

## Historical Background

It was with vision and a demonstration of its commitment to equality of opportunity for all Colwood residents that the City of Colwood, in the spring of 1989, established its *Council Committee on the Disabled*. This Committee was dedicated to making "...the City more liveable for its disabled residents, by the removal of physical and social barriers which impede their full participation in all aspects of life."

Responding to the challenge were its original members, under the leadership of Colwood City Council representative, John Schuttinga. The first meeting of the (then) City of Colwood Council Committee on the Disabled took place on April 26th, 1989. Original membership included Colwood residents Jeanette Hughes, Craig Helliwell, Lewis Orr, and Bob Dougans.

In the spring of 1993, under the guidance of Councillor Jans Diemer, the Council Committee on the Disabled embarked on an evolution that would result in broader representation and better service to Western Community residents with disabilities. With the newly-renamed *Intermunicipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues*, the citizens of Colwood, Langford, Sooke, Metchosin, and the Highlands have all been represented in the membership of the Committee, both by residents and by their local Council representatives. Each member has brought to the Committee a demonstrated commitment to ameliorating the impact that having a disability may have on residents of the Western Communities, as well as to working to develop and maintain equality of opportunity for all residents. Membership in the Intermunicipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues represents a body of considerable expertise, both experiential and professional/academic, and acts as a bridge between Western Community residents with disabilities and the Municipal Councils that serve them.