Identifying and Addressing Accessibility Priorities

An Ongoing Institutional Process

Submitted to:
Campus and Community Planning and Access and Diversity

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Preface

The University of British Columbia covers over 1000 acres and can be challenging to navigate for anyone, but is especially difficult for people with physical disabilities. The University is dedicated to building a campus that is open and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. This project seeks to examine the institutional processes that exist for ensuring accessibility on campus and looks at ways in which accessibility deficiencies might be identified and addressed in an ongoing way.

The project was initiated as a component of the School of Community and Regional Planning course PLAN 515: Qualitative Research Methods in the spring of 2013. The course instructor acted as the research team lead and senior consultant on the project. This project was a component of a larger class project, comprised of five small groups each exploring a different aspect of campus accessibility for people with physical disabilities. The other projects included an exploration of the possible use of social media for way-finding, the impact of enhanced design elements in the public realm, prioritizing existing deficiencies on campus, and an investigation into unique challenges faced by international students with physical disabilities. The project was a service learning project embarked on in collaboration with Campus and Community Planning and Access and Diversity.

This report was made possible with the support of our professor, Silvia Vilches, and the partners in Campus and Community Planning and Access and Diversity. It is also important to acknowledge the generous time taken and commitment of the various university representatives who met with us, offered their skills and knowledge, and continue to work to address these issues on a daily basis.
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Executive Summary

The University of British Columbia has been progressively working for at least two decades towards access improvement projects on campus. The recent Campus Plan (2010), which incorporates Universal Design Principles into all new construction and renovation projects, in conjunction with hosting the 2010 Paralympics, ushered in a “new era” with a clear focus on continued enhancement of accessibility at UBC. Since then, there has been significant improvement in the public realm as well as in buildings to, for example, provide multiple accessible route options to people with physical disabilities. A decentralized University structure has allowed for heightened awareness and has increased the profile of issues related to accessibility on campus. The biggest barrier to addressing existing deficiencies is a lack of adequate funding to make improvements. However, staff have been very creative in leveraging opportunities whenever they arise.

Since a number of accessibility deficiencies continue to exist, it would be useful to have a way of communicating out the progress that has been made and any future plans for addressing outstanding issues. It would also be valuable to have a structured way for members of the university community to relay information about accessibility deficiencies as they arise. Temporary barriers, such as construction, and temporary disabilities pose specific challenges that should also be addressed through improved communication and education. This builds upon the recent decentralization of facilities management, which has improved relationships with building users. Overall, university staff have been creative in moving forward with the accessibility improvements in light of a tight fiscal environment.
Background

“We have run out of money. Now we have to think.” – Winston Churchill

In 2010 the University of British Columbia adopted The 7 Principles of Universal Design (see Appendix 2). The Vancouver Campus plan (Campus Plan) was in the process of being updated and the University was about to host the world for the Paralympics. A series of reports were commissioned throughout the development of the new Campus Plan and there was interest in getting an idea about how the University was doing overall with regards to accessibility to see where improvements could be made. “The University of British Columbia 2010 Access Audit Final Report” (Ostrander, 2010) was commissioned to serve this need. An accessibility consultant went through the campus recording accessibility deficiencies. In addition to listing all existing deficiencies the report provided some high level notions and broader recommendations to address accessibility. Three major areas of concern that came out of this report were incorporated into the campus plan; these included the steepness of the Western Slope (Appendix 7), common errors in new construction, and existing buildings with significant accessibility barriers. Creative solutions are being implemented to address each of these areas.

The endorsement of the provisions of Universal Accessibility (see Appendix 1) in the Campus Plan went even further with an official commitment to “[provide] dignified, welcoming, and effective access to people of all ability levels, to all parts of the campus and buildings where people are expected to engage in university life” (UBC Vancouver Campus Plan, 2010). It provides guidelines requiring, for instance, that new buildings afford access for all, regardless of ability, to main entrances as well as multiple entry options. These principles have guided the development of the University Technical Guidelines and together supplement the BC Building Code. University architects were clear to reiterate that although the BC Building Code has had a strong influence, it only “identifies the minimum standard within the Province of British Columbia for buildings to which this Code applies” (BC Building Code, 2012) and does not address equity issues such as whether or not people with disabilities are able to use the same entrance as everyone else. The Technical Guidelines are meant to ensure that equity is considered.

Sometimes referred to by university staff as a “new era”, these Universal Accessibility provisions outlined in the most recent Campus Plan are resulting in noteworthy improvements to the accessibility of the campus for people with physical disabilities. Indeed, in new buildings at least, it is getting to the point where “the design of products and environments [are] usable by all people...without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (North Carolina State University, 2010).

Methods

The research sought to answer the following questions:

What processes are needed for UBC to create and maintain a high standard of physical accessibility in public spaces on campus?

- How have disability/accessibility improvements been identified previously?
Identifying and Addressing Accessibility Priorities

- What is the current process for ensuring accessibility for new construction on campus?
- How can UBC's internal processes be improved to facilitate identifying and prioritizing accessibility issues going forward?

Disability Lens
We have adopted a holistic disability lens or perspective, similar to that of the Access and Diversity Office (K. Foo, personal communication, January 29, 2013). A holistic lens integrates a medical approach, in this case whereby responsibility is taken on by the institution to provide public spaces that can be utilized by all persons regardless of physical limitations, as well as a socio-political approach that allows for persons with disabilities to become active participants in providing information to the institution to improve accessibility. We believe that both components are crucial for full acceptance and optimal accessibility. This lens is used in attempt to answer the question of how accessibility deficiencies might be identified and addressed in an ongoing way on UBC’s Vancouver Campus.

Methods and Methodology
A hermeneutic methodology directed this research, which means that the “purpose of textual interpretation [was] to understand the intended meaning of the text’s author” (Prasad, 2002, p. 20). Materials were analysed in order to siphon out the core of what university representatives are interested in and concerned about. Within this methodology the methods used were literature review, interviews, one focus group, and site observation.

The project took an inductive approach working from specific observations and discussions, through synthesis, analysis, and development of patterns, to broader generalizations and theories of how accessibility is addressed at UBC.

In order to gather data the initial idea was to hold a focus group with key institutional departments and then hold follow up interviews where necessary. Potential participants were identified and contacted at first by our project liaison in Campus and Community planning. A focus group was ultimately held (Focus group questions in Appendix 3) with four participants including representatives from Campus and Community Planning, Building Operations, Project Services, and Access and Diversity to broadly discuss methods of identifying and prioritizing accessibility deficiencies on campus. The focus group was taped and transcribed and provided the basis for our analysis. An iterative process was used reviewing the transcript and pulling out major ideas that seemed to be important to the participants. A separate interview (for interview guide see Appendix 4) was then held with a representative from Infrastructure Development and two follow up interviews (Appendix 5 and 6) helped us clarify details and focused on people’s experience of identifying and addressing these accessibility priorities and the specific possibilities for attending to these needs in the future. An ongoing literature review throughout the process provided details of the topics and projects being discussed and site observation informed questions and understanding of the problems being faced.

The major strength of this research comes from having active involvement of many University Departments. The fact that we had the opportunity to speak with key members of the departments directly was extremely beneficial. Due to the scope of the project and inherent time constraints the
project was however limited and was unable to delve too far below the surface. Conversations with people, such as “Champions” and the Senate Academic Building Needs Committee, would have been beneficial but was unfortunately not possible.

**Organizational Structure**

Many formal and informal processes are in place at UBC to ensure that the campus is accessible for people with physical disabilities. Access and Diversity is the official body looking out for and acting as an advocate for students with disabilities. However, it was communicated that UBC views accessibility, like human rights and the environment, as something that needs to be decentralized and addressed in many different contexts. It is important that accessibility be at the forefront of every discussion and every decision that might affect infrastructure and public space on campus. As discussed above, since 2010, the Campus Plan directly addresses this need and it is evident from speaking with people who implement the plan that these values are taken seriously.

The departments and subsets of the University that are directly involved in designing, developing, and maintaining infrastructure on campus are: UBC Properties Trust, a trust that “acquire[s], develop[s], and manage[s] real estate assets for the...university” for the sole benefit of UBC and the UBC Foundation (UBC Properties Trust, 2009); Campus and Community Planning; Building Operations; and Infrastructure Development. Besides these formal roles, the Office of Access and Diversity as well as “Champions” provide support and greater awareness across campus of the need to be cognisant of people with varying levels of mobility. Additionally, many buildings on the UBC campus are either owned by UBC, but not operated by Building Operations (e.g. Student Housing), not owned by UBC but maintained by Building Operations (e.g. Student Union Building (SUB) via service contracts), or not owned by UBC, but used for UBC student services (e.g. Hospital). In each of these cases there is, at times, a perception that UBC is responsible for the buildings when in fact there is a more complicated relationship and UBC does not have jurisdiction like they do in core buildings. Each of these different bodies has a role to play in ensuring accessibility is always on the agenda. A visual representation of these relationships is presented in Figures 2 and 3.

UBC Properties Trust, in collaboration with Campus and Community Planning (CCP), work from the BC Building Code and the University of British Columbia Technical Guidelines when designing new buildings and public spaces for the UBC community. Building Operations maintains core buildings, ensuring their functionality. In cases where accessibility deficiencies are identified, Building Operations investigates the problem and considers possible solutions, fixing the problem if possible and subsequently updating the Technical Guidelines, if appropriate, to reduce the chance of the problem repeating itself. Infrastructure Development facilitates accessibility upgrades in older buildings by securing capital funding. Project Services, an office within Infrastructure Development, design strategies to address specific accessibility deficiencies.
Upgrades can be particularly tricky in buildings that are both not owned nor operated by UBC. When there is shared jurisdiction for operating the building, the process can take longer but is still often facilitated by the University (e.g. Athletics buildings). In instances where the University does not own the building they may have to deal with the issue of public perception, but have no jurisdiction to address concerns. With all of the above processes, Access and Diversity is available to provide consultation and advice, but they do not have any official authority to implement changes. Champions can be either groups or individuals with no formal role. For instance, the Senate Academic Building Needs Committee was noted as playing an important role in advocating for improved accessibility. Champions have a
unique role in that they, like Access and Diversity, have no official authority, however being committed to accessibility they bring the issue to different tables.

**Strengths**

A number of strengths were acknowledged within the existing formal and informal institutional processes for identifying and addressing accessibility deficiencies on campus. The existence of “Champions” and the inclusion of the Universal Accessibility provisions in the Campus Plan have led to an increased awareness and improved knowledge about the University’s goals regarding accessibility among architects and others involved in the development and design of new buildings. Effective working relationships also exist between the various departments on campus (i.e. Campus and Community Planning, Building Operations, Project Services, etc.) that are each involved in some aspect of ensuring a high level of accessibility. The informal consultation role of Access and Diversity is drawn upon frequently in order to ensure the user group’s perspective is considered in new developments or in the renovation of existing space.
Some of the greatest gains for accessibility have been made in the construction of new buildings, where incorporation of the Universal Design Principles has been considered from the outset of the project. This has allowed for their inclusion into the design and layout of the new building and how the building fits into the surrounding landscape. For example, the redevelopment of the Ponderosa Commons will provide a choice of accessible routes. One option will be to enter the building on a ground floor, utilizing an elevator to overcome the significant gradient of the Western Slope. Other options will follow outdoor routes, either by pathway or ramp, to navigate the grade, as seen in Figure 4. Considering accessibility during the design of a project allows for more seamless incorporation of accessibility features into the building, generally at a much lower cost than would be required to incorporate them at a later stage in the construction project.

The Public Realm Plan, and associated ongoing upgrades, has been effectively leveraged to incorporate improved accessibility wherever possible (Figure 5). Findings from interviews with people who use wheelchairs identified that uneven surfaces are difficult for some wheelchairs to navigate and recommended that “the creation of sudden slopes should be limited/prohibited, and the continuity of pathways should be addressed” (Brown, Giratalla, Mody, Procyk, & Yamashita, 2010, p.18). Despite the often challenging terrain, particularly along the Western Slope of campus, innovative solutions for improving accessibility are being incorporated in all aspects of the design and will continue to be implemented as the Public Realm undergoes reconstruction. The Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability provides an example where the building was designed to allow the existing accessible pathway to remain, providing continued coherence within the public realm (Figure 6). Since the Public Realm improvements are financed through Infrastructure Impact Charges, levied on the various developers involved in construction projects on campus, this is one area that is expected to have continued funding available.
Figure 5: Public Realm.

Figure 6: Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability: Ensuring accessibility and campus coherence by creating a covered walkway through the building. The images are taken from opposite sides of the walkway.
Despite the often difficult task of finding appropriate solutions and funding to improve accessibility in many of the older buildings on campus, there has been a fair amount of success in incorporating accessibility improvements into larger renovation projects, with the Buchanan building providing a good example. Rather than attempting a large number of one-off improvements, which can be both expensive and don’t always result in particularly good solutions, piggy-backing on larger renovation projects has allowed for much better incorporation of accessibility into the renovated building at a much lower overall cost. Going along with this strategy of incorporating accessibility into the renovation of older buildings, is a prioritization of accessibility issues of immediate impact to students, faculty, or staff and an implementation of “soft solutions” whereby a class may be moved to a building that provides better accessibility options, rather than undertaking an expensive renovation to make the current classroom accessible.

Decentralization of facilities management and the division of campus into eight zones, each with its own Facilities Manager and trades has also allowed for improved identification and communication of accessibility deficiencies. Although implementing solutions to those issues identified is not always able to be accomplished quickly due to financial constraints or particularly complex problems, having Facilities Managers and trades who are knowledgeable about the buildings they work in and able to form working relationships with building occupants definitely is an asset in the identification, communication, and eventual resolution of accessibility deficiencies.

Barriers

Although there are many examples of the successful ways in which accessibility improvements are being implemented on UBC’s Vancouver campus, there still remain a number of barriers to mobility for people with disabilities. Two examples of temporary barriers to accessibility have proven quite challenging for UBC to address. For one, assisting people with temporary disabilities, such as a broken leg, as their expectations for accessibility are quite high and they do not have the support networks or experience to draw from when navigating campus. Secondly, temporary barriers to accessibility are created during construction on campus; there is not much warning for such obstructions as contractors often have to block routes with short notice resulting in difficulties for those with physical disabilities who need to navigate campus from day to day.

A barrier for addressing more enduring accessibility deficiencies arises from people not knowing who to report an issue to on campus, especially because there often exists a perception that all buildings on campus are owned and operated by UBC, when in fact there are a number of separate entities and varying relationships for operating different buildings (outlined above). Furthermore, even if an issue has been reported to the appropriate department, there is currently no way of communicating that the problem has already been identified. When an issue is particularly complex or expensive to fix, a lot of time may pass before an appropriate solution is developed and implemented, leading to the assumption that UBC is not addressing accessibility issues even when they are reported.

Another potential barrier to attaining the “access with dignity” goals outlined in the Universal Accessibility guidelines is that fact that the guidelines are something to be aspired to, while the BC
Building Code is the legal minimum standard. Unfortunately, no incentive exists to go beyond the legal minimum standard and to do so often incurs additional costs to the developer. An example of a newer building, but still prior to this “new era” is the Beaty Biodiversity Centre. While up to BC Building Code, the building still presents many challenges to people with physical disabilities, including heavy, oversized doors, prohibitively long ramps, and grey on grey signage that is difficult to read (Figure 7). UBC has been working hard with UBC Properties Trust to impress upon developers the need to meet the new accessibility standards and there has been a significant amount of learning in the last few years. Staff felt there had been a cultural shift with many architects really starting to embrace UBC’s aims and designing buildings that meet these guidelines.

The biggest barrier to addressing many of the pre-existing accessibility deficiencies on campus is lack of adequate funding. There currently exists no specific budget for implementing solutions to previously existing or newly identified accessibility issues, however, they will be given priority if they are deemed to be an issue of safety. Although a number of upgrades have been addressed creatively through larger scale renovations and a small number through funds held within Infrastructure Development, there is very little expectation that any funds for individual accessibility improvements will be available going forward, at least not at this time. This lack of funding is the biggest challenge to implementing the Universal Accessibility guidelines and addressing outstanding and emerging accessibility issues campus-wide on an ongoing basis.

![Figure 7: Accessibility Concerns with the new Beaty Biodiversity Centre.](image-url)
Recommendations
This report has aimed to explore what processes are in place and see what might be needed for UBC to create and maintain a high standard of physical accessibility in public spaces on campus. It appears that a lot is working. Significant improvements to the public realm and a “new era” of direct planning for accessibility needs have resulted in very good processes, especially surrounding the construction of new buildings. In the case of older buildings or when dealing with temporary accessibility barriers there remains a need to develop ongoing processes for identifying, communicating, and addressing deficiencies. The existing process may need to be evaluated for cases where accessibility features are not working (i.e. automatic door openers) to ensure timely identification and response. This section outlines a variety of recommendations that Campus and Community Planning and the Office of Access and Diversity could consider in their efforts to create a more academically and socially inclusive campus for students with physical disabilities.

Many of the outstanding accessibility deficiencies on campus have already been identified, either through the 2010 Ostrander Report, or they are longstanding issues that are challenging to find appropriate solutions to that are not prohibitively expensive. However, from time to time, new issues will emerge due to accessibility features failing to function as intended or a desire to move from the minimum acceptable standard to something more in line with UBC’s Universal Accessibility provisions. Also important is finding a way to improve communication of temporary accessibility barriers, particularly those created by construction on campus, in a timely fashion. Equally important is sharing information about what is being done to improve accessibility on campus and sharing information about why certain accessibility barriers have not yet been addressed. Implementing solutions that improve accessibility are often constrained by lack of financial resources. For this reason, the creative strategies currently being employed should be continued. All of the following recommendations are based on the observations, concerns and suggestions of the study participants. In most cases the recommendations are process driven and in some respect, formalizing or making public the informal processes that currently exist.

Problem Identification & Communication

- Continue to utilize the existing decentralized building maintenance structure as a way to stay on top of emerging accessibility issues in buildings. Ensure that the Facilities Managers and trades personnel that work in each of the 8 zones have a thorough understanding of UBC’s commitment to the Universal Accessibility provisions so that they can prioritize repairs to accessibility features or identify potential upgrades to improve accessibility within the buildings they work in. Additionally ensure that facilities contact information is readily available in each building.

- A process exists whereby people can call the Service Centre to have an existing piece of equipment repaired. Nonetheless, a limited amount of site observation has shown multiple automatic door openers that are not functioning. The reasons for this are unknown but it is a potential area to look at for improvement.
• Set up an email address or web-based form that anyone (students, faculty, staff, or the public) can email to report accessibility barriers they encounter. Publicize how to report accessibility issues and the email address in appropriate places, such as within buildings, on way-finding signs, on the Access and Diversity, and Building Operations websites, etc. Set up an automatic reply describing what happens when an issue is reported that informs the reporter of what to expect (i.e. issue will be fixed as soon as possible for smaller items, or for larger, more complex, or expensive problems it will be logged and addressed as resources allow).

• Provide information online regarding accessibility deficiencies identified and their status to communicate the work that UBC is undertaking to improve accessibility on campus, but also to educate users of the challenges that often need to be overcome in order to implement effective solutions.

• Utilize social media, for example twitter, to communicate temporary accessibility barriers created due to construction or other events on campus. Communicate this service to the affected user group through Access and Diversity. Some suggestions on how this could be achieved may be presented in the final report of the Social Media research group from PLAN 515.

• Prepare a “tips” information sheet for people with temporary disabilities and post it on the Access and Diversity website. For instance, indicate where accessible parking is located, options of accessible routes, acknowledgement that barriers to accessibility do exist on campus and that people with long-term disabilities confront them every day. This will help demonstrate that UBC is committed to continuously improving accessibility, as well as improve education about accessibility issues for the larger campus community.

• Emphasize the relationship between the Universal Accessibility provisions in the Vancouver Campus Plan and the Technical Guidelines utilized by architects in the design of buildings, in order to improve understanding of the University’s goals with regards to accessibility. To begin with, update the Technical Guidelines webpage to provide links to the Accessibility provisions in the Campus Plan.

Implementing Solutions

• Continue to incorporate accessibility improvements into the work being done in the public realm, in the renovations of existing buildings, and the construction of new buildings, while seeking feedback from the user community to confirm the perception that the improvements are moving the University towards the goal of “access with dignity”.

• Due to changes in the organizational structure of University Departments, in particular the division of Campus Planning and Development into two separate departments – Infrastructure Development with responsibility for facilities and Campus and Community Planning with responsibility for land use planning – it is recommended that the outstanding issues identified in the Ostrander Report (2010) be passed over to Infrastructure Development and Building
Operations for implementation. Of note, a portion of the Ostrander Report dealing with the northwest quadrant of campus is currently being reprioritized based on feedback provided by students with disabilities regarding what they feel is most important.

- Work to maintain and strengthen relationships with outside entities located on the UBC campus, sharing experiences and best practices for attaining universal accessibility in order that they may strive to improve access in their own facilities.

- Continue wherever possible to apply for available grants to fund outstanding identified deficiencies.

This report sought to examine the institutional processes that exist at UBC (Vancouver Campus) for identifying and addressing accessibility deficiencies in an ongoing way. It is our hope that Campus and Community Planning, Building Operations, Infrastructure Development, and Access and Diversity will take these recommendations and put them into action. Thanks again to our participants for their input to this report and their continued dedication to improving accessibility at UBC.
References


Appendix 1: Universal Accessibility Provisions (from Campus Plan)

**UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY**

The University is committed over time to providing dignified, welcoming, and effective access to people of all ability levels, to all parts of the campus and buildings where people are expected to engage in university life. In addition to meeting the accessibility provisions in the BC Building Code, all new building project designs must address:

a. The 7 *Universal Design Principles* outlined in Appendix 3.

b. Accessibility standards for buildings, integrated throughout other sections of these guidelines. These include finished grade elevations, provision of dignified and universally accessible main entries, multiple entry options, and directional signage regarding accessible entries.

c. Exterior pathway accessibility standards, integrated within other sections of these guidelines. These include measures to support an interconnected and accessible exterior public realm network, provision of project connections to the larger public realm network (not just the parking lot), suitable surface treatment of pedestrian routes, covered rest areas, visual and wayfinding support features, parking and drop-off facilities, and pathway gradient guidelines.

d. A simple collection of interior design fit-out adaptations to avoid common unintentional impediments to accessibility, as outlined in Appendix 4. These include considerations such as provision of sufficient manoeuvring space at doors, more universally usable door handle designs, countertop heights, stair nosing details, and other accessory considerations.
Appendix 2: Universal Design Principles

**The 7 Universal Design Principles**

**PRINCIPLE 1 — EQUITABLE USE**
Designers should design spaces to allow the same means of use for all users from the outset, wherever possible, to avoid segregation of users by physical abilities. Sensitive early design can provide all users with equal degrees of service, security, and safety. (E.g. wheelchair accessible shortcuts, level entry access to the main floor buildings).

**PRINCIPLE 2 — FLEXIBILITY IN USE**
Accessibility features should be designed to accommodate choice in methods of use. (E.g. accommodate right and left-hand use, a range of user heights and strengths, dual height countertops and drinking fountains).

**PRINCIPLE 3 — SIMPLE AND INTUITIVE USE**
Accessibility features should be designed to have minimal complexity. (E.g. arrange information consistent with its importance).

**PRINCIPLE 4 — PERCEPTIBLE INFORMATION**
Essential information regarding built facilities should be provided in redundant forms (pictorial, verbal, tactile) allowing different users to perceive the information through different modes. (E.g. Adequate height signs, compatibility with a variety of techniques used by people with sensory limitations).

**PRINCIPLE 5 — TOLERANCE FOR ERROR**
Accessible features should be designed to have minimal complexity. (E.g. provide clearance from hazardous finishes, and easy to grasp handles).

**PRINCIPLE 6 — LOW PHYSICAL EFFORT**
Accessible features should be designed to require low physical effort to operate. (E.g. users able to maintain neutral body position, and use reasonable force).

**PRINCIPLE 7 — SIZE AND SPACE FOR APPROACH AND USE**
Accessible features should be designed with ample size and space for users of various abilities to manoeuvre and operate. (E.g. provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user, put features within reach of any seated or standing user, or accommodate variations in hand and grip size).
Appendix 3: Focus Group Questions

- HAND OUT ‘UNIVESAL ACCESSIBILITY’ & ‘UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES’

- Given that the university has adopted universal design principles, how might your office be involved in implementing them?

- (How do you think your office could support them?)

- Are you aware of any instances in which your office has responded to concerns regarding accessibility? If so, please describe.

- Are you aware of any instances in which your office has been the first to identify a deficiency? What has happened? Were you able to pass the message on... etc. What were the results... etc.?

- What is your understanding of who at UBC is responsible to address identified deficiencies?

- Does your office have any involvement with students? With students with disabilities? Can you see a way students could be involved in bringing issues to your office? And what about the broader public?

- What sources of funding are you aware to address deficiencies?

- What kind of communication currently exists between your departments with regard to accessibility on campus? What other departments on campus should be involved that aren’t here today?

- Is there anything else you would like to discuss? Like to see?

- In your observation, what is working well and what could be improved upon?
Appendix 4: Interview Questions (Infrastructure and Development)

- Can you describe your role with Facilities Planning?

- What is your role in relation to projects that are looking to improve accessibility on campus? Can you give us an example?

- What is your understanding of who at UBC is responsible to address identified deficiencies?

- What sources of funding are you aware to address deficiencies?

- We’ve heard that your office has been successful at getting grant funding. Can you elaborate on the sources of funding. (For example, what agencies? Is it provincial or federal funding?)

- Are there sources of funding in the University budget that you have access to? (do you think that the university should be budgeting for addressing accessibility deficiencies?)

- A recurring theme we’re seeing in other departments is that there is no ongoing funding for accessibility upgrades and that is a bit of a barrier. Can you tell us more about the funding from your perspective. (Do you have a budget that is specifically for accessibility issues? Is it ongoing? Or do you wait for a project to come up and then look for funding?)

- Do you think there is a better way to address these funding issues?

- Do you have anything to do with new buildings or only renovations?

- What communication currently exists between your department and Access and Diversity, Special Projects Office, Building Operations, and Campus and Community Planning in relation to accessibility on campus?

- In your observation, what is working well and what could be improved upon?

- Is there anything else you think is relevant to accessibility? Do you have any questions for us at this point?
Appendix 5: Follow up Interview Questions (Building Operations)

- You mentioned a fairly new building that had a long ramp which turned out to be slippery, resulting in it being challenging to use. What building was that? Was it the Beaty Biodiversity Centre?

- Are there any new buildings that have been built since the new campus plan came out? (CIRS...others?) If so, have there been any accessibility deficiencies identified in those buildings?

- Who is UBC Properties Trust? What is their role in terms of all of this?

- What does this mean when a building is “given over to the university?” how does this process go? Does UBC design and build the building (where are these architect teams? Who do they work for? Properties trust in partnership?) and then it’s inaugurated by UBC and it gets “given over”???

- Do you do a review of the buildings before they are officially accepted by the university?

- You had mentioned a warranty on the buildings. What is the situation with this? Who holds the warranty? What sorts of things are covered under the warranty?

- Do you have a budget to do these kind of fixes such as the motorized door, grey on grey, poor lighting (p.9) (Is this operating budget? Who pays for it? Out of what budget?) When you do this kind of a fix do you just do it or do you talk to Darren?

- Would you elaborate on the distinction between university owned versus non-university buildings. We see three categories as being: Building ops (Core), Athletics, separate entities (public entities (ex. Hospital), colleges, Student Union Building). What about residences? What is your role in terms of maintenance on each of the types of buildings? What happens if there is an accessibility issue requiring funding? In the case of the Athletic centre you mentioned it takes more time to get projects through, but who pays for it?
Appendix 6: Follow up Interview Questions (Campus and Community Planning)

- What do they mean by the western slope? The big success there? What in particular are you talking about?

- You talked about this public realm funding. Where was the public realm funding from? Is it ongoing?

- What was the temporal relationship between Ostrander report and campus plan amendments?

- You said the Ostrander report wasn’t really available. Is there a reason for that? Is it going to be made available?

- You mentioned that it is the existing buildings where the accessibility problems arise and that there is more scrutinizing over new buildings. Has this changed since 2009? With regard to accessibility? How do the accessible designs get worked into it?

- Do the teams of architects get guidance on specifics of how to meet these? For instance the long, slippy ramp problem. On paper it looks like it meets the requirement unless someone remembers the problem and specifically avoids it. Is this true?

- Are the running list of problems that get encountered and how they are “fixed” get recorded anywhere so that people can easily refer to them when the next building comes along? We talked about UBC records but that doesn’t seem accessible to some architect who’s sketching out a building....

- Someone at the meeting a couple of weeks ago mentioned that upgrades “go to campus planning which can go onto their website to update it”. Can you clarify how this goes? We didn’t see this type of thing on the website but maybe we weren’t looking hard enough. Which website is this referring to? Who can access it? What kind of level of detail does it have?
Appendix 7: Western Slope

The Western Slope is a particularly steep portion of campus on the western side of the central ridge that forms the historic core of campus. Figure 8 shows this area in relation to the rest of campus. The portion of the Western Slope at University Avenue is currently under construction in the development project shown in Figure 9. The steepness of the western slope is evident in this image and when complete, the Ponderosa Commons, will provide a variety of options for people navigating the space as discussed above (Figure 3).
Figure 9: Ponderosa Commons Development, University Avenue section of the Western Slope