



# YORK REGION ACCESSIBILITY STATUS REPORT 2018

## 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

*York Region Accessibility Status Report 2018* .....1

*The Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Compliance Timeline .....3

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

Accomplishments of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee 2014–2018.....7

Let Us Know What You Think .....9

## The York Region Accessibility Status Report 2018

The *York Region Accessibility Status Report 2018* is the annual update The Regional Municipality of York (York Region) and York Regional Police provide on the measures taken to improve accessibility, implement the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the *York Region 2015 – 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*.

This *Status Report* highlights what we have accomplished since the AODA became law, and includes the strategies and actions that identify, prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities in Regional programs, services and facilities.

To review the *York Region 2015 – 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* and previous *Status Reports* visit [york.ca/accessibility](http://york.ca/accessibility)

### Creating a More Accessible York Region

York Region and York Regional Police are committed to creating programs, services and facilities that people of all abilities can access. 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 fully makes good sense for all of us.

## Statement of Organizational Commitment

York Region's Statement of Organizational Commitment provides a foundation for creating an accessible York Region: "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 2018

## INCLUSION CHARTER FOR YORK REGION

York Region is committed to welcoming and inclusive communities where diversity is celebrated and where everyone can develop to their full potential, participate freely in society and live with respect, dignity and freedom from discrimination. The [Inclusion Charter for York Region](#) was endorsed by Regional Council on June 28, 2018. This community initiative aims to create an inclusive environment with equality for all who work, live and play here.



## DIVERSITY CALENDAR

Did you know York Region has a diversity calendar for staff? Developed through best practice research and in consultation with community resources, York Region offers all staff access to a comprehensive and informative Diversity Calendar. The Diversity Calendar raises awareness about significant accessibility, faith and cultural dates throughout the year.



## YORK REGION BRAND

York Region developed new brand standards to create a consistent and compelling story for the organization. The new brand standards are applied to all marketing and communication materials and include accessible design elements such as type size and colour, leading, spacing, margins and columns, print finish and background, and content. The standards were reviewed by the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).



## The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Compliance Timeline

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) became law in 2005. Under the *Act*, organizations must meet the requirements of the AODA in the areas of information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces and customer service. There are also general and compliance requirements. This at-a-glance summary shows the AODA requirements that are now part of York Region's day to day operations.

### 2010 – 2017 Requirements Completed

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

### 2018

No new requirements.

### Future Requirements

2021 – Website to World Wide Consortium Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Level AA\*

\*WCAG is an international standard for making websites and web content accessible to a broader range of users with disabilities.

# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2018



## NATIONAL ACCESSABILITY WEEK

Each year York Region celebrates National AccessAbility Week starting the last Sunday of May. The week is celebrated across Canada and promotes inclusion and accessibility in communities and workplaces. This year York Region hosted two lunchtime sessions to raise awareness and educate staff on conducting accessible meetings and accessible public engagement.

York Regional Police hosted a lunch and learn to raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the workplace.

## YORK REGIONAL POLICE PARTNERSHIP WITH MEDICALERT

York Regional Police partnered with MedicAlert Foundation Canada to better help officers quickly locate vulnerable individuals who are lost or missing, such as those living with autism, Alzheimer's, dementia or other cognitive brain injuries. MedicAlert gives police officers 24-hour access to a registered subscriber's photo, identifying information, past wandering history and other medical information through the MedicAlert identification and associated database.



## ADAPTING THE NATURE'S CLASSROOM PROGRAM FOR SENIORS (PILOT PROGRAM)

York Region developed a pilot program to provide Nature's Classroom programming geared specifically to seniors, including those with accessibility accommodations. Held in the York Regional Forest, these educational sessions are designed to teach participants about the forest ecosystem and its importance to the community. Each session allows participants to experience an accessible forest trail. The program also includes a presentation on York Region Transit and the Mobility Plus service – York Region's door-to-door, shared ride, accessible public transit service for people with disabilities.



## 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 many 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) and click on Events to see upcoming meeting dates and times.

### Thank you members of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee 2014 – 2018



A group photo of the 2014 – 2018 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee and York Region staff at the Committee celebration event in the Great Hall at the York Region Administrative Centre.

### Members of the 2014 – 2018 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee:

York Region Chair and CEO  
Wayne Emmerson (Ex-officio)

Regional Councillor Vito Spatafora  
(Chair), Town of Richmond Hill

Mayor Justin Altmann, Town of  
Whitchurch-Stouffville

Leslie Bolt

Astley Dennis

Steve Foglia (Vice-Chair)

Laurie Fortnum

Kirsten Hill

Lilian Hulme-Smith

Brian Lynch

Frank Maggisano

Sandy Palombo

Judy Phromratsamy

Joann Simmons

Angelo Tocco

# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2018



## TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

York Region Public Health developed a resource to provide tips for communicating with people with intellectual disabilities. This resource aims to increase the confidence of Public Health and other staff to better meet the needs of clients with intellectual disabilities in varying settings.

## ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

York Region updated and promoted resources to help staff deliver exceptional accessible customer service. Accessible Customer Service Guidelines for employees offer tips, processes and templates to best serve customers with disabilities and meet the mandatory requirements set out in the Province's accessible Customer Service Standards. The Region also developed an infographic highlighting key tips for serving people with disabilities. In addition, a custom training session focusing on accessible customer service and court operations was developed and delivered to help staff offer accessible customer service in an enforcement environment.



## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

York Region implemented the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. In 2018, the Region launched a 15 month education and awareness campaign on the 13 Factors for Psychological Health and Safety. This was kicked off with a renewed statement of commitment from the Chief Administrative Officer.

## INCREASING INCLUSION IN THE LICENSED CHILD CARE SECTOR

York Region Inclusion Support Services enhanced access and inclusion for children with special needs in licensed child care, with a number of accessibility accomplishments in 2018. As of September 2018, Inclusion Support Services supported 1,710 children, an increase of 17% from 2017. York Region also provided funding for 332 child care centres to purchase specialized toys and equipment and created a new South Central Team to support the increased demand.



## Accomplishments of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee 2014 – 2018

The 2014 – 2018 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) made notable contributions to over 40 York Region and York Regional Police projects and met as a committee 16 times in their four year term. Together, members:

- Advised York Region on the *2015 – 2021 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* and the 2016 and 2017 *Accessibility Status Reports*
- Offered feedback on the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* compliance activities and reports
- Helped to deliver and promote accessible customer service, which supports York Region's commitment to provide exceptional service to people of all abilities
- Provided feedback on transportation projects including the redesign of the Richmond Hill Centre Bus Terminal, the construction of the Cornell Bus Terminal at Markham Stouffville Hospital and the median multi-use path at Highway 7 and Highway 400
- Tested York Region's mobile app and York Region Transit/VIVA's Mobile Fare Payment app
- Advised on the development of the Inclusion Charter for York Region, York Region's Seniors Strategy and Mental Health Matters initiative
- Offered feedback on York Region's Official Plan, corporate brand standards and property signage for York Region facilities
- Participated in site visits and site plan reviews to ensure that facilities and services, including the York Region Annex Building, the Unionville Seniors Hub and the Upper York Sewage Servicing Water Reclamation Centre, meet the needs of everyone
- Participated in federal consultations to inform the development of the proposed Accessible Canada Act
- Raised awareness about accessibility and participated in annual National AccessAbility Week events
- Hosted a forum entitled Building Livable Accessible Communities, which brought together accessibility advisory committee members from local municipalities, school boards and hospitals to learn about best practices in inclusive design and building livable and accessible communities

# DOING MORE TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITIES IN 2018

## HOME REPAIR PROGRAM HELPS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES

York Region's Home Repair Program offers grants of up to \$7,500 per year, with a lifetime maximum of \$15,000, to low and moderate income homeowners who need critical repairs and/or modifications to their homes to make them safer or more accessible to a household member with a disability. Some of the accessibility-related projects under the Home Repair Program include ramp and handrail installations, bathtub conversions, raised toilets and countertop adjustments. This program helps York Region residents to continue to live in their own homes safely and independently.



## TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM

York Region Transit (YRT) continues to build strong community partnerships through the travel training program. In 2018, YRT delivered over 25 transit orientation sessions to staff and participants of various organizations across York Region. This includes agencies that serve people living with disabilities such as Community Living York South, Children's Treatment Network, Centre for Dreams and York Centre for Family, Youth and Children.

In addition to the group sessions, over 300 individuals received one-on-one training on how to use YRT services safely and comfortably.



## SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

York Region is designing and building roads that support all modes of travel and incorporate measures on the Regional road network to make it safer and more efficient for everyone. Safe and accessible pedestrian crossing measures include audible pedestrian signals, tactile plates, longer crossing times and enhanced pavement markings. In 2018, seven intersections were reconfigured or rebuilt to be compliant with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Design of Public Spaces Standards* and three intersections are expected to be completed by spring of 2019.

## Let Us Know What You Think

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

### **York Region**

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### **York Regional Police**

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