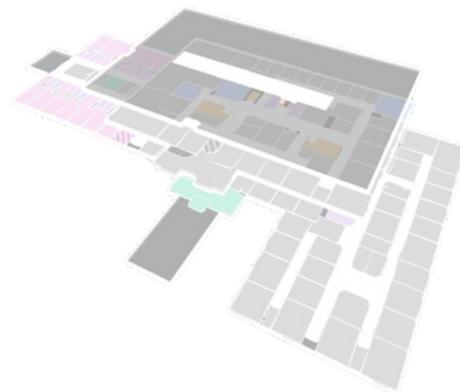
- A review of YDF's social media content was completed by an external marketing consultant, focusing on best practices to ensure it is viewed easily by all users, over all forms of electronic devices.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- YDF has investigated the capability of adding visual text to its public information/announcement software, iFids. YDF is upgrading its current information monitors to larger screens in high traffic zones in 2025 and will proceed with adding this visual text feature.
- Completion of improved videography of our terminal and key points of interest within the GoodMaps navigation application for YDF. User testing has been completed and final revisions are underway.
- Social media boosting and awareness of NL-based organizations for persons with disabilities.
- User testing of accessibility tool on YDF's website.

NEXT FOCUS

- Investigate self-service flight information kiosk offering at YDF.
- Investigate provision of an e-service kiosk at visitor information centre that would provide local and regional tours, events, festivals, contact information and more to a passenger who wishes to use this self-service option for their individual needs.
- Social awareness of NL-based organizations and accessible services at YDF.
- Accessible software tool for internal work order system and employee portal.
- Finalize and implement GoodMaps terminal navigation tool for key touchpoints during a passenger's travel experience.



COMMUNICATION OTHER THAN ICT

YDF's focus on travelers ability to understand and interpret information related to their passenger journey was a strong focus over this past year. Rolling out accessibility training and resources for YDF employees and tenants to recognize the needs of all public travelers and how to communicate with each traveler was an important undertaking for year one in efforts to ensure that all passengers are met with consistent, respectful travel interactions.

A key contributor to this initiative was the Canadian Airport Council National Accessibility Training that was developed in collaboration with Canadian Airports to help workers understand accessibility needs and enhance the travel experience for persons with disabilities. It educates on appropriate communication, identifying barriers, best practices, assisting devices, and accessibility focuses in auditory, visual, cognitive and other key provisions.



ACHIEVED

- CAC National Accessibility Training to all employees, aerodrome security and visitors information centre staff.
- Civility in the workplace training completed by all employees.
- Launched inquisition with all tenants on accessibility training provisions to YDF frontline staff.
- Recruitment postings continue to include YDF's commitment to embracing diversity and encouraging all individuals of all perspectives to apply for job positions.
- Website continues to be accessible in multiple language translations and read-aloud options.
- Passenger experience survey was completed in September 2024 in both electronic



and in-person format to gather feedback on passengers use of YDF accessible provisions and facilities.

- Reviewed monitor heights to ensure visibility for all passengers.
- Wayfinding was reviewed by CODNL during site visit, including suggestions for improvement for persons with disabilities.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- Review tenant gaps in accessibility training and offer to provide by the DLRAA.
- Inquiries continue with consultants on additional accessibility training for employees, and potential front-facing tenant staff, to be included in the DLRAA onboarding process.
- Research for additional training offerings for DLRAA employees on neurodiversity.
- Purchase replacement monitors in the key primary locations, based on feedback from CodNL on best practices.
- Creation of a guest experience council at YDF, including terms of reference and preliminary inquiries with airport passenger experience consultants.

NEXT FOCUS

- Develop committee with volunteers trained in accessible provisions and communication tools for YDF terminal.
- American sign language offering for public events.
- Review best practice for hearing provisions at major touchpoints in terminal. Closed captions on developed videos with marketing consultants.
- Review best practice program for self-identification in a discrete, dignified manner for persons with disability seeking assistance.
- Review public announcements to ensure clarity of messaging, proper repetition intervals, and other best practices.



PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES & FACILITIES

In 2024, YDF reviewed its procurement practices for opportunities for improvement in incorporating accessibility provisions in service agreements, contracts, and vendor relations.

ACHIEVED

- Created a procurement policy, with language reflecting YDFs commitment to a selection process that supports equality, minority groups, and organizations who promote and foster similar DEI practices.
- Executed operating agreements and lease agreements in 2024-2025 that included articles for compliance with applicable accessibility legislation and official languages.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- Service agreement and Request For Quotes to include clause about accessibility legislative compliance.
- Continue to review contracts upon renewal for updated or new accessible language, requirements, regulation compliance, and employee training.
- Review of quality of accessible procured devices.
- Engaging advisory committee on contract inclusions for compliance with accessibility requirements.

NEXT FOCUS

- Review accessible platforms for public tendering.
- Request For Proposal templates to include article on alternate formats available by request, for equitable reach to bidders.



DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

YDF continues to encourage and accept feedback on areas of improvement to ensure that programs and services are upholding their intended purpose, meeting the needs of each traveler and providing an equitable, relevant and enjoyable experience. YDF is in the preliminary stages of creating a Guest Experience Council, composed of airport staff and tenants, external community partners, and frequent flyers. The council's goal is to ensure an enhanced passenger experience and to also monitor accessibility requirements through all touchpoints and interactions of the airport property.

ACHIEVED

- Updated curbside assistance buttons at departures entrance to a more modernized, reliable, seamless technology connecting guest directly to terminal security who can promptly respond to inquiries.
- Review completed with leadership team of awareness of accessibility considerations during their department's budget planning, capital planning and contract development decision making.
- Fire alarm visual and audio capabilities were tested in May 2025 for proper functioning throughout the terminal building.
- Provided CAC Accessibility training to all YDF employees and key passenger-facing tenants.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- Reviewing airline accessibility provisions in coordination with YDF to ensure a seamless travel journey for guests from beginning to end of travel points.
- Review emergency call buttons in terminal.
- Ongoing review of height for Emergency Response Plans, First Aid Kits, fire extinguishers to ensure accessibility for all.
- Continue to provide access to accessibility training to key passenger facing tenants.
- Continue to seek opportunity for additional training provisions for YDF staff and the accessibility community.



NEXT FOCUS

- Implement assistance provisions for any identified gaps between airline accessibility provisions.
- Engage Guest Experience Council for additional accessibility programs and services, including an appropriate self-identification process for persons with disabilities that will be discrete and will not present vulnerability of passengers.
- Gap review for provision of charging ports for mobility aid devices.
- Travel rehearsal program and travel story book.



TRANSPORTATION

Significant strides have been made in improving accessibility with transportation at YDF. YDF facilitates a ground transportation permit program that monitors transportation providers' services for a multitude of requirements, which include safety and accessible provisions. YDF has increased the quantity of licensed ground transportation providers in the past year, creating choice and variety for all users.

Additionally, improvements have been made to a number of capital projects at YDF that assist in the passenger transportation experiences with parking lot updates and foot path rehabilitation into the terminal building.

ACHIEVED

- Replacement of parking infrastructure which included improvements to the height of kiosk controls, visuals and payments options to provide a more reliable and user-friendly interface.
- Replaced fractured concrete walkways that were causing issues for path of travel accessing the terminal building.
- Increased the short-term parking lots accessible parking spaces by 12.5%.



- Increased ground transportation providers in 2025 so that passengers have more options which include accessible vehicle provisions.
- Conducted a ground transportation survey, including requests for accessibility feedback on experience of assistance received by ground transportation providers.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- Doubling the amount of accessible parking spaces in the long-term parking lot in spring/summer 2025.
- Social posts about accessible parking provisions at YDF.
- Continuously review accessible parking space locations for optimization.
- Continue to assist ground transportation providers in supporting guests with their transportation needs.

NEXT FOCUS

- Review feedback report from CODNL from a transportation improvement lens.
- Adding accessible EV Charger.



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

YDF continues to make significant efforts to ensure capital investments include best practices and improvements for the accessible provisions in its terminal and surrounding property. Many capital initiatives have been investigated and/or launched in the past twelve months, and all have been reviewed to ensure accessibility features and improvements are considered during the process.

Included in that review process were onsite walkthroughs by advocates and people with lived experiences of disabilities, providing feedback and suggestions on how YDF can remove barriers and make improvements that will have considerable impact for those traveling with disabilities.

ACHIEVED

- Implemented a weekly inspection that is conducted by YDF employees to examine and/or test systems and infrastructure functionality, including but not limited to: emergency alarms, call buttons, functioning accessible washroom stalls, identifiable and accessible seating placement, removing trip hazard or barriers, ensure proper lighting, etc.
- Completed an ergonomic assessment of all employee workstations, implementing adjustments and newly acquired equipment to meet the needs of employees.

PROGRESS ELEMENTS

- Diversify seating throughout terminal, in consultation with CodNL for best option, considerations, and flexibility for persons with disabilities.
- Creating accessible workstations within terminal both groundside and airside.
- Replacement of dated terminal main concourse washrooms in accordance with ATDPR regulations.
- Designated an area within the terminal for future creation of a low-stimulation space. Included a site visit from the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador (ASNL) to gather their opinions and feedback on how to develop it into an effective space.





NEXT FOCUS

- Continuing engagement with ASNL in developing the low stimulation space in the terminal, as well as other offerings that can be provided by YDF.
- Review all passenger access points to ensure appropriate accessible openings are functioning appropriately.
- Installation of visual/audio crosswalk connecting parking lots to terminal building.



PROVISIONS OF CTA ACCESSIBILITY-RELATED REGULATIONS

YDF adheres to the Canadian Transportation Agency accessibility related regulations. Its accessibility plan and progress reports are in accordance with the Canada Transportation Act 170(1) as well as the Accessible Canada Act (ACA).



As a federal transportation service provider, YDF is subject to the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities regulations (ATDPR) parts one and four:

Part One – Requirements Applicable for Transportation Service Providers

Part Four – Requirements Applicable to Terminal Operators

Our airport website continues to be compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Levels A, AA, and AAA through a tool that maximizes the accessibility and readability of our online content, with capability to remove barriers to understanding and maximizing visitor engagement throughout our website. These tools include text to speech with read along highlighting, translation into multiple languages, screen masking to reduce visual stress and improve focus, content conversion to audio, text magnifier to enlarge text and read out loud, simplify page to remove any distracting graphics, dictionary options for cognitive assistance, and more.



FEEDBACK INFORMATION

As part of our commitment, the Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority strives for continuous improvements to our airport's facilities and its role in providing a barrier-free and safe travel journey. We have designated the Director of Corporate Services to receive and respond to all accessible feedback, as well as providing the Accessibility Plan & Feedback Process in alternative formats. The public may provide feedback or comments (including anonymously), via the options below.

Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority will acknowledge feedback in the same manner in which it was received.

Provision of the Accessibility Plan & Feedback Process will meet and conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) formats and are available to anyone upon request. Any person may make a request for an alternative format of our Accessibility Plan & Feedback Process through the feedback process on our website, by mail, phone, fax, or email. These alternate formats include print, large print, audio format, electronic format compatible with read-assist technology, braille. Braille and audio format requests of the Accessibility Plan & Feedback Process will be made available within 45 days after the day of request is received. All other requests will be made available within 15 days after the request is received.



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CONSULTATIONS

YDF will continue to strengthen its relationships with the accessible community by working with the Coalition of Disabilities NL Association and their partners to further build and educate how YDF can better serve persons with the disabilities and how YDF can also support these organizations in their own goals and outreach. These relationships will create learnings and opportunities to enhance DLRA facilities, generate input for leadership team consideration, and build upon the Accessibility Plan for future years.

Over the past year, YDF focused heavily on relationship building and consultation, and had the opportunity to receive valuable feedback from experts and individuals with lived experiences of barriers throughout air travel through multiple inquiry channels:

- Internal leadership meeting review on accessibility in the workplace, procurement, and infrastructure considerations.
- Passenger Engagement Survey conducted online and in person, including inquiries on accessibility.
- Ground Transportation Survey online and in person, including inquiries on accessibility.
- Accessibility Plan Feedback process received zero inquiries during its first year.
- Invite and survey the public through social media platforms for feedback on YDF's website ReachDeck accessibility tool that removes communication barriers and edits content for best provision to every user. User input was requested on the tool's navigation, communication, and satisfaction of the software's various capabilities. The feedback received around some difficulties with the toolbar was thoroughly reviewed and troubleshooted, with engagement from the software provider, to ensure seamless user interaction going forward.
- Coalition of Disabilities Newfoundland and Labrador(COD NL) accessibility review of the YDF terminal and parking facilities in August 2024. The Program Manager and Executive Director visited YDF and provided a report on suggestions for improvements primarily to the physical building with some reflection on sensory considerations as well.
- Engagement with CODNL on capital infrastructure initiatives such as: public washroom replacement considerations, public and accessible seating



improvements, low-stimulation space, and information screen placement and size for key traffic areas within the terminal.

- Autism Society of NL (ASNL) site visit to review a proposed low-stimulation space for travelers who may need it.
 - Next step is to create a travel storybook of YDF;
 - Ideas for Sensory Kit provision at YDF;
 - Formalize partnership to support commitments and goals towards autism; and
 - Participation in the Guest Experience Council in 2025.
- Considerable engagement since 2024 has been ongoing to revitalize GoodMaps navigation mobile application, including a site visit by their team in August 2024 to redo all mapping and interface with application. Revisions have been made based on selected user-testing in terminal, and is nearing public promotion and marketing once final feedback items are implemented.

CONSULTATION NEXT STEPS

- Strengthen existing relationships with the accessible community and formalize support.
- Publicly invite feedback from the local region on the 2024-2026 Accessibility Plan.
- Create a Guest Experience Committee that will include accessibility components. The committee will be comprised of YDF employees, tenants and stakeholders, and accessible community partners, with semi-annual meetings to discuss recent occurrences in the accessible community, accessible considerations of YDF for committee input, infrastructure improvements, and Accessibility Plan improvements.
- Engagement has begun with external marketing agencies on social media information best practice for ease of communication and interpretation by the accessible community.



APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

What is disability? The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) defines disability as “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment – or a functional limitation – whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.”

The Coalition of Persons with Disabilities Newfoundland and Labrador (COD NL) explains disability as being the result of the interaction between persons with limitations, including physical/mobility, mental health, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, pain-related, and sensory limitations, whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature; and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Accessibility Plan & Feedback Process is a plan that sets out a comprehensive roadmap that transportation service providers (TSPs) will use to improve accessibility during a three-year period. They describe the actions a TSP will take to prevent and remove barriers.

Barrier. The Accessible Canada Act defines a barrier as “anything – including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice – that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.”

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people who experience disabilities.

Mobility Aid means any manual or electric wheelchair, scooter, boarding chair, walker, cane, crutch, prosthesis or other aid that is specially designed to assist a person with a disability with a need related to mobility.

Assistive Device means any medical device, mobility aid, communication aid or other aid that is specially designed to assist a person with a disability with a need related to their disability.

Service Animal refers to a dog that has been individually trained by an organization or person specializing in service dog training, and performs a task to assist a person with a disability with a need related to their disability.



APPENDIX B - ACRONYMS

DLRAA - Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority

DLRA - Deer Lake Regional Airport

YDF - Deer Lake Regional Airport Authority & Airport Working Community

ACA - Accessible Canada Act

ICT - Information & Communication Technology

CAC - Canadian Airports Council

ATDPR - Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations

CODNL - Coalition of Disabilities Newfoundland and Labrador

WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

ASNL - Autism Society Newfoundland Labrador

DEI - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

