

**For Information**

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DATE: April 21, 2015

REPORT TITLE: **ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY STATUS REPORT 2014**

FROM: Gilbert Sabat, Commissioner of Service Innovation, Information and Technology

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update for the year 2014 on the progress made and actions taken by the Region of Peel to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) as well as the strategies set out in the Region's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2017).

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- In 2005, the Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) which aims to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.
- The AODA sets out accessibility standards that organizations must meet.
- One of the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) is to implement and maintain a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- The Region's 2013-2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was approved by Regional Council on November 22, 2012.
- The IASR also requires an annual status report on the progress and measures taken to implement the requirements under the AODA and the strategies set out in Region's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.
- This document outlines the actions to comply with the requirements from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

In 2005, the Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), aimed to improve accessibility for Ontarians by identifying, removing and preventing barriers faced by persons with disabilities by 2025.

On November 22, 2012, the Region of Peel's first Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2013-2017, was passed in accordance with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR).

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Also a requirement under the IASR is the annual reporting of the measures taken to improve accessibility in the Region of Peel as required under the AODA as well as an update on the actions taken to implement the Region's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

The "Annual Accessibility Status Report 2014" attached as Appendix I, outlines the actions the Region of Peel has taken in 2014 to meet the requirements of Ontario's accessibility legislation to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. It builds on the *Accessibility Status Report 2013* which outlined the progress of the Region of Peel in complying with the requirements from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2013. The report is also to be posted on the Region of Peel's website and made available in an accessible format, upon request.

### **CONCLUSION**

As required under the AODA, the Region of Peel Annual Status Report 2014 outlines the actions taken to implement the requirements set out in the AODA legislation. It outlines the actions taken to comply with the requirements from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014. The Report reinforces the Region of Peel's commitment to accessibility and ensures that the Region of Peel is on track in removing barriers for persons with disabilities and making the Region of Peel an inclusive place to live, work and play.



Gilbert Sabat, Commissioner of Service Innovation, Information and Technology

### **Approved for Submission:**



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D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

### **APPENDICES**

1. Appendix I – Annual Accessibility Status Report 2014

*For further information regarding this report, please contact Brian DeNiese, Manager, Service Innovation & Improvement, extension 4088, [brian.deniese@peelregion.ca](mailto:brian.deniese@peelregion.ca).*

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## Region of Peel Annual Accessibility Status Report for 2014

An annual report on the progress of measures taken by the Regional Municipality of Peel to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The report provides an update on the implementation of the Region's 2013-2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. It highlights actions to comply with the AODA requirements during year two of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014 and looks forward to the IASR requirements for 2015.

### Background

In 2005, the Ontario government passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The AODA aims to improve accessibility for Ontarians by identifying, removing and preventing barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The goal of the Act is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.

One of the requirements under the AODA is to develop, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan and report on an annual basis on the progress towards meeting the requirements of the IASR, section 4(3) (a).

In 2013 the Region of Peel developed its first Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2017), in accordance with the requirements of the AODA and the IASR.

The Region of Peel Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2017) reflects the Region's commitment to creating accessible programs, services and a workplace that ensures full participation of persons with disabilities.

This document outlines the work undertaken in 2014 to fulfill this commitment as well as the ongoing work undertaken towards meeting the requirements of the AODA. It builds on the *Accessibility Status Report 2013* which outlined the progress of the Region of Peel in complying with the requirements from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2013.

### Status Update

#### 2014 Actions

The following table outlines the progress during 2014 to implement the Region of Peel's 2013-2017 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan as well as the status of the work undertaken to comply with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

#### Accessible Customer Service:

Requirement	Action
Accessible Customer Service	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Region of Peel continues to provide excellent accessible customer service that is in line with the five Regional values. Ongoing compliance with this Standard includes training of new hires and volunteers who serve the public on behalf of the Region. The training is recorded and forms part of the employee's record.</p>

#### General:

Requirement	Action
Annual Status Report on the Multi-year Accessibility Plan	<p><b>Annually:</b></p> <p>Completed: The Annual Accessibility Status Report for 2013 which outlines the progress during year one of the Region's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was provided to the Region's AAC and approved by Regional Council. The report outlines the actions to comply with the AODA requirements from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2013. The Report is available in alternative formats, on request. A copy of the Annual Accessibility Status Report 2013 can be found on the Regional website.</p>
Training	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Region of Peel uses various formats to provide training to all new hires and volunteers on the requirements of the IASR, including Accessible Customer Service and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to person with disabilities. This training has been added to the list of mandatory training which new hires receive during their Orientation session.</p>

**Information and Communication:**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Action</b>
Accessible formats and communication supports	<p><b>Completed:</b></p> <p>A communication campaign was launched to inform all Region of Peel staff of their obligation under this requirement to ensure compliance by the January 1, 2015 deadline.</p> <p>Signage has been placed in all public facing service counters throughout the Region to inform residents and members of the public of the availability of documents in accessible formats and communication supports, upon request. The Region of Peel website was revised to reflect similar messaging and a new online form was launched for such requests. Region of Peel Call Centre processes have been updated to ensure proper handling of requests.</p>
Accessible Websites and Web Content	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Region of Peel continues to work towards meeting WCAG 2.0 Level AA in advance of the AODA 2021 deadline. Work is underway to redesign the Region's website which will take into account accessibility and conformity with the legislation.</p> <p>New websites and web content such as the new Waste Management site uses new technology platforms that include improvements to accessibility. Changes to processes and roles/skill sets continue to be addressed to ensure the Region's external site is usable and accessible to all citizens.</p>

**Employment:**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Action</b>
Recruitment and Accessible Hiring Process	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Region of Peel continues to ensure that its recruitment practices are accessible by everyone. It ensures that everyone is aware of the availability of accommodation throughout the recruitment cycle.</p>
Informing Employees of Supports	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>Support is provided to Regional employees returning to work after illness or injury. The employee is connected with a member of the Disability Management team and all concerned parties work together to ensure that the needs of the employee are met for a successful return to work process as outlined in the Region's Return to Work (RTW) Process document.</p>

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Documented Individual Accommodation Plans	<p><b>In Progress:</b></p> <p>The Region is carrying out a review of its policies relating to accommodation. It is in the process of developing a Policy and Procedure for Accommodating Persons with Disabilities. These documents will help to ensure that the Region incorporates proactive practices which will help to proactively identify and minimize accessibility barriers throughout the employment cycle.</p> <p>The draft documents have been provided to stakeholders and are currently under review.</p> <p>Once approved, the Policy will reinforce the Region's commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible workplace, and will provide further clarification on stakeholder roles and responsibilities. The accompanying Procedure document will speak to how the Region will accommodate staff throughout the employment cycle.</p>
Performance management	<p><b>Updated:</b></p> <p>Changes have been made to policy and administration for performance management.</p> <p>The Human Resources Policy for Performance Appraisal (HR08-02) has been revised and indicates that employee accommodations plans are to be reviewed in conjunction with the performance review, at least annually, or more often if deemed necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The Human Resources Guide to Performance Appraisals addresses questions regarding accommodation requirements and performance objectives. It also indicates how changes to accommodation requirements will be addressed as it relates to the objectives outlined in the PA document.</p>

**Transportation:**

	<b>Action</b>
Compliance required by January 1, 2017	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>After a lengthy process which included community and stakeholder consultation, the Region's Accessible Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) has been completed. Regional Council approved five recommendations for the Accessible Transportation Master Plan (ATMP). The recommendations will improve the customer experience and increase service delivery efficiency of TransHelp, the Region's specialized transportation service. A timeline has been established for implementing the recommendations from the</p>

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	<p>ATMP and ensure that the AODA requirements are met by the 2017 deadline. The Region of Peel's Accessibility Advisory Committee is a key stakeholder as the Accessible Transportation Master Plan is implemented.</p> <p>The Region of Peel has also conducted a review of its accessible transportation appeal process. The results of this review include the formation of an independent TransHelp Appeals Panel. This three-member panel will conduct appeal interviews and review decisions respecting eligibility as required under the AODA's Transportation Standard.</p>
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**Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment):**

	<b>Action</b>
Compliance required by January 1, 2016	<p><b>Ongoing:</b></p> <p>The Affordable Housing Design Guidelines and Standards continue to govern new housing projects in the Region of Peel. The document has been updated to capture the recent amendments made to Ontario's Building Code regarding barrier free requirements. A terminology section has also been added to the document which describes the three different types of barrier free suites incorporated into new housing projects for the Region of Peel.</p> <p>The Affordable Housing Design Guidelines, which was created for apartment buildings is now split into townhome guidelines and apartment guidelines as the construction and requirements of each type is different. Both set of guidelines ensure that universal accessibility features are incorporated into new units.</p> <p>The Region of Peel ensures that Consultants working with the Region on new builds and major renovations, take the Standard into account. The Region's affordable housing projects such as Creditvale Mills and Norton Lake have incorporated outdoor playgrounds and exterior path requirements from the Standard.</p> <p>In consultation with the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee, accessibility has been incorporated into the Region's Active Outdoor and Active Stairwell projects, an initiative which aims to create places that promote healthy behaviour and physical activities for all.</p>