

Lethbridge Airport

Accessibility Plan

2024-2027

June 1, 2024 Ver. 1.0



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The City of Lethbridge acknowledges that we are gathered on the lands of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pays respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. The City of Lethbridge is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Changes Made	Prepared By	Approved By

Plan Revision

The Airport Operations department is responsible for establishing, administering, and maintaining this plan. The plan will be reviewed annually and revised as required or following an event which identifies a requirement for immediate amendment.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Barrier - The ACA 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.”

Disability - The 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, evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.”

The terms “persons with disabilities” and “people with disabilities” used in this Plan are drawn from the Accessible Canada Act. They are used to refer inclusively to people with disabilities and those with special needs.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACA – Accessible Canada Act

CTA – Canadian Transportation Agency

YQL – Lethbridge Airport IATA Code

IATA – International Air Transportation Association

GENERAL

Lethbridge Airport is committed to becoming a barrier-free, inclusive airport for people of all ages and abilities and to ensuring that every guest can fully participate in their airport experience. We strive to provide inclusive access to the joys of air travel through a safe and welcoming airport experience for everyone.

Lethbridge Airport operates as a department of the City of Lethbridge and was acquired from Lethbridge County in 2018. Since that time, Airport staff with support from the City, have been working hard to make improvements to the terminal building and the airfield.

At Lethbridge Airport, we see accessibility as a core element of customer service and our staff make this a priority.

To support the areas described below, Lethbridge Airport has created an Airport Terminal Agent position. These staff members provide timely support to those who need it while they move through the terminal building. In addition to the contacts listed below, feedback may also be given to the Terminal Agents.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Lethbridge Airport Accessibility Plan is to outline the strategic direction Lethbridge Airport (YQL) aims to take over the next three year period to prevent and remove barriers that may impact those with disabilities. This plan will cover the period of June 1, 2024 to June 1, 2027. An updated plan will be published every three (3) years to reflect current efforts being made and future plans to improve accessibility. The plan will be reviewed annually, or on an as needed basis, in which changes may occur. They will be reported in the above section, [Version Control](#).

If you require an alternate format of this document, or wish to provide Lethbridge Airport with feedback on this plan so that we may continually work to improve it and better the experiences of those with disabilities, please contact:

Airport Operations Coordinator

Lethbridge Airport

Mailing Address:

417 Stubb Ross Road, Suite 219, Lethbridge, AB T1K 7N3

Website: www.lethbridgeairport.ca

Email: general@lethbridgeairport.ca

Phone: 403-329-4466

Anonymous feedback can also be provided over the phone or through the website in the “Contact Us” section.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

To get a passenger from point A to point B, it takes many organizations working in collaboration to ensure a seamless and inclusive experience.

Lethbridge Airport is responsible for:

- Overseeing the overall operation of the airport
- Creating an accessible built environment within our terminal
- Designing and delivering accessible programs, technologies, services, and facilities
- Ensuring accessibility is at the forefront to Lethbridge Airport plans now and into the future.

Government agencies and other organizations are responsible for:

- Delivering services such as ground transportation (e.g., taxis, bus services, limousines), security screening, customs and border protection;
- Providing accommodations including assistance to passengers with disabilities when accessing transportation, security, customs and border protection services.

Our airline partners (aircraft and air carrier services) are responsible for:

- providing mobility assistance and escorting passengers with disabilities from the Terminal curbside, through the check-in process, to the gate and on-board the aircraft, and vice-versa;
- ensuring the proper stowage for mobility aids on aircraft and delivering those aids to passengers upon arrival.

ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES

Section 6 of the [Accessible Canada Act \(ACA\)](#) sets out a series of principles that must be recognized and incorporated into Accessibility Plans. Lethbridge Airport has reviewed these principles and have worked to incorporate them in this plan. The principles are:

1. all persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
2. all persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
3. all persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;
4. all persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
5. laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons; and,
6. persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

At Lethbridge Airport, we are working with traditional systems that have stood the test of time, and are readily researching, learning and adopting user-friendly Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools to enhance our customer experience and improve accessibility.

In 2022 the Lethbridge Airport website, which is the primary means of digital communication, was replaced to ensure the latest technology was available to improve accessibility. The website contains any information that may be needed while travelling through the airport, including flight schedule, parking, transit, frequently asked questions (FAQ) and more. A website audit will be planned to ensure it meets WCAG standards. Free wi-fi is available to all passengers to allow access to the airport website and/or check on the status of their flight.

A PA system is available for audio public announcements, Lethbridge Airport is researching ways to include visual paging. Digital flight information displays are placed in high traffic areas and are updated in real time.

Members of the public can communicate with airport administration electronically via phone, email or directly from www.lethbridgeairport.ca.

COMMUNICATION, OTHER THAN ICT

Effective communication requires a good understanding of what types of barriers an individual with a disability may encounter in the airport environment. To improve how we communicate with both passengers and airport staff, YQL has focused on training that addresses attitudinal barriers. This training is delivered via Canadian Transportation Agency approved sources. This helps staff understand the nature of a person's disability, the types of barriers, as well as whether a person may use an assistive device to assist in hearing, seeing, or communicating.

YQL is committed to ensuring that information is communicated in a way that best suits the individual. This means offering information in alternative formats, such as accessible electronic formats that allow people to utilize accessible technology (enlarge text, text-to-speech, etc.), providing information in clear and concise sentences. Additionally, this means asking a person if they would like information in writing or whether they would like to speak in a quieter location.

PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Purchasing at Lethbridge Airport includes everything from small, routine purchases to large multi-year contracts. Accessibility is prioritized during our purchasing process so that our vendors know that it is important to us. YQL requires vendors to meet various accessibility requirements if required under the Statement of Work.

Depending on the type of work (such as security contractors and ground transportation service providers), the contract may require accessibility training for vendor employees.

Accessibility codes, laws and standards are incorporated into our terms and conditions for any operational design builds, architecture, and technology requests. This was a critical piece of the Air Terminal Building renovations that were completed in 2021. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Our team is committed to creating a smooth and enjoyable airport for all. We know that designing and delivering programs and services in an accessible and inclusive way makes for a better travel experience for

passengers. We are constantly working towards ensuring our programs and services enable more choice, comfort and greater independence as passengers travel through the airport.

YQL leverages the City of Lethbridge Mobility Accessibility Master Plan and dedicated resources for guidance and support. This includes working with an Accessibility Committee that the City is establishing in 2024.

Airport staff and contractors that interact with the public are required to complete Assistance of Persons with Disabilities training to ensure the delivery of day-to-day services are sensitive to the needs of all individuals.

Going forward, YQL will strive to make accessibility a priority and utilize the technology and other resources available to ensure people with lived experience are able to provide feedback on future programs and services, as well as reducing/removing barriers .

TRANSPORTATION

As a connector to Calgary International Airport, we know that travel extends beyond our runways. While options are limited in Lethbridge, we have worked to ensure our passengers have an accessible mode of transportation to and from our front doors.

Lethbridge Transit expanded its cityLINK service to include Lethbridge Airport, increasing accessible public transit options. Although no formal contracts are in place for taxi service, there are multiple options from private providers available for each flight.

National car rentals are available from the terminal building and offer vehicles with accessible features such as hand-controls. Some of these features may require advanced notice to ensure availability.

The airport will continue to work with transportation stakeholders to improve access and ensure appropriate training is completed.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

At YQL, we want our built environment to elevate, ease and support a passenger's journey. Our team works collaboratively to ensure barriers are consistently being identified, prevented and removed to offer meaningful access. Maintaining an inclusive environment allows us to increase connectivity and foster diverse relationships with anyone.

The Air Terminal Building underwent significant renovations in 2021 and was designed with accessibility as a priority. Prior to the renovation, many barriers were identified and mitigated. YQL also ensures that any changes to the architectural environment and any new construction comply with the latest applicable building codes and standards. There are now several options for barrier free washrooms, including touch free automatic door openers.

Lethbridge Airport will be implementing designated seating for Persons with Disabilities in applicable areas, such as the boarding lounge.

Accessible loading/unloading zones are available at the departures and arrivals doors. There are also multiple accessible paths to and from the main parking lot with designated stalls for Persons with Disabilities.

We use internationally recognized symbols or a combination of raised symbols, text and braille on signage, to help identify facilities (from afar or up close). Accessible facilities such as washrooms are identified with the International Symbol of Access.

A service animal relief area is available in close proximity to the arrivals doors.

PROVISIONS OF CTA ACCESSIBILITY-RELATED REGULATIONS

Lethbridge Airport is not required to adhere to the [Canada Transportation Act, Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations](#), Part 1, Section 3(1)(B) and Part 4, Division 1, Section 212 (B), as YQL serves less than 200,000 passengers per year. This legislation is intended for large airports and should be considered as YQL approaches relevant passenger thresholds.

Lethbridge Airport is required to abide by [Canada Transportation Act, Personal Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities Regulations](#). Below is an outline of the sections contained within the regulation and a description of how YQL abides by them:

4 Employees and Contractors Who Interact with the Public

All airport staff that are tasked with the day-to-day assistance of passengers undergo a formal training program to familiarize themselves with YQL's policies and procedures. They also receive CTA approved training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities. This training is refreshed and monitored by the Airport Operations Coordinator on a regular basis.

5 Employees and Contractors Who Provide Physical Assistance

Not applicable.

6 Employees and Contractors Who Handle Mobility Aids

Not applicable.

7 Employees and Contractors Who Assist with Special Equipment or Aids

Not applicable.

Time Limit for Completion of Training

8 – Training is completed a part of the onboarding process.

9/10 – The Airport Operations Coordinator oversees the training records and ensures employees remain up to date. Part of this review includes updating the training plans, policies and procedures as new information becomes available. The Operations Coordinator also conducts “spot checks” on a regular basis to help identify any shortfalls as soon as possible.

11 Training Program Description

YQL maintains the training program digitally and can be made available for inspection by the Agency or the general public when requested. A description of the training program has been provided below.

DRAFT

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING PROGRAM

Date: May 31, 2024

Lethbridge Airport
417 Stubb Ross Road, Suite 219
Lethbridge, AB T1K 7N3

Program: Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities

1 Person Responsible for Managing the Training Program:

- Airport Operations Coordinator

2 Target group of the training program:

(a) employees and contractors who interact with the public;

3 List of the occupational categories of the organization's employees and contractors required to receive training.

- Airport Operations Coordinator
- Airport Terminal Agents
- Airfield Maintenance Specialists (as required)

4 Subject matter covered in the training program.

The Customer Service for Travelers with Disabilities course covers the following topics:

1. New Perspectives

- The increasing prevalence of disabilities amongst those engaging in air travel.
- Different ways of viewing disability.
- Characteristics of disabilities (e.g., visible vs hidden).
- Introduction to the CAN and HOW approach – the importance of asking permission to help before jumping in and taking over.

2. Disabilities and Customer Service

- Accessible customer service principles.
- Signs a traveler with a disability needs help.
- How to provide effective and respectful customer service to those with mental, emotional, and neuro-developmental conditions, as well as those with physical and sensory disabilities.

3. Barriers and Language

- The different types of barriers travelers with disabilities face at airports.
- Ways those working at airports can help to remove or overcome these barriers.
- Using respectful language when talking to and about travelers with disabilities, including the use of People First Language.

4. Disability Supports

- Types of disability supports used at airports.
- Tips for assisting customers using mobility aids / devices.
- Honouring the boundaries between a service animal and their handler.
- The vital role a support person plays in assisting travelers with disabilities.

5 Principal teaching methods and types of educational and support materials used in the training program.

- Customer Service for Travelers with Disabilities is an online course with an assessment.
- Best Practice Guide for Interacting with Persons with a Disability from the Canadian Transportation Agency.

6 Number of hours of training provided in the initial training program.

- The online course takes approximately 2 hours to complete.

7 Average period between the beginning of employment and the initial training.

- Initial training occurs within 60 days of employment

8 Frequency, nature and number of hours of refresher training sessions required.

- The online course is required annually and best practice information is available at all times as a refresher.

9 Qualifications and title of the person who provides the initial training and refresher training sessions.

- Initial training is provided through the Canadian Airports Online College and is developed in partnership with Changing Paces, a leading disability awareness and training organization.
- Supplementary information is provided in written form from the Canadian Transportation Agency as a Guide for Best Practices for Interacting with Persons with a Disability.

10 Where a person with a disability is involved in the training program, the nature of the involvement.

- Not applicable

11 Means used by the organization to ensure that employees receive a level of training appropriate to the requirements of their function.

- Customer Service for Travelers with Disabilities is industry standard training and is endorsed by Airports Council International.

12 The recording and monitoring of the completion of the initial training and each refresher training session.

- All training is mandated through our Training Plan and results are recorded on our internal systems by the Airport Operations Coordinator.

13 Where the organization uses contractors, the means used to ensure that the contractors receive a level of training appropriate to the requirements of their function.

- Not applicable

Airport Manager

Date

DRAFT

CONSULTATIONS

In the pursuit of creating inclusive environments, consultations play a pivotal role in ensuring that the needs of individuals with disabilities are not only acknowledged but also effectively addressed. These consultations serve as a platform for engaging with diverse stakeholders, including people with lived experience, advocacy groups, experts in accessibility, and decision-makers. By fostering collaboration and understanding, consultations can lead to the development of more accessible policies, programs, and infrastructures that benefit everyone.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- To be completed after consultation process.

DRAFT

FEEDBACK PROCESS

Feedback is a crucial component of developing and maintaining an effective accessibility plan. It provides a mechanism for stakeholders to share their perspectives, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that the plan remains responsive to the needs of the community. In this section, we outline the feedback process implemented as part of our accessibility plan, highlighting the importance of stakeholder engagement and the strategies used to solicit, analyze, and incorporate feedback into our planning efforts.

YOUR FEEDBACK:

Our approach to handling feedback from the community about accessibility is centered on transparency, responsiveness, and continuous improvement. We have established dedicated channels, such as a mailing address, email, and phone number to receive feedback from community members regarding accessibility issues. This feedback can also be provided in person to a Terminal Agent. Maintaining open communication with the community and providing regular updates on the progress made in addressing your feedback is a key aspect of our commitment to transparency and accountability. We also encourage ongoing feedback and engagement, as we believe that collaboration with the community is essential for creating a more accessible and inclusive environment for all. Anonymous reporting can be done over the phone or via the Airport website.

FEEDBACK RESPONSE:

Dealing with feedback related to accessibility involves listening to input from users with disabilities, addressing their concerns, and continuously improving accessibility practices. The following steps are our commitment to effectively manage your feedback.

1. **Acknowledge receipt** – Promptly respond to acknowledge your feedback to ensure you know your opinion is valuable to us.
2. **Review and evaluate** – Thoroughly review each feedback submission to understand the specific issue, impact on users and applicability.

3. **Prioritize and plan** – Prioritize feedback based on severity and impact and develop a plan to address the issues raised.
4. **Communicate progress** – Keep users informed of the progress made in addressing their feedback, including any changes or improvements implemented.
5. **Implement solutions** – Implement solutions, when applicable, to address the accessibility issues identified.
6. **Seek Expertise** – If needed, seek assistance from accessibility experts or consultants to ensure that solutions are effective and inclusive.
7. **Monitor and evaluate** – Continuously monitor the effectiveness of the solutions implemented and solicit further feedback to ensure improvements are successful.
8. **Document and learn** – Document the feedback received, and the actions taken to address it and use this information to inform future accessibility initiatives.