



Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Community Services Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

1:15 p.m.

Regional Council Chamber

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener

Present were: Chair G. Lorentz, L. Armstrong, E. Clarke*, T. Galloway, D. Jaworsky*, H. Jowett, K. Kiefer, J. Mitchell, K. Seiling, S. Shantz, S. Strickland, and B. Vrbanovic.

Absent: D. Craig, S. Foxtan, J. Nowak, and K. Redman.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under “The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”

None declared.

Delegations

- a) Trudy Beaulne, Social Development Centre Waterloo Region and KW VisitAble Housing Task Force Re: VisitAble housing in Waterloo Region

*E. Clarke entered the meeting at 1:16 p.m.

Trudy Beaulne appeared with Mary Pappert and Brad Ullner on behalf of the KW VisitAble Housing Task Force. T. Beaulne provided a presentation advocating for the creation of VisitAble housing in Waterloo Region. A copy of the [presentation](#) is appended to the original minutes. M. Pappert distributed [documents](#) and explained that a VisitAble house is one that consists of a one, or no, step entrance to the main level and a minimum half bath on the main level.

T. Beaulne noted that VisitAbility is not all that is required for full accessibility but would be beneficial as a minimum standard. She requested that the Region take efforts to

encourage VisitAble housing in the Official Plan and make it a requirement for affordable housing funded by the Region.

*D. Jaworsky entered the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

The Committee thanked the delegation for the presentation.

In response to a question from the Committee, Deb Schlichter, Director, Housing Services, noted that criteria related to VisitAble housing is not a requirement, but is one of the objectives, when reviewing affordable housing proposals.

Request to Remove Items From Consent Agenda

E. Clarke requested that items 4.1 PHE-PSV-16-01, Paramedic Services Performance Measurement Report – January to December 2015 (year-end) and 4.4 CSD-HOU-16-01, Proposed Waiting List Assistance Program be removed from the consent agenda.

Motion to Approve Items or Receive for Information

Moved by B. Vrbanovic

Seconded by L. Armstrong

That the following item be approved:

- That the Commissioner of Community Services be authorized to sign, on behalf of The Regional Municipality of Waterloo, an agreement with Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario by its Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade to provide funding in the amount of \$40,000 for use in connection with the Waterloo Region Immigration Portal under the Immigration Partnership, with such agreement to be in a form satisfactory to the Commissioner of Community Services and the Regional Solicitor;

That the 2016 Operating Budget for Community Services be increased by \$25,264 gross and \$0 net Regional Levy, for the Immigration Portal Development to be funded by the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (MCIIT) as outlined in Report CSD-IP-16-01, dated February 23, 2016;

That the Commissioner of Community Services be authorized to sign, on behalf of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, the grant letter agreements in connection with grants provided to assist with resettlement of Syrian newcomers, subject to such grants being approved by the Task Force overseeing the Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers and the form of grant letter agreement being satisfactory to the Commissioner of Community Services and the Regional Solicitor;

That the addition of 0.60 Temporary Full Time Equivalent be approved effective April 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 for a Planner position for Community Services,

Immigration Partnership as outlined in report CSD-IP-16-01, dated February 23, 2016;

And that the increase of 0.09 Temporary Full Time Equivalent be approved effective April 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017 to increase the Program Assistant position hours for Community Services, Immigration Partnership as outlined in report CSD-IP-16-01, dated February 23, 2016.

And that the following item be received for information:

- PHE-IDS-16-01, Sexual Health Youth Strategy Update

Carried

PHE-PSV-16-01, Paramedic Services Performance Measurement Report – January to December 2015 (year-end)

In response to a question from the Committee, Stephen VanValkenburg, Chief Paramedic Services, stated that there are a number of reasons why a large number of ambulance calls do not result in transportation to the hospital, including individuals that are treated at the scene, multiple vehicles sent to an accident, and patients that decide they do not want to be taken to the hospital.

Received for information.

CSD-HOU-16-01, Proposed Waiting List Assistance Program

In response to a question from the Committee, D. Schlichter stated that the waiting list assistance program is designed to assist households that have been waiting the longest for access to geared to income housing and funding from other sources is used to assist those with urgent housing needs.

Moved by K. Kiefer

Seconded by D. Jaworsky

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo authorize staff to implement the Waiting List Assistance Program as outlined in report CSD-HOU-16-01, dated February 23, 2016.

Carried

Regular Agenda Resumes

Reports – Planning, Development and Legislative Services

PDL-CUL-16-02, Overview of Museum Collections Storage Needs and Possible Federal Funding Towards Expansion of Curatorial Centre

Rob Horne, Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services stated that the Curatorial Centre is approaching capacity and the report is recommending applying for funding to expand the Curatorial Centre.

Moved by K. Seiling

Seconded by J. Mitchell

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following actions regarding a proposed expansion to the Region of Waterloo Curatorial Centre, as described in Report No. PDL-CUL-16-02, dated February 23, 2016:

- a) Initiate an application to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for submission in 2016, seeking funding for architectural fees, construction, storage systems and related expenses from the Government of Canada; and
- b) Forward this report to the Federal Minister of Canadian Heritage, and area Members of Parliament.

Carried

Reports – Public Health and Emergency Services**PHE-HLV-16-02, Public Health's Role in Supporting School Health**

Received for information.

PHE-PSV-16-02, Paramedic Services Ambulance Service Review Update

S. VanValkenburg explained that the report provides the results of the Ambulance Service Review. He noted that that Paramedic Services successfully completed the process and was commended in a number of areas including level of service and training.

Received for information.

Information/Correspondence

- a) Housing Stability System Evolution Newsletter – Winter 2016 was received for information.
- b) The Community Guide to End Homelessness in Waterloo Region was received for information.

- c) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List was received for information.

Next Meeting – March 22, 2016

Adjourn

Moved by T. Galloway

Seconded by K. Kiefer

That the meeting adjourn at 1:46 p.m.

Carried

Committee Chair, G. Lorentz

Committee Clerk, T. Brubacher

VisitAble Housing

A Basic Standard for Accessibility

**VisitAble Housing Task Force
Social Development Centre Waterloo Region**

Presentation to
Community Services Committee
Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Tuesday, February 23, 2016



Objectives

- Update local work related to VisitAble housing
- Invite Regional Council to take a lead in ensuring VisitAble housing is built in the region
- Invite Council, staff and community members to attend a March 23rd community forum and workshop to get more information and discuss action

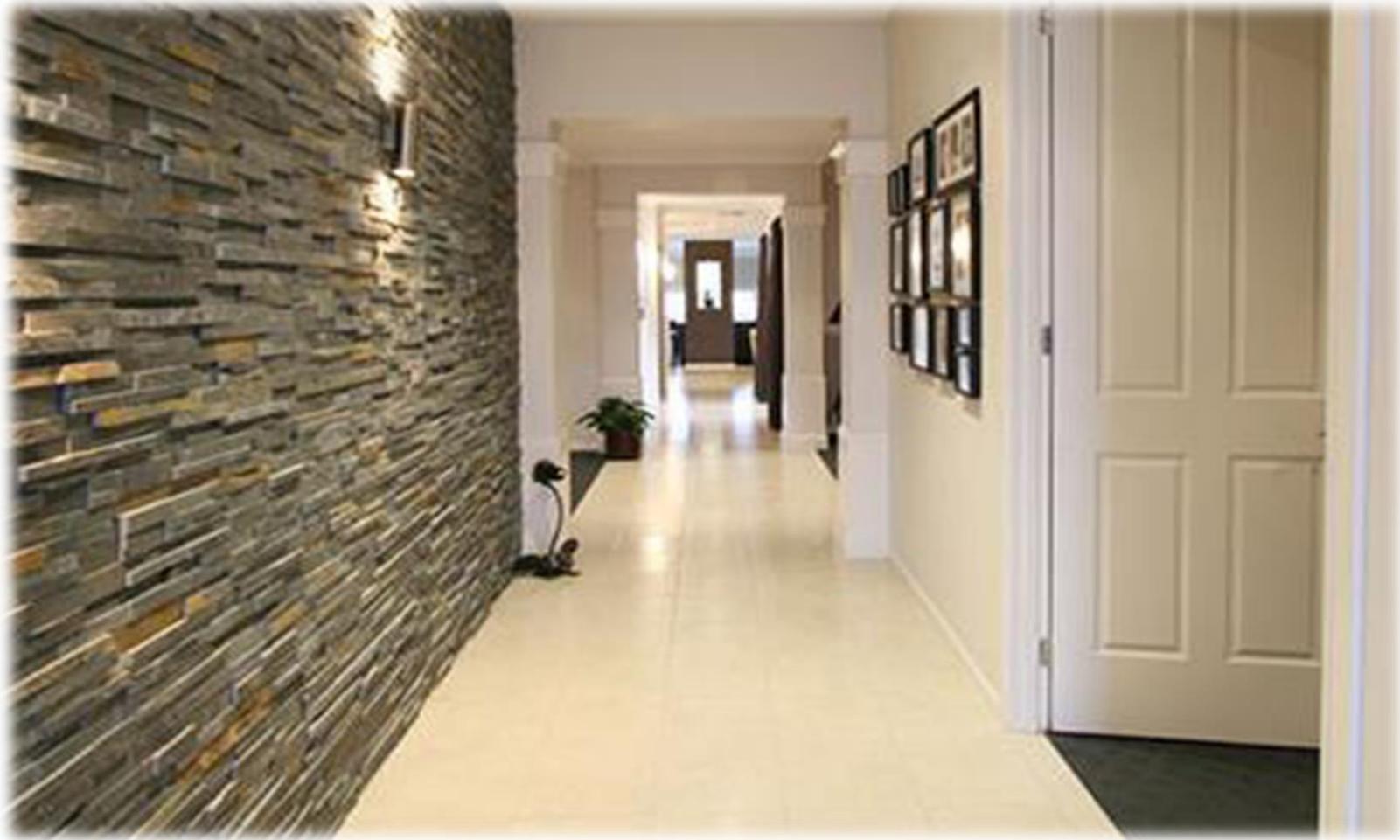
VisitAble Housing Features

1. One no-step entrance to main level
2. Wider doorways and hallways on main level
3. At minimum a half bath on main level that can be used by someone with a mobility aid

One no-step entrance to main level



Wider doorways and hallways on main level



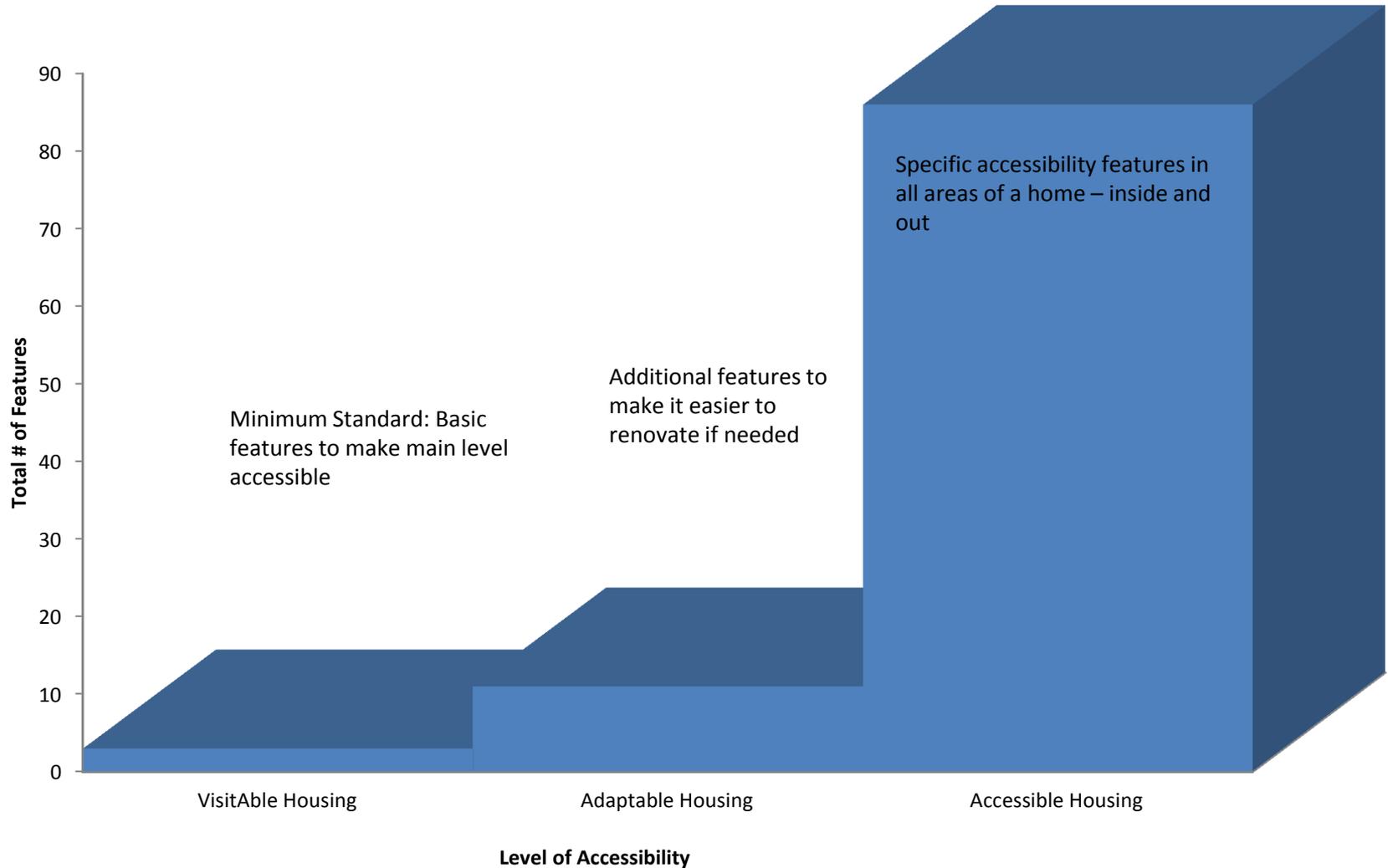
**At minimum a half bath on main level
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A Basic Standard for Accessibility

- VisitAble Housing is the **minimum standard** for accessibility
- Ensures a home can be visited by friends and family members who have mobility limitations
- Does not define all possible accessibility features

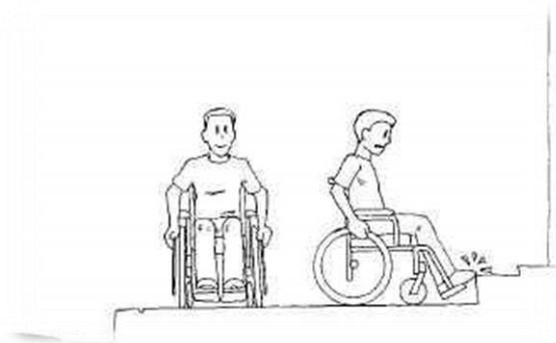
Accessibility Design Spectrum



Why? Our Love Affair with Stairs ≠ An Inclusive Community



Stairs Limit Access



Stairs Can Be Unsafe



Challenges in Building VisitAble Housing

- Accessibility needs and realities not well understood
- Lack of Canadian stock with basic accessibility features
- VisitAble features exist but are not always recognized
- Readiness of housing industry
- Uncertainty about costs, particularly no step access
- Regulations and policies in Canada not helpful

Regulation and Technical Research

- Provincial, regional and local municipal policies, plans, regulations and building guidelines
- Solutions for no-step entrance with information on costs
- Contacted builders in Canada and US to get information and advice

What We Learned

- VisitAble features can fit within current policies, plans and regulations
- Some policies encourage, none require (except for Ontario Building Code requirement for multi-unit buildings 3+ stories high)
- The no-step access is the most challenging feature
- Requirements, technical guidelines and usual practices may discourage any but the most persistent builder
- There is housing built in Waterloo Region and Ontario with VisitAble Housing features – but not well known & difficult to find

Key Challenge: No-Step Entrance

- It's easier to build on larger lot size and greenfield development
- Any size lot is doable – the smaller the footprint, the more attention is needed re: design and engineering
- Local zoning requirements are not easily understood and could be a disincentive
- Costs vary depending on type of solution

No-Step Entrance Solutions and Costs

Solution	Cost (Estimated)
Inset Floor Joist Method	\$250-375
No-Step Entrance Though Garage	\$0-500
Slab on Grade	\$0
Ramps/Bridges	\$200-600
Split Drainage	\$1,025
Earth Berms	\$230-1,230
Retaining Wall	\$2,950

From Social Development Centre Waterloo Region, Building VisitAble Housing in Waterloo Region: Regulatory and Technical Analysis, January 2016

Building VisitAble Features when a home is built costs very little compared to renovations later which can add up to thousands of dollars

Builders tell us:

- With experience, it gets easier and costs are lower
- Costs can be absorbed, so don't need to increase the price of a home

Region of Waterloo Official Plan, 2015

3.A Range and Mix of Housing (p.40)

Housing is a basic necessity of life and is an essential element to individual health and community vitality. The provision of a full and diverse range and mix of permanent housing that is safe, affordable, of adequate size and meets the accessibility requirements of all residents, is important if the region is to maintain and enhance its quality of life. It also plays a key role in attracting and supporting a diversified and stable business environment.

Region of Waterloo – Expressions of Interest – EOI 2014-03 – Rental Housing: New Affordable and Supportive Development

2) Program Objectives (p.1-2)

To build energy efficient and well-designed housing that delivers adequate unit sizes, provides for overall visitability and accessible units

8) Planning and Design Requirements (p.6)

The Region encourages proponents to include designs that provide visitability for people with physical disabilities. Visitability means that individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or have some other form of mobility impairment can move freely throughout the building and gain access to units. Proponents that target housing for persons with disabilities are also encouraged to provide accessible units with features and design details above the minimum Ontario Building Code requirements.

**The best time to build VisitAble
housing was 100 years ago**

- the 2nd best time is now!

Request of Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council

- ▶ Recognize VisitAble housing as a basic standard for accessible housing and strengthen the language in the Regional official plan to encourage this standard
- ▶ Promote VisitAbility as a requirement for all affordable housing funded by the Region
- ▶ Provide leadership and invite all area municipalities to collaborate and:
 - Adopt a shared local standard of VisitAble Housing for all new housing
 - Develop guidelines for building greenfield and infill VisitAble housing
 - Provide incentives to developers/builders to build VisitAble housing
- Join a community forum and workshop to discuss these directions in greater detail - *Wednesday, March 23 - RIM Park, Waterloo*

Thank You

For more information about the VisitAble Housing initiative:

Trudy Beaulne, Executive Director, Social Development Centre Waterloo Region

Email: trudy@waterlooregion.org

Phone: 519-579-1096 X *3006

www.waterlooregion.org/visitable



Social Development Centre
— WATERLOO REGION —



VisitAble
Housing
CANADA



VisitAble Housing

A Basic Standard for Accessibility

VisitAble Housing Task Force

Social Development Centre Waterloo Region

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Community Services Committee
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Objectives

- ▶ Update on local work related to VisitAble housing
- ▶ Invite Regional Council to take a lead in ensuring VisitAble housing is built in Waterloo region
- ▶ Invite Councillors, staff and community members to attend a March 23rd community forum and workshop to get more information and discuss action

VisitAble Housing Features

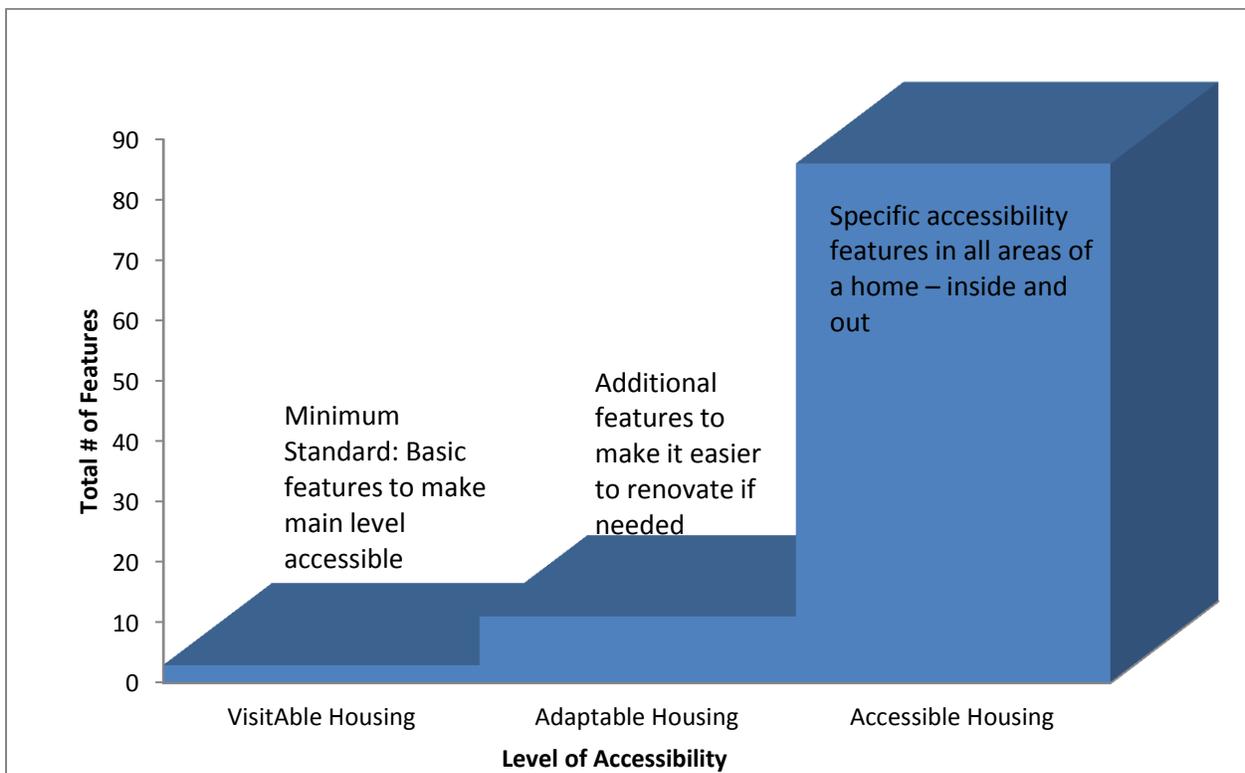
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VisitAble Housing – Basic Standard for Accessibility

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Challenges in Building VisitAble Housing

- ▶ Accessibility needs and realities not well understood
- ▶ Lack of Canadian housing stock with basic accessibility features
- ▶ VisitAble features exist but are not always recognized
- ▶ Readiness of housing industry
- ▶ Uncertainty about costs, particularly no step access
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Regulation and Technical Research

- ▶ Provincial, regional and local municipal policies, plans, regulations and building guidelines
- ▶ Solutions for no-step entrance with information on costs
- ▶ Contacted builders in Canada and US to get information and advice

What We Learned

- ▶ VisitAble features can fit within current policies, plans and regulations
- ▶ Some policies encourage, none require (except for Ontario Building Code requirement for multi-unit buildings three or more stories high)
- ▶ The no-step access is the most challenging feature
- ▶ Requirements, technical guidelines and usual practices may discourage any but the most persistent builder
- ▶ There is housing built in Waterloo Region and Ontario with VisitAble Housing features – some as early as 1990's in Elmira – but this is not well known and difficult to find

No-Step Entrance

- ▶ It's easier to build on larger lot size and greenfield development
- ▶ Any size lot is doable – the smaller the footprint, the more attention is needed re: design and engineering
- ▶ Local zoning requirements are not easily understood and could be a disincentive
- ▶ Builders tell us:
 - ▶ With experience, it gets easier and costs are lower
 - ▶ Costs can be absorbed, so don't need to increase the price of a home

No-Step Entrance Solutions and Costs

Solution	Estimated Cost
Basement and inset floor joist method	\$250-375
Build house on concrete slab	\$0-500
Gradual sloped entrance through garage	\$0
Build ramp and bridge from porch	\$200-600
Lower/raise visit-able floor and earth berm	\$1,025
Split drainage (to front and back) from centre of lot	\$230-1,230
Build retaining wall so grading can be done as needed	\$2,950

From Social Development Centre Waterloo Region, Building VisitAble Housing in Waterloo Region: Regulatory and Technical Analysis, January 2016

Building VisitAble Features when a home is built costs very little compared to renovations later which can add up to thousands of dollars

Region of Waterloo Official Plan, 2015

VisitAble housing is consistent with what has been laid out in the Regional Municipality's Official Plan:

<p>3.A Range and Mix of Housing (p.40) Housing is a basic necessity of life and is an essential element to individual health and community vitality. The provision of a full and diverse range and mix of permanent housing that is safe, affordable, of adequate size and meets the accessibility requirements of all residents, is important if the region is to maintain and enhance its quality of life. It also plays a key role in attracting and supporting a diversified and stable business environment.</p>	
3.A.1	The Region, in collaboration with Area Municipalities and other agencies, will prepare and regularly update the Community Action Plan for Housing and the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy.
3.A.2	Area Municipalities will plan to provide an appropriate range of housing in terms of form, tenure, density and affordability to satisfy the various physical, social, economic and personal support needs of current and future residents.

Region of Waterloo – Expressions of Interest – EOI 2014-03 – Rental Housing: New Affordable and Supportive Development

2) Program Objectives (p.1-2)	<p>Building on the new AHS 2014-2019, the Region is seeking proposals that achieve as many of the following program objectives as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build new sustainable affordable rental housing, including housing available to lower-income households (please see Section 5 of this document) • To create a range of supportive housing in either new or existing developments that provide support services to allow families and individuals to live independently (please see Section 6 of this document); • To build housing that supports existing affordable and supportive housing needs in less serviced areas of the Region; • To build affordable housing that supports the planning and land-use policies of the Region of Waterloo and Area Municipalities, including transit-supportive development within or in immediate proximity to ION station areas; • To build affordable housing that is sensitively integrated into the community (e.g. through design excellence and use of quality materials); • To create affordable housing that addresses economic, environmental and community sustainability (please see Section 7 of this document); • To build energy efficient and well-designed housing that delivers adequate unit sizes, provides for overall visitability and accessible units; • To building affordable housing that is located on or near a Grand River Transit route and in close proximity to schools, recreational facilities, shopping and services; • To incorporate partnerships with organizations and agencies to address other community interests; and • To dedicate units to households currently on the Region's centralized waiting list for Community Housing.
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7) Sustainability Measures (p.6)	For the purposes of this call for EOIs, proponents must show how their proposed project will address three areas of sustainability: economic (e.g. demonstrating good business sense), environmental (e.g. energy efficiency above code requires, meeting LEEDS standards) and community (e.g. create social inclusion).
8) Planning and Design Requirements (p.6)	Preference will be given to EOIs that integrate good urban design elements, demonstrates enhanced energy efficiency and accessibility features, and meets the Area Municipality’s planning objectives and design guidelines, in addition to basic site specific development requirements. The Region encourages proponents to include designs that provide visitability for people with physical disabilities. Visitability means that individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or have some other form of mobility impairment can move freely throughout the building and gain access to units. Proponents that target housing for persons with disabilities are also encouraged to provide accessible units with features and design details above the minimum Ontario Building Code requirements.

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Request to Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council

- ▶ Recognize VisitAble housing as a basic standard for accessible housing and strengthen the language in the Regional official plan to encourage this standard so all of Waterloo Region will be a more inclusive community and attractive for aging in place
- ▶ Promote VisitAbility as a requirement for all affordable housing funded by the Region
- ▶ Provide leadership and invite all area municipalities to collaborate and:
 - Adopt a shared local standard of VisitAble Housing for all new housing
 - Ensure that specific guidelines for building housing that is VisitAble are available for both green field and infill housing so as to encourage this type of housing to be built
 - Providing incentives to developers/builders to build VisitAble housing
- ▶ Council members, staff and interested community members attend community forum and workshop to discuss these directions in greater detail - Wednesday March 23, RIM Park, Waterloo

Thank You

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