

2008

Moving Beyond Barriers:

The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas

Annual Municipal Accessibility Plan



St. Thomas Ontario is a community where people, regardless of their physical and mental abilities can live, work and play to their full potential.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Cliff Barwick

Alderman Lori Baldwin-Sands

Alderman Heather Chapman

Alderman Tom Johnston

Alderman David Warden

Alderman Terry Shackelton

Alderman Bill Aarts

Alderman Gord Campbell

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Mailing Address

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545 Talbot Street
P.O. Box 520, City Hall
St. Thomas, Ontario N5P 3V7

Key Contact

The key contact for inquiries regarding the City of St. Thomas Annual Accessibility Plan is the Accessibility Coordinator who acts as the staff liaison between the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Municipal Accessibility Steering Committee:

Sandra Datars Bere
Director, Ontario Works and Social Housing;
telephone: (519) 631-9350 ext. 128;
e-mail: sdatars_bere@city.st-thomas.on.ca

Population: 36,110 (Census, 2006)

MUNICIPAL HIGHLIGHTS

1. Location

The City of St. Thomas is located in the heart of Southwestern Ontario, approximately halfway between Toronto and Detroit, and approximately 25 kilometers south of London and 13 kilometers north of the Lake Erie shoreline.

St. Thomas is single tier municipality within Elgin County. Surrounding St. Thomas are numerous picturesque towns, lakeside villages and historic hamlets, each with their own unique charm.

2. History

In 1852, St. Thomas was incorporated as a village, a town in 1861, and a city in 1881. St. Thomas has encountered a dramatic increase in population in recent years – 8.4% from 2001 to 2006, making it one of the fastest growing cities in Southwestern Ontario.

The City became an important railway junction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the construction of an extensive railway system working its way through the City. In total, 26 railways have passed through St. Thomas since the first track was laid in 1856.

With the decline of the railway as a mode of transportation in St. Thomas since the 1950s and 1960s, the industry has shifted to that of primary and secondary automotive. Notwithstanding, railway history remains extremely important today. Visitors are drawn to the City every year for many railway-based events, including the Iron Horse Festival and the Day Out with Thomas the Tank Engine.

The recent population increase has amplified expansion. The City has recently built a new community centre and a new home for the aged, as well as completed the transit terminal.

3. Organizational Structure

The following departments, boards and entities are under the jurisdiction of the City of St. Thomas:

City Clerk's Department	Airport (44989 Talbot Line) Animal Shelter (100 Burwell Road)
Economic Development Corporation	City Hall, 1 st Floor (545 Talbot Street)
Environmental Services • Engineering • Operations	City Hall, 1 st Floor (545 Talbot Street) Public Works Service Centre (100 Burwell Road) Pollution Control Plant (40359 Bush Line) City Parking Lots (Various Locations) Horton Farmers' Market (Manitoba Street)
Fire Department	St. Thomas Central Fire Station (305 Wellington Street) Captain Dennis Redman Station (235 Burwell Road)
Human Resources	City Hall, 3 rd Floor (545 Talbot Street)

Mayor's Office	City Hall, 2 nd Floor (545 Talbot Street)
Ontario Works	423 Talbot Street
Parks & Recreation Services	Pinafore Park Administration Building (95 Elm Street) St. Thomas-Elgin Memorial Community Centre (80 Wilson Avenue) St. Thomas Timken Community Centre (2 Third Avenue) City Parks (Various Locations)
Planning & Zoning Office	City Hall, Lower Level (9 Mondamin Street)
Police Department	Colin C. McGregor Justice Building (30 St. Catharine Street)
St. Thomas Public Library	153 Curtis Street
Treasury	City Hall, 1 st Floor (545 Talbot Street)
Valleyview Home	350 Burwell Road

PART I

2008 MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FOR THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS

1. Background and Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to make the public aware of the City's initiatives in regards to accessibility and to establish goals and objectives for the upcoming year.

The City's vision on accessibility is:

- To promote public awareness and sensitivity to all persons with disabilities;
- To encourage co-operation between all service and interest groups;
- To identify and document relevant issues and concerns;
- To create a community that provides opportunities for barrier-free access to housing, transportation, education, recreation, health care and employment;
- To embrace the concept of universal design to include both the disabled and the increasing aging population;
- To ensure that policies and practices are maintained in relationship to the development and redevelopment of services and facilities that have regard to persons with disabilities and aging population statistics;
- To ensure that the City receives the maximum economic benefits from building an accessible City including an increased potential for tourism, retail business and accommodating conventions;
- To encourage public participation and civic engagement in community accessibility issues;

This is the 2008 plan produced by The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas on accessibility issues related to barriers for persons with disabilities. The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas is committed to promoting a barrier-free City for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit, and invest in St. Thomas. With this plan, the City is proud to present its findings and report on the development of innovative strategies to remove and prevent future barriers for people with disabilities and the maturing population.

2. Ontarians with Disabilities ACT S.O. 2001, C. 32

Under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities ACT, S.O. 2005, C.11 (AODA)

In 2005 the Province enacted the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. It defines a disability as:

- 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;
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1977

It defines a barrier as meaning:

anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* provides for the development of standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodations, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. The Minister responsible for the *AODA* is required to establish a process to develop and implement all accessibility standards necessary to achieving the purposes of this *Act*. Within this process, standards development committees are established by the Minister to develop proposed accessibility standards. Persons or organizations may be required to meet more than one accessibility standard under the *AODA*.

In 2008 the provincial government introduced the first process of the *AODA*, that process being the Accessibility Customer Service Standards. The process outlines the principles and requirements of customer service standards by which all Provincial and Municipal bodies are to adhere to by 2010.

Other Accessibility Standards that are yet to be introduced by the Ontario Government are:

- Transportation
- Information and Communications
- Built Environment (buildings, structures and public spaces)
- Employment

Until all standards are proclaimed, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001* will remain in effect, and government ministries and other affected public sector organizations will continue to have planning obligations in accordance with that legislation.

3. Obligations of the Province of Ontario

The Provincial Government is required to develop barrier-free design guidelines to promote accessibility to buildings and other premises that the Government purchases, enters into a lease for, constructs or significantly renovates. These guidelines must meet or exceed the levels of accessibility set out in the *Building Code Act*. Individual Government ministries must each prepare an accessibility plan, which must meet specific requirements. Other obligations of the Province are:

1. To have regard to persons with disabilities when purchasing goods and services;
2. To provide internet sites in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities unless it is not technically feasible to do so;
3. To make an Ontario Government publication accessible to a person with a disability who requests it unless it is not technically feasible to do so;
4. To accommodate the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities in accordance with the *Human Rights Code* to the extent the needs relate to the employment; and
5. To accommodate the accessibility needs of job applicants with disabilities who are invited to participate in the selection process in accordance with the *Human Rights Code* to the extent the needs relate to the selection process.

4. Obligations of the Corporation of the City of St. Thomas

In accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, each year, the council of every Municipality shall prepare an accessibility plan. The Act also requires the City to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee, which must have a majority of members who are persons with disabilities. The committee's duty is to advise City Council about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan. The annual accessibility plan is approved by Council and shall be made available to the public.

The accessibility plan shall address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the municipality's by-laws, and its policies, programs, practices and services.

In addition, in accordance with the Act, the Municipal Accessibility Plan (MAP) shall include:

1. a report on the measures the Municipality has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities;
2. the measures in place to ensure that the Municipality assesses its proposals for bylaws, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities;
3. a list of the by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that the Municipality will review in the coming year to identify, prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities; and
4. the measures that the Municipality intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities; and
5. all other information that the regulations prescribe for the purpose of the plan

The council shall seek advice from the Accessibility Advisory Committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises or part of a building, structure or premises,

1. that the council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;
2. for which the City enters into a new lease; or
3. that is provided as a municipal capital facility under the *Municipal Act*. The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described under the *Planning Act* that the committee selects; and
4. perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations.

The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas provides a public transportation system. The City has an obligation each year to prepare an accessibility plan and consult with persons with disabilities and others in preparing the plan. The accessibility plan shall address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the organization's by-laws, if any, and in its policies, programs, practices and services. The City has incorporated the public transportation system into this plan.

5. The Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC)

Council appointed the first Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee on October 21st, 2002. Since that time, the MAAC has been involved in the production of the City's annual Accessibility Plan, including conducting site visits and inspections.

As required by the Act, a majority of the members of the MAAC include persons with disabilities. At present, the MAAC consists of four members from the community at large, one member who is a citizen at large, one member of Council, and one member who is a professional from the community at large.

MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Committee Member	Length of Term
Alderman Terry Shackelton	Council Term (2010)
Lesley Buchanan-Cairns, Vice Chair	January 1, 2007 – December 31 st 2008
Clair Eastwood Jackson	January 1 st 2007 – December 31 st 2008
Peter Yurek	January 1 st 2007 – December 31 st 2008
Michelle Sylvester ,Chair	January 1 st 2008 – December 31 st 2009
Donald Shaw	January 1 st 2008 – December 31 st 2009
Ed McLachlan	January 1 st 2008 – December 31 st 2009

6. The Municipal Advisory Steering Committee (MASC)

The Municipal Advisory Steering Committee (MASC) was created in 2006 to support and facilitate the development of the Municipal Accessibility Plan. The MASC is a working group comprised of senior staff representatives of the Municipality's Management Board of which directly reports to Municipal Council. The primary role of MASC is to demonstrate leadership in creating and recommending innovative approaches and progressive solutions to make City services, programs, by-laws, policies and practices more accessible to employees and residents of St. Thomas. The MASC is responsible for producing the Accessibility Plan in consultation with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and must seek approval and guidance from the Municipal Council.

Municipality Advisory Steering Committee Members		
Committee Member	Department Represented	Contact Information
Sandra Datars Bere	Ontario Works	519 631 9350 ext 128 sdatars_bere@city.st-thomas.on.ca
Graham Dart	Human Resources	519 631 1680 ext 4141 gdart@city.st-thomas.on.ca
Bill Day	Treasury	519 631 1680 ext 4101 bday@city.st-thomas.on.ca
John Dewancker	Environmental Services	519 631 1680 ext 4165 jdewancker@city.st-thomas.on.ca
Pat Keenan	Planning	519 631 1680 ext 4211 pkeen@city.st-thomas.on.ca
Kent McVittie	Parks and Recreation	519 631 1680 ext 4170 kmcvittie@city.st-thomas.on.ca

7. Municipal Structure and Services

The administration of The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas is comprised of twelve departments: City Clerks Department, Environmental Services, Economic Development Corporation, Fire Department, Human Resources, Library, Police Services, St. Thomas Elgin Ontario Works, Treasury, Parks and Recreation, Valleyview and Planning.

Within each department the following services are provided:

Responsibilities of Each Department

City Clerk's Department

- By-laws enforcement including Animal Control and Parking
- Municipal Elections
- Municipal Freedom of Information
- Committee of Adjustment
- Records management and retention
- Administrative services for Council and its Committees including preparation of agendas and minutes
- Assist and participates on various Committees of Council
- Vital statistic – Division Registrar – Birth, Death, Marriage
- Oversees Municipal Airport operations
- Coordinated Community Improvement Program

Economic Development Corporation

- Business development
- Communication and Marketing Services
- Encouraging industrial, commercial and residential development
- Industrial Land Sales and Development

Environmental Services

- Building Services
- By-law Enforcement

- Community Design
- Fleet Services
- Garbage / Recycling services
- Infrastructure Services
- Municipal Building- Capital Projects
- Environment and Infrastructure Policy
- Property Guidelines
- School Crossing Guard Program
- Surface Operations
- Traffic
- Transit and Para-Transit Services
- Water and Waste Water Services

Fire Department

- Emergency Preparedness
- Fire Prevention and Education
- Fire Suppression

Human Resources

- Compensation, Benefit and Payroll Administration
- Human Resource Services
- Labour Relations
- Health and Safety
- WSIB

Library

- Materials and programs for all ages to inform, educate and enrich
- Free access to information for St. Thomas residents of all ages, including visually and physically handicapped people, job seekers, parents, students and business owners
- Literacy, tourism, and community development
- Free access to the Internet, including wireless
- Formal or informal community meeting space

St. Thomas Elgin Ontario Works

- Provision of income and employment supports for St. Thomas and Elgin County
- Access to child care and housing supports for residents in St. Thomas and Elgin County
- Community service planning and support programs
- Address accessibility issues

Parks and Recreation

- Operation of Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs
- Marketing and Promotion
- Horticulture and Forestry;
- Special events organization and operation

Planning

- Land Use Planning activities
- Planning Policy
- Official Plan
- Zoning By-law
- Subdivision/Condominium Approval
- Site Plan Approval
- Development Agreements

- Development policy
- Provision of planning service for Central Elgin

Police Services

- Crime Prevention
- Traffic Safety
- Crime Detection, Investigation and Apprehension
- Community Relations and Education

Treasury

- Accounting and Financial Reporting
- Budget Development and Monitoring
- Property Taxation
- Purchasing
- Information Technology
- Insurance and Risk Management

Valleyview Home

- Long term care program and services
- Respite care program
- Adult Day programs in St. Thomas and Elgin County
- Meals on Wheels

Since the implementation of the Municipal Accessibility Initiative, the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee has provided advice and information to Council, through its committee work and physical reviews of Municipally properties including:

- o St. Thomas Public Library
- o St. Thomas Fire Station
- o St. Thomas City Hall
- o Colin McGregor Justice Building
- o The Timken Centre
- o Valleyview Home for the Aged
- o Memorial Arena
- o St. Thomas Senior's Centre
- o Public Works Centre/Animal Shelter (Burwell Road)
- o Transit Building (Bus depot on Talbot Street)
- o St. Thomas Municipal Airport
- o Pinafore Park and Emslie Field and Administration Building
- o Waterworks Park
- o Athletic Park
- o Doug Tarry Complex
- o Optimist Park
- o Lion's Park
- o 31 Green spaces
- o Jaycees Pool
- o City Parking Lots
- o Water Pollution Control Plan
- o St. Thomas Energy Inc

8. Other Organizations & Agencies Participating

The Municipal Transit System and the St. Thomas Library Board also fall under the auspices of the municipal government and have been included in the operational review of past and current barriers of this plan.

9. Consultation Activities

Coordination and information gathering with other municipalities and industry service providers are routinely sought to assist the Municipality Advisory Steering Committee and the Municipality Accessibility Advisory Committee in the completion of their mandate.

PART II

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

The City of St. Thomas has been active over the last several years in developing and implementing innovative approaches to addressing accessibility issues. The following section provides an overview of accomplishments to date:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Implementation of Accessibility Initiative throughout the City and the Corporation:

- ***Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee*** – Comprised of community stakeholders and established in 2002, the committee has been active since then identifying barriers, developing plans and providing advice to Municipal Council on accessibility issues
- ***Municipal Accessibility Steering Committee*** – Comprised of Municipal staff and established in 2006, the committee, working in collaboration with the Advisory Committee, and under the direction of City Council, oversees the development and implementation of the municipal accessibility initiative, ensuring plan development and legislative compliance.
- ***Allocation of Planning Resources*** – In 2008, City Council allocated funding to secure the services of a Municipal Accessibility consultant to assist in the development of the 2008-2009 Plan and the establishment of accessibility structures and processes.
- ***Information Sharing, Education and Training*** – In 2008, the Accessibility consultant facilitated information sharing, education and training to Council, Staff, Steering and Advisory Committee members on roles, responsibilities and requirements under the ODA and AODA.

2. Success in Identifying and Addressing Barriers:

Both the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee and City staff have been actively involved in the identification and addressing of issues related to accessibility. Since 2002, the Advisory Committee has completed on-site visits of municipal buildings (as identified previously in Part II, Section 7 of this plan) and services and developed an inventory of existing issues and challenges. Additionally, as new facilities have been developed and/ or new services implemented, attention has been given to ensuring accessibility priorities are addressed. The following is an overview of successful activities that have been implemented to identify and address barriers:

Department / Location	Type of Barrier	Barrier Issue	Resolution / Achievements
City Clerk's Office: <i>City Hall Building</i>	Architectural	Access to public Counter	Installation of flip-up table at Clerk's counter
Environmental Services: <i>City Hall Building</i>	Architectural	Access to building	Improvement to ramp at parking lot doorway to increase accessibility
	Architectural	Access and use of public counters	Lowering of Treasury Counter to support service to those requiring lower access
	Architectural	Access and use of public counters	Installation of flip-up tables at all City Hall counters for access by those in wheelchairs (as above)
Environmental Services: <i>City Hall Parking Lot</i>	Architectural	Access and use of parking lot by those in with mobility issues	Curb and sidewalk slab adjustment to remove grade differences in pavement
Environmental Services: <i>Horton Marketing Building</i>	Architectural	Access to building and washroom facilities	Renovations to building to improve wheelchair accessibility and installation of accessible washroom
Environmental Services: <i>Municipal Transit</i>	Physical	Access to buses	Replacement of 3 buses with 3 new low floor buses, each with accessible ramps and 2 wheelchair tie-downs
	Architectural	Access to Commercial Centre – East St. Thomas	Purchase of new 30 foot accessible bus for newly established bus route 5, the Express-Commercial Route; includes the creation of a new accessible bus stop close to the Wal-mart building

Department / Location	Type of Barrier	Barrier Issue	Resolution / Achievements
Environmental Services: Municipal Transit (<i>cont'd</i>)	Architectural	Bus Shelter Accessibility	Replacement of 12 bus shelters with new style shelters with increased visibility and accessibility
	Architectural	Transit Terminal Building Accessibility	Rehabilitation of Transit Terminal Building with fully accessible doorway and accessible public washrooms
	Informational/ Communication & Policy/ Practice	Determination of Transit stop locations	Manual call out of all bus stops on each transit bus and route
Environmental Services: Road and Sidewalk (<i>Re</i>) Construction	Informational / Communications	Traffic signaling	New Traffic signal with audible signal for visually impaired installed at Wellington / Stokes Road intersection
	Architectural	Access to Sidewalks at road intersections	Installation of sidewalk ramps at each road intersection along reconstructed roads at the following locations: <i>Wellington Street</i> from First Avenue to Fairview Avenue; <i>Manitoba Street</i> , from Kains Street to Edward Street; Barwick / Edward Street <i>Malakoff Street</i> from Balaclava Street to Alexandra Street <i>Moore Street</i> , from Wellington Street to Centre Street
	Architectural	Pedestrian access	Pedestrian crossing with curb cuts to Elgin Court School Entrance on Holland Street
	Architectural	Sidewalk access and use	Sidewalk replacement along Sunset Drive, Forest Avenue and Isabel Street with intersection ramp improvements
	Architectural	Access to Leisure/ Parks	Entrance Roadway reconstruction and sidewalk/walkway improvement at Pinafore Park (in collaboration with Parks and Recreation Dept.)

Department / Location	Type of Barrier	Barrier Issue	Resolution / Achievements
Environmental Services: <i>Site Plan Control</i>	Architectural	Consideration of Accessibility issues in review of site plans	Consideration by staff of accessibility issues in all review of site plans.
St. Thomas Fire Department: <i>Central Fire Station</i>	Architectural	Identification of Disabled Parking Space	One space has been created directly opposite the Station's main office entrance
St. Thomas Fire Department: <i>Dennis Redman Sub Station</i>	Architectural	Ensuring that new facilities address accessibility issues	New accessible substation opened in 2006 (with accessible washrooms, locker rooms, Braille signage)
Human Resources: <i>Employee work stations and locations</i>	Architectural and Policy/ Practice	Access to work stations/ locations by staff	Implementation of Corporate Ergonomics program that assesses workstations/ offices and ensures appropriate furniture is available to accommodate employees physical needs
Library: <i>St. Thomas Public Library Building</i>	Architectural	Accessible Parking	Two disabled parking spaces have been created closest to the accessibility ramp, on the south east corner of the building. Signage has also been installed
	Architectural	Access to Building	A new accessibility ramp has been installed at the front door of the library that allows access to first floor. Elevator at back of building provides access to all three levels (1 st , lower and mezzanine). All thresholds within the building have been made level with floor and/ or entrances Push button power operated entry doors
	Architectural	Access to Book Return Service	Book returns are located on sidewalk (exterior of building)

Department / Location	Type of Barrier	Barrier Issue	Resolution / Achievements
Library: St. Thomas Public Library Building (cont'd)	Architectural	Accessibility within Building and to Building and Service features	<p>Flip-up tables at circulation desks for wheelchair access</p> <p>Accessible water fountains.</p> <p>Light switches lowered to accessible level in public areas</p> <p>Furniture repositioned in public areas to support clear access</p> <p>Public Computer terminals – desks and chairs are adjustable</p>
	Communications/ Information and Policy/ Practice	Access to Library Services	<p>Home Delivery Service of loaned library materials is available to all those requiring it.</p> <p>Audio and Large Print books are available as well as magnifier.</p> <p>Magnification software allows public computers to be changed to a large print setting.</p> <p>Headsets are available for computer access for visually impaired</p>
St. Thomas Elgin Ontario Works: Office at 423 Talbot Street	Architectural	Access to Building	Wheelchair/ Accessibility Ramp at first floor entrance; Elevator services available to 2 nd floor services
	Architectural	Access to Waiting areas and Interview Rooms	All waiting room, reception and interview areas accommodate individuals in wheelchairs / requiring assistance
	Informational/ Communication and Policy / Practice	Access to Ontario Works services by all	Service users needs determined on a case-by-case basis. Service provision tailored as required to meet needs of clients (use of interpreters, holding of home instead of office visit as necessary).
Parks and Recreation: Pinafore Park	Architectural	Accessible Parking	Accessible parking spaces added to new parking areas within park
	Architectural	Access to Park Operations Building	Power Assist Door feature has been added to front door of building

Department / Location	Type of Barrier	Barrier Issue	Resolution / Achievements
	Architectural	Access from play areas to other buildings	New Path has been installed to connect playground to band shell and to south property line
Parks and Recreation: <i>Cowan Park</i>	Architectural	Access to Park facilities	Stair treads painted at park to facilitate use by visually impaired residents, to assist with depth perception
Parks and Recreation: <i>Centennial Sports Park</i>	Architectural	Access to service building and washroom facilities	Design and build of a new service building at the park which incorporates accessible standards for washrooms
Parks and Recreation: <i>St. Thomas Timken Centre</i>	Architectural	Access to building and facilities	Design and building of this new sports facility incorporated accessibility features including automatic doors, ramps, curb cuts, accessible washrooms, elevator (2 nd floor access) and stripping on egress/stairs for visually impaired
Parks and Recreation: <i>Memorial Arena</i>	Architectural	Access to building and facilities	Renovation to existing sports facility to add accessibility features including automatic doors, curb cuts, accessible washrooms and stripping on egress/stairs for visually impaired.
Planning	Informational/ Communications and Policy Practice	Consideration of Accessibility Issues in Planning	As noted above, circulation of all site development plan applications to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and inclusion of comments by Committee with other agency comments for Site Plan Committee and Council review
Treasury	Architectural	Counter access	As noted above, Treasury counter in City Hall has been retrofitted.
Valleyview	Architectural	Accessible Nursing Care and Day Program Services	New facility opened in 2006 which meets Accessibility standards through Building Code and Ministry of Health requirements

Note: A comprehensive review is planned for 2009 to review all completed and outstanding barriers.

PART III

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2008

1. Implementation Plan and Recommendations

The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas is committed to improving accessibility and promoting opportunities for persons with disabilities to fully participate in the community.

Targets are established based on what is considered achievable. As the Municipal Accessibility Plan is required on an annual basis, reviews occur prior to the budget preparation cycle each year. The purpose of an annual review of the Municipal Accessibility Plan is to evaluate whether or not targets are being met and to adopt a plan to meet current expectations. The Municipal Advisory Steering Committee will continue to work with the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure the monitoring process is maintained. The Municipal Advisory Steering Committee will conduct an audit of the activities outlined in the Municipal Accessibility Plan on an annual basis and report directly to Council. The Municipal Advisory Steering Committee and the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee shall meet at least twice annually to discuss the current year Accessibility Plan and to consider the upcoming year's accessibility capital budget.

2. Communication of Plan

The availability of the Municipal Accessibility Plan is announced publicly by way of an announcement at the televised City Council meeting. Additionally, the plan is posted on the City's website. As policies, procedures and technical guidelines develop, they too will be placed on the website. It is the intention of the Municipality to ensure that the Plan will be made available in multiple formats.

PART IV

MOVING FORWARD INITIATIVES FOR 2008 – 2009

The City of St. Thomas will move forward in 2008-2009, building on successes identified within this plan and addressing priorities for the future. The City will focus its accessibility activities in four key areas in the upcoming year.

1. Business and Corporate Processes to Support Accessibility

Activities	Responsibilities	Timelines
Develop and finalize Corporate structures, including lead department, for Accessibility Initiative	Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> Approval: <i>City Council</i>	<i>By December 31, 2008</i>
Confirm and finalize Roles and Responsibilities for Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board, Departments and City Council	Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> Approval: <i>City Council</i>	<i>By December 31, 2008</i>
Assess and as necessary, ensure that all necessary key stakeholder groups and perspectives are included in activities	Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> Approval: <i>City Council</i>	<i>By December 31, 2008</i>
Align Accessibility Planning Processes with Corporate Municipal Planning and Business Processes (Capital and Operating Budget activities)	Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> Approval: <i>City Council</i>	<i>By December 31, 2008</i>
Review Corporate Policies to ensure incorporation of Accessibility considerations	Review and Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Management Board</i> Approval: <i>City Council</i>	<i>By August 31, 2009</i>
Evaluate activities and outcomes	<i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee and Management Board</i>	<i>By December 31, 2009</i>

2. Training and Development

Activities	Responsibilities	Timelines
Accessibility Training for all staff in all departments	<i>Human Resources Department in collaboration with Steering and Accessibility Committees</i>	<i>By December 31, 2009</i>
On-going training and development for City Council, Steering and Accessibility Advisory Committees	<i>Steering Committee/ Corporate Lead to organize</i>	<i>By December 31, 2009</i>

3. Barrier Identification and Resolution

Activities	Responsibilities	Timelines
Develop and Implement coordinated processes to identify barriers	<i>Recommendations: Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> <i>Approval: City Council</i>	<i>By March 31, 2009</i>
Develop and implement coordinated processes to resolve barriers	<i>Recommendations: Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i> <i>Approval: City Council</i>	<i>By March 31, 2009</i>

4. Standards Development

Activities	Responsibilities	Timelines
<p>Develop, Adopt and Implement Service Standards, as directed by the Province:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service – by January 2010 • Transportation • Information and Communications • Built Environment • Employment (pending Provincial Direction) 	<p>Recommendations: <i>Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, Management Board</i></p> <p>Approval: <i>City Council</i></p>	<p><i>Customer Service – By December 31, 2009</i></p> <p><i>All others – to be determined</i></p>
<p>Develop, Adopt and Implement Facility Accessibility Standard</p>	<p>Recommendations: <i>Environmental Services Department (lead) in conjunction with Steering Committee, Advisory Committee and Management Board</i></p> <p>Approval: <i>City Council</i></p>	<p><i>By December 31, 2009</i></p>

PART V

CONCLUSION

The Corporation of the City of St. Thomas is committed to continuously addressing past and current accessibility barriers, to being progressive and to developing innovative solutions to accessibility issues. The City recommends that the Province co-ordinate the preparation of uniform Municipal Accessibility Guidelines so that the guidelines can be implemented in a consistent manner and that the Province provides Accessibility Funding to assist municipalities in the implementation of barrier-free services and facilities.