sparc bc

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Dear Mayor and Council:

RE: Access Awareness Day – June 3, 2017 – Accessible Communities are Inclusive Communities

June 3, 2017 marks SPARC BC's 20th annual Access Awareness Day! Access Awareness Day gives each of us an opportunity to look at our community and to think about how to make it more accessible and inclusive for everyone. The theme for this year's Access Awareness Day is "Accessible Communities are Inclusive Communities". As part of this year's focus, our goal is to draw attention to the different ways that communities can come together to promote greater accessibility and inclusion. The series of posters enclosed as part of this letter show the many different ways that accessibility is part of community life.

There are a number of different ways that your community can take part in Access Awareness Day. This includes passing a proclamation, hosting an accessibility event, or sharing information about some of your recent efforts to help make your community as accessible and inclusive as possible. As part of this package of materials we have also included a survey to learn more about local accessibility priorities and about the different types of accessibility-related initiatives that you have implemented in your community.

In 2016, forty-three different local governments passed a proclamation or wrote a letter of support recognizing the importance of accessibility and the role that it plays in building inclusive communities. Accessibility is not just about physical access and technical devices; it is also about ensuring that everyone has the right to share their talents, experience and abilities, and to engage in all aspects of community life. We hope that you will consider joining us in celebrating Access Awareness Day this year.

To help to support you in your efforts, we have included a number of different posters that can be used to build increased public awareness and support around the importance of working together to ensure that our communities are as accessible and inclusive as possible. As well, we have a limited amount of funding (small grants of $500 per community) to help promote and support local accessibility events. To request additional posters or to suggest possible ways to partner around Access Awareness Day please do not hesitate to reach out to us by calling 604.718.7736 or by sending an email to mycommunity@sparc.bc.ca.

We know that true accessibility and inclusion is achieved by people and communities working together. By looking at ways to achieve greater accessibility, we are also building stronger, healthier and more inclusive communities. As part of this year's Access Awareness Day activities, our goal is to demonstrate the many different ways that communities across British Columbia have been successful in building accessibility and in creating communities where everyone is included! Please take a moment to reach out and to share your stories or ideas! We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Copas

Lorraine Copas
Executive Director, SPARC BC

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