



Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and Service Strategy Business Planning Requirements

Appendix I
2006 Accessibility Plan

This section will provide readers with detailed information of Regional accessibility initiatives by listing activities which have taken place since the development of the third Accessibility Plan. The second and third Plans were developed by identifying four main objectives to achieve the Regional goal of creating a receptive and accessible community, which will ensure full participation of persons with disabilities according to the obligations set out by the provincial disability legislations the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. The following initiatives fully support the four objectives outlined in the second, third and fourth Regional Accessibility Plans.

Objective #1: To develop ability of all Regional staff to effectively and proactively identify and address accessibility barriers.

- Prepared a Pathways story for the International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) for Regional employees to disseminate information related to the IDDP and to seek nominations from all staff by identifying significant accessibility improvements achieved by their peers. Nominations received were compiled and forwarded to the members of the AAC for their consideration.
- On December 2, 2005, the Accessibility Planning Office successfully organized the 2nd Regional IDDP, sponsored by the Housing and Property Department; proclaimed by Regional Council and supported by the AAC and the IDDP organizing committee.
- Activities of the day included a message from the Acting CAO; the sponsoring Commissioner; a presentation entitled “**Depression: Beyond the Secrecy and the Shame**” given by Karen Liberman of the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario; experiential learning stations to learn about mobility and learning disabilities, displays by the accessibility Planning Program, TransHelp and the Canadian



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Mortgage and Housing Corporation; video presentation; web-casting of the event for employees in satellite offices and distribution of the annual accessibility awards.

- Approximately 143 staff participated in the event. Survey feedback received from the participants strongly supported the focus of raising awareness about invisible disabilities. Survey results indicated that future events should focus on hearing or vision disabilities or workplace accommodations.
- During the 2nd Annual Accessibility Awards Presentation, the AAC distributed four Certificates of Achievement and five Letters of Appreciation to recognize efforts of Regional staff and departments for improving accessibility of Regional programs, services, projects and facilities.
- Throughout the year, the Accessibility Planning Specialist continued to follow up with departmental coordinators from all nine departments regarding the status of barriers submitted through the Barrier Identification and Tracking Tool (BITT). The Accessibility Planning Specialist continued to meet with Communication Services staff to discuss strategies on how to increase awareness of BITT amongst Regional employees.
- As requested by the members of the BITT departmental coordinators team, the Accessibility Planning Specialist organized four meetings to assist them in planning for the removal of barriers identified by Regional staff and to provide guidance to departmental coordinators.
- Scheduled meetings with staff from People, Information and Technology, Health and Finance to explore partnership opportunities to conduct disability education sessions for Regional staff.
- Two Series of six Lunch and Learn sessions were scheduled for Regional staff, in partnership with the Health department, the Accessibility Planning Program and the Joint Peel-Caledon



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Accessibility Advisory Committee. The first series was held in June, 2006, and attracted 57 attendees. Three sessions organized in August, 2006 were aimed at improving staff understanding of how to prepare universal accessible information resources for clients and co-workers with disabilities. Each participant received a resource package, hands on experience in creating accessible resources and a certificate of completion. The last series will be presented early in 2007. Evaluation summaries for each session are being prepared and will be shared with Senior Management, AAC and other stakeholders.

Objective #2: To improve accessibility of Regional programs, services and facilities.

- A new Accessible Transportation Coordination Office is being created that will have three primary functions:
 - Gateway to direct users to appropriate services and screen applicants
 - Support to transit, including TransHelp, to optimize access and use
 - Brokerage to assist community service agencies by providing additional support for all high needs passengers with disabilities; and providing health and social transportation that cannot be covered by local transit or TransHelp.
- The Accessible Transportation Coordination Specialist organized four focus groups with Community Living and Erinoak clients to determine the transportation needs and wants of specific groups of people with disabilities (who are not eligible for TransHelp) and to identify the special and unique training needs of youth who will become the next generation of accessible transit consumers.



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- A subcommittee of AAC members was created to ensure that the 2007 Peel Children Water Festival event location and activities will be inclusive and accessible for attendees with various disabilities. An audit of this year's event was conducted by the subcommittee members and feedback from this audit is currently being collected. Members of Regional staff and the AAC subcommittee will meet in July to review the recommendations received and start developing an implementation plan.
- As project sponsor of the Accessibility Planning Program, R. Kent Gillespie, Commissioner of Corporate Services is currently seeking resources to implement various components of the Executive Management Team approved new governing structure for Regional Accessibility Planning SSBP.
- The Commissioner of Corporate Services and the Director of Strategic Initiatives conducted a consultation session to gather members' input and comments related to the Regional Accessibility Plan and other accessibility initiatives.
- AAC members and the Accessibility Planning Specialist met with the John Street Senior's Residence project team to review their design concept and provide accessibility recommendations.
- Collaborated with the Housing and Property department and the members of AAC to review and improve existing emergency evacuation procedures to ensure safe exit of both, staff and volunteers with various disabilities from regional headquarters.
- AAC members reviewed site plan and provided accessibility recommendations and a letter of endorsement supporting 10 Peel Centre Expansion Project.
- AAC members met with the architecture and project team to review various design options proposed to re-construct the front ramp at 10 Peel Centre Drive. Design was approved and endorsed by the members of AAC. Construction of the ramp is currently underway.

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Objective #3: To address policy issues and optimize advocacy efforts.

- Vice-chair of the AAC and the Accessibility Planning Specialist participated in the “Accessibility Advisory Committee Continuing Education” workshop organized by the City of Kitchener and Region of Waterloo to gain first hand knowledge of systemic and attitudinal gaps experienced by organizations servicing people with invisible disabilities as well as to network with other municipal staff and Accessibility Advisory Committees within the province of Ontario.
- Accessibility Planning Specialist also participated in a one day conference titled “Implications of International Disability Policies” where a number of speakers highlighted the key points of the draft United Nations Convention now officially known as the “International Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities” (ICRPD), which is currently in its final stages of review by UN members countries including in depth discussions as to how such a convention would impact existing legislations, public policy, disability rights and accessibility initiatives within various global communities including Canada.
- Joint Peel-Caledon Accessibility Advisory Committee will be hosting a joint AAC meeting with area municipalities in early 2007. The topic proposed for the meeting is “Housing”.
- Vice-chair of the AAC participated in the 2006 Liveable Peel Conference to receive first hand knowledge of Regional planning process to address the issues of the growing number of senior’s and persons with disabilities population in the Region of Peel and the Regional strategy to enhance accessibility and sustainability of its programs and services while meeting the future needs of Peel citizens.



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- The Accessibility Planning Specialist reviewed a draft of the customer services standards developed by the Provincial Accessibility Advisory Committee and provided input for their consideration.
- The Accessible Transportation Specialist began discussions with the Brampton and Mississauga Transit and the Region of Peel TransHelp to develop a broad communication strategy promoting conventional transit as a viable option for many people with disabilities, who may not be eligible for TransHelp service.

Objective #4: To build public awareness and knowledge of accessibility issues.

- The Accessibility Planning Specialist participated in the “Deaf for a Day” event hosted by the Canadian Hearing Society of Mississauga along with two Councillors from the Town of Milton to raise public awareness of issues impacting citizens of Peel who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- The Region of Peel launched a pilot project named “Transportation Training Institute Office” in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC).