



A MORE ACCESSIBLE NAME: Access Oceanside Association (AOA)

The purpose of the Access Oceanside Association (AOA) is to bring awareness, inform and educate the community, including service agencies, businesses, organizations and the public at large about individuals with disabilities. These disabilities could be physical, visual, auditory or related to aging. The goal of the AOA is to be the information source and resource for individuals dealing with disabilities as well as for businesses, service organizations, tourists and citizens of the community.

Established in 2008 as the Measuring Up Committee, the association has worked to address the physical, social and psychological barriers to full participation in community life and to fostering a sense of inclusion which enables people of all ages and abilities to enjoy local amenities, participate in local employment and live a healthy, productive lifestyle.

In early 2013, the Measuring Up Committee changed the organization name to the Oceanside Accessibility Committee (OAC) to reflect its mandate and activities serving the larger Oceanside community, representing the Regional District Electoral Areas, the Town of Qualicum Beach and the City of Parksville. In November 2013, the organization applied for and was accepted as society status under its new name, Access Oceanside Association (AOA).

"There's a renewed momentum and it is not just about getting around this region, but includes things like tourism and regional mobility. Accessible tourism is already a huge industry that will only increase as the population ages. Our mandate is *inclusion for all* and all meaning everyone," said chair, Suzan Jennings.

Access Oceanside Association meets monthly to ensure ongoing promotion of accessibility and inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

Executive board members are Suzan Jennings, chair; Greg Greenshields, vice-chair; Gerry Price, past chair; Jollean Chantrel, treasurer, and Gail Hadfield, secretary.

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