
DATE: September 11, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **2009 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

FROM: Norma Trim, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the seventh annual Region of Peel Accessibility Plan, prepared in consultation with the Accessibility Planning Steering Committee (Steering Committee) and the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- As required by the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) the Region of Peel has prepared its seventh annual Accessibility Plan titled "Accessibility Plan – September 2009".
- The overall goal of the 2009 Plan is to ensure that an accessibility component is incorporated into the corporate planning processes of each department.
- Sponsoring departments were assigned to 12 key projects and the outcomes of these twelve key projects is incorporated in the 2009 Accessibility Plan attached as Appendix I to the subject report.
- The 2009 Accessibility Plan is a compilation of accessibility accomplishments submitted by Regional departments.
- The Plan will be available electronically on the Region of Peel website, printed in hard copy, on DVD and other accessible formats as required.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Province of Ontario proclaimed the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) on September 30, 2002 which requires that accessibility plans be prepared annually by all provincial ministries, municipalities, school boards, hospitals and public transportation organizations to address barriers in by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services.

Regional Council has approved the previous six Accessibility Plans, which were developed using the information submitted by the departments and accessibility gaps and disability trends identified by the Accessibility Advisory Committee members, the Accessibility Plan Steering Committee and the Accessibility Planning Program staff. Similar to previous years' plans our seventh Accessibility Plan for the Region has been prepared using the information collected from Regional departments by the Region of Peel Accessibility Planning Program and has been presented to the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Planning Steering Committee.

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The 2009 Region of Peel Accessibility Plan has been developed by highlighting the progress of key accessibility projects since the last Plan was developed and the key accessibility initiatives that took place in the region between July 2008 and June 2009.

The 2009 Accessibility Plan reflects the continued dedication of the Region of Peel to meeting the commitments made to contribute to creating receptive, accessible Regional programs and services, and a workplace that ensures full participation of individuals with disabilities.

2. Consultations

The 2009 Accessibility Plan was developed in consultation with the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee. The draft plan was circulated to members in early September and presented at the September 22, 2009 AAC meeting.

3. The Accessibility Plan as the Accessibility Program Planning Process

The 2009 Accessibility Plan includes information on services, clients/customers, significant accomplishments to date, mandate, objectives and actions.

The four key strategic objectives within the Plan are:

1. To build the capacity of all staff to be aware of, and sensitive to, accessibility issues and barriers, and to support efforts to improve accessibility;
2. To develop and strengthen organizational processes that will support accessibility;
3. To review and develop policies to ensure prevention and removal of accessibility barriers; and
4. To build public awareness and advocate for accessibility of programs and services.

The seventh Plan represents the ongoing process of ensuring the programs and services of the Region of Peel become more accessible for individuals with disabilities. As an organization strongly committed to integrated processes, the Region of Peel will continue its efforts to identify and remove existing barriers while laying the foundation for the prevention of future barriers.

CONCLUSION

Upon receiving Council approval of the 2009 Accessibility Plan, the Plan will be reported to the Minister of Community and Social Services responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the ODA and AODA. The insight and expertise of the AAC members and the Accessibility Planning Steering Committee have strengthened the Plan, enforced a strategic focus and provided a solid foundation for addressing accessibility for persons with disabilities within the programs and services delivered by the Region of Peel.

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Approved for Submission:



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