



**visits4u Case Studies:**

**Room for Accessibility in the  
Alberta Accommodation Industry  
Alberta, Canada**

## Room for Accessibility in the Alberta Accommodation Industry

### Alberta, Canada

Title: Planning for accessible tourism through long-term strategic partnerships

#### Description

The Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and the Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Society (VAD) conducted a joint research project to examine best practice for accessibility in the hotel and lodging industry and to speak directly to hotel and lodging managers and persons with disabilities regarding their view of current accessibility within Alberta hotels. Information gathered during the project indicates there is room for improvement on accessibility within the Alberta hotel and lodging industry. The final report “*Creating Accessible Hotels in Alberta*” (2017) provided a number of recommendations for action.

The purpose of the project *Room for Accessibility in Alberta’s Accommodation Industry* is to implement a three year strategic plan (2018-21) to improve accessibility consistent with the recommendations made in *Creating Accessible Hotels in Alberta*.

#### Becoming inclusive:

##### 1. Description

The goals of the project are to:

- Expand access to the growing market of individuals with disabilities and seniors who are looking for accessible travel to new destinations that connect them with nature, new experiences and cultural opportunities.
- Provide a tool kit for the Alberta accommodation industry with the information needed to provide an excellent travel experience to guests with disabilities.
- Add a tool to the visitor information services to assist visitors looking for an accessible travel destinations in Alberta.

## 2. Description of steps taken

The Boards of AHLA and VAD have ratified the content for a three year strategic plan that includes:

- Piloting the *Hotel Accessibility Self-Assessment Guide* with hotels and the *Guest Checklist for Accessible Hotel Accommodations* with persons with disabilities.
- Promoting the *Guest Checklist for Accessible Hotel Accommodations*, the *Hotel Accessibility Self-Assessment Guide* and the *Optimum Hotel Room Templates* to their networks.
- Identifying and documenting best practice accessibility examples in Alberta .
- Developing hotel/lodging industry training on customer service for persons with disabilities.
- Conducting independent accessibility assessments within 30 hotels
- Taking immediate action to bring attention to the unique challenges related to assuring the safety of hotel guests with disabilities in the event of an emergency.

## 3. Main stakeholders / actors

Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)

The AHLA's vision is to be an industry leader and the trusted advisor for hotels and lodging in Alberta, helping to build Canada's tourism and hospitality industry. The AHLA's mission is to support our members and strengthen Alberta's tourism and hospitality industry. Through our programs, services, and advocacy efforts, we strive to enhance the economic prosperity and social fabric of our industry.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Society (VAD)

VAD is a provincial cross-disability non-profit organization of and for people with physical, mental, developmental, learning and sensory disabilities. We actively promote full participation in society. This vision is supported through education and awareness, research; collaborations and partnership; and support and referral.

#### 4. Costs of the changes

The initial research occurred over a one year period at the cost of \$70,000 Canadian.

The proposed cost of the three year plan is \$150,000 Canadian per year.

#### Results and Impact

Three original tools that can be used by individuals with accessibility requirements and the hotel and lodging industry have been drafted and available for piloting. These include:

- Templates on Best Practice Layouts for Accessible Hotel Rooms and Bathrooms
- A Guest Checklist to Assess Accessible Hotel Accommodations
- A Hotel Accessibility Self-Assessment Guide for hotels to examine key accessibility elements.

A formal partnership between the tourism industry and the disability sector within Alberta has been established to take action on accessibility.

Further results will emerge over the next three years.

#### Further information

Regular updates on the three year project “*Room for Accessibility in the Alberta Accommodation Industry*” will be posted at [vadsociety.ca](http://vadsociety.ca) and [ahdl.ca](http://ahdl.ca) starting the April 2018.

Information from Accessible Hotels in Alberta Study

Full Report: <http://vadsociety.ca/files/download/c24f19fed28889e>

Summary Report: <http://vadsociety.ca/files/download/4030d07868ac830>

Template of Accessible Hotel Rooms and Bathrooms:  
<http://vadsociety.ca/files/download/98889833bae1d93>

Checklist for Guests: <http://vadsociety.ca/files/download/2be1f72bf6e801bp>



visits4u is co-funded by the  
COSME Programme of the European Union