



# YORK REGION ACCESSIBILITY STATUS REPORT 2019

## CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE YORK REGION

An update on actions by York Region and York Regional Police to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities and implement the *York Region 2015 – 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*



# Table of Contents

The York Region Accessibility Status Report 2019 ..... 1

Accessibility Planning Includes Both Legislated and Non-Legislated Actions ..... 3

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee ..... 5

Let Us Know What You Think ..... 8

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Please email [aoda@york.ca](mailto:aoda@york.ca) or call 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72149 or TTY: 1-866-512-6228  
(for deaf or hard of hearing)

## The York Region Accessibility Status Report 2019

York Region and York Regional Police are committed to creating programs, services and facilities that people of all abilities can enjoy. Accessibility not only helps people with disabilities, it benefits everyone. Creating welcoming and inclusive communities where every person who lives, works or visits can participate makes good sense for all of us.

Accessibility planning supports the Region's vision of strong, caring, safe communities. This report highlights what we have

accomplished since the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) became law and the actions to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities. It also provides an update on actions taken to implement the Region's *2015 to 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*.

An Accessibility Status Report is prepared and posted every year. To review the Plan and previous Status Reports visit [york.ca/accessibility](http://york.ca/accessibility)

### Doing More to Create Accessible Communities in 2019

York Region and York Regional Police continue to implement "beyond compliance" actions to ensure services, programs and facilities are accessible for everyone. This report highlights some of them.

## Statement of Organizational Commitment

"The Regional Municipality of York is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely and proactive manner and will use reasonable efforts to provide equitable access to Regional programs, goods, services and facilities in a way that respects a person's dignity and independence."

Source: York Region Accessibility Policy 2017

# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2019

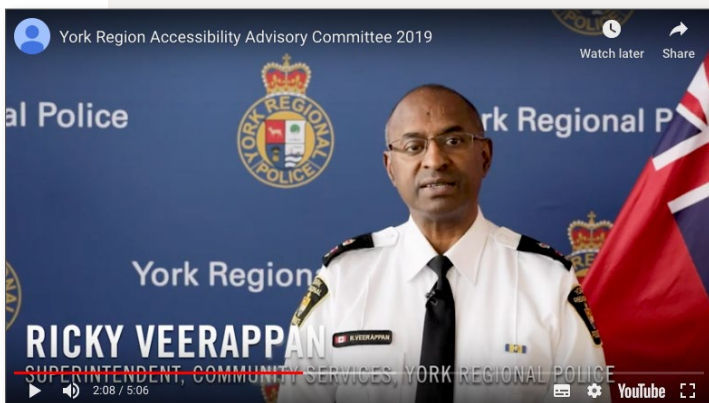
## INCLUSION CHARTER FOR YORK REGION

As of 2019, all 20 community partners of York Region's Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group have endorsed the Inclusion Charter, including York Region and York Regional Police. This group includes municipalities, police services, hospitals, school boards, conservation authorities, community agencies and the United Way Greater Toronto and was formed to develop an inclusion charter for York Region. By endorsing the Charter, organizations affirm a commitment to welcoming and inclusive communities, including access for people of all abilities. For more information, visit [york.ca/inclusiveYR](http://york.ca/inclusiveYR)



## CELEBRATING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR REGION

York Region recognizes significant accessibility, faith and cultural dates throughout the year on our corporate social media channels. This allows us to celebrate the diversity of our Region while helping to raise awareness around the unique needs and traditions of our residents.



## NATIONAL ACCESSABILITY WEEK

For 2019 National AccessAbility Week, York Region placed a spotlight on the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee. A video was created to raise staff awareness about the important role the Committee plays in advising York Region and York Regional Police on accessibility actions.



## Accessibility Planning Includes Both Legislated and Non-Legislated Actions

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) requires organizations to meet standards of accessibility in the areas of information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service.

The AODA is ongoing legislation. This at-a-glance summary shows AODA requirements that are completed and continue to be part of York Region and York Regional Police day-to-day operations:

- ✓ Accessible customer service
- ✓ Accessibility policies
- ✓ Accessible purchases
- ✓ Emergency response plans for employees
- ✓ Transportation standards
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Accessible feedback
- ✓ New websites to World Wide Consortium Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Level A
- ✓ Employment standards
- ✓ Accessible formats and communication supports
- ✓ Design of public spaces standards
- ✓ Compliance monitoring and reporting

### Actions in Progress

**Websites and web content:** Under the AODA, all obligated organization websites must meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA\* by January 1, 2021.

York Region and York Regional Police have implemented a strategy to ensure all websites – both new and existing sites – owned and maintained by York Region meet this important requirement by the 2021 deadline. Results will be posted in the 2020 Accessibility Status Report.

\*Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 defines how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities. Accessibility involves a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning and neurological disabilities.

# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2019



## ACCESSIBLE TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION

York Region maintains three accessible trails in the York Regional Forest. In 2019, the Hollidge Tract was reconstructed to incorporate all design features of the *Accessibility Design Guidelines for York Regional Forest Trails*. The newly reconstructed trail ensures the natural beauty and health benefits of the York Regional Forest will continue to be accessible to all visitors for years to come.

## HEALTHY COMMUNITIES START WITH KIDS

York Region is responsible for planning, overseeing and managing the system of services for children 12 years of age and under. The *2020 to 2023 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan* is the community blueprint to offer high-quality services that are accessible, affordable, responsive and welcoming to all York Region children and families, including children with special needs.



## ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING REFRESH

A refresh of York Region's accessibility training module is in progress. The module explains the principles of accessibility and describes actions the Region is taking to meet the requirements of the AODA. It also highlights the role of Ontario's Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities and is mandatory for employees, volunteers and contractors who serve the public on our behalf.

### Training on the importance of accessibility and implementing the AODA

AODA requires:

- ✓ Accessible Customer Service Training
- ✓ Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and Human Rights Code Training
- Applies to employees, volunteers and suppliers



## The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) advises York Regional Council and York Regional Police on what can be done to make it easier for people with disabilities to use the Region's programs and services. Members come from different backgrounds and most are people with disabilities. Meetings are open to the public and are held at the York Region Administrative Centre. Visit [york.ca](http://york.ca) to see upcoming meeting dates and times.

In 2019, York Regional Council appointed twelve citizen members to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee for the 2019-2022 committee term.

### Members of the 2019-2022 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee



**Front row (left to right):** Scott Wollin, David Hingsburger, Astley Dennis

**Middle row (left to right):** Vito Spatafora, Laurie Fortnum, Town of Newmarket Regional Councillor Tom Vegh, Lindsey Gold, Barry Martin, Joann Simmons (Vice-Chair), City of Markham Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Don Hamilton (Chair)

**Back row (left to right):** Angelo Tocco, Cheryl Davies, Kirsten Hill

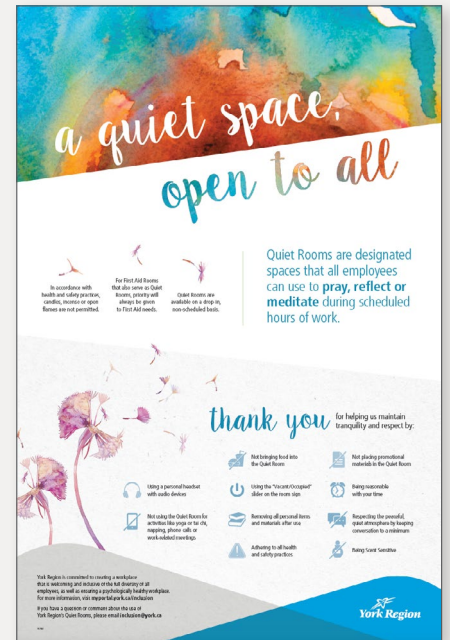
**Not pictured:** York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson (Ex-Officio), Sandy Palombo



# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2019

## QUIET ROOMS

York Region established quiet rooms in thirteen Regional buildings in 2019. A Quiet Room is a designated space in the workplace reserved for prayer, reflection and meditation and is available to all employees during work hours. These rooms support York Region’s corporate commitment to supporting good mental health and an inclusive work environment for everyone.

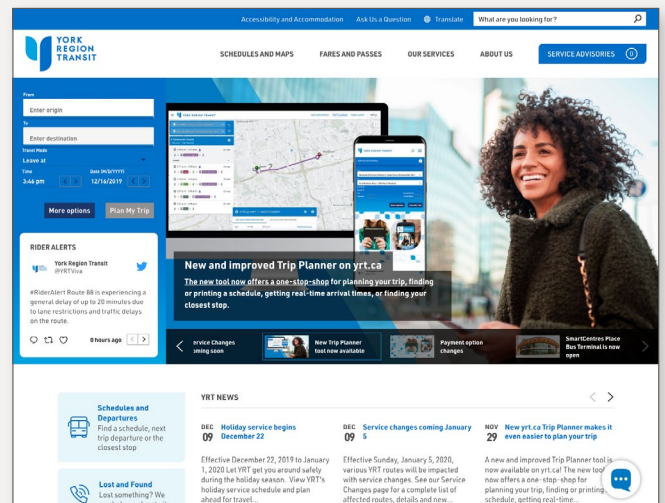


## YORK REGIONAL POLICE INCLUSION STRATEGY

York Regional Police is in the process of developing an ongoing strategy to promote equity, inclusion and diversity across the organization and at all levels of leadership. This strategy is aimed at protecting human rights in York Regional Police’s delivery of services to the public and the workplace.

## YORK REGION TRANSIT WEBSITE

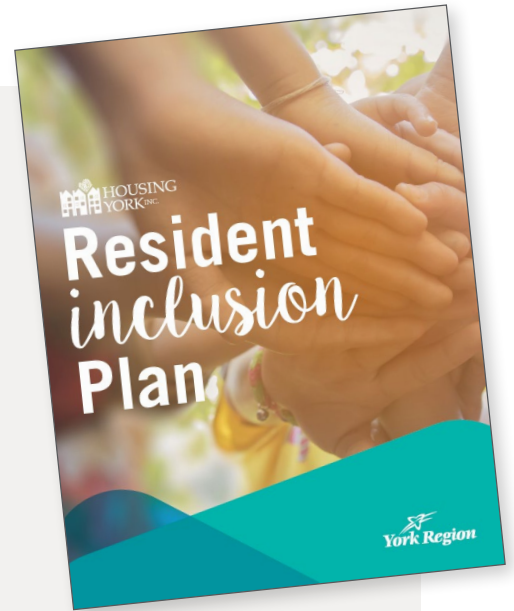
The York Region Transit (YRT) refreshed website provides an accessible and enhanced user experience to customers. The YRT website is on track to meet the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards well before the legislated compliance date of January 1, 2021. It has been rated as 98% compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level AAA, the next level of website accessibility. Visit [yrt.ca](http://yrt.ca)





## HOUSING YORK INC. RESIDENT INCLUSION PLAN

Housing York Inc., York Region’s housing company, provides affordable townhouses and apartments in 35 properties across the Region. In 2019, Housing York Inc. developed a Resident Inclusion Plan to enhance existing operational practices to help achieve inclusive social housing communities. As a commitment to its residents, the plan highlights four key action areas: enhancing the accessibility of its buildings, providing inclusive communications, ensuring business processes respect diversity and providing programs and services of value to residents.



## THE 13 FACTORS

of a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace

YORK REGION PRACTICES THE FOLLOWING 13 FACTORS OF A PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE.

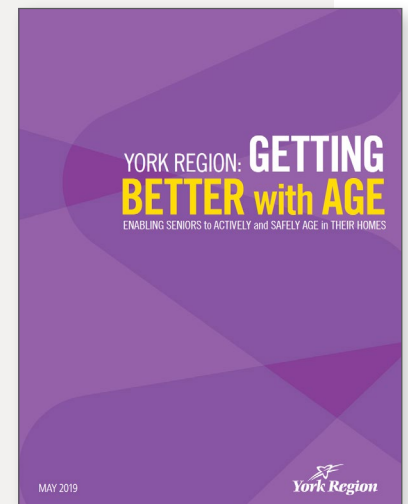
1 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	2 CLEAR LEADERSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS	3 INVOLVEMENT AND INFLUENCE	4 RECOGNITION AND REWARD
5 CIVILITY AND RESPECT	6 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT	7 ENGAGEMENT	8 BALANCE
9 WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT	10 PSYCHOLOGICAL PROTECTION	11 PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMAND & JOB FIT	12 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT
13 PROTECTION OF PHYSICAL SAFETY	York Region is committed to supporting the health and well-being of our employees. We view psychological health and safety in the workplace as not only a key component to an employee's overall health, but as a vital part of the health of our organization as a whole.		

## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Throughout 2019 York Region continued to implement the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Efforts included training front line employees and managers about mental health in the workplace, anti- stigma efforts such as Bell Let’s Talk, Mental Health Awareness Week and Mental Illness Awareness Week, and completing the 13 Factors for Psychological Health and Safety awareness campaign.

## SENIORS STRATEGY

The York Region Seniors Strategy looks at the changing senior population, defines our role in serving seniors and sets the course for action to best support the aging population over the next 10 to 20 years, including supporting age-friendly complete communities. The *York Region: Getting Better with Age* education document was developed in 2019 to build awareness of senior friendly housing. Seniors need housing options and communities that help them remain independent.



## Let Us Know What You Think

We welcome your feedback. Let us know if you have any questions or feedback about the programs highlighted in this 2019 Status Report, the *York Region 2015 – 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* and accessibility matters in general.

To view previous Status Reports visit [york.ca/accessibility](http://york.ca/accessibility)

To request a copy in another format or to send us your comments or questions, please contact us at:

### **The Regional Municipality of York**

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17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1

Phone: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72149  
TTY: 905-762-0401

Fax: 905-895-6616

### **York Regional Police**

Email: [accessibility@yrp.ca](mailto:accessibility@yrp.ca)

Mail: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bureau  
York Regional Police  
47 Don Hillock Drive  
Aurora, Ontario L4G 0S7

Phone: 1-866-876-5423 ext. 7643  
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