

Transportation Services

Environmental Scan

In the fall of 2007, the Transportation Services Department and the Environmental Services Department were formed from the existing Transportation and Works Department. Transportation Services will oversee the Roads Transportation Branch and York Region Transit. Environmental Services will oversee the Water and Wastewater Branch and the Solid Waste Management Branch.

A Leader in Emerging Technologies

As one of the six Departments in York Region, Transportation Services exemplifies public and environmental safety by providing residents with efficient and state-of-the-art transit, and roads. Our long-term vision consists of improving service and infrastructure for transit services and roads.

The Services We Provide

- Public Transit – Plan and operate a Region-wide network of transit routes that are integrated with TTC and GO Transit. We also operate the YRT Mobility Plus service – a service which is the Region's door-to-door, shared, accessible public transit service for people with disabilities.
- Roads – Plan, design, construct and operate Region-wide road system.
- Forestry – Manage 2070 hectares (5300 acres) of Regional forests.

Significant investments required to meet current and future demand

York Region's population is projected to be 1.1 million by 2021 with a corresponding increase in employment to 700,000 jobs. Approximately 40,000 new residents move to York Region each year! This 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 and the public transit network.

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. Investment in public transit has been strong and has received both federal and provincial support. This strong support is demonstrated in the implementation of the new Viva bus rapid transit services. The economic conditions and growth pressures within York Region require investment. The Department will continue to experience significant increases in fuel prices, road maintenance, transit operating contracts and construction costs.

Our Customers

The Department's customers include a broad cross-section of regional residents, businesses, area municipalities and visitors.

However the primary focus, for the purposes of this Accessibility Plan, is to ensure universal access for pedestrians and transit customers to the public transportation system. This includes access to bus stops, transit terminals, vehicles and the sidewalk network that connects to the transit system.

Accessibility Statement

To plan and provide accessible, safe, cost-effective, quality driven and integrated public transit, roads, forestry and other related services that support economic vitality, while meeting regional growth and the expectations of regional residents and businesses.

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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements – 2007

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
YRT Mobility Plus: Increase system capacity to meet demand and ensure client satisfaction (estimated 5% increase in trip demand @ \$26.00 per trip).	Physical	Physical	Reviewed service delivery strategy (vehicle types, contractors, etc.). Current contractor levels are adequate.
YRT Operations: Process for conventional vehicle on-board bus stop announcement and VMS display.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	A review is now required in light of the recent Human Rights decision regarding announcements on the TTC.
YRT Fleet: Accessible conventional fleet inventory including expansion and replacement. (Delivery in 2007).	Physical	Physical	Inventory Fleet replacement program is underway – all new deliveries will be low-floor accessible. Plan to be fully accessible by 2012.
YRT Fleet: Develop policy for allocation of conventional buses across the Region by size and accessibility features to meet demand and accessible route designation.	Physical	Physical	All contractors are receiving additional accessible buses as required for expansion and replacement needs.
YRT Facilities: Update of Technical Guideline for Transit Facilities Stops and Accessories.	Physical	Sensory	Met with CNIB for suggested placement and pattern type. Pilot installation planned for Fall 2007; monitor in winter 2007/2008.
YRT Facilities: In Field Inventory based on accessibility checklist of the first 1500 stops.	All	Physical	Accessibility check-list is complete. Field inspection has begun.
YRT Transportation Management Systems: Retrofit Automated Fare Collection (AFC) machines for persons who are blind or have low vision and persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	Architectural/ Technological	Sensory	Under review due to potential capital costs.
T&W Roads: Incorrect height of the pedestrian push button on traffic signal poles and hard ground surface.	Technological/ Physical	Physical	Relocation of pedestrian pushbuttons on traffic signal poles facilitating ease of use will be completed by the end of 2007.
T&W Roads: Traffic control signals that are not useable by persons who are blind or have low vision.	Technological/ Physical	Physical	Installation of Audible Pedestrian Signals at identified crossings is underway and will allow for ease of use by persons who are blind or have low vision.
YRT Mobility Plus: Increase system capacity to meet mobility demand for bus service through software efficiency.	Physical	Physical	Software functionality and some internal processes to improve efficiency have been reviewed. The upgrade has been completed.
YRT Training: Travel Training Pilot Launch	Physical, Information, Communicational, Attitudinal, Policy/Practice	All	Deferred to Fall 2007.

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YRT Mobility Plus: Introduction of 24 hour advance day trip booking process (update to software).	Communicational/ Technological	All	Completed within the existing call centre hours.
YRT Operations: Need for audio bus stop announcements and visual next bus stop display.	Communicational	Physical	Service improvements for persons who are blind or have low vision, or deaf, deafened or hard of hearing are ongoing and may be advanced in light of recent Human Rights decision (TTC).
YRT Facilities: Need for accessible bus stop locations as identified along routes deemed to be accessible.	Physical	Physical	Improvements to bus stops at 150 locations have been completed to date.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
T&W Customer Service: Improve communication with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing at Transportation and Works' reception desk at the Administrative building.	Communicational	Sensory	A new computer screen with wireless mouse and keyboard was installed at Transportation and Works' reception desk in the Administrative Building.
YRT Marketing: Ongoing review of font/contrast improvements in print materials (Mobility Plus Application and specific Route Navigators) for persons with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	Initial review has been completed. Initiative is ongoing.
YRT Mobility Plus: Introduction of 24 -hour advance notice day trip booking process.	Policy/Practice	Physical/Sensory	Completed. Customer satisfaction surveys indicated that this was the most requested service improvement.
YRT Fleet: Increase percentage of fleet accessibility.	Physical/ Technological	Physical	Additional accessible buses have been purchased and will meet target of 85% of fleet by year end. Fully accessible fleet is projected by 2012.
YRT Fleet: Develop policy for allocation of conventional buses across the Region by size and accessibility features to meet demand and accessible route designation.	Physical	Physical	Low floor buses for VIVA have been allocated to key corridors on designated routes; additional buses on order will be allocated to YRT contractors to address service and replacement needs.
YRT Marketing: Full web accessibility for persons who are blind or have low vision with reading software (new web site is currently 85% accessible).	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Full accessibility testing/audit of new web site/trapeze schedules completed.

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
T&W Customer Service: Improve communication with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing at Transportation and Works' reception desk at the Administrative building.	Technological Physical	Physical	Using a monitor and wireless keyboard which is linked to reception's monitor, reception can now download maps, organizational charts, etc. and print for the client. Paper and pens for writing have also been made available for clients to provide comments/feedback.
YRT Marketing: Full web accessibility for persons who have low vision with reading software (new web site currently 85% accessible).	Technological	Sensory	Focus groups were conducted and feedback was considered in the web redesign. The website was launched on August 12, 2007.
YRT Marketing: Ongoing review of font/contrast improvements in print materials.	Informational	Sensory	A Focus group was conducted including 27 stakeholders. The group's feedback was included in the redesign of the Mobility Plus application form. Specific Route Navigators on seniors' routes were also updated.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Eighty employees in the Transportation and Works Department are participating in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.
YRT Mobility Plus: Changing attitudes and raising awareness.	Attitudinal	All	Two networking meetings between agencies and Mobility Plus have been held to date (December 2006 and June 2007).

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Barrier Identification for 2008

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing <i>(When will this be completed?)</i>
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
YRT Mobility Plus Language.	Call centre audit.	Q4 2008
YRT Facilities Facilities review.	Review inventory based on accessibility check-list of 1500 stops.	Q4 2008 – ongoing to completion in 2009
YRT Service Planning Process for identifying accessible transit routes.	Service Planning to consult with YRT operations/ facilities, contractors, marketing & customer service determine criteria for accessible routes.	Q1
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
YRT Marketing Ongoing review of font/contrast improvements in print materials for persons with low vision.	Internal staff review.	Q1 – Q4

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2008

Barrier Identified	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing (When will this be completed?)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region						
YRT Service Planning Travel Training Pilot Launch (to increase knowledge and confidence to use conventional public transit services).	Physical, Information, Communicational, Attitudinal, Policy/Practice	All	Increase travel opportunities for persons with disabilities.	Launch of a Travel Training Pilot project targeted at seniors and persons with disabilities. Will involve a communication strategy to advise trainers and customers of travel skills.	Will assist a wide range of clients to develop the skills and confidence to ride conventional public transit and Viva buses. New riders and transferred riders from Mobility Plus service.	Q2
YRT Facilities Need for accessible bus stop locations as identified along routes deemed to be accessible.	Physical	Physical	Improved access to bus stops.	Construct concrete pads to YRT standards.	% of accessible stops; 400 new and replacement concrete pads per year.	Ongoing 2008 to 2015
YRT Mobility Plus Improve client access to trip booking system.	Technological	All	Enables Mobility Plus registrants to confirm, cancel and book trips and obtain information on Mobility Plus services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	Develop and implement of interactive voice response software and interface.	Improved access to Mobility Plus information; improved customer service levels (i.e. call wait times).	Q2
YRT Fleet Increase percentage of fleet accessibility.	Physical, Technological	Physical	Improved access on to conventional transit buses.	Purchase accessible buses.	Percentage of fleet that is accessible (2007 year end was about 85%, and 2008 year end anticipated to be 89%).	Ongoing Fully accessible fleet projected by 2012.

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Making it Easier to Move Around the Region						
YRT Fleet Develop guideline for allocation of conventional buses across the region by size and accessibility features to meet demand and accessible route designation.	Physical	Physical	Improved accessibility to public transit based on demand.	Annual review to allocate accessible buses to designated accessible routes.	Assignment of buses to designated routes and successful communication strategy for customers.	Annual review.
T&W Roads Traffic control signals that are not useable by persons who are blind or have low vision.	Technological	Sensory	Ease of use.	Installation of Audible Pedestrian Signals at identified crossings.	Frequency of use.	Ongoing as required with CNIB.
T&W Roads Incorrect height of the pedestrian push button on traffic signal poles and hard ground surface.	Technological, Physical	Physical	Ease of use.	Relocation of pedestrian pushbuttons on traffic signal poles.	Frequency of use.	Ongoing 2008 (Complete Q4 of 2008)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Ongoing improvement of all marketing and communications materials.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	Improved communication to customers.	Ensure consistency of font sizes/contrast for easy reading (printed materials as well as web info).	Audit of all materials to ensure standards are met.	Ongoing throughout 2008.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
YRT Mobility Plus Desire to improve information exchange between social/health agencies/stakeholders regarding transportation service needs.	Attitudinal	All	Improved information exchange between agencies; improved working relationships.	Bi-annual formal meetings and ongoing communication.	Information sharing and potential for sharing resources and improved client services and potential for increased efficiencies (e.g. combining rides).	2008 - Ongoing

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.	50 of employees in the Transportation & Works will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2008 - Ongoing