DRAFT 2006 Accessibility Plan

Transportation and Works

Environmental Scan

York Region's population is projected to be 1.1 million by 2021 with a corresponding increase in employment to 700,000 jobs. This in turn is causing significant pressure on the transportation system. Currently 25% of the Region's road network is operating at or near capacity and average congestion levels are projected to increase. This growth requires significant investment in the roads system, water supply and wastewater collection system, solid waste management, and public transit.

The public is demanding higher service standards in road maintenance and transit coverage. At the same time, the cost of delivering these services is increasing. The introduction of Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards for roads may further increase costs.

Investment in public transit has been strong and has received provincial support. This strong support is demonstrated in the implementation of new bus rapid transit services, beginning in the fall of 2005.

The Region is working to minimize the impact of construction on the environment. Natural environments are returned to near pre-construction conditions where water and sewer facilities are constructed. In the case of road construction, wetlands and wildlife routes are maintained where feasible.

The Department has implemented an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) Program in some areas that gives emphasis to and improves the management of environmental aspects of its services.

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Issues related to the quality of drinking water and disposal of wastewater are receiving greater public attention and concern. Meeting Provincial regulations, which require increased testing, monitoring and reporting, along with capital and operating modifications, will improve the water supply but increase its cost as well.

Major changes to the Occupation Health & Safety Act, such as requiring enhanced vehicle control and protection at work sites, have increased the costs of maintenance and construction.

The economic conditions and growth pressures within York Region are still robust. The Department will continue to experience significant increases in fuel prices, road maintenance and transit operating contracts and the cost of construction. These costs are reflected in an upward pressure on property taxes.

Our Customers

The Department's customers include a broad cross-section of Regional residents, businesses, area municipalities and visitors as related to transportation, water & wastewater, solid waste and forestry services.

Accessibility Statement

To plan and provide accessible, safe, cost-effective, quality driven and integrated public transit, roads, water and wastewater, solid waste diversion and disposal, forestry and other related services that support environmental sustainability, public safety and economic vitality, while meeting Regional growth and the expectations of Regional residents and businesses.

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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified [1]	Barrier Type [2]	Disability Type [3]	How the barrier was addressed [4]
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
TRANSIT: YRT fare media and ticket vending machines may be a barrier to riders with low vision or riders with physical disabilities.	Physical	Sensory Physical	The fare media and the ticket vending machines meet the physical access requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Further investigation is on for access requirements for people with visual and hearing impairments.
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced mobility may not be able to reach request stop buttons.	Physical	Physical	Completed. All accessible buses have labels for this at time of manufacture. Some buses using yellow touchtape instead of buttons; underway since 1997. New YRT buses have pullcord hung at lower portion of upper sash on tip in windows. Will also be included in Travel training program.
TRANSIT: Accessibility within transit terminals.	Physical	Physical	An overall review of transit terminals was completed and all YRT, GO and TTC terminals were deemed accessible. The phone booth at Promenade Bus Terminal will be replaced with an accessible telephone unit.
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Physical	Physical	Strategy to investigate and designate routes as accessible is being developed as part of new 5 Year Service Plan.
TRANSIT: Travel training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Physical	Physical	Research and best practices review is completed. RFP developed/issued for consultant assistance.
TRANSIT: Improve accessibility to conventional transit (fleet acquisition).	Physical	Physical	100% of Rapid Transit fleet and 67% of conventional fleet will be accessible by end of 2005.
TRANSIT: Functionality of the technical software used to schedule Mobility Plus trips.	Technological	Physical	Specifications for software changes are being tested

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3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

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Barrier Identified [1]	Barrier Type [2]	Disability Type [3]	How the barrier was addressed [4]
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region con't			
TRANSIT: Access at conventional bus stops and terminals.	Physical Policy/Practice	Physical	Process to retain a consultant to define what an accessible bus stop is, prepare an inventory of accessible bus stops in York Region, and identify a process for improving on street infrastructure including access to facilities in progress
TRANSIT: Mobility Plus customer ease of travelling across Regional boundaries.	Physical Policy/Practice	Physical	Initial scheduling software and location loading assessments completed
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Investigate and designate routes as accessible.	Physical	In progress as part of 5 Year Service Plan
TRANSIT: Securement in conventional fleet are not easily managed for riders with upper body mobility problems.	Physical	Physical	Completed. All new buses since 2004 have one rearward facing and one forward facing mobility aid position.
TRANSIT: Travel training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Physical	Physical	Following the designation of accessible routes, provide training program for select group of Mobility Plus riders. Research for best practices and process to retain a consultant underway.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
TRANSIT: Riders who have low vision are not able to read all communication pieces, including the YRT web site.	Informational Technological	Sensory	Completed adjustments to layout and font on the Mobility Plus Newsletter using larger fonts and recommended fonts for low vision. Modification of font size used in the Mobility Plus section of the Web site to meet CNIB standards. Other technical accommodations include the use of HTML forms, use of colours, use of language, types and size of font adjustments, use of graphics, page layout and paper width adjustments.
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced vision may not know which bus is arriving at stops.	Informational	Sensory	Bus Operator sensitivity and technical training required including announcements of routes and destinations. Additional details to be included in the performance based contract extension changes now underway. Will also be reviewed as part of the Travel training program.
TRANSIT: Riders who are blind are not aware that they are at a bus stop.	Informational	Sensory	Staff investigated the possibility of using tactile strips (pattern concrete) and will also investigate how it will apply to stop standard in 2006. Currently considering what detailed information should be included in bus stop data base.

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Making Regional Services More Accessible con't			
TRANSIT: Maintenance of securement apparatuses on buses.	Policy/Practice	Physical	Completed. Maintenance checks every 5000km are part of the inspection process and is subject to daily audit and/or driver pre-trip inspections.
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Informational	Physical	Standard format for signage indicating accessibility and courtesy seating will be created.
TRANSIT: Lack of co-ordinated transportation needs among health, and social service agencies and York Region.	Policy/Practice	All	Initial contact work is underway with community agencies to provide improved service coordination, awareness or requirements for eligibility, assist in determining ongoing demand for services, and assist in the development of training and sensitivity requirements.
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Physical	Physical	Process to place priority seating signage on all conventional buses is in progress
T&W ROADS: Pedestrian countdown signals	Physical	Physical	29 Pedestrian countdown signals were installed at intersections across the Region
T&W ROADS: Larger font street signs	Physical	Physical	278 street signs were replaced with larger font sizes
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
TRANSIT: Quality of contracted Mobility Plus service.	Physical Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Physical	Development of new performance based contracts is underway. The new contracts are intended to improve the availability and delivery of Mobility Plus service to address growing customer trip demand and the need to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction in an efficient and effective manner.

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Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing [5] (When will this be completed)
Helping People Live Independently		
YRT Fleet: Accessible conventional fleet inventory (%)	Inventory; fleet replacement program	Ongoing 2006 (fully accessible fleet by 2012)
YRT Fleet: Process for conventional vehicle allocation across Region (by size and accessibility features) to meet demand and accessible route designation	Following route designation and demand assessment provide process for fleet assignment and monitoring.	Q1 2006
YRT Service Planning: Travel Training - Identify target market (customers requiring specialized travel training for conventional transit)	Customer surveys, outreach/consultation programs, liaison with service agencies who also serve customers/clients who are looking to ride conventional public transit services, but currently do not have the skill set or confidence to do so independently.	Q2 2006 for training of individuals. Summer/Fall 2006 for actual Travel Training Program Launch
YRT Mobility Plus: Increase system capacity to meet demand and ensure client satisfaction	Purchase of four (4) new accessible low-floor 25 foot ELF buses – one replacement/three to handle growth in trip demand and customer mobility and requirements.	Q4 2006
YRT Mobility Plus: Improve system efficiency and increase system capacity	Additional upgrade to current software/hardware (Transview) to further improve trip availability, system performance management and customer service	Q4 2006
YRT Mobility Plus: Improve system efficiency and increase system capacity	Introduce GPS (Global positioning system) on bus fleet to improve trip availability, vehicle/passenger security and on-time system performance.	Q4 2006
YRT Facilities: Technical Guidelines for Transit Facilities Stops and Accessories	Formal bus stop criteria check list to be established.	Q2 2006

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By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing [5] (When will this be completed)
Helping People Live Independently con't		
YRT Facilities: Field Inventory	In field inspection of bus stops along routes deemed to be accessible routes by YRT Service Planning group.	Q3 2006
YRT Facilities: Prioritization of bus stop construction schedule to improve accessibility	Construct or reconstruct bus stop pads along designated accessible transit routes and other locations as deemed priority.	Q3 – Q4 2006
YRT Marketing and Customer Service: Improved legibility of communication pieces (information materials and website) for persons with visual impairments.	Review of all materials and improve as necessary (focus groups)	Q4 2006
T & W Roads: Field Assessment of Regional Roads (ROW)	General field assessment to identify areas in need of accessibility improvements	Q4 2006
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
YRT Mobility Plus: Improve client access to trip booking system	Installation of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system and live response system to enable Mobility Plus registrants to confirm their trip times, cancel trips and obtain information on Mobility Plus Services. This system will be designed for access by all key pad telephones.	Q4 2005
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
YRT Operations: Accessibility Awareness and Sensitivity Training – (Refresher) for contracted bus operators	Training classes to be conducted by service contractors and monitored by YRT staff	Q4 2006
YRT Mobility Plus: Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness	Development and introduction of formal Community Outreach program to improve the provision of information and interaction between Mobility Plus and agencies serving persons with disabilities.	Q3 2006
All T&W Staff: Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness	Training for sensitivity and inclusivity	Q1-Q4

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified [6]	Barrier Type [7]	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? [8]	Means to prevent/remove the barrier [9]	Indicators of success [10]	Timing [11] (When will this be completed)
Helping People Live Independently					
Service Planning: Implement Travel Training Program for Conventional Transit	Physical Informational Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Improved access to conventional transit services to anyone wishing to use the service. Potential cost mitigation for more expensive Mobility Plus services, thus increasing capacity for higher need individuals.	Designation of accessible routes, customer information program, Travel Training program.	Number of individuals who complete the Travel Training program and/or number of Mobility riders who can will be able to use conventional transit services	Program to be launched Summer/Fall of 2006.
Fleet: Fleet accessibility (%)	Physical, Technological	Persons with mobility impairments will have improved access to conventional transit fleet	Fleet replacement program and new bus purchase program. Allocation of accessible buses to designated routes and priority areas across the Region	Percentage of fleet that is accessible (2005 year end will be 69%, 2006 year end anticipated to be 75%)	Fully accessible fleet projected by 2012.

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Helping People Live Independently					
YRT Facilities: Need for accessible bus stop locations as identified in bus stop improvement replacement and expansion program	Physical – Built environment	Improved access to bus stops for persons with disabilities	Review of standards. Develop inventory and priority list. Construct concrete pads to standards.	Percentage of accessible bus stops	2015 for complete system 200 new and replacement concrete pads per year.
YRT Marketing & Customer Service: Need for improved legibility of information pieces and website	Physical – Visual Communication	Improved legibility for persons with visual impairments. Improved access to information	Modification of font size, layout, colour use, etc.	Positive feedback from clients/customers	Q4 – basis for new standard
T&W Roads: Incorrect height of the pedestrian push button on traffic signal poles	Physical – Built Environment	At the standard height the pedestrian push button will be accessible to all.	Adjust the push button to the correct height.	Keep record of road sections that the push buttons are at the correct height.	It is anticipated that the pedestrian push buttons on all Regional Roads will be adjusted to the standard height by 2009.

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Helping People Live Independently					
T&W Roads: Lack of hard ground surface for accessibility to the pedestrian push button located on traffic poles	Physical – Built Environment	With the hard surface in place, pedestrians and persons using wheelchairs will be able to access the push buttons to activate the walk signals more easily.	Contractor will place either asphalt or concrete surface at the base of the pedestrian push button poles to allow easier access.	Fewer complaints about inaccessibility to allow proper activation of walk signal	It is anticipated that all pedestrian signal poles along Regional roads will have a hard surface at the base by 2009.
T&W Roads: Traffic control signals that are not accessible persons with visual impairments	Physical – Built Environment Technological.	Improve accessibility for those who have visual impairment.	Install audible traffic control signals.	Positive feedback from CNIB / public.	Five locations are planned for 2006.
T&W Roads: Unclear crossing time at intersection.	Physical – Built Environment Technological.	Clarify proper use of traffic control signal.	Install countdown traffic control signals – improve communication/education to the public.	Positive feedback / fewer complaints.	Countdown signals have been planned for 5 locations and audible signals are planned for another 5 locations in 2006.
T&W Roads: Street name signs that may be hard to read.	Physical – Built Environment.	Improved visibility.	Replace existing street name signs at Regional Road intersections.	Positive feedback / fewer complaints	Forty street name signs will be replaced with larger font size.

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness					
All T& W Staff	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities	25% of employees in the T&W department will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of people with disabilities.	2006

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