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ACCESS-ABILITY: YORK REGION'S 2009 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

(Regional Council at its meeting on May 21, 2009 adopted this report with the following additional recommendation:

- 4. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities and to the appropriate provincial authorities.)***

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated May 5, 2009, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council approve *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan* as included in *Council Attachment 1*.
2. The summary chart of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee's questions, comments and suggestions and York Region staff recommendations and responses regarding the 2009 Departmental Accessibility Plans be approved as included in *Council Attachment 2*.
3. The release strategy to make the 2009 Accessibility Plan available to the public in hardcopy and on the Region's website be approved as outlined in Section 4 of this report and this report and final version of *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan* be shared with local municipalities. As well, it should be shared with the local Accessibility Advisory Committees and the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee for their information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present and seek Regional Council approval of the final version of *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan* (see *Council Attachment 1*); the advice and feedback received from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) (see *Council Attachment 2*); and the release strategy for making the 2009 Accessibility Plan available to the public. This report also highlights the results of the implementation of *Opening Doors*, the Region's 2008 Accessibility Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) includes specific requirements for all municipalities, including York Region. One requirement is the development of an annual accessibility plan. Under the ODA, the annual accessibility plan must address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in municipal by-laws, policies, practices, programs, services and facilities. The ODA also requires that the accessibility plan is developed in consultation with persons with disabilities and is made available to the public.

Since the proclamation of the ODA, York Region has planned and executed five, and with the release of this plan, six accessibility plans which have involved the development and implementation of over 500 accessibility planning initiatives.

Municipalities have planning obligations under both the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* came into effect on June 13, 2005. The AODA applies to both the public and private sectors and covers every aspect of life except private homes. The goal of the AODA is to ensure that all Ontarians with disabilities have full and equal access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 1, 2025. This goal will be achieved through the development, implementation and enforcement of provincially-set accessibility standards. Both public and private sector organizations will be required to implement these standards in increments.

The AODA will eventually replace the ODA, however, the Province has indicated that the ODA will remain in effect for the foreseeable future. Until all standards are finalized into regulation, all public sector organizations, including local municipalities and the Region must continue to implement both Acts simultaneously.

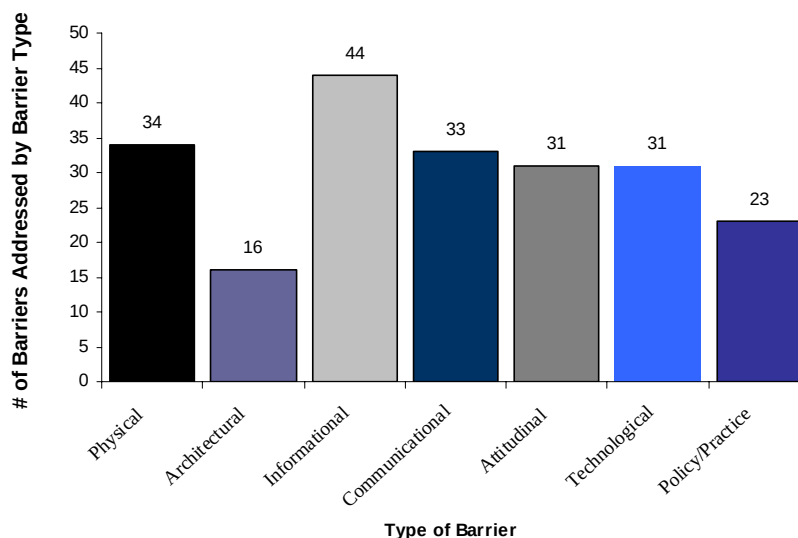
4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Highlights of accessibility achievements made in the 2008 Plan

The majority of initiatives in the Region's 2008 Plan are completed. Of the 95 initiatives included in the 2008 Accessibility Plan, 53% (50) are complete and 47% (45) were started in 2008 and will be fully implemented throughout 2009 and 2010.

In 2008, a total of 212 barriers to accessibility were identified. As illustrated in Chart 1, the Region continued to move towards accessibility by removing both invisible barriers and more visible, physical barriers.

CHART 1
Types of Barriers Addressed
in the 2008 Plan



Source: 2008 Progress Report *Opening Doors*

A few examples of how departments addressed different types of barriers in 2008 include:

- The **Corporate Communications Branch** addressed *technological* barriers by implementing the Google search function to enable all persons with disabilities to retrieve information quickly without having to navigate the entire website.
- The **Community and Health Services Department** addressed *physical* barriers by installing a new elevator for persons with visual and hearing disabilities that includes improved lighting, back lit/large buttons, and a large digital floor display at Elmwood Gardens. Branches in the Community and Health Services Department have addressed a number of barriers; for instance, addressing *informational* and *technological* barriers by increasing access to Community Services web information, making it more accessible and incorporating technology to assist people with disabilities to navigate the website. Branches have also addressed *all* barrier types by conducting an accessibility audit of meeting locations using the Region's Accessible Meeting Guidelines.
- The **Corporate Services Department** addressed *informational* barriers by developing a question for inclusion on the Employee Satisfaction Survey to measure employee satisfaction with workplace modification or accommodation supports.

- **The Environmental Services Department** addressed *informational* and *technological* barriers by reviewing and editing the Waste Management web pages to identify any barriers to accessibility.
- To address *technological* barriers, the **Finance Department** is studying and documenting how municipalities across Ontario are using technology solutions to overcome various accessibility barriers.
- **The Planning and Development Services Department** addressed *physical*, *architectural* and *informational* barriers by conducting a review of all presentation materials and public consultation centres to identify barriers to access.
- **The Transportation Services Department, YRT Mobility Plus** addressed *attitudinal* barriers by improving the information and communication exchange between social/health agencies and stakeholders regarding transportation service needs through conducting bi-annual formal meetings. **The Roads Branch** is addressing *physical* barriers by increasing accessibility to some Regional Forest Trails by identifying step grades at the Hollidge Tract for persons with disabilities.
- To address *communicational* barriers the **York Regional Police** acquired communication tip cards from the Canadian Hearing Society for officers to use when communicating with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. York Regional Police also addressed *policy/practice* barriers by establishing a sign language service protocol allowing for appropriate and timely access to sign language interpreter services.

Developing Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan

The Region's Accessibility Plans are developed by the ODA Staff Committee. This interdepartmental committee has representatives from every department, as well as the York Regional Police and works to ensure that their department's ODA commitments are planned and implemented successfully.

The development of the Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan, as directed by Regional Council, has been integrated into the Region's 2009 business and planning process. Each regional department, including the York Regional Police, developed a departmental accessibility plan in consultation with the YRAAC, outlining the initiatives that each department would take in 2009 to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in its core businesses.

YRAAC provides valuable input and advice through the accessibility planning process

In keeping with its legislated mandate under the ODA, the YRAAC continues to provide direct input into the implementation activities of the 2008 Plan. For example, in 2008 members of the YRAAC:

- Provided advice on the 2008 Plan and the development of the 2009 Accessibility Plan.
- Recommended that Regional Council once again recognize National Awareness Week, which was subsequently endorsed by Council in May 2008.
- Participated in the Province's Accessible Customer Service Regulation Training workshops held in February and March 2008.
- Participated in "Exercise Maple Migration" a joint emergency exercise with York Region and the City of Vaughan in September 2008.
- Participated on the Metrolinx Accessibility Advisory Working Group to provide advice on issues related to regional accessibility as part of their preparation for the Regional Transportation Plan.

YRAAC members have reviewed and endorsed the initiatives that are included in *Accessibility: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*. Regional staff presented the department accessibility plans to the YRAAC at two meetings held in November 2008 giving YRAAC members the opportunity to provide their comments and input into the Region's plan. The YRAAC's advice on individual initiatives has been incorporated into the final version of the plan. *Council Attachment 2* to this report includes the questions, comments and suggestions of the YRAAC on the 2009 draft plan and corresponding staff recommendations and responses.

Each initiative has been grouped under five key themes that impact the lives of people with disabilities

As in previous plans, each departmental initiative to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 2009 has been grouped under five key themes that bring together different aspects of the Region's programs and services into broader areas of action. The themes reflect feedback from the YRAAC and the public on the key regional services and program areas that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

The themes are:

- Helping People Live Independently.
- Making it Easier to Move Around the Region.
- Making Regional Services More Accessible.
- Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government.
- Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness.

Future Highlights of the 2009 Plan – Access-ability

The Region is in the process of planning for and implementing AODA standards as they move forward. It is also fulfilling its ODA responsibilities through the 2009 Plan which continues to build on the foundation laid in the previous plans. The 2009 Plan enhances accessibility by identifying and removing barriers in all regional programs and services. As the emphasis in the 2008 Plan was to open doors to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities, the 2009 Plan will promote ‘access-ability’ to the Region’s programs, services and facilities.

The 2009 Plan includes a total of 77 accessibility planning initiatives (49 Barriers Identified and 28 Barriers to be Addressed) from across all regional departments, including the York Regional Police. Some initiatives included in the 2009 Plan include:

The Community and Health Services Department will continue to look for barriers by establishing an Ontario Works Reference Group that will include people with disabilities who receive Ontario Works to provide feedback on the accessibility and delivery of services. The Department will also review programs to identify any barriers to communication for their long-term care patients, relatives and people with sensory disabilities.

In order to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA, the **Office of the Chief Administrative Officer**, as the departmental lead, will develop and implement a corporate training strategy about the provision of York Regional goods and services to people with disabilities. It will also create an accessible process for receiving and responding to feedback about how well the Region provides goods and services to people with disabilities.

The Corporate Services Department will redesign the ceremonial entrance of the Administrative Centre to include ramp handrails and a flat transition area allowing easier access to regional services in the Administrative Centre. It will also redesign the cafeteria’s salad bar area to increase accessibility for people with disabilities. The parking lot and main entrance at 22 Prospect Street, one of the Region’s public health buildings, will be redesigned to incorporate a ramp and an accessible parking spot, and new internal office signage at the Administrative Centre will make it easier for people with sensory disabilities to find their way through the building.

To increase access to communication materials the **Environmental Services Department** will revise two of its brochures by changing the layout and design to enhance accessibility for people with sensory and cognitive disabilities. It will also review its web pages for font, colour, contrast and plain language to increase access to information. It will enhance accessibility in the Vaughan Community Environmental Centre by adding a washroom at the front entrance that has an accessible fixture and contrasting colours.

The Finance Department is continuing to study and document how municipalities across Ontario are using technology to overcome accessibility barriers. It is planning to change TTY devices in the Region's Business Call Centre's to TEXTNET, a PC based, easy to use, digital solution, to directly connect callers who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to the staff member best able to help them.

The Planning and Development Services Department will continue to review the accessibility of its Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums to identify any barriers to full participation by people with disabilities.

The Transportation Services Department is reviewing the accessibility of its printed transit route maps to improve colour contrast and clarity. With input from CNIB, the Transportation Services Department will continue to install audible pedestrian signals at identified intersections.

The York Regional Police will partner with York Support Services Network to investigate the potential funding sources to expand the role of the Mental Health Support Team, to specifically respond to the needs of children.

Annual accessibility plans must be made available to the public – Release Strategy for the 2009 Plan

The ODA specifically states that municipal annual accessibility plans must be made available to the public. Upon Regional Council approval of *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*, the plan will be posted on the Region's website.

Like the previous five accessibility plans, it is recommended that copies of *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan* also be sent to individuals, agencies and organizations that represent or provide services to people with disabilities in York Region, the nine local municipalities and their Accessibility Advisory Committees, members of the Municipal Staff Reference Group, and the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. The Plan will also be made available in alternate formats (such as large print, Braille or on CD) upon request. The Plan will include a survey which can be mailed in or completed online to allow people to submit comments throughout the year.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Accessibility planning is now integrated into the way of doing business

Accessibility planning continues to be integrated with the Region's service and business planning practices. Therefore, the majority of initiatives included in the accessibility plans are part of the existing base budgets of the various departments.

In the 2009 Accessibility Plan, the Region continues to be successful at integrating accessibility planning into its way of doing business and using previously planned work to meet accessibility requirements. From 2003 – 2008, approximately \$93 million was spent on a range of projects which included accessibility initiatives that were part of the Region's previous five accessibility plans. This amount was offset by approximately \$14 million in provincial and federal funding. These costs were mainly related to transportation, housing and regional facility capital improvements which included some accessibility features.

In 2009, York Region Transit continues to purchase buses that include accessibility features as part of its fleet replacement and expansion plan. The 2009 Capital Budget includes new funding for buses and terminal facilities which totals \$48.2 million. The Province provides \$12.5 million in subsidies for fleet replacement and expansion vehicles (including Viva). The Federal government provides \$20.5 million for fleet expansion (including Viva), which when combined offsets the total cost by \$33 million.

The 2009 Plan also includes initiatives related to the implementation of the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA. An additional \$133,000 of new funding was approved in the 2009 Operating Budget for Accessible Customer Service Training.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

All York Region residents, including those with disabilities, benefit from barrier-free regional practices, procedures and services. The Municipal Staff Reference Group, which is led by the Region, is comprised of those responsible for implementing the requirements of the ODA and the AODA in all of its nine municipalities and broader sectors such as hospitals and school boards. The group meets to exchange information and share ideas regarding implementation activities. Six municipalities in the northern part of the Region have formulated a group and coordinated efforts to meet the implementation requirements of the AODA Customer Service Regulation. The other three municipalities, and the Region, are in the process of establishing their own strategies for implementation. York Region will continue to meet with and share reports/information with the Municipal Staff Reference Group and their Accessibility Advisory Committees.

7. CONCLUSION

The Region's sixth annual accessibility plan is a comprehensive plan of actions that promotes "access-ability" for people with disabilities, while meeting the legislated requirements of the ODA. It also includes initiatives that will begin to prepare the Region to meet the new requirements under the AODA.

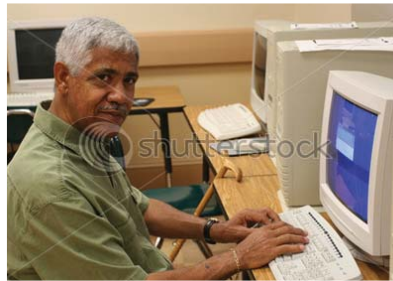
Much progress has been made to date to make York Region more inviting, and more inclusive of people with disabilities. Integrating accessibility into business practices and

processes is now commonplace across all departments, promoting equal access for people with disabilities. These accomplishments have prepared the Region to meet the future requirements of the regulations released under the AODA.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch at Ext. 2150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The two attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)



ACCESS-*ability*

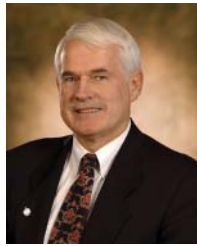
York Region's Sixth Accessibility Plan

2009

DRAFT



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Tony Wong
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Gordon Landon
Town of Markham



Mayor
David Barrow
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Linda D. Jackson
City of Vaughan



Chairman and CEO
Bill Fisch



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Joyce Frustaglio
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Mario Ferri
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Gino Rosati
City of Vaughan



Mayor
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Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



Mayor
Phyllis M. Morris
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Mayor
Wayne Emmerson
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



Mayor
James Young
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Margaret Black
Township of King

Message from Regional Council

We are pleased to present *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Annual Accessibility Plan*. *Access-ability* builds on our growing experience in accessibility planning and captures new ways to make the programs, services and facilities of The Regional Municipality of York more accessible for our residents who have disabilities.

In this sixth year of accessibility planning, our progress is evident. Access to our public transit, Regional forests and buildings continues to be enhanced, enabling more people to participate in what York Region has to offer.

We will continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers for all types of disabilities – both visible and invisible – for our residents.

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee has provided valuable input throughout the development of this plan and has offered significant support and strategic direction with the implementation of the standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Regional staff across all departments have worked together again this year to make York Region more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities.

We believe this plan demonstrates our ongoing commitment to making York Region a strong, caring and safe community where all residents can access our programs, facilities and services.



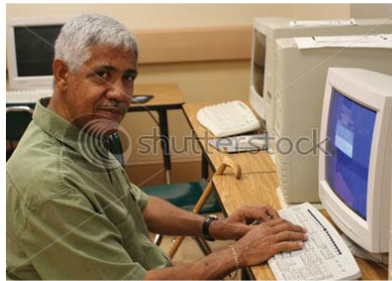
Regional Councillor
Vito Spatafora
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket



ACCESS-ability

York Region's Sixth Accessibility Plan

2009

Message from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

It is with great pleasure that we present *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*.

As a committee, we've worked with Regional Council and staff during the accessibility planning process to provide input on Regional initiatives, policies and programs. We are very proud of the fact that Council and staff have listened and acted on our advice. We look forward to advising Council on the implementation activities included in this year's plan. We've seen great accessibility accomplishments here at the Region in the last six years and anticipate more progress as standards are released under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Our committee will continue to play a critical role in making York Region fully accessible by providing direct input into the development, implementation and enforcement of the accessibility standards under the AODA.

We look forward to successfully supporting the Region's efforts in both roles under the ODA and the AODA, to promote 'Access-ability' for all who live and visit The Regional Municipality of York.

York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee



Front Row: Regional Councillor John Taylor, Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler,
Margaret Gaukel, Cindy Gorlewski, Diana Hordo

Back Row: Regional Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch, Regional Councillor Vito Spatafora (Chair),
Kirsten Hill, Janice Cameron, Wilf Morley (Vice-Chair), Donna Hardaker,
Trish Robichaud

Other Members: Beverley Hall, Diane Humeniuk

Acknowledgements

York Regional Council would like to thank the many people who actively contributed and participated in the development and production of *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*.

The successful development of this Plan was made possible by many people from across The Regional Municipality of York who gave their time and expertise, including the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, members of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* Staff Committee, and other Regional staff who were involved in the creation of this Plan.

We appreciate the ongoing commitment and support of all of these people.

The Members of the ODA Staff Committee



Front Row: Pat Harrison, Aisha Saintiche, Lois Davies, Sharon Duffy, Lina Bigioni, Piragal Thiru, Tracy Grover, Dawn Seetaram, Kirti Gandhi, Lisa Gonsalves, Marc Gallant

Back Row: Val Sequeira, Tim Paleczny, Darryl Blakeley, Dino Basso, Brenda Mulroy, Hector Deault, Michelle Herder, Barry Crowe, Kelly Vandette

Other Members: Joy Hulton, Deputy Chief Eric Jolliffe, Cordelia Abankwa-Harris (Chair of Committee), Deputy Chief Bruce Herridge, Lizuarte Simas, Leslie Gilbert, Don Gordon, Irene McNeil, Bev Cassidy-Moffatt, Sylvia Patterson, Gabe Tropea

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Let Us Know What You Think

Your comments are important to us. Please let us know what you think about *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*.

You can send us your comments or inquiries in any of the following ways:

Email: AccessYork@york.ca

Mail: The Regional Municipality of York
Community and Health Services Department
17250 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Phone: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 2123

TTY: (905) 762-0401

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You can access this publication at **www.york.ca** > click **Services** and then click **Accessibility Planning**.

This document is available in multiple formats upon request.

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Organizations wishing to use any portion of Access-ability are requested to:

Contact the Commissioner of Community and Health Services for York Region or her designate regarding the purpose for which this material will be used.

Use the following citation when referencing this document:

The Regional Municipality of York. (2009) *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*. Newmarket, Ontario.

Acknowledgements that The Regional Municipality of York is providing a copy of its material for reference purposes only and that the organization is responsible and liable for compliance with the ODA.

Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan

Comment Form

This form is available online at www.york.ca

Your comments are important to us. Please take a few minutes to complete this form and let us know what you think about *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*.

1. What do you like most about the Plan? (Check as many boxes as you want)

- ☐ The many new things that York Region will do in 2009 to make its services and programs easier for people with disabilities to use
- ☐ Learning more about all that the Region has already done to ensure people with disabilities can use York Region's services and programs
- ☐ The range of existing barriers that will be removed and new barriers that will be prevented
- ☐ How York Region will identify barriers within its programs and services
- ☐ That the Region is making it easier for people with different types of disabilities to use its services and programs
- ☐ Total number of initiatives to address barriers in 2009
- ☐ Types of barriers that will be addressed in 2009
- ☐ The participation of all Regional departments in accessibility planning
- ☐ The involvement of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee in developing the Plan
- ☐ The overall layout and format
- ☐ Other: _____

2. What do you see as the key issues facing people with disabilities in York Region?

(Check as many boxes as you want)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Transit | ☐ Housing |
| ☐ Roads | ☐ Social Assistance |
| ☐ Lack of services/supports | ☐ Barriers in the private sector |
| ☐ Attitudes/awareness | ☐ Lack of information |
| ☐ Other: _____ | |

3. Have you noticed an improvement in accessing York Region's services and programs?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list improvements. If no, please explain.

4. Is the Plan easy to read and understand?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why?

5. Other comments about *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*

Thank you for your comments.

GENERAL INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)

**6. How did you find out about *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*?
(Check as many boxes as you want)**

- ☐ Newspaper ad/article
- ☐ Social Services/Community Agency
- ☐ York Region building
- ☐ York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee
- ☐ York Region staff
- ☐ York Region disability organizations
- ☐ www.york.ca
- ☐ Municipal website
- ☐ Other: _____

7. Are you a resident of York Region?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Are you a person with a disability? (Optional)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Are you a member of an organization or agency that represents or provides services to people with disabilities in York Region?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what is the name of the organization?

Thank you.

If you would like to receive more information about this Plan or accessibility planning in York Region, please feel free to contact us.

You can send us your comments or inquiries in any of the following ways:

Mail: The Regional Municipality of York
Community and Health Services Department
17250 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor
Newmarket, Ontario
L3Y 6Z1

Fax: (905) 895-3166

Email: CHS-info@york.ca

You can also complete this form online:

www.york.ca > click **Services** and then click **Accessibility Planning**



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Introduction

Accessibility Planning in York Region

Introduction

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in Ontario through the identification, prevention and removal of physical and other barriers that may limit opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society.

Since 2004, all municipalities in the province have a legal obligation under the ODA to prepare an annual accessibility plan. Each municipality's plan must include a complete overview of all operations including bylaws, programs and procedures, practices, policies, facilities, and services.

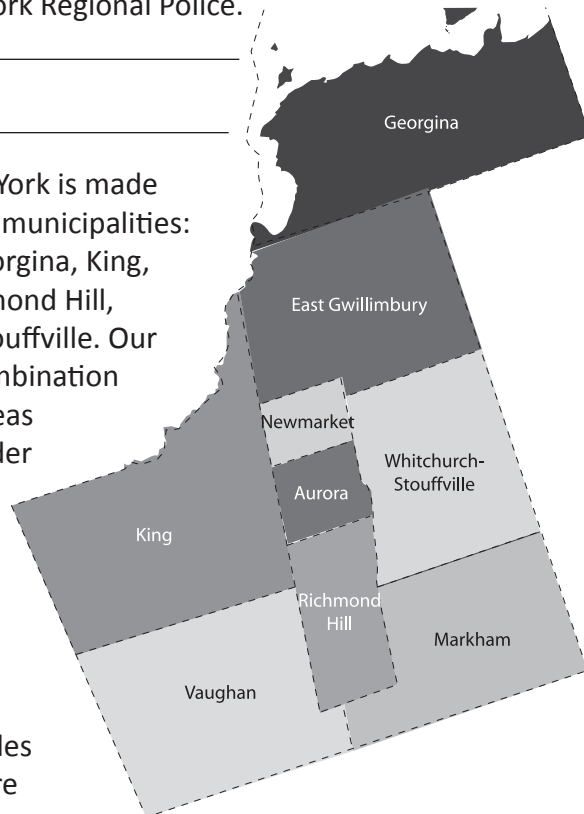
This year The Regional Municipality of York would like to present its sixth annual accessibility plan titled *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*. This Plan continues to break down barriers for people with a broad range of disabilities by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility.

"Access-ability" highlights barriers that were identified and/or eliminated in 2008 and outlines the actions that the Region will take in 2009 to identify, prevent and remove remaining barriers across York Region's departments, including the York Regional Police.

York Region Facts

The Regional Municipality of York is made up of the following nine local municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Our diverse region is a unique combination of urban centres and rural areas that sits on the northern border of the Greater Toronto Area. York Region is one of six regional governments in Ontario and was created on January 1, 1971 by the provincial government.

In general, York Region provides services and programs that are best delivered across wide areas, or those requiring large-scale coordination. The nine local municipalities provide programs and services that are more local in nature. The Municipal Act, 2001 is the provincial legislation that outlines the areas of regional and local municipal responsibility. The following list shows the range of services provided at the regional and local municipal levels.



THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (AODA)

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* came into effect in 2005 and will establish regulations in the following five areas:

Customer Service

Transportation

Information and Communications

Employment

Built Environment

THE CUSTOMER SERVICE REGULATION (ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07)

The first regulation to be passed under the AODA was the Customer Service Regulation (Ontario Regulation 429/07) on January 1, 2008, with a compliance date of January 1, 2010. The regulation states what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to make the provision of their goods and services more accessible to people with disabilities.

Regional and Local Municipal Responsibilities

The Regional Municipality of York	Local Municipalities
Court Services	Building Permits
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	Local Emergency Preparedness
Family and Children's Services	Fire Services
Housing and Residential Services	Curbside Garbage, Green Bin, Blue Bin Recycling Pick Up, Yard Waste Pick Up
Long Term Care Services	Local Roads
Police Services	Libraries
Public Health Services	Marriage Licences
Regional Roads	Parking Permits/Restrictions
Social Assistance	Parks and Recreation
Solid Waste Management	Pet Licences
Transit and Rapid Transit (YRT/VIVA)	Sidewalk Repair
Regional Emergency Planning	Streetlights
Planning and Economic Development Services	Local Water and Sewage

Population Trends

York Region's population has more than quintupled since its creation in 1971 and has grown 22.4% between the years 2001 and 2006¹. With a population of about 1,011,360 as of December 31, 2008², York Region is the third fastest growing Census Division in Canada.

Most of our population growth (2001-2006) has been concentrated in the three southern local municipalities of Vaughan (31.2%), Markham (25.4%), and Richmond Hill (23.2%)¹.

Across Ontario, York Region had the highest growth rate for all age groups. Between 2001 and 2006, the growth rate among the different age groups was: 14.3% for residents between 0 and 14 years, 22.8% for residents between 15 and 64 years, and 38.6% for residents 65 years and older¹.

According to the Statistics Canada 2006 Census, there are 91,920 seniors (those aged 65 and older) living in York Region. Seniors represent approximately 10% of the region's population. Among urban municipalities, we have one of the fastest growing senior populations. By 2031 we expect the number of seniors living in York Region to increase to 311,745, or 21% of the population³. The expected increase is mostly due to the high proportion of baby-boomers in York Region.

This rapidly growing population, including an aging population who may also have disabilities, has wide-range implications for our region. This will pose challenges for all levels of government to find better ways to predict the needs of residents and to ensure that our programs and services are accessible to everyone.

¹ Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006.

² Source: York Region Population Estimate, Planning and Development Services Department, 2008.

³ Source: The Regional Municipality of York, "Just the Facts About Your Community, Seniors Living in York Region" 2008.

Persons with Disabilities in York Region⁴

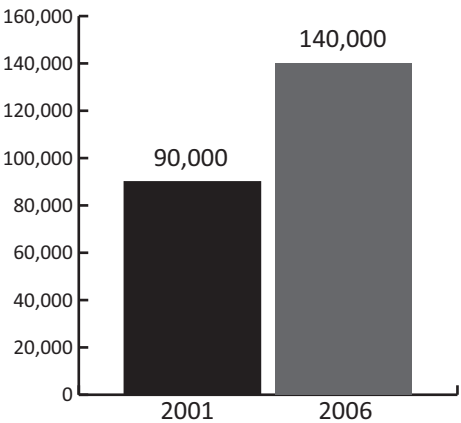
According to the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) - Statistics Canada 2006, approximately 4.4 million (14.3%) Canadians reported having a disability. This number has increased by 21.2% from 3.6 million in 2001. Of these, 5% are under 15 years, 55% are between 15 and 64 years and 40% are 65 years or older.

Almost three million Canadians (11% of the population 15 years and older) indicated that they have a disability related to pain, mobility or agility. There was also a large increase in the number of adults and children who reported having learning disabilities between 2001 and 2006.

In 2006, there was an estimated 1.9 million Ontario residents with a disability representing 15.5% of the population. This represents an increase of 2% from 2001.

Using the Ontario figure, it can be estimated that in York Region the number of people with disabilities increased by approximately 55% or close to 50,000 between 2001 and 2006. In 2006, it was estimated that there were 140,000 York Region residents with a disability.

Estimated Number of Residents with a Disability
York Region, 2001 and 2006

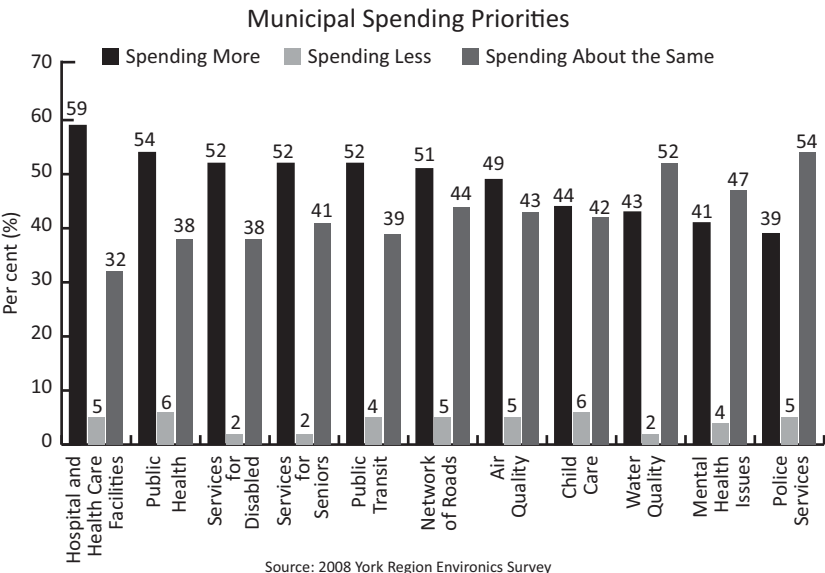


Source: Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006, Statistics Canada

Key Observations

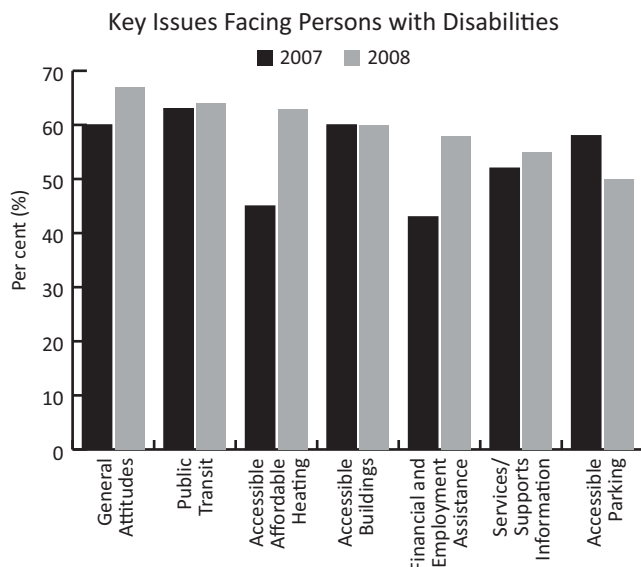
Accessibility to York Region’s programs, services and facilities is important to residents. Consistent responses in the past four York Region Enviroics Surveys (2004 – 2007) show that full accessibility to the Region’s programs, services and facilities matters to our residents. In 2008, the York Region Enviroics Survey results once again confirm that accessibility for persons with disabilities continues to be a spending priority for York Region residents.

When asked about municipal spending priorities, 52% of the survey respondents said they



Source: 2008 York Region Enviroics Survey

⁴ Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.
 Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001.
 Note: Statistics are based on self-identification and include a broad scope of disability.



Source: 2008 York Region Environics Survey

would like to see more spending directed towards services for people with disabilities. This was rated only slightly below hospitals and health care facilities (59%) and public health (54%), and rated equal with services for seniors (52%) and public transit (52%).

Survey respondents also indicated that the most important issue facing people with disabilities in York Region is general attitudes (67%) slightly above public transit (64%) and accessible affordable housing (63%).

Accessibility Planning in York Region

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF OUR RESIDENTS

myRide

YRT's Travel Training Program

Transportation Services myRide, is a support program that prepares people to travel safely on their own using public transit. It responds to individual needs and abilities with services ranging from group training sessions to intensive one-on-one sessions on how to use transit. By empowering and encouraging transit use for people of all ages and disabilities to use transit, myRide travel training enables people to participate more fully in their community.

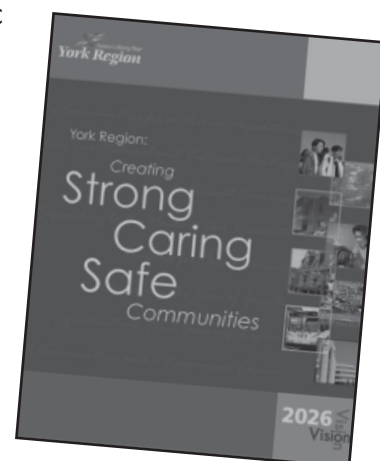
The program is delivered through partnership with various service providers in the region including CNIB, Ontario March of Dimes, Community Living York South, Epilepsy York Region and both the public and catholic school boards.

Since the launch of the pilot in May 2008, YRT has trained over 80 trainers and currently over 200 participants are enrolled in the myRide program.

Under the ODA, the annual accessibility plan must include:

- Steps the Region has taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
- How the Region will assess its bylaws, policies, programs, practices, and services to determine their impact on persons with disabilities.
- What bylaws, policies, services, programs, and practices the Region will review in the coming year to identify barriers.
- Measures the Region will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers in all of its services, and programs, including transit.

York Region's long-term strategic plan, Vision 2026, provides the foundation for accessibility planning in York Region and many other important corporate initiatives. Meeting the specific requirements of the ODA through the development and implementation of annual accessibility plans further supports the goals set out in Vision 2026.



The Process for Developing York Region's Plans

The Region's accessibility planning process was set out in the Accessibility Plan Policy Framework that was approved by Regional Council in February, 2003. The direction established in the Policy Framework has resulted in six Regional accessibility plans that cover every aspect of the Region's businesses and services.

Each department, including York Regional Police, develops its own departmental accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers in Regional programs and services on an annual basis. The initiatives included in these departmental plans are combined to form one document - York Region's Annual Accessibility Plan.

Understanding what the Region has done to improve and enhance accessibility is also a key part of our Policy Framework. To help us understand our progress, we evaluate, monitor and track the accessibility planning progress. We continue to successfully meet the obligations outlined in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

Participation of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC)

York Regional Council highly encourages the involvement of many different people and groups in the Region's accessibility planning process. Since the beginning of the ODA implementation, the support of Regional Council members has been consistent. We have formed networks to encourage ongoing communication with area municipalities, stakeholder organizations, and the general public. Many Regional departments work with their customers and clients to identify, prevent, and remove different types of barriers that prevent people with disabilities from receiving or accessing services, programs and facilities.

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) is a legislatively mandated committee that was first appointed by York Regional Council in 2003. In March 2007, Regional Council appointed a new committee to serve for the 2007 - 2010 term. It includes members of Regional Council and citizen volunteers, and has been an integral part of the accessibility planning process. The members of the YRAAC include people from across York Region with different types of disabilities and backgrounds offering a variety of perspectives and representing the region as a whole. The YRAAC plays a critical role in advising Council on the preparation, implementation, and effectiveness of its annual accessibility plans.

PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD (AODA)

The scope for the proposed Transportation Accessibility Standard outlines long-term objectives and technical requirements to prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities in the use of passenger transportation services in the Province of Ontario by January 1, 2025.

This proposed transportation accessibility standard applies to all persons or organizations providing or responsible for the following types of passenger transportation services in the Province of Ontario:

- Accessible public transit services
- On-demand taxi services
- Booked vehicle services
- School transportation services
- Other transportation services

THE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S ROLE WILL EXPAND UNDER THE AODA

Under the AODA, the role of each municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee will change from advising municipal councils on their annual accessibility plans as required under the ODA, to reviewing and advising council on their municipalities' compliance with the new accessibility standards.

Until the ODA is repealed, Accessibility Advisory Committees will have responsibilities under both the ODA and AODA.

In keeping with its legislated mandate, in 2008 the YRAAC continued to provide direct input into the implementation activities of *Opening Doors: York Region's 2008 Accessibility Plan*. For example, members of the YRAAC:

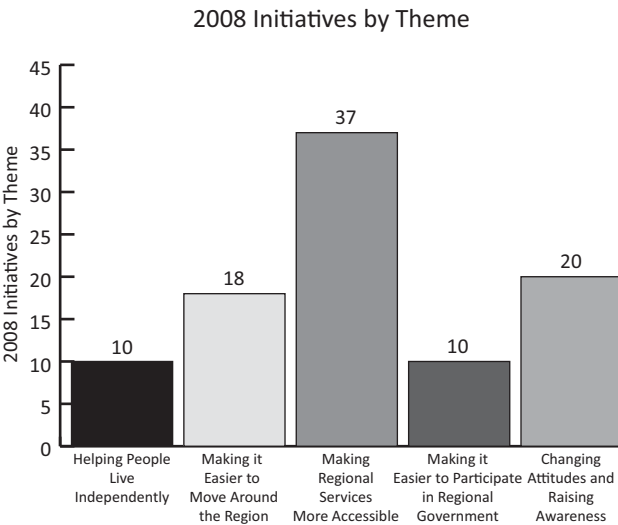
PROPOSED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD (AODA)
The scope of the proposed Information and Communications Standard outlines how businesses and organizations will be required to provide public information (online, print and verbal and digital) in various accessible formats like Braille, large print, audio-format and CD.

- Provided advice on the 2008 Plan and the development of the 2009 accessibility plan.
- Recommended that Regional Council once again recognize National Access Awareness Week, which was subsequently endorsed by Council in May 2008.
- Participated in the Province's Accessible Customer Service Regulation Training workshops and focus group held in February and March, 2008.
- Participated in "Exercise Maple Migration" a joint emergency exercise with York Region and the City of Vaughan in September, 2008.
- Participated on the Metrolinx Accessibility Advisory Working Group to provide advice on issues related to regional accessibility as part of their preparation for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Are We Making Progress? A Brief Overview of 2008 Achievements

Opening Doors: York Region's 2008 Accessibility Plan, committed to act on 95 initiatives to enhance accessibility across our programs, services, and facilities. As a first step, we identified 34 new barriers and then addressed 61 barriers that were already identified. Of these initiatives, we are pleased to report that 53% (50 initiatives) are now complete and 47% (45 initiatives) are planned or underway with completion expected early in 2009.

The initiatives included in *Opening Doors: York Region's 2008 Accessibility Plan* support the Region's dedication to enhancing accessibility for people with a broad range of disabilities while supporting the key areas that impact the lives of people with disabilities in York Region. Our experience in accessibility planning has increased our awareness and understanding of all types of barriers both visible and invisible. In 2008, 212 different types of barriers to accessibility were identified and of these, 162 were invisible barriers.

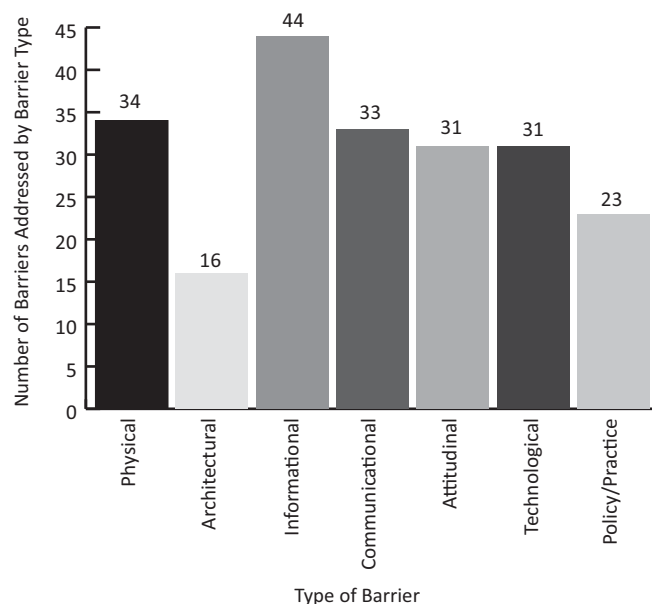


- A few examples of how departments are addressing different types of barriers in 2008 include:
- Corporate Communications addressed *technological* barriers by implementing the Google search function on the Region's website to enable all persons with disabilities to retrieve information quickly without having to navigate the entire website.
 - As a department, Community and Health Services addressed *physical* barriers by installing a new elevator for persons with visual and hearing disabilities that includes improved lighting, back lit/large buttons and a large digital floor display at Elmwood Gardens. Branches in the Community and Health Services Department have addressed *informational* and *technological* barriers

by increasing access to Community Services web information, making it more accessible and including technology to help people with disabilities navigate the website. Branches have also addressed *all* barrier types by conducting an accessibility audit of meeting locations using the Region's Accessible Meeting Guidelines.

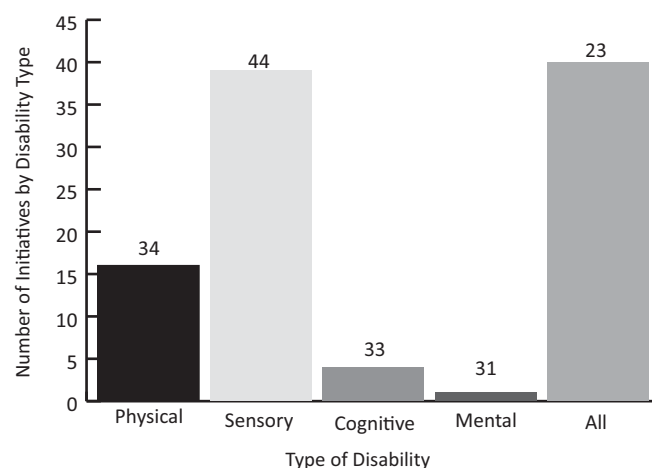
- Corporate Services addressed *informational* barriers by developing a question for inclusion on the Employee Satisfaction Survey to measure employee's satisfaction with workplace modification or accommodation supports.
- Environmental Services addressed *informational* and *technological* barriers by reviewing and editing the Waste Management web pages to identify any barriers to accessibility.
- To address *technological* barriers, the Finance Department is studying and documenting how municipalities across Ontario are using technology solutions to overcome various accessibility barriers.
- Planning and Development Services addressed *physical*, *architectural* and *informational* barriers by conducting an accessibility audit of all Public Consultation Centres to identify any barriers to access.
- Transportation Services, YRT Mobility Plus addressed *attitudinal* barriers by improving the information and communication between social/health agencies and stakeholders about transit needs by conducting bi-annual meetings. The Roads Branch is addressing *physical* barriers by increasing accessibility to some Regional Forest Trails by identifying the need for step grades at Hollidge Tract for persons with disabilities.
- To address *communicational* barriers York Regional Police (YRP) acquired communication tip cards from the Canadian Hearing Society for officers to use when communicating with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. YRP also addressed *policy/practice* barriers by establishing a sign language service protocol allowing for appropriate and timely access to sign language interpreter services.

212 Different Types of Barriers Were Identified in the 2008 Accessibility Plan



Source: 2008 Progress Report Opening Doors

Disability Types That Were Addressed in the 2008 Accessibility Plan



Source: 2008 Progress Report Opening Doors

PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD (AODA)

The scope of the Employment Accessibility Standard outlines how organizations should set out policies, procedures and requirements to prevent, identify and remove barriers across all steps of the employment life cycle for people with disabilities.

PROPOSED ACCESSIBLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT STANDARD (AODA)

The scope for the proposed Accessible Built Environment Standard refers to access to, from and within:

- buildings and outdoor spaces
- life safety and emergency evacuation facilities
- public parks, trails and streetscaping
- bus stops, boarding platforms
- multi residential occupancies

The scope could include standards for:

- heights
- aisle/door widths
- lighting
- public address systems
- parking
- signs
- pedestrian routes and signal systems

Developing *Access-ability*: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan

The Region's sixth accessibility plan continues to follow the direction set out in our Accessibility Plan Policy Framework and is integrated with our annual business planning and budget process.

Again this year, each regional department, including the York Regional Police participated by developing a departmental accessibility plan. Each department's plan is included in this document.

The 2009 Accessibility Plan includes 77 accessibility planning initiatives put forward by departments to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 2009. As in our previous accessibility plans, we have organized each initiative around five themes.

The themes are:

Helping People Live Independently

Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

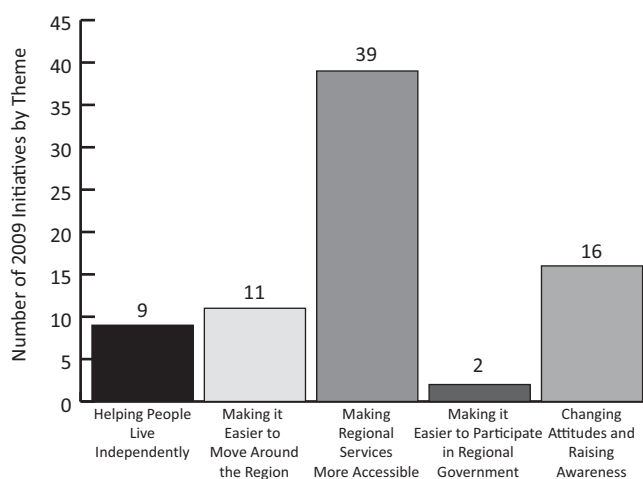
Making Regional Services More Accessible

Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

The themes bring together the different parts of our programs and services into broader areas of action. These themes reflect input from the YRAAC and from previous public consultations on the key areas that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

2009 Initiatives Organized Around Five Themes



Parallel Implementation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) came into effect in June 2005. It applies to both the public and private sectors covering every aspect of life available to the public, except private homes. The goal of the AODA is to ensure that all Ontarians with disabilities have full access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, building structures, and premises by January 1, 2025. This goal will be achieved through the development, implementation, and enforcement of provincially-set accessibility standards in the areas of customer service, the built environment, information and communications, employment, and transportation. Both public and private sector organizations will be required to implement these standards in increments.

AODA INCLUDES ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE AND PENALTIES

Unlike the ODA, the AODA includes enforcement provisions. Enforcement will be through a process of reporting, inspection, investigation, compliance orders, and administrative penalties

The Province has not released details on compliance reporting requirements. It is expected that these details will be provided closer to the compliance dates.

Enforcement of the AODA will be through a process of reporting, inspection, investigation, compliance orders, and administrative penalties.

Under the AODA, the role of municipal accessibility advisory committees will change from advising municipal councils on their annual accessibility plans to advising councils on their municipalities' compliance with the new accessibility standards.

The AODA will eventually replace the ODA. However, the Province has indicated that the ODA will remain in effect for the foreseeable future while the AODA is phased in. The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) is the first of five standards to be released under the AODA with a compliance date of January 1, 2010. It is expected that the other standards – Transportation, Information and Communications, Employment and Built Environment will be released in 2009/2010. Until then, the Region, like other municipalities, must meet the challenge of implementing both the ODA and the AODA simultaneously.



YORK REGION'S 2009 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN SUMMARY

Helping People Live Independently

Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

Making Regional Services More Accessible

Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

Conclusion

Executive Summary

York Region is pleased to present *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan*. It lists accomplishments made in 2008 and explains how individual departments are identifying, removing and preventing barriers in their core businesses now and in the future.

Detailed individual department accessibility plans, which are included in this plan, describe initiatives from every regional department including York Regional Police and incorporate all regional businesses, programs, services, facilities, policies, practices, bylaws and procedures.

Our goal is not only to remove visible barriers, but also to identify and remove invisible barriers, which might be communicational, attitudinal, informational or technological. Barriers to accessibility might also be rooted in an organization's policies or practices. We address the needs of people with a broad range of disabilities: physical, sensory, cognitive disabilities and mental illness.

As in previous years, the initiatives are arranged into the aspects of life that impact people with disabilities:

1. Helping people live independently
2. Making it easier to move around the Region
3. Making regional services more accessible
4. Making it easier to participate in regional government
5. Changing attitudes and raising awareness.

This summary highlights some of our 2008 accomplishments and outlines how we plan to promote 'Access-ability' in 2009.



1. Helping People Live Independently

Accessibility Achievements in 2008

York Region has already done a great deal to identify and remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from living in safe, comfortable, and affordable homes. In 2008, we continued to improve the accessibility of the housing we manage, and we continued to plan accessible communities for the future, so that every member of our community can live independently.

Community and Health Services provides a wide range of programs and services to the residents of York Region that promote safe, secure and healthy communities and respond to the needs of vulnerable residents, including people with disabilities. The Housing and Long Term Care Branch manages and administers social housing and two long term care facilities.

In 2008, Community and Health Services made a number of changes that have helped more people with disabilities live independently in the community. For example, we completed a centralized waiting list, streamlining the process that provides access to affordable housing for people with disabilities. We also improved the accessibility of properties we manage by installing:

- new elevators with improved lighting, back lit/large buttons and large digital floor displays in Elmwood Gardens

- better lighting in the public areas of Heritage East and Fairy Lake Gardens and in the suites of nine seniors' buildings
- raised toilet seats in the suites at North View Court
- a new emergency power generator at Maplewood Place to ensure the elevators operate and common areas are lit during a power outage
- automatic door openers at Evergreen Terrace and Heritage East
- visual alarm features on the fire alarm systems at Maple Health Centre and Newmarket Health Centre

Planning and Development Services has committed to including accessibility measures into its New Communities policy in the Regional Official Plan.

Barrier Identification for 2009

Community and Health Services will continue to look for barriers that prevent people from living independently by establishing Ontario Works Reference Group for people with disabilities who receive Ontario Works to provide input on our services. We will also hire a consultant to identify any barriers to communication for our long term care patients, relatives and people with sensory disabilities.

Barriers to be Addressed in 2009

To help people with disabilities live independently in York Region, **Community and Health Services** has planned projects in 2009 that include:

- improving the lighting in the suites of 11 seniors' buildings in the parking area and walkways at 55 Orchard Heights, in the common areas at 84 Oakridge Street and 190 Church Street
- upgrading the elevators at 37 North Street
- installing stair treads with better visibility and grip for seniors at 190 Church Street

To improve access to affordable housing for people with disabilities, the Department will use funds allocated from the Provincial Housing Innovations Fund to help external housing providers conduct accessibility upgrades, and to repair and purchase playground equipment.

Planning and Development Services will continue to include accessibility measures for public transit and regional streets when developing new community design criteria.



Photo courtesy of the Town of Richmond Hill

2. Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

Accessibility Achievements in 2008

York Region is committed to providing full accessibility to all residents who travel by roadways, the pedestrian network and public transit. Greater accessibility means people with disabilities can more easily travel to work, meet their friends, attend school or do their shopping. Making it easier to move around the region encourages broader participation in all aspects of life and enriches our communities.

York Region operates three public transit services, including the York Region Transit (YRT) conventional service, Mobility Transit and Viva rapid transit. Combined, these services form a single integrated transit system. We also operate door-to-door Mobility Plus services for individuals with disabilities. We are committed to providing convenient public transit service for those unable to use conventional transit so everyone can fully participate in community life.

Transportation Services is responsible for ensuring universal access for pedestrians and transit customers with disabilities to the public transportation system, including access to bus stops, transit terminals, vehicles and the pedestrian network. Some of the projects completed in 2008 include completing a plain language audit of the Call Centre and a review of bus stops for accessibility. So far over three hundred bus stops have been upgraded with concrete pads. At pedestrian crossings, audible pedestrian signals were installed and pedestrian push buttons were reinstalled at different heights making them more accessible. We also made it easier to schedule the services of Mobility Plus—customers can now request service by phone and over the Internet.

Transportation Services launched a one year Travel Training Pilot Program that teaches eligible seniors and people with disabilities how to use conventional transit. Community and Health Services provided one of its clients with an opportunity to participate in this pilot program.



Barrier Identification for 2009

Community and Health Services will survey Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staff to determine the need for step aids for patients and relatives with physical and sensory disabilities to access EMS vehicles.

Transportation Services will review ways to improve signs on terminal platforms and at bus stops for visibility and readability by people with sensory disabilities.

Barriers to Be Addressed in 2009

Transportation Services will increase accessibility to bus stops by adding 400 new and replacement pads per year. We will continue to purchase low floor accessible buses as part of the fleet replacement and expansion program with the goal of being fully accessible by 2012. We will add more accessible routes to our system and help more people with disabilities to use conventional transit with the Travel Training Program. The Mobility Plus website will have an audio option to help people with sensory disabilities.

3. Making Regional Services More Accessible

Accessibility Achievements in 2008

York Region's services and programs are vital to the safety, comfort and well being of its residents. People with disabilities often face barriers in accessing these services - on paper, online or in person. Our commitment to providing full access to our services and programs is very important in every department, as you can see from this summary of our 2008 achievements.

Community and Health Services enhanced the standards of printed materials to ensure everything is available in plain language and alternative formats, such as large print. The Social Services Branch revised its printed materials to ensure the typeface was legible for people with low vision. The Health Protection Division reviewed and revised food safety fact sheets using the Region's Multiple Formats Guidelines. Dental and Nutrition Services reviewed and revised dental web pages for improved accessibility. We have also increased the awareness and use of the Ontario Works Employment Resource Centres by persons with disabilities by offering an orientation session, a tour of the facility and an overview of available community support and job search strategies.

Corporate Services is reviewing the design of the ceremonial ramp and the cafeteria salad bar at the Administrative Centre to make them more accessible for people with physical disabilities. Our other Administrative Centre projects include installing brighter lighting in the washrooms and elevators, clearer internal signs, and a guest wheelchair near the information kiosk of the Administrative Centre. We have also installed a new power door operator at the Corporate Learning Centre at the South Services Centre.



Environmental Services is reviewing written and website materials to ensure they are written in plain language and are accessible to people with low vision. We are also reviewing emergency plans at all facilities to ensure they address the needs of people with disabilities. The department presented architectural plans to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee for the proposed Community Environmental Centre in Vaughan, and made revisions based on the Committee's feedback to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Finance Department is continuing to study how municipalities across Ontario are using technology to overcome accessibility barriers. It is planning to change TTY devices in the Region's Business Call Centres to TEXTNET, a PC-based, easy-to-use digital solution to directly connect callers who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to the staff member best able to help them.

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer has made the Region's website more accessible for people with cognitive and sensory disabilities by allowing them to browse the site using keywords rather than navigation. We also concluded that Real Simple Syndication (RSS) - technology that sends information directly to computers with screen reading software - can be streamed so that it works with users' screen reading software.

Planning and Development Services is incorporating fully accessible features in online Geomatic maps so people with sensory disabilities can view and access maps and products published online more easily.

Transportation Services is reviewing the accessibility of its printed materials, and collaborated with the Oak Ridges Trails Association (ORTA) to address barriers to accessibility of our forest trails by using the Universal Trail Accessibility Protocol (UTAP).

York Regional Police is creating three accessible parking spots at the entrance of 2 District. Police officers will now use communication tip cards when communicating with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

Barrier Identification for 2009

To ensure everyone in York Region benefits from our programs and services, we continue to look for barriers to accessibility.

Community and Health Services will conduct a comprehensive review of the recently initiated Application Support Worker pilot project to determine best practices when assisting Ontario Works applicants who have disabilities.

Corporate Services will investigate converting the two washrooms at the North entrance of the Administrative Centre to one accessible unisex washroom. We will also investigate installing voice activated floor announcements in the elevators.

The Finance Department will study how other municipalities are using technology to overcome accessibility barriers.

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer will determine what content should be accessible by Real Simple Syndication (RSS) - a technology that sends information directly to computers with screen reading software to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities.

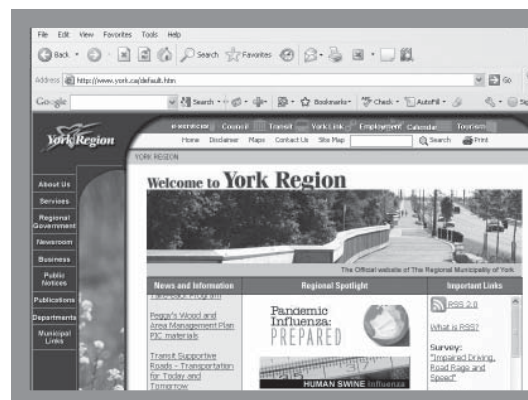
Planning and Development Services will continue to audit the accessibility of its Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder forums to identify any barriers to full participation by people with disabilities.

Transportation Services will gather feedback from its customers to assess the readability of the YRT route map.

York Regional Police will hire a consultant to review the accessibility of its facilities being modified or constructed. It will conduct an accessibility review of internet, telecommunications and other technologies to identify barriers and review YRP emergency planning procedures.

Barriers to Be Addressed in 2009

To increase access to our emergency shelter services and housing, **Community and Health Services** will create a barrier-free emergency shelter at Leeder Place and include 5 modified units at the Mapleglen Residences. Families of children with disabilities will be able to apply for financial assistance to ensure their children benefit from the available recreational sport programming. We will use feedback from Ontario Works clients to enhance services to people with disabilities. We will also ensure our breastfeeding clinics and our redesigned website are accessible by doing continued audits.



Corporate Services will redesign the ceremonial entrance of the Administrative Centre to include new ramp handrails and a flat transition area allowing easier access to the Administrative Centre. We will also redesign the cafeteria's salad bar area to increase accessibility for people with disabilities. The parking lot and main entrance at 22 Prospect Street, one of the Region's public health buildings, will be redesigned to incorporate a ramp and an accessible parking spot, and new internal office signs at the Administrative Centre will make it easier for people with sensory disabilities to find their way through the building.

To increase access to our Regional website, **Environmental Services** will change the layout and design of two brochures to enhance accessibility for people with sensory and cognitive disabilities. We will also review Environmental Services' webpages for font, colour, contrast and plain language to increase access to information. We will enhance accessibility in the Vaughan Community Environmental Centre by adding a washroom at the front entrance that has an accessible fixture and contrasting colours.

The Finance Department is planning to change TTY devices in the Region's Business Call Centres to TEXTNET, a PC-based, easy-to-use digital solution to directly connect callers who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to the staff member best able to help them.

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer will test the effectiveness of the automatic font size icon/link placed in our new web design.



To encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public consultation meetings, **Planning and Development Services** will use sound amplification systems and provide accessible printed materials (Braille, large print, electronic version, and audio-format). We will also continue to include fully accessible features in our online Geomatic maps.

Transportation Services will improve clarity and readability of a new YRT route map for people with sensory and cognitive disabilities. To increase access for people with low vision, Audible Pedestrian Signals will be installed at identified crossings as

required by the CNIB.

York Regional Police will partner with York Support Services Network to investigate potential funding sources to expand the role of the Mental Health Support Team, to respond to the needs of children.

4. Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Accessibility Achievements in 2008

To create a strong, caring, safe community, the voice of every member needs to be heard and full community participation is the goal. Below are York Region's 2008 accomplishments that have removed barriers to participation in regional government, making it easier for people with disabilities to have a voice.

Community and Health Services now provides Flu Clinics at sites that are fully accessible to wheelchairs. Two staff from Community and Health Services participated in the Built Environment and Information and Communications Standards Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Resource Teams, contributing to the development of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* standards.

Environmental Services is auditing the accessibility of its public consultation and seminar locations to make it easier for people with disabilities to participate in regional government.

Planning and Development Services has enhanced accessibility at public consultation meetings by providing sound amplification at its meetings and providing printed materials in accessible font colours. Meeting transcripts, brochures and display materials are also on our regional website.

York Regional Police has developed a Canadian Hearing Society Sign Language Interpreter Services Protocol that allows appropriate and timely access to Sign Language Interpreter services.

Barriers to Be Addressed in 2009

Environmental Services will continue to increase the participation of people with disabilities at its public consultation facilities and forums using the Region's Accessible Meeting and Multiple Format Guidelines to make its meetings and materials more accessible.

York Regional Police will promote CopLogic, an email/web-based method of reporting minor incidents, increasing access to reporting minor incidents for people with disabilities.

5. Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

Accessibility Achievements in 2008

While many barriers to accessibility are visible and can be overcome with ramps, better lighting or larger fonts, there are also invisible barriers, such as negative attitudes or misinformation about people with disabilities. York Region has worked to change attitudes and raise awareness about people with all types of disabilities, including those that are not so obvious.

Community and Health Services is creating a resource library in each Ontario Works office to help staff better serve clients with mental illness, learning disabilities and chronic diseases. We held a Community Partners Open House to inform staff of community programs and services available to people with disabilities.

Corporate Services developed a question to be included in the Employee Satisfaction Survey, designed to measure satisfaction with workplace modifications. Human Resources launched "Mental Health Works," a program to help managers with employees experiencing mental illnesses, such as depression or anxiety.



Transportation Services is reviewing training content and materials to identify any gaps in meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA. With a goal to improve the information exchange between social/health agencies and stakeholders, YRT Mobility Plus will hold meetings twice per year with service agencies to discuss transportation needs.

York Regional Police is providing officers and dispatchers with training through the Canadian Hearing Society to better help them serve citizens who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. Officers at risk of hearing loss are receiving preventative education.

In 2008, York Region departments collectively enrolled over 160 staff in "Just Ask," York Region's inclusivity and accessibility training. So far, over 590 staff have participated in this training.

Barrier Identification for 2009

York Regional Police will review hiring and volunteer selection practices to identify barriers that exclude people with disabilities, and will review the composition of the Equity Advisory Committee to identify additional opportunities for inclusion.

All departments, including York Regional Police, will review internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure they comply with AODA Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equality of opportunity.

Barriers to be Addressed in 2009



To raise awareness of staff's knowledge of the new *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005(AODA)*, **Community and Health Services** will add an AODA component to the annual mandatory Long Term Care core in-services training program, improving customer service to people with disabilities.

To meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA, the **Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)**, as the departmental lead, will develop and implement a corporate training strategy for providing York Region's goods and services to people with disabilities. The Office of the CAO will also create an accessible process for responding to feedback about how well we provide goods and services to people with disabilities.

York Regional Police will meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA) by ensuring all staff members receive Customer Service Regulation training in providing goods and services to people with disabilities. To help change attitudes and raise awareness among recruits, YRP will invite agencies serving people with various types of disabilities to participate in the Recruit Community Insight Program.

Conclusion

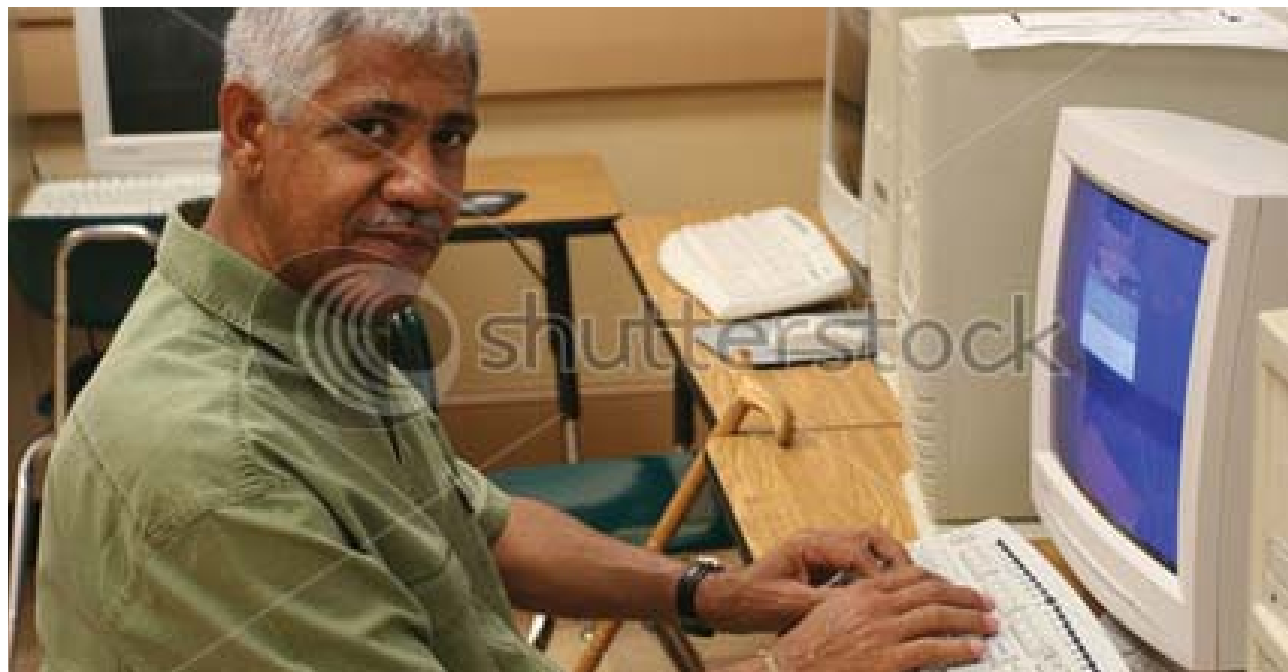
The Region's sixth annual accessibility plan continues to demonstrate our commitment to creating strong, caring and safe communities with services that are accessible to all residents.

While a great deal has been accomplished, there is more work to be done. This plan continues to identify, remove and prevent barriers in all aspects of regional government, while balancing the developing requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

The scope of initiatives described in this year's plan shows that accessibility is deeply embedded in York Region's business practices and processes, making our region more inviting and inclusive to people with disabilities. In 2009, we will continue to explore barriers and implement solutions, making real and effective changes that promote 'Access-ability.' Our goal is to create opportunities for those who live here and for others who visit, work, play and learn to fully participate in what York Region has to offer.

Questions or comments about *Access-ability: York Region's 2009 Accessibility Plan* are welcome. To provide comments, please refer to page 9 of this document.





DEPARTMENTAL ACCESSIBILITY PLANS

Community and Health Services

Corporate Services

Environmental Services

Finance

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Planning and Development Services

Transportation Services

York Regional Police

Environmental Scan

The Community and Health Services Department continues to identify barriers within the themes that people with disabilities in our communities have told us have the greatest impact on their lives. For example:

Helping People Live Independently

- We will continue to help people with disabilities live independently in York Region through enhancements to customer service and improvements to accessibility of our social housing units and buildings.

Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

- To make it easier to move around the region, we will survey staff of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to identify physical mobility barriers on EMS emergency vehicles to enhance access by patients and relatives.



Making Regional Services More Accessible

- To identify potential barriers in our services and to make our services more accessible, we will review our Application Support Worker Pilot, Breastfeeding Clinics, recreational sport programs for children, printed materials (such as posters, brochures, and promotional materials), and our section of York Region's website.

Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

- To change attitudes and raise awareness, we will review staff training procedures to ensure employees are learning in an environment that addresses their learning needs. We will do a comprehensive review of our internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps and ensure incorporation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Our Customers

The Community and Health Services Department provides a wide range of programs and services that promote safe, secure and healthy communities, and respond to the needs of vulnerable residents by supporting health care needs at all stages of life.

We serve people of all ages, including children, youth, and seniors with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Our clients may be in need of financial and employment assistance, housing assistance, child care including developmental programming, emergency medical services, long term care, and public health services.

Emergency Medical Services provides emergency and non-emergency land ambulance services to residents and visitors of York Region. Paramedics perform patient assessment, life saving treatment,

and provide skills and procedures that require medical oversight along with providing safe and timely transport.

Public Health Services delivers programs and services legislated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, to residents of York Region. Public Health staff strive to ensure that programs and services are delivered in accordance with provincial guidelines.

The Social Services Branch provides employment and financial support to eligible residents of York Region including adults living in domiciliary hostels, and also provides financial assistance and direct developmental programming to children.

Our Housing and Long-Term Care Branch manages social housing through Housing York Inc. and administers social housing through independent non-profit and co-operative housing providers. As well, the Branch manages two long term care facilities. In addition, we provide programs and services that meet the needs of adults and seniors who can no longer live independently. These programs and services focus on promoting the health, safety and independence of residents.



The Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch provides support to the department, the corporation, and Regional Council by integrating program planning and providing cross-department analysis on policy and legislation that affects community and health services. We also lead accessibility planning for the coordination of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* and *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. This branch also provides program communications, implements community development and investment funding, coordinates homelessness programs and human services planning, and leads emergency social services planning.

The Business Operations and Quality Assurance Branch delivers direct services such as helping clients pursue support income, investigating and collecting revenue owed to the Region, call centre services and referral and application services. We also support the Community and Health Services Department by providing knowledge and skills training for staff, accommodation services, technology support, and ensuring the Department's fiscal integrity through budget development and expenditure control.

Accessibility Statement

The Community and Health Services Department commits to enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities to its programs, services and facilities. In 2009, we will do a comprehensive review of internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of AODA Customer Service Regulations core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity. Our branches will work together to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in our programs, services and facilities.

Community and Health Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Helping People Live Independently			
Finalize the process of creating a centralized waiting list for households needing modified housing units.	Policy/Practice	All	People with disabilities can access affordable housing on the centralized waiting lists instead of applying to individual housing providers.
Research the self declared disabilities of tenants reported in Housing York Inc. tenant survey.	Policy/Practice	All	Improved understanding of the needs of tenants with disabilities.
Facility limitation and need to provide greater accessibility in elevators for social housing residents.	Physical	Sensory	An audit was conducted in preparation for the planned recommended upgrade in 2009.
Facility limitation and need to provide greater accessibility in elevators for social housing residents.	Physical	Sensory	The elevators at Elmwood Gardens will have improved lighting, back lit/large buttons and a large digital floor display.
Inadequate lighting levels in common areas of Housing York Inc. property.	Physical	Sensory	Lighting levels have been improved in the common areas of Maplewood Place and the public areas of Heritage East and Fairy Lake Gardens.
Inadequate lighting levels in the suites of Housing York Inc. seniors' buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Lighting levels were upgraded in the suites in nine seniors' buildings.
Inadequate lighting levels during power blackouts.	Physical	All	A new emergency power generator was installed that will keep elevators operating and the hallways and community room lit during a power outage for an unlimited time. This is over and above Building Code requirements.
Facilities limitation and need for greater accessibility to building entrances.	Architectural	Physical	Door openers were installed in Evergreen Terrace and Heritage East.

Community and Health Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice))	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Helping People Live Independently			
Fire Alarm Systems in public areas of the Maple Health Centre and the Newmarket Health Centre.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	A visual alarm feature was added to the fire alarm systems in all public areas of both health centres.
Inadequate washroom facilities in seniors' buildings.	Physical	Physical	Raised toilet seats were installed in all suites in North View Court.
Making It Easier to Move Around the Region			
Access to York Region Transit's conventional Travel Training Program for Community Services clients.	Physical, Informational, Communicational, Attitudinal, Policy/Practice, Architectural	All	One Community Services client participated in YRT's Travel Training Program.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Use of Ontario Works Employment Resource Centres by persons with disabilities.	All	All	The Vaughan office site was used for review as part of a larger targeted employment resource centre initiative. In response to user feedback, furniture located near a computer workstation was moved to enhance accessibility.
Printed materials used in Family and Children's Services branch.	Communicational, Informational	Sensory	Using feedback from clients the program areas are in the process of revising printed materials/brochures to ensure typeface is readable for people with low vision. We expect this to be complete by Summer 2009.
Access to information on the Community Services web pages for people with different types of disabilities.	Informational, Technological	All	Reviewed all programs. Focus tested with a YRAAC member and it was found to be accessible. Ongoing monitoring is underway.

Community and Health Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Access to printed materials within Community Services for people with different types of disabilities.	Informational, Communicational	All	Community Services materials are available in different printed formats upon request (e.g.. Large print, Braille). Online formats are compatible with screen reading software.
Child & Family Health parenting programs, brochures, and promotional material.	Informational, Communicational	All	All promotional flyers for prenatal classes include this accessibility statement “We are committed to making our programs accessible to persons with disabilities: identify your needs to us.” Review of printed materials for accessibility will continue to be included in plans to revise program materials related to new Ontario Public Health standards.
People who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing are often under serviced in terms of their access to affordable housing.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Seven units have been designed to house clients of the Canadian Hearing Society.
Access to Community Services web information for persons with disabilities.	Informational, Technological	Sensory	All programs were reviewed and focus tested with a YRAAC member and the website was found to be accessible. Ongoing monitoring is underway.
Access to Community Services printed materials – format and language.	Informational,	Sensory	Efforts have been made to tailor the language (e.g. Plain Language edits) and format the layout (e.g., large font) to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
Health Services Fact Sheets.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	Health Protection has reviewed and revised food safety program fact sheets using the Region’s Multiple Formats Guidelines in 2008.
Dental and Nutrition Services web pages.	Informational	Sensory, Cognitive	Web pages for Dental Services were reviewed and revised in 2008 to improve accessibility.
Accessibility of Breastfeeding Clinics.	All	All	Plans to be incorporated into 2009 breastfeeding team plans.

Community and Health Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Limited awareness and use of Ontario Works Employment Resource Centres by people with disabilities.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	All	Despite outreach efforts, only a small group of people with disabilities attended our orientation sessions offered. Those who attended received a tour of the facility, overview of written and internet resources, an overview of community supports, and job search strategies. Attendees provided positive feedback regarding job search skills and how to access the labour market.
Making It Easier to Participate in Regional Government			
AODA Standards Development Committees.	All	All	Two staff from Community and Health Services participated on the Built Environment and Information and Communications Standards AMO Resource Teams. One staff participated on the AMO Barrier-Free Working Group.
Accessibility feedback mechanism for York Region residents.	All	All	The Customer Service Regulation (AODA) was released in 2008. We are working together with the lead department (Office of the Chief Administrative Officer) to develop a corporate accessible feedback mechanism to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation.
Meetings are not equally accessible to all.	All	All	Flu Clinic sites were chosen with wheelchair accessibility as a key criteria; also, clinic sites are well lit to ensure that individuals can see written information, especially fact sheets and consents. If patients are not able to read the consent and interview questions, the staff will go over the material verbally with clients. Health Protection staff now host public information sessions (e.g., for faith-based groups, special events, information sessions) in facilities that are accessible.

Community and Health Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice))	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other))	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Review training materials to identify gaps in training for staff awareness of the needs of Community Services clients with disabilities.	Informational, Communicational, Policy/Practice	All	A review of training materials is underway.
Regional staff and community knowledge of York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee.	Informational	All	A YRAAC brochure will be launched during National Access Awareness Week 2009.
Staff access to resources and information regarding mental illness issues, learning disabilities and chronic diseases.	Attitudinal, Informational	All	Staff resource libraries were created in Ontario Works offices providing staff access to resource and information materials to support clients with issues such as: learning disabilities, mental illness, chronic disease, addiction, domestic violence and family strengthening.
Knowledge of community programs and services for people with disabilities.	Attitudinal, Informational	All	A Community Partners Open House was held to provide information to staff about community services available for people with disabilities. So far we have held two sessions.
Increase workforce diversity within Community Services.	Policy/Practice	All	A Summer Student was hired through York Region Summer Student Program.
Awareness of ODA and AODA legislation.	Attitudinal, Informational	All	Initiative pending redesign of 'Working Together' newsletter.
Need for more staff awareness of customers with disabilities and how best to serve them.	All	All	National Access Awareness Week was promoted with a newsletter and posters.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	62 staff from Community and Health Services have completed the 'Just Ask' inclusivity training.

Community and Health Services

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Helping People Live Independently		
Enhance opportunities for people with disabilities, who receive Ontario Works, to provide input on the services provided.	The establishment of an Ontario Works Reference Group will provide the opportunity for input, enhancing service to people with disabilities.	Q4 – 2009
Effective communication with Long Term Care patients, relatives and people with sensory disabilities.	Consultant to assess any barriers to communication with people with sensory disabilities.	2009
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
Access to Emergency Medical Service (EMS) vehicles by patients, relatives and people with physical and sensory disabilities.	Survey staff to determine the need for additional step aids.	2009
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Comprehensive review of the recently initiated Application Support Worker Pilot project to determine best practices.	Assess the Application Support Worker Pilot, which assists Ontario Works applicants with disabilities to apply for provincial benefits through the Ontario Disabilities Support Plan, creating better customer service for people with disabilities.	Q4 – 2009
During the website redesign, barriers to accessibility will be reviewed.	Assess the new website to ensure that all information remains accessible.	Q4 – 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's training procedures to ensure employees with disabilities are learning in an environment that best suits their needs.	Review internal departmental practices to ensure the needs of employees needing training in an alternate format are identified.	2009
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA) Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Helping People Live Independently						
Inadequate lighting levels in suites of Housing York Inc. seniors' buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Increased safety and independence of seniors with reduced vision.	Update the lighting in the suites of 11 seniors' buildings.	Greater independence for seniors with reduced vision.	Third Quarter 2009
Inadequate lighting in parking areas and walkways at Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Increased safety and independence of seniors with reduced vision.	Upgrade lighting in the parking area and walkways. • 55 Orchard Hts.	Greater independence for seniors with reduced vision.	Fourth Quarter 2009
Inadequate lighting in common areas of Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Increased safety and independence of seniors with reduced vision.	Replace lighting in common areas. • 84 Oakridge St. • 190 Church St.	Greater independence for seniors with reduced vision.	Third Quarter 2009
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in elevators for residents living in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Physical	Greater independence and accessibility for residents.	Upgrade elevators for greater accessibility for senior residents. • 37 North St.	Greater independence for seniors with reduced vision.	Fourth Quarter 2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Helping People Live Independently						
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in stairwells for residents living in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Physical, Sensory	Greater independence and accessibility for residents.	Install new stair treads that will be brighter and provide better grip for seniors using the stairs. • 190 Church St.	Greater accessibility for people with reduced vision and/or a physical disability.	Third Quarter 2009
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Policy/Practice	All	Improved accessibility to affordable housing offered by housing providers.	Allocate the Housing Innovations Fund to housing providers to conduct accessibility upgrades, repairs and purchase playground equipment.	Greater access to affordable housing for people with disabilities.	Second Quarter 2009
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Access to emergency shelters for people with disabilities.	Architectural	Architectural	People with disabilities will have access to emergency shelters.	Design and construct Leeder Place emergency shelter to accommodate people with disabilities.	Completion of a barrier-free emergency shelter with a modified unit at the newly constructed Leeder Place shelter.	Third Quarter 2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Architectural	People with disabilities will have greater access to affordable housing.	Design and construct Mapleglen Residences in Vaughan to accommodate people with disabilities.	Completion of a barrier-free building with five modified units at Mapleglen Residences.	Fourth Quarter 2010
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Need to create additional opportunities for people with disabilities receiving Ontario Works to provide input on how best to serve them.	All	All	Programs and services can be created, changed and modified based on input from participants including people with disabilities.	Implement an Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group providing the opportunity for continuous direct input to enhance services including input from people with disabilities.	Recommendations from Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group implemented as appropriate.	Fourth Quarter 2009



Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Access to recreational programs for children with disabilities.	Policy/Practice	Physical, Cognitive	Equal access to sports and recreational activities for children who have physical or cognitive disabilities from eligible families (e.g. receiving Ontario Works, Child Care Fee Assistance under LICO, or Rent Geared to Income).	York Region's role is to provide the financial assistance for the one-to-one staff cost required to access the program. In partnership with York Support Services Network, Municipal Parks and Recreation staff will be trained to deliver safe and quality programming to children with physical or cognitive disabilities.	Eligible families will have the opportunity to enrol their children, regardless of ability or income level, to participate in recreation and sport programs offered by all nine local municipal recreation departments.	January 2009 to December 2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Accessibility of breastfeeding clinics.	All	All	Continued participation of people with disabilities at breastfeeding clinics.	Continued auditing of clinics using the Region's Accessible Meeting and Multiple Format Guidelines.	The breastfeeding clinic assessment will review accessibility requests from clients along with a review of breastfeeding clinics using the Region's Accessible Meeting and Multiple Format Guidelines.	2009
The implementation of publication standards will increase access to information for people with different types of disabilities.	Informational	All	People with different types of disabilities will be able to access Community and Health Services information more easily.	Implement standards of practice using the proposed Information and Communications Standard for printed material, incorporating plain language and accessible formats (e.g., Braille, large print, PDF, or other ways as requested).	Increase accessibility to services for people with different types of disabilities.	Fourth Quarter 2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
The re-design of the website with focus on accessibility, allowing people with different types of disabilities to see the information and understand it.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	People with different types of disabilities will be able to access Community and Health Services information more easily.	Ensure that information posted on the re-designed website is accessible for people who use screen readers and is in a plain language format.	Increased access to information and services for those with cognitive and sensory disabilities.	Fourth Quarter 2009
Access to staff communication/ information by staff with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	Staff with low vision will have access to written communication/ information in a format that is appropriate to their needs.	All written communication will be available in large font. Staff will have access to information in an accessible format (i.e. verbal, Braille), upon request.	Staff will have access to written communication / information in an alternate format that meets their needs.	Fourth Quarter 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Awareness among Long Term Care staff regarding the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> .	Informational	All	Enhanced staff knowledge of the AODA and how it applies to the work they do.	Addition of an AODA component to the mandatory annual core in-service training program.	Staff knowledge of the AODA will be enhanced, improving their customer service to people with disabilities.	Fourth Quarter 2009

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Corporate lead for the coordination and development of policies, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the AODA.	Policy/Practice	All	Compliance requirements will be met, enhancing accessibility for people with all disability types.	The corporate and departmental leads will work together to ensure internal consistency and ensure accessibility.	Compliance requirements of each regulation under the AODA will be met.	Ongoing



Environmental Scan

- Implementation of high priority recommendations to improve accessibility at the Administrative Centre and other prioritized facilities;
 - Escalation in construction costs for renovations or new buildings; and
 - Review of Council and Committee processes to identify and remove any existing barriers.
-

Our Customers

- Regional Chair and Members of Council
 - Police Services Board
 - The public
 - Regional employees
 - Direct service departments
 - Other municipalities and government agencies
-

Accessibility Statement

Corporate Services will continue to improve customer service by focusing on improving our work environment, with a goal of barrier-free facilities and services for our citizens, customers and staff.



Corporate Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

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Helping People Live Independently			
Property Services Ramp at the Ceremonial entrance of the Administrative Centre.	Architectural	Physical	Architect and ODA Consultant review in progress.
Property Services Salad bar area in the cafeteria at the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Physical	Architect and ODA Consultant review in progress.
Property Services Lighting in the washrooms of the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Sensory	Ballasts, devices in lights used to stabilize the electrical current flow into fluorescent bulbs, were replaced, light levels were tested and proven to be sufficient.
Property Services Internal spaces signs at the Administrative Centre.	Informational	Sensory	Due to a number of corporate re-organizations, installation of signs will be completed in 2009.
Property Services Elevators of the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Sensory	Upgrades complete.
Property Services Accessibility throughout the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Physical	Wheelchair was purchased and located at the Information Kiosk for use.
Property Services Exposed hot water pipes under the sinks in the washrooms and first aid room at the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Physical	Insulation was added to the pipes, and this application is complete.
Property Services Door to the Corporate Learning Centre at the South Services Centre.	Physical	Physical	Power door operators installed.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Human Resources Employee workplace modification or accommodation supports.	Informational	All	Question included and information gathered from employee satisfaction survey.

Corporate Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Human Resources Increase awareness of employer to needs of employees experiencing mental illness disabilities in the workplace.	Attitudinal	Mental Illness	Training planned for the staff in 2009.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Three staff from Corporate Services have completed the 'Just Ask' inclusivity training.



Corporate Services

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Available		
Investigate the possibility of converting the two washrooms at the north entrance of the Administrative Centre to a unisex accessible washroom.	Hire a consultant to conduct a study on the two washrooms.	2009
Investigate the possibility of installing voice-activated floor announcements in the elevators at the Administrative Centre.	Hire a contractor to review the possibility of installing floor announcements in the elevators.	2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA) Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Corporate Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Property Services Ramp at the ceremonial entrance of the Administrative Centre.	Architectural	Physical	Ramp will be redesigned for easier access for people with a physical disability.	Ramp handrails will be modified and a flat transition area added.	Modified ramp will allow for increased accessibility by people with disabilities.	2009
Property Services Salad bar area in the cafeteria at the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Physical	Salad bar area will be redesigned to remove barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities.	The design will allow for people with disabilities to have better access to the salad bar area.	Salad bar area will be more accessible for people with disabilities.	2009
Property Services Parking lot at 22 Prospect Street.	Architectural	Physical	Parking lot and main entrance area will be redesigned to include a ramp and an accessible parking spot.	Site will be modified to accommodate accessible parking.	Site will be more accessible for people with physical disabilities.	2009
Property Services Internal office signs at the Administrative Centre.	Informational	Sensory	More effective way-finding for people with sensory disabilities.	New signs will be installed in all internal office spaces with colour contrasting and letter sizing, making way-finding easier for people with sensory disabilities.	All offices will be more easily identified, improving way-finding.	2009

Corporate Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Property Services York Regional Police's elevator in the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Sensory	Elevator will be brighter and added handrails will enhance accessibility for people with disabilities.	Brighter lighting and smaller handrails will be added.	York Regional Police's headquarters will be more accessible for people with all disability types.	2009



Environmental Scan

Our innovative people provide environmental services that protect health and the environment and meet the needs of our thriving communities. The long-term vision of our department is to provide environmentally sustainable services through integrated efforts in an organizational culture of opportunity, trust, leadership and partnership.

Our Customers

The Environmental Services Department's customers include regional residents, businesses, area municipalities and visitors affected by environmental services.

Accessibility Statement

To plan and provide accessible, safe, quality, cost-effective environmental services that grant universal access for pedestrians at the department's public depots, public events and through its communication efforts.



Environmental Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Waste Management Promotional and educational printed material.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	A review of printed materials is underway.
Water and Wastewater Water for Tomorrow promotional material.	Communicational	Sensory	A review of promotional materials will be complete by the end of 2009.
Waste Management Communication materials	Informational, Communicational	Cognitive	A plain language review of communications materials is underway.
Waste Management Waste Management web pages.	Informational, Technological	Sensory	Web pages reviewed and edited based on web audit requirements set out by Corporate Communications.
Water and Wastewater Water and Wastewater web pages.	Informational, Technological	Sensory	Web pages are currently being reviewed.
Waste Management Emergency Plan.	All	All	Emergency plans will be reviewed by the end of 2009. Emergency Escape Plans were identified for two sites and are in progress for review.
Water and Wastewater Emergency Plan.	All	All	Emergency plans will be reviewed by the end of 2009. Emergency Escape Plans were identified for two sites and are in progress for review.
Architectural plans for the proposed Community Environmental Centre in Vaughan.	Physical, Architectural	All	Plans for the Community Environmental Centre (CEC) were presented to the YRAAC and revisions were made based on feedback (e.g. reconfiguring the fixture placements in the accessible washroom).
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government			
Waste Management Public consultation facilities.	All	All	Ongoing process as needed. Draft audit protocol developed and being reviewed.
Water and Wastewater Public seminar locations.	All	All	Audits of seminar locations will be conducted by the end of 2009.

Environmental Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training	Attitudinal	All	10 staff from Environmental Services have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.



Environmental Services Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Environmental Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/ practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Waste Management Review of communication materials identified two brochures to be revised to enhance accessibility.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory, Cognitive	Improved readability and comprehension.	Review audio option and change layout and design to enhance accessibility for people with sensory and cognitive disabilities.	Greater access to communication materials by people with disabilities.	December 2009
Water and Wastewater Revise web pages to increase access to information.	Informational	Sensory, Cognitive	Increase overall navigation, access and comprehension of web pages by people with sensory and cognitive disabilities.	Revise web pages for font, colour, contrast and plain language use.	Increased access to information by people with sensory and cognitive disabilities.	December 2009
Community Environmental Centre in Vaughan.	Physical, Architectural	All	Increase access to facility for people with all disability types. Enhance functionality and ease of use.	Accessible enhancements such as an accessible washroom with reconfigured fixture placements at the front entrance and contrasting paint colours for the walls and floors will be included during construction.	Increased access to the Community Environmental Centre by people with disabilities. Success to be based on customer feedback.	June 2009

Environmental Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government						
Access to public consultation facilities.	Architectural, Physical	Physical, Sensory	Easier access to public consultation facilities for people with physical and sensory disabilities.	Increasing access to the public consultation facilities using the Region's Accessible Meeting and Multiple Format Guidelines.	Increased participation of people with disabilities in public consultations.	April 2009



Environmental Scan

In 2009 our focus will be on helping other departments deliver more accessible services through the use of technology.

Our Customers

- Council
- Residents of York Region
- Direct service departments in York Region
- Regional staff
- Development industry
- Vendors, suppliers and bidders in public procurement processes
- Area municipalities



Accessibility Statement

We will continue to:

- increase staff's awareness of different types of disabilities and,
- support departments in their efforts to improve accessibility to York Region services.

Finance

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Study and document how municipalities across Ontario are using technology to remove various accessibility barriers.	Technological	Sensory	This initiative is in the planning stages and will proceed in 2009.
The capabilities of the existing TTY devices limit York Region's ability to effectively deliver services and information to our customers.	Technological, Communicational	Sensory	This initiative is in the planning stages and will proceed in 2009. We are planning to change TTY devices in the Region's Business Call Centres to TEXTNET, a PC based, easy to use, digital solution, to directly connect callers who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to the staff member best able to help them.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Two staff from Finance have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.



Finance

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Study and document how municipalities across Ontario are using technology to remove accessibility barriers.	Survey municipalities, with follow-up site visits where appropriate. Discuss findings with disability support agencies to confirm suitability where possible.	Fall 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Finance

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
The capabilities of the existing TTY devices limit York Region's ability to effectively deliver services and information to our customers.	Technological, Communicational	Sensory	Through new business solutions, TTY type calls can be handled and routed more easily to ensure the right staff addresses a customer-specific issue.	Change TTY devices in the Region's Business Call Centres to a networked solution called TEXTNET or some newer technology.	Call volumes are expected to increase. An exit survey within the system may be implemented to gather feedback and usage information. This may be automated or with a live operator after the customer has received the services they inquired about.	This initiative is continued from 2008 and will be completed in 2009.

Environmental Scan

The priorities identified by the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer are as follows:

- To analyze and help research the best possible strategy or software for making York Region's website more accessible using the www consortium (W3C) criteria (e.g., Content Management Software with accessibility features built into it, strategy or policy that dictates levels of accessibility that must be achieved with the current software).
- Empower people who are blind or have low vision to identify what types of information are important to them and use technology to access it. Technology can automatically bring that information to their computer so that they can use screen reading software to access the information.
- To review the writing styles of the departments that post to the website and determine guidelines around literacy levels and how put these guidelines into practice to help persons with cognitive disabilities access our website.
- To lead The Regional Municipality of York in implementing of the AODA Customer Service Regulation's core principles, requirements and training strategy and to lead the implementation of the Accessible Information and Communications Standard.



Our Customers

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for corporate administration, strategic planning, internal and external communications, the Corporate Customer Service Strategy and emergency management. The Corporate Communications branch is also responsible for the layout and dissemination of information over the Internet and Intranet in a way that supports screen reading software for persons who are blind or have low vision. Any documents produced by Corporate Communications will be made available in a format or font size that would be most accessible for a person with a disability.

Accessibility Statement

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer is committed to training members of their department to be aware of the needs of people who have disabilities, through training offered by The Regional Municipality of York. This training will educate our staff on how to properly manage requests from people with disabilities in a respectful and accommodating manner.

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Research to determine if technology used to provide information directly to user's computer works with screen reading software.	Technological, Informational	Sensory	Testing completed determined that Real Simple Syndication (RSS) can be provided in an accessible format.
Web review Content Management System (CMS): • Option of having an automatic font size icon/link placed on the site. How will it work with CMS? • Contrast control of text on York Region's website.	Technological, Informational	Sensory	Testing is complete. Review of CMS will allow automatic font size icon link and contrast control of text to be placed on York Region's website.
Research the possibility of making York Region's website accessible without having to create a duplicate site accessible to people with visual disabilities.	Technological, Informational	Sensory	Testing is complete. Research concluded that the website is accessible without having to create a duplicate site for people with visual disabilities.
Navigation of York Region's website.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Cognitive, Sensory	Persons with cognitive and sensory disabilities are able to search the site using keywords rather than depend on intuitive forms of navigation.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Two staff from Corporate Communications have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Research to determine what York Region content should be accessible through Real Simple Syndication (RSS) technology (information pushed directly to user's computer that works with screen reading software).	Conduct survey and/or focus group to gauge effectiveness.	Spring 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
To meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA), a corporate document will be developed that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption.	Informational	All	Customers who use or benefit from the goods or services will be aware of the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any are available.	A process to notify the public of the temporary disruption will be developed and implemented and will be available both onsite and on the corporate website.	Decreased customer complaints and increase positive customer feedback. Customer service, including access to York Region's goods and services for people with disabilities, will be enhanced.	January 1, 2010
Web: Content Management System (CMS).	Technological	Sensory	Access to the Region of York website will be increased for people with sensory disabilities.	A test will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the automatic font size icon/link in the new web design. Testing to be conducted on the contrast changing feature for website text.	Increased access to the York Region website by people with sensory disabilities.	Summer 2009

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
To meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA) a corporate training strategy will be created and implemented for the provision of York Region goods and services to people with disabilities, incorporating the AODA Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	All	All	All York Region staff will receive Customer Service Training about the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities.	Mandatory training modules will be developed and implemented using feedback from focus groups with stakeholders, York Region staff and York Region technical working group. Training levels will be determined and staff will be assigned to the appropriate level of training.	All York Region staff will be trained about providing goods and services to people with disabilities, meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA.)	Completed by January 1, 2010

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
To meet the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA), a process will be developed for responding to customer feedback about the way York Region provides goods and services to people with disabilities.	All	All	An accessible customer feedback process with defined processes and accessible timelines will make it easier for people with disabilities to let us know how we are doing.	A corporate accessible customer feedback process will be developed and implemented. Notices will be posted on the website and at Regional locations, advising of the feedback process and timelines.	Customer service, including access to an accessible customer feedback process, will be enhanced for people with disabilities.	Completed by January 1, 2010

Environmental Scan

The Planning and Development Services Department provides accessible public meetings by identifying and removing physical, architectural, informational, and communicational barriers at meeting sites. In addition, we ensure information and communication barriers are minimized in the publications and web application services that we provide.

Our Customers

Planning and Development Services Department customers and partnerships include Regional Council, the residents of York Region, regional and area municipal politicians, other regional departments, area municipalities, development industries, businesses of York Region and public agencies (such as schools boards, health and safety organizations, and conservation authorities).

Accessibility Statement

The Planning and Development Services Department will commit to serving all of our customers, taking into consideration their accessibility needs and our ability to address those needs. When a barrier is identified that requires the co-operation with another corporate department we will work in partnership to minimize or remove barriers to access.



Planning and Development Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Helping People Live Independently			
Inclusion of accessibility planning in new community developments.	Policy/Practice, Physical	All	Including accessibility into our New Communities policy for the Regional Official Plan review.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Accessibility to Geomatic maps and products.	Informational, Physical, Technological, Communicational	Sensory	People with sensory disabilities can more easily view and access maps and products published online. Online access to regional information increases accessibility and reduces travel. Ongoing incorporation of the practices are used in the development of all new products.
Making It Easier to Participate in Regional Government			
Accessibility Audit of Public Consultation Centres.	Physical, Architectural, Informational, Communicational	Sensory, Physical	All current venues are accessible and sound amplification is used at meetings. All printed materials are in accessible font colours. Meeting transcripts, brochures and all display and presentation materials are available on the Region's website. There have been no requests from participants for additional assistance.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Seven staff from the Planning and Development Services Department have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.

Planning and Development Services

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Review of Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums.	Staff will continue to review Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums for accessibility.	2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equality of opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Planning and Development Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Helping People Live Independently						
Inclusion of accessibility planning in new developments with respect to public transit and Regional streets.	Policy/Practice, Physical	All	Reasonable access to all places and services in new community developments.	Accessibility measures with respect to public transit and Regional streets will be incorporated in the development of new community design criteria.	Increased accessibility in new community development policy.	2009
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Accessible Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums.	Physical, Architectural, Informational, Communicational, Technological	All	Access to Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums will be enhanced for people with disabilities.	All venues will be accessible and sound amplification will be used at meetings. All printed materials will use accessible font colours. Meeting transcripts, brochures and all display and presentation materials will be available on the Region's website. Additional help will be available on request.	Increased participation of people with disabilities in Public Consultation Centres and stakeholder engagement forums.	2009 – Ongoing

Planning and Development Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Accessibility to Geomatic maps and products.	Informational, Physical, Technological, Communicational	Sensory	Geomatic products that are more easily accessible by people with sensory disabilities.	Continue to include practices using the most readable and largest fonts possible on maps. Avoiding combination of colours (red and green) on maps. Alternate scroll-over option to allow text-to-speech functionality on York Atlas icons, buttons, and links. Maps created in Adobe Acrobat 6.0 that can be downloaded with features such as intelligent navigation, text-to-speech, and mouseless keyboards.	Geomatic maps and products are accessible for use by people with sensory disabilities.	2009 - Ongoing

Environmental Scan

A Leader in Emerging Technologies

As one of the eight departments in York Region, including York Regional Police, 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 public transit services and roads.

The Services We Provide

- **Public Transit** – Plans and operates York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva a region-wide network of transit routes integrated with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and GO Transit. We also operate YRT Mobility Plus – the region's door-to-door, shared, accessible public transit service for people with disabilities. In 2008, our combined YRT/Viva system consisted of over 120 routes (including school specials) and we estimate that the system carried about 19.5 million revenue passenger trips by the end of 2008. On an average weekday, our system carries approximately 70,000 revenue riders with an overall system cost recovery of approximately 38 per cent. During 2009, we estimate that 1.1 million revenue hours of service will be operated. All of the above figures include the TTC contracted routes operating within York Region.
- **Roads** – Provides a safe environment for vehicles and pedestrians by maintaining a safe and efficient road system by operating a centralized traffic control system and road maintenance activities, providing information to the public, issuing permits to control uses of the road, and installing and maintaining road signs.
- **Natural Heritage and Forestry** – Responsible for four regional program functions that are integral to the sustainable management of the Region's 'Green Infrastructure'. The development and implementation of these priority initiatives helps to ensure our natural environment, including the urban forest, is protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Significant investments required to meet current and future demand

York Region's population is projected to be 1.3 million by 2021 with a corresponding increase in employment to 700,000 jobs. Approximately 30,000 new residents move to York Region each year. This is causing significant pressure on the transportation system. Currently, 25 per cent 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, the public transit network, water supply, wastewater collection system and solid waste management.

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 by the implementation of the first phase of our Viva bus rapid transit service, with the second phase (Vivanext) being planned for 2009 and beyond.

The economic conditions and growth pressures within York Region cause a need for significant investment. Our department will continue to experience increases in fuel prices, and road maintenance, transit operations and construction costs.

Our Customers

Our customers include a broad cross-section of regional residents, businesses, area municipalities and visitors.

Our 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 pedestrian 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 residents and businesses.



Transportation Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example, was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility?)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making It Easier to Move Around the Region			
YRT Mobility Plus Language.	Communicational	Other	A plain language audit of the Call Centre was completed. In addition, we have made a list of staff that are able to speak languages other than English. AT&T Translation services are also available for use if required.
YRT Facilities Facilities review.	All	Physical	3000 stops have been reviewed for accessibility. Remaining 1500 to be completed by Q3 – 2009.
YRT Service Planning Process for identifying accessible transit routes.	All	All	The criteria that must be met for a route to be considered accessible is: 50% of the facilities and 100% of the fleet should be accessible.
YRT Service Planning Travel Training Pilot Launch (to increase knowledge and confidence to use conventional public transit services).	Physical, Informational, Communicational, Attitudinal, Policy/Practice	All	Travel Training Pilot Program has been underway since April 2008. Results of the one-year pilot program will be evaluated in spring 2009.
YRT Facilities Need for accessible bus stop locations as identified along accessible routes.	Physical	Physical	As of September 2008, over 300 stops have been upgraded with concrete pads to meet YRT accessibility standards.
YRT Mobility Plus Improve client access to trip booking system (Telephone).	Technological	All	An Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system is being tested at this time. Upon completion of testing, ability to confirm, cancel and book trips will be introduced in phases.
YRT Mobility Plus Improve client access to trip booking system on website.	Technological	All	Once the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) is fully functional, web booking will be launched.
YRT Fleet Increase percentage of fleet accessibility.	Physical, Technological	Physical	As of September 2008, 92% of the YRT fleet is accessible.

Transportation Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

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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.	Policy/Practice	Physical	For the purpose of the pilot travel training program, 14 routes in the region have been identified as accessible routes. Additional routes to be added in spring 2009.
Roads Traffic control signals that are not useable by people who are blind or have low vision.	Technological	Sensory	As required by CNIB, 10 new installations and 22 upgraded installations have been completed.
Roads Incorrect height of the pedestrian push button on traffic signal poles and hard ground surface.	Physical, Technological	Physical	Project complete at all signalized intersections. During 2008 staff identified any remaining locations and relocated 45 push buttons and installed 60 hard ground surfaces.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
YRT Marketing Ongoing review of font/contrast improvements in print materials for persons with low vision.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	Route navigators are produced to meet CNIB standards. Route maps to be reviewed for improvements. Map to be reviewed for proposed September 2009 implementation.
Roads Ongoing improvement of all marketing and communications material.	Informational, Communicational	Sensory	Materials are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Transportation Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Roads Accessibility of forest trails in Regional Forests.	Physical	Physical, Sensory	The York Regional Forest is managed as a low impact, no facilities, nature reserve experience. To address the barrier of trail accessibility staff undertook a pilot project assessment of one trail in the Hollidge Tract (W/S) with the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) accessibility consultant, using the Universal Trail Accessibility Protocol (UTAP). This assessment was completed in 2008, and the UTAP signs will be in place by the spring of 2009. The standardized signs and markings will clearly identify the accessibility of the trail to potential users. Staff intend to monitor the use of the trail, and obtain further feedback from the public.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
YRT Mobility Plus Desire to improve information exchange between social/health agencies/stakeholders regarding transportation service needs.	Attitudinal	All	Meetings now occur twice per year between Mobility Plus and service agencies.
Review training content and materials to identify any gaps in meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA.	Policy/Practice	Physical	Training contents and materials are reviewed and revised to meet the Customer Service Regulation requirements under the AODA.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	11 Transit staff and six Road staff have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.

Transportation Services

Barrier Identification for 2009

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
YRT Facilities Identification and inventory of accessible stops.	Review inventory of transit stops based on accessibility checklist.	Q4 – 2009
YRT Facilities Improved terminal platform signs and on-street bus stop signs.	Review of the current signs for visibility and readability.	Q4 – 2009 to 2010 and ongoing.
YRT Service Planning Designation and communication of accessible routes.	Increase number of accessible routes across the region based on the criteria formed in consultation with YRT Operations and Facilities groups.	Q2 – 2009
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
YRT Marketing Improve clarity and readability of YRT route map.	Feedback from customers, Service Planning Department, and use of proposed AODA Standards.	Ongoing throughout 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA) Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	2009



Transportation Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region						
YRT Facilities Need for accessible bus stop locations.	Physical	Physical	Improved access to transit services and facilities.	Construct transit facilities to YRT accessible standards.	Increase percentage of accessible stops. Target: 400 new and replacement pads per year.	Ongoing 2009 – 2010
YRT Facilities Improved terminal platform signs and on-street bus stop signs.	Informational	Sensory	Improved customer communication.	Construct and install new signs at terminal platforms and update signs at bus stops.	Improved customer service.	Q4 – 2009 (ongoing to 2010)
YRT Service Planning Designation and communication of accessible routes.	Physical	All	Improve access to transit services.	Designate accessible routes in consultation with YRT Operations and Facilities groups.	Will promote the use of public transit and provide an additional method of travel for those currently using Mobility Plus.	Ongoing 2009
YRT Service Planning Formal program launch of Travel Training Program.	Physical	All	Will enable any customer to use the conventional transit services confidently and independently.	Roll out the Travel Training program pending the results from the one year pilot which was launched in May 2008.	Improved quality of life through access to conventional and rapid services for some or all of their travel needs.	Q3 - 2009

Transportation Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making it Easier to Move Around the Region						
YRT Mobility Plus Audio option for website & newsletter.	Communicational	Sensory	Enable customers with low vision to access the YRT website and online newsletter.	The Mobility Plus website will have an audio option that would read aloud the content on the web page including the seasonal newsletter.	Improved access to Mobility Plus services and improved customer service.	Q2 – 2009
YRT Fleet Increase percentage of fleet accessibility.	Physical, Technological	Physical	Improved access to YRT/ Viva services.	Purchase low floor accessible buses as part of the fleet replacement and expansion program.	Increase in the percentage of accessible fleet (2008 year end was about 92%).	Ongoing – Fully accessible fleet projected by 2012.
YRT Mobility Plus Need for accessible buses that accommodate mobility devices.	Physical	All	Accommodate more riders with mobility devices on the community bus routes.	Purchase buses that will accommodate three wheelchairs.	Assignment of buses on community bus routes.	Q3 - 2009

Transportation Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
YRT Marketing Improve clarity and readability of YRT route map (new).	Communicational	All	Produce a map that is glare free and with contrast levels using the proposed AODA standards.	Revisions to be completed progressively using the proposed AODA standards.	First version of the revised map was printed in January 2009, and revisions will be completed on an ongoing basis to ensure the map meets the AODA standards.	Ongoing 2009
YRT Marketing Mobility Plus Services website.	Technological	Sensory	Improved access to YRT Mobility Plus Services website.	Using feedback from customers and the Mobility Plus department, the site will be designed to meet the proposed AODA and W3C standards.	Improved access to Mobility Plus Services website.	Q3 – 2009
Roads Universally accessible Public Information Centres.	Informational, Communicational	All	Improved access to Public Information Centres.	Increasing access to Public Information Centre using the Region's Accessible Meeting and Multiple Format Guidelines.	Increased participation of people with disabilities.	Ongoing

Transportation Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Helping People Live Independently						
Roads Audible pedestrian signals.	Technological	Sensory	Ease of use for people with low vision.	Installation of audible pedestrian signals at identified crossings.	Increase in the frequency of use by people with low vision.	Through 2009 as required by CNIB.



Environmental Scan

York Regional Police proudly serves its communities through the efforts of its 1364 officers and 496 civilian members. We maintain headquarters in Newmarket and support facilities in Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Markham, Newmarket, Georgina and Aurora, delivering community-based policing, investigative and specialized services to both urban and rural communities. The organizational structure includes Operation and Administrative Branches which oversee District Patrol Operations, Investigative and Support Services, Information Services, Financial and Staff Services, Community Services and Court Services.

People with disabilities are an increasing proportion of the population we serve. According to the 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey from Statistics Canada, approximately 4.4 million Canadians reported having a disability. In 2006, there was an estimated 1.9 million Ontario residents with a disability. Using the Ontario figure, we can estimate that 140,000 York Region residents have a disability. As the region's population continues to grow, there will be pressure on infrastructure and service providers resulting from the expectations of all our citizens. Police officers will increasingly have interaction with people with disabilities and as such, require increasing awareness of the diverse needs within the communities they serve.



York Regional Police continues to consider accessibility planning to be a significant component when reviewing and developing new programs and services. In 2009, individual Bureaus and Units will be requested to work together in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility. There will be a focus on the implementation of the Customer Service Regulation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. We will ensure that we continue to address a number of key areas including training and awareness, policy review, facilities design and modification, and technology enhancements to increase access to our services by people with disabilities.

Our Customers

The customers of York Regional Police include all citizens, businesses and visitors to York Region; victims, suspects, witnesses and perpetrators of crime. Our partnerships include regional and municipal Councils, other regional departments, the judiciary and corrections, policing partners (such as other police services, by-law enforcement, CISO, Interpol, etc.), public agencies and human service providers (such as school boards, fire services, emergency medical services, etc.), and many community agencies and groups, among others. Providing quality policing services requires a concerted effort to ensure the protection of all citizens of all ages with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and diverse service needs.

Accessibility Statement

York Regional Police will evaluate accessibility as it relates to people with disabilities needing policing services, regardless of the event(s) causing the need for interaction. Education, outreach programs, communication strategies, human resource practices and criminal investigations will all be reviewed as a precursor to implementing necessary changes that reflect our desire to better serve the public. In previous years we have worked in partnership with various groups to raise awareness of different types of disabilities among our officers and members. We will continue to move toward enhancing the accessibility of our programs and services through building strategic community and regional partnerships and by increasing our awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities, so that we can better respond to those needs and promote safe, secure and healthy communities.



York Regional Police

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Communication devices for use by people who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.	Technological, Communicational	Sensory	An internal technological review of communication devices was conducted to determine their effectiveness.
Communication system (TTY) used by people who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.	Technological, Communicational	Sensory	Research determined that software to interface directly with Computer Automated Dispatch is not available.
Parking lot at 2 District.	Architectural	Physical	Three accessible parking spots were relocated to the front entrance of 2 District.
Aids for officers to use with citizens who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	Communicational	Sensory	Communication tip cards to be used by police officers when communicating with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing have been received through the Canadian Hearing Society.
Making it Easier to Participate In Regional Government			
Canadian Hearing Society membership on the York Regional Police Recruit Community Insights Program.	Attitudinal	Sensory	Each year members of the Canadian Hearing Society are invited to become members of the YRP Recruit Community Insights Program.
Representation of people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing on the York Regional Equity Advisory Board Committee.	Attitudinal	Sensory	The Accessibility Advisory Committee has been amalgamated with the York Regional Police Equity Advisory Committee.
Canadian Hearing Society Sign Language Interpreter Services Protocol.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Protocol is in place allowing for appropriate and timely access to Sign Language Interpreter Services.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Awareness of officers and dispatchers to the needs of citizens who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	Attitudinal	Sensory	Plans are in place to invite the Canadian Hearing Society to participate in the Diversity Speakers component of requalification training. All new communicators receive instructions on the use of TTY during initial and requalification training.

York Regional Police

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2008

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Training curriculum for specialized police units where hearing loss may be an issue.	Informational	Sensory	A presentation was developed regarding hearing conservation that is available to staff online. Also researching potential for hearing loss for motorcycle officers.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of people with disabilities through continued staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	10 staff from YRP have completed the 'Just Ask' Inclusivity Training.



**York Regional Police
Barrier Identification for 2009**

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2009. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Accessibility of facilities being modified and constructed.	Contract accessibility consultant to conduct review of accessibility designs and best practices to ensure accessibility measures are included.	Q4 2009
Review of existing communication channels and technology.	Conduct accessibility review of web, telecommunications and other technologies to identify barriers.	Q3 2009
Review of YRP emergency planning procedures.	Consult with people with disabilities to identify their needs within this process.	Q4 2009
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Hiring and volunteer selection practices.	Review hiring and volunteer selection practices to identify any barriers to inclusion of people with cognitive and/or other disabilities	Q4 2009
Composition of Equity Advisory Committee to ensure adequate representation of people with disabilities.	Review current composition of the Equity Advisory Committee to identify additional opportunities for inclusion.	Q1 2009
Review department's internal policies, practices & procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	A comprehensive review of all internal departmental policies, practices & procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity.	Q4 2009

York Regional Police
Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Expand the role of the Mental Health Support Team specifically to respond to the needs of children.	Policy/Practice	Mental Illness	Children who have been victimized gain better access to required services.	Partnership with York Support Services Network (YSSN) to investigate potential funding sources.	Children who have been victimized receive enhanced services through YRP and YSSN.	2009-2010
AODA Staff Resource.	Policy/Practice	All	Accessibility will be enhanced for people with disabilities to access York Regional Police services.	Seek approval for inclusion of a staff position in 2009 staffing and deployment plan.	Improve lives of people with disabilities by focusing on improving our work environment with a goal of barrier-free facilities and services for our citizens, customers and staff.	Q2 2009
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government						
Need to promote existing alternative method of reporting minor incidents on-line via the YRP website (CopLogic).	Policy/Practice	Sensory, Cognitive	Improved access to reporting minor incidents for people with disabilities.	Promotion to people with disabilities of email/web-based option of reporting minor incidents.	People with disabilities will have alternative methods (i.e., CopLogic) to report minor incidents.	Q3 2009

York Regional Police
Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2009

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illness or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2009; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
To meet the training requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA), YRP civilian staff and officers will attend training.	All	All	Enhance officer and staff knowledge of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA) and of serving people with disabilities.	All employees in York Regional Police Services will receive Customer Service Regulation training about the provision of its goods and services to people with disabilities.	All YRP Services staff will be trained about the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities, meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation (AODA).	2009-2010
More diverse participation of community agencies that serve people with disabilities in the Recruit Community Insight Program.	Attitudinal	All	Enhance officer and staff knowledge of serving people with various types of disabilities.	Invite agencies serving people with various types of disabilities to participate in the Recruit Community Insight Program.	Enhanced officer and staff knowledge of community agencies that serve people with various types of disabilities.	Q3 2009

YORK REGION ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (YRAAC)
Summary of Feedback: DRAFT 2009 Departmental Accessibility Plans

Accessibility Advisory Committee Questions, Comments or Suggestions	Staff Recommendation/Response	Given your response, does your Departmental Plan need amending? Yes/No? Please provide associated costs, if any
General Feedback		
According to the 'Executive Summary Report: Accessibility Audit of Prioritized Facilities for York Region', September 2005, there are no accessible washrooms or automatic doors at the Tannery. Is this still the case in 2008?	No. All exterior entrances at the Tannery, which is a leased property, now have automatic doors. The Tannery Management has also indicated that their 2009 plan includes renovations of the public washrooms to make them more accessible.	No
Community and Health Services Department		
How many accessible units are included in the new Mapleglen Residences in Vaughan?	Out of the 84 units in the building, five units are dedicated units for persons with disabilities. This is beyond the requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC).	No
Corporate Communications		
Suggestion: When documents become public, they should be understandable – written in plain language and avoiding the use of short forms or acronyms.	Corporate Communications is in the process of reviewing the web content, and will ensure the website is reviewed for plain language and that technological terms or abbreviations are clearly defined.	No

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Corporate Communications		
Comment: Kirsten Hill, YRAAC member offered her assistance in testing the RSS technology to determine if Regional content can be accessible through this technology.	Staff expressed thanks for the offer, and will look forward to Kristen's input on this technology. Staff will contact Kirsten when ready to conduct the testing.	No
Have you seen the proposed Information and Communication Standard? I believe the Region is well positioned. However, the Region should review the use of PDF's on the website.	Yes. Staff have reviewed the Information and Communication Standard. The Region will review the new accessibility features in Acrobat 9.0 and determine the usefulness of maintaining PDF's as a standard for downloadable documents. Other alternatives will also be looked at when the new portal software is initialized.	No
Can a person with low vision or vision loss change the font size or contrast on the web pages they access through content management system?	Yes. It allows the user to change both the contrast and the font size on the webpage. For example, the screen can change from a white background with black print, to a dark blue background with yellow print.	No
Suggestion: York Region's website should be made to be open and inviting. It should include an accessibility statement such as "If you have any accessibility issues please contact"	The web redesign will include an accessibility section which will give advice on the best ways to search the web depending on a person's disability. Staff will consider this suggestion.	No

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Corporate Communications		
What if the website does not accommodate? Is there a phone number that goes directly to the Region's Senior Multimedia Specialist?	Currently there is a designated telephone line that customers can call if they are experiencing difficulty with web accessibility. Under the Customer Service Regulation, it is mandatory that an official accessible feedback mechanism is developed and implemented. York Region is expanding this mechanism to include all five standards providing options, how complaints will be handled, and turnaround times.	No
Corporate Services Department		
Why were the three automatic door openers that were temporarily installed to accommodate a summer student removed? It's hard to believe that accessibility measures are being taken down.	Corporate services has installed automatic door operators on all external doors accessed by the public; however at this time resources are not available to put the same door operators on all internal doors. The equipment remains onsite, should there be a need somewhere else to accommodate another staff member. If such an accessibility measure is a requirement of the Built Environment Regulation under the AODA, Corporate Services will do what is necessary to ensure that the Region is compliant.	No

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Corporate Services Department		
Has there been any consideration or research completed on the possibility of having voice activated floor announcements in the elevators for use by people with sensory disabilities? Also, are there signs throughout the Regional building which indicate where departments are found?	Corporate Services has not completed any research on a voice activated announcement system in the elevators throughout the Region, however it is something that could be looked at. There is accessible signage for way finding situated throughout the building, and there is always someone at the main entrance reception desk of the Administrative Centre to assist if necessary.	Yes No
As a public entity, is the Region eligible for energy saving grants through Power Stream or Enbridge?	The Region has accessed approximately \$750,000 in grants through both the Federal energy program and locally through Enbridge. Corporate Services is balancing the use of energy sources that generate less electricity, to reduce costs while ensuring accessibility.	No
Does the use of low density (LD) lighting, halogen or fluorescent lighting really make a difference to people with vision loss or low vision?	Kirsten Hill, YRAAC member indicated that the type of lighting used does make a difference. Use of lights that are non glare, do not cast shadows or distort the ability to see contrasts are best.	No

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Corporate Services Department		
Where do the ideas for accessibility upgrades come from?	Accessibility upgrades completed at the Region are based on the findings of an accessibility audit in 2005.	No
How are they prioritized?	All recommendations could not be completed at once, so initiatives were prioritized concentrating on areas of public use first. Each year more initiatives are completed.	No
What is the budget for accessibility measures?	Accessibility planning is integrated into our everyday business practices and considered into broader plans.	No
How does York Region compare to other jurisdictions?	On average, the Corporate Services Department spends approximately \$100,000 of part of the existing base budget annually on specific accessibility projects, which is comparable to other municipalities.	No

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Environmental Services Department		
Could audio versions of the two brochures to be revised as mentioned in your 2009 Plan be provided? Suggestion: Mobility Plus made audio versions of their newsletter available.	Yes. This can be arranged and has been added as part of the review process for brochures being posted with audio availability. The staff working group within the Environmental Protection and Promotion Branch will follow up on the review of technological choices offered as a solution. This is something that can be considered, and contact will be made with Mobility Plus to determine how this was implemented.	Yes No
The Building Code specifies measurements for wheelchairs. Does it include scooters?	The building code does not specifically address the measurements for a scooter however the “barrier free path of travel” is a 42” minimum, which would include the dimensions for scooters.	No
With regard to your department’s initiative to review emergency plans to ensure the needs of persons with disabilities – I am sceptical that anyone has a handle on addressing the needs of persons with disabilities. We should be concerned if a group of our citizens needs are not met. I would like to see this committee review emergency plans under the “lens of disability”. I would urge the Region to take this issue more seriously.	Environmental Services’ emergency plans are tied to operations and maintenance only. The suggestion that members of the YRAAC participate in the review of Environmental Services’ emergency plans was presented to staff and accepted as a good way for Environmental Services to ensure that their emergency plans meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	No

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Finance Department		
How many staff are in the Finance department? Why did only 2 staff members complete the 'Just Ask' training in 2008? How many staff have direct contact with the public?	There are approximately 150 people in the Finance Department. Although only 2 staff participated in the 'Just Ask' training, with the roll out of the Customer Service Regulation staff training will now be mandatory for all. Six staff have direct contact with the public.	No
I'm curious to see what financial tools or services other jurisdictions have that support persons with disabilities. This information could assist to enhance the supports we provide.	Under certain conditions, York Region allows low-income people with disabilities the option to defer payment of property tax increases to a future date as prescribed in the policy. Besides this option to defer payment of tax increases, the Finance and Information Technology Services department does not provide any financial tools or services to support persons with disabilities. Rather, these types of tools and services are intertwined with the actual service being delivered and are managed through the operating department that delivers the service, e.g. Transit. The focus of the Finance and Information Technology department over the past few years has been to improve accessibility to the purchasing process while, through the use of technology, supporting initiatives in our operating departments.	No

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Planning and Development Department		
There were no questions, comments or suggestions from the Committee.	No response necessary.	No
Transportation Services Department		
Has the Travel Training Project been rolled out to the school boards?	The Travel Training Project has partnered with two school boards and 10 community agencies. Training is provided to the trainers in a 'Train the Trainer' format. The trainer then takes the information back to their boards/agencies. A handbook and training manual is provided. They will then provide us with feedback on the success of their program. The feedback is then compiled and we tabulate and track the results.	No
How many have been trained?	To date, approximately 86 people have been trained.	No
What can be done to improve the pilot?	We are currently tracking services of four participants from March of Dimes to determine if their program objectives have been met.	No
The objective of this training is to increase riders confidence to use conventional transit – has this been achieved?	A review will be completed at the end of the project to review its effectiveness and we will report the results to the YRAAC.	No

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Transportation Services Department		
Will route maps indicate accessible routes?	Yes. In order for a route to be deemed accessible, 100% of the bus fleet must be accessible and 50% of the bus stops must be deemed accessible by YRT standards.	No
Will bus stops be indicated as accessible?	These routes and stops will be identified as accessible using the universal symbol.	No
What is meant by “audible pedestrian signals have been upgraded?”	This means replacing the existing dated audible units with the most updated equipment.	No
How is it determined which push button signals need adjusting?	The location of the push buttons are field checked for proximity of the push button to the crossing point and the height of the push button from the adjacent platform. If the standards are not met the necessary improvements are scheduled.	No
Are all push button signals being adjusted?	Only push buttons that do not meet the minimum standards are adjusted.	No
Suggestion: During the audits of push button signals, attention should be given to the barriers around the push button such as curb cuts and uneven ground.	When field checking the pedestrian crossings such things as uneven concrete, dropped curb for pedestrian crossings and sidewalk ramping are noted and improvements will be scheduled if the standards for these things are not met.	No

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Transportation Services Department		
In the Transportation Services Department's Environmental Scan it states that "York Region's population is projected to be 1.1 million by 2021" and "approximately 40,000 new residents move to York Region each year." Please review this information for accuracy.	It should read the following: York Region's population is projected to be 1.3 million by 2021 and approximately 30,000 new residents move to York Region each year. The environmental scan will be changed to reflect this information.	Yes
Is Transportation Services moving forward on Interactive Voice Response (IVR) in 2009?	Yes. IVR was an initiative in the 2008 Accessibility Plan and is in the testing stages of roll out. It will be rolled out in stages: the first stage will allow customers to cancel and confirm rides and in the second stage, customers will be able to book a trip.	No
Can IVR be included as an initiative in Transportation Services 2009 Accessibility Plan?	IVR was identified as an initiative in the 2008 Accessibility Plan and it is currently in the process of being implemented.	No

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Transportation Services Department		
Suggestion: York Region should strive for two fully accessible forest trails in the Region (one in the North and one in the South) so that a person with accessibility requirements can fully enjoy the trails.	We are working with the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) to deploy the Universal Trail Accessibility Protocol (UTAP) on one trail in the Hollidge Tract. Following monitoring of use and feedback from the Regional Forest Advisory Team (RFAT), we can look at signing another appropriate trail at a different location. The trails will not be ‘fully accessible’ but will be clearly identified to confirm accessibility as per the UTAP protocol.	No
The initiative included in the 2008 Progress Report regarding the forest trails does not provide enough detail. More detail should be added to the “How the Barrier was Addressed Column” of the Progress Report.	The York Regional Forest is managed as a low impact, no facilities, nature reserve experience. To address the barrier of trail accessibility staff undertook a pilot project assessment of one trail in the Hollidge Tract (W/S) with the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) accessibility consultant, using the Universal Trail Accessibility Protocol (UTAP). This assessment was completed in 2008, and the UTAP signage will be in place by the spring of 2009. The standardized signage and markings will clearly identify the accessibility of the trail to potential users. Staff intend to monitor the use of the trail, and obtain further feedback from the public. This information will be added to the “How the Barrier was Addressed” column of the Progress Report.	Yes

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York Regional Police		
The East Gwillimbury AAC has had numerous discussions around emergency preparedness. During an emergency situation, is there a system in place to let Police and Fire know of, and deal with persons with disabilities?	YRP offers a technology called 'Reverse 911', where a person can provide their information to a database. This system will allow York Regional Police to notify residents and businesses by telephone and email about community safety matters in their area. This could include a rash of break and enters, vehicle thefts or a missing child. The system will also be used to alert citizens in the event of an emergency. Due to privacy laws, Bell will not release personal information. Personal information must be provided by the individual.	No
Comment: This information needs to be communicated to the community. Municipalities should distribute this information to seniors and families.	YRP hopes to partner with Hydro to use a bill insert to notify the public of this service.	No
Can staff send this information to the YRAAC?	Staff will send information regarding this program to the YRAAC. YRAAC members are encouraged to share this information with agencies, organizations or individuals who may benefit by using this service.	No

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York Regional Police		
Is information about 'Reverse 911' available on YRP's website?	Yes. Go to www.yrp.ca and click on 'Community Alert Sign Up'.	No
You mentioned that YRP hired a webmaster to conduct an audit on the website. Does this webmaster have experience in accessibility?	The webmaster that was hired to conduct an audit on YRP's website does not have experience with accessibility websites, however sufficient time and training will be given, allowing the webmaster time to do the appropriate research to ensure that the guidelines and requirements under the AODA and technical specifications are met.	No