



BC Healthy Communities
People. Place. Potential.



British Columbia has all the ingredients to become the most accessible and inclusive place to live, work and visit in the world. Growing awareness of disabilities, an increasingly diverse and aging population, a booming economy, labour shortages, the coming 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, the election of a Mayor with a disability and the Province of British Columbia's commitment "To build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk and seniors." These combine to make this the most opportune time for communities to advance and become leaders of accessibility and inclusion.

MEASURING UP THE NORTH

PURPOSE: *Measuring Up The North* (MUTN) is an innovative new project to facilitate development of disability-friendly, senior-friendly communities in nearly 40 locations in Northern British Columbia.

INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP: The project is a partnership between the North Central Municipal Association and the BC Paraplegic Association with supporting partners BC Healthy Communities Initiative and 2010 Legacies Now. This unique partnership provides vision, leadership, and support to northern BC municipalities and Regional Districts that want to realize the social and economic benefits of becoming accessible and inclusive for all citizens.

LOCAL INITIATIVES: Since its beginning in August 2007, the project has gained interest and support from many northern communities. Each MUTN community has an NCMA Liaison, a Community Liaison (person with a disability or senior) and a MUTN Committee to set community priorities and goals.

WHY IT MATTERS: For local governments, businesses, and others, becoming involved with *Measuring Up The North* is a way to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the social and economic prosperity of your community. This is especially true for over 13% of BC's population that has a disability as well as our rapidly growing senior population. The reality is that everyone benefits when communities become accessible and inclusive – parents pushing baby carriages, anyone trying to manage a heavy load, a small child that has difficulty reaching things high up, people using other languages, experiencing depression, a sore back or broken limb, etc.

When communities are accessible and inclusive to residents, this attracts visitors who spend their money in local shops, hotels, restaurants, recreation facilities, museums, and many other businesses, adding to the local economy. And when the economy is good, jobs are plentiful. People with disabilities are eager to become employed and bring significant value to any company.

HOW MEASURING UP THE NORTH WILL HELP: *Measuring Up The North* will assist communities to evaluate how accessible and inclusive their community is now, and to work together to set goals and work towards improvement. With strong support throughout Northern BC, we will help all North Central municipalities and Regional Districts strengthen their communities with locally controlled initiatives that will potentially increase participation of seniors and persons with disabilities, employment rates, tourism opportunities, retirement living, community processes, cooperative ventures and sustainable progress.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED: Contact the *Measuring Up The North* Project Director who will guide you and your community to benefit from the Measuring Up experience. For more information and to become involved contact:

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