

Corporation of the
Township of Billings
15 Old Mill
Kagawong ON POP 1JO

ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
2005

As accepted by Resolution of Council
January 17, 2005

Submitted by : Kathy McDonald
Clerk-Treasurer

Billings Township Highlights:

Billings is located on the north Shore of Manitoulin Island in the North Central area of Ontario. The main hamlet, Kagawong is referred to as “Ontario’s Prettiest Village” and is nestled in the beautiful harbour of Mudge Bay surrounded by old growth forest.

The Township has a library, fire hall, Public Works garage, and Community Centre, a secondary school serving all the Island except the easternmost native reserve, a marina and small craft basin, a park pavilion and two churches. The Municipal Office is located in the Old Mill Building, which also has a rental hall. Several retail businesses and three eating places complete this mix of lifestyle, prosperity and location.

Many tourists and Island residents walk our river park and harbour area. Gatherings at the Community Centre and Rental portion of the Old Mill attract many people. The events include about 20 musical presentations, 40 euchre parties, and many community luncheons and receptions. Billings is most eager that people with mobility and vision problems, who already attend such events and view our river and harbour find the facilities they need.

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

The purpose of 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 and implement an annual Accessibility Plan.

A “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 a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice. Barriers prevent people with disabilities from going to school or to work.

OBJECTIVES OF PLAN:

The plan describes the measures that the township of Billings has taken in the past and the measures the town will take in the current year to identify remove and prevents barriers to people with disabilities who utilize the facilities and services of the Township.

The plan will:

1. Describe the process by which the Township will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
2. Review earlier efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
3. List the facilities, policies, programs, practices and services the Township of Billings will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with Disabilities.
4. Describe the measures the Township will take in the coming years to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with Disabilities.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Township of Billings Accessibility Committee is dedicated to promoting a barrier-free environment for all persons, regardless of needs, to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of community life.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES:

The goals of the Accessibility Committee are to encourage and facilitate accessibility on behalf of all persons by:

1. Promoting public awareness and sensitivity to accessibility issues.
2. Encouraging cooperation among all service and interest groups to ensure a better community for all persons.
3. Identifying and documenting relevant accessibility issues and concerns with respect to all municipal property and buildings.
4. Liaising with Town Departments and local organizations in addressing accessibility issues that are related to municipal property and buildings.
5. Recognizing that the needs of all persons are constantly changing.

SITE AUDIT OF MUNICIPALLY OWNED BUILDINGS

In order to identify barriers the following methodology was used:
Visual inspection of properties by Municipal and Public works staff. Site audit of the municipally-owned buildings was completed.

PROGRESS IN 2004

Public Library:

The existing ramp was replaced with a wheelchair ramp meeting Ontario Building Code specifications.

Old Mill Building:

Municipal Office/ Public Washrooms/ Rental Room

Although wheelchair ramp from parking area to front deck, and wheelchair sill lip for entry door are in place, no signage was in place to declare "Disabled Only Parking- Towing Enforced". The public washroom is on ground level and sized to accommodate wheelchairs, but no sign so indicated. Now signage has been purchased to identify accessible washrooms and to reserve a parking space. A By-law will be passed to enforce towing. The washroom sign has Braille.

Marina:

Although a disabled accessible parking space exists, no signage so designated it. Now a sign has been ordered “Disabled Only Parking-Towing Enforced”.

Pavilion:

The boardwalk journey from the Pavilion, past the log museum to the Evergreen Maze and Community Centre is popular. This year, six light standards have been installed between pavilion and maze, to improve visibility in this area.

IDENTIFIED BARRIERS STILL TO BE OVERCOME

Barrier	Strategy for removal/ prevention
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Old Mill Building:

Poor Lighting at entrance	Upgrade outdoor light fixture
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Community Centre

Stairwell lacks clear visibility	Place reflective tape on entry step lips.
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Wheelchair entry door lip.	Place wheelchair sill lip at entry.
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BARRIERS TO BE ADDRESSED IN 2004

Community Centre:

A wheelchair door lip ramp will be placed at the wheelchair ramp head on the upper level.

Reflective tape will be placed on entry step lips at lower level.

MONITORING PROCESS

Billings will work within its resources and other priorities to mitigate identified barricades. The Council, Accessibility Committee, staff and public will all have input into what barriers exist, and which are to be mitigated. The Township recognizes that the investment it makes in identifying and removing barriers for people with disabilities will benefit everyone.

As additional barriers are identified in the future, Council will consider strategies and budget allocations to address them.