



2019

Peel Region Accessibility Status Report

Creating an accessible **Community for Life**

An update on actions taken by the Regional Municipality of Peel to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities and implement the *Region of Peel's 2018 – 2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*

 **Region
of Peel**
working with you

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ZZG-Accessibility@peelregion.ca or call **905-791-7800**.

Peel Region Accessibility Status Report 2019 - Creating A Community for Life

This annual report describes the progress and measures taken by the Regional Municipality of Peel (The Region of Peel) to improve accessibility and implement the requirements set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). This report outlines the progress in 2019 to implement the *Region of Peel's 2018 -2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* (Multi-Year Plan). It includes initiatives that were undertaken outside of the AODA requirements to make the Region of Peel more accessible and inclusive for persons of all abilities.

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the five standards of the AODA are:



Information and communications



Employment



Transportation



Design of public spaces



Customer service

The Multi-Year Plan aligns with the Region of Peel's Strategic Plan, to achieve the vision of **Community for Life** and mission of Working with You. Accessibility is embedded into all facets of the Region of Peel's Strategic Plan which is built around three areas of focus: **Living, Thriving** and **Leading**.



Statement of organizational commitment to accessibility

The Region of Peel is committed to implementing, maintaining and enhancing accessibility with respect to employment and the use of all Regional goods and services, programs and facilities for all persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- Respects their dignity and independence and is sensitive to their individual needs
- Ensures reasonable efforts are made so that the service outcome is the same for persons with disabilities as well as those without disabilities
- Allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services as those without disabilities, in the same location and in a timely and similar manner considering the nature of the service





Doing more in 2019 to create accessible
Communities for Life



Living is about improving people's lives in their time of need. This includes ensuring that the right tools, resources and supports are in place to assist when most needed.



▶ Information and communications

The Region of Peel continues its effort to ensure that information is accessible to everyone. The use of technology plays a key role in ensuring that people with disabilities have access to information and can participate equally in society.

- Digital marketing channels continue to be updated to ensure that AODA requirements conform with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA requirement by the Jan. 1, 2021 deadline.
- AODA compliant Finance [Economic Dashboard](#) provides a glance into the economic landscape.
- In partnership with Microsoft Canada, numerous staff were trained on built-in accessibility features offered by Office 365 as well as other tools and applications created to assist people with disabilities. These features will support the creation of accessible documents and will assist in establishing minimum standards for documents.
- "BookItPeel", a new Salesforce-based Event Management & Appointment Scheduling solution was deployed, enabling Ontario Works to migrate from non-compliant software, onto the new BookItPeel AODA-compliant solution.



▶ **Customer contact**

Our Customer Contact Centre enhanced the customer experience by implementing web chat on the Region of Peel's website, allowing real-time text-based messaging with agents in the customer contact centre.

▶ **Food handler certification training - addressing the accessibility needs of clients**

The Region of Peel's Food Handler Certification Training Program teaches food handlers about safe food handling practices to prevent or reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Modifications have been made to the course and exam to promote an accessible learning environment for clients, including: the use of speakers and microphones; information provided in accessible formats and with communication supports; closed captioning in educational videos; adjustments to reading level of course manuals to grade 9 literacy level; communication supports offered during the exam; the option of taking the exam in a quiet room; to name a few. The course evaluation has been updated to elicit feedback for program improvements and to identify accessibility barriers and solutions.

▶ **The Butterfly Model of dementia care - improving the quality of life for people living with dementia**

The Butterfly Model of Dementia Care in Peel provides those diagnosed with dementia and their families with access to services that are specific to their unique needs and strengths. It offers person-centered care where the heart of the care is focused on the emotional needs of the individual. This model of care has demonstrated positive outcomes related to improved quality of life for those living with dementia.

A targeted advocacy campaign was initiated in 2019 to eliminate the stigmatization and discrimination around dementia. This included over 100 tours of the Butterfly Home by partners in the care sector, politicians and decision-makers within the

dementia community. Over 60 presentations to academics, care-sector partners, family council groups and health professions were facilitated and the partnering with the Ministry of Labour in the development of workplace violence prevention tools and guidelines focusing on Butterfly techniques. The value of the Butterfly experience at the Region of Peel has led to consultations with senior levels of the provincial government and has caused a shift in other Long-Term Care homes across the province on enhancing how they provide emotional care for those living with dementia.

► Planning for the future

Housing and homelessness service transformation

The Region of Peel's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (PHHP), Home for All, identifies the work required toward making affordable housing available to all Peel residents and to prevent homelessness. The transformation of housing services will be anchored in the principle of client-centric service delivery that is "right sized" based on individual needs. An accessibility and inclusion lens as well as a client-centric philosophy to decisions has been embedded in the guiding principles for the new service delivery model.

Early years and child care services

The Region of Peel's Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan for 2019-2024 sets the path for how we will continue to build and grow an early years and child care system that is responsive to the current and future needs of children and families in Peel. It is focused on the following key priorities: Accessible, Inclusive, Accountable, High Quality and Affordable. Using an inclusive lens, programs are delivered that meet the needs of families, foster a sense of inclusion, and help prepare children and families for the future through early development supports.





THRIVING

Thriving is about building communities that are integrated, safe and complete.



► Design of public spaces and guideline for rest areas along exterior paths of travel

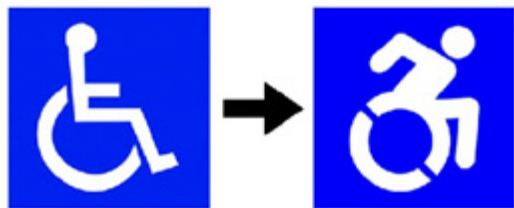
The Design of Public Spaces Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) sets out a comprehensive framework for municipalities in Ontario and outlines technical requirements for specific accessibility features in the design of public spaces. The IASR also requires municipalities to consult on the design and spacing of rest areas along exterior paths of travel.

To improve efficiencies in the consultation and implementation process, a guideline for rest areas along exterior paths of travel, which satisfies the duties to consult as prescribed in the IASR was developed. The guideline provides spacing recommendations, a design standard, and design considerations. The design includes a concrete pad, bench, and clear space for mobility devices. This guideline is to be used when constructing new or redeveloped sidewalks or multi-use paths, and will be incorporated into the Region's Design of Public Spaces Compliance Checklist.

The Region of Peel continues to ensure that our public spaces are accessible and inclusive. In 2019, accessible seating was incorporated into cafeteria spaces and a universal washroom was installed at one of the Regional offices. Renovations were made to the Employment Resource Centre to improve visual and physical accessibility to clients. This was achieved through furnishings and placement of frontline service counters.

► Dynamic symbol of access

The Region of Peel adopted the use of the Dynamic Symbol of Access (DSA) as an alternative to the currently used International Symbol of Access (ISA) where permitted. The DSA is an improvement to the current ISA as the image conveys movement and action and places emphasis on a person's ability. The Dynamic Symbol of Access is used in areas where the ISA is not mandated, including on pavement markings, signage and communication materials. In 2019, 74 of the 146 parking spaces located in the City of Mississauga and the Town of Caledon were installed with the new Dynamic Symbol. The remaining spaces will be completed in the Spring of 2020.



► Age-friendly planning

The Region of Peel Official Plan was amended (ROPA 27) to include Age-Friendly Planning, and Health and the Built Environment policies. These policies encourage proactive planning for seniors in the areas of aging in place, universal accessibility, and active aging. The Age-Friendly Planning policies specifically reference the need to provide diverse options of affordable housing, accessible transit, and the incorporation of universal accessibility in the design of the physical environment. The completion of this project will act as a primary step in supporting the implementation of ROPA 27 Age-Friendly Planning policies.





▶ Transhelp

TransHelp, Peel's specialized public transit provider offers door-to-door service to clients who experience barriers to using conventional public transit due to physical, cognitive, visual, sensory or mental health disability. TransHelp, together with our regional transportation partners, aims to be 100% accessible by 2025, across a fully integrated transit network.

In 2019 TransHelp undertook various initiatives such as the integration of TransHelp with Brampton Transit and MiWay; the introduction of Magnus Moda, a free mobile app that helps passengers with special needs use conventional public transit in Peel; enhancements to the Travel Training Program; the installation of on-board cameras on TransHelp fleets for the safety and security of passengers; and quality initiative campaigns.



▶ Waste collection

The Region of Peel continues to enhance its waste collection services to ensure that all residents have access to the services. Walk-up service continues to be provided for residents that are unable to bring their cart to the curb for collection. Medical exemptions are also provided in which the Region gives residents additional garbage capacity to manage their medical needs. Some of the enhancements in waste collection included:

- The implementation of a Region-wide textile collection program. This program provides donation bins in multi-residential buildings where residents that are unable to travel or carry heavy items can use the donation bins in their buildings to donate gently used textiles

- The continuation of the Chemical Cab Pilot where residents in multi-residential buildings, that are not able to travel to their Community Recycling Centre to dispose of the Household Hazardous Waste, can bring these items to a designated area in their building, where staff will pick it up

► PAMA

The Region of Peel's Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA) continues to look for opportunities to ensure an accessible and barrier-free experience for everyone whether attending an exhibit or accessing a program or service, persons of all abilities can participate. To maintain focus on accessibility in 2019 a staff person was assigned as a dedicated Accessibility Lead to coordinate inclusive initiatives. Maps and signage were improved for wayfinding and all-gender and family washrooms were added. A Collections Management System was developed to increase digital access to archives, art and art history content. Two touch screens were installed in exhibition spaces for easier access of information in accessible formats.

In addition to the corporate accessibility training, staff participated the following training and workshops:

- Let's talk about disability and creative spaces (ArtsBuild Ontario)
- Prioritizing Inclusion to Create Accessible Exhibits (Canadian Museum Association)
- Assessing Intercultural Competency (Charity Village)
- Invisible Disabilities and Creative Spaces (ArtsBuild Ontario)
- Plain Language writing workshop (Region of Peel)
- Inclusion by Design (Region of Peel)





LEADING

Leading is about becoming a government that is future-oriented and accountable. It means setting the pace to address changes in an evolving community.



▶ Accessibility training refresh

The Region of Peel is undertaking a refresh of its corporate accessibility training. The refreshed training will be more streamlined and incorporated into one training module. This mandatory training is for employees, volunteers and contractors who serve the public on the Region's behalf will provide knowledge of the AODA and Ontario's Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. In addition, staff will learn how to interact with people with various types of disabilities.

▶ Awareness and education through observances

The following observances were acknowledged and celebrated to raise awareness of persons with disabilities. These include:

World Autism Awareness Day – April 2, 2019

Aimed to raise awareness and promote full participation of all people living with autism. Regional staff had the opportunity to view a video in which a member of the Region's leadership team shared her impactful story of her journey as a parent with a child with autism.



National AccessAbility Week – May 26 to June 1

The Region of Peel acknowledges this week every year by promoting inclusion and raising awareness around the importance of accessibility and the barriers that people with disabilities continue to face. In 2019, the Region of Peel launched an education and marketing campaign for staff to promote the principles of accessibility as per the AODA as well as breaking down myths and stereotypes related to disabilities and persons with disabilities.

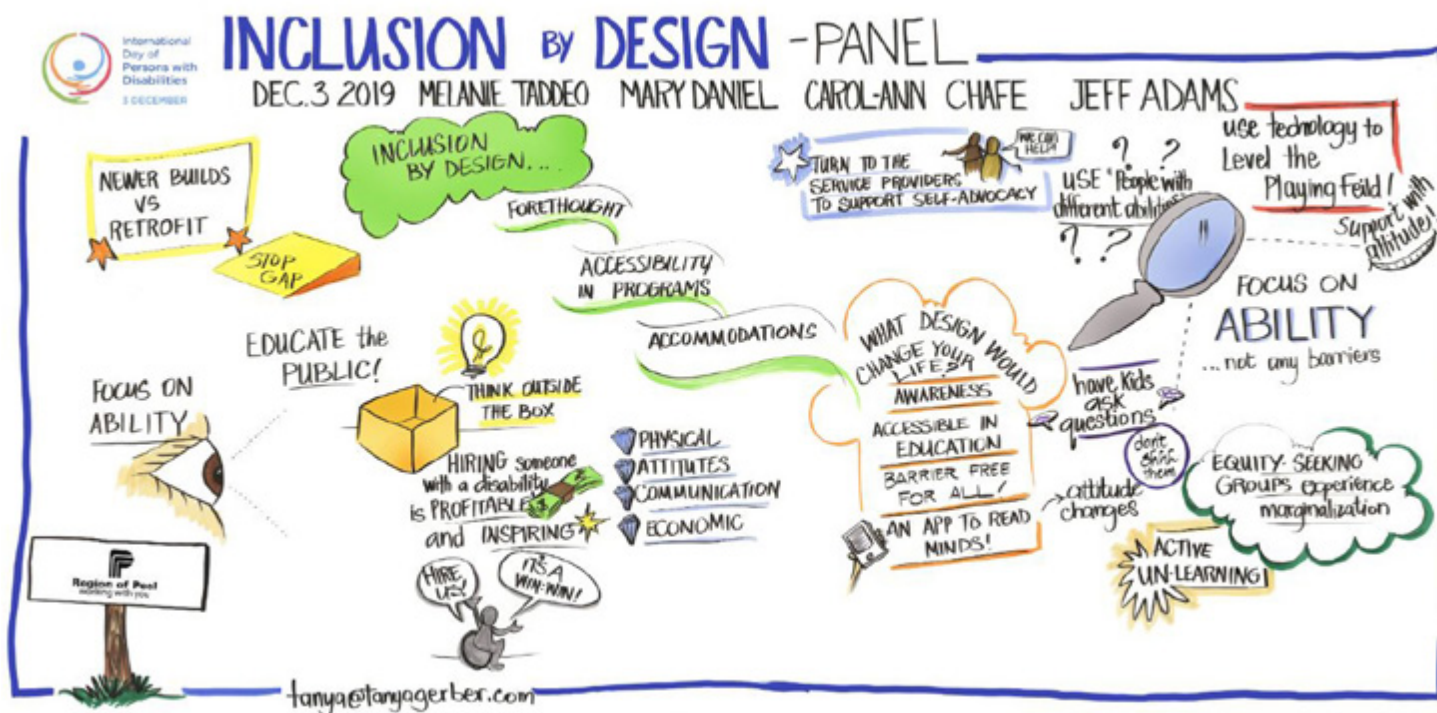


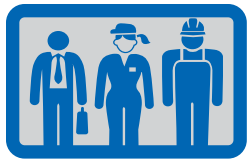
International Day of Persons with Disabilities – December 3, 2019

This event brought together Regional staff and community partners to celebrate, strengthen partnerships and bring to life a shared vision of an accessible Peel. The theme for the day was “Inclusion by Design”. Attendees participated in a panel discussion and had the opportunity to visit booths to learn about services, programs and technologies available in the community for persons with disabilities.



International
Day of
Persons with
Disabilities
3 DECEMBER





▶ Workplace psychological health and safety

It is estimated that 500,000 Canadians miss work in any given week due to mental health challenges, costing the economy in excess of \$50 billion annually in direct costs related to health care, social services and income supports.

The Region of Peel is committed to creating a workplace that is healthy and safe for all staff. It uses the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace as a guide. In 2019, a comprehensive review was completed which informed a multifaceted framework and workplan designed to make “the invisible – the mental well-being of all of us – visible”.

The framework and workplan is inclusive of three overarching goals that include actions designed to:

- 1) empower individuals to take control of their own mental well-being,
- 2) identify and remove hazards within the workplace, and
- 3) support community capacity for better mental health through advocacy efforts and community well-being planning.

Some examples of actions include initiatives supporting standards of behaviour through the Region’s Respectful Workplace Program; alignment of programs to allow for better data collection; building more awareness and understanding using learning tactics like leadership development and mental health first aid training, performance management program enhancements; changes to the Employee and Family Assistance program; and initiatives specific for Paramedic Services.



Accomplishments of the Region of Peel's Accessibility Advisory Committee in 2019

Applying the principles of inclusiveness and integration, the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) guides Regional Council on accessibility issues and helps identify ways to remove barriers with respect to Regional programs, services and facilities. The AAC also monitors the progress of Regional accessibility initiatives which are reported annually to Regional Council and assist the Region in meeting its legislative requirements. Many members of the AAC are persons with disabilities. In 2019, 8 citizens members were appointed to the Committee for the 2019-2022 term. Some of the tasks undertaken by the Committee in 2019 included:

- Review of Alton Village – Phase 2 Road Improvements and Streetscaping Age-Friendly Planning
- Participation in the Region of Peel Housing Workshop for consultation on Housing Design Standards and Housing Delivery Model
- Participation in the GTHA Accessibility Advisory Committee (GTHA AAC) Joint Meetings
- Attended the Accessibility Advisory Committee 101: Design of Public Spaces Standards and Site Planning webinar
- Assisted with the development of the Guideline for Rest Areas along Exterior Paths of Travel
- Assisted with the planning and coordination of NAAW and IDPD observances
- Assisted with various community fairs including the Connections Resource Fair and City of Mississauga Senior's Fair

Creating a *Community for Life* that is inclusive and accessible

The accomplishments highlighted in this report demonstrate the Region of Peel's commitment to an inclusive and accessible community, bringing to life the Region's vision of ***Community for Life***. The Region continues to seek opportunities to promote accessibility and remove barriers in its programs services and public spaces while meeting the requirements of the AODA and its goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025.

We welcome your feedback

Your feedback is important to us.

Please let us know if you have any questions or feedback about the programs or services mentioned in this report, *Peel Region's 2018-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan* or about accessibility in general.

Call:

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