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DATE: November 10, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - DECEMBER 3, 2009**

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

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That December 3, 2009 be proclaimed “International Day of Persons with Disabilities” in the Regional Municipality of Peel;**

**And further, that members of the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) be commended for their dedication and commitment to improving accessibility for persons with disabilities.**

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The United Nations proclaimed International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) will be observed throughout the world on December 3, 2009.
- The 2009 United Nations theme for IDPD is “Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for All: Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Their Communities around the World”.
- The theme for the 2009 Region of Peel event is promoting “Positive Images of Disabilities”.
- Since 2004, the Region of Peel has been observing this day annually to show its support to Peel citizens and Regional staff with disabilities.
- The focus of the 2009 event is to educate community members through a series of presentations and a roundtable discussion to engage all participants in accessibility planning within Peel Region.
- The 2009 IDPD event is a collaborative partnership between the Accessibility Planning Program and the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **1. Background**

The annual declaration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), on December 3, 2009, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. The United Nations theme for 2009 is “Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for All: Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Their Communities around the World”. The annual event seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities into every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme is based on the

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goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities, established by the World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons adopted by the General Assembly in 1982.

In past years, the IDPD has been commemorated by the Region of Peel through organizing various activities aimed at raising awareness among the community at large, regarding accessible housing initiatives, strategies to enhance employment of persons with disabilities, accessible information technology, and attitudinal barriers that persons with disabilities continue to face. The AAC and the Accessibility Planning Program led a number of educational initiatives aimed at increasing staff awareness by sharing disability facts and trends through quizzes, panel discussions and by inviting expert speakers to share information on specific accessibility areas.

### **2. Raising Regional Staff Awareness of Accessibility**

Proclamation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is an excellent opportunity for Regional Council to reflect on current accessibility initiatives taking place in Peel and focus on what we can do to ensure an inclusive and barrier-free community for our residents.

The Region of Peel AAC and Accessibility Planning Program is organizing an event on Wednesday, December 2, 2009 to commemorate the 2009 International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Peel.

The program for the event includes recognizing recipients of Peel Region Annual Accessibility Awards, an overview of key accessibility initiatives, and thought-provoking roundtable discussions that will engage participants in accessibility planning issues.

Karlene Nations, CTV Diversity Reporter, will be the Master of Ceremonies. Speakers of the day include:

- Madeleine Meilleur – Minister of Community and Social Services
- Michelle Amerie – Artist, sculptor, painter, photographer and writer
- Jeff Preston – Aspiring Community Advocate and Motivational Speaker

The Minister of Community and Social Services Madeleine Meilleur will provide an update on progress made towards a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. Our inspirational speakers will share their stories, experiences and accomplishments. The overview and accomplishments of the Region of Peel Accessibility Planning Program and the Accessible Transportation Program will also be shared.

A trade show is also planned to showcase accomplishments of service organizations working in Peel to support persons with disabilities, accessibility accomplishments of our three local municipalities and accomplishments of Regional programs.

### **CONCLUSION**

Proclamation of December 3, 2009, as International Day of Persons with Disabilities offers an opportunity to acknowledge Regional diversity, engage the community, foster attitudinal change, and eliminate barriers to full participation by persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.

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Norma Trim  
Chief Financial Officer  
and Commissioner of Corporate Services

**Approved for Submission:**



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D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

 For further information regarding this report, please contact Jeff Payne, Acting Director and Deputy Regional Clerk at extension 4325 or via email at [jeff.payne@peelregion.ca](mailto:jeff.payne@peelregion.ca)

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c. Legislative Services

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**APPENDIX I**

# Proclamation

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**December 3, 2009**

**WHEREAS** the Region of Peel and other Organizations representing persons with disabilities and various levels of government across the country are recognizing December 3, 2009 as United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons;

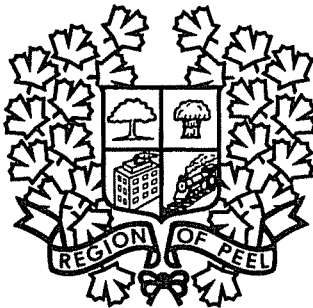
**AND WHEREAS**, the disabled community in Canada exceeds 14 per cent of our population;

**AND WHEREAS**, persons with disabilities contribute to our community, as entrepreneurs, decision-makers, employees, musicians, artists, volunteers, parents, grandparents;

**AND WHEREAS**, recognition of this day calls attention to the ability and willingness of persons with disabilities to contribute to Canada's economic, political and social communities, including the important work of the members of the Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC);

**AND WHEREAS**, for many among us, our future depends on the success of creating communities and recognizing the efforts put forward by individuals with disabilities;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, THAT December 3, 2009 be proclaimed "INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



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**Emil Kolb**  
**Regional Chair**