



**FUNCTIONAL AND CODE ASSESSMENT  
EXISTING CHANTRY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE BUILDING  
TOWNSHIPS OF RIDEAU LAKES  
July 13, 2021**

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

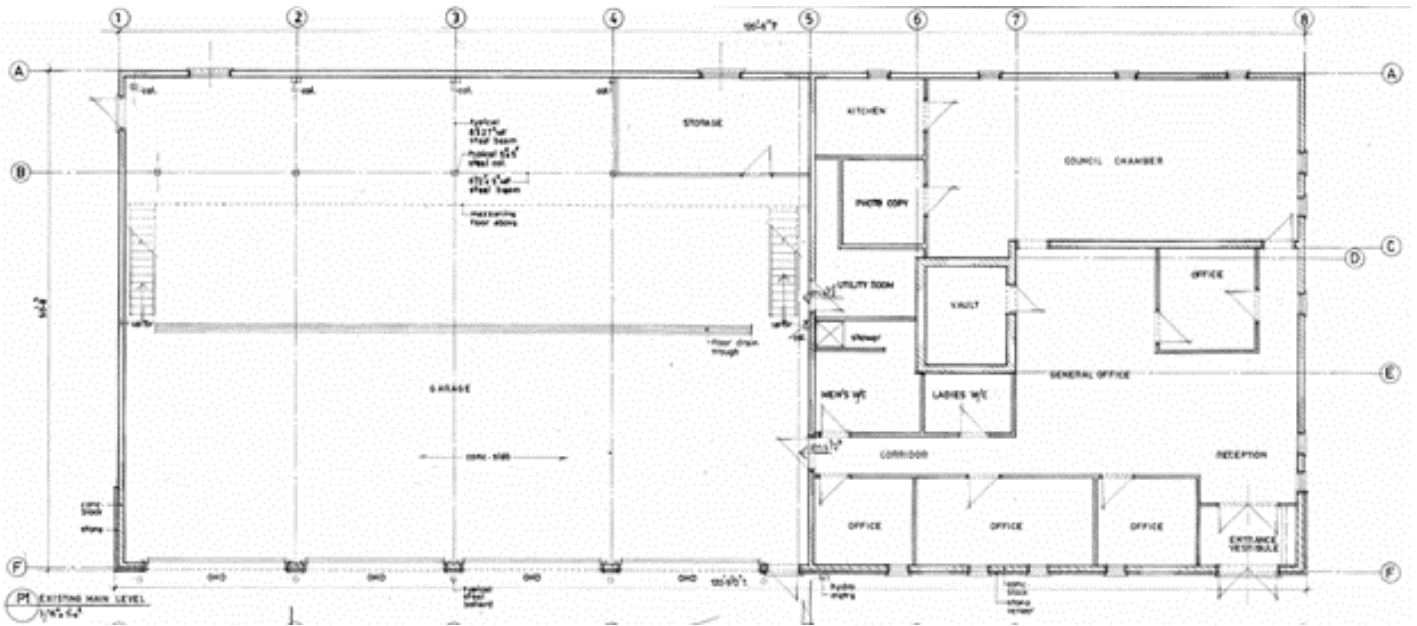
+VG Architects has been retained by the Township of Rideau Lakes to perform an accessibility and functional assessment of the existing Township Administrative Offices at 1439 County Rd 8 Delta, ON. The two-part study evaluates the Existing Township Office's Ontario Building Code compliance issues related to accessibility as well as functional deficiencies in the administrative office spaces. The existing building is a multi-purpose facility that has been adapted and renovated over time to suit the changing needs of the Township. The original building housed a 4-bay apparatus service garage with a smaller space for municipal offices and Township council chambers. A 2004-2005 renovation of the facility converted 80% of the vehicle bays into additional municipal office space including large areas dedicated to document storage, expanded council chambers and bathroom facilities. A partial apparatus service bay remains with offices at the back of the bay as well of other public works infrastructure to the rear of the building.

This study will evaluate the Township Administrative Office's existing deficiencies related to accessibility, operational functionality, and preparedness for future growth.

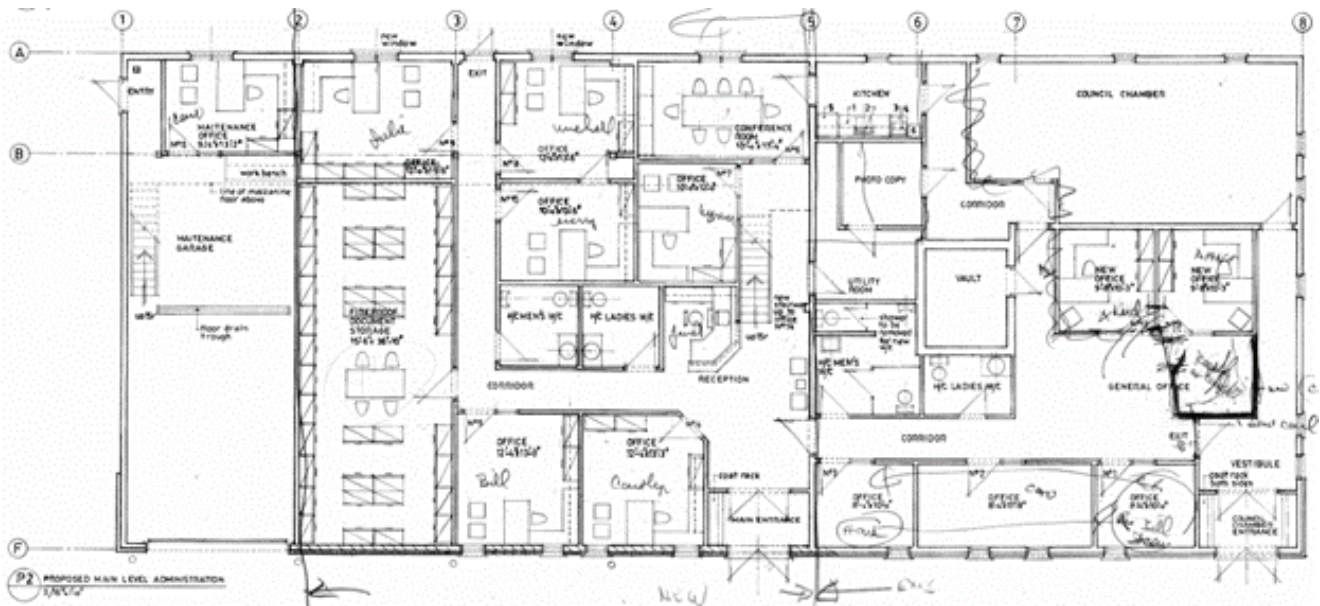
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IMG 1.1 - Chantry administration office building – original design



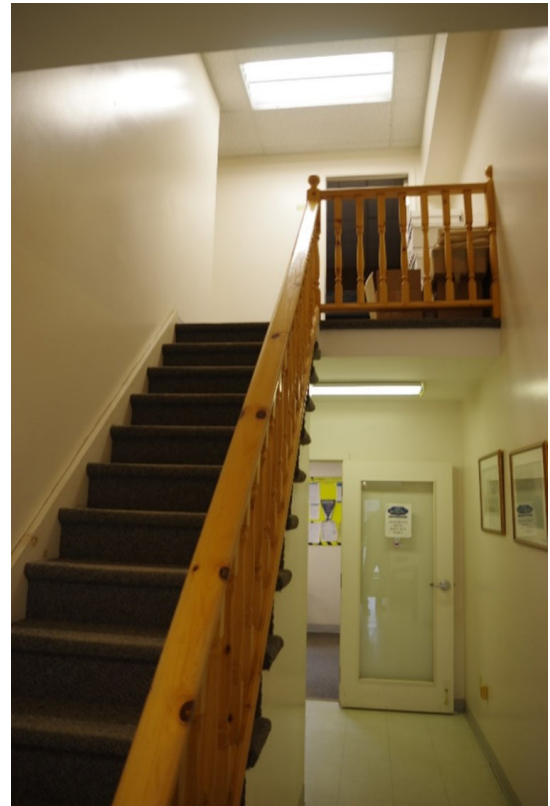
IMG 1.2 - Chantry administration office building – renovated design

## 1.2 ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

Inclusive and accessible design for employees, clients, and public users of municipal facilities is an essential requirement for public facilities in the Province of Ontario. Accessible workplace design provides safety, accessibility, and inclusion to all building users. The Ontario Building Code (OBC) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) dictate the level of compliance that is required to meet minimum accessibility requirements in the province of Ontario. All new construction projects, including new builds, renovations or additions of public building are required to meet or exceed OBC and AODA standards. As these requirements become more prescriptive and stringent over time existing facilities can require extensive costly renovations to be brought up to code. This is true of the Township's existing Administrative Offices. This review itemizes existing accessibility deficiencies at the Township offices and contemplated modifications/ renovations that may be required to bring the existing facility into compliance.

This 2-storey facility has no barrier free access to the 2nd level which contains some occupied spaces related to the office. In order to bring this into compliance with applicable codes and standards either all functions should be removed from the second level or a passenger elevator will need to be added to the building. For this type of application, we would recommend a LULA (Limited Use/Limited Application) Lift be implemented to serve the second level.

The existing stair (IMG 1.3) in the office space does not meet current codes and standards related to the guard and handrail heights and extensions for accessibility. In a renovation project this stair would require replacement to comply with current codes and standards.



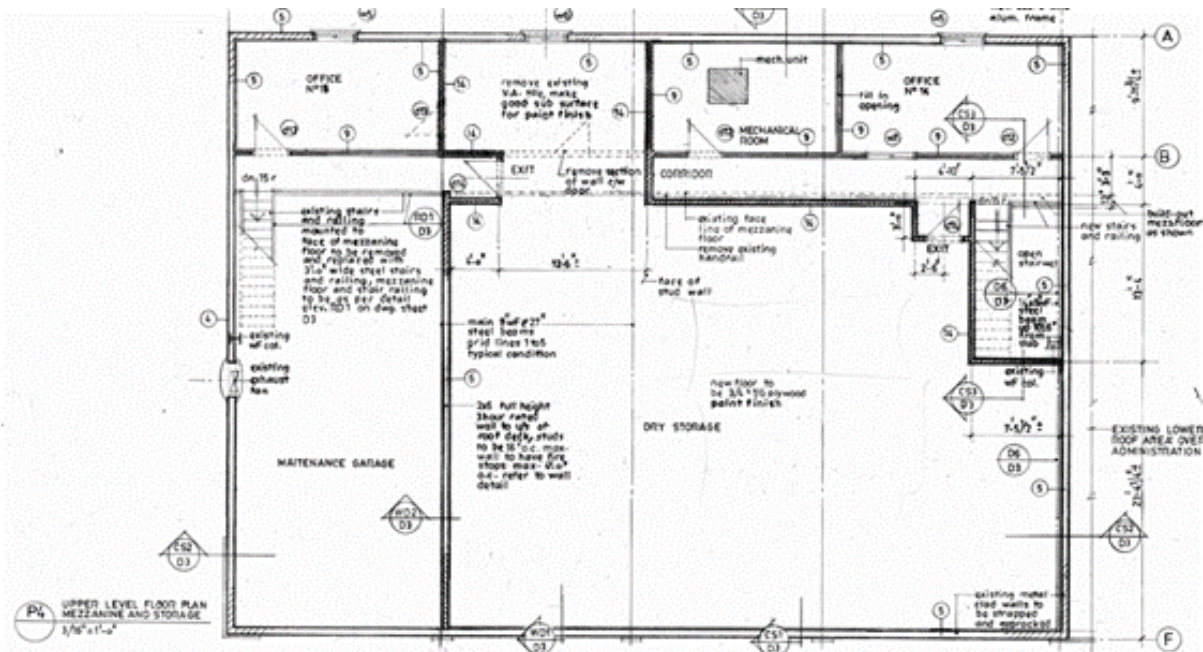
*IMG 1.3 - No barrier free access to 2nd level*



The second level space (IMG 1.4, 1.5, 1.6) currently house a meeting area, records storage and some unofficial workstations. The record storage area has very low ceilings with beams cutting across the space creating even lower areas, there is no practicable method to make this area barrier-free. This space also has no finished floor, poor ventilation, and does not appear to supply sufficient lighting or electrical receptacles to meet code. Based on the above noted criteria, the second floor storage area should be abandoned. The existing facility is proposed to be renovated.



IMG 1.4 & 1.5 - Essential work occurring in overflow space



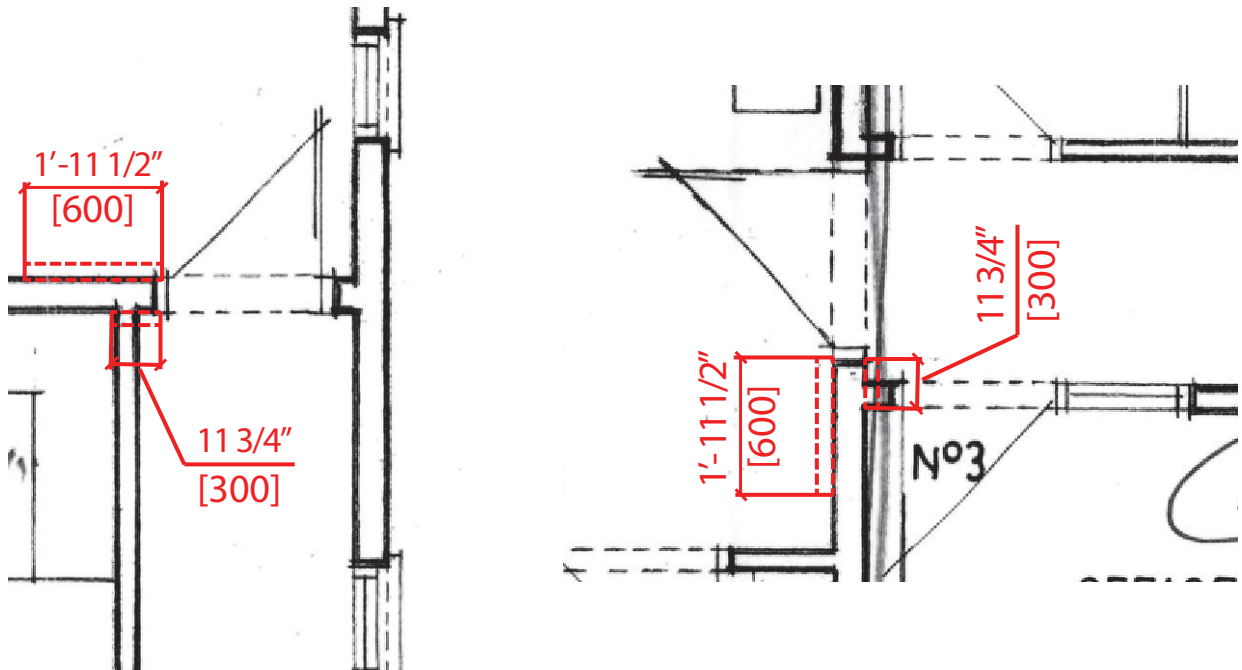
IMG 1.6 - 2nd Level

## Barrier-Free Path of Travel

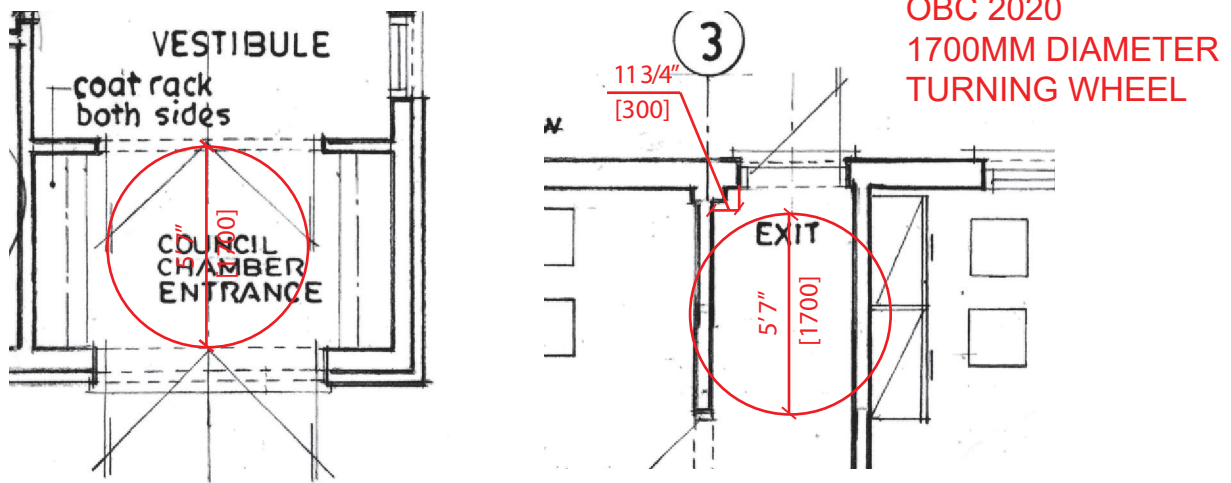
Our team completed a review of the existing barrier-free paths of travel in the facility. Public access routes and corridors through the existing office spaces were analyzed and, in most cases, deemed to be deficient as per current codes and standards. The below items are examples of non-compliance in the barrier-free routes in the existing building.

- Barrier free access regarding passageways into rooms corridors or exits (IMG 1.7, 1.8) require 300mm clear space on the push side and 600mm clear space on the pull side of a passageway – if this cannot be met a door operator must be installed as per OBC 2020.

- Adequately sized wheelchair turnaround areas are required at the termination of public corridors and in entrance vestibules (IMG 1.9, 1.10).
- Double entry doors in entrance vestibules are required to be spaced apart a minimum of 1500mm when the doors are in the open position to provide adequate space for a user in a wheelchair to easily and safely access the building.



*IMG 1.7 & 1.8 - Council chamber public access entrance and several other public use doors do not meet current 300mm clear wall space on push side requirement in OBC 2020. When this 300mm push side/600mm pull side clearance cannot be met, OBC 2020 requires door operators for barrier free access.*



*IMG 1.9 & 1.10 - 1700mm diameter wheel space is used as best practice for barrier free access and is meant to allow for disabled to navigate passage ways safely and effectively.*

Providing safe and barrier free means of egress from the building in case of an emergency is required for all public buildings – as noted in the photo (IMG 1.11), hallway spaces need to be free of obstructions or obstacles to allow building users safe egress paths directly to the exterior of the building.



*IMG 1.11 - Hallway space used as temporary overflow space, blocking safe travel for building users and not appropriate for barrier free access.*

Employees working at the Chantry administration office also do not have full access to modern barrier free design standards. The noted OBC Code compliancy issues regarding door pull and push and turning wheel clearances applies broadly to employee work spaces as well. The lack of accessibility within the facility limits the ability of the Chantry office to provide fully inclusive work spaces. This is a critical issue with current employee satisfaction and retention as well as being able to advertise to future employees that they are able to accommodate those with mobility or sensory issues. As the Townships of Rideau Lakes aims to advance an agenda of progressive rural governance, providing work environments that meet modern standards.

### Washroom Facilities

The current washroom facilities are adequate from a building size standpoint. however, the facility is missing a universal washroom for employees, clients, and the public use. This is a major disadvantage with respect to providing barrier free access to base level building amenities to building users. The OBC requires at least a single universal washroom in public facilities with accommodation for an adult-sized, height adjustable, change table. There is currently no space in the existing facility to accommodate a universal washroom.



### 1.3 FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OFFICE SPACE

Our team reviewed the existing municipal office spaces at the Township Administrative Building to better understand the operational challenges within the existing facility. As the compliment of Township staff has grown over the years some stop-gap measures have been put in place to address accommodation deficiencies of office and ancillary spaces.

The Township's office space accommodation needs are not adequately met with the layout of the existing offices. During our team's review of the existing facility, it was noted that some offices that were originally intended for a single occupant are now housing up to three Township employees (IMG 1.12). Corporate Services Offices, in some cases, are grossly undersized and are not suitable for their functions. New offices have been created in former storage rooms/areas to support a growing compliment of staff. The overcrowding of office spaces is creating operational challenges and impacting staff's ability to work efficiently. There is currently no contingency of space that could be allocated for future growth at the Chantry site.

Since the last renovation project in 2005 the offices have again reached a point where they can no longer accommodate the space-needs for the Township staff. A complete reorganization and

renovation of the existing office space would be required to rectify the above noted layout issues in addition to previously mentioned OBC and AODA deficiencies. Additional office space is required to accommodate current and future space needs. The Township Council Chambers and associated kitchen Space are adequately sized, but have reached the end of their life-cycle and require renovation to serve the needs of the Township into the future. A new layout for the Council Chambers and associated lobby is proposed to provide more inclusive and accessible spaces.

In general – separating public works function from municipal office space would be helpful in accommodating dyssynchronous growth in facility and technological needs. The public works and municipal office employee being in separate facilities makes most long-term sense. However, future growth could be accommodated on the chantry site through a fulsome renovation of the Township Offices and an addition to accommodate existing/ future space needs. Given the original intended use of the building and life-cycle of the current facility this level of renovation is not recommended for the existing facility. Swing-space would need to be organized should the Township wish to renovation the Chantry Office for an anticipated duration of 18-24 months.



*IMG 1.12 Typical office space currently used at max capacity*

### 1.3 FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OFFICE SPACE

As the Township Administrative Building has the potential to be renovated and have an addition built, re-imagining the facility would require the existing interior to be updated resolving code issues including the stairs to the 2nd level, door passage clear spaces, and accommodate barrier free turning wheels where necessary. Anticipated growth regarding full time employees over the next 10 year period requires space for an additional 2 full time employees according to current Townships of Rideau Lakes projections.

The renovation and existing building updates dealing with code issues would require approximately 450 sq.ft. The relocation of the full time employee from 2nd level work space and the addition of 2 new employees would require 300 sq.ft. Storage, utility, and circulation is estimated at 250 sq.ft. This scenario would require a total of 1000 sq.ft. being added to the building. 400 \$ sq.ft.

Accommodate this growth and existing building update would approximate \$400,000 if a construction average price of \$400 per sq.ft. is applied. The addition itself would be restricted to the East and South aspects of the building. This is due to the following factors:

- Western addition not feasible due to requirement for sand dome and rear parking area access.
- Northern addition not feasible due to mechanical servicing and adjacent septic system and OBC setbacks.
- Eastern addition and southern addition avoid these problem areas.

The building renovation as described would have a one storey addition component capturing existing and future space needs would be approximately situated as depicted in the aerial graphic below (IMG 1.13).



*IMG 1.13 Approximate location of a facility addition*

## 1.4 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Based on the above noted findings the current municipal offices will require significant upgrades to address accessibility deficiencies and accommodate a growing compliment of staff. The existing facility was retrofitted through various renovations to better suit the needs of the Township, but can no longer adequately accommodate the townships needs without a carefully planned renovation and expansion of the existing facility. Given the age and location of the existing building in the township, we do not perceive any economic benefit to the ratepayers of the municipality in undertaking a renovation of the existing administrative offices.

Relocation would provide a long-term solution for the Township. It would provide the opportunity to design a flexible facility to strategically accommodate future growth. The Township of Rideau Lakes can leverage a welcoming, highly-productive, and universally accessible municipal administration building to attract a talented workforce to serve the community into the future.