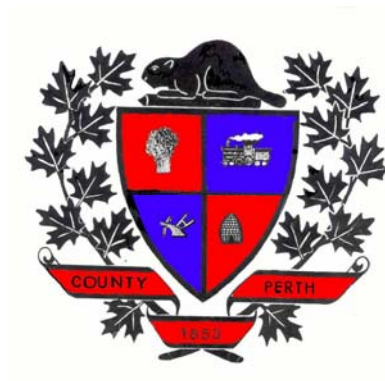


COUNTY OF PERTH



Accessibility Plan

2003-2004

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

Table of Contents

- Section 1: Municipal Jurisdiction(s) Participating in Plan
 - Section 2: Consultation Activities
 - Section 3: Summary of Information Collected through Consultation
 - Section 4: Plan Development Working Group
 - Section 5: Inventory of Initiatives to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in the Organizations
 - Section 6: Operational Review
 - Section 7: Decision Making Review
 - Section 8: Targets and Actions
- Appendices

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

SECTION 1: MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION(S) PLAN

Municipality:

The County of Perth and its member municipalities:

Town of North Perth, Municipality of West Perth, Township of Perth East and Township of Perth South

Address:

One Huron St., Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

Key Contact:

P. Taylor, Clerk Administrator, Municipality of West Perth, Box 609,
Mitchell, ON, N0K 1N0 Phone: 519-348-8429

ptaylor@westperth.com

Population: 37,700

Municipal Highlights

This plan will cover all of the County of Perth. In January of 1998 fourteen municipalities within the County of Perth were amalgamated to form four lower tier municipalities. Within all of these municipalities are recreation, fire and emergency services and public works departments. Social services are provided by the City of Stratford through agreement with the County of Perth and the Town of St Marys. The County of Perth provides land ambulance through agreement with the City of Stratford and the Town of St. Marys.

The Committee's research would indicate that there is little or no consistency by the five municipalities in dealing with disabilities within the County. This plan will find design challenges within the municipal environment that make it difficult to provide for those with disabilities within the County of Perth. For the purpose of this report the choice of terminology is the same as the Ontario Disability Act.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

SECTION 2: OTHER ORGANIZATIONS & AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THIS PLAN

2.1 Organization-Agency

The County of Perth

2.2 Address

One Huron St., Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

2.3 Description

A description of the municipal structure has been included in Section 1.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

SECTION 3: CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

3.1 Target Group

The target group includes any persons with a disability within the County of Perth.

3.2 Consultation Activities

In an attempt to find and determine design challenges within the County, the committee attempted to make contact with at least one group associated with disabilities in each of the lower tier municipalities.

Ads were placed in local papers in May of 2003 asking for public input on barriers to accessibilities. No response was received.

Letters were written to various groups within the County with only two replies being received by the committee.

The Accessibility Advisory committee will continue to attempt to reach many of the disabled groups that could provide input on the barriers that prevent them from achieving accessibility within their communities.

The County and its member municipalities will jointly consult with the following agencies to review any barriers that would prevent disabled persons from accessing their needs:

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

Agency	Mandatory/ Preferred	Type of Consultation						Status
		Informal Discussions	Structured Meetings	Focus Groups	Key Informant Interviews	Community Meetings	Other	
Health	Mandatory	Yes						P
Social Services	Mandatory	Yes						P
OPP	Mandatory	Yes						P

Summary of Information Collected through Consultation

All consultation replies will be included in Appendix 2 to this plan. The committee will then review the replies and insert the concerns into future accessibility plans.

It is recognized that individual municipalities will have other agencies or organizations in their municipalities that they may need to consult as noted in Appendix 1 which may be amended from time to time.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

SECTION 4: PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

This information is an important component of the plan and will allow officials from municipalities to contact their cohorts to discuss different approaches in plans and share best practices and experiences.

The committee has yet to name its plan development-working group. This group will provide a ready method for municipalities to share information, techniques and background to their approaches on the many facets of accessibility. This group will have the responsibility to inspect all municipally owned facilities. It will also be the responsibility of this group to prepare Accessibility Guidelines to function as an independent document that will ultimately become Appendix 3 of this plan. The County will appoint the working group to concur with the current Council.

The following chart may be used to present the information:

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

TABLE 1: ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP

<u>Working Group Member</u>	<u>Municipality/ Agency</u>	<u>Department Presented</u>	<u>Contact Telephone & e-mail</u>
Darrell Reis	Perth East	Fire Chief/ Inspection Officer	Phone: 595-2800, Ext. 226 Fax: 595-2801 Email: dries@pertheast.on.ca
Bob McLean	West Perth	Chief Building Official	Phone: 348-8429 Fax: 348-8935 Email: bmclean@westperth.com
Gary Stewart	Perth South	Public Works	Phone: 271-7565 Fax: 271-0647
Steve Hardie	North Perth	Arena/Recreation Managers	Phone: 291-4875 Fax: 291-3135 Email: shardie@town.northperth.o n.ca
Ethel Sage Judy Nafziger		2 members of Accessibility Committee	Ethel Sage: Phone: 291- 2908 Email: boccia_sage@hotmail.com Judy Nafziger: Phone: 595-8161 Email: nafibg@perth.net
Carol Francis		1 Support Person	Phone: 348-8372 Email: spud@quadro.net
Bentley Ehgoetz	Public Works Director	1 County Staff or associate	Phone: 271-0531, Ext. 225 Fax: 271-6265 Email: behgoetz@countyofperth.o n.ca

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

SECTION 5: HISTORY OF INITIATIVES TO IDENTIFY, REMOVE AND PREVENT BARRIERS IN THE ORGANIZATION(S)

5.1 Initiatives

Perth County Council supported the Provincial initiative to move toward a province in which no new barriers are created and existing ones are removed. They proposed to develop a County-wide Accessibility Advisory Committee with the support of the lower tier municipalities following the passing of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. An ad was placed in various papers asking for volunteers to sit on a Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee. Five applications were received with one additional member coming forward at a later date and a representative from County Council. The West Perth municipality supplies secretarial duties and support services to the committee at this time; however, these duties may rotate among the other municipalities. This committee began meeting in November of 2002 and have determined that they will meet on a bi-monthly (six times a year) basis. The Act states that each year, the council of every municipality shall prepare an accessibility plan and seek advice from the accessibility advisory committee that it establishes. In preparation for the development of a Plan, the committee recommended that two representatives from the municipality attend a two-day weekend workshop organized by (Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario) AMCTO to assist in the development of this plan. As part of the workshop, all representatives received an audit tool called the Accessibility Quotient Audit. The Accessibility Quotient was used to assist in the municipality's preparation for the AMCTO Accessibility Planning Workshop. Completion of this audit began the development of this Accessibility Plan. Each municipality solicited responses from individual departments to assist in completing the Quotient Audit. Following the collection of the information, the (Chief Administrative Officer) CAO's and clerks of the participating municipalities met to tabulate this information. The audit identified the municipality's present accessible facilities, policies, programs and services and identified some barriers to accessibility. This barrier identification became the starting point for activities to be completed in 2003/04 for the 2003/04 Accessibility Plan.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

The following chart lists the Barriers identified in the Accessibility Quotient Audit:

Using the 64 questions we have grouped barrier types according to commonalities.

<u>Barrier and Type</u>	<u>Strategy for removal/prevention</u>	<u>Status</u>
<p>GENERAL</p> <p>Informational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main contact person/department/ service identified to handle inquiries related to accessibility • Quick and easy access to information for the public <p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information on website, telephone, etc. <p>Policy/Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include information on accessibility when marketing for tourism and conventions 	<p>Municipalities to delegate someone from staff to be responsible for this.</p> <p>Investigate issues</p> <p>Investigate issues</p>	
<p>HUMAN RESOURCES</p> <p>Policy/Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, or limited, policies on accommodating employees and ensuring facilities are accessible, training with respect to interaction with people with disabilities and understanding their issues <p>Informational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment opportunities 	<p>All policies must be reviewed or implemented to enable staff to review and develop a management report which will identify all barriers with respect to providing for and working with disabilities.</p> <p>Staff to report to AAC (Accessibility Advisory</p>	

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

<p>posted in multiple formats of communication</p>	<p>Committee) on various formats of communication</p>	
<p>CLERKS, COUNCIL & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>Informational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meetings are somewhat accessible and are not conducted in varied formats of communication. <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This also includes minutes, reports, documents. Large print can be provided, if requested. <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most municipalities are able to provide for the needs of all electors with disabilities with exception of the hearing and vision impaired. <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no municipal policies that set standards in which offices and services are provided to people who are deaf and blind. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection to Privacy Act requests are somewhat provided in varied formats. <p>Policy/Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No municipal policies that set standards for which offices and 	<p>Those with televised meetings could discuss the possibility of closed captioning. If this happens then a monitor could be available in Council chambers so that all visitors with hearing impairments have clear access to the monitor.</p> <p>Availability of audit and large print versions will be formalized and a report detailing these new policies be prepared for Council approval.</p> <p>A further review of the needs of electors to be taken prior to next election. Improvements to be made if possible.</p> <p>An investigation into policies that address the supplying of services to those who are deaf and blind should be forwarded to the Accessibility Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Policies to be established and included in the long-term goals and objectives of all</p>	

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

<p>services that provides information to the general public or to provide telephone services through TTY/TDD for people who are deaf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal websites do not provide information in a text-based format to make it accessible to people who are blind and use reading software. • Municipalities have not established accessibility standards for all information systems, hardware and software. 	<p>municipalities.</p> <p>This again, could be included in the long-term goals and objectives of all municipalities.</p> <p>Most municipalities are only in the early stages of information systems and may at some time include this in their long-term plan.</p>	
<p>PLANNING</p> <p>Policy/Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The municipality does not collect and analyze data regarding people with disabilities including numbers, locations and ageing demographics. • Accessibility is not considered in the approval of and maintenance of the Official Plans. It is unknown whether special planning task forces, if formed would have input into the plans. • There are somewhat consistent standard barrier-free provisions and policies throughout the Municipality. • Most municipalities have barrier-free designs incorporated in new construction projects; however, no information is provided in 	<p>This could be a long-term plan and would provide for supporting documentation for the Accessibility Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Official Plan reviews are being done at this time and perhaps some statement could be established affecting those with disabilities.</p> <p>Barrier-free provisions could also be established at the time of the Official Plan review.</p> <p>Additional formats will, once again, become part of the long-term goals and objectives</p>	

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

<p>alternate formats (other than large print) for those with disabilities to enable them to participate in the planning process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility is somewhat considered in approval of new development applications. • Most Municipal parking by-laws adequately serve those with disabilities. • No incentives are offered to cab companies to provide accessible vehicles. <p>ACCOMMODATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No incentives are provided to developers to build accessible housing. • There is no inventory of barrier-free units in the municipality. 	<p>of the municipalities.</p> <p>Approval of new development applications usually follows the requirements under the Building Code Act; however, the development of Accessibility Guidelines will improve this.</p> <p>These by-laws will continue to be reviewed.</p> <p>Municipalities have no incentive policies in place and will not likely consider one in the near future.</p> <p>Municipalities to investigate establishing incentive policies. Committee to investigate programs available by the Provincial/Federal Government for construction of accessible housing. In turn committee to advise developers.</p> <p>The Accessibility Advisory Committee, with the assistance of the Housing Dept. of Social Services will establish a directory for use at the County level.</p> <p>This could be included with the above inventory.</p>	
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2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most short-term accommodation units are not accessible for guests with disabilities. 		
<p>WORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipality does not maintain an inventory of accessible municipal facilities. • There is no consistent criteria for assessment or monitoring of barrier free features in existing facilities. • Special features for those with disabilities are not currently used in relation to public signage, trash receptacles, benches, telephones and other public accessories • Current road maintenance and snow removal plans do not consider those with disabilities. • Communications and information relating to water use, landfill sites, etc. are not available in variable formats. • Some consideration is given to accessible features in construction of sidewalks and walkways. 	<p>Once again the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to develop an inventory of accessible municipality facilities with the help of staff.</p> <p>This again will be addressed in the Accessibility Guidelines and attached to the appendices.</p> <p>The Works, through their input to the Accessibility Guidelines will address most of these issues.</p> <p>At present the municipalities do not possess the resources to provide this type of service throughout each area. When the Works department begins to monitor the availability and usage of barrier-free features, a report will be made for Council.</p> <p>These will be included in the long-term goals and objectives of the municipalities.</p> <p>This will continue to be considered, as it is a requirement under the Building Code Act.</p>	
<p>TRANSPORTATION</p>		

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transit is generally not accessible to people with disabilities • There is a parallel public transit system available for some people with disabilities • There is no transportation committee that includes members with disabilities. 	<p>The only public transit in Perth County is with Mobility Buses. These are an operative unit unto themselves reporting to the municipality. There will be some discussion with these groups at a future date.</p>	
<p>SOCIAL SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some consideration is given to the hearing and visually impaired in relation to telephone and other emergency numbers as well as the adaptability of mandatory forms. • Most interview and meeting rooms are accessible. 	<p>The Intake Screening Unit at 1-888-748-8895 is accessible.</p>	
<p>CHILD CARE DIVISION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no centrally managed waiting list for special needs children using licensed childcare. • Childcare centers and nursery school programs are usually accessible for parents with disabilities. • In-home child care providers receive training on the care of children with disabilities. <p>ONTARIO WORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Resource Centres are generally accessible in terms of the building and equipment, facilities, education material and training programs available (services for hearing impaired may be 	<p>Each day care/nursery/home provider agency maintain their own waiting list.</p> <p>Home Provider Agency has the list of homes.</p> <p>Committee will contact Social Services on this matter.</p> <p>This will continue to be monitored.</p>	

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

limited)		
<p>LONG TERM CARE AND SERVICES FOR SENIORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident’s rooms are generally accessible for visitors with disabilities • Not all homes have an emergency evacuation system-plan with built-in redundancies so that any visitor who is deaf, blind, or restricted in mobility will safely evacuate. 	<p>Research to be done on this.</p> <p>This will continue to be monitored and eventually written into a plan.</p>	
<p>PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed materials are available in varied forms of communication and somewhat take into account the unique forms of some disabilities • The Public Health Unit collects some data on people with disabilities. • Public Health Clinics are usually accessible. 	<p>The Health Unit will continue to monitor these issues.</p>	
<p>RECREATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and promotional material is not provided in variable formats of communication • Fitness facilities and programs are somewhat accessible to people with disabilities. • There are no specialized recreation passes for people with disabilities. 	<p>An operational review of the recreation with the County will be done when a facilities tour is completed.</p> <p>Meeting with Managers will determine what degree of programs are available. Inventory to be completed and made available to public.</p>	
<p>ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBLE</p>		

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

ISSUES BASED ON LOCAL CONDITIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Libraries - not all are accessible	Consultations with local library boards will be necessary for those municipalities with non accessible libraries	
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SECTION 6: OPERATIONAL REVIEW

The County of Perth and its member municipalities have many departments, all of which may require operational reviews. This section presents the information from the audit that identified areas in the current operations of the organization that are in need of review. This information has been organized according to department.

Complaint Review

It is the intention of this committee that complaints will be received in writing by the County of Perth, who in turn will forward to it to the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The committee will contact the municipality responsible to have this complaint investigated and resolved if possible. The municipality will in return advise the accessibility committee on how the complaint was or will be resolved. All complaints received about accessibility need to be recorded by the committee and moved into measurable goals as to whether or not the plan is working. A copy of each complaint will be contained in Appendix 4.

Operation Review

The committee will complete the Future Departmental Operations report (based on barriers contained in Section 5.1) on an annual basis to the County of Perth. The county will, in turn, circulate this review to the member Municipalities.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

6.1

Future Departmental Operations Reviews

Department	Area for Review	Dates	Methodology	Status
General				
Human Resources				
Clerks, Council & Gen. Admin.				
Planning				
Transportation				
Social Services				
Public Health				
Recreation				
Additional Accessibility Issues				

7: DECISION MAKING REVIEW

This section provides information about which decision-making processes (policies and procedures, by-laws) were identified by the audit to be in need of review. The reviews include reviewing policies and practices, capital planning, by-laws approval etc. It also identifies the decision-making reviews that may take place in 2003/04 as well as those to be delegated to future consideration.

Based on the audit findings, the committee will develop the rationale for the planned time period. Appropriate rationales could consist of the size of the department, the scope of the activity, a recent amalgamation, and the resources available.

A review may take longer than one-year. In these cases a rationale should be provided for this extended time line.

Each department is responsible for listing the area where decisions were made by policies and procedures, by-laws, unwritten practices etc. that will be reviewed by communications of the general public, human resources policies, parking by-laws.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

7.1.4 Status

There will be three choices to identify the status of the decision making review:

Completed: If the review is completed, provide the dates completed

Ongoing: If the review is still underway, provide a summary of the progress and an assessment if the review is within the time frames set.

Planned: In larger municipalities where a department may consist of divisions and/or work teams a review may be completed within certain divisions or work-teams. This section may be structured according to the departmental structure and a status accorded to each division and/or work team.

Summary of Planned Decision Making Reviews

A summary of planned decision-making reviews specific to each municipality's respective department or divisions will be reported by individual charts as indicated below.

Summary of Decision Making-By-Law Reviews for 2003/04

Insert Department (i.e. Human Resources)	Policies and By-laws for Review	Dates	Methodology	Status
General				
Human Resources				
Clerks, Council & Gen. Admin.				
Planning				
Transportation				
Social Services Public Health				
Recreation				
Additional Accessibility Issues				

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

8: Targets and Actions

The Accessibility Quotient Audit identified some existing barriers that can be addressed in 2003/2004 and the following years. Targets will be set to help establish when these barriers will be addressed or actions taken to address preventative measures where reasonable numerous barriers and the corrective measures may be grouped together into one action. The target is the anticipated timeline for the action. A target does not necessarily have to be set within a 12-month period. The goal of the actions is to move the organization forward eliminating and preventing barriers. Resources necessary to undertake the actions are to be detailed in a way that the necessary resources may be funding for actions of merely staff time dedicated to doing the work proposed. The nature of the actions may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the community. For example Council should establish a capital annual budget to undertake renovations to make its facilities accessible.

This chart is a list of year one priorities drawn from the previous list of identified barriers and possible actions to be taken.

Table 4: Summary of Barriers to be Addressed/Removed in 2003/04

Barrier	Action	Resources	Costs	Target

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Accessibility Advisory Committee to update the status on these targets to Council.

This will allow the committee to review any new Provincial requirements that may impact the status of the targets that have been set.

Action Required

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

- Annual funding commitment to support the activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committee by County Council. Due to Provincial requirements and regulations, this committee's work will be ongoing and will require an increased budget resource.
- Acknowledgement by member municipalities to County Council of the staffing commitment for the activities of the working group.
- Appoint the accessibility-working group consisting of those outlined in Section 4.
- Ongoing appointment of Accessibility Advisory Committee.

2003 –2004 Accessibility Plan

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - Agencies/organizations Consulted

Appendix 2 -Consultation Replies

Appendix 3 - Accessibility Guidelines

Appendix 4 - Complaints