

# Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028



**ACCESS** for **ALL**



## Message from the Executive Director

As we embark on this three-year strategic plan, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) remains committed to advocating for accessibility, inclusion, and equity for people with disabilities across Alberta. Over the next several years, VAD will focus on strengthening partnerships, securing sustainable funding, and amplifying the voices of those we serve—both virtually and in person.

We will continue working closely with government agencies, businesses, and advocacy groups to create lasting change. At the same time, we will invest in innovative programs, enhanced outreach, and stronger public engagement strategies to ensure that VAD remains a trusted leader in advancing accessibility and disability rights.

Since its founding in 1973, VAD has evolved from a small vision into a powerful advocate for Albertans with disabilities. Each year, we continue to grow in strength, visibility, and impact. With this strategic plan, we aim to solidify our presence as a household name across the province—representing and advocating for the diverse needs of Alberta's disability communities.

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## Our Impact in the Past Year

- **1,700+ phone calls answered**—providing vital information and support.
  - **500+ in-person appointments**—assisting with applications for AISH, CPPD, Disability Tax Credit, OAS, GIS, Alberta Adult Health Benefit, and other essential supports.
  - **340+ referrals**—connecting individuals with services such as AISH, Income Support, Boyle Street, Bissell Centre, and ECLC.
  - **35+ disability education and awareness presentations**—reaching over 650 attendees.
  - **80+ tax returns completed**—supporting low-income people with disabilities.
  - **Strategic partnerships**—collaborating with Gateway, SCI Alberta, Catholic Social Services, law enforcement, municipal and provincial governments, and many more.
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## Collaborative Advocacy and Working Groups

VAD actively participates in over 20 working groups and committees that focus on disability rights, accessibility, human rights, poverty reduction, transportation, and inclusive housing. Our engagement ensures that the voices of Albertans with disabilities are heard at every level of decision-making.

Moving forward, our priorities include:

- Expanding our reach beyond Edmonton to support communities province-wide.
- Strengthening our financial sustainability through fundraising and partnerships.
- Enhancing disability awareness and advocacy efforts at municipal, provincial, and federal levels.
- Developing innovative services that address emerging needs in the disability community.

Together, we can create a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable Alberta for all. Thank you for your continued support as we work towards this vision.

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### Our Mission

To advocate for the rights, needs, and opportunities of Albertans with disabilities, fostering empowerment and inclusion in all aspects of life.

### Our Vision

To create an inclusive Alberta where all individuals with disabilities are empowered to fully participate in society, embracing diversity and achieving their goals.

### Our Core Values

- **Inclusion:** Fostering a society where everyone has equal opportunities.
  - **Advocacy:** Championing the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities.
  - **Empowerment:** Supporting individuals with disabilities to achieve their fullest potential.
  - **Collaboration:** Building partnerships with stakeholders to advance shared goals.
  - **Integrity:** Acting with transparency, accountability, and respect.
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## **Understanding VAD's Strategic Opportunities**

VAD is committed to strengthening its advocacy, expanding its reach, and enhancing its long-term sustainability. By identifying key areas for growth and improvement, VAD can maximize its impact and continue to serve the disability community effectively.

### **1. Enhancing Accessibility & Expanding Services**

- Strengthen advocacy efforts to advance accessibility legislation and enforcement.
- Develop innovative programs and services tailored to the needs of diverse disability communities.
- Expand digital accessibility initiatives to ensure equitable access to information and services.

### **2. Strengthening Public Awareness & Community Engagement**

- Launch targeted media campaigns to amplify VAD's message and impact.
- Expand partnerships with community groups, businesses, and influencers to increase engagement.
- Organize province-wide disability awareness events and resource fairs.

### **3. Advancing Employment Opportunities**

- Build stronger relationships with employers to advocate for inclusive hiring practices.
- Develop training programs for job seekers with disabilities to enhance workforce readiness.
- Support businesses in implementing workplace accessibility improvements.

### **4. Ensuring Financial Sustainability**

- Diversify revenue streams through corporate sponsorships, donor campaigns, and social enterprise models.
- Strengthen grant writing and application processes to secure more funding.
- Launch an annual fundraising gala and membership growth strategy.

### **5. Enhancing Organizational Capacity & Governance**

- Implement a RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) framework for role clarity.

- Establish working committees for key strategic areas, ensuring active board engagement.
- Improve internal reporting and performance tracking through a digital performance dashboard.

## 6. Advocating for Policy & Funding Stability

- Develop a clear advocacy agenda focusing on key issues such as accessible housing, transportation, and employment rights.
- Build coalitions with other advocacy groups to strengthen lobbying efforts.
- Increase engagement with policymakers to secure long-term, sustainable funding commitments.

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## VAD's Strategic Goals

### Goal 1: Strengthen Financial Sustainability

#### Objectives:

- Secure diverse grants and increase corporate sponsorships.
- Implement an annual fundraising strategy, including an annual gala.
- Employ a Fund Development Coordinator to generate new and sustainable sources of revenue.
- Maximize efficiency in financial resource allocation.

### Goal 2: Expand Awareness, Outreach, and Advocacy

#### Objectives:

- Conduct multi-cultural and Indigenous projects to expand reach.
- Organize resource fairs and disability awareness presentations.
- Engage government ministries and elected officials to advocate for policy improvements.
- Establish an annual town hall/forum for real-time community engagement.
- Strengthen relationships with media outlets to enhance advocacy.

### Goal 3: Improve Services and Accessibility

#### Objectives:

- Train staff in accessibility assessment models (e.g., Rick Hansen model).
- Promote accessibility assessments to businesses and organizations.
- Develop new programs to address service gaps in the disability community.
- Increase visibility through social media, outdoor signage, and partnerships with community hubs.

### Goal 4: Strengthen Organizational Capacity and Governance

#### Objectives:

- Improve internal reporting and tracking of outcomes for accountability.
- Streamline administrative processes to reduce inefficiencies.
- Increase board engagement and ensure regular managerial updates.
- Develop a membership growth strategy to expand support and sustainability.

## 5. Implementation and Evaluation

### Implementation Plan

- **Assign Responsibility to Key Staff and Board Members**
  - Define specific roles and responsibilities for staff, board members, and volunteers.
  - Establish working committees to oversee key initiatives (e.g., advocacy, fundraising, employment programs).
  - Ensure the Executive Director (ED) serves as the primary point of contact for execution and reporting.
- **Secure Necessary Resources (Funding, Staff, Partnerships)**
  - Identify and apply for relevant grants, sponsorships, and funding opportunities.
  - Strengthen partnerships with corporate sponsors, government agencies, and community organizations to enhance resource-sharing.
  - Evaluate staffing needs and consider hiring or reallocating personnel to focus on priority areas.

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- **Communicate Strategic Goals to Stakeholders and Partners**
  - Develop a comprehensive communication plan to engage members, funders, and community partners.
  - Ensure all messaging aligns with VAD's vision, mission, and long-term objectives.
  - Use multiple communication channels (newsletters, social media, website updates, and community meetings) to keep stakeholders informed and involved.
- **Develop a Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Initiative**
  - Set clear deadlines for short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals.
  - Create project roadmaps that outline action steps and accountability measures.
  - Use regular progress check-ins to ensure initiatives stay on track.

## Evaluation and Monitoring

To measure success and maintain accountability, VAD will implement a structured evaluation process:

- **Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Each Strategic Goal**
  - Define measurable outcomes for accessibility, employment programs, public awareness efforts, financial sustainability, and governance improvements.
  - Track indicators such as membership growth, event participation, advocacy impact, and funding secured.
- **Conduct Quarterly Reviews to Assess Progress and Challenges**
  - Hold formal performance reviews every three months to analyze progress.
  - Identify challenges and determine corrective actions where needed.
  - Adjust priorities based on data and stakeholder feedback.
- **Adjust Strategies as Needed Based on Performance Data**
  - Be flexible in modifying approaches to address emerging needs and opportunities.
  - Use feedback from staff, board members, and community partners to refine initiatives.
  - Stay responsive to changes in government policies, funding landscapes, and public attitudes toward disability advocacy.

- **Publish an Annual Impact Report to Showcase Achievements and Improvements**

- Create an annual report detailing progress, challenges, and success stories.
- Share data-driven insights to demonstrate VAD's effectiveness and transparency.
- Use the report as a tool to engage funders, policymakers, and the broader community.

## **Conclusion**

This strategic plan serves as a roadmap to guide VAD's growth and effectiveness over the next three years. Through financial sustainability, expanded advocacy, improved services, and stronger governance, we will continue to be a leading voice for Albertans with disabilities.