



Planat in Action: Accessibility Assessment of UBC Competition and Accommodation Venues for the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games

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a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Sport and Sustainability

Executive Summary

The University of British Columbia (UBC) was the Host Venue for the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games from July 8 to July 12, 2014. The Games proved a perfect opportunity for UBC to initiate accessibility related capacity of the University's Games related venues. In conjunction with partners, the venues used at the Vancouver 2014 Games were assessed for accessibility using Planat. This report provides a summary of each venue along with recommendations.

The chief aim of this project involved information and photo gathering on current accessibility and inclusive features at venues and public spaces used during the Games. More specifically, the Organizing Committee wanted to create accessibility venue plans for all sites on and off the UBC campus hosting Games' events, enhance the accessibility information and opportunities for Games' participants, and provide recommendations for future accessibility improvements at UBC.

Founded by the Rick Hansen Foundation, Planat is an online database that acts as a business promotional tool as well as an awareness and educational tool. Planat facilitates the building assessments from mobility, visual, or hearing perspectives. Planat allows for businesses to rate features of a venue, such as entrances and washrooms that a visitor or an immersed guest would naturally encounter. For each feature of a venue, Planat also provides the capability of including photographs alongside data and text descriptions to ensure a visitor has an accurate understanding of the accessibility of a venue. Assessments for educational or public institution buildings can be completed in a period of two to three hours using a tablet and an internet connection. Once the data is published on Planat, the ratings, each of the scales, and photographs are available for viewing by the public online.

This report highlights a series of observations from conducting these assessments prior to hosting a national event. As outlined in Appendix 2, the results leave both a favourable impression of accessibility on campus, as venues often met or exceed the accessibility requirements outlined in BC Building Code. However, further improvements ought to be implemented in:

- Paths and routes
- Doors and entrances
- Elevators
- Parking and metres
- Dropoff and pickup zones
- Wayfinding and signage
- Washroom stalls
- Sink areas
- Showers
- Change rooms
- Seating and tables
- Service counters
- Spectator seating

Each of these modules were discussed in more depth. However, the real benefit of Planat lies in providing a current snapshot to guide future improvements.

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

The University of British Columbia (UBC), located in Vancouver, BC, was proud to be the Host Venue for the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games from July 8 to July 12, 2014. Building on the success of the comprehensive sustainability strategy developed by the Organizing Committee for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and the sustainability commitments and the expertise of UBC, the 2014 Games embedded a sustainability strategy that included environmental, economic, and social perspectives.

The vision of the Vancouver 2014 Organizing Committee was to deliver a regenerative Games that leaves a positive long-term legacy of human and ecological wellbeing for participants, stakeholders, and the community. The Organizing Committee chose to include an accessibility assessment to further their social sustainability aspect and human wellbeing legacy.

This project was commissioned by the UBC Centre for Sport and Sustainability with financial support and oversight from UBC Conferences & Accommodation; UBC Athletics & Recreation; and the Office of the Vice President, Students.

CONTEXT

The Canadian Human Rights Act and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures equality and freedom from discrimination on prohibited grounds from the federal government. After recognizing that the federal government does not have legislation mandating accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities outside of their jurisdiction, the provinces are beginning to close the legislative gap by introducing legislation to develop, implement, and enforce accessibility standards.

Despite not having accessibility legislatively mandated, in many cases institutions like UBC recognize the importance of ensuring the built environment is accessible. UBC has consistently been a leader by exceeding standards set in the BC Building Code to ensure that the Vancouver campus is an inclusive and welcoming environment. The UBC Vancouver Campus Capital Plan, adopted by the UBC Board of Governors in June 2010, includes a requirement that all building projects and all projects occurring in the exterior public realm be designed, constructed, and according to high standards of Universal Design.

UBC's strong commitment to accessible design is demonstrated by the initiatives of the many departments across the Vancouver campus. For instance, Student Housing and Hospitality Services (SHHS) has aimed to have as many units specifically adapted to meet the standards of Universal Design as possible to allow people with disabilities to live or visit housing on campus. Recognizing that many students with disabilities cannot locate off-campus housing that adequately meets their functional needs, SHHS provides priority registration for eligible students with disabilities to gain access to adapted units.

UBC Athletics & Recreation is also committed to providing an accessible environment across their nine sporting facilities. With a focus on ensuring illumination in all facilities, two major renovations of lighting fixtures have recently occurred in Thunderbird Stadium and Douglas Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre. The recently announced construction of a new Aquatic Centre reveals significant accessibility improvements: the hot tub, leisure pool, and 25 metre pools will feature graduated sloped entries and the availability of separate unisex, accessible washrooms with roll-in showers and change rooms with an adequate turning radius.

The Special Olympics movement is the largest sporting organization to serve individuals with intellectual disabilities. Hosting the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games was an opportunity for UBC to demonstrate and enhance its commitment to on-campus accessibility. Athletes benefited from staff with disability training and venues with clear signage. The many friends and family members of the athletes who visited the campus during the 2014 Games were able to appreciate accessibility considerations including Games-specific information, adapted accommodation units, gently sloped pathways, and a range of transportation options.

OBJECTIVES

The primary work conducted by this project involved information and photo gathering on current accessibility and inclusive features at venues and public spaces used during the Games.

The objectives of this project were to:

- Create accessibility venue plans using Planat for all Games' event sites on and off the UBC campus,
- Enhance the accessibility information and opportunities for Games' participants, and
- Provide recommendations for future accessibility improvements at UBC.

PARTNERS

This project was a joint initiative supported by:

- UBC Centre for Sport and Sustainability
- UBC Athletics & Recreation
- UBC Conferences & Accommodations
- The Organizing Committee for the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games
- Planat

Approach

PLANAT

The Vancouver 2014 Games at UBC proved a perfect opportunity for the campus to initiate accessibility related research of the university's various venues. The partners chose to use Planat as a tool to provide information about accessibility to users and hired two students, Grace Chang and Kristy Tymos, to conduct the work over a three month period.

Founded by the Rick Hansen Foundation, Planat is an online database that acts as a business promotional tool as well as an awareness and educational tool. Its accessibility rating system is based on the standards of the CSA-B44, Best Practices of Universal Design by the Human Rights Commission of Canada, as well as the BC Building Code and Canadian National Building Code. Planat's appeal lies in the fact that it makes venue information readily available to users in a way that is easy to understand while also encouraging interaction through additional user reviews.

METHOD

Data collection was performed through site visits of each of the venues used during the Vancouver 2014 Games. Most times, surveying was completed with a single 2-3 hour site visit with occasional second and third follow-up trips. Following the direction of Planat's accessibility criteria, an accessibility rating was determined through several sets of quantitative and qualitative information calculated directly on Planat's website. Examples of quantitative data include slope angles, counter and fixture heights and parking stall areas. Qualitative information includes paving material, lighting, colour contrast and ambient noise level. This data was inputted easily using an iPad or a similar device while on-site.

Ratings are designed to assume the perspective of a visitor staying in an accommodations-related venue and both the perspectives of a spectator and participant in the athletics venues. Photos were also taken to help users better visualize the facility.

The results were uploaded on the Planat website to create a business profile for each venue. This profile displays the overall accessibility ratings as well as mobility, sight and hearing ratings. Specific modules, such as for washrooms or parking, provided further details.

This information was made available through the UBC website for the 2014 Games as well as through the UBC Conferences & Accommodations website. Planat also encourages the public to submit their own reviews of venues to provide additional information for future visitors.

Through individual venue descriptions, this report aims to record the accessibility of UBC venues and to provide recommendations for future building upgrades to improve accessibility on campus. This report also aims to stimulate more accessibility related research of the university's facilities.

PLANAT SCREENSHOT

The Planat Screenshot shows the user interface, which provides an overview of the business profile, individual modules, and user reviews.

1

Business Profile done by Venue
Date submitted: Jun 10, 2014



West Coast Suites exterior

A 47 suite hotel located at the Vancouver campus of the University of British Columbia. There are two accessible units available featuring a wheel in shower, widened doorways, and wheel under surfaces. Please request these suites and discuss any assistive equipment that may be required for your stay upon booking.

- + Routes, Paths, Ramps (2.9 / 5) [Click for more](#)
- + Doors, Entrances (3.9 / 5) [Click for more](#)
- + Elevators (3.7 / 5) [Click for more](#)

1 A business profile is completed for each facility to provide venue accessibility information. An overall rating is shown for each

2 Individual modules open to show photos, a module rating, and further details. The Washroom module is shown here

3 User reviews are added by visitors and an overall user rating is shown

2

Washrooms (4.0 / 5) [Click for more](#)

4.0 / 5
Better than average access



Wheel under sink with tilted mirror



Unisex washroom with grab bars

A separate accessible, unisex washroom is located near the service counter.:

- Door(s) to the washroom entrance.
- Less than 1500mmx1500mm (60"x60") of clear space on both sides of the door.
- Less than 600mm (24") free space off the latch side of door.
- Door(s) do not require assistance to get through.
- Door is heavy, more than five pounds pushing force.
- Lever door handle.
- Main entrance door at least 856mm (34") wide.
- Threshold less than 13mm (1/2") AND beveled at max 50%.
- Path from door to stall, if turning is required, is at least 1066mm (42") wide.
- High contrast sightlines on the walls.

3

5.0 (out of 5)
Excellent access

Reviewed by: johns
Date: Feb 8, 2012

Entrance **5 (out of 5) Excellent access**

All doors for public are accessible; Entry door(s) wide enough for wheelchair; Power operated doors; Level pathway; Covered entrance; Clear signage.

Venue Pathway **5 (out of 5) Excellent access**

All public pathways are accessible; Clear aisles which accommodate the width of a wheelchair; Turn around spaces at end of aisle for wheelchairs/strollers; Low counter at cashier; Well-lit pathways; Emergency management features in place to allow evacuation in the case of an emergency.

Main Function **5 (out of 5) Excellent access**

All areas, aspects and features of the venue's main function are accessible; For example: all tables in a restaurant are accessible and for a hotel all rooms are accessible.

Washrooms **5 (out of 5) Excellent access**

Separate unisex (family) washroom; Screen walls instead of doors or power operated doors; No barriers or obstacles to sinks or toilets; three grab bars at each toilet; Easy open or power operated door(s); Accessible sink and accessories; No stored items inside washroom (e.g.: janitor supplies); Emergency call button in case of fall or help needed.

Results

The results in this report provide a current view of and recommendations for accessibility on UBC's Vancouver campus for the following venues:

- West Coast Suites
- Walter Gage Apartments
- Walter Gage Commons Block
- UBC Aquatic Centre
- Douglas Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre
- Gerald McGavin Rugby Centre
- Student Recreation Centre
- UBC Tennis Centre
- Thunderbird Park
- Thunderbird Stadium
- War Memorial Gymnasium

The following sections provide highlights of the assessment conducted at each venue and outline recommendations for future changes.

Several off-campus businesses, including The Zone Bowling Centre, University Hill Secondary, and University Golf Club were assessed using Planat as part of the 2014 Games Planat project. Since this report is focused only on UBC venues, details on those venues were not included. For more information on the results for these off-campus venues, please visit the Planat website.

WALTER GAGE APARTMENTS

 3.7  3.6  3.7  3.9



Part of the Walter Gage Residences, the Walter Gage Apartments have two accessible suites available for guests. Like the accessible units in the West Coast Suites, special consideration has been taken in making these two suites as accessible as possible. Ratings are generally high, however some alterations can still be made to increase accessibility ratings.

In-Suite Washrooms



Washrooms have been altered to accommodate a wheelchair. Coat hooks and toilet paper dispenser should be lowered to the appropriate height. The hot water pipe should be insulated. Grab bars should be added on the back wall of the toilet. A toilet with automatic flush will also increase accessibility ratings.

The size of the roll-in shower does not meet Planat accessibility standards. An in-shower bench should be added and the shower head should be lowered and of an appropriate length.



Sight and Hearing Features

Significant consideration has been made towards improving mobile accessibility. There is potential to also include more sight and hearing features. In particular, emergency features with audio or alert lights in suites will improve ratings. More use of high contrast between walls and other features and sight lines on walls can also increase accessibility.

- 1 Walter Gage Apartments accessible suite
- 2 In-suite shower
- 3 In-suite kitchen with a wheel under stove

WEST COAST SUITES

 3.8  3.8  3.7  3.8



The West Coast Suites is a 47 suite hotel located next to UBC's Gage Towers and apartments. Accessibility ratings are based on the two accessibility suites in the building. These suites have recently been renovated to feature a wheel-in shower, widened doorways, and wheel-under surfaces. The West Coast Suites enjoys a generally high rating due to the careful considerations that were made to better accommodate for wheelchairs.



In-Suite Washroom

In general, accessibility ratings can be improved with additional accessibility-specific features. Fixtures such as coat hooks, light switches, toilet paper dispenser and soap dispenser should be lowered to the appropriate heights. More grab bars should be added around the toilet and in the shower, specifically behind the toilet and on the shower walls currently without grab bars. The hot water pipe under the sink should be insulated. Hands free soap dispensers and automatic flush toilets will also improve accessibility ratings. Lastly, the shower bench is installed on the wrong side of the shower and should be switched.



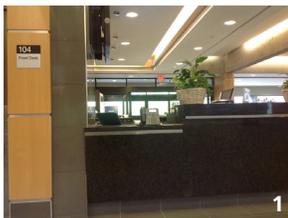
Sight and Hearing Features

Similar to the West Coast Suites, additions of sight and hearing features in the suites will also improve ratings.

- 1 West Coast Suites
- 2 In-suite shower
- 3 Toilet

WALTER GAGE COMMONS BLOCK

 3.7  3.6  3.7  3.9



1 Service Desk

The Walter Gage Commons Block functions as the check-in location for guests at the West Coast Suites and the Gage Apartments. The washrooms and work spaces are also available for guests to use.

Service Desk

The service desk features a separate accessible counter; however it does not allow space for knee clearance.

Washrooms

There are two designated accessible single-user unisex washrooms. Doors are too heavy to be opened without assistance.

Conference/Study Rooms

The glass doors of conference/study rooms in Gage Commons are too heavy to be opened without assistance. Although not as relevant to hotel guests, these doors can be improved to better serve all users of the facility.

UBC AQUATIC CENTRE

 3.0  3.0  3.3  2.6



The UBC Aquatic Centre, fifty years old in 2017, is home to pool and weight room facilities. The pool does contain a chair lift to facilitate access into one of the pools. Unfortunately, not all pools offer a graduated slope or lift access. Access to the mezzanine is restricted by stairs. Plans to begin construction on a new Aquatic Centre have been announced.



Paths

The path to the entrance contains steps, but there is a separate accessible pathway available. Routes that exist that are unusable by all members of the public. Although, an accessible route exists, the ongoing construction has led to very hazardous conditions with loose gravel and uneven terrain. Maintenance and construction activities should account for safe public access to the Aquatic Centre.

Improvements could involve altering the threshold at the main entrance to be flush. This will reduce tripping hazards for people with visual impairments and reduce barriers for people using mobility devices.



Elevator

There is a small elevator available at the Aquatic Centre. Although it provides access between the pool level and the lower level, there is no elevator service to the upper mezzanine level.

This small elevator is not equipped with the size or features of a commercial elevator. The lack of space inside of the elevator may prevent an companion from accompanying a person with a disability, and the narrow door may increase the difficulty for a person entering with a mobility device.



Change Rooms and Showers

This large change room contains small, private nooks for discrete changing and showers. Unfortunately, the nook does not provide for adequate space inside, and additionally, this nook has one step that makes it inaccessible for those with mobility impairments.

There is a bench, which is designed to currently provide seating and store belongings, but this is not a bench designed for a person with a disability to change on. To further improve the change room and showers ratings, consider designating a larger multi-use space for people with disabilities with a roll in shower and a change room with an adequate change bench equipped with grab bars and lowered coat hook.

- 1 Aquatics Centre Pool
- 2 The route to the entrance of the Aquatic Centre requires caution as the surface is loose and uneven due to construction
- 3 Change room has one step that makes it inaccessible for those with mobility impairments
- 4 Roll-in shower

DOUGLAS MITCHELL THUNDERBIRD SPORTS CENTRE

 3.2  3.3  3.5  3.0



The Douglas Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre is a state-of-the-art, world renowned sport and special event facility that is home to three ice rinks and the UBC Sports Hall of Fame. Renovated in 2008 for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, the venue has many modern accessibility features.



Parking

Accessible parking is available at the lot adjacent to the Centre and Thunderbird Parkade. These spots are well placed on flat terrain with the required signage. However, the parking spots seem to be built to the specifications required in BC Building Code but the parking is not generously sized to allow for vehicles modified with ramps. To further improve the rating of parking, consider providing parking closer to the main entrance and indicating a marked, safe path of travel from parking to the entrance.

Seating and Tables

The seating and table area located adjacent to the main rink provides an excellent area for socialization or eating, has moveable chairs to accommodate a wheelchair, and provides adequate circulation. Designating a non-pedestal table with adequate knee clearance for priority use by people with disability would raise the rating to excellent. To further improve the rating, consider providing chairs with various arm heights.

1 Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre exterior view
2 Spectators' designated accessible seating area

Spectator Seating

Designated accessible seating is available level with the rink or overlooking the rink. This seating accommodates companions. At least one percent of the seating is designated as accessible, but if event set-up requires the use of the accessible seating space beside the rink, adequate accessible seating may not be available. Unfortunately, a guard rail installed at an improper height obstructs the view of the rink, which negatively impacts the rating.

Service Counters

The Centre has service counters at both the ticketing box and the concession stand; however, neither has a lowered service counter with sufficient knee clearance. To further improve the rating, consider relocating fixtures on any service counters to reduce the visual barrier between a customer and staff and the customer and concession items.

GERALD MCGAVIN RUGBY CENTRE

 3.6  3.4  3.8  3.6



Completed in 2012, the Gerald McGavin Rugby Centre is a recent addition to UBC Athletics & Recreation. This 5000 square foot high-performance facility includes team locker rooms and a 100 person lounge that overlooks the field. Upon arrival, a person using a wheelchair is required to access the building by a small elevator. Despite this inconvenience, the Rugby Centre provides a spacious and bright area to hold an event or watch a game.



Spectator Seating

Designated accessible seating is not available at the Rugby Centre. Visitors with mobility aids will need to be seated level with the field or on the pathway at the level of the Centre but these individuals and their companions will either obstruct the view of other spectators or obstruct circulation.



Change Rooms

The change room is located at the field level which is designed for use with teams. Even for this purpose, the change room lacks many accessibility features including private space. There is a bench which is designed to provide seating and store belongings, but this is not a bench designed for a person with a disability to change on.

- 1 Gerald McGavin Rugby Centre
- 2 View from spectator seating
- 3 Change rooms

Service Counters

The Rugby Centre has service counters at the refreshment booth. However, there is no accessible service counter marked by a lowered section with sufficient knee clearance.

STUDENT RECREATION CENTRE

 3.7  3.7  3.8  3.6

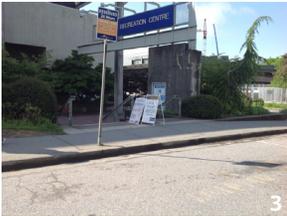


Nearly twenty years old, the Student Recreation Centre is home to multiple gymnasiums, a dance studio, a martial arts dojo centre, and a fitness studio. The fitness studio features adaptive fitness equipment and staff are prepared to assist. A recent renovation to the Locker and Change Rooms provided wider change benches and increased the brightness in hallways by choosing lighter paint colours.



Entrances and Paths

The Student Recreation Centre does contain steps at many of its entrances but the Centre does have an accessible entrance with a ramp and automated door. Routes that are unusable by all members of the public lower the ratings of paths. Clearer signage is necessary to indicate the accessible entrance.



Another consideration in the ranking is that accessible seating does not exist along the route from the drop-off and pickup zone to the entrance, which does not provide a resting place for people with limited endurance.

Washrooms

Commendably, the washrooms at the Student Recreation Centre are among the few washrooms assessed on campus that have urinals lowered and with grab bars. However, the ratings were not able to achieve 'accessible with no assistance' since the urinal is still not quite lowered to the proper height, the accessible stalls are not large enough to meet the size requirements for turning, and the toilets in these stalls are above the required height.



- 1 Student Recreation Centre
- 2 Entrance featuring an accessible, automated door opener
- 3 Drop-off zone is located near the curb cut and ramp to entrance
- 4 Washrooms feature lowered urinals

UBC TENNIS CENTRE

 3.4  3.3  3.5  3.3



A new addition to UBC, the new Tennis Centre building interior is open and features an easy to understand floor plan. It is generally a more accessible building compared to others on campus.

Foyer

The Tennis Centre enjoys a large foyer with moveable seating and views into the courts. Overall lighting is dim and can be improved for the visually impaired. The service desk is also too high for those in wheelchairs and there is no knee clearance.



Washrooms

The two unisex single-user accessible washrooms feature doors that are too heavy to be opened without assistance. Fixtures in these washrooms as well as change room washrooms should be lowered to the appropriate heights. The change room also lacks an accessible change room stall and the current stalls are too small to accommodate a wheelchair.



Spectator Seating

The Tennis Centre has halted development of the spectator seating originally in the plan of the facility. If it is to be developed in the future, special consideration should be taken in terms of accessibility, through elevators and ramps, and presence of designated seating areas.



- 1 UBC Tennis Centre
- 2 Reception desk and dimly lit foyer
- 3 Unisex single-user accessible washrooms
- 4 Change rooms stalls

THUNDERBIRD PARK

 3.3  3.2  3.5  3.3

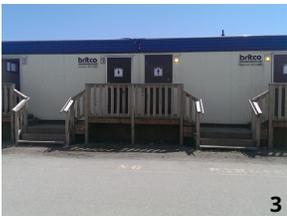


A large outdoor facility featuring soccer fields, a baseball field, and a track and field oval, Thunderbird Park was the main venue cluster for the Special Olympics Canada 2014 Summer Games. As an outdoor sporting facility, it is free of many of the restrictions that a building may pose. Accessibility is evaluated mainly on parking, drop-off/pickup, washrooms, and seating.



Parking and Drop-Off/Pick-Up

Located at the centre of the complex, the parking lot is paved with gravel, an immediate area of concern for those with disabilities. There is no designated drop-off/pick-up zone. There is also no signage that directs visitors from the main parking lot to the designated accessible parking spots that are located next to the Allan McGavin Sports Physiotherapy Building.



Washrooms

The portable washrooms that serve the sporting fields are accessed through a set of stairs, thus wheelchairs are unable to enter the washroom. The doorway has a threshold too high for a wheelchair to wheel over. Each washroom features three stalls that are too small and pose difficulty for any individual. The washrooms do not reach the accessibility standards in terms of area and heights of fixtures. Signage should exist to direct wheelchair users to the nearest washroom alternative.



Spectator Seating

Bleachers are available to spectators at each field, however there is no designated accessible seating area. Although there is enough space for alternative seating arrangements to be made, more consideration towards seating options will raise accessibility ratings.

- 1 Thunderbird Fields
- 2 Gravel paved parking lot
- 3 Inaccessible washroom portables
- 4 Change rooms stalls

THUNDERBIRD STADIUM

 2.9  3.2  3.4  2.2



Thunderbird Stadium is an open-air, artificial turf stadium used primarily for soccer, football, and rugby. The stadium will be fifty years old in 2017, so the venue does not have the accessibility features that more recent buildings on campus do. Notably in 2014, the Stadium underwent a lighting renovation and replaced 68 lighting fixtures to increase illumination to 50 horizontal foot candles.



Paths and Elevator

The top level, where the parking leads to the entrance, contains ticketing booths, concession, washrooms, and accessible spectator seating. The rest of the seating is located along a graduated surface. These stairs are either not accompanied by a handrail or do not have a handrail of the appropriate height, so the risk of falling is increased.



The field level, which is also home to change rooms and showers, is not accessible given that there is no elevator connecting the levels. Access is only available by a gated service road. Signage indicating directions to the accessible entrance and a telephone number to contact to open the gate should be placed in the parking lot for access clarity.

- 1 Thunderbird Stadium
- 2 wheelchair accessible washroom stall
- 3 Designated accessible spectator seating area

Washrooms

The main washrooms are located on the entrance level. Men and women's washrooms feature one separate wheelchair accessible stall in each. Although many standard features are in place, the doorways to the stalls do not meet the accessibility requirement. To further improve the washroom ratings, consider lowering the coat hooks, the toilet paper dispenser, a urinal, and changing the toilets to flush automatically.

Spectator Seating

There is designated accessible spectator seating with an unobstructed view. Accommodating mixed seating with a companion is difficult since the seating is not adjacent to other seating and the accessible seating blocks the view of the row directly behind. Although there seems to be sufficient seating in this booth at first glance, the total accessible seating available less than 1%.

Service Counters

Thunderbird Stadium has service counters at both the ticketing box and the concession stand. However there is no lowered service counter with sufficient knee clearance. To further improve the rating of service counters, consider relocating fixtures on any service counters to reduce the visual barrier between a customer and staff.

WAR MEMORIAL GYMNASIUM

📍 3.0 ♿ 3.1 👁 3.2 👂 2.7

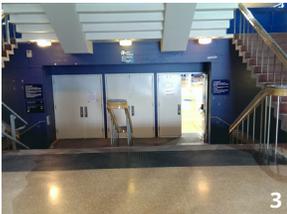


Serving as a memorial for those who served in the two world wars, UBC's War Memorial Gymnasium is still considered one of the best basketball/volleyball facilities in Canada. Being over 60 years old, the venue does not enjoy the accessibility aspects more recent buildings on campus have. Most of the accessible features in the facility have been added later on or make use of alternative preparations.



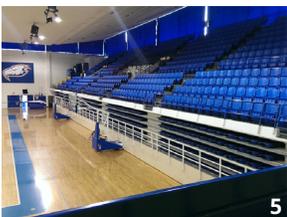
Entrance

The main entrance of War Memorial Gym is accessed through a set of exterior stairs that rise about one story high and does not have a ramp. Visitors in wheelchairs are directed to the side door of the Physiotherapy Clinic. The closest curb-cut that leads to this entrance is more than 50 metres away from this entrance. This alternative route is obscure, with first time visitors being unaware of this entrance leading to confusion for drop-off/pick-up. Directional signs and a closer curb-cut with a safe route to the Physiotherapy Clinic entrance may improve accessibility.



Paths and Elevator

The gymnasium entrance of War Memorial is on a split level and is accessible by stairs coming down from the main entrance level. The paths of the facility thus include stairs most of the time. The Area of Refuge indicated on the map is not accessible to wheelchairs due to the stairs that are part of the path that lead to it. The main staircase, although wide and with handrails, is dimly lit and may pose problems for those with visual impairments. The elevator that has been installed serves to bring users to three levels of the facility, including the gym. Although it serves its purpose, it is smaller than a commercial size. Accessibility ratings increase with elevator size. The elevator door also does not sense obstruction. The lack of verbal indication of arrival of elevator and to floors also lowers visual ratings.



- 1 War Memorial Gymnasium
- 2 Alternative Entrance - Physiotherapy Clinic
- 3 Gymnasium entrance on a split level
- 4 Non-commercial elevator
- 5 Spectators in wheelchairs are required to wheel out onto the court

Washrooms

Men's and women's washrooms feature one separate wheelchair accessible stall in each. Change rooms have one roll-in shower and one wheelchair accessible washroom stall. Improvements can be made by lowering toilet seats, coat and towel hooks, and dispensers to the appropriate heights.

Spectator Seating

The spectator seating area is completely inaccessible to wheelchairs. There are no other designated accessible seating areas. Visitors are asked to wheel out into the court to watch games. Although War Memorial enjoys a wide area around the court, ratings can be improved if seating areas were more accommodating to the wheelchair.

Discussion & Conclusion

This was the first time that UBC Vancouver campus used Planat to provide accessible information for a national event. Using Planat to rate venues ahead of the Games promoted familiarity with the Games' venues. Familiarity with venues is fundamental to any event to enhance the participant experience - particularly for a population with a high percentage of people with an intellectual disability. Having compiled the Planat ratings for each venue ahead of the Games allowed for quick and access to the accessibility venue plans. The venue plans yielded accessibility information across a range of components, including:

Paths and routes

Any stairs or steps, tripping hazards, slopes, or narrow routes at the venue negatively impacted the ratings of paths and routes. Further, the measure examined if the surface was hard or carpeted, if there was gaps in the walking surface, or if the route was dimly lit.

Doors and entrances

Doors that are less than 36" wide, heavy doors, or entrance doors without automatic openers negatively impacted the ratings of doors and entrances. Additionally, the measure examined if there were separate accessible entrances to accommodate doors that do not provide ease of access, if door handles were levered, or if control keys were easy to operate.

Elevators

Elevator doors that are less than 36" wide, doors that do not stay for at least 6 seconds, and doors that do not sense obstruction negatively impacted the rating of elevators. Further, the measure examined if the elevator buttons were a maximum of 48" high, if there was adequate turning radius, if there were audible and visual indicators of the elevator arriving and direction, or if there was a handrail in the elevator.

Parking and metres

Parking lots with more than 2% of accessible parking spots, accessible parking spots that have vertically mounted signage and clearly painted surfaces, parking spots generously sized at least 145 x 216" with aisle space, and parking located on firm and stable surfaces positively impacted the rating of parking and metres. As well, the measure examined if there was a safe path of travel from parking to the entrance, if assistance was required to use the pay metre, if the entrance was in close proximity to the parking, and if there was adequate lighting in the parking area.

Dropoff and pickup zones

A clearly identified drop-off and pickup zone, a curb-cut, protection from the weather, and a firm and stable surface all positively impacted the ratings of drop-off and pickup zones.

Wayfinding and signage

A pedestrian crossing with good colour contrast, mounted tactical signage with a clear wall area around the sign, and signs that indicate the direction of travel all positively impacted the rating of wayfinding and signage.

Washroom stalls

Doors that are at least 34" wide, a grab bar beside and behind the toilet, a door with a D/handle, a toilet that automatically flushes, a lowered urinal, and a lowered coat hook all positively impacted the ratings of washroom stalls. Additionally, the measure examines if there was an emergency alarm, adequate space in front of the toilet, and a stall with an adequate turning radius.

Sink areas

Automatic or levered faucet controls within easy reach, insulated hot water pipes, sufficient knee clearance under the sink, and adequate lighting all positively impacted the ratings of the sink area. Further, the measure examined if the light switches were less than 42" and A/C outlets were between 18"-36" in height.

Showers

A stall entrance less than 34" wide, inadequate space for a wheelchair and care attendant, and a shower head placed above 44" all negatively impacted the ratings of showers. Additionally, a roll-in shower, grab bars located behind and beside the shower, a folding seat, a change bench, and a coat hook less than 48" high all positively impacted the ratings of showers.

Change rooms

A door at least 34" wide, a door with a D/handle, a grab bar beside the bench, and a room with adequate clear space positively impacted the rating of change rooms.

Seating and tables

Chairs that are easily moved, a mix of seating with and without armrests, tables with proper knee clearance, and tables with a height between 29" to 34" all positively impacted the rating of seating and tables.

Service counters

The availability of an accessible service counter no higher than 34" with a payment device within reach positively impacted the rating of service counters. Further, barriers that blocked the sight lines between the customer and staff or the retail offerings negatively impacted the rating of service counters.

Spectator seating

The designating of at least 1% of seating as accessible on a hard surface that does not protrude into routes or paths positively impacted the ratings. If the seating did not accommodate a companion, obstructed the view of the audience, or did not have a mix of seating, it negatively impacted the rating of spectator seating.

The real strength of Planat, as shown in this report, lies in supplementing a numerical score with specific accessibility information compiled using a progressive set of design criteria and making this information available to the public. In the context of event planning, an accessibility audit ought to be conducted several years in advance of hosting a national event to provide a snapshot of current accessibility. A Planat assessment conducted prior to improvements serves as an excellent standardized measure of accessibility and as a baseline to systemically guide improvements. Upon completion of improvements, conducting another Planat assessment could be part of a strategic marketing platform to leverage an accessible venue to the public.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A - PLANAT RATINGS OVERVIEW FOR 2014 GAMES VENUES AT UBC

UBC Accommodations & Conferences

Walter Gage Apartments	 3.7	 3.6	 3.7	 3.9
West Coast Suites	 3.8	 3.8	 3.7	 3.8

UBC Athletics & Recreation

UBC Aquatic Centre	 3.0	 3.0	 3.3	 2.6
Doug Mitchell Thunderbird Sports Centre	 3.2	 3.3	 3.5	 3.0
Gerald McGavin Rugby Centre	 3.6	 3.4	 3.8	 3.6
Student Recreation Centre	 3.7	 3.7	 3.8	 3.6
UBC Tennis Centre	 3.4	 3.3	 3.5	 3.3
Thunderbird Park	 3.3	 3.2	 3.5	 3.3
Thunderbird Stadium	 2.9	 3.2	 3.4	 2.2
War Memorial Gymnasium	 3.0	 3.1	 3.2	 2.7

APPENDIX B - ACCESSIBILITY STATISTICS FOR 2014 GAMES VENUES AT UBC



- ✓ **91%** of venues have staff available to help
- ✓ **78%** of accessible parking is within 50 meters to entrance
- ✓ **91%** of routes have slopes less than 8%
- ✓ **86%** of inside elevator buttons are within reach
- ✓ **89%** of venues have more than 1:50 ratio of accessible parking spots designated
- ✓ **91%** of sinks have enough clearance to be used by those in wheelchairs
- ✓ **90%** of entrances have wide enough doorways
- ✓ **100%** of hallways or pathways are sufficiently wide
- ✓ **82%** of signs are high contrast
- ✓ **91%** of sink faucets are either automatic or levered
- ✓ **86%** of elevators have visual and audible indicators of arrival
- ✓ **100%** of washroom doors have a levered door handle



- × **40%** of service counters have an accessible counter
- × **50%** of elevator doors do not open upon sensing an obstruction
- × **45%** of entrances do not require a separate route for people with disabilities
- × **40%** of rooms do not offer tactile signage
- × **27%** of washrooms have sight lines to help people balance
- × **45%** of entrances have no tripping hazards
- × **27%** of toilets automatically flush
- × **36%** of soap and towel dispensers are within easy reach of the sink
- × **9%** of coat hooks in washrooms are low enough for those using wheelchairs
- × **0%** of tables are designated accessible with no barriers
- × **25%** of sporting facilities do not have 1% accessible seating
- × **10%** of washrooms have enough space for a wheelchair to rotate
- × **28%** of doors are light enough to be easily opened
- × **44%** of routes from parking to venues have a safe, marked path of travel
- × **33%** of light switches can be reached while sitting
- × **36%** of urinals have grab bars
- × **0%** of change rooms have an accessible change bench with grab bars
- × **14%** of elevators verbally announce floors and directions