

# **York Region 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

York Region Logo

York Regional Police Logo

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**Table of Contents**

Land Acknowledgement..... 2

A Message from York Region Chairman and CEO and Members of Regional Council ..... 3

Message from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee ..... 4

Summary: A Plan on a Page..... 5

York Region at a Glance..... 6

About the 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan ..... 7

    The Plan Must be Reviewed and Updated at Least Once Every Five Years..... 7

    York Region and York Regional Police Plan Together..... 7

    How the 2023 to 2027 Plan is Developed..... 8

    Summary of Consultations ..... 8

The Plan in Action..... 10

    Ongoing Actions and Accessibility Accomplishments ..... 10

        General Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments ..... 10

        Information and Communications Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments ..... 10

        Employment Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments ..... 11

        Transportation Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments ..... 12

        Transportation Maintenance Procedures and Performance Measures..... 13

        Design of Public Spaces Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments..... 14

        Design of Public Spaces Maintenance Procedures..... 15

        Customer Service Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments..... 15

Next Steps..... 16

Actions to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on AODA Requirements ..... 17

Let Us Know What You Think ..... 18

# Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that York Region is located on the traditional territory of many Indigenous peoples including the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Métis peoples and the treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations. Today this area is home to many diverse Indigenous Peoples, and we recognize their history, spirituality, culture and stewardship of this land. We also acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our closest First Nation community.

# **A Message from York Region Chairman and CEO and Members of Regional Council**

York Regional Council strives to build a welcoming and inclusive community where diversity is celebrated and everyone can develop to their full potential, participate freely in society and live with respect, dignity and freedom from discrimination.

In partnership with York Regional Police, The Regional Municipality of York is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely and proactive manner. We are committed to using reasonable efforts to provide equitable access to Regional programs, goods, services and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all York Region residents.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) sets out accessibility standards for organizations to implement with the goal of making Ontario more accessible and inclusive for everyone. With guidance and advice from York Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee, we continue to meet and, in certain circumstances, exceed these standards by identifying, removing and preventing barriers through accessibility planning. Among these actions, York Region strives to make transit accessible for all travellers, maintains four accessible trails in the York Regional Forest and meets Web Content Accessibility Guideline standards across all websites.

The 2023 to 2027 York Region Multi-Year Accessibility Plan highlights and guides the work York Region and York Regional Police are doing to create accessible programs, services and facilities that value the diversity of our residents and allow every person to thrive in a barrier-free community without discrimination.

# **Message from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee**

## **Celebrating the Past, Embracing the Future**

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee advises York Regional Council and York Regional Police on how to make it easier for people with disabilities to use our programs, services and facilities.

Our committee is made up of passionate, insightful professionals and volunteers who are committed to creating a more accessible York Region. With leadership from Council and the Senior Management Team, YRAAC has worked tirelessly to ensure York Region and York Regional Police have met, and in some cases exceeded the requirements of the Provincial accessibility legislation and its standards.

The committee represents local municipalities, people with diverse backgrounds and different abilities that allow us to offer many perspectives to improve accessibility for York Region residents. To us, accessibility means ensuring that all people have the freedom and opportunity to participate freely in their community.

In 2023, our Committee celebrated a big milestone marking the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee. Since its inception in 2003, YRAAC members have participated in more than 90 formal meetings and provided feedback and consultation on over 250 presentations. We believe that our knowledge, expertise, and most importantly, lived experiences, have positively contributed to making Regional programs, services and facilities more accessible. YRAAC has also been involved in organizing and hosting many accessibility forums and professional development events.

This updated York Region Multi-Year Accessibility Plan builds on the accomplishments of York Region's previous accessibility plans and activities to implement the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). It also outlines the work ahead to help achieve the vision of creating an accessible Ontario by 2025 and beyond.

Our Region is enriched by contributions from people of all abilities. We look forward to the future and a barrier-free community where everyone is included. It is our privilege to continue to advise Regional Council and York Regional Police on identifying and removing barriers, changing attitudes, and raising awareness about all abilities and the importance of accessibility in York Region.

# Summary: A Plan on a Page

## York Region Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Regional Municipality of York (York Region) 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.

## York Regional Police Statement of Organizational Commitment

York Regional Police is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely and proactive manner so that all people may have equitable access to programs, goods, services and facilities in a way that respects their dignity and independence.

## The Plan

This 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how York Region and York Regional Police meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005* and remove barriers in our programs, services and facilities for people with disabilities across five areas that impact our daily lives: information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces, and customer service. AODA also has General and Compliance requirements. We strive to make York Region more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

### Did you know?

This Plan only applies to York Region and York Regional Police and outlines how both organizations meet the requirements of the AODA and remove barriers to accessibility in its programs, services and facilities. For more information about accessibility at nine local municipalities, school boards, hospitals and other organizations or levels of governments (federal and provincial), please visit their websites.

# York Region at a Glance

York Region is home to nearly 1.2 million people of all ages and backgrounds. It is one of Canada's fastest growing communities and the third largest municipality in Ontario.

According to the Canadian Survey on Disability (2017), approximately one in five residents (or 18%) aged 15 years and over has at least one type of disability.

York Region has nine local municipalities: Town of Aurora, Town of East Gwillimbury, Town of Georgina, Township of King, City of Markham, Town of Newmarket, City of Richmond Hill, City of Vaughan and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. It is a diverse region which combines urban and rural areas and is in the northern part of the Greater Toronto Area.

The Region provides [services and programs](#) that are delivered across wide areas and require large-scale coordination. These include children's services, court services, economic development, forestry, housing services, long-term care, paramedic services, planning, public health, regional roads, social assistance, transit, waste management and water. Our [Who Do I Call](#) information sheet outlines services offered by local towns and cities.

York Regional Police provide [police services](#) to residents. Key priorities include working with partners in addressing community safety issues, delivering sustainable and effective police services to communities, and ensuring roads, schools and communities are safe through prevention and enforcement.

## York Region

### **Vision:**

Strong, caring, safe communities

### **Mission:**

Working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow

### **Values:**

Integrity, Commitment, Accountability, Respect, Excellence

## York Regional Police

### **Motto:**

Deeds Speak

### **Vision:**

To make a difference in our community

### **Mission:**

We will ensure our citizens feel safe and secure through excellence in policing

### **Values:**

Professionalism, Compassion, Fairness, Courage, Respect

## About the 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Plan outlines the long-term strategies of both organizations to achieve legislated accessibility requirements and improve accessibility within programs, services and facilities. The 2023 to 2027 Plan builds off the success of Council's direction, York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee's advice and the strong foundation of previous multi-year accessibility plans. Each [local municipality](#) is also required to have a multi-year accessibility plan.

## The Plan Must be Reviewed and Updated at Least Once Every Five Years

The AODA became law in 2005. The overarching purpose of the AODA is to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under the AODA, York Region and York Regional Police must establish, review, update and post a multi-year accessibility plan at least once every five years. The legislation also requires organizations to prepare annual status reports on actions taken to improve accessibility and to implement legislated requirements.

The AODA sets out accessibility standards for private and public organizations. The following provides a description of each standard and the general requirements, all of which are addressed in this Plan:

- Information and Communications – Create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities
- Employment – Incorporate accessibility practices across all stages of employment
- Transportation – Make it easier to move around through accessible public transportation services
- Design of Public Spaces – Make public spaces more accessible
- Customer Service – Provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities
- General Requirements – Implement actions, including accessibility policies and plans, to enhance accessibility across the organization
- Compliance Requirements – File accessibility reports every two years and comply with other compliance requirements

## York Region and York Regional Police Plan Together

York Region and York Regional Police have developed a joint Plan and implemented actions to achieve compliance with the AODA since 2010 when the first requirements of the AODA became law. York Region is the compliance lead for both organizations.

Creating communities where every person can participate is important for people, businesses and community life. An accessible community allows everyone to develop to their full potential, participate freely in society and live with respect, dignity and freedom from discrimination. York Region and York Regional Police continue to plan so services are accessible and welcoming for everyone.

Accessibility planning supports the Region's vision of strong, caring and safe communities. The Plan outlines strategies and actions approved by Regional Council to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities in our programs, services and facilities. It details our approach for meeting the



requirements of the AODA. Most actions in the Plan are already in effect and part of regular business practices.

Creating a community that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible for everyone aligns with goals set out in Regional strategies and policies, including the Region's Accessibility Policy and York Regional Police AODA Procedure AI-345.

To maintain organizational focus on [Vision](#), the Region sets priorities over each four year term of Council through the [Strategic Plan](#), in alignment with the four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government. The Corporate Strategic Plan is integrated with the Region's [Multi-Year Budget](#). Vision also serves as the guiding document for the Region's provincially mandated plans such as the [Regional Official Plan](#) and the [Community Safety and Well-being Plan](#).

York Regional Police understands that inclusion matters. Its commitment to promoting equity and inclusion within their organization and the community is demonstrated through the [Inclusion Strategy](#) and the [Business Plan](#), which serves as the organization's roadmap in building a workplace and a region where everyone feels that they belong.

## How the 2023 to 2027 Plan is Developed

The development of the 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes seven key steps: Consultations (Phase 1), Development of the Plan, Consultation (Phase 2), Council approval of the Plan, Posting and Distribution, Implementation, and Annual Status Reports.

## Summary of Consultations

The AODA requires the Plan to be developed, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities and an accessibility advisory committee. York Region and York Regional Police collect feedback about the Plan from people with disabilities, the community and the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee.

This requirement was met through consultations with staff, including meetings and one-on-one conversations with subject matter experts, consultations with York Region's Community of Belonging for Staff with Disabilities, Diversity and Inclusion Staff Committee, and York Regional Police Internal Support Network.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan external consultations included two public YRAAC meetings and an online survey conducted during the Plan's development phase. The survey included targeted outreach to community agencies serving York Region residents with disabilities, Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG), York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) and accessibility advisory committees within York Region's nine local municipalities.

## What we heard

Many survey respondents confirmed that the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan includes the information residents would like to know about York Region's and York Regional Police's accessibility planning. The majority of respondents also confirmed that the Plan is easy to read and understand. Most

respondents answered that they did not encounter any barriers when accessing York Region or York Regional Police programs, services and facilities. Key findings and themes for each of the AODA standards are listed below.

**Information and Communications:**

- The majority of respondents confirmed that York Region and York Regional Police make its information and communications accessible (this includes verbal, written and digital formats)
- It is important for both organizations to continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0)
- Some respondents noted that it is not always easy to find the information they are looking for

**Employment:**

- The majority of respondents noted that they are not familiar with York Region and York Regional Police accessible employment processes
- Respondents noted that it is important to be transparent about accessible employment processes, such as hiring practices and accommodations in the workplace on internal and external websites
- Some respondents noted that the application and interview processes may present challenges and barriers

**Transportation (York Region Transit):**

- The majority of respondents answered that York Region's transportation services are accessible and have improved over the years but would benefit from ongoing training for transit drivers
- Respondents urge the Region to continue to create safe stops that are close to community spaces and various amenities for those with disabilities and to take family needs into account when providing supports to those who have disabilities (e.g. transportation for dependents/minor children)
- Accessible fare and service integration across the Greater and Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) has been identified as a barrier. Continued collaboration is encouraged between all of the transit agencies and the province to ensure accessible and affordable transit is available to all transit riders

**Public Spaces and Facilities (design of public spaces/ built environment):**

- The majority of respondents confirmed that newly constructed or redeveloped York Region and York Regional Police public spaces and facilities are accessible, however priority should be given to the remediation of public buildings and public spaces built before 2016
- Accessible washrooms and safety for people with disabilities should remain a priority
- The Region should consider adding information about accessibility features and services offered at its public buildings to make it easier for the public to find this information (physical signage and online)

**Customer Service:**

- The majority of respondents answered that York Region and York Regional Police provide accessible customer service
- It is important for both organizations to ensure customer service numbers and contact information is easy to find and accessible
- Automated systems may be difficult to navigate

## **The Plan in Action**

This Plan highlights actions to strengthen the accessibility of York Region and York Regional Police programs, services and facilities. It updates and builds on the 2020 to 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan approved by Regional Council in 2020 and aligns with the term of Council and 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan. It is integrated with the Region's business planning and budget process and will be updated in 2027 when the new budget cycle begins.

## **Ongoing Actions and Accessibility Accomplishments**

Multi-year accessibility planning was first established in 2013. Since then, York Region and York Regional Police have implemented and met all AODA requirements for broader public sector organizations. Building on the solid foundation of accessibility accomplishments and actions, York Region and York Regional Police will continue to meet and, in some cases, exceed the AODA requirements.

### **General Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments**

Continue to implement the general requirements of the AODA through the following actions designed to enhance accessibility across the organization:

- Continue to use York Region Accessibility Policy and York Regional Police AODA Procedure AI-345 which govern how York Region and York Regional Police achieve and maintain compliance with the requirements of the AODA
- Implement a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that outlines long-term strategies to achieve AODA requirements and improve accessibility across programs, services and facilities; report annually on the status of the Plan
- Include accessibility criteria in purchases and acquisitions including self-service kiosks
- Train all employees, volunteers and agents on the AODA, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and Ontario's Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities

### **Information and Communications Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments**

Continue to provide accessible information and communication to residents, visitors and employees through the following actions:

- Ensure processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to people with disabilities
- Provide and arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports upon request, in consultation with the requestor and considering the person's accessibility needs. This includes emergency plans and public safety information
- Ensure all existing York Region and York Regional Police websites and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA in accordance with the timelines set out by the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

## **What are we proud of?**

All existing York Region and York Regional Police websites and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA as required by the AODA. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are international standards developed through the World Wide Web Consortium for making websites and web content accessible to a broader range of users with disabilities. York Region is responsible for compliance for york.ca and several affiliate websites, including: yorklink.ca, vivanext.com, yrt.ca, yrp.ca and yrpsb.ca (websites for economic development, transit and police services, respectively). York.ca and York Region's affiliate sites are updated constantly, and we continue to monitor and address accessibility issues on an ongoing basis to ensure these websites and web content remain accessible.

## **Employment Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments**

Continue to ensure employment policies and practices are inclusive of people with disabilities with these established actions:

- Ensure all employees and successful applicants with disabilities are informed of available supports and accommodations
- Ensure applicants with disabilities are informed of available accommodations during the recruitment, assessment and the selection processes
- Consult with employees to provide and arrange for accessible formats and communication supports
- Provide employees with individualized workplace emergency response information, upon request
- Maintain a return-to-work process and provide individual documented accommodation plans for employees with disabilities when required
- Ensure the needs of the employees with disabilities are considered for the purposes of performance management, career development, advancement and redeployment

## **What are we proud of?**

### **York Regional Police Working with Restrictions Internal Support Network**

In line with its priority to cultivate an environment of professionalism, respect and well being, in 2022 the York Regional Police established an Internal Support Network (ISN) for employees who represent and support individuals who require workplace accommodations.

Self-identifying as the Working with Restrictions ISN, the group strives to be inclusive and multi-representational of both visible and invisible disabilities. ISNs are voluntary support networks designed to help specific, self-identified groups share information and experiences. ISN members also provide mentoring and guidance to help members develop both personally and professionally. The ISNs raise awareness and promote the importance of an inclusive environment for all members.

Advocating for increased awareness and inclusivity within the workplace so that everyone can participate with purpose and belonging, the group has hosted a Multiple Sclerosis fundraiser; participated in workplace discussions with stakeholders from around the province to increase

awareness; and hosted motivational guest speakers to share their lived experiences on the importance of workplace accommodations.

The Working with Restrictions ISN and the support it receives from the Chief of Police and the Executive Leadership Team, demonstrates YRP's continued commitment to promoting inclusivity, celebrating diversity and reflecting the communities we serve.

## **Transportation Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments**

(Applicable only to York Region as a public transportation services provider)

Continue to ensure York Region's conventional and specialized transportation services are accessible to people of all abilities with these established actions:

- Offer information on the accessibility equipment and features of vehicles, routes and services is available upon request
- Establish documented emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of people with disabilities
- Ensure people with disabilities are able to board or deboard at the closest available safe location if the official transit stop is not accessible
- Offer safe storage and handling of mobility aids
- Provide alternate accessible arrangements to transport persons with disabilities to their destination if there is a service disruption
- Offer specialized transportation to visitors who are eligible in the jurisdiction where they live
- Coordinate specialized transportation services between adjacent municipalities with connections made from one transportation service to another
- Provide same hours of operation for conventional and specialized transportation services
- Ensure service delay information is provided to a passenger using specialized transportation in a mutually agreed upon manner
- Provide clearly marked priority seating for people with disabilities
- Allow companions and dependents to travel on specialized services with a person with a disability, with notice and paid fare; a support person who accompanies a person with a disability is not charged a fare
- Ensure transit operating contractors provide accessibility training for staff on how best to provide service to people with disabilities, the safe use of accessible equipment and features, emergency response procedures and addressing temporary barriers, in addition to the other AODA training requirements
- Provide an eligibility application process for those wanting to use specialized transit; riders can be deemed eligible for full specialized transportation services, the Family of Services or conventional transportation under three categories: Unconditional (no limit), Temporary (with a time limit) and Conditional (with some conditions for use)
- Offer temporary specialized services for emergency needs or on compassionate grounds
- Accept same day bookings for specialized services and provide same day service based on availability; registrants can also book any number of trips within regular hours of service
- Offer automated electronic pre-boarding and on-board announcements
- Implement transportation specific accessibility performance measures

## Transportation Maintenance Procedures and Performance Measures

York Region will continue to implement transportation specific accessibility performance measures.

Elements of the Region's planned activities are as follows:

- **Process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback** includes but is not limited to the following steps:
  - Customer feedback/complaints are received by York Region Transit (YRT) and Mobility On Request staff representatives, tracked in the complaint tracking system and forwarded to the appropriate functional area for investigation and resolution, and customer follow-up, where requested
  - Monthly reports summarize the number of complaints received and categorize them according to functional area. Customer feedback is used to identify opportunities for service improvement
- **Demographic and ridership projections for specialized transportation services:**
  - YRT undertakes a demand analysis for Mobility On Request as part of the five year service plan. The five year service plan for Mobility On Request includes ridership projection as well as measures to reduce waiting times.
- **Steps to reduce waiting times:**
  - As part of the five year service plan for Mobility on Request, YRT identifies steps to reduce waiting times, including maintaining contractual obligations for on time service delivery and providing same day service.
- **Accessibility equipment failures:**
  - Measures to identify, prevent and address accessible equipment failure is documented in the operating contract between YRT and the operating contractors. These include pre-trip, in-trip and post-trip inspections and regularly scheduled maintenance of vehicles.
- **Development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters:**
  - YRT ensures that there is a staff representative at every York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting. YRT continues to provide updates and solicit feedback on transit-related matters, including the design of bus stops and facilities, when required. YRT continues to upgrade stops and terminals using accessible design criteria to increase accessibility.

### What are we proud of?

York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRACC) members receive transit orientation including a York Region Transit (YRT) Family of Service vehicles tour. Adapting to a virtual environment of YRAAC meetings, a comprehensive descriptive video tour was created featuring accessibility components on vehicles ranging from 60-foot articulated buses to small accessible vans. YRT is compliant in all AODA transportation regulations and continues to strive to go above and beyond in making transit accessible for all travellers. The virtual tour can be used as a teaching tool for others wishing to learn about YRT's accessible fleet.

## Design of Public Spaces Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments

Continue to ensure new or redeveloped public spaces comply with specific accessibility design requirements for the following areas:

- Trails, beach access routes and forest trails
- Outdoor public eating areas
- Public play spaces and accessible parking
- Exterior paths of travel including sidewalks and accessible pedestrian signals
- Service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas
- Emergency and preventative maintenance in public spaces

### Did you know?

York Region maintains four trails accessible to wheelchairs, strollers and other assistive devices. Accessible trails are wider, clear of large obstructions and graded for ease-of-movement for all visitors. Each trail ranges between 1.5 to 2 kilometres and loops through a variety of landscapes. Accessible parking is available. The York Regional Forest is open to the public 365 days per year with no cost to enter. Accessible trails are located at:

- **Hall Tract** at 15681 McCowan Road in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville – 1.5 kilometres of accessible trails
- **Hollidge Tract** at 16389 Highway 48 in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville – 1.8 kilometres of accessible trails
- **North Tract** at 17054 Highway 48 in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville – 1.7 kilometres of accessible trails
- **Nobleton Tract** at 5345 15th Sideroad in the Township of King – 1.7 kilometres of accessible trails

### What are we proud of?

With York Regional Council's leadership and advice of the previous York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, York Region's new building located at **17150 Yonge Street** in Newmarket was awarded **the Gold Certification by the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)**. The RHFAC is a national rating system that measures and certifies the level of accessibility of buildings and sites. To receive Gold certification, sites must achieve a rating score of 80% or higher and meet mandatory Gold certification requirements. Some of the accessible and inclusive designs that earned the 17150 Yonge Street building its Gold certification include:

- Accessible paths of travel leading to the building's entrances, which are provided throughout the building
- The site and building incorporate safety warning features, such as tactile attention indicators at the top of stairs and where drive aisles are level with pedestrian paths; cane-detectable features; and features detecting if there are overhead or protruding hazards along the path of travel
- The fire alarm system is equipped with visual and audible signal devices mounted in both public and private areas (e.g., washrooms and changerooms)

This certification is a testament to York Region's commitment to building welcoming and inclusive communities that are accessible to all.

### **Design of Public Spaces Maintenance Procedures**

York Region and York Regional Police will continue to implement the maintenance procedures and performance measures requirements of the AODA through the following actions:

- Review and update procedures for the preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements required in the Design of Public Spaces Standards, such as curbs and ramps, handrails and tactile indicators on stairs
- Review and update procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when these accessible elements are not working

### **Customer Service Ongoing Actions and Accomplishments**

Continue to offer an excellent accessible customer experience to everyone through the following actions:

- Provide Accessible Customer Service training to all staff and volunteers, and to agents who provide service to the public on our behalf
- Accommodate the use of assistive devices, support persons and service animals
- Receive and respond to feedback regarding the manner in which goods or services are provided to people with disabilities
- Provide notice of temporary service disruptions to programs, services or facilities

### **Did you know?**

York Region launched and operated several COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Clinics during the Covid-19 pandemic that were designed to be accessible by default. This was one of the largest direct service delivery initiatives in its history. Throughout the planning and design phases of the clinics, site selection and accessibility audits were conducted, and the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee was consulted to ensure accessibility standards were being met. Clinic staff who were already AODA trained also received supplemental accessibility content in their clinic training program to provide quality and accessible customer service. The accessibility features of the clinics ensured all persons with disabilities could access these vital services.

Other vaccination clinic options were offered to York Region residents as well, including drive-through vaccination clinics, in-car vaccination options at non-drive-through sites and specialized clinics that meet the unique needs of people, such as children with developmental disabilities. Recommendations for accessibility at Mass Immunization Clinics were documented in the Risk Assessment Planning Tool, which will help inform the development of future clinics.

From March 2021 to August 2023, Mobility On-Request (MOR) completed 2,328 trips to safely connect paratransit customers and seniors to their nearest vaccination clinic within York Region. Drivers provided added support by remaining at clinics to avoid having customers wait outside for their return trips. The MOR team supported stakeholder communications and worked with Public Health on drive-through clinic entrance and exit logistics.



## Next Steps

Although not a requirement of the AODA, York Region and York Regional Police will continue to implement continuous quality improvement actions aimed at ensuring programs, services and facilities continue to be accessible to everyone. This includes reviewing processes created to meet the requirements of the AODA to identify opportunities for improvement, including:

- **General Requirements:** review and update Region's accessible procurement practices and procedures. York Region must include accessibility criteria when buying or acquiring goods, services, facilities and self-service kiosks. The Region considers accessibility, along with other criteria like the quality and the cost. These procurement requirements came into effect in 2013 (for public sector organizations). The Region will review and update current processes to ensure the process and resources in place are up to date and reflect best practices.
- **Information and Communication Standards:** review and update Region's Information and Communications Guidelines and enhance access to training, resources and supports for staff in their adoption and application of the guidelines. This includes updated corporate brand standards and resources, accessible Word and PowerPoint templates and style sheets, understanding of colour contrast ratios and increasing adoption of accessible best practices in communications.
- **Employment Standards:**
  - undertake an equity audit to review Human Resources policies from an inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility perspective
  - review York Region's internal disability management program to align with the new Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group) on Workplace Disability Management [CSA Z1011:20](#) – the first National Standard on occupational disability management
  - York Regional Police will develop a specialized course for its staff, that provides a comprehensive understanding of disability in the workplace, reflects on ableism, able-bodied privilege, and accommodations, with the aim of improving inclusion for everyone
- **Transportation Standards:** York Region Transit will conduct an accessibility and best practices review to enable YRT to make informed decisions around how to improve the accessibility of its services
- **Design of Public Spaces Standards:** review and update the Region's Accessibility Design Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities to meet current best practices for newly constructed or redeveloped spaces and to ensure the Region continues to be a leader in developing accessible environments for all
- **Customer Service Standards:** conduct an internal needs assessment to determine opportunities for continuous improvement in serving customers with disabilities

York Region's long-standing commitment to continuous improvement extends to accessibility and continues to drive the Region forward. York Region and York Regional Police will continue to identify areas for accessibility improvements to ensure residents of all abilities can enjoy the same opportunities as they live, work, play and invest in York Region.

## **Actions to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on AODA Requirements**

York Region and York Regional Police will continue to monitor the Province of Ontario's legislative reviews of accessibility laws and requirements. Both organizations will continue to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations, including any amendments to existing and release of new applicable standards.

As legislated, York Region and York Regional Police will review and update this plan at least every five years. An annual status report outlining the progress of the actions in the plan will also be prepared. These documents will be posted on the Region's and York Regional Police websites at [york.ca](http://york.ca), [yrp.ca](http://yrp.ca), and [yrpsb.ca](http://yrpsb.ca) and can be made available in an accessible format or with communication supports upon request. Accessibility (compliance) reports will be submitted every two years as required to the Government of Ontario, which regulates compliance for all Ontario organizations.

In addition to the development of the 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, York Region and York Regional Police will:

- **2023:** File accessibility (compliance) report with the Government of Ontario
- **2024:** Prepare an annual status report
- **2025:** File accessibility (compliance) report with the Government of Ontario and prepare an annual status report
- **2026:** Prepare an annual status report
- **2027:** File accessibility (compliance) report with the Government of Ontario and prepare the 2027 to 2031 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

# Let Us Know What You Think

We welcome your feedback. Please let us know what you think about the York Region 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and general accessibility matters.

To view this plan online, visit [york.ca/accessibility](https://york.ca/accessibility)

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

## The Regional Municipality of York

**Email:** [aoda@york.ca](mailto:aoda@york.ca)

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## York Regional Police

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