



2006

REMOVING BARRIERS

York Region's Third Accessibility Plan



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Town of Newmarket



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Tim Jones
Town of Aurora



Mayor
James Young
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Robert Grossi
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
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Town of Georgina



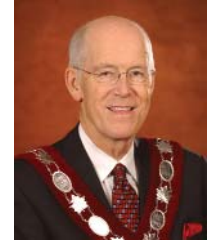
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Township of King



Regional Councillor
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Town of Newmarket



Regional Chair and CEO
Bill Fisch



Mayor
Donald Cousens
Town of Markham

A Message from Regional Council

We are pleased to present *Removing Barriers: York Region's Third Annual Accessibility Plan*. *Removing Barriers* is filled with creative ideas and solutions to remove different types of barriers through more training, better and more accessible transit services, retrofits to regional buildings, housing and long-term care facilities, as well as accessibility improvements to our Web site.

For the past three years, the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee has provided sound advice on our accessibility plans. They have been actively involved in the development and implementation of these plans, by taking part in focus groups, advising us on barriers to our facilities and ways to remove them, and providing input on our policies and practices. We thank them for their great advice, dedication and commitment.

An important way to remove barriers is to raise awareness of the issues that impact on the lives of people with disabilities. In 2006, we will host events to provide people more information about these issues by participating in National Access Awareness Week and educating the community on the recently proclaimed *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. Regional staff, led by the Community Services and Housing Department, will play a key role in coordinating these events and we thank them for their ongoing involvement.

These activities and this accessibility plan are a continuation of our ongoing commitment to make York Region's programs, services and facilities more accessible to the residents of York Region. We hope that you will read this Plan and take part in these activities which will help us to remove barriers for people with disabilities.



Mayor
William F. Bell
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Frank Scarpitti
Town of Markham



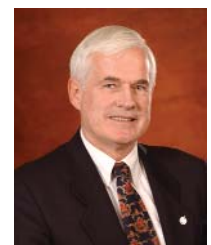
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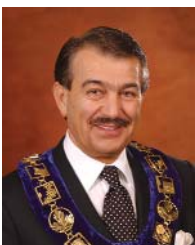
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Regional Councillor
Bill O'Donnell
Town of Markham



2006

REMOVING BARRIERS

York Region's Third Accessibility Plan



Acknowledgements

Regional Council would like to thank the many people, including several residents of York Region, who actively participated in the development and production of *Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan*.

The successful development of this Plan was made possible by many people from across the Regional Municipality of York who contributed their time and expertise, including the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, members of the ODA Staff Committee, as well as other Regional staff who were involved in the creation of this Plan.

The commitment and support of all of these people is greatly appreciated.



York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2006 Plan Development

Front Row: Robert Hunn, Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio (Vice-Chair), Wilf Morley (Chair), Barbara Caiger, Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler

Back Row: Trish Robichaud, Kirsten Hill, Joann Simmons, Commissioner of Community Services, Housing and Health Services, Diane Humeniuk, Zahra Brown, Mary Ann Proulx.

Other Members: Regional Chair and CEO Bill Fisch (ex-officio), Sharon Abrahams

The members of the ODA Staff Committee include:

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Let Us Know What You Think

Your comments are important to us. Please let us know what you think about *Removing Barriers*.

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

Email: AccessYork@york.ca

Mail: A self-addressed stamped envelope is included inside this Plan.

The Regional Municipality of York
Community Services and Housing Department
Policy and Program Support Services Division
3rd Floor, 17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Phone: 1-888-256-1112

TTY: (905) 762-0401

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This publication may be accessed on the Internet at www.york.ca

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.

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- Contact the Commissioner of Community Services, Housing 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:
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Removing Barriers - York Region's 2006 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 *Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan*.

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

- The many new things the Regional Municipality of York Region will do in 2006 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 its services and programs.
- The range of existing barriers that will be removed and new barriers that will be prevented.
- How the 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 2006.
- Types of barriers that will be addressed in 2006.
- The participation of all Regional departments in accessibility planning.
- The involvement of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) 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
- Roads
- Lack of services/supports
- Attitudes/awareness
- Lack of information
- Housing
- Social Assistance
- Lack of mandatory accessibility standards
- Barriers in the private sector
- Other: _____

3. Have you noticed an improvement in accessing Regional services and programs?

- Yes No

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

4. Is the Plan easy to read and understand? *(Check one)* Yes No **If not, why?**



5. Other comments about the *Removing Barriers* - York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan

Thank you for your comments.

GENERAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*

6. How did you find out about *Removing Barriers*: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan? *(Check as many boxes as you want)*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper ad/article | <input type="checkbox"/> York Region staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social services/community agency | <input type="checkbox"/> York Region building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> York Region disability organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> www.york.ca |
| <input type="checkbox"/> York Region AAC | <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Web site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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

9b. If yes, what is the name of the organization?

Organization's Name: _____

Thank you.

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

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

Email: AccessYork@york.ca

Mail: A self-addressed stamped envelope is included inside this Plan.

The Regional Municipality of York
Community Services and Housing Department
Policy and Program Support Services Division
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REGIONAL OVERVIEW

- Introduction
- Accessibility Planning in York Region



Introduction

Under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)*, all municipalities in the province continue to have a legal obligation to prepare an annual accessibility plan. The plan must include a complete overview of all of the municipality's operations including its bylaws, programs, procedures, practices, policies, facilities and services.

This document, *Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan*, is the Regional Municipality of York's third annual Accessibility Plan under the ODA. The Region's first and second Plans: *Understanding Barriers* and *Moving Forward* were released in 2004 and 2005 respectively. This third Plan continues this progressive work and includes initiatives to remove barriers that were identified in our earlier Plans.

Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan highlights barriers that were identified and/or eliminated over the past year. As in previous years, achievements were made in 2005 but there are more barriers to be removed. This Plan outlines the actions that the Region will take to identify, prevent and remove 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. This diverse region is a unique combination of urban centres and rural areas that sits on the northern boarder 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, the Regional Municipality of York 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 area municipal responsibility. The following list shows the range of services provided at the regional and area municipal levels.



Regional and Area Municipal Responsibilities

The Regional Municipality of York	Area Municipalities
Police Services	Fire Protection
Emergency Medical Services (ambulance and paramedics)	Local Planning
Public Health Services	Local Economic Development
Long Term Care Services	Building and Plumbing
Social Assistance	By-law Enforcement
Social Housing	Licensing
Family and Children's Services	Local Roads
Regional Planning/Growth Management	Waste Collection
Regional Economic Development and Tourism Promotion	Water Distribution
Arterial Roads	Local Sewage
Public Transit	Tax Collection
Water Treatment	Parks, Recreation and Heritage
Trunk Sewage	Libraries
Waste Disposal	Local Emergency Planning
Long Term Borrowing	
Regional Emergency Planning	

Population Trends¹

York Region's population has more than quintupled since its creation in 1971.

As of December 2005 the region's population was estimated to be approximately 918,383. Most of York Region's population growth has been concentrated in the three southern area municipalities of Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham.

In terms of the general age of York Region's residents, when compared to the Greater Toronto Area and Canada, York Region has a younger population. This is primarily due to the large proportion of people between the ages of 35 and 54 years that make up 35% of the region's population.

¹ Source: The Changing Face of York Region, A Demographic Profile by York Region Planning Department Services Department and York Region Planning Department based on Statistics Canada data and CMHC Housing Completion data



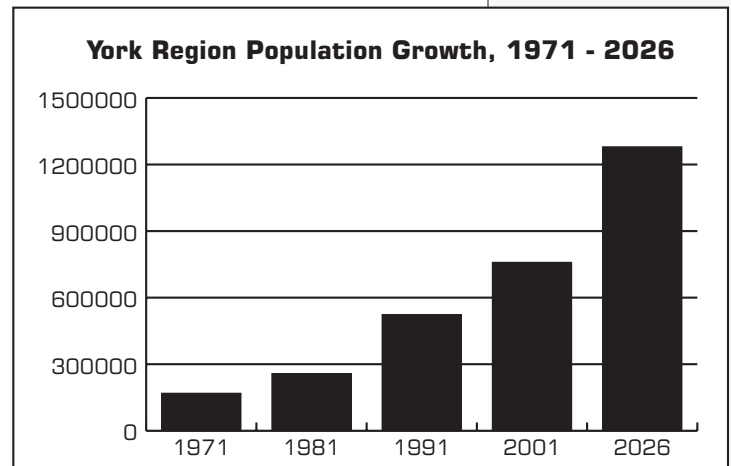
However, a growing population that is also aging poses a number of challenges for all levels of government to find ways to better anticipate the needs of an older population, who may also have a disability and to ensure that programs and services meet these needs.

By 2026, it is anticipated that 21% of York Region's population will be senior citizens (65+), which would see the seniors' population increase three times over the 2000 level to 263,000.

Persons with Disabilities in York Region²

According to Statistics Canada, there are approximately 1.5 million people with disabilities in Ontario representing approximately 13.5% of all citizens. By 2025, it is expected that this number will increase to three million people, or 20% of the population.

At the time of the 2001 census, York Region's population was just over 750,000. Of this, the number of people in York Region who identified themselves as having a disability was about 90,330 or 12% of the total population. This is larger than the current population of Newmarket or Peterborough and comparable to the current populations of King, Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville combined. York Region's population is expected to reach 1.28 million in 2026. Of this, it is estimated the number of people with disabilities will be approximately 230,400 or 18% of residents. This would be larger than the projected population of Richmond Hill (218,000), comparable to the population of Vaughan and equivalent to adding the current population of Newmarket (66,000) to the future populations of King (34,653), Aurora (75,267) and Whitchurch-Stouffville (40,837).



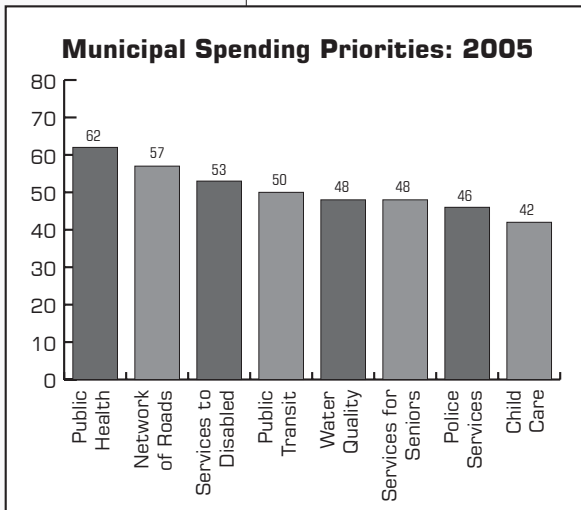
SOURCE: *The Changing Face of York Region, A Demographic Profile* by York Region Planning Department Services Department and York Region Planning Department based on Statistics Canada data and CMHC Housing Completion data

²Sources: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001.

Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001.

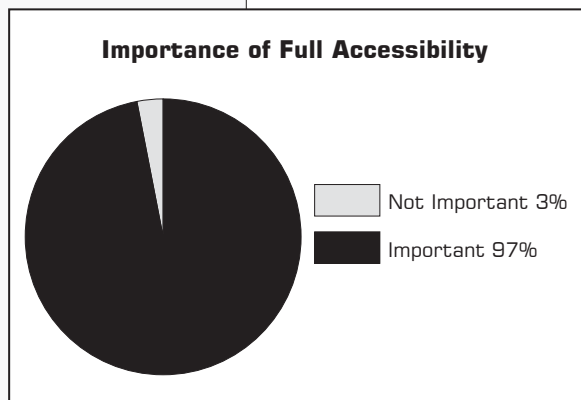
Note: Statistics are based on self-identification and include a broad scope of disability.

Economic and Development Review Mid-Year 2005



SOURCE: Environics Survey, York Region Summary, Fall 2005

Accessibility for persons with disabilities matters deeply and is a key spending priority for York Region residents. This interest is reflected in York Region's Environics Survey. In 2005, the survey reported that a resounding 97% majority of residents said they felt it was important for programs, services and facilities in York Region to be fully accessible to residents with disabilities. In last year's survey (2005), 53% of residents stated that even if it would increase their costs they wanted increased spending on services for persons with disabilities. This was only third to public health (62%) and roads (57%) and came out ahead of increased spending on water quality, public transit, services for seniors, child care, and even police and ambulance services.



SOURCE: Environics Survey, York Region Summary, Fall 2005

Making Regional services fully accessible to all, including residents with disabilities, along with the high priority placed on increased spending on services to persons with disabilities, was also reflected in the 2004 survey.

Accessibility Planning in York Region

The purpose of the ODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in Ontario through the identification, prevention and removal of physical and other barriers that may impede the opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society.

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.

York Region's Accessibility Plan Policy Framework

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 the development of three regional accessibility plans that cover every aspect of the Region's businesses and services.

As such, accessibility planning in York Region involves every Regional department as well as the York Regional Police. Each department develops its own department accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers in Regional programs and services on an annual basis. The overall Accessibility Plan for the Region is built from the initiatives included in these department plans.

Understanding what the Region has done to improve and enhance accessibility is also a key part of our Region's policy framework. As such, evaluation is an ongoing process to monitor and track the accessibility planning progress. From the first two years of accessibility planning, the Region successfully met and exceeded the requirements and obligations as outlined in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*. The Region investigated and addressed barriers within many Regional services and programs including public transit, housing, health services, social services, corporate communications and police services. Regional policies, programs, services, practices, procedures, bylaws and facilities were examined to gain a better understanding of where barriers existed and action was taken to remove and prevent these barriers. It should be positively noted that many of the physical barriers to York Region's facilities, programs and services were addressed and removed. These plans have laid the groundwork for more progressive enhancements to accessibility to take place in the following years.



Participation of York Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee

York Regional Council strongly supports the involvement of many different people and groups in the Region's accessibility planning process. Several members of Regional Council have been involved since the beginning of ODA implementation and networks have been formed to encourage ongoing communication with the area municipalities, stakeholder organizations, and the general public. Many Regional departments continue to work with their own customers and clients to identify, prevent and remove different types of barriers that impact people with disabilities from receiving services or accessing various programs and facilities.

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC), which is a legislatively mandated committee appointed by York Regional Council and includes both members of Regional Council and citizen volunteers, has been an integral part of the accessibility planning process. The members of the YRAAC include people who have different types of disabilities, backgrounds and who come from across York Region and offer a variety of perspectives. The YRAAC plays a critical role in advising Council on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its annual Accessibility Plan. The York Region YRAAC played a key role in the development and implementation of the Region's first and second Accessibility Plans and provided their input and advice on the initiatives included in this third Plan.

For example, in 2005, members of the YRAAC recommended that Regional Council recognize National Accessibility Awareness Week, which was subsequently endorsed by Regional Council; they provided tips for the special edition of the "Here to Serve You" customer service newsletter on how to provide superior customer service to people with disabilities; the YRAAC Chair represented the YRAAC at the Access Ontario conference in Burlington in June 2005; they provided advice to the York Regional Police on accessibility to the York Region Community Safety Village; and participated in a workshop for all Accessibility Advisory Committees in York Region hosted by the Town of Newmarket. They will also have an active role in the implementation of *Removing Barriers*.

Highlights of 2005 Achievements and Progress

The majority of initiatives in the Region's 2005 Plan are completed. Other initiatives are underway and completion is expected in early 2006. Of the 89 accessibility initiatives in the 2005 Plan, 63% (56) are complete, and 37% (33) are planned or underway.

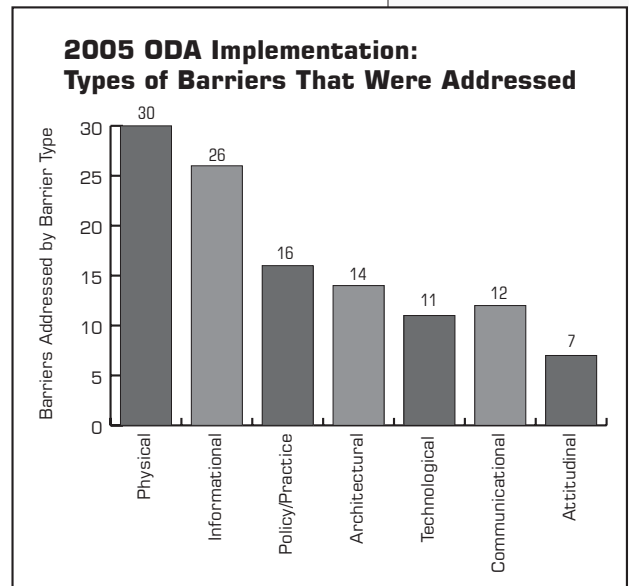


While the Region still continued in its efforts to better understand and identify the barriers that existed in its programs and services, the focus of the 2005 Plan was on taking action and addressing various types of barriers.

In 2005, a total of 116 barriers were identified. As illustrated in the graph below, the Region continued to make progress in removing both invisible barriers and the more visible, physical barriers.

A few examples of barriers that have been identified and removed in 2005 are:

- Community Services and Housing is currently in the process of developing a detailed inventory of modified housing units in response to the need to create a centralized source of information regarding special needs units.
- Corporate Communications has reviewed access to York Region's information and services by improving access to the Web for persons with visual impairments.
- Corporate Services moved the job posting board from inside the Human Resource Services reception area to a more central location and installed self serve bins that are wheelchair accessible.
- Finance now provides the Region's procurement process in Braille format upon request.
- Health Services submitted a proposal for funding to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to provide a Supportive Housing Program for seniors and persons with physical disabilities who will reside in a new development project in Vaughan.
- Planning and Development Services included information on wheelchair accessibility at various tourist locations in the 2005 Visitor's Guide.
- Transportation and Works completed an overall review of all transit terminals to ensure accessibility and all York Region Transit, GO Transit and Toronto Transit Commission.
- York Regional Police launched the Mental Health Support Team Program to ensure the needs of persons with mental health issues are identified and met.



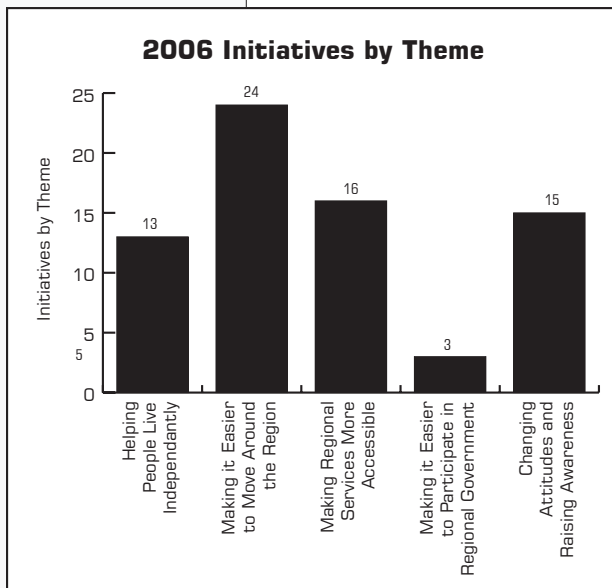
SOURCE: 2005 Progress Report Moving Forward



Developing *Removing Barriers:* York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan

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

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



The 2006 Accessibility Plan includes 71 accessibility planning initiatives put forward by departments to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 2006. As in the 2005 Plan, each initiative in *Removing Barriers* has been organized 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 diverse aspects of the Region's programs and services into broader areas of action. These themes reflect the feedback from the YRAAC and previous public consultations of the key areas that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

Parallel Implementation of the AODA and the ODA

The *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) came into effect in June 2005. The AODA applies to both the public and private sectors and covers 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. Both public and private sector organizations will be required to implement these standards in increments that could range from as little as six months to a maximum of five years.



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

Under the AODA, the role of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will change from advising Council on its annual accessibility plans to advising Council on the Region's compliance with the new accessibility standards.

The AODA will eventually replace the current ODA. However, the province has indicated that the ODA will remain in effect for the foreseeable future while the AODA is phased in. The Region, like other municipalities, will therefore be required to implement both Acts simultaneously during this period.

Summary

Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan

York Region is committed to creating healthy, accessible, safe communities where all its citizens - regardless of age or ability - are able to participate and lead full lives. The efforts to break down barriers for people with disabilities will make it easier for everyone to live, work, play and learn in York Region.

This Accessibility Plan describes how individual departments are working together to identify and overcome barriers. It describes accessibility achievements in 2005, efforts to continue to identify barriers, and the barriers to be removed or eliminated in 2006.

The following pages provide some examples of the initiatives that will be undertaken in 2006 by York Region to enhance accessibility. The initiatives of individual departments have been grouped together under five key themes to demonstrate what the Region has done and is planning to do to better serve people with different types of disabilities.

In 2026, York Region residents will live, work, play and learn in healthy, accessible and safe neighbourhoods that are vibrant, exciting and people-friendly. Residents will continue to enjoy the high quality of life that attracted them to York Region and will have a sense of belonging and commitment to their communities

***Vision 2026
Creating Strong Caring Safe Communities***



1. Helping People Live Independently

Accessibility Achievements

In 2005, the Regional Municipality of York took a number of steps designed to help people with disabilities live independently.

Housing

To better meet the needs of people with disabilities, Housing Services is in the process of developing a detailed inventory of all the modified housing units in the region. They have also consulted with people with disabilities, housing providers and agencies that provide support services to identify the type of housing information they should collect on people's needs related to accessible housing units. This will allow people requiring modified units to know what accessibility features exist within York Region's social housing portfolio.

The Region has also begun a process to develop more affordable rental housing units for people with disabilities, including frail seniors, and began construction of an accessible transitional housing facility in Sutton.

To help more seniors and adults with physical disabilities stay in the community and remain independent for as long as possible, Health Services applied to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for funding for a Supportive Housing Program Project in Vaughan.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Housing Services has identified the lack of service agreements with non-profit housing providers as a barrier to creating a centralized waiting list for modified housing units, and will be identifying ways to overcome this barrier.

Removing Barriers

Housing

During 2006, York Region will increase the supply of accessible and supportive housing units by:

- Developing 50 new affordable units for non-seniors in Newmarket (Stickwood Farm site). To help meet the needs of people with physical disabilities and people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, three of the units will be fully accessible and between five and seven units will be designated for clients of the Canadian Hearing Society.



- Developing 15 new accessible emergency shelter units for families.
- Completing an accessible transitional housing unit at the Sutton Multi-Purpose Centre for Youth that will be able to meet the needs of youth with disabilities.
- Modifying three public washrooms (37 North Street, Sutton, 75 Dunlop Street, Richmond Hill, 474 Eagle Street, Newmarket).
- Modernizing elevators (16105 Yonge Street, Aurora; 540 Timothy Street, Newmarket) to make facilities more accessible for people living in social housing.

Health

To make supportive housing units and Alternative Community Living program sites more accessible, the Region will:

- Renovate 14 units in Hadley Grange (Aurora), increasing the number of accessible apartments and making it possible for more seniors and adults with physical disabilities to remain in the community.
- Upgrade the bathrooms in the client centres at three Assisted Community Living program sites (Keswick Gardens, Genesis Place, Heritage East), which will mean that clients with physical disabilities will receive safer personal care.



2. Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

Accessibility Achievements

Transit Services and Facilities

To make it easier for people to move around the region, York Region Transit took the first step in developing a travel training program for registered users of its Mobility Plus service. This involved completing a review of best practices and issuing a request for proposals for a consultant to help develop an education program.

The transit service is also testing specifications for changes to the software used to schedule Mobility Plus trips, which will make it easier for mobility plus riders to plan trips that cross regional boundaries.

In its five-year service plan, York Region Transit identified the need for a strategy to investigate and designate accessible routes (i.e., routes served by accessible conventional vehicles, with accessible stops, accessible sidewalks and streets, and easy access to buildings). As part of that strategy, York Region Transit has hired a consultant to help define an accessible bus stop, prepare an inventory of accessible bus stops in the region, and identify ways to give riders better access to transit facilities.

Vehicles and Equipment

Over the past year, York Region Transit continued its efforts to make it easier for people with disabilities to travel within the region.

By the end of 2005, 100% of the Region's rapid transit vehicles and 67% of its conventional vehicles were accessible (up from 60% in 2004). All new buses purchased since 2004 have one rear facing and one forward facing mobility aid position, which makes it easier for riders who have problems with upper body mobility to use transit.

York Region Transit completed an accessibility assessment of many aspects of its operations. Based on the findings:

- Fare media and ticket vending machines meet the physical access requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, but require more study to ensure they can be used by people with visual or hearing impairments.
- All accessible buses and new buses have stop buttons or pull cords that can be reached by people with reduced mobility.



- All York Region Transit, GO Transit and Toronto Transit Commission terminals in the region are accessible to people with physical disabilities.
- The phone booth at the Promenade Bus Terminal will be replaced with an accessible phone unit.

Long-Term Care Facilities

During 2005, changes were made in the drop off area at the Maple Health Centre Day Program to avoid traffic congestion and to make it easier for people in both private cars and Mobility Plus vehicles to come and go.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Transit and Roadways

As part of its plan to designate accessible transit routes, the Region will assess the challenges of scheduling the right vehicles for the accessible routes - that is, the right size with the right accessibility features - while still meeting transit demands. To make it easier for riders to use the system, the Region will develop a checklist of criteria for an accessible bus stop and do a field inspection of all bus stops on the designated routes.

York Region Transit plans to survey current Mobility Plus riders who could use conventional accessible transit to identify barriers (e.g., lack of confidence, lack of knowledge) that could be addressed as part of the planned travel training program.

To help the Mobility Plus service be more efficient, carry more riders and provide more trips, the Region will:

- Introduce a global positioning system (GPS) on the bus fleet.
- Continue to upgrade trip scheduling software.

During 2006, the Transportation and Works Department will conduct general field assessments of selected regional roads to identify areas in need of accessibility improvements.



Removing Barriers

Vehicles and Equipment

By the end of 2006, 75% of York Region's conventional transit vehicles will be accessible (up from 69% in 2005). The transit system will also purchase four new accessible low-floor buses for the Mobility Plus service: one to replace an aging vehicle and three to handle the increased demand for trips.

To make it easier for riders to use the system, York Region Transit will designate a number of accessible routes and develop a priority list of bus stops that will be made accessible with the goal of having all bus stops accessible by 2015.

The transit system will also provide customer information and a training program that will teach anyone with a disability - including people who are now registered users of Mobility Plus service - how to use conventional transit service. The program will provide information on accessible transit routes and how to use the accessibility features on conventional buses. This will help more people with disabilities use conventional transit to move around the region, which means they will be able to travel when they want to instead of having to plan ahead and wait for scheduled pick up times. It will also allow Mobility Plus to focus on providing service for people with higher needs.

Roadways and Crosswalks

To make it easier for people to move around the community, York Region will adjust the height of pedestrian push buttons on traffic signal poles and ensure there is an asphalt or concrete surface at the base of the poles, so people in wheelchairs can reach the "walk" buttons.

To help people with visual impairments, the Transportation and Works Department will:

- Install audible traffic control signals at five more intersections in 2006.
- Replace 40 existing street name signs at regional road intersections with ones that are easier to read.

To help all pedestrians know whether they have time to cross a street before the light changes, the Region will install countdown traffic control signals in five locations in 2006 and educate people about how to use them.



Education and Outreach

To make it easier for people with disabilities to visit regional heritage sites, Planning and Development Services, in partnership with the Ontario Historical Society, will host a workshop called “Making Ontario's Heritage Accessible.” The workshop will help heritage sites, museums and historical societies in the region identify and reduce barriers to people with disabilities.

Improving Information and Communications

During 2006, York Region Transit will redesign its brochures, Web site and other information, choosing font sizes and colours that will be easier for people with visual impairments to read.

To encourage more people with disabilities to use transit and to improve access to community services, the Community Services and Housing Department will develop - in consultation with York Region Transit - training materials for staff so they can tell clients about both the accessible conventional transit service and Mobility Plus, and how to use transit to access community services.

Corporate Communications continues to make the Region's Web information easier for people with visual impairments to use. The Department used findings from 2004 focus groups, as well as accessibility standards established for the World Wide Web, to improve the Web site.

Planning and Development Services produces maps with large, legible fonts and avoids combining colours that are hard to see (e.g., red and green). On the Web site, visitors will have the option of viewing or downloading geomatic or digital maps, and using the program to scroll across the maps and use screen reading software to "read" the information on the map to them.



3. Making Regional Services More Accessible

Accessibility Achievements

During 2006, all departments in the Region worked hard to make it easier for people with disabilities to access Regional services and facilities.

Buildings and Equipment

The Corporate Services Department completed a flooring study at the Administrative Building to allow for safer and easier travel throughout the building. Installation of the new flooring is planned for completion in summer 2006. To enhance safety and accessibility in the corridors of the Administrative Centre, Corporate Services relocated existing water fountains to areas outside of the main corridor and replaced them with ones with internal chiller units.

The first phase of a signage study was completed at the Administrative Centre which reviewed sign location, height, contrast, type size, texture, colour and shape to ensure effective communication to all persons. Corporate Services also completed an inspection of all leased facilities to identify existing barriers and investigate opportunities for improvements with landlords.

Improving Information and Communications

The Community Services and Housing Department actively promotes its TTY service for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing and provides the number on brochures and publications. It also reviewed and revised the language and writing standards used on its Web pages, and will use the same standards when updating print materials. Information on the Department's Web site and on the YorkLink Web page was revised to meet accessibility standards established for the World Wide Web.

The Corporate Services Department moved the job posting board from inside the Human Resource Services reception to a more central location and the self serve bins are now wheelchair accessible.

Programs and Services

To make it easier for people with disabilities to participate in Ontario Works, find employment, and access information about services, the Community Services and Housing Department:



- Revised the employment information presentation given to everyone applying to Ontario Works, making the information more accessible for people with sensory or cognitive impairments. The presentation is being made available on CD with voice over and in hard copy to participants.
- Revised the application process, adding some questions that will help staff identify the supports that people with non-visible disabilities may need.
- Held a focus group with clients with disabilities to identify any barriers they may face in utilizing the Ontario Works appeal process.
- Installed accessible computer workstations in the four employment resource centres.
- Developed a new, easy-to-read information pamphlet about the Ontario Works program.

To make its services more accessible, the Health Services Department:

- Used a checklist developed by Health Services Staff to assess the accessibility of 11 locations across the region where prenatal classes are held. As a result of the assessment, all promotional ads and newsletters for the classes now include a statement about the site's accessibility.
- Developed and delivered a falls prevention program for people with visual impairments. The program is now available for anyone with low vision.
- Conducted a survey and focus groups with seniors, family agencies and community health care providers to identify the most effective way to give annual flu shots to seniors who have trouble leaving their homes.
- The School Team reviewed parent newsletters and in order to meet the needs of people with visual impairments, parent information is now printed in a larger font using contrasting colours upon request.
- Held focus groups with clients and family members to identify problems reaching staff in the Department's long-term care and seniors programs. Because most of the problems were related to callers not knowing how to use the phone system, the Department now teaches clients how to use the system. Staff also developed a brochure listing important numbers and telling clients how to reach program staff. Based on feedback, the admission procedures were also revised.



Transportation and Transit

York Region Transit began consultations with community agencies to make them aware of the eligibility requirements for Mobility Plus services and to identify the ongoing demand for transit services from people using community services, as well as ways to provide more coordinated service.

To make conventional transit services more accessible, York Region Transit:

- Requires transit operators to take sensitivity and technical training, which includes being aware of the needs of riders with low vision, who may not be able to see which bus is arriving at the stop.
- Has established a policy to conduct daily inspections of the equipment to secure wheelchairs and to do maintenance checks on the equipment every 5000 km.
- Is considering using patterned concrete at its bus stops to help riders who are blind know when they are at a bus stop.
- Is installing standard signs for priority seating for seniors and people with disabilities on all conventional buses, replacing the variety of different signs that have been used.

To make Mobility Plus service more accessible, York Region Transit:

- Installed an interactive voice response system that allows riders to confirm their trip times, cancel trips and obtain information about Mobility Plus services.
- Redesigned the Mobility Plus newsletter using larger fonts recommended for people with low vision.
- Made the Mobility Plus section of the Web site more accessible by using a font size that meets the standards set by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, making better use of colours and graphics, modifying the language, and making forms available in different formats (i.e., HTML).

Police Services

York Regional Police have made it easier for people with disabilities to access their stations by:

- Repainting accessible parking spaces at Districts.
- Ensuring all new and some renovated buildings are barrier-free.
- Providing barrier-free access to the mini police station at the Community Safety Village.
- Installing curb cuts and making the sidewalks at the Community Safety Village, 3 District (Sutton) and 5 District (Markham) wheelchair accessible.



To make police services more accessible for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, York Regional Police have:

- Purchased software that allows all 911 Police Communicators to answer TTY calls from their station.
- Installed communication software at individual Districts that allows for direct communication with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- Installed community alert notification systems that police can use to communicate with a large segment of the population, including people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- Continued to enhance their sign language capacity so they can work with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing at any incident.

To help police identify and respond to the unique needs of people who have mental health issues, York Regional Police have developed and launched the Mental Health Support Team Program, a multi-agency effort operating in York Region through the York Support Services Network. All team officers, whether permanent or temporary, must have successfully completed the Mental Health Awareness course, or have equivalent experience in the mental health field.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Programs and Services

Given the growing concern about a possible influenza pandemic, Health Services will identify any barriers to getting information about a health emergency, along with instructions about self care, to people with disabilities.

The Region will work with group homes and other programs for people with developmental and physical disabilities to identify barriers that prevent people with disabilities from getting their flu shot.

Buildings and Equipment

To make services at the Administrative Centre more accessible, Corporate Services has hired a consultant to redesign the exterior and interior of the north entrance including the crosswalk and accessible parking spaces.

York Regional Police will work with the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) to audit the Community Safety Village and identify any barriers for people with disabilities.



Information and Communications

Community Services and Housing will implement a Voice Information System at the Contact Centre, making it easier for people with visual impairments to obtain information about housing and community services.

The Social Assistance Division will conduct a focus group to assess whether cheque inserts used by the Ontario Works program to provide information to clients is effective for people with disabilities.

During 2006, Corporate Communications will assess the Web publishing software used by the Region's Information Technology branch for accessibility, using the standards established for the World Wide Web.

Removing Barriers

Programs and Services

The Health Services Department will pilot an accessible flu program for seniors who have difficulty leaving their homes during the 2005/06 flu season.

To help people with disabilities live safely in the region, the Health Services Department will also revise its well water education package and water testing policies to ensure that they can be used by people with disabilities. York Region will also ask the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to revise its well kits, and to provide water results over the phone using TTY services, so people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing can receive the results.

Using the recommendations of the client focus group, Community Services and Housing will take steps to remove the barriers that people with disabilities encounter when trying to use the Ontario Works appeal program. Department staff will also use feedback from client surveys to make the Region's Ontario Works Employment Resource Centres more accessible.

Based on the results of an audit, York Regional Police will continue to retrofit the Community Safety Village, making it easier for people with disabilities to use. The police service will also provide training that will allow all 911 staff to handle TTY calls.



Buildings and Equipment

To make the Administrative Building more accessible to persons with disabilities, a redesign of the north entrance crosswalk and accessible parking spaces will be completed. This will include appropriately sized accessible parking spaces, clearly marked and better designed crosswalk area, and changes to the exterior and interior entrance doors.

Improving Information and Communication

All written materials for the Assisted Community Living program including brochures, pamphlets and service agreements will be reviewed and revised to ensure they are readable in an accessible format.

Departments will work together to develop a policy designed to ensure that information on Regional services is available in different formats and accessible to more people with disabilities.

To help all departments conform to accessibility standards established for the Web and make their Web information more accessible, Corporate Communications will recommend software that has built-in accessibility features or provide writing/style standards and guides. This information will be used to train staff in accessible Web development. The software and guides are designed to overcome visual barriers by enabling people with visual impairments to use screen reading software.



4. Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Accessibility Achievements

Improving Information and Communication

To make it easier for people with disabilities to attend public meetings, Planning and Development Services continues to review methods used to notify people about meetings. It also reviews locations and selects ones that are accessible.

York Regional Police reviewed and revised the procedures used to test and interview new applicants to ensure that they accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

York Region's 2005 Visitor Guide includes information on wheelchair accessibility at various tourist locations.

To improve its ability to communicate with people with disabilities, the Finance Department:

- Will print the Region's procurement guide in Braille for people who are visually impaired upon request.
- Consulted with Regional departments and determined that TTY has been successfully implemented at all Call Centres allowing people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to communicate directly with Regional staff.

The Planning and Development Services Department has redesigned the format of its Official Plan Web site to make the information more accessible to people with visual impairments.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

As part of the Premier Ranked Tourism Infrastructure Audit, Planning and Development Services will survey all tourism attractions in the region about their accessibility. The information gathered will be included in the York Region's Visitor Guide.

Removing Barriers

Community Services and Housing will develop, in consultation with other departments, an accessible meeting policy. To encourage more people who are deaf, deafened or hearing impaired to attend its public meetings, the Department will contract with an outside agency to provide sign language interpretation and provide information about this service to all Departmental staff.



5. Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

Accessibility Achievements

Outreach and Education

In the fall of 2005, the York Region Small Business Centre hosted a conference on accessibility and inclusivity for the business community. The goal was to raise awareness of the need to comply with the new *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and to help businesses identify ways to meet accessibility requirements.

Community Services and Housing continues to provide staff sensitivity training to encourage staff sensitivity and confidence in serving customers with disabilities.

The Health Services Department tested a training module designed to raise staff awareness of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001*, accessibility issues and available resources.

Corporate Services released a special edition of the Here to Serve You newsletter which focused on serving customers with disabilities. It was published in recognition of National Access Awareness Week and included articles and tip sheets on serving customers who have disabilities.

York Regional Police established a Corporate Internal Accessibility and Inclusion Committee to raise awareness of how visible and invisible disabilities affect people's daily work. The Department also reviewed its policy for working with people who are traumatized or victims of crime to ensure it meets legal requirements, reflects medical best practices, and takes into account the needs of people with disabilities.

Business Practices

York Region Transit is negotiating new performance-based contracts with the companies that provide Mobility Plus service. These contracts are designed to increase both the availability and quality of service. They will help ensure that Mobility Plus is able to meet the growing demand for trips and still maintain high levels of customer satisfaction.

To encourage the Region's suppliers to consider accessibility, the Finance Department is developing a way to make compliance a factor or criteria when evaluating tenders and proposals.



Continuing to Identify Barriers

Education and Outreach

Community Services and Housing will survey staff to assess their knowledge of employment resources for people with disabilities and identify resources in the community that could help staff develop the knowledge and skills they need to provide more effective service.

York Regional Police will train an internal group to conduct workspace accessibility audits. The process will help raise awareness and identify barriers for employees with disabilities.

Removing Barriers

Education and Outreach

The Health Services Department will encourage staff to participate in education session on the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and how to integrate its principles into their work.

Corporately, Regional departments have committed approximately 250 staff to participate in an inclusivity and accessibility training course offered by the Region. The training will help raise awareness within regional government of the needs of people with disabilities and improve services.

The Human Resource Services Branch plans to review an initiative to make inclusivity training mandatory for all staff.

All bus operators will be required to take a refresher accessibility awareness and sensitivity training course.

Community Services and Housing, in consultation with other Regional departments, will plan activities to support National Access Awareness Week (in May/June 2006). The goal is to raise awareness in the community and improve services for people with disabilities.

The Region's Mobility Plus service will introduce a community outreach program designed to improve communication with agencies serving people with disabilities.



Conclusion

The Regional Municipality of York continues to creatively identify and remove barriers to its programs and services for persons with disabilities in York Region, building on past plans and looking forward with new ideas.

Regional departments are developing new initiatives within their programs and services to remove barriers and enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities living in York Region. Attention to accessibility planning is a key component when reviewing, improving and developing Regional programs and services. This inclusive method to planning has resulted in an increased level of participation of persons with disabilities in Regional activities and decision-making.

When the new standards under the AODA are released, York Region will be well positioned to meet these new challenges through the achievements already made in the past three years under the ODA. Through the development of the first three Accessibility Plans, Regional Council, Regional staff, and members of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee have acquired expertise and knowledge on barriers to accessibility and ways to remove them. These partnerships will continue to prove to be an invaluable resource for meeting the new challenges ahead.



DEPARTMENT ACCESSIBILITY PLANS

- Community Services and Housing
- Corporate Communications Services
- Corporate Services
- Finance
- Health Services
- Planning and Development Services
- Transportation and Works
- York Regional Police



Community Services and Housing

Environmental Scan

Community Services and Housing will address the following issues:

Staff Training

- Provide training to staff to assist with awareness, identification, and solutions for York Region citizens with disabilities.

Information

- Work to remove barriers to information regarding services and programs and to increase and manage information for persons with disabilities.

Physical Barriers

- Work to make specific services and programs more physically accessible to persons with disabilities.

Our Customers

Housing Services Division

The Housing Services Division directly manages 1767 social housing units through the operations of Housing York Inc. The Division also administers 4599 social housing units through independent non-profit and co-operative housing providers. The Division is also responsible for increasing the supply of affordable housing including the creation of new accessible units. The Region supports and funds a range of homelessness and prevention support programs in partnership with community agencies.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- People of all ages, including children, youth, and seniors who are elderly and fragile.
- People with diverse cultural backgrounds, many who are new to the country and have a mother tongue other than English.
- Households in financial need.
- Households in receipt of Ontario Disability Support Program payments, Old Age Pensions, Disability Pensions, etc.
- People facing a wide range of physical barriers.
- Households headed by those who have been victims of domestic violence.
- Households who require integrated community support services.



The needs of our customers are for housing that is:

- Affordable
- Safe and secure
- Appropriate in size and physical form
- Integrated with community support services

Assistance for our clients with disabilities includes:

- Providing a minimum of 326 accessible housing units throughout York Region.
- Incorporating barrier reduced design into new housing development.
- Seeking instances where retro fitting of existing properties can accommodate a wider range of clients who face physical barriers in their housing.
- Providing information to allow clients to better determine if available housing matches their need for barrier reduced accommodation.
- Liaising with community agencies that provide households with community support services.
- Evaluating impact of future AODA regulations.

Social Assistance Division

The Social Assistance Division provides financial and employment assistance to approximately 8700 residents annually (including adults and children). This comprises approximately 4600 family units.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- People in financial need, including those who are homeless.
- People of all ages, including children, youth and seniors.
- People with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Persons in receipt of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).
- Persons with a broad range of physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

The needs of our customers are:

- Financial assistance for food, shelter, and additional expenses.
- Employment assistance that supports participants in accessing and maintaining jobs.



Financial assistance available for persons with disabilities:

- All Ontario Works recipients receive an Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) card with their monthly social assistance cheque. The ODB card covers the costs of all prescription medications listed on the drug formulary.
- Ontario Works and ODSP recipients with disabilities may be eligible to receive assistance with the cost of health-related items such as:
 - Mobility aids (i.e. walkers)
 - Foot orthotics
 - Vision and dental care
 - Prosthetic devices (i.e. hearing aids)
 - Home repairs or renovations (i.e. addition of ramps, grab bars in the shower)
 - Wheelchair repairs and batteries
 - Other eligible items as defined in policy

Employment Assistance available for persons with disabilities:

- Ontario Works currently maintains a link with a range of agencies to assist persons with disabilities to prepare for employment.
- Persons with learning disabilities have access to literacy and numeracy programs through Ontario Works referrals to community agencies.
- Volunteer placement and employment-based workshops, delivered at local Community Services and Housing offices, are physically accessible for persons with disabilities and mobility issues.
- One-on-one employment counselling is offered at all local Ontario Works offices to assist participants in developing strategies to manage disability-related barriers to employment.

Family and Children's Services Division

The Family and Children's Services Division provides financial assistance and/or direct developmental programming to approximately 5935 York Region children from birth to 12 years annually and 300 eligible adults residing in domiciliary hostels. This comprises approximately 4344 family units.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- Children from birth to 12 years of age.
- Families with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Families with an assessed financial need.



- Eligible adults residing in domiciliary hostels.
- Children with a broad range of diagnosed and undiagnosed physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.
- Licensed child care centres with children with special needs enrolled.
- Agencies delivering programs for children and families under the *Day Nurseries Act*, the *Child and Family Services Act*, the *Ontario Works Act*, and the *Lodging House By-law*.

The needs of our customers are:

- Financial assistance for child care and recreational costs, and enhanced inclusion support for children with exceptional special needs.
- Developmental programming to assist in the development of children with special needs and their inclusion into licensed child care centres and community settings.
- Information, intake, and access to programs and services in York Region.
- Financial assistance for domiciliary hostel costs.

*Information, Intake and Access to
Family and Children's Services Division*

All requests for information, intake, and access for the following programs are accessed by calling the toll free 1-888-703-KIDS (5437) line:

- Child Care Fee Assistance
- Early Intervention Programs
- Preschool Speech and Language Program
- Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program
- Child Care Support Line including a Child Care Translation Language telephone line
- Summer Camp Fee Assistance

The Division administers:

- Child care fee assistance for families with an assessed financial need with children enrolled in licensed child care, including those with special needs.
- Wage subsidy to enhance staff salaries within licensed child care programs.
- Enhanced funding to provide inclusion supports to children with exceptional special needs in licensed child care programs.



The Division provides direct service delivery for developmental programming:

- Early Intervention Services (EIS) provides:
 - Developmental programming and consultative supports for children with special needs in their homes, child care centres, community settings, and EIS offices.
 - Occupational and Physio-therapy consultative services.

The Division manages the funding and program relationships with:

- Speech Language Pathology services through a contract with Markham Stouffville Hospital.
- In-home mobility, orientation, and developmental supports through a contract with Ontario Foundation for Visually Impaired Children.
- Seating and orthotic clinic equipment support for children with physical disabilities through a contract with Southlake Regional Hospital.
- All Our Kids (AOK) Early Child Development and Parenting Programs.

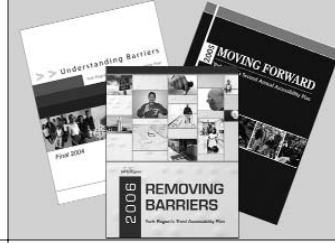
The Division administers per diem agreements with domiciliary hostel operators for domiciliary hostel beds. The Division has responsibility to license domiciliary hostels under the *Lodging House By-law* and to monitor compliance under the *By-law* and per diem agreements.

Business Services Division

The Business Services Division delivers direct and support services through its six program teams.

- Family Support Team - assists clients in pursuing support income.
- Eligibility Review Team - investigates and collects revenues owed to the Region.
- Learning and Development Team - knowledge and skills training for all staff.
- Contact Centre Team - 'First Call' services and OW eligibility assessment.
- Budget and Finance Team - ensures the Department's fiscal integrity.
- Administration Team - delivers accommodation services and standard practices and provides expert technology support for program applications.

Our customers are Community Services and Housing Department clients, staff, service providers, and vendors.



Policy and Program Support Services Division

The Policy and Program Support Services Division provides support to the Department, the corporation, and Regional Council through the provision of strategic policy analysis and program development services.

The Division also manages departmental emergency preparedness and business continuity planning; provides program communications services; produces YorkLink; co-ordinates the Region's ODA accessibility planning process and manages community investment, planning and program evaluation activities.

Our customers are primarily the Community Services and Housing Department, the corporation, and community service agencies.

Accessibility Statement

The Community Services and Housing Department will continue to move toward accessible programs, training, and information. The first step was the preparation of the 2004 Plan. As in the 2005 Plan, implementation is the main focus of the 2006 Plan.



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Helping People Live Independently			
Need to develop affordable accessible rental housing units for frail seniors and adults with disabilities. (Housing Services)	Physical	Physical	Development process for housing additional households of persons with disabilities in progress.
Need to provide greater accessibility services for households requiring transitional housing. (Housing Services)	Physical	Physical	Development of an accessible transitional housing facility in a housing project in Sutton in progress.
Need to create centralized source of information regarding special needs units within the social housing portfolio. (Housing Services)	Informational	Physical, Sensory	Development of detailed inventory of modified units underway.
Need to create a centralized waiting list for households requiring modified units without support services. (Housing Services)	Policy/Practice	Physical, Sensory	Conferring with housing providers, persons with disabilities and support agencies to develop a list of the information required for special needs applicants to assess the suitability of modified or supported units. Engaging a consultant to compile a detailed inventory of modified units in the social housing portfolio.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Helping People Live Independently			
Remove barriers in the social assistance appeal process. (Social Assistance)	Policy/Practice	All	A workgroup has been established to review feedback from a consultation session conducted in May 2005. A client focus group was conducted in November to determine barriers in the appeal process.
Lack of access to Contact Centre for persons with disabilities. (Business Services)	Communicational, Technological	Physical	Survey underway.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Need to review and revise the current employment information presentation given to all Ontario Works applicants as part of the second stage application process. (Social Assistance)	Informational	Sensory, Cognitive	The Employment Information presentation has been revised to meet the needs of persons with sensory and cognitive needs. The revised presentation is in the process of being made available on CD ROM with voice over. In addition, participants will be provided with a paper copy.
Based on a review completed on the Ontario Works application process, access needs for persons with disabilities, particularly for those with non-visible disabilities, is not easily identified by staff. (Social Assistance)	Policy/Practice	All	Supportive, non-invasive question has been developed to help identify how to better support persons with disabilities in ongoing work. This question will be incorporated into the initial application process.
An accessible information brochure for the Ontario Works program is currently not available in York Region. (Social Assistance)	Informational	Sensory, Cognitive	Development of a new, easy to read information pamphlet about Ontario Works is in progress. The pamphlet will be printed and distributed in 2006.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Review accessibility of Ontario Works resource centres. (Social Assistance)	Physical, Architectural	Physical, Sensory	A survey for users was conducted in each of four OW offices to identify any barriers in the employment resource centres. Survey responses have been compiled.
Review usability and accessibility standards for online information found in the YorkLink directory/Web page. (Policy and Program Support Services)	Informational	Sensory	Completed review.
An accessible computer workstation is currently only available in one Social Assistance office. (Social Assistance)	Policy/Practice Technological	Physical	Computer work stations have been installed in all four OW resource centres.
Continue to review Web pages to identify potential barriers for persons with disabilities. (Policy and Program Support Services)	Informational Technological	Sensory	Using accessibility standards established by the W3C and screen reader software, Community Services and Housing will review and revise its Web pages on an ongoing basis to identify barriers for people with visual and cognitive disabilities.
Provide print communications in online format (PDF). (Policy and Program Support Services)	Informational Technological	Sensory	All print communication is now provided in online format (PDF).
Awareness of TTY service at Contact centre. (Business Services)	Communicational	Sensory	Promotion of TTY by providing the number in the Bell Blue Pages, on brochures and publications is in progress.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Need to continue to provide effective staff training to effectively promote services and information to persons with disabilities. (Corporate/Business Services)	Attitudinal Policy/Practice Informational Communicational	All	Completed sensitivity training.
Review writing standards in program communications to improve usability and accessibility. (Policy and Program Support Services)	Informational	All	Writing standards for Departmental online information have been reviewed and Web pages are being revised to be more accessible to persons with different types of disabilities. Writing standards for hard copy material will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as materials are updated and reprinted.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Helping People Live Independently		
Begin process of creating a centralized waiting list for households requiring modified units. (Housing Services)	Develop Service Agreement and negotiate with non-profit housing providers.	2nd Quarter 2007
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Complete a review of the effectiveness of Ontario Works cheque inserts, one of the primary methods of communicating information to clients, for persons with disabilities. (Social Assistance)	Conduct a focus group to review existing practices and research potential alternatives.	4th Quarter
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Conduct a current review of Ontario Works staff skills and knowledge on employment resources for participants with disabilities. (Social Assistance)	Conduct surveys as part of a continuous improvement approach to identify staff needs and research available resource/agency and community supports to address skill and information gaps.	3rd Quarter

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Helping People Live Independently		
Facility limitation and need to provide greater accessibility for social housing residents. (Housing Services)	Physical	Increased resident accessibility and greater independence.
Need to develop affordable accessible rental housing for persons with physical disabilities and hearing impairments. (Housing Services)	Physical	Addition to the inventory of social housing units available to those with disabilities
Need to develop emergency family shelter housing with accessibility features for persons with disabilities. (Housing Services)	Physical	First accessible emergency housing units for persons with disabilities.
Need to provide greater accessibility services for households requiring transitional housing. (Housing Services)	Physical	The ability to serve those facing physical barriers in need of transitional housing.
Service - Contact Centre. (Business Services)	Physical (visual)	Information accessible to people with visual impairments.
Staff knowledge about Mobility Plus transit service. (Family and Children's Services)	Attitudinal and Informational	Staff can increase client awareness of service that may improve accessibility to Regional programs and services.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Helping People Live Independently		
Modify 3 public washrooms: •37 North St. Sutton •75 Dunlop St. Richmond Hill •474 Eagle St. Newmarket Modernize elevators: •16105 Yonge St. Aurora •540 Timothy St. Newmarket Upgrade electric openers and door holders for entries, laundry and public washrooms in 9 Housing York Inc. buildings with barrier free units.	Use of facility by persons with physical disabilities.	4th Quarter 2006
Development of 50 new affordable units for non-seniors in the Town of Newmarket (Stickwood Farm Site). Three of the units will be fully accessible and 5 to 7 units will be designated for clients of the Canadian Hearing Society.	Housing additional households of persons with disabilities.	2007
Development of 15 emergency shelter units for families including persons with disabilities (Leeder Place).	Providing emergency housing units for persons with disabilities.	2006
Development of an accessible transitional unit (Sutton Multi-Purpose Centre for Youth).	Serving households requiring transitional housing with accessible features.	2006
Implement Voice Information System.	Number of users of the system.	2006-2007
Staff training materials regarding Mobility Plus service developed collaboratively between CS&H and York Region Transit.	Training materials developed.	4th Quarter, 2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

11 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Helping People Live Independently		
Client knowledge about Mobility Plus transit service. (Family and Children's Services)	Informational	Clients made aware of service that may improve accessibility to Regional programs and services.
Review the recommendations from client focus group and take appropriate actions to address identified barriers in the Ontario Works appeal process. (Social Assistance)	Policy/Practice	The appeal process will be better understood and more effective in terms of accessibility for persons with disabilities.
Review survey results and feedback to make adjustments to York Region's Ontario Works office Employment Resource Centres as required. (Social Assistance)	Physical/ information Technological	York Region's Ontario Works Employment Resource Centres will be more accessible and user-friendly to persons with disabilities.
Need to provide greater access to information through the use of multiple formats. (Corporate)	All	Better access to information.
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government		
Sign language interpretation is not made available at all public meetings. (Policy and Program Support Services)	Physical Communicational	Enable individuals who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to attend public meetings.
Meetings are not equally accessible for all. (Policy and Program Support Services)	All	Allowing persons with disabilities to participate independently.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Helping People Live Independently		
Development of communications strategy to inform clients about Mobility Plus service.	Communications strategy developed.	4th Quarter, 2006
Incorporate changes utilizing feedback from the focus group.	Recommendations from focus group implemented as appropriate.	4th Quarter, 2006
Incorporate changes utilizing feedback from the focus group.	Changes made to increase accessibility.	3rd Quarter, 2006
Development of a multiple formats policy in consultation with other Regional Departments and AAC.	Increased access to Regional services resulting in good customer service for persons with disabilities.	4th Quarter 2006
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government		
Contract with external supplier to provide information to staff.	An increased number of people who are deaf attending meetings.	3rd quarter
Development of an accessible meeting policy in consultation with other Regional Departments.	Greater participation of persons with disabilities in Regional meetings.	4th Quarter 2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

11 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training. (All Divisions)	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.
Need for more staff awareness of customers with disabilities and how best to serve them.(Policy and Program Support Services)	All	Improved customer service for people with disabilities.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
72 CS&H employees will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness raised and staff report better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2006
Design and implement activities to support and promote National Access Awareness Week in consultation with other Regional Departments.	Greater staff sensitivity and confidence in serving customers with disabilities; greater customer satisfaction.	May/June 2006 (NAAW)

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

11 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.



Corporate Communications Services

Environmental Scan

Corporate Communications continually supports other departments and provides guidance in accessible Web production, font usability and writing styles.

Our Customers

Corporate Communications customers include internal departments, residents, businesses, visitors, the media, and area municipal partners.

Our responsibility to our customers includes corporate identity and branding, graphic standards for all publications and signage, advertisements, and Web correspondence.

This Department does not provide targeted services for persons with disabilities, rather sets standards and guidelines from a corporate perspective that guides its customers towards accessible alternatives when developing messaging for persons with disabilities. Our Web site (www.york.ca) was developed using these standards, keeping persons with visual impairments in mind.

Accessibility Statement

Corporate Communications is dedicated to the continual quest of making Regional information accessible to persons with disabilities. We are committed to staying current on the latest programs, technologies, and standards through accessibility training and research.



Progress Reports on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Using findings from the 2004 focus group feedback, external accessibility services and the W3C Consortium (standard for the World Wide Web), Corporate Communications will further improve and maintain Web access for persons with visual impairments.	Informational Technological	Sensory	Continued access improvements to York Region's information and services.
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government			
Corporate Communications will continually review its Web access to identify barriers for persons with disabilities.	Informational Technological	Sensory	Communicated to ITS the need to research various CMS systems that will integrate accessibility features within the software itself.
Corporate Communications will investigate the feasibility of providing alternate formats for communications materials and ways to disseminate upon request.	Informational	Sensory	The review of business cards and stationary is almost complete. We are underway in establishing standards in file keeping and saving documents to assist people with visual impairments.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Corporate Communications will review the Web publishing software that ITS is suggesting for accessibility components. Corporate Communications will also advise ITS on the level of accessibility that will be achieved through the software and give recommendations.	The WC3 Consortium criteria will be used as a template for determining the CMS accessibility level.	New software is anticipated to be introduced early in 2006.
Corporate Communications will provide guidelines and standards that are geared towards accessible communications for all departments in York Region as it relates to Web production and communications that are for internal and external clients.	The writing style guide as well as archiving standards will be discussed for effectiveness and feasibility.	Guides and standards are anticipated by the summer of 2006 for archiving information in an accessible format.

5 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
<p>Visual barriers will be addressed in 2006 such as: Internet and Intranet redesign with a focus on screen reading software compatibility and a standards guide developed to train the Web co-ordinators on proper accessibility processes when developing Web pages Implementation of Humanist 970 font and size as agreed upon by the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) for business cards and stationary to accommodate persons with visual impairments.</p>	<p>Information Technical Visual</p>	<p>ITS, Corporate Communications and the e-solutions group will open a direct channel to York Region information and services to those persons with visual impairments by conforming the Internet and Intranet to WC3 criteria.</p> <p>Using the Humanist 970 font to print business cards and stationary will make it easier for those persons with visual impairments to be able to identify and access Regional staff communications and information.</p>
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
<p>Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.</p>	<p>Attitudinal</p>	<p>Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.</p>

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
<p>Pick content management software (CMS) that has built in accessibility features such as Web Sphere if feasible. If not, then standards and guides will be produced to train Regional staff on proper accessible Web development and process on the new CMS that is geared to the new Internet and Intranet designs. For the stationary, all of the templates will be changed to reflect the new accessible design and the changes will be forwarded to the printers for implementation. Also the graphic standards will be updated to describe and direct the staff to the changes.</p>	<p>The Web sites will meet the WC3 criteria and screen reading software will be able to read the content fluently. The stationary and business cards will be easier to read for those persons with visual impairments.</p>	<p>The Intranet is scheduled to be completed by the beginning of 2006. The Internet is going to be reviewed and is estimated to start around February 2006. The business cards and stationary will start to be printed in 2005 and be grandfathered in gradually and should be in circulation by mid 2006.</p>
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
<p>2 to 3 employees in the Communications Department will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.</p>	<p>Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>2006</p>

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.



Corporate Services

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.
- Review of Council and Committee processes to identify and remove any existing barriers.
- Expand the educational component of the Customer Service Strategy to assist staff in providing excellent customer service to persons with disabilities.

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 shall continue to improve customer service by focusing its efforts on the education and training of staff to respectfully and effectively serve the needs of persons with disabilities, identifying existing barriers by completing accessibility studies of prioritized owned and leased facilities, and developing and implementing barrier removal action plans to improve accessibility for all of the region's residents. In 2005, the Department began to implement many of the highest priority recommendations to remove barriers at the Administrative Centre and establish a multi-year plan to address other identified barriers. Additional accessibility studies were completed on other prioritized facilities to establish baseline accessibility information. The Department has not only investigated the physical nature of buildings, but also our policies, practices and procedures to ensure that all aspects relating to the design, construction, operation, maintenance, or leasing of buildings, are focused on improving accessibility to all persons with disabilities. The Department will continue to encourage diversity in hiring through policy development, continue to review Council, Committee, Legal, and Court processes to identify and remove barriers that limit accessibility, and continue to enhance and improve our work environment, with a vision of barrier-free facilities for our citizens, customers and staff.



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Human Resource Services Job Board.	Informational Physical	Physical	Job posting board was moved from inside HR reception to the outer hallway behind the elevator bank and the self serve bins were designed to be wheelchair accessible.
Recruitment Process Interview Scheduling.	Informational	All	The question "Do you require any accommodation for the interview?" is asked when interviews are initially arranged.
Flooring in the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	Physical Sensory	A flooring study was completed to allow for safer and easier travel throughout the building while ensuring that it will function well over the long term with regard to cleaning, maintenance and sustainability. Installation of the new flooring planned for completion by summer 2006.
Elevator lighting in the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	Physical Sensory	Brighter lighting to be installed inside of elevators by March 2006.
Clarity of doorways in the Administrative Centre.	Architectural	Sensory	Doorframes to be painted in contrasting colours by spring 2006 to ensure easier and safer navigation throughout the building's public areas.

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2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Washrooms at the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	Physical	Pilot test case for auto flush toilets and hands-free faucets has been completed. Installations in remaining washrooms currently underway
Washroom and parking garage doors within the Administrative Centre.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Power operators will be added to 4 additional ground-floor washroom doors and 2 additional doors leading to the parking garage from the elevators. Indoor accessible parking spaces and the ramps between the elevators and the parking garage will be repainted and additional railings will be installed along these ramps by April 2006.
Establish baseline accessibility information on prioritized, owned facilities with Regional staff.	Physical	Physical	Consultant has completed Accessibility Audits and Barrier Removal Action Plans for 12 additional Regional facilities and provided prioritized recommendations and cost estimates.
Review prioritized leased facilities, leasing practices and standard lease agreements to improve accessibility.	Physical	Physical	Consultant inspected prioritized leased facilities, identified existing barriers and investigated opportunities to negotiate improvements with landlords. Studies completed.
Review existing signage at the Administrative Centre.	Informational	Sensory	Signage study, reviewing sign location, height, contrast, type size, texture, colour and shape etc. has been completed to ensure clear and effective communication to all persons within the building. New signage to be installed in 2006.

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- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Customer Service Best Practices	Informational	All	Ongoing preparation of articles for each issue of Here to Serve You customer service newsletter.
Inclusivity training for Regional staff.	Attitudinal	All	Two training sessions were completed and 55 staff attended to raise awareness of the needs of persons with different types of disabilities and to discuss ways that more accessible accommodation can be provided.

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



Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Study north entrance, crosswalk, and accessible parking spaces at the Administrative Centre.	Consultant has been retained to study and redesign the exterior and interior of the Administrative Centre's north entrance.	April 2006

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
North entrance, crosswalk and accessible parking spaces at the Administrative Centre.	Physical, Architectural	The building will be more easily and safely accessible to persons with disabilities.
Water fountains in the Administrative Centre.	Physical	Existing fountains act as an obstruction along narrow corridors. Removal will make corridors safer and more accessible to persons with visual impairments.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools which can be utilized to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

- 6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?
- 7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).
- 8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
A complete redesign of this area is required to ensure a sufficient number of appropriate spaces, with incorporated curb cuts and a well demarcated, smoother, concrete surface path to new north entry doors. Additional changes to the entryway's card reader, power assist button, lighting, and trash bin location, will also be implemented.	Sufficient and appropriately sized accessible parking spaces, clearly marked and better designed crosswalk area, and changes to doors and interior and exterior door area, will allow for easier and safer entry into the building.	2006
The existing fountains on the first floor will be relocated from where they are now to remove the existing obstruction. New, accessible water fountains, with internal chiller units, will be installed. Fountains located on the other 3 floors will be removed.	Existing water fountains, which are obstructions along narrow building corridors, will be removed, and those existing on the first floor, will be relocated and replaced with more accessible units.	January 2006
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
A target of 10% of Corporate Services staff will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately. Human Resource Services staff shall review an initiative to make inclusivity training mandatory for all staff.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.	2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

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Finance

Environmental Scan

In 2006, our focus will be on widening staff awareness of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA).

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 educate our staff, look at the services we deliver, and the processes we manage, with a view to continually improving service quality and accessibility.



Progress Reports on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Technological Barrier - Investigate the possibility of implementing corporate TTY technology (software and hardware) to allow staff to communicate directly with citizens who use TTY equipment.	Technological	Sensory	In consultation with Regional Departments it was determined that we have successfully implemented TTY at Call Centres.
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: Accessibility of the procurement process to all York Region residents.	Informational	Sensory	If requested, guide will be printed in Braille for use by people who are visually impaired.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: No formal mechanism to factor in compliance with ODA legislation when evaluating responses to York Region RFPs and tenders.	Potentially all types of barriers	All	Draft evaluation methodology to factor in ODA considerations in York Region's RFP and tender process developed. Will be finalized in 2006.

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



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
In consultation with Regional departments, implement, where appropriate, TTY technology to address accessibility concerns.	Technological	Citizens who communicate using TTY equipment will be able to communicate directly with staff at the Region.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to information and the tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

- 6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?
- 7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).
- 8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Implement corporate TTY technology.	Citizens using TTY equipment will communicate directly with staff at the Region.	2006
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
5 employees in the Finance Department - one per branch - will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

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Health Services

Environmental Scan

The Health Services Department provides programs and services to a wide variety of clients including persons with disabilities. Because Department management and staff deal with accessibility issues on a daily basis, it is no wonder that Health Services has an impressive list of achievements in the areas of identifying and removing barriers for persons with disabilities. The challenge for the Department is to continue to be innovative and proactive in providing and modifying our many programs and services so that they are accessible to all our client groups.

Our Customers

All Branches of the Health Services Department work together to promote, protect and enhance the health and safety of the people of York Region. The Health Services Department serves a variety of clients including York Region residents of all age groups, the general public and other health care professionals.

Many of the services, even a majority of the services, provided by our three operational Branches (Emergency Medical Services, Long Term Care and Seniors and Public Health) are targeted at persons with disabilities. They include direct health care service, health education and promotion, emergency and non-emergency medical services response, family and children's health programs, immunization services, environmental health, health protection, community outreach, long term care programs and services and long-range and emergency planning.

Accessibility Statement

The Health Services Department will continue to identify barriers, implement strategies to increase accessibility, and evaluate our programs and services to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to fully participate in them.

Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Public Information for the Plan

This section will be based on information provided through ongoing progress reports on 2005 barrier identification and barriers to be addressed initiatives.



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Helping People Live Independently			
Need for more Supportive Housing - Alternative Community Living Programs (ACLP) which provides essential homemaking and personal care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities in order for them to stay in the community and remain as independent as possible.	Physical Architectural	Physical	Proposal completed and submitted to Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for funding to provide a Supportive Housing Program for seniors and persons with physical disabilities who will reside in a new development project in Vaughan.
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Drop off zone for Day Programs at Maple Health Centre is congested with both individual transportation vehicles and mobility buses.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Improved drop off area with designated signage. Written standards are being developed by other departments.
The physical space for activities and in hallways is too small for the large number of wheelchairs and walkers used by Day Program participants at Maple Health Centre.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Renovations to be completed by March 2006 to improve space.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Access to universally funded influenza vaccine for York Region seniors who experience difficulty leaving their homes to attend a community based immunization clinic.	Physical	Physical	Needs assessment including surveys and focus groups to seniors, family agencies and community health care providers developed. Consultation with other Health Departments for current practice on drive through clinics. Plan to pilot an accessible flu program in 2005/06 flu season.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Physical accessibility to prenatal classes, falls prevention and school workshops.	Physical	Physical	Location appraisal (11 sites for prenatal classes) with 'pilot' checklist completed in Jan. 2005. Final assessment pending completion of standardized checklist from ODA Committee. Accessibility statement added to promotional flyers/ads. All participants with identified special needs provide feedback.
Assess the accessibility of prenatal classes for persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	Informational	Sensory	Accessibility statement on all promotional materials. All self-identified (hearing loss) clients to provide feedback on class evaluation. To date - no requests.
Accessibility to Private Drinking Well Systems (PDWS) Education and Outreach Program; PDWS testing service; and retrieval of water test results from the MOHLTC Lab.	Physical	Physical	Focus groups planned with York Region AAC to discuss public education outreach program.
Readability of written materials sent to parents re: school programs.	Informational	Sensory	Completed consultation: parent newsletter now printed in larger font (Verdana 16pt) and improved colour contrast upon request. Accessibility statement on all newsletters.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Ability to consistently reach a staff member when calling in to the Department's long term care and seniors programs.	Communicational	All	Phone system upgrades still pending. Focus groups held with both clients and family members to determine needs. Needs identified are related to knowledge of how to use the phone system versus the voice mail process. All new clients will undergo phone protocol and training as part of orientation to program, and will review yearly. Brochure developed listing important numbers and how to reach Day Program staff. Admission procedures to be revised.
Falls Prevention Program workshop content and delivery difficult for persons with visual impairments to see.	Informational	Sensory	The Falls Prevention Team delivered to two groups of persons with visual impairments - now available for any persons with low vision. Consultation with Dots R Us group in Georgina. Audiotape being developed to complement the workshop as recommended by focus group.
Paramedic staff require improved access to stretchers in ambulances.	Physical	All	Two centre mount Crestline E450 ambulance vehicles received. Four Proflex 35 stretchers received which will improve access to stretchers in ambulances.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Decreased awareness of Health Services Department staff regarding the <i>Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001</i> , accessibility issues and available resources.	Informational Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	All	A pilot awareness training module will be tested. Plans for further implementation will be made following the conclusion of the pilot project. First draft of resources list in progress and will be made available to all staff.

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- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
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Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Inclusion of persons with disabilities into Health Services emergency planning, specifically for Pandemic Influenza.	Assessment of factors that require consideration and/or action when communicating general information to the public in the midst of an emergency situation, instructions for self-care and access to shelters, health services, sponsored clinics etc.	2006
<p>Access to universally funded influenza vaccine at York Region influenza clinics for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Access difficulty is related to these individuals not being able to leave their homes or ability to obtain appropriate transportation to such clinics.</p>	The flu program will approach York Regional Group Homes and other programs that work with people with disabilities to explore various possibilities of increasing access to our community immunization clinics.	Assessment to be undertaken in 2006 and possible implementation during the 2006/2007 influenza season.

5 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Helping People Live Independently		
Upgrading of bathrooms (shower/bath) in the client centres of the ACL program sites Keswick Gardens, Genesis Place and Heritage East is required.	Physical	Safer personal care (bathing) of clients with physical disabilities will be possible.
Need for more physically accessible supportive housing units, with the alternative community living program, that provide essential homemaking and personal care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities in order for them to stay in the community and remain as independent as possible (Hadley Grange site renovation of 14 Units).	Physical/ Architectural	Increased number of accessible apartments.
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
ACL brochures, pamphlets and service agreements require review and revision to ensure they are readable and conform to ODA guidelines.	Communication	Improved communication between service providers and clients and their caregivers.
Implementation phase of 2005 goal of accessibility to private drinking well systems (PDWS) education and outreach program; PDWS testing service; and retrieval of water test results from the MOHLTC lab.	Communication Information Policy/Practice	Improved access for people with disabilities to obtain information regarding private drinking well systems, including test results.

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- 7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).
- 8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Helping People Live Independently		
Renovations to the shower/bath area.	Completed Renovations	June/July 2006
Renovation of specified units in Hadley Grange.	Completed Renovations	October 2006
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Review/access current materials and make changes as necessary to meet ODA guidelines.	Written materials are completed and more easily understandable.	April/May 2006
Review and revise YR well water education package as well as policy/practice around well water testing. Investigate the MOHLTC capability to revise its well kits and ability to provide water results over the phone using TTY service.	Advocacy on behalf of YRHS to the MOHLTC regarding its services.	June 2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Staff awareness related to the ODA and incorporation of accessibility practices into daily activities within Health Services.	Communication Information Policy/Practice	Staff will feel an increased comfort level when dealing with persons with disabilities and more information will be provided or facilitated with accessibility concepts in mind, to be delivered in the community.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Encourage and promote opportunities, both external and internal, for Health Services staff to attend and participate in education related to increasing awareness of the ODA as well as the integration of accessibility concepts into daily work practices where appropriate.	Number of opportunities offered. Number of staff attending internal or external ODA opportunities. Number of examples of integration of accessibility concepts.	2006 - ongoing
20 employees in the Health Services Department will participate in the inclusivity training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is increased and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

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Planning and Development Services

Environmental Scan

The Planning and Development Services Department provides accessibility at public meetings by identifying and removing barriers where possible to remove and/or reduce physical, architectural, information and communication barriers. In addition, the Department ensures information and communication barriers are minimized through the wide array of publications and Web application services that we provide.

Our Customers

The 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 industry, businesses of York Region, public agencies (such as school boards, health and safety organizations and conservation authorities) and human service providers.

Accessibility Statement

The Planning and Development Services Department will commit to serving all of our customers to the best of our ability, taking into consideration their accessibility needs and our ability to address those needs. Where a barrier can be removed with existing resources - we plan to do so. When a barrier is identified that requires the co-operation of resources of another corporate department (i.e. Clerks Office, Property Services, etc.) we will work in partnership to minimize and/or eliminate barriers to access.



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Accessibility information in York Region's Visitor's Guide.	Physical Informational	Physical	2005 Visitor's Guide included information on wheelchair accessibility if voluntarily provided by tourism business. Inclusion of accessibility information for all tourism businesses was postponed until HRSDC funding to implement Premier Ranked Infrastructure Audit received.
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Public meeting notification practices and location selections.	Informational Physical	Physical	Continuous review of location lists for public meetings.
Regional Official Plan format and Web site.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Web site made more accessible for people with visual impairments.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Awareness of need for accessibility resources in York Region Small Business Centre.	Informational/ Attitudinal	All types	In the fall of 2005, the York Region Small Business Centre hosted a conference on accessibility and inclusivity to raise awareness within the business community of the need to comply with provincial legislation and to identify ways that businesses can meet accessibility requirements.

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



Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Accessibility information published in York Region's Visitor's Guide.	Premier Ranked Tourism Infrastructure Audit 2005/2006 will gather information on accessibility of tourism attractions.	2006/2007

5 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
Access to regional heritage sites.	Physical Architectural Communicational	Will assist heritage sites, museums and historical societies reduce barriers and increase accessibility.
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government		
Accessibility to Geomatics maps and products.	Informational Physical Technological	Geomatics products that are more easily accessed by people with physical disabilities.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

- 6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?
- 7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).
- 8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
In partnership with Ontario Historical society, host a workshop called "Making Ontario's Heritage Accessible."	Attendance at workshop and participant's satisfaction.	Jan 2006
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government		
Use of the most legible and largest fonts possible on maps. Avoidance of the combined colours red and green on maps. Alternate scroll-over option to allow test-to-speech functionality on YorkAtlas icons, buttons and links. Maps created in Adobe Acrobat 6.0 that can be downloaded with features such as intelligent navigation, test-to-speech and mouseless keyboards.	Continuous incorporation of practices in development of all new products.	Ongoing
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Approximately 40 - 50 employees in the Planning and Developmental Services Department will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2006

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10 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.

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Transportation and Works

Environmental Scan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Customers

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

Accessibility Statement

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



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
TRANSIT: YRT fare media and ticket vending machines may be a barrier to riders with low vision or riders with physical disabilities.	Physical	Sensory Physical	New fare media and the ticket vending machines meet the physical access requirements of <i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i> (ADA). Further investigation is on for access requirements for people with visual and hearing impairments.
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced mobility may not be able to reach request stop buttons.	Physical	Physical	Completed. All accessible buses have labels for this at time of manufacture. Some buses using yellow touchtape instead of buttons; underway since 1997. New YRT buses have pullcord hung at lower portion of upper sash on tip in windows. Will also be included in Travel Training program.
TRANSIT: Accessibility within transit terminals.	Physical	Physical	An overall review of transit terminals was completed and all YRT, GO and TTC terminals in York Region were deemed accessible. The phone booth at Promenade Bus Terminal will be replaced with an accessible telephone unit.
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Physical	Physical	Strategy to investigate and designate routes as accessible is being developed as part of new 5 Year Service Plan (2006-2010).
TRANSIT: Travel training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Physical	Physical	Research and best practices review is completed. RFP developed/issued for consultant assistance in 2006.
TRANSIT: Improve accessibility to conventional transit (fleet acquisition).	Physical	Physical	100% of Rapid Transit fleet and 67% of conventional fleet will be accessible by end of 2005.
TRANSIT: Functionality of the technical software used to schedule Mobility Plus trips.	Technological	Physical	Specifications for software changes are being tested.

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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
TRANSIT: Access at conventional bus stops and terminals.	Physical Policy/ Practice	Physical	Retain a consultant to define what an accessible bus stop is, prepare an inventory of accessible bus stops in York Region, and identify a process for improving on street infrastructure including access to facilities in progress.
TRANSIT: Mobility Plus customer ease of travelling across regional boundaries.	Physical Policy/ Practice	Physical	Initial scheduling software and location loading assessments completed.
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Investigate and designate routes as accessible.	Physical	In progress as part of 5 Year Service Plan (2006-2010).
TRANSIT: Securement in conventional fleet is not easily managed for riders with upper body mobility problems.	Physical	Physical	Completed. All new buses since 2004 have one rearward facing and one forward facing mobility aid position.
TRANSIT: Travel Training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Physical	Physical	Following the designation of accessible routes, provide training program for select group of Mobility Plus riders. Research for best practices and process to retain a consultant underway.

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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
TRANSIT: Riders who have low vision are not able to read all communication pieces, including the YRT Web site.	Informational Technological	Sensory	Completed adjustments to layout and font on the Mobility Plus Newsletter using larger fonts and recommended fonts for low vision. Modification of font size used in the Mobility Plus section of the Web site to meet CNIB standards. Other technical accommodations include the use of HTML forms, use of colours, use of language, types and size of font adjustments, use of graphics, page layout and paper width adjustments.
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced vision may not know which bus is arriving at stops.	Informational	Sensory	Bus Operator sensitivity and technical training required including announcements of routes and destinations. Additional details to be included in the performance based contract extension changes now underway. Will also be reviewed as part of the Travel Training program.
TRANSIT: Riders who are blind are not aware that they are at a bus stop.	Informational	Sensory	Staff investigated the possibility of using tactile strips (pattern concrete) and will also investigate how it will apply to stop standard in 2006. Currently considering what detailed information should be included in bus stop data base.
TRANSIT: Maintenance of securement apparatuses on buses.	Policy/Practice	Physical	Completed. Maintenance checks every 5000km are part of the inspection process and is subject to daily audit and/or driver pre-trip inspections.
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Informational	Physical	Standard format for signage indicating accessibility and courtesy seating will be created.

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Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
TRANSIT: Lack of co-ordinated transportation needs among health, and social service agencies and York Region.	Policy/Practice	All	Initial contact work is underway with community agencies to provide improved service coordination, awareness or requirements for eligibility, assist in determining ongoing demand for services, and assist in the development of training and sensitivity requirements.
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Physical	Physical	Process to place priority seating signage on all conventional buses is in progress.
T&W ROADS: Pedestrian countdown signals.	Physical	Physical	29 pedestrian countdown signals were installed at intersections across the region.
T&W ROADS: Larger font street signs.	Physical	Physical	278 street signs were replaced with larger font sizes.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
TRANSIT: Quality of contracted Mobility Plus service.	Physical Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Physical	Development of new performance based contracts is underway. The new contracts are intended to improve the availability and delivery of Mobility Plus service to address growing customer trip demand and the need to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction in an efficient and effective manner.

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Barrier Identification for 2006

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

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Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
YRT Facilities: Field Inventory	Field inspection of bus stops along routes deemed to be accessible routes by YRT Service Planning group.	Q3 2006
YRT Facilities: Prioritization of bus stop construction schedule to improve accessibility	Construct or reconstruct bus stop pads along designated accessible transit routes and other locations as deemed priority.	Q3 - Q4 2006
YRT Marketing and Customer Service: Improved legibility of communication pieces (information materials and Web site) for persons with visual impairments	Review of all materials and improve as necessary (focus groups).	Q4 2006
T & W Roads: Field Assessment of regional roads (ROW)	General field assessment to identify areas in need of accessibility improvements.	Q4 2006
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
YRT Mobility Plus: Improve client access to trip booking system	Installation of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system and live response system to enable Mobility Plus registrants to confirm their trip times, cancel trips and obtain information on Mobility Plus Services. This system will be designed for access by all key pad telephones.	Q4 2005
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
YRT Operations: Accessibility Awareness and Sensitivity Training - (Refresher) for contracted bus operators	Training classes to be conducted by service contractors and monitored by YRT staff.	Q4 2006
YRT Mobility Plus: Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness	Development and introduction of formal Community Outreach program to improve the provision of information and interaction between Mobility Plus and agencies serving persons with disabilities.	Q3 2006
All T&W Staff: Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness	Training for sensitivity and inclusivity.	Q1-Q4

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
Service Planning: Implement Travel Training Program for Conventional Transit.	Physical Informational Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Improved access to conventional transit services to anyone wishing to use the service. Potential cost mitigation for more expensive Mobility Plus services, thus increasing capacity for higher need individuals.
Fleet: Fleet accessibility (%)	Physical, Technological	Persons with mobility impairments will have improved access to conventional transit fleet.
YRT Facilities: Need for accessible bus stop locations as identified in bus stop improvement replacement and expansion program.	Physical - Built environment	Improved access to bus stops for persons with disabilities.
YRT Marketing & Customer Service: Need for improved legibility of information pieces and Web site.	Physical - Visual Communication	Improved legibility for persons with visual impairments. Improved access to information.
T&W Roads: Incorrect height of the pedestrian push button on traffic signal poles.	Physical - Built Environment	At the standard height the pedestrian push button will be accessible to all.
T&W Roads: Lack of hard ground surface for accessibility to the pedestrian push button located on traffic poles.	Physical - Built Environment	With the hard surface in place, pedestrians and persons using wheelchairs will be able to access the push buttons to activate the walk signals more easily.
T&W Roads: Traffic control signals that are not accessible persons with visual impairments.	Physical - Built Environment Technological.	Improve accessibility for people with visual impairments.

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
Designation of accessible routes, customer information program, Travel Training program.	Number of individuals who complete the Travel Training program and/or number of Mobility riders who will be able to use conventional transit services.	Program to be launched summer/fall of 2006.
Fleet replacement program and new bus purchase program. Allocation of accessible buses to designated routes and priority areas across the region.	Percentage of fleet that is accessible (2005 year end will be 69%, 2006 year end anticipated to be 75%).	Fully accessible fleet projected by 2012.
Review of standards. Develop inventory and priority list. Construct concrete pads to standards.	Percentage of accessible bus stops.	2015 for complete system. 200 new and replacement concrete pads per year.
Modification of font size, layout, colour use, etc.	Positive feedback from clients/customers.	Q4 - basis for new standard.
Adjust the push button to the correct height.	Keep record of road sections that the push buttons are at the correct height.	It is anticipated that the pedestrian push buttons on all regional roads will be adjusted to the standard height by 2009.
Contractor will place either asphalt or concrete surface at the base of the pedestrian push button poles to allow easier access.	Fewer complaints about inaccessibility to allow proper activation of walk signal.	It is anticipated that all pedestrian signal poles along regional roads will have a hard surface at the base by 2009.
Install audible traffic control signals.	Positive feedback from CNIB / public.	Five locations are planned for 2006.

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
T&W Roads: Unclear crossing time at intersection.	Physical - Built Environment Technological	Clarify proper use of traffic control signal.
T&W Roads: Street name signs that may be hard to read.	Physical - Built Environment	Improved visibility.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
All T&W Staff	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/ remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region		
Install countdown traffic control signals - improve communication/education to the public.	Positive feedback / fewer complaints.	Countdown signals have been planned for 5 locations and audible signals are planned for another 5 locations in 2006.
Replace existing street name signs at regional road intersections.	Positive feedback / fewer complaints.	Forty street name signs will be replaced with larger font size.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
25% of employees in the T&W Department will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities is raised and staff report having a better understanding of people with disabilities.	2006

9 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

10 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.

11 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.



York Regional Police

Environmental Scan

York Regional Police proudly serves its communities through the efforts of its 1,229 officers and 442 civilian members. We maintain headquarters and support facilities in each of our five police districts, delivering community based policing, investigative and specialized services to both urban and rural communities. The organizational structure includes Operational and Administrative Branches which oversee Uniform, Investigative, Support, Information, Financial, Human Resource, Professional Development and Community Services.

As the region's population continues to grow, there will be pressure on infrastructure and service providers resulting from the expectations of our citizens. As we consider the significant population growth, it is important to remember that persons with disabilities number over 15 percent of our population. They suffer substantial disadvantages and exclusion from the mainstream of society. They face numerous barriers in gaining access to and fully participating in important activities such as jobs, access to information/communication, education at all levels, public transit, and the use of goods, services and facilities that the public usually enjoys. These unfair barriers can be physical, technological, bureaucratic, legal, or attitudinal.

People with disabilities are a part of the diverse composition of the population we serve. The legitimate needs of all persons drive the need for responsive public services that enhance quality of life. Members of York Regional Police understand the importance of inclusion and will continue to develop strategies and programs that facilitate access to policing services.

Our Customers

The customers of York Regional Police include all citizens, businesses and visitors to York Region. Providing quality policing services requires a concerted effort to ensure the protection of all citizens, giving specific attention to vulnerable groups and locations in our communities.

Accessibility Statement

York Regional Police will evaluate accessibility as it relates to persons with disabilities requiring policing services regardless of the event(s) giving rise to 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.



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Policy: Working with deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing at any incident attended by police.	Communicational	Sensory	Continuing to review current capabilities with respect to sign language skills.
Service: Community Alert 'Notification System'.	Communicational Informational	Sensory	Through the use of telecommunications system police are able to communicate with large segments of the population including persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
Practice: Signage at police facilities.	Informational Communicational	Sensory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible parking spaces at Districts have been repainted as required • Barrier-free access has been completed at Mini Police Station at the Community Safety Village • All new structures and some existing structures have also been reconstructed to be "barrier-free" • Sidewalk at Community Safety Village, 3 and 5 Districts made wheelchair accessible (Curb cuts).
Service: Crisis response to incidents involving mental health issues.	Informational Attitudinal	Cognitive	Development and launch of the Mental Health Support Team Program and the development of regional Mental Health Support Team to ensure the needs of persons with mental health disabilities are identified and met.
Service: 9-1-1 services for deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.	Communicational	Sensory	Software allowing each 9-1-1 Police Communicator to remain at their position to answer a TTY was purchased for all districts.

- 1 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
- 2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)
- 3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)
- 4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements 2005

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Service: TTY services for deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing at the individual District locations.	Communicational	Sensory	Software was introduced at individual Districts which allows for direct communication with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government			
Policy: Information collection on pre-printed or electronic forms.	Informational	All	Ongoing review of forms commonly used by the public to convey information to the police.
Practice: Pre-hire testing and interviewing process.	Informational Attitudinal	All	Review conducted of all testing and interviewing guidelines to ensure "best practices" applied to people with disabilities applying for employment.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Policy: Working with traumatized persons or victims of crime.	Communicational	All	Review completed of current policy to ensure it meets all requirements of legislation and medical best practices.
Service: Establishment of a Corporate internal Accessibility and Inclusion Committee.	Informational Attitudinal	All	Internal Accessibility Advisory Committee established to enhance Corporate Awareness of many visible and invisible disabilities that impact our work on a daily basis.

1 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

2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier



Barrier Identification for 2006

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Community Safety Village	In response to YRAAC's request, accessibility audit to be completed involving YRAAC.	Summer 2006
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Workspace audits	Establish and train internal staff group to conduct accessibility audits of workspaces within YRP.	

5 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Continue to make enhancements to accessibility in the Community Safety Village.	Physical	The Safety Village will be more accessible to persons with disabilities.
9-1-1 Services for persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	Communicational	Timely response in an emergency.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information and tools to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.

6 Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

7 Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

8 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2006

Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
The Safety Village will be retrofitted to continue enhancements to accessibility.	The Safety Village will be accessible to more persons with disabilities.	Sept 2006
Communications and District staff will be further trained in the use of the TTY.	Ability to handle TTY calls at every call taker position.	September 2006
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
A target of 10% of staff will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately. Human Resource Staff shall review an initiative to make inclusivity training mandatory for all staff.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2006

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006; 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.