



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
From:	Connie Morphet, Director of Finance & Administration Patrick Wittmann, Supervisor of Infrastructure & Asset Management
Date:	January 24, 2019
Re:	Accessibility for Seniors Update – Issue Report

Purpose

This report is intended to inform the Board about the results of the inspections undertaken by municipal inspectors and fire chiefs at the 5 (five) buildings considered for chair lift installations.

Background

Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff completed initial investigations into the options available and determined a balanced approach to identify possible locations based on tenant demographics. The [report](#) provided to the Board in June of 2018 provided for a list of options and results of initial investigations.

The recommendations approved were for staff to assess five (5) buildings for the possibility of a stair lift. The first step in the process was to ask the municipal building official (CBO – Chief Building Official) and Fire Chief (FPO Fire Prevention Officer) in each community for their inspection of the building and their approval in principle with the installation of a stair lift.

Determinations of the Municipal Chief Building Official and Fire Chief Inspections

The Town of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands

- Although in favour of the idea, the existing stairwell does not meet today's building code for dimensions, any type of projection into this means of egress would further hinder its capability to function. Because of safety reasons, without a major structural renovation to increase size the project can't be endorsed as outlined.

Espanola

- A designer would be required and/or an architect for a chairlift depending on the size of the building. It would not be possible due to the width of the required exit at 60 Barber. The exiting stairwells are currently narrow and would not meet today's standards. A Chairlift installation is not recommended and would not be approved.

Spanish-Sables Rivers Township: Webbwood

- The Ontario Building Code has a required width for an exit. Egress concerns make this chair lift not possible in these stair wells.

Municipality of Markstay-Warren: Warren

- For a 2-story building used as a residential occupancy the building code, under section 9 retrofit requires that stairwells be a minimum width of 900mm and that the stairwell width shall not be reduced by any appliances. The stairs would need to have an unobstructed width of at least 35.5" which is currently the width of the landing. Adding a chair lift in this case would not be feasible as the path is already very close to the minimum width. The project would require a building permit for the installation. To receive a permit, the department would require detailed specifications for the installation of the lifts to be reviewed at the time of inspection.

Municipality of French River

- The landing would not meet fire code and would need to be resolved to meet egress requirements. The project would require a building permit for the installation. To receive a permit, the department would require detailed specifications for the installation of the lifts to be reviewed at the time of inspection.

Summary

While each inspector and fire chief provided their own opinion based on the building and fire codes that must be followed, the results of the investigations are that the landings at all five (5) buildings pose a code-based violation if a chairlift were installed. The violation is that they would negatively impact the width, thus impeding egress (35.5 inches unobstructed).

The nature of the five (5) stairway landings is that they are flanked on all sides by structural walls (generally concrete block) on concrete foundations. These walls are two story exterior structures and thus would require significant architectural and structural alterations to facilitate a chairlift installation that meets the OBC and Fire Code.

Recommendations

The DSB staff although supportive of improving accessibility for tenants at the social housing properties, cannot recommend the installation of chair lifts due to the opinions provided by the Municipal Building Officials and Fire Prevention Officers.