

Date: March 6, 2007
 To: Township of East Ferris Council
 From: Municipal Accessibility Plan Committee
 Re: Annual Update of the Municipal Accessibility Plan

Municipal Accessibility Plan 2004

10. MONITORING PROGRESS & ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY PLANS

This working group will act as both the technical advisor to Council and as a liaison to the special needs community. They will meet annually to review the accessibility plan as well as monitor project status to ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan and of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 are being accomplished.

The Municipal Accessibility Plan Committee met on February 20, 2007 to update the Municipal Accessibility Plan as mandated. The committee is comprised of these members;

Robert Point- Co- Chair, Rick Champagne- Co-Chair, Paul Gervais- Secretary and Angela Hurrell- Member.

The meeting dealt with updating the barriers that were identified in the original plan as well as newly identified barriers.

Updated List of Identified Barriers

Barrier & Type	Strategy for removal/prevention	Timeline Short 0 - 1 yr. Med. 1 - 3 yrs. Long 3 - 5 yrs.
Shortage of senior's housing in the municipality - Policy / Practice	Complete a housing review to determine need and investigate funding opportunities available for the provision of senior's housing.	Medium term <i>(On going)</i>
Lack of awareness of groups and agencies providing services for seniors and disabled persons - Communication	Prepare a list of agencies, contacts and services they provide for our residents and include this information on the municipal web site.	Medium term <i>(On going)</i>
Lack of disabled parking for municipal facilities - Mobility	Provide a parking by-law designating sufficient parking spaces for all municipal facilities and provide for enforcement to ensure compliance.	Short term <i>(On going)</i>
Improper doors & no barrier-free washrooms at the East Ferris Community Centre - Mobility, Facility/Design	Install automatic doors and make washrooms accessible for persons with disabilities.	Long term <i>(On going)</i>

Inadequate doors & no barrier-free washrooms at the Public Works Garage - Mobility, Facility/Design	Make one washroom accessible for persons with disabilities and gender free and ensure one access to building is made accessible for wheelchair access.	Long term (On going)
Lack of proper signage for all municipal buildings	Install international signage system for all municipal facilities.	Short term (On going)
Lack of proper access and washroom facilities at public parks and beaches - Facility/Design	Make all municipal parks and beaches accessible for persons with disabilities.	Long term (on going)
Parking at Corbeil Park Hall adjacent to the Main entrance creates a hazard for everyone and vehicles are blocked in.	Install signage to make the area adjacent to the main entrance a <i>Loading Zone</i> (only), and create barrier-free parking spaces at the guard rail closest to the building.	Short (On going)
It is difficult for some residents to hear at meetings conducted in the Corbeil Park Hall.	Install a Public Address (P.A.) system when renovating of constructing new Council Chambers.	Medium
Ramps at local businesses become difficult or impossible to use.	Encourage local businesses to maintain access/ramps and approaches in good order.	Long
Local business should be made aware of forthcoming legislation.	Make local businesses aware of forthcoming legislation regarding accessibility.	Long (On going)
Approach to the ramp at the Government Dock Beach has deteriorated.	Advised Parks & Recreation staff to repair and maintain problem area.	Short (On going)
Washrooms at Government Dock Beach are difficult to use.	Make washroom accessible.	Medium
Washrooms at Arena are difficult to use.	Make washrooms accessible.	Short (On going)

Work completed the past year

The washrooms on the main floor at the Community Centre have been renovated to be barrier-free accessible. The washrooms on the Upper floor have not been renovated yet.

A wheelchair was donated to the Community Centre for use by visitors.

The Committee wanted to make Council aware of the following concerns and make the following recommendations;

Signage at the Municipal Office is still required to be installed.

Advertise or make the public aware that the arena is barrier-free accessible.

The washrooms at the Government Dock Beach on Big Moose Road need to be completed and or corrected.

Accessible Parking areas should be designated at the following;
Corbeil Park Hall, Municipal office and Astorville Firehall

The difficulty of audibility at meetings for the hearing impaired is still an issue

The ramp at the Government Dock beach was improperly repaired and still too dangerous for those in wheelchairs.

Since the washrooms on the main floor at the arena have been corrected, the washrooms at the upper floor should be corrected.

The committee would like to see on the Township of East Ferris website;

A list of available grants to businesses and persons to make their places of business/residence barrier-free accessible be posted on the municipal web site.

A list of local businesses that are barrier-free accessible

Advertise that the arena is accessible

The Committee wanted to make East Ferris Recreation Committee aware of the following concerns make the following recommendations;

The washrooms on the Main floor have been made accessible. The washrooms on the Upper floor should be addresses now.

A wheelchair has been donated for the use by visitors. Staff at the arena should be made aware of it.

Signs indicating barrier-free facilities should be installed where appropriate.

Advertise or make people aware that the Community Centre is Barrier-free accessible.

Repairs to the ramp at the Government Dock Beach are still required

The washroom facilities at the Government Dock Beach require repairs.

There is no barrier-free parking signage at the Government Dock Beach?

The Committee will send a letter to the East Ferris Winter Carnival Committee regarding transportation for those with special needs to and from the East Ferris Winter Carnival. The committee will also send a letter to the East Ferris Figure Skating Club advising them that the curtain they installed during opening ceremonies during the East Ferris Winter Carnival blocked the only viewing area for those in wheelchairs.

Angela Hurrell will inspect the renovated washroom at the arena to make any suggestions prior to the renovations of the Upper floor washrooms.

Rick Champagne will contact Wayne Graham at Nipissing Manor to discuss the Para-bus there.

The Committee will meet again in the near future.

The committee was also made aware of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Information about the act is available on the Ministry of Community and Social Services website <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca>.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (from Ministry of Community and Social Services website)

What is the goal of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005?

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, is to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025, by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. The Act would also provide for the involvement of people with disabilities, representatives of sectors of the economy and the Government of Ontario in the development of accessibility standards (Section 1).

How will this legislation make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities?

People with disabilities should be able to move around from place to place, go shopping, attend school, visit their doctor or get a job, without facing barriers that people without disabilities would not face. That's what we mean by an accessible society, and that's our goal.

Why will the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, take until 2025 to implement?

2025 is an end point, not a starting point. Working together – individuals, communities and the public and private sectors – we will be able to remove and prevent barriers beginning right away. We will achieve real results in stages, with milestones every five years or less.

There are many changes that organizations can make easily to help remove barriers for people with disabilities – simple things such as installing ramps or providing publications in large print. But making Ontario accessible requires fundamental change. Despite what we might all desire, that can't happen overnight.

Other jurisdictions have reached the same conclusion. For example, Australia has five-year timeframes over a 30-year period for removing transportation barriers. And the United States has transportation timeframes ranging up to 30 years.

What are some of the changes that we can expect to see as a result of the new legislation?

Standards will be set in both the public and private sectors to address the full range of disabilities – including physical, sensory, mental health, developmental and learning. New standards could include:

- Employment policies and processes
- Software applications and websites

Who will develop the standards?

Each standard will be developed by a committee that includes people with disabilities or their representatives, representatives of industries or sectors and government ministries.