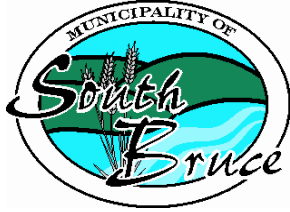


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MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

for

THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH BRUCE

Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 (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. To this end the ODA mandates that each Municipality prepare an annual accessibility plan. This is the seventh year plan (2009-2010) for the Municipality of South Bruce.

An accessibility working group of the Municipality of South Bruce was formed to investigate the needs of this municipality and to review the measures the Municipality has already taken and the measures the Municipality will consider over the next number of years.

The Municipality of South Bruce has committed itself to the continual improvement of access to all municipal facilities. The most significant findings indicated that the Council Chambers in the Municipal Office in Teeswater was not wheelchair accessible, and subsequently commencing November 2005 and ending April 2006 an addition with wheel chair accessibility to the offices and Council Chambers has been completed.

The installation of an elevator in the Formosa Hall in 2004-2005 addressed some safety concerns in the facility. During 2006, a wheelchair access path was installed by the Mildmay Rotary Club at the Rotary Park to allow wheelchair access to the washrooms and pavilion. During 2007, the entrance to the Teeswater Culross Arena was renovated to allow wheelchair access.

In 2008, Plans were drafted for wheel chair access to the Teeswater Public Library, a Friends of the Library Committee was formed to commence with fundraising and \$50,000 was donated by OPG. During 2009 plans commenced to upgrade the Teeswater Library to full access to the Library level and to further

expand opportunities for the lower level use. This includes a lift new rear lower level entrance and other structural upgrades. A grant application to Canada/Ontario Infrastructure Stimulus Funding was successful in the amount of \$330,000. A Trillium grant application was also successful in the amount of \$40,000. Tenders for the required renovations have just been let and work will continue throughout the winter. Municipal Council has committed funding to see this project to completion.

The Teeswater Town Hall Committee has begun fundraising for Wheel Chair accessibility to the theatre level and accessible washroom upgrades. During 2009 a grant application was submitted for Enabling Accessibility Funding and was recently confirmed in the amount of \$50,000 for a lift and accessible washroom. Municipal Council has committed a further \$40,000 to see this project through to completion.

In 2009, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, will require training for staff in Customer Service Delivery. Some signage and accessible doors are required. The training is almost complete and arrangements have been made for the installation of accessible doors ant the Municipal Office and the Mildmay Public Library

A. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKING GROUP

Aims:

This Report intends to describe the measures that the Municipality of South Bruce has taken and the process by which the Municipality of South Bruce will undertake in the future, to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who use our facilities, including staff.

Objectives:

1. To maintain a working group consisting of but not limited to, representative(s) of Council and the Clerk;
2. To create a list of the facilities, owned and operated by the Municipality, in order to identify barriers to people with disabilities;
3. To determine the steps already taken to address accessibility;
4. To identify the measures that will be taken in the coming years to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities;

5. To describe how the Municipality will make this accessibility available to the public.

B. Description of the Municipality of South Bruce

The Municipality of South Bruce is located in the southerly part of Bruce County, and is comprised of two Villages, Teeswater and Mildmay, and two rural Townships, Carrick and Culross. The Hamlets of Formosa, Belmore, and Karlsruhe form part of South Bruce. The Municipal Office is located in the Village of Teeswater. The former Mildmay-Carrick Municipal Office forms the Operations Centre and part of the Works shed in Mildmay.

The Municipality owns and operates an arena and community centre in Mildmay and Teeswater, and a Community Hall in Formosa. The Teeswater Town Hall is located in Teeswater. Libraries, operated by Bruce County, are established in both Mildmay and Teeswater, in buildings owned by the Municipality. The Mildmay Medical Clinic completed in 2007 is the newest facility in the Municipality.

C. Council Commitment to Accessibility Planning

The Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Bruce is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and service for all those with disabilities;
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

The Council has authorized the Clerk, with the assistance of other staff members and Council, to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Council to meet those commitments.

D. Recent Barrier-Removal Initiatives

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, customer service training will be completed by January 2010 as required by the Act. The Mildmay Library and the Municipal Office will receive accessible doors.

In 2008, an accessible Teeswater Library was identified as a priority and plans were commenced to provide lower level access and an elevator to give patrons barrier free access to the library level. In 2009 work has commenced on the project and will continue into 2010.

Enabling Accessibility Funds have been approved for the Teeswater Town Hall, and plans continue to provide a lift to the upper level and accessible washrooms. Work is scheduled to begin in 2010.

During 2007, renovations were completed to the entrance to the Teeswater Culross Community Centre (Arena), allowing for wheelchair accessibility to the facility. In 1998, an addition was added to the Teeswater-Culross Arena and Community Centre and officially opened in 1999, which provided wheelchair accessibility to the Community Centre. The Arena itself was not fully accessible, and renovations will make it possible for physically handicapped people to participate in functions in this arena area of the Complex.

During 2006, The Mildmay Rotary Club made the Rotary Park washrooms and Pavilion wheelchair accessible by way of a pathway from the parking lot to the building.

In 2005 and 2006 Municipal council hired a drafting consultant to prepare a set of plans for an addition and revisions to the Municipal Office in Teeswater. The plans address an accessible reception area as well as complete access to the Council Chamber for all members of the public. The project commenced in November of 2005 and was completed in April of 2006.

The 2006 renovations to the Municipal Building in Teeswater addressed accessibility limitations to attendance of the disabled at Council Meetings. New office space, a wheelchair accessible Council Chambers and washrooms allow all interested parties to attend Council and other public meetings without limitation. Future plans for the emergency operations centre in the basement allow for handicapped access.

The Council determined that for the Municipal Election 2003 and 2006, a "Vote by Mail" system would be used. This method increased voter turnout, and provided a means whereby voters with physical and mental disabilities may more easily cast their ballot. This method of voting will be utilized in the future elections.

The 2005 Installation of an elevator in the Formosa Community Centre has been identified as an area where accessibility was improved. The installation of an elevator addressed safety concerns in the facility and benefits senior citizens and individuals with physical challenges by removing the physical barriers to and within the facility. Improved access will allow these individuals to be active members of the community, giving them a sense of independence and fulfillment. The installation of an elevator allows Formosa residents, businesses and other users of the facility will not have to worry about accessibility issues when holding family or business functions.

Over the past number of years, and before the amalgamation that created the Municipality of South Bruce, steps were taken in the Villages of Mildmay and Teeswater, to provide the ramping of the curbs at the corners of the urban streets. This is an ongoing project that the Councils of the past addressed and is being continued.

Prior to the creation of the Municipality of South Bruce, the Village of Teeswater installed a ramp to provide access to the Teeswater Town Hall.

A temporary ramp is being utilized at the Mildmay Carrick Recreation Complex to address the needs of those fans in wheelchairs

In 2000, the Council of the Municipality purchased a building to house the Mildmay-Carrick Library and provided a wheelchair accessible Library for the residents wishing to use the facility.

In 2001, a web site was established, providing access to many users, informing them of the actions of Council and the events of significance.

Handicapped Parking spaces were marked on the pavement at the Municipal Offices, Community Centres in South Bruce, and at some of the Churches.

Notices that are circulated to the public are printed in large bold print to provide easier readability for the visually impaired.

E. Audit of Municipally Owned Buildings

In August 2003, the Members of Council and some members of Staff were asked to complete a survey of municipally owned facilities to assess any barriers that may exist. Brainstorming exercises involving the Office Staff and Department Heads were conducted informally at Staff Meetings. Council Members and Staff were encouraged to discuss accessibility with any physically or mentally challenged residents in South Bruce. Solutions to removing these barriers are to be suggested on an ongoing basis, and included in this plan.

F. Barriers Identified

The survey provided will request the following information identifying barriers in South Bruce. (See Schedule "A" attached.) Over the next several years, Councils will need to decide the priority for the removal of these barriers, and include provisions in their annual budgets to accommodate the changes.

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Type of Barrier</u>	<u>Strategy for removal or prevention</u>
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G. Barriers to be addressed in 2010

With renovation underway at the Teeswater Library the Teeswater Town Hall is the next priority for accessibility for all patrons. Enabling Accessibility Funds have been approved for the Teeswater Town Hall, and plans continue to provide a lift to the upper level and accessible washrooms. Work is scheduled to begin in 2010. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 has addressed customer service issues and to meet the requirements, accessible doors will be installed in our facilities as required throughout 2010. Under the AODA, 2005 restructuring of the Municipal Website will be a priority in 2010.

H. Review and Monitoring of the Process

As required by the Ontario Disabilities Act, 2001, the Council of the Municipality is required to review this Plan annually, and to monitor the barriers identified in it. Provisions to address the issues raised will be required to be considered.

I. Communication of the Plan

This Accessibility Plan will be available in the Municipal Office and on the website at www.southbruce.on.ca .

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN SCHEDULE "A"

BARRIER	TYPE of BARRIER	STRATEGY for REMOVAL or PREVENTION
Public drinking fountains	Structural	Construct additions to the existing fountains which would include fountains at a level accessible to the young people and the handicapped.
Access to walk-over bridges at Rotary Park in Mildmay	Structural	Provide some ramping onto these bridges so that people in wheelchairs or scooters may have access to the bridge and the Park beyond.
Formosa Hall Entrance	Architectural	Remove existing entrance and construct a new entrance with an automatic door.
Formosa Hall Second Floor	Architectural	Install an elevator or chairlift
Formosa Recreation Centre washrooms	Architectural	Widen doorways and enlarge a stall.
Public Telephone	Communications	Provide a public phone that may be altered to accommodate the hearing impaired.
Teeswater public Library	Structural and Architectural	Providing wheelchair accessibility to this municipally owned facility.
Teeswater Town Hall	Structural	Remodel the existing washrooms to provide for wheelchair accessibility. To allow wheelchair access to the Auditorium / stage level
Municipal Office	Structural	Provide counter space at a level that someone in a wheelchair or scooter could access, as well as wheelchair access to council chambers.
Disabled Parking Places	Physical	Provide more marked spaces at the Post Offices, and local banks, etc. and enforce the parking by-laws.
Future Development	Structural and Architectural	Encourage, through staff participation, the contractors and developers in South Bruce to be mindful of the needs of the physically challenged residents and future residents of South Bruce when planning development and creating subdivision agreements.
Municipal Website and Communications	Communications	The Municipal website will be updated to meet the needs off many disabilities, and larger font documents will be the preferred method of distributing information to the public
<i>The barrier may be of an architectural or physical nature, or may be a communication issue.</i>		
<i>Budget restraints and feasibility will need to be considered in dealing with these issues.</i>		