



County of Perth

Joint Accessibility Plan

Between:

County of Perth

Municipality of North Perth

Municipality of West Perth

Township of Perth East

Township of Perth South

September 2009-August 2010

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Introduction

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) was passed on December 14, 2001. The purpose of the ODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. Under the ODA, all municipalities have a legal obligation to prepare annual accessibility plans in consultation with people with disabilities. Municipalities of 10,000 or more residents are required to establish local accessibility advisory committees, and a majority of their members must be people with disabilities. Municipalities must consult with these committees as they prepare their plans. In preparing annual accessibility plans, municipalities must consider the following:

- The plans must address a broad range of disability issues, taking into account the full definition of disability under the ODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- The plans must examine all aspects of the municipality's operations, including its bylaws, practices, facilities, programs and services.
- Municipalities must take into consideration their roles as service providers and employers.
- The plans must identify steps to be taken over time to remove identified barriers and prevent any new ones.
- It is important that municipalities consider integrating accessibility planning into their business planning cycles to ensure a thoughtful, effective and efficient process and meaningful outcomes.
- All municipalities are accountable to their communities and, as such, must make their accessibility plans available to the public.

In 2005, the province took greater action, passing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, 2005 (AODA) on June 13, 2005. Under this landmark legislation, the government of Ontario will develop mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living. The standards will apply to private and public sector organizations across Ontario.

The first standard to come into force under the act is Regulation 429-07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, passed January 1, 2008. Through this standard people of all abilities will be able to get the service they need. Public sector organizations, including municipal government, will need to comply with this standard by 2010. Private sector and non-profit organizations will need to comply by 2012.

In the coming years, more standards will be released in other important areas, including:

- Information and communications
- Transportation
- Employment
- Built environment

This is the seventh joint accessibility plan between the County of Perth and its member municipalities, created in consultation with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). This plan highlights their achievements in breaking down barriers for people with disabilities and outlines their commitment to making programs, polices facilities and services more accessible for all Ontarians.

Municipal Jurisdictions Participating in this Plan

The Corporation of the County of Perth

1 Huron Street
Stratford, ON N5A 5S4

Member municipalities:

The Municipality of North Perth

330 Wallace Ave N
Listowel, ON N4W 1L3

The Municipality of West Perth

P.O. Box 609
169 David Street
Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0

The Township of Perth East

P.O. Box 455
25 Mill Street E
Milverton, ON N0K 1M0

The Township of Perth South

3191 Road 122
St. Pauls, ON N0K 1V0

Key Contact:

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Population:

The population for the County of Perth, according to the 2006 census data is 32,272 broken down by member municipality as follows:

North Perth – 12,225

Perth East – 12,045

West Perth – 8,840

Perth South – 4,132

Description:

Responsibilities under the County and member municipalities include roads, water, garbage and recycling, snow removal, planning and development, emergency services, fire, by law enforcement, provincial offences administration, parks and recreation, property taxes, and library services.

Consultation Activities

This plan has been developed in consultation with the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The AAC acts as an advisory body for the County and its member municipalities, consistent with the expectations of the ODA, 2001. The committee is composed of approximately seven people, the majority of which have a disability.

More information about the committee can be found in Appendix A, the Perth County Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

History – Highlights

2003-2004 Accessibility Plan	First plan since legislated. Completion of facilities audit.
2004-2005 Accessibility Plan	Designation of Accountability. Implementation of barriers identified as “short term”.
2005-2006 Accessibility Plan	Development and distribution of AAC information booklet.
2006-2007 Accessibility Plan	Address outstanding action items in accordance to new regulations as they become available. Budget process set accordingly. Implementation of Administration Committee.
2007-2008 Accessibility Plan	Budget process set accordingly. Employee training, focus on service.
2008-2009 Accessibility Plan	Site Plan Review Process initiated. Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Budget process set accordingly. Hiring of an Accessibility Coordinator.

Targets and Actions

Previous Year (2008-2009)

County Wide -

Barrier: Need for an Accessibility Coordinator to ensure AODA compliance is met, to act as an expert in accessibility, to identify and remove barriers and to be a one-point contact for staff and public.

Barrier Type: All

Action Taken: Accessibility Coordinator hired. Began June 1, 2009.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Improve the accessible provision of goods and services (AODA Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

Barrier Type: Policy/Practice, Communicational, Informational, Attitudinal

Action Taken: Develop policies, practices & procedures that ensure goods and services are provided in a manner that respects a person's dignity and independence; that is integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary; and that provides equal opportunity. Implement policies, practices and procedures that address communicating and providing information in a way that takes into account a person's disability; assistive devices, service animals and support persons; service disruptions; receiving feedback; and staff training. Train staff in providing Accessible Customer Service. Create a feedback process for customers.

Status: In progress – compliance to be met by January 1, 2010.

County -

Barrier: Location of the Payphone in the Courthouse was inaccessible.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: The payphone was moved to the level one entrance-way. This location is accessible, easy to find and more spacious.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: POA service counter was inaccessible.

Barrier Type: Architectural

Action Taken: Reconstructed the POA office and service window.

Status: Complete.

North Perth -

Barrier: Municipal office – bathroom taps difficult to turn

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Accessible taps (operable with a closed fist) installed in the 2nd floor public washroom.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Atwood Community Centre, Atwood Pool, Listowel Wading Pool - deteriorating interlocking brick decks creates trip hazards and makes maneuvering assistive mobility devices difficult.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Atwood Community Centre & Listowel Wading Pool – lifts and relay the interlocking bricks. Atwood Pool – replace with a concrete deck.

Status: All actions complete.

Barrier: Listowel Parks – interlocking bricks being removed by vandals creates trip hazards and makes maneuvering assistive mobility devices difficult.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Edging installed in various areas along the interlocking brick walkway in Memorial Park to reduce the frequency of bricks being removed by vandals.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Listowel Arena – lobby and dressing room floors are a trip hazard.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Replace the lobby and dressing room floors to eliminate the trip hazard.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Listowel Library – dripping eaves causing ice formation on the east side public walkway.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Heat cables added to the eaves of the library.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Monkton Library – no accessible pathway from the rear parking lot to the front entrance.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Concrete walkway installed to connect the front entrance to the rear parking lot.

Status: Complete

Barrier: Wallace Community Centre – main entrance to the hall inaccessible, ice formation on entrances due to downspout location, and low colour contrast between walls and doorways.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Main entrance to the hall removed and replaced with a universal, flat, concrete entrance; downspouts from eaves relocated to eliminate ice formation at entrances; and repainted walls white with dark purple door frames, high colour contrast.

Status: All actions complete.

Barrier: Listowel – curbs lacking curb cuts and ramps.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Curbs cut and ramps added in various areas of town.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Paint on parking spots, parking lines and steps fading and not clearly visible.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Annual painting of parking spots, parking lines and steps.

Status: Complete.

West Perth -

Barrier: Brodhagen hall – inaccessible.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Action Taken: Reopened a new Brodhagen hall, which is now accessible.

Status: Complete January 2009.

Barrier: Narrow sidewalks.

Barrier Type: Architectural

Action Taken: Widened sidewalks with annual maintenance.

Status: Complete Summer 2009.

Perth East -

Barrier: Parking areas of Newton Park, Millbank Park, Morningdale Park, Greenwood Park & Cemetery lacking accessible parking signs.

Barrier Type: Physical, Policy/Practice

Action Taken: Install designated wheel-chair parking signs

Status: Complete 2008.

Barrier: Milverton Public Parking on Main Street lacking accessible parking.

Barrier Type: Physical, Policy/Practice

Action Taken: Designate accessible parking spaces, install signs and paint to communicate them as such.

Status: Complete 2009.

Barrier: Raised sidewalks in the Milverton Street Network (Mill Street E, Mill Street W, Glen Street, West Street).

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Barrier free sidewalk ramps installed at all intersections.

Status: Complete 2008/2009.

Barrier: Milverton Library – books on top shelves not reachable by all customers.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Posted signage offering staff assistance to reach books on top shelves.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Milverton Library - Improve the accessible provision of goods and services (AODA Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

Barrier Type: Policy/Practice, Communicational, Informational, Attitudinal

Action Taken: Adoption of Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Status: Complete July 2009.

Barrier: Milverton Library – need an AED.

Barrier Type: Policy/Practice

Action Taken: Installation of an AED unit and training of staff.

Status: Complete August 2009.

Barrier: PERC – lacking accessible parking signage and markings

Barrier Type: Physical, Policy/Practice

Action Taken: Install signs and markings.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: PERC – no detectable warning surface at the top of stairway.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Install a detectable warning surface to the top of the stairway.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: PERC – spectator areas have no distinctive markings to show edge of step.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Added distinctive markings to show the edge of step.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: PERC – public telephone lacking clear signage.

Barrier Type: Informational

Action Taken: Clearer signage installed.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: PERC – ticket & admissions counter too high.

Barrier Type: Physical

Action Taken: Used a table.

Status: Complete.

Perth South -

Barrier: Municipal website only had one font size setting.

Barrier Type: Technological.

Action Taken: Website was updated to include the option of increasing font size.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Finding accessibility information on the municipal website.

Barrier Type: Informational, Technological.

Action Taken: Added an 'Accessibility Plan' page to the website.

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Taking persons with disabilities into account when creating site plans.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural.

Action Taken: Approved new Site Plan review process to ensure that developments being approved under the site plan control process have regard for persons with disabilities

Status: Complete.

Barrier: Font size of documents not large enough for all customers.

Barrier Type: Informational

Action Taken: Acquired magnifying sheets for use in municipal office by public to view written documents.

Status: Complete.

Upcoming Year (2009-2010)

County Wide –

Barrier: Improve the accessible provision of goods and services (AODA Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

Barrier Type: Policy/Practice, Communicational, Informational, Attitudinal

Strategy for removal or prevention: Develop policies, practices & procedures that ensure goods and services are provided in a manner that respects a person's dignity and independence; that is integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary; and that provides equal opportunity. Implement policies, practices and procedures that address communicating and providing information in a way that takes into account a person's disability; assistive devices, service animals and support persons; service disruptions; receiving feedback; and staff training. Train staff in providing Accessible Customer Service. Create a feedback process for customers.

Anticipated Timeline: Implementation and training to be complete January 1, 2010.

County -

Barrier: Ensuring accessibility in new website development.

Barrier Type: Technological.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Accessibility Coordinator to pull together resources and information on accessible web design, taking into consideration the proposed information and communication standard, W3C website accessibility guidelines, screen reader compatibility, CNIB clear print guidelines, plain language, ease of navigation, etc. to be shared with the Tech division and staff. AAC will test the trial version for further input before launch.

Anticipated Timeline: Anticipated launch for October 2009.

Barrier: Finding accessibility information on the municipal website.

Barrier Type: Informational.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Create 'Accessibility' page on the new website.

Anticipated Timeline: Will be completed for launch, October 2009.

Barrier: Facilities and services.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural, Policy/Procedural, Informational, Communicational

Strategy for removal or prevention: Undergoing a full facilities and organizational review with a consultant to determine the best facilities, use of space and corporate organization to serve our customers.

Anticipated Timeline: Review process commencing in August 2009 for approximately three months time. Actions to be determined after reviewing results.

Barrier: Need for a new ambulance base.

Barrier Type: Architectural, Physical.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Construction of a new, fully accessible ambulance base in Mitchell.

Anticipated Timeline: To be complete March 2010.

North Perth –

Barrier: Municipal office – lacking various aspects of accessibility.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Strategy for removal or prevention: Renovating the Municipal office taking into account accessibility.

Anticipated Timeline: Summer 2010.

Barrier: Constructing a new fire hall.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Strategy for removal or prevention: Taking into account accessibility during the design and construction of the new fire hall.

Anticipated Timeline: Summer 2010.

Barrier: Elma-Logan Recreation Complex – lacking various aspects of accessibility.

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Strategy for removal or prevention: Renovation and expansion of the recreation complex.

Anticipated Timeline: Summer 2010.

West Perth –

Barrier: Inaccessible pool.

Barrier Type: Physical, architectural.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Installing a pool lift and changing the wading pool into a splash pad.

Anticipated Timeline: To be complete Summer 2010.

Barrier: Inaccessible community centre washrooms.

Barrier Type: Physical, architectural.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Renovate washrooms to meet accessibility standards.

Anticipated Timeline: Pending grant approval.

Barrier: Inaccessible municipal building.

Barrier Type: Physical, architectural.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Renovate ramp in the front of the building; renovate the washrooms to be accessible.

Anticipated Timeline: Pending grant approval.

Barrier: Narrow sidewalks.

Barrier Type: Architectural.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Widen the sidewalks with annual road maintenance.

Anticipated Timeline: Summer 2010.

Perth East –

Barrier: Building Condition and Accessibility

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Strategy for removal or prevention: Undertaking a Building Condition Assessment of all facilities with a consultant.

Anticipated Timeline: Beginning July 2009.

Barrier: Milverton Library - Improving the accessible provision of goods and services (AODA Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service).

Barrier Type: Policy/Practice, Communicational, Informational, Attitudinal

Strategy for removal or prevention: Training for all staff on Accessible Customer Service .

Anticipated Timeline: October 2009.

Barrier: Milverton Library – Library building inaccessible to all customers who cannot use stairs.

Barrier Type: Architectural, Physical

Strategy for removal or prevention: Building a new library that will be fully accessible.

Anticipated Timeline: 2010/2011.

Barrier: PERC – washrooms and dressing rooms lacking in accessibility

Barrier Type: Physical, Architectural

Strategy for removal or prevention: Renovation of the dressing room areas (including washrooms and showers) with RINC grant.

Anticipated Timeline: Spring 2010.

Barrier: PERC – ticket & admission counter too high.

Barrier Type: Physical

Strategy for removal or prevention: Currently using a table instead, will correct during renovations.

Anticipated Timeline: Spring 2010.

Perth South –

Barrier: Font size of documents not large enough for all customers.

Barrier Type: Informational.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Prepare large font copies of council agendas for public distribution.

Anticipated Timeline: Fall 2009.

Barrier: Sidewalks are in poor condition and lack curb cuts.

Barrier Type: Architectural.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Sidewalk rehabilitation that will incorporate curb cuts to assist persons with mobility challenges.

Anticipated Timeline: Fall 2009.

Barrier: Drainage ditch at the soccer field makes accessing the field difficult for people with mobility disabilities.

Barrier Type: Physical.

Strategy for removal or prevention: Fill in the drainage ditch.

Anticipated Timeline: Spring 2010.

Customer Feedback (September 2008-August 2009)

August 2009

Barrier: Accessible Parking Spaces at the Mitchell Arena

Report: An area resident was attending a wedding reception at the Mitchell arena this summer. The parking lot was very crowded, and when he arrived the accessible parking space was already taken. He had to park quite some distance from the door, which was difficult for him to walk. He also noticed another guest using a wheel chair had to park near the Crystal Palace because there were not enough designated spots and the lot was so full.

Suggestion: Create one or two additional accessible spots. Already existing spots near the door could be transformed into accessible parking spaces.

Action: Accessibility Coordinator brought the concern to the attention of the West Perth CAO verbally on September 8, 2009. CAO will connect with appropriate staff member and look into turning an existing space or two into a designated accessible spot for the next line painting.

Perth County
Accessibility Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference

Definitions

“Barrier” means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including physical barrier, architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice;

“Disability” means,

- a. Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes, involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. A mental disorder, or
- e. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997

“Municipality” means the County of Perth, the Municipalities of West Perth and North Perth, and the Townships of Perth East and Perth South.

“Councils” mean the elected Councils of the Municipalities.

Mission/Objective

To fulfill the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 by providing vision and advice to the Councils of the County of Perth and Member Municipalities to create an accessible community.

Required Duties

- Advise Councils annually, as required by the Act, regarding the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of the Municipalities' annual accessibility plan.
- Advise Councils on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises, that Councils purchase, construct or significantly renovate; for which the Councils enters into a new lease; or that a person makes available as municipal capital facilities under Section 110 of the Municipal Act, 2001.
- Review in a timely manner and advise Councils on the accessibility of site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act.
- Advise on existing and proposed procurement processes of the Municipalities with respect to the accessibility for persons with disabilities to the goods or services being purchased.
- Perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations.
- Review matters referred to the Committee by Councils and make recommendations as appropriate.

Other Duties

- Advise Councils to address issues for the inclusion of persons with disabilities relating to the provision of transportation, housing, employment, culture and recreation in order to achieve an accessible community for persons with disabilities.
- Consult with persons with disabilities, community groups and organizations representing persons with disabilities in order to capture and communicate emerging issues to Councils.

- Refer issues, make recommendations or suggestions for action to appropriate groups, agencies, committees and organizations in the community to address barriers that affect persons with disabilities.
- Monitor, advise, consult and report findings and recommendations with respect to government directives and regulations related to the status of persons with disabilities.
- Review, as needed the terms of reference of the Perth County AAC and recommend changes. Changes must comply with AODA 2005 and require the ratification of Councils.

Membership

The AAC will be comprised of a minimum of seven volunteer citizen/layperson members, as appointed by Councils. A majority of the members shall include persons with disabilities representing the interests of citizens with varying disabilities. These committee members shall reflect the cross disability nature of AODA 2005 definition of “disability”, but where such representation is not feasible, no volunteer will be discriminated on the said basis that they don’t fit the cross disability nature requirement. Members may also include a County elected official, parents or caregivers of a person with a disability, or citizens at large interested in disability issues, but who may also be a person with a disability.

In order to avoid potential conflict of interest, municipal employees with disabilities are not eligible to be voting citizen/layperson members of the AAC.

Representatives

Staff coordinator(s) are represented in a non-voting capacity and will provide advice and resources.

Length of Term of Appointments

The length of term of appointments for voting members of the AAC, after the initial term, shall be 4 years. The terms of the appointments may be staggered on a two-year period to avoid expiry of terms for all members at the same time.

Meeting Chair

A committee chair will be elected annually from committee members to preside over meetings and committee business.

Minutes and Agendas

Minutes will be taken and distributed by the staff coordinator. Agendas will be assembled and distributed by the staff coordinator in consultation with the Chair.

Reports of proceedings will be managed in accordance with Municipalities' records management practices.

Minutes are of public record and are posted on the County and Municipality's websites.

Meetings

The AAC members will determine a schedule of dates, times and location of meetings, but the Committee will meet no less than four (4) times per year.

Meetings will be open to the public except if the subject matter being considered is within a category defined in Section 239 (2) or (3) or the Municipal Act, in which case the meeting may be closed. When a matter is considered in a closed meeting, members shall maintain confidentiality of the subject matter pursuant to municipal practices.

Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a majority, being 50% plus one, of the voting members appointed to the committee.

Voting

Members will work toward a consensus model for decision making, if this is not possible a simple majority vote will be held.

Absences

If a committee member is absent for three consecutive meetings without notice or justifiable reason, their membership will be reviewed by the Committee.

Remuneration

An annual honorarium of \$250.00, prorated by meeting attendance, will be provided to each voting committee member.

Travel expenses will be paid as per County of Perth policy.

Working Groups

The AAC may establish, as required, working groups to research and make recommendations to the AAC with respect to specialized issues assigned to such working group by the AAC.

Working groups may draw upon members from the AAC and may include individuals who are not members, such as municipal staff, as well as outside resource members as necessary. This may include from time to time the advice or participation of individuals or organizations with a particular area of expertise.