

MEMORANDUM

TO: York Region AAC

FROM: Joann Simmons, Commissioner of Community Services and Housing

DATE: March 18, 2005

RE: **Follow up on Access Guide Project**

At the AAC meeting on February 23, 2005, the AAC decided not to pursue the development of a region-wide access guide at this time. We have prepared a draft letter to follow up on the responses we received from the local AACs regarding the Access Guide Project. The attached draft letter is for your review and approval before it is sent to local AACs.

In the meantime, we have invited staff from the Region's Planning and Development Services department to provide an update to AAC members on the Region's Visitor's Guide project and discuss opportunities for the AAC to participate in this initiative.

I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions at the upcoming AAC meeting on March 30, 2005.

Thank you.


Joann Simmons

LG/lg

Attachment Draft Letter to Local AACs on Access Guide Project

Dear AAC Chair:

Further to my letter to you dated January 7, 2005 regarding a region-wide access guide project, I am writing to provide you with an update on the responses we have received and the direction that the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) will be taking on this matter.

At this time, we have only received five responses from the area municipalities and of this: two AACs requested further information on this project before making any decisions; two others were planning to discuss this matter at their AAC meeting in January of this year, but we have not received any feedback; and one other AAC expressed an interest in participating and in fact, has a similar locally based initiative on its work plan.

The York Region AAC considered these responses at its meeting on February 23, 2005 and decided that they would not pursue developing a region-wide access guide at this time, however, this does not preclude the local AACs from creating their own accessibility guides. The York Region AAC will instead focus its efforts on assisting the Region in the implementation of the Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan, which was recently adopted by Council on March 31, 2005. The 2005 Plan entitled, *Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan*, is now posted on the Region's web site www.york.ca.

As part of the 2005 Plan, the Region's Planning and Development Services Department is planning to conduct a "Premier Ranked Tourism Infrastructure Audit 2005" project, which will gather information on the accessibility of tourism attractions in York Region. I understand however, that the Department has sought funding from the Federal government to carry out this audit and is still awaiting a decision. If funding is received, the York Region AAC intends to work with staff and provide advice on this initiative. Upon completion of the audit, there will be central source of information on accessibility of tourism related businesses. Staff will then assess the feasibility of publishing this accessibility information in future regional visitors' guides. If you would like any further information on this initiative or any others in the Region's 2005 Plan, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my inquiry and I look forward to exploring other opportunities to work together.

Sincerely,

Wilf Morley
Chair, York Region AAC

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