

Region of Peel: Liveable Peel Initiative

Appendix VI
2006 Accessibility Plan

The Liveable Peel initiative was created to help the Region of Peel plan for growth 30 to 50 years into the future. Peel Region is currently facing significant growth pressures, an ageing population and an increasingly diverse community fuelled by strong immigration. The Region is currently examining these and other trends into the future and determining their potential implications for Regional programs and services, in order to ensure that Peel residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life over the long-term. An important aspect of ensuring a high quality of life in Peel is providing human services that meet the diverse needs of the population; therefore trends concerning the increasing senior population and increasing population of persons with disabilities are important considerations for Liveable Peel.

In order to move forward on this important corporate initiative, in November 2004 the Region developed a Service Strategy Business Plan (SSBP) to further define and scope the Liveable Peel initiative. The SSBP process resulted in a Liveable Peel mandate that, “the Region of Peel will ensure that future generations are able to live, work and travel in an inclusive and prosperous community.” The following objectives were also developed:

1. To manage the impacts of growth and affect change through Regional initiatives and partnerships.
2. To achieve a sustainable land use and transportation system.
3. To balance the demands of social, economic, environmental and cultural interests.
4. To increase recognition and support of long-term planning.
5. To capitalize on community capacity and stakeholder involvement.

It must be noted that the above objectives attempt to address a range of impacts that affect the Region such as environmental impacts, human service needs, including accessibility issues, growth implications, importance of community engagement, etc. The Region recognizes the needs of vulnerable populations (such as the seniors, persons with disabilities, immigrant needs and others) and Liveable Peel aims to address these needs into the future.



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Liveable Peel is an important initiative for the Region's Executive Management Team (EMT), which has established an internal Liveable Peel Steering Committee made up of senior staff from across the Corporation. In August 2006, the committee established a number of preliminary priority key project areas: immigration, determinants of health, housing, and impacts of growth on watersheds. These project areas are subject to refinement and need to be assessed in terms of resources required to undertake studies in these areas.

In terms of immigration, Regional staff is examining immigration and related labour force issues. Studies indicate that programs and services need to evolve to become more accessible to immigrants, foreign credentials need to be recognized by employers, the aging immigrant needs must be ascertained and addressed, and that the current housing supply must adapt to suit larger household size, which immigrants bring to our community.

Specifically in terms of housing, the Region of Peel is experiencing many challenges to meet the housing needs of our population due to rapid population growth, significant immigration, and changing socio-economic and demographic conditions. Regional staff is working together on a Housing Strategy to identify housing issues and to provide a full range of affordable and accessible housing for current and future residents.

A review of social determinants of health to identify unmet health needs and implications indicates that factors such as income and employment, the surrounding environment, age, safety, weight, level of activity and personal health practices help or hinder a population's chances of good health.

Regional staff is also assessing the impacts of growth on the watershed to 2051. The Credit River's water quality in Peel is forecasted to decline if "business-as-usual" development practices continue. This presents challenges for all watershed partners, including the Region, to develop new approaches to ensure that watersheds are healthy in the future.



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In addition to the above, consultation on a vision for Peel over the long-term will be obtained through engaging stakeholders during the Strategic Plan process. Each of the project areas determined by the committee will include a communication and consultation component.

In conclusion, the Liveable Peel initiative and its associated projects are mindful of the needs and concerns of the aging population and persons with disabilities. As such Liveable Peel projects such as housing, immigration, social determinants and environment, as well as consultation and communication will include components on accessibility, participation, engagement in order to understand and address barriers facing the residents of Peel over the long-term.