



RK ACCESS

PATHS TO GREATER CONNECTIVITY

For all general inquiries, please contact:

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riddell kurczaba
celebrating design since 1988



30 years



“At RK Access, our mandate is to design spaces that are safe and inviting for all people, especially those for whom design is often a human-made barrier when in fact it should be a human-made connector.”

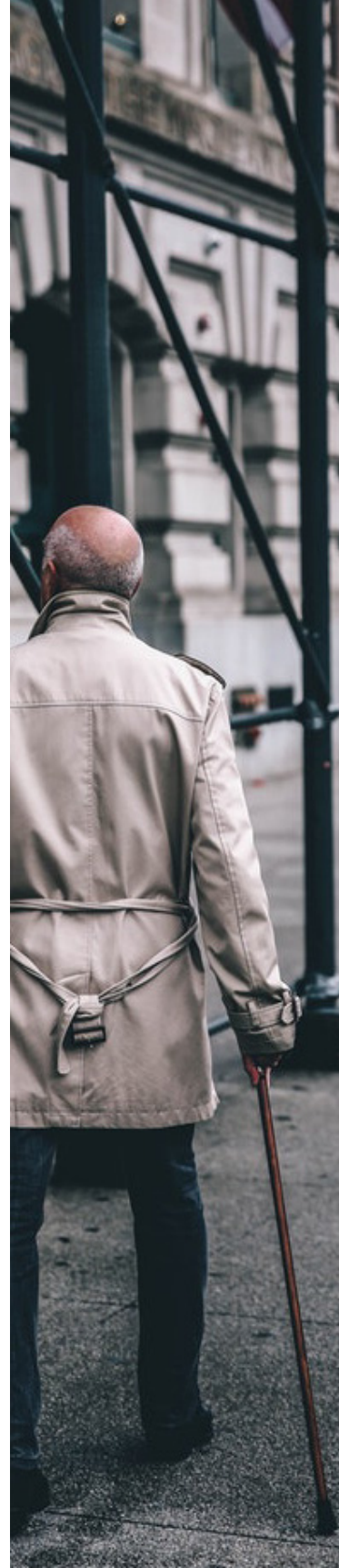
DESIGN SOLUTIONS THAT OPEN UP THE WORLD TO BARRIER-FREE ACCESSIBILITY.

RK Access is a progressive new service offering of Riddell Kurczaba focused on accessibility through architecture and design.

In the general conversation about disability, there is a trend of thinking of design for disability as the right thing to do, not as a business driver. At RK Access, we want to change the discourse to make clear that designing for disability can have significant tangible benefits to the bottom line of a business. Whether it is engaging an underutilized talent pool, or taking a slice of an estimated 6.9 trillion dollars of disposable income represented by friends and family of people with disabilities, there is an opportunity for companies to contribute to the greater good and add to their bottom line at the same time.

Our team at RK Access is made up of industry veterans with a combined 45+ years of experience. The team is also supported by the entire Riddell Kurczaba staff made up of architects, interior designers, 3D visualization specialists, and technologists. RK Access offers a full range of services including building assessments, design recommendations, project implementation, research and advocacy, and other consulting services to help organizations grow their businesses through thoughtful universal design principles.

From greater community engagement and brand recognition to fresh talent pools, Riddell Kurczaba sees accessibility as an integral part of the future of business. This untapped future of accessibility in the built environment is the driving force behind the formation of RK Access and the reason why John Riddell and Ron Kurczaba have invested in this pursuit. At the end of the day, an investment in accessibility is not just something that is good for business, but also an investment in a better tomorrow and a commitment towards a more diverse and inclusive society.



THE TEAM

Our RK Access team is made up of a diverse group of individuals that bring a breadth of experience to the table. They are also supported by the entire Riddell Kurczaba team of architects, interior designers and project managers.



ERIN SHILLIDAY, Architect, AAA, RHFAC Professional

Erin Shilliday brings more than 25 years of architectural experience and is the lead for the RK Access team. He oversees all interactions with all stakeholders during crucial, early stages of the design process and has continuous involvement during design and construction phases. Erin has positioned RK Access to be the first architectural consulting firm in Calgary to focus exclusively on barrier-free design.



NABEEL RAMJI

Nabeel Ramji is an advocate for accessibility for all. In 2014, he developed a social movement initiative and framework called “Accessibility for All Albertans.” He also volunteers as an advisor for the City of Calgary’s Planning and Development group, as well as Calgary Neighbourhoods and Employment and Social Development Canada, and was appointed by the Alberta government in June 2017 to serve on the Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. Nabeel’s lived experience of using a power wheelchair his entire life due to cerebral palsy, combined with his vision to make accessibility in design the norm instead of the exception, offers clients and their projects the benefit of a realistic and evidence-based perspective.



KIMBERLY KARN, CET

Kimberly Karn brings over 15 years of experience working with Provincial, National & International Building Codes and regulatory standards. Kim has developed and presented numerous continuing education seminars related to Building Code, fire protection and life safety.

OUR SERVICES ARE THE CORE OF WHO WE ARE

RK Access offers a wide range of consulting services for businesses with the guiding principle of adding value to companies through accessible design practices.

AUDITS

Review and analyze drawings of proposed developments or existing sites and buildings for accessibility.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Develop construction drawings, coordinate specialized sub-consultants and administrative construction.

DESIGN ENHANCEMENT

Propose and develop solutions that address accessibility, construction methods and budgetary constraints.

RESEARCH & ADVOCACY

Serve as a vast resource for international design standards for accessible architecture, and for building codes and life safety. Assist with grassroots advocacy in the fields of education, engineering, research and innovation, and the arts.





ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

- Curb cuts near accessible parking stalls
- Power door openers at main entries
- Lever handles on all doors
- Power door openers and locks for barrier-free washrooms
- Adjustable work surfaces for different height requirements
- Roll-under counters in kitchen
- Non-slip, contrasting colour strips on stairways
- Audible signals in elevators
- Safety Plan for evacuating persons with a disability in an emergency





The image shows a professional meeting in a modern office. A man in a wheelchair is seated on the left, pointing at a whiteboard. The whiteboard features several charts and graphs. One chart is titled 'Black gold' and shows a line graph with a significant upward trend, labeled '+39.2%'. Another chart is labeled 'Kenya' and shows a line graph with a downward trend, labeled '-20%'. A third chart is labeled 'Benin' and shows a line graph with an upward trend, labeled '+20%'. There are also sticky notes on the whiteboard, including one with '15%' and another with '39.5%'. In the background, another man is seated at a desk with a laptop, looking towards the whiteboard. The desk also has a coffee cup and some office supplies. The overall scene is set against a white brick wall.

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

OUR EXPERIENCE

The goal of RK Access is to review and identify areas that are inaccessible, that do not meet barrier-free legislation or areas which could achieve a higher level of accessibility.

BUILDING ASSESSMENTS

LORD BEAVERBROOK HIGH SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Calgary Board of Education

RK Access was retained by the CBE to perform an accessibility assessment of Lord Beaverbrook High School. The school is approximately 350,000 sq. ft. on two levels with a partial basement. The site is approximately 8.77 acres and is comprised of parking, playfields and outdoor service areas.

The school was built in 1968 before barrier-free legislation was in effect. RK Access assessed the entire facility and grounds. A modernization and renovation program for the facility was in effect at the time; the assessment included a review of the facility as well as a review of the architectural design drawings for the renovation.

RK Access generated a report which identified the areas of the school that did not meet barrier-free requirements; our report provided 10 recommendations which, if implemented, would make the school more accessible to a student, teacher or parent with a disability.

The recommendations were supported by a Class D cost estimate in order that they could be prioritized for consideration by the CBE.

FOREST LAWN HIGH SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Calgary Board of Education

RK Access performed a similar accessibility assessment of Forest Lawn High School which was built in 1963 and is approximately 160,000 sq. ft. on two levels; the site is 16.17 acres.

RK Access assessed the entire facility and grounds. A modernization and renovation program for the facility was in effect at the time; the assessment included a review of the facility as well as a review of the architectural design drawings for the renovation.

RK Access generated a report which identified the areas of the school that did not meet barrier-free requirements; our report provided 10 recommendations which, if implemented, would make the school more accessible to a student, teacher or parent with a disability.

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SCHEMATIC DESIGN REVIEWS

17TH AVENUE EXTENSION PUBLIC REALM ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

Calgary Municipal Land Corporation

RK Access was retained by CMLC to review the design drawings of the 17th Avenue Extension project for accessibility by persons with disabilities.

The project is primarily located in the vehicular and pedestrian realm. The assessment addressed street crossings, pick-up and drop-off zones, materials, street furniture, as well as a review of the proposed signage and heritage information motifs. RK Access also introduced several assistive devices that are primarily used for outdoor urban environments.

Our role was to review Schematic Design drawings provided by IBI Architects and O2 Landscape Architects and provide a report. We attended two meetings with the design team to review the design intent for the project and to review our report and comments.

RK Access will stay involved with the project providing reviews and comments for the 60% and 90% construction documents.

OFFICE RENOVATIONS

OFFICE ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT

BGC Engineering

A local oil and gas company recently moved into a new tenant space for which Riddell Kurczaba provided the interior design services. Shortly before the move-in date, an employee of BGC was involved in a car accident and was left paralyzed from the waist down and is now relegated to a wheelchair.

RK Access was retained by BGC to assess the workplace and provide accessibility from the parkade to the reception lobby of BGC; further, we supplied revised designs for the employee's office, one of the staff washrooms, the two kitchen areas and access to the roof top patio.

The accessibility strategy involved power door openers, a platform lift, modification to the washroom layout and kitchen millwork design.

BUILDING DESIGN

A³ ACCESSIBLE RESIDENTIAL

Securfund

The A³ Accessible Residential project is the first market-rate accessible housing project in Calgary. The challenge was to design an apartment building that had complete accessibility throughout but did not look institutional.

The design is a simple, light and airy residential look. We have proposed a durable, wood cladding for the floors above the Main Floor as a way to give the building a gossamer aesthetic. The main pick-up/drop-off area is tucked along the side of the building and situated under the second floor extension and as such is subtly integrated into the landscape. Two Calgary Access vans can be accommodated in the pick-up/drop-off area at one time.

Three Live/Work accessible units and an office or concierge make up the rest of the main floor. The Live/Work units address the street and offer business solution for those residents who operate a business from their homes.

The typical apartment floor has nine units organized around an over-sized elevator and 2m wide hallways. Ample room is provided in the common areas for multiple wheelchairs to maneuver at the same time. Areas of refuge are provided on each floor for use by persons with mobility challenges during an emergency evacuation.

A³ Accessible Residential boasts the latest technology to assist residents with daily tasks. Assistive devices will enable persons with sight, hearing and mobility challenges to live an independent life while at A³.

The building also has been designed with a penthouse level which can be purposed as short and long term stay, like a hotel. Generous outdoor balconies (with no-threshold barriers for ease of access) are associated with the penthouse rooms to enhance the marketability.

A³ Accessible Residential has a total of 35 accessible apartments, 23 underground heated parking stalls and 3 at-grade accessible parking stalls.



A³ Accessible Residential



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