

Summary of Recommended Changes

Comment	Staff Recommendation	AAC Advice
Comments already addressed or that could be added to the final Plan		
<p>1. Overall Advice on the Region's Plan That the Plan include a public education component to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - begin to change public attitudes towards people with disabilities - explain areas of provincial, regional and municipal jurisdiction - promote existing programs and services for people with disabilities 	<p>Education to change public attitudes is a shared responsibility and the Region will continue to work with its partners. As such, it is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Plan include a clear description of the areas of regional and local municipal jurisdiction. - the Region's Plan be made widely available across the Region to begin to change attitudes and promote existing Regional programs and services for people with disabilities. 	<p>That the Plan also includes a clear description of the areas of provincial, as well as, regional and local municipal jurisdiction.</p>
<p>2. Overall Advice on the Region's Plan That the Region develop a better understanding of the needs of people with different types of disabilities</p>	<p>The primary focus of the Region's first Plan will be to identify barriers to accessibility. Through the identification of barriers, a better understanding of the needs of people with different types of disabilities will be developed that will be used to inform the development of future accessibility plans.</p>	<p>The Plan also includes the development of diversity training and a sensitivity workshop. This should be used as an opportunity to educate Regional staff and the York Region AAC about the needs of people with different types of disabilities.</p>
<p>3. Community Services and Housing People with disabilities often have low incomes and are spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing, which affects the quality of their lives. They need access to affordable housing – the Region should address the need for affordable housing (to avoid long waiting lists now) to promote independence and life with dignity and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that wheelchair accessible housing units are occupied by people 	<p>The Region is looking at all housing issues through an accessibility lens that considers the needs of persons with a range of disabilities. Community Services & Housing is developing strategies and proposals related to the concerns identified at the public consultation on the Accessibility Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examining a variety of modifications in our social housing portfolio to meet the needs of persons with a range of disabilities. For example, the Region is 	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>who need these units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate allowing the development of basement apartments - Provide specialized housing for people with different types of disabilities e.g., people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing - Examine the need for visual alarms 	<p>currently working with the Canadian Hearing Society to identify modifications such as visual alarms that would meet the needs of persons who are deaf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing specialized housing for people with different types of disabilities. ▪ Investigating complaints to Community Services & Housing of non-compliance with the <i>Social Housing Reform Act</i> (2000) such as concerns about whether wheelchair accessible housing units are occupied by people who need them. <p>While the regulation of basement apartments lies within local municipal jurisdiction, the Region will continue to work with local municipalities on this and other housing issues as appropriate.</p>	
<p>4. Corporate Communications Services That the review of the Region's website includes more auditory features to make the website more accessible.</p>	<p>Included in the Plan as part of the continuous improvement of the Region's website to all audiences</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>5. Corporate Communications Services That all Regional reports/information should be in plain language</p>	<p>A planned corporate initiative is the production of a plain language guide and inclusion in management communications training</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>6. Corporate Services The review of the Region's recruitment process should also examine how to provide accessible employment services or an employment consultant that will allow people who are deaf to communicate in their first language and help them find work.</p>	<p>The Region is willing to explore any requirements from a job interview perspective to meet the needs of any person who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. The Plan already includes research into providing a TTY line in Human Resource Services (which will hopefully be compatible with the Career Line). This line will be available to employees</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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	<p>and external candidates who are to be interviewed. The TTY line would also be available for telephone interviews. Arrangements can also be made to have a language interpreter attend an interview if the request is made in advance.</p>	
<p>7. Corporate Services That the pilot diversity training and sensitivity workshop included in the Plan includes training to meet the needs of all types of disabilities (physical, cognitive, sensory, other) to remove attitudinal barriers</p>	<p>Work is underway to have a pilot training program ready in the fall of 2003. AAC members will be invited to attend and provide feedback to ensure that the training meets a range of needs. Mandatory training will then be offered to all existing and future employees.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>8. Corporate Services The review of all aspects of building accessibility for Regional facilities should include an examination of the need for uniformity and standards for accessibility in all Regional buildings.</p> <p>The standards could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear guidelines about what is wheelchair accessible (including the height of service counters), - automatic door openers (ensure that the time open is appropriate), - appropriately placed handrails and dispensers, - mirrors in winding hallways and at hallway junctions (to avoid colliding with people coming the other way) - stronger colour contrasts can help make services more accessible for people with visual impairments - the need for visual alarms - greater stratification of disabled parking to allow for both wheelchair accessibility and 	<p>The Pilot Study to be carried out on the Regional Administrative Centre will analyze existing barriers, as well as develop criteria and guidelines that could be uniformly utilized at all Regionally staffed facilities. The specific comments provided will certainly be considered as part of this Study.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>people who need accessible cars and other people with disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better monitoring of use of parking spaces for people with disabilities. 		
<p>9. Corporate Services That in considering accessibility to Council and Committee meetings, also consider making modifications that would make meetings more accessible for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better lighting for speakers' podiums to facilitate lip reading consistent use of sound systems greater use of interpreters notetakers closed captioning 	<p>The following activities will be added to the Plan for 2004:</p> <p>A review regarding the feasibility of acquiring and installing portable lighting.</p> <p>Determine the need for sign language interpreters at Council and Committee meetings based on input from specific customers. Research will include the use of interpreters by other government agencies.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>10. Corporate Services That the Region investigate using professional sign language interpreters in the courts to avoid misinterpretations or misunderstandings for people who are deaf</p>	<p>The Region will continue to use the interpreter list provided by the Ministry of the Attorney General covering all languages including sign language to provide interpretation services in court.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>11. Health Services That the Plan include investigating the need for visual alarms in long-term care facilities</p>	<p>The Plan be changed to include a review of the feasibility/practicality of visual alarms at the Regional Long-Term Care facilities (Maple Health Centre and Newmarket Health Centre).</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>12. Transportation and Works The Plan should ensure that sidewalks in the Region are checked for uneven grades and curb cuts. Also include examining/adding curb cuts in medians to make it easier for people with disabilities to cross the road where there are medians.</p>	<p>Curb cuts are already included in the Plan. The Region will work with local municipalities to inform them of any complaints and rectify the problems. The Region will cut back the raised median if it is encroaching into the crosswalk.</p>	<p>That the Plan include investigating the development of a Region-wide standard for curb cuts to be shared with local municipalities.</p> <p>Note staff response: The Plan will be amended to include that Transportation and Works Department will forward the modified drawing to all nine local municipalities for their consideration.</p>
<p>13. York Region Transit A number of comments were made regarding York Region Transit Mobility Plus Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ways to speed up the time it takes to process applications for Mobility Plus - Providing more information about the appeal process so that people know who to contact if they have been rejected - A review of the eligibility criteria for Mobility Plus to ensure that people with cognitive and sensory disabilities have access to Mobility Transit - Ways to improve the transit connections/continuity inside the Region and with the TTC - Consider making the service more flexible and giving riders more influence over the route the driver takes - Investigate issues such as ramps that are too steep; safety issues with equipment on some vans, including visual alarms - Review fare structure so that privately operated taxis do not charge more than regular fares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend that Plan be modified to reduce application process cycle time to 10 business days. - Recommend that Plan be modified to include the development of an appeal process. - The Plan already contains a recommendation to present the existing eligibility criteria and the review process to the AAC. - The Plan already identified customer ease of travelling across Regional boundaries as an issue to be addressed. No change to the Plan is necessary. - Passengers can suggest alternate routes to drivers. No change to Plan is necessary. - The Plan already identified maintenance of ramps as a barrier. No change to the Plan is necessary. - Taxis operating under contract to YRT are not permitted to charge higher than regular fares. No change to Plan is necessary. 	<p>Move to Item #14</p> <p>The initiatives worded as, "Recommend no change to the Plan" should be changed to, "No change to the Plan is necessary".</p> <p>-Comment regarding privately operated taxis should be moved to the List of items "Outside the Region's Scope and Mandate"</p>

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<p>14. York Region Transit That the Plan include the development of consistent mobility transit policies, guidelines and procedures (including procedures to ensure that the needs of children with developmental disabilities are always met).</p>	<p>The Plan already contains a recommendation to present the existing eligibility criteria and the review process to the AAC.</p>	<p>Revise staff recommendation to:</p> <p>The Plan will be clarified to state that a complete review of the Mobility Plus eligibility criteria will be undertaken in conjunction with the AAC to review all aspects of the criteria including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The needs of people with cognitive and sensory disabilities, - Fare policies for attendants and family members travelling with people with disabilities
<p>15. York Region Transit That the Plan include providing sensitivity training to ensure that all drivers are sensitive to the needs of the disabled (including people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing)</p>	<p>Driver sensitivity training is an initiative identified in the Plan. Specific training for dealing with persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing will also be included.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>16. York Regional Police That the Plan includes sensitivity training for front-line staff regarding the needs of people with different types of disabilities (including people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing)</p>	<p>This recommendation is already included as part of the Plan.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>17. York Regional Police Investigate using professional sign-language interpreters to avoid misinterpretations and misunderstandings</p>	<p>This recommendation is already included as part of the Plan.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>Comments to be addressed in future Accessibility Plans</p>		
<p>1. Overall Advice The need for an Advocate Office or phone line (call centre) that people with disabilities can contact to get free assistance about the programs and services available and how to cut through the red tape</p>	<p>To be considered in the development of future accessibility plans.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>2. Community Services and Housing That the Region and the Plan investigate ways to provide people with disabilities more opportunity to participate in education and employment opportunities, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People with disabilities need access to computers and specialized computer training (including financial assistance for low income families) - Computer courses should be held in barrier-free buildings 	<p>The Region will continue to provide financial assistance to OW participants requiring the purchase of training to support their return-to-work-action-plan.</p> <p>Community Services and Housing will develop a plan for the purchase of accessible computers and workstations for placement in each Ontario Works Area Office and in the Employment Resource Centres. Pending approval of the 2004 Regional Budget, pilot one accessible workstation in late 2004. Full implementation may be included as a barrier removal activity in a future Accessibility Plan based on the outcome of the pilot.</p> <p>A survey of training organizations to identify those who offer training courses in a barrier free environment will be included in a future Accessibility Plan as a barrier identification activity.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>3. Corporate Services That in considering accessibility to Council and Committee meetings, also consider making modifications that would make meetings more accessible for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> better lighting for speakers' podiums to facilitate lip reading consistent use of sound systems greater use of interpreters notetakers closed captioning 	<p>Activities to be considered in future plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brief user guide for use of Regional audio visual systems in future years - Determine feasibility with cable TV providers if Regional meetings are televised in the future (2004-2008) 	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>4. Health Services The Region should have an office or department where people with disabilities can get equipment, such as scooters and other assistive devices</p>	<p>This function is currently undertaken by numerous health care agencies in the community.</p> <p>Could be considered within future plans in the context of the Region's operations for specific Regional buildings beginning with a needs assessment.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>5. York Region Transit The need for greater TTY accessibility in transit stations</p>	<p>It is recommended that this item be considered in conjunction with the AAC in the development of a future accessibility plan.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>Comments not recommended for inclusion in the Plan</p>		
<p>1. Corporate Services The review of the Region's recruitment process should include identifying ways to provide more complete information about job opportunities with York Region. Currently only some job opening are posted on the Careers page</p>	<p>The current process should remain the same. As a unionized employer, it is our responsibility that all of our employees have access to the vacant positions first, before external applicants are considered. Positions are only posted externally if they cannot be filled by internal employees. All of the vacant positions are posted on the 24-Hour Career Line, for the public and our employees to access.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>
<p>2. Planning and Development Services That the Plan include a section on how the Region will include the goal of ensuring that its residents will have the opportunity to play through fully accessible sport, recreation and leisure opportunities (Vision 2026 Goal statement - Quality Communities for a Diverse Population)</p>	<p>This comment will be examined in future reviews of Vision 2026, the Region's long-term strategic plan.</p>	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

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<p>3. York Region Transit A number of comments were made regarding York Region Transit Mobility Plus Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency of transit services -- particularly peak hours and rush hours - Ways to address the lack of a guaranteed arrival time - Ways to improve the 48 hours currently required to book a trip – lack of opportunity for spontaneity and inability of the system to respond to emergency situations - Ways that the capacity of the system can keep up with the demand - Expanding evening access by making better use of transit stock 	<p>The following items are not recommended for the Plan because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current peak period frequencies are meeting demand for both conventional and specialized transit services. - Currently customers are provided with a 30-minute pick-up “window.” - Although 48 hours is requested, same day trip requests are accommodated on a “as available” basis. 48 hours is required to enable schedules to be prepared. - Although current demand is generally being met; additional resources will be required to meet growth in demand. - Current evening demand is being met 	<p>Endorse without additional comment</p>

August 26, 2003