

Accelerating Accessibility Coalition Marks Three Years of Impact

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On Friday, January 23, 2026, members of ULI Toronto's Accelerating Accessibility Coalition (AAC) celebrated three years of progress advancing accessibility in Canada's housing development sector. The award-winning Coalition brings together developers, planners, architects, and accessibility researchers and advocates united by a goal: removing barriers and creating more inclusive homes and communities.

In his opening remarks, Luke Anderson, outgoing AAC Co-Chair and Executive Director of StopGap Foundation, acknowledged the positive work of coalition members. "You're modelling what it means to lean in, learn, and be dedicated to this intent to create a more connected world by removing barriers for all of us," he said.

A powerful story from Anthony Lue, Principal Consultant at Anthony Lue Consulting, followed as he shared his journey navigating life as a wheelchair user following a workplace accident. Speaking candidly about the challenges of finding suitable housing, Lue highlighted how inaccessible design directly impacts dignity, independence, and quality of life.

Addressing the room, he called on industry professionals to step forward as allies and advocates: "You have the voice to make the change and make the world a better place."

A Growing Coalition with National Reach

That voice is growing. Since its inception, AAC has seen strong momentum. Coalition membership increased by 40% this past year, reaching 102 members across six provinces, and it earned and contributed to two awards, including winning *Best Program Advancing Housing Opportunities* at the 2025 ULI Americas District Council Showcase of Excellence Awards.

The Coalition also launched and supported awareness initiatives in 2025 including:

- [A Tale of Two Homes](#) (with The Daniels Corporation and funded by CMHC)
- CMHC's [Ask a Housing Expert](#) segment on universal design
- *A StopGap Measure*, which premiered at Hot Docs 2025 and included the AAC's Committee members' kick-off event
- Tours and events with partners including UHN KITE Research, Reena, and Northcrest Developments with KIRKOR Architects and Planners and Rick Hansen Foundation

AAC also continued breaking new ground in offering practical resources for the sector. The Daniels Corporation published its [Accessibility Designed Program \(ADP\) Technical Standards Guide](#), while Penguin Living shared [design and costing research](#) for accessible apartments, and KIRKOR shared suite layout designs along the spectrum of accessibility.

Welcoming New Leadership

Outgoing Co-Chairs Luke Anderson and Heidi Green (RioCan REIT) passed the torch – fittingly, a handrail – to incoming Co-Chairs Arleigh Hack (Northcrest Developments) and Nevin Dunn (Shiplake Properties/Collecdev Markee).

In addition to new co-chairs, new committee leaders were announced or reconfirmed across strategy, outreach and engagement, and marketing and communications, strengthening AAC's capacity.

The AAC is excited about an upcoming National Housing Council Review Panel on the lack of accessible housing. The group acknowledged developers and architects who are continuing their commitment to accessible homes (The Daniels Corporation, BDP Quadrangle/Human Space and KIRKOR Architects and Planners) and exploring more accessible design through pilots and building certifications (RioCan REIT/Diamond Schmitt, Collecdev Markee, crosswalk communities, and Killam Apartment REIT).

Members were also encouraged to hear that the Rick Hansen Foundation has seen 30% year-over-year growth in its residential building certifications and that since launching in 2022, CMHC's MLI Select program has insured 370 loans with accessibility commitments, representing approximately 34,000 units.

Growing Support and Amplifying Impact

The celebration included the announcement of BILD as a founding 2026 sponsor, alongside continued support from ULI Toronto. Thanks to previous financial supporters CMHC, The Daniels Corporation, Cadillac Fairview, and Accessibility Standards Canada. Their commitment has enabled the AAC to increase and continue advancing accessibility across Canada.

To close the gathering, conversation turned to how AAC can deepen its impact as it enters its fourth year. A lively discussion underscored the Coalition's shared commitment to collaboration and action – strengthening partnerships, developing the business case for accessible housing, and continuing to push for meaningful standards and incentives to deliver housing that meets the needs of people of all ages and abilities.