



# **THE FEDERAL BRIDGE CORPORATION LIMITED**

## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2026-2029**

Ce document est aussi disponible en français.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

This Accessibility Plan for 2026-2029 is the second that has been created by The Federal Bridge Corporation Limited (FBCL), in accordance with the [Accessible Canada Act](#), to meet its responsibilities. Building upon its learnings from the past three years, this document identifies the priorities and activities that the FBCL will undertake by proactively identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility for its employees and customers. The corporation has shown achievements made against its first Accessibility Plan (published for the 2023-2025 time period) as evidenced in annual progress reports. This commitment to communicating progress against this Plan will continue annually. Furthermore, this plan will be updated every three years as the corporation is committed to continuous consultation of people with disabilities and integrating the feedback into future plans. The FBCL is strongly committed to a barrier-free Canada.

The intent of this Plan is to identify, remove and prevent barriers in employment; the built environment; information and communication technologies; other communications; the procurement of goods, services and facilities; and the design and delivery of programs and services. By setting targets, the FBCL is holding itself accountable for action.

In 2021, the FBCL was recognized with the prestigious Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification for its Blue Water Bridge customer-oriented facilities in Point Edward, Ontario. Four out of five buildings assessed were found to certify to the minimum standard set by the Foundation. Importantly, recommendations for improvements were presented to the FBCL to improve the level of accessibility at these facilities and potentially obtain the coveted Gold Standard Certification. In an effort of continuous improvement, the FBCL has worked to achieve most of these recommendations within our 2023-2025 Accessibility Plan, and this current Plan continues to work towards completing the remaining others and reapplying for the Gold Standard Certification.

Meeting the needs of all Canadians who may pass through or be employed in our facilities is something that the FBCL continues to strive towards. This is not an aim

towards a destination, but a journey on which the FBCL is committed to continuing. I have confidence this plan will continue to guide us along this journey and allow us to implement the important activities that need to be undertaken to improve accessibility within our organization. The FBCL is committed to providing all Canadians with access at its border crossing, as well as being an employer of choice for people with disabilities who can contribute to our ongoing success. Our corporation is driven to offer the most open, accessible, and welcoming crossings for all Canadians and visitors.

Natalie Kinloch  
Chief Executive Officer

## GENERAL

### Statement of Commitment

The [Federal Bridge Corporation Limited \(FBCL\)](#) enables bridge crossings in excess of 7.2 million<sup>1</sup> motor vehicles annually and employs approximately 110 individuals. In delivering its mandate, the corporation is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. Further, it is committed to removing accessibility barriers within the corporation. The FBCL wants to ensure an accessible environment for all employees and the public it serves, as well as ensuring that its public information is accessible to all Canadians. This plan reflects that commitment.

### Description of The Federal Bridge Corporation Limited

The FBCL headquarters are in Ottawa and it owns international bridge crossings and associated structures in Ontario in the following cities: Sault Ste. Marie, Point Edward (ownership and operation of the Canadian facilities), Lansdowne and Cornwall. The FBCL's mandate is to provide the highest level of stewardship so that its international bridge crossings and associated structures are safe and efficient for users.

This Accessibility Plan was developed to meet the FBCL's responsibilities, as a parent Crown corporation including its wholly-owned subsidiary, The Seaway International Bridge Corporation, Ltd. (SIBC), under the [Accessible Canada Act \(ACA\)](#), the [Accessible Canada Regulations](#), the [Canada Transportation Act](#), and to persons with disabilities.

### Background

The ACA strives to realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040 and applies to federal jurisdictions, including Crown corporations, such as the FBCL. Among other things, the ACA requires federal entities to develop a plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. Plans should list initiatives and commitments to be implemented over three years and subsequently updated every three years, with annual progress reports.

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<sup>1</sup> 2024 Data

Consultations with persons with disabilities and all affected or interested parties are essential to effectively develop an accessibility plan. Furthermore, a mechanism for feedback on the plan, its actions and its progress enable a continuous conversation that greatly assist the overall objective.

The FBCL's accessibility plan for 2026 to 2029 represents its commitment to ensuring greater accessibility for its employees and all Canadians. The Government of Canada website includes background on the ACA and various activities the government is undertaking to create communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers.

### **Contact Information and Feedback Process**

You may communicate feedback about this Accessibility Plan, barriers faced by employees or people who deal with The Federal Bridge Corporation Limited, or accessibility in general. Feedback may be submitted anonymously if preferred. All feedback received, other than anonymous feedback, will be acknowledged in the same manner it was received. Anonymous requests will be reviewed but not be responded to. Your feedback will improve accessibility within FBCL operations and will inform the next accessibility plan and annual progress reports.

In person or by mail:

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Director, Human Resources  
1555 Venetian Boulevard, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Point Edward (Ontario) N7T 0A9  
  
Telephone: (519) 336-2720  
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Email: [info@federalbridge.ca](mailto:info@federalbridge.ca)

A person may make a request to access the FBCL's Accessibility Plan in print, large print, Braille, audio format or an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities.

Print or Large Print: A copy of this plan is available within 15 days of the request.

Braille: A Braille copy of this plan will be available within 45 days of the request.

Audio: An audio copy (an audio file with a person's voice reading the text) of this plan will be available within 45 days of the request.



## AREAS DEFINED UNDER SECTION 5 OF *ACCESSIBLE CANADA ACT*

### Employment

The FBCL and its wholly owned subsidiary, the SIBC, are equal opportunity employers, who promote a culture of inclusion and diversity and employ approximately 110 individuals at three locations in Ontario: Ottawa, Point Edward, and Cornwall. Since 2021, 33% of the workforce have engaged in a hybrid work arrangement.

The FBCL is committed to an inclusive, safe, barrier-free workplace and embodies values of respect for people, respect for democracy, integrity, stewardship and excellence in its actions and decisions. It has in place modern Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) and Duty to Accommodate policies to support these principles. Accommodations are available throughout the staffing process and can be requested at any time from individual People Leaders or the assigned human resources representative.

Initiatives	Timeline
<p>The FBCL will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to conduct comprehensive workforce analysis via an employee self-identification process.</li></ul>	<p><u>2026-29:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing updates to workforce analysis based on self-identification process.</li><li>• Consult, develop, design, deliver and evaluate accessible and inclusive programs, training, tools and services.</li><li>• Ongoing yearly upgrades to accessible internal policies, guideline and procedures.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain employee training on accessibility, disability awareness, diversity and inclusion, and digital and communications principles.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to use accessibility standards for internal policies, guidelines and procedures.</li></ul>	

<b>Barriers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stigma associated with self-identification as a person with a disability limits fulsome employee needs assessment.</li> <li>• Ongoing development of employee knowledge and awareness of accessibility is needed to enable an effective application in policies and operations.</li> <li>• Policies, procedures and systems require ongoing updating of outdated language, approaches or practices that could contribute to systemic barriers to accessibility and inclusivity.</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Function:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources, with support from Information Technology and Communications.</li> </ul>
<b>Planned Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised awareness of accessibility and inclusion by all employees.</li> <li>• Improved quality of personnel management.</li> <li>• Barriers removed for employees and individual needs accounted for.</li> <li>• Perceptions, policies, and practices provide a more equitable workplace.</li> </ul>

## The Built Environment

The FBCL's portfolio of assets comprises 10 bridge structures, 49 buildings, including three CBSA operational facilities and five investment properties on four international crossing plazas. Members of the public have access only to a limited number of buildings as the remainder are secured sites for purposes of the international bridge operations. The FBCL also leases commercial and residential spaces to independent tenants.

Since 2021, the FBCL possesses the prestigious Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification for its Blue Water Bridge customer-oriented facilities in Point Edward, Ontario. Recommendations for improvements were presented to the FBCL to improve the level of accessibility at its facilities. The FBCL is addressing these recommendations in this plan.

The FBCL is committed to incorporating barrier-free design for accessibility in the new construction or major rehabilitation of its facilities and public spaces. Where emergency or unplanned repairs or changes are made to the built environment, the FBCL endeavours to plan for a longer-term remediation inclusive of accessibility requirements.

Initiative	Timeline
<p>The FBCL will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek to achieve Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) status on existing buildings. All new construction or retrofits will target the higher Gold level certification.</li></ul>	<p><u>2026-27:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address remaining 14 of 83 recommendations from the 2021 RHFAC report at FBCL facilities.</li></ul> <p><u>2027-28:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submit application for Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification status on existing Blue Water Bridge plaza buildings.</li></ul> <p><u>2028-29:</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop, publish, and circulate emergency evacuation plans for employees with disabilities.</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create action plan to address any recommendations from 2027/2028 Rick Hansen Foundation assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical access to certain facilities are limited, increasing security and reducing access to commercial and employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Function:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineering and Maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>Planned Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced accessibility and inclusivity of FBCL facilities and public spaces.</li> <li>• Enhanced safety and security of all individuals working in or accessing FBCL facilities.</li> </ul>

## Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The public interacts with the FBCL through its website ([www.federalbridge.ca](http://www.federalbridge.ca)), its subsidiary SIBC's website ([www.sibc.ca](http://www.sibc.ca)), and through an online toll customer portal. FBCL employees use a variety of technology hardware, software systems and cellular telephones in the conduct of their work.

The FBCL is dedicated to improving the accessibility and inclusivity of its technologies. As digitalization increases in the work environment, considerations of accessibility and usability must be top of mind.

Initiative	Timeline
The FBCL will:	<u>2026-27:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure website compliance with WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard and ongoing alignment with accessibility guidelines for new amendments to website.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redesign, build and deploy FBCL's website per WCAG 2.2 AA in alignment with request for proposal.</li><li>• Implementation of a corporate-wide Digital Strategy.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess all software solutions for compliance with the WCAG 2.2 AA and utilize the developed Digital Strategy to resolve partial and non-compliance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create action plan for known accessibility gaps, including an assessment on upgrade feasibility.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rollout technology architecture standard for accessibility.</li></ul>	<u>2027-28:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execute on accessibility gaps action plan from 2026-27.</li><li>• Conduct training and advance the Digital Strategy.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create and deploy an action plan for known accessibility gaps in current software solutions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop accessible technology architecture standard.</li></ul>

Initiative		Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance accessibility tools where possible for users with various applications used internally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable future procurement to have an accessibility assessment conducted as part of requests for proposal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing alignment with accessibility guidelines for new amendments to website.</li> </ul>
		<u>2028-29:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct training and advance accessible technology architecture standard.</li> <li>Continue to execute and assess accessibility gaps action plan from 2026-27.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital communications available on FBCL's website and intranet, as well as certain software solutions, do not fully meet the WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Function:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Technology with support from Communications.</li> </ul>	
<b>Planned Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced accessible and inclusive principles for employees and the public.</li> <li>Accessible and inclusive elements integrated in new technologies adopted.</li> </ul>	

## Other Communications Other Than ICT

The FBCL communicates with the public through its main website, direct email customer messages, social media platforms, and the publications of reports and other documents. FBCL employees communicate with one another regularly through multiple communication tools in writing, online and in person.

The FBCL is committed to communicate in an accessible and inclusive manner with all individuals working in or accessing FBCL facilities.

Initiative	Timeline
<p>The FBCL will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue updating signage with an accessibility lens to address gaps that were not within scope of the 2021 RHFAC assessment.</li></ul>	<p><u>2026-27:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue update of signage gaps.</li><li>• Complete a review of intranet updates needed to align to WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard.</li><li>• Investigate opportunities to improve accessibility of crisis communications to better serve diverse audiences.</li><li>• Implement revised communication plans for emergency and business continuity plans, as recommended in RHFAC assessment criteria.</li></ul> <p><u>2027-28:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement intranet alignment project with WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard.</li><li>• Update policy on accessibility accommodations for ATIP requests.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and update communication of emergency and Business Continuity Plans tailored for employees with disabilities.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and update intranet to align to WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update policy on accessibility accommodations for Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) requests.</li></ul>	

Initiative		Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update policies, guidelines, programs, processes into accessible documents during the three to five-year review period for each document.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed links to the Accessibility Plan and associated standards within the Occupational Health and Safety program manual and policy.</li> </ul>	<u>2028-29:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete intranet updates with WCAG 2.2 Web Accessibility Standard.</li> <li>Complete updates to Occupational Health and Safety program manual and policy.</li> <li>Implement approved enhancements to accessibility of crisis communications.</li> </ul>
		<u>2026-29:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct updates of policies, guidelines, programs, processes into accessible documents during the three to five-year review period for each document.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wayfinding at Blue Water Bridge.</li> <li>Emergency and Business Continuity Plans may not be easily accessible, which could impact employee safety and operational awareness.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Function:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operations, Information Management, and Communications, supported by Information Technology.</li> </ul>	
<b>Planned Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standardized wayfinding accessibility standards at an optimal level and broadened accessibility and inclusivity of FBCL facilities and public spaces.</li> <li>Enhanced access to accessible communications and wayfinding on Blue Water Bridge Plaza.</li> </ul>	



## Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

The FBCL procures various products and services that support its international bridge operations and employees. It has in place prescribed policy and guidelines to ensure best value for Canadians, pre-eminence of operational requirements, enhances access, competition and fairness to suppliers; and stands the test of public scrutiny.

The FBCL is dedicated to ensuring meaningful consideration to accessibility and inclusivity in all its procurement activities, to progressively remove existing barriers and prevent future ones.

Initiative		Timeline
The FBCL will:		<u>2026-27</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete procurement procedures and templates.</li><li>• Complete policies up for renewal.</li></ul> <u>2027-29:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete policies and ongoing maintenance of accessibility-focused procurement policies, processes and templates (including contracting documents).</li></ul>
Barriers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of availability of procurement documents in accessible formats limits participation in such procurement to some Canadians.</li></ul>	
Lead Function:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance, along with support from Operations and Engineering.</li></ul>	
Planned Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing consideration of accessibility and inclusiveness in FBCL procurement processes and practices.</li></ul>	

## **Design and Delivery of Programs and Services**

The greatest public exposure to the FBCL is through the automated lane tolling, as well as entering into CBSA-controlled facilities for the purposes of entry into Canada. After reviewing its policies, programs, practices and services, the FBCL has integrated related accessibility consideration within the information and communication technologies section of this plan, both for FBCL-controlled web services and those administered by the FBCL's tolling provider.

Physical accessibility has been reviewed at the Blue Water Bridge using the robust standards from the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification, in which the FBCL's Maintenance and Facilities personnel participated to ensure continuous improvement to this standard through ongoing maintenance programming.

## **Transportation**

After reviewing policies, programs, practices and services, this area does not apply to the corporation's activities and operations.

## **BUDGET AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

All initiatives outlined in this accessibility plan have been integrated within the approved FBCL operating and capital budgets as presented within its Summary of the Corporate Plan 2025-2026 to 2029-2030. Furthermore, these initiatives are being captured as an integral part of each department's planning and detailed action plans.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

The foundational principle in the ACA of “Nothing without us” recognizes that persons with disabilities are equal participants in all areas of life. People with disabilities are in the best position to tell us about the barriers they face. This principle informs the way the FBCL approaches its responsibility under the ACA and its regulations and guides the way we identify, remove and prevent barriers, develop accessibility plans, receive and respond to feedback, and measure our progress.

### **Consultation Process**

Throughout the evolution of this plan, the FBCL will consult with employees with disabilities and community groups knowledgeable about accessibility. Additionally, all departments of the FBCL had the opportunity to input into its development.

These consultations helped us to identify existing barriers and prioritize actions to remove and prevent barriers based on participants’ feedback.

The FBCL sought out comments from accessibility experts in the field related to our planned initiatives and the design elements we should be considering for our public-facing documents. We have already addressed some recommendations within the plan and others will be addressed by management throughout the implementation of this three-year plan. As the FBCL continues to learn and evolve throughout the implementation of this plan, as will our publications and our tools to mitigate accessibility issues.

### **Future Consultations**

The FBCL issued a self-identification survey to all employees early in 2023 that allowed individuals to identify as a person with disabilities, if applicable. This survey is now completed upon initiation of employment by new employees, and employees are invited to update their self-identification at any time. This information is confidential and is managed by the FBCL’s Human Resources division. Human Resources has invited those that have identified as an individual with a disability to participate in accessibility team consultations and contribute to the development of this plan. These consultations

will continue to help further the FBCL's identification of barriers that exist and potential mitigation strategies.

The FBCL will also consult with accessibility advocacy groups in Sarnia, Ontario, to discuss ways of improving accessibility for employees of the FBCL and the Canadian public it serves.

## **APPROVAL**

This plan has been reviewed and recommended by the FBCL's Senior Management Team and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

## GLOSSARY

**Accessibility** refers to the design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies and rules in a way that allows all people, including persons with disabilities, to access them.

**Accommodation** refers to the design and adaptation of the work environment to the needs of as many types of persons as possible and, according to the Supreme Court of Canada, refers to what is required in the circumstances of each case to avoid discrimination.

**Barrier** refers to anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation or obstacle.

**Designated groups** refer to four categories: 1) women; 2) Aboriginal peoples, 3) persons with disabilities; and 4) members of visible minorities.

**Disability**, as defined by the *Accessibility Canada Act*, is any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment, or a functional limitation, whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

**Self-Identification questionnaire** is a survey that all employees complete upon hire. The self-identification information collected is used to compile statistics on the composition of Employment Equity groups in the FBCL workforce.

**Workforce analysis** is a workforce profile showing the number of employees by designated groups and non-designated groups, as defined by the Government of Canada [\*Employment Equity Act\*](#).