

Accessibility 2012-2017 Plan



Table of Contents

Section 1: Message from the Regional Chair	1
Section 2: Message from Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair	2
Section 3: Municipal Information	3
Section 4: Legislation and Interpretation	5
Section 5: Other Organizations and Agencies Participating in this Accessibility Plan	7
Section 6: Plan Development Working Group	9
Section 7: Status and Updates of Regional Operations	11
Section 8: Status and Updates by Other Organizations and Agencies	14
Section 9: Initiatives 2012-2017	18
Section 10: Summary 2012-2017 Highlights	25

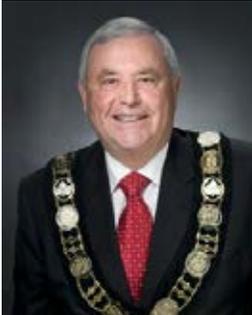
Section 1: Message from the Regional Chair



OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CHAIR

GARY BURROUGHS

The Regional Municipality of Niagara
2201 St. David's Road, P.O. Box 1042
Thorold, Ontario L2V 4T7
Telephone: 905-685-1571
Fax: 905-685-6243
E-mail: gary.burroughs@niagararegion.ca



Since the introduction of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* Niagara Region has worked to ensure our responsibility to legislated compliance for accessibility standards while also looking to exceed the minimums set out wherever possible. Niagara Region recognizes our responsibility to accommodate all of our residents and visitors with disabilities in order to remain a premier destination for visitors, as well as a great place to live, work and play.

This 2012 - 2017 Accessibility Plan is intended to serve as a compendium of Niagara Region's compliance with the legislated requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, at the same time introducing a number of programs, services and initiatives already underway as we look to not only meet but exceed standard requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). This report represents the ongoing efforts of Niagara Region as well as the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Niagara Regional Housing, Niagara Regional Police Services and the Niagara Economic Development.

To achieve the goal of exceeding the standards, Niagara Region has taken a collaborative approach toward compliance with our municipal partners, members of the not-for-profit sector, and a number of internal groups including Niagara Region's Age-Friendly Initiative, Cultural Capital of Canada (2012), Active Transportation Initiative, Human Services Plan Steering Committee, Healthy Communities Committee and the Council Chamber Renovation Committee. Niagara Region has also been fortunate to participate in meaningful accessibility-related engagements with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, and the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals.

Finally, I extend sincere appreciation to our Accessibility Advisory Committee, which is comprised of dedicated volunteers from the Niagara community. These individuals provide advice, expertise and in many cases valuable personal experience to Regional Council along with our departments and programs. The commitment and enthusiasm brought by our committee members is proof of the benefits realized by working together to improve opportunities for increased citizenry for our residents. I applaud and commend your ongoing and dedicated efforts.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Burroughs".

Gary Burroughs
Regional Chair

Section 2: Message from Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair

On behalf of the Niagara Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, we would like to thank the staff and Regional Council for their collaboration and hard work in the creation of the 2012-2017 Accessibility Plan. This plan signifies the efforts of many staff, community partners and Regional Council in working towards an environment in which the interests of all segments of our society are represented.

We are proud to be a part of the accessibility initiatives within the region and are thankful for the acceptance and appreciation our committee is provided by the Staff and Regional Council.

We wish to thank Councillor Doug Joyner for his representation of our committee on Regional Council. Councillor Joyner's insight has become invaluable to us and we look forward to continuing our partnership together.

The Niagara Region Accessibility Advisory Committee comprises a dedicated group of individuals who live across our region. Each member brings their own experiences and knowledge regarding accessibility to each meeting. This vast knowledge base provided by our membership allows our committee to provide a strong and effective voice on issues surrounding accessibility within our region.

It is both my pleasure and honour to work with and learn from my fellow committee members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Keith".

Christine Keith, Chair
Niagara Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

Section 3: Municipal Information

Municipality: Niagara Region

Contact Information:

Niagara Region
2201 St. David's Rd.
PO Box 1042
Thorold, ON
L2V 4T7

Local Phone Number:..... 905-685-1571
Toll-free Phone Number: 1-800-263-7215

TTY Local Phone Number: 905-984-3613
TTY Toll-free Phone Number: 1-866-913-3444
TTY = Teletypewriter (text communication phone)

Key Contacts:

Steve Murphy
Accessibility Advisory Coordinator
Community and Corporate Planning
Niagara Region
905-685-4225 ext. 3252
steve.murphy@niagararegion.ca

Natasha Devos
Legislative Assistant
Office of the Regional Clerk
Niagara Region
905-685-4225 ext. 3296
natasha.devos@niagararegion.ca

Municipal Highlights

The Niagara Region is located in southern Ontario between two of North America's Great Lakes (Ontario and Erie), covers an area of 1854 sq. km (715 sq. miles) and is composed of 12 municipalities with a combined population of 431,346.

Niagara became part of the reform movement to create new forms of governance: Regional governments. On June 26, 1969, the provincial legislature enacted *The Regional Municipality of Niagara Act*. On Jan. 1, 1970, 12 area governments and one Regional government replaced the two counties and 26 municipal structures.

Niagara's 12 area municipalities are:

- Fort Erie, population 29,960
- Grimsby, population 25,325
- Lincoln, population 22,487
- Niagara Falls, population 82,997
- Niagara-on-the-Lake, population 15,400
- Pelham, population 16,598
- Port Colborne, population 18,424
- St. Catharines, population 131,400
- Thorold, population 17,931
- Wainfleet, population 6,356
- Welland, population 50,631
- West Lincoln, population 13,837

Source: Stats Canada 2011

Niagara Regional Council comprises a Chair and 30 Councillors representing five cities, five towns and two townships.

Section 4: Legislation and Interpretation

On June 13, 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) received Royal Assent and is now law. The purpose of the AODA 2005 is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025. Standards will be developed by the Government of Ontario in collaboration with persons with disabilities, representatives of industries and various sectors of the economy. Both the public and private sectors that provide goods and services to people in Ontario will have to meet certain accessibility standards in five important areas: Customer Service (O.Reg. 429/07), and currently pending Standards for Transportation, Information and Communications, Built Environment and Employment.

Public sector organizations including government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, public transportation organizations, school boards, colleges and universities are required to continue to prepare and make public annual accessibility plans as their legal obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) remain in force until such time that the Act is repealed.

Communities are changing throughout the province of Ontario as the population ages. Approximately 20 per cent of Ontarians are likely to have a disability in 20 years. A mandate to remove barriers by 2025 will allow communities to fully accommodate an aging population and persons with disabilities.

Like in other municipalities in Ontario, an accessibility plan is prepared to address any issues and barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating fully in the life of the community. Ultimately, the Accessibility Plan is intended to identify, remove and prevent all barriers that may impede residents and visitors from accessing and using municipal services within the responsibility of the Regional Municipality of Niagara. Accessibility planning is no longer an afterthought, but instead has become ingrained in the normal operating policies and procedures.

Definitions for “disability” and “barrier” as they appear in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) and *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA):

Disability:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”).

Barrier: means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice (“obstacle”).

Common acronyms:

- AAC - Accessibility Advisory Committee
- FADS - Facility Accessibility Design Standards
- ODA - *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 – Bill 125*
- AODA - *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 – Bill 118*
- UD - Universal Design
- TTY - Teletypewriter (text communication phone)

Common barriers:

- Architectural - may result from the design of a building
- Attitudinal - refers to persons who do not know how to: communicate with people with disabilities, or persons who display discriminatory behaviours
- Communicational - makes it difficult for people to receive or send information
- Policy/Practice - may result from an organization’s policies, practices and protocols if they restrict persons with disabilities

Section 5: Other Organizations and Agencies Participating In this Accessibility Plan

5.1 Organization-Agency

- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Niagara Regional Housing
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

5.2 Description

Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS)

Established on Jan. 1, 1971, the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) is the oldest regional police service in Ontario. In an area of 1,854 square kilometres, the NRPS patrols one of Ontario's largest geographic regions. The Niagara Regional Police provide policing and public safety services to 431,346 residents and an estimated 15,000,000 visitors annually.

A few of the unique policing challenges facing Niagara are the combination of urban and rural development, the large annual influx of tourists, its proximity to the United States, the effect of the nations' busiest border crossings, a major summer cottage population in varying communities, and a waterfront shoreline that surrounds the region on three sides.

Niagara Regional Housing (NRH)

As administrator of affordable housing for Niagara Region, Niagara Regional Housing (NRH) is dedicated to providing and advocating for quality affordable housing in Niagara. Affordable housing in the region includes more than 2,600 units owned and managed by NRH, more than 4,000 units operated by non-profit and cooperative housing providers, more than 700 units provided by private market landlords, more than 170 rent supplements and new communities through new development. NRH is governed by a board of directors with representation from the housing sector, the community and Niagara Regional Council.

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)

The activities of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) are governed by a board of directors comprising 15 members appointed by the member municipalities as follows:

- 12 members appointed by Niagara Region
- Two members appointed by the City of Hamilton
- One member appointed by Haldimand County

Board members collectively provide direction through the CAO for the consideration and adoption of NPCA goals and objectives, policies, operational plans and budgets.

Established in 1959, the NPCA serves approximately 500,000 people and covers an area of 2,424 square kilometres encompassing the entire Niagara Region, 21 per cent of the City of Hamilton and 25 per cent of Haldimand County. The driving force behind the Conservation Authority movement was its grassroots land stewardship focus and involvement with water programs. Programs focus on environmental protection and preservation, and watershed management activities. These include planning, regulations, water quality monitoring, environmental improvement through stewardship and restoration, community outreach, and conservation through land acquisition and public ownership. NPCA now owns over 2,870 hectares (7,091 acres) that are held in public trust.

The Authority's stewardship allows the public to enjoy Niagara's distinctive heritage and natural resources at conservation areas, each of which offers diverse recreational and educational opportunities.

With its unique resources, the NPCA manages one of the most complex watersheds in the province. It includes lands drained by the Niagara River, Twenty Mile Creek, the Welland River, and the Welland Canal. Nestled between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario and transversed by the Niagara Escarpment, the Niagara Peninsula has truly unique climatic and biotic zones that are unlike anywhere else in North America.

Section 6: Plan Development Working Group

Niagara Region Accessibility Working Group

Working Group Member	Department/Affiliation	Contact Telephone
Denise Papaiz	Niagara Region Integrated Community Planning - Corporate Communications	905-685-4225 ext. 3218
Steve Murphy	Niagara Region Integrated Community Planning - Community and Corporate Planning	905-685-4225 ext. 3252
Chris Herstek	Niagara Region Corporate Services - Facilities <i>(resigned May 2012)</i>	905-685-4225 ext. 3582
Sarah Phillips	Niagara Regional Housing	905-685-4225 ext. 3931
Judy Sobchak	Niagara Region Community Services – Operational Support	905-685-4225 ext. 3809
Catherine O’Leary/ Zuher Ismail (alt)	Niagara Region Public Health - Medical Public Health <i>(resigned July 2012)</i>	905-688-8248 ext. 7336 905-688-2854 ext. 7458
Kumar Ranjan	Niagara Region Public Works - Transportation	905-685-4225 ext. 3467
Sgt. Sandy Staniford	Niagara Regional Police Services	905-688-4111
Nicole Mephram	Niagara Regional Police Services	905-688-4111
Trevor Ward	Niagara Region Corporate Services - Health & Safety	905-685-4225 ext. 3527
Arnie Wohlgemut	Niagara Region Corporate Services - Facilities Management	905-685-4225 ext. 3582



Working Group Member	Department/Affiliation
Geoff Eden Chairperson	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Welland AAC, Provincial Accessibility Directorate Standards Development Committee for Information & Communications
Jonathan Williams	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Brain Injury Community Re-entry
Chris Akilie	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Mainstream
Glenda Morabito	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Welland Pelham Community Living
Cindy Forster	Niagara Regional Council representative <i>(resigned November 2011)</i>
Cheryl Isaak	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Ontario March of Dimes <i>(resigned 2012)</i>
Ian Greaves	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Niagara Falls AAC
Brian Kon	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Niagara Falls AAC, Retail Council of Canada – Accessibility Provincial Accessibility Directorate Standards Development Committee for Customer Service
Anita MacKenzie	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Niagara Specialized Transit member, Niagara Falls AAC <i>(resigned February 2012)</i>
Mary Lou Whitty	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Port Colborne AAC
Bob Mahoney	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Stakeholder <i>(resigned November 2012)</i>
Councillor Douglas Joyner	Niagara Regional Council, representative <i>(effective February 2012)</i>
Christine Keith	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Stakeholder
Cheryl Toole	Accessibility Advisory Committee Member Accessibility Affiliation: Stakeholder

Section 7: Status and Update of Regional Operations

7.1 Community Services

- Supports and advances the well-being of individuals, families and communities of Niagara
- Provides encouragement and support to enable individuals and families to maximize potential to achieve their life goals
- Enhances residents' quality of life and social well-being by providing a spectrum of integrated programs and partnerships

7.2 Corporate Services

- Provides support services to Regional departments and policy advisory services to both Regional Council and staff
- Manages Regionally owned and operated public facilities
- Provides legal services to Regional Council and departments
- Assists Regional departments to become more productive through the use of information technology, systems and support
- Acts as agent on behalf of the 12 local area municipalities and has established administration and courtrooms to deal with charges laid under the *Provincial Offences Act* (POA)
- Through the guidance of committee and Council, the department is dedicated to the development of strategic human capital initiatives, programs, services and expertise for approximately 3000 employees in the areas of employee and labour relations, benefits and pensions, health services, recruitment and retention, training and development, organizational development, compensation and classification
- Enhances cost effectiveness and efficiencies for taxpayers through shared service initiatives with nine area municipalities and related boards/agencies

7.3 Integrated Community Planning

- Enhances the Niagara community's special characteristics through partnerships
- Responsible for development, conservation and environmental protection
- Achieves a higher quality of life for residents and visitors
- Provides policy direction to Regional Council on the protection of agricultural resources and the development of safe and healthy communities
- Ensures the annual Accessibility Plan addresses the provincial mandate
- Advances Council Business Plan themes by providing strategic, innovative and creative corporate communication services

- Provides support to Regional Council through the Office of the Regional Clerk as well as Council agenda and related materials to the public in various formats
- Supports planning legislation related to accessibility
- Provides economic and fiscal planning
- Incorporates Regional staff sensitivity and awareness training
- Promotes FADS to business and industry contacts
- Promotes awareness of the consumer power of persons with disabilities

7.4 Public Health

- Niagara Region Public Health is committed to the public health needs of our community. We demonstrate this commitment through health protection, disease prevention, health promotion, and injury prevention programs.
- Through our team of skilled health professionals, we work closely with our community to improve the social and physical environments where we live, learn, work, and play so residents can reach their full health potential



7.5 Public Works

- Provides safe potable water
- Ensures effective and safe treatment of sewage
- Manages the Waste Management Program in Niagara Region
- Develops and maintains a regional road network
- Road design and construction
- Road crossing protection and assistance
- Long, intermediate and short term transportation plan
- Inter-municipal specialized transit service

7.6 Economic Development

- Mandated to carry out activities to advance the economic prosperity of the Niagara community
- Designed to bring a more focused, strategic approach to the goals of creating jobs and working together with municipal and private sector partners
- Provides effective, innovative services to promote investment and visitation and provides business support services to attract, maintain, and increase jobs in Niagara



Section 8: Status and Updates by Other Organizations and Agencies

8.1 Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS)

- Review of the NRPS facilities has been undertaken to build a long-term accommodation strategy, using FADS as the accessibility guideline
- Future needs assessment of facilities to include accessibility and barrier recognition in tandem with future usage assessments
- New proposed Licensing By-law addresses accessible transportation
- Website is W3C compliant
- TTY service is available
- Customer service and other applicable regulations included in:
 - » Niagara Region training
 - » Officer education and training programs
 - » Existing and ongoing training programs and videos
 - » Video library (situational training) at police stations and the police training centre on Niagara College campus, including an eight-part training video series titled Police Response to Persons with Disabilities
 - » Orientation training includes content regarding the Ontario Human Rights Code and workplace harassment, which both include accessibility sensitivity and awareness components
 - » Customer service, *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC) and Integrated Accessibility Regulations (IAR) transportation training offered to taxi cab providers and drivers



8.2 Niagara Regional Housing (NRH)

- Improves facility accessibility on a continual basis
- Endorses the inclusion of accessibility planning into emergency preparedness initiatives
- Enhanced forms to be more user-friendly and available in alternate formats upon request
- Ensures availability of alternative formats for information and material
- Ensures special accommodations are available for meetings and events
- Special events are held at accessible venues
- Develops policies and procedures for AODA Customer Service compliance
- Encourages any new affordable housing to have at least 10 per cent of units designated as supportive housing units and/or strives to have at least 10 per cent of units built incorporating Universal Design Principles where possible

Under the Niagara Affordable Housing Programs, private sector and non-profit housing proponents, builders, and contractors were provided and encouraged to incorporate the FADS document.

- Design Consultation Committee established to provide input into new NRH-owned project includes representative from the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee
- All NRH-owned buildings converted to power door operators in foyers and lobbies
- All buildings have elevators with the exception of four smaller buildings under review
- Elevator buttons in hallways and inside elevators have been lowered
- Ramps are installed in family units, where structurally possible, upon request and at no charge to tenants
- Family units have audible/strobe fire alarms on all levels for persons with hearing disabilities
- Seniors' apartments have audible fire alarms, with visual strobe fire alarms/horns being placed inside apartment units and bedrooms of persons with hearing disabilities
- Seniors' apartments have grab bars and levered handles in all bathrooms, kitchens and entrance doors
- Grab bars are installed in family units upon request and at no charge
- All common areas/grounds have accessible parking spaces, curb cuts and ramps to entrance doors

- Continue to be guided by strategy documents such as “The Housing Strategy - People Needing Housing: A Collaborative Housing Strategy for the Niagara Community”, released in October 2004, which recommends a set of housing objectives including: ensure there is an accessible, adequate supply of affordable rental and ownership housing; and eliminate physical, social and economic barriers to all forms of housing
- Website updated to incorporate plain language and improve readability
- Communication materials and publications, including application forms developed with plain language guideline to improve readability
- Ongoing staff training



8.3 Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)

- Facility accessibility audit completed, prioritized facility improvements, including remedies and costs
- A checklist and reference guide was prepared by the Waterfront Regeneration Trust on the accessibility of outdoor facilities
- Accessibility improvement projects have included facilities at Ball's Falls, Long Beach, Binbrook and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas
- Regular upkeep of outdoor facilities include trail maintenance, ensuring that trails being advertised as accessible have adequate, packed screening pathways in good condition
- Glenridge Quarry and Elm Street Naturalization Sites include accessibility considerations for all undertakings
- FADS is used as the guiding document for accessibility along with Built Environment outdoor spaces regulations
- New sound system installed at Ball's Falls
- Programming now designed to remove barriers

Section 9: Initiatives 2012-2017

Initiative:	Budget Provisions Financial Planning
Department (reference Section 6.2):	All departments
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Council and budget allocations
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Customer Service Training
Department (reference Section 6.2):	All Departments <i>(Administered via Human Resources)</i> Integrated Community Planning, Clerk's Office Accessibility Advisory Coordinator
Barrier:	Attitudinal Communicational Policy/Practice
Resources/Comments:	Training to be organized by Human Resources representative, Accessibility Advisory Coordinator, Community Services representative and incorporated into the Corporate Orientation agenda.
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Completed Develop an in-house Customer Service training tool and necessary policies in compliance with the AODA's mandate of Customer Service Standard by January 1, 2010 for Corporation and January 1, 2012 for agencies, boards and commissions

Initiative:	Policy/Procedure
Department (reference Section 6.2):	All Departments Accessibility Advisory Coordinator CMT
Barrier:	Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise Incorporate accessibility considerations into policy/procedure
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing Incorporate outcomes from all AODA Standards as they become regulatory

Initiative:	Alternative format availability Information Technology
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Integrated Community Planning Corporate Communications which includes in-house creative services and web content review/internet communications
Barrier:	Attitudinal Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation (example; Regional materials available in alternative formats upon request, website regularly updated with accessible technologies, legible and clear writing for print products and print advertising) Staff are currently developing a manual of resources to assist with provision/delivery of alternate formats and accommodation resources as requested
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing Incorporate outcomes expected in the near future from the AODA's Information and Communication Standard

Initiative:	Develop Communications Standard
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Administration Integrated Community Planning Corporate Communications
Barrier:	Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation Continue to ensure accessible communication between departments, staff and particularly with the public to promote and enhance communication (example – document preparation, storage and distribution to use readable OCR PDF technology)
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing Incorporate outcomes expected in the near future from the AODA's Information and Communication Standard

Initiative:	TTY teletypewriters <i>(local and toll free TTY to main switchboard)</i>
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Corporate Services Community Services Public Health Integrated Community Planning- corporate communications - creative services
Barrier:	Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Ensure TTY contact information is included on website and on all published material Continue to monitor further customer service needs for any additional TTY service
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Accessibility Events
Department (reference Section 6.2):	All Accessibility Advisory Coordinator
Barrier:	Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Accessibility Advisory Coordinator supports events related to Regional accessibility
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Accessibility Legislation
Department (reference Section 6.2):	All
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Accessibility Advisory Coordinator: Ensures legislative compliance and implementation into practices Ensures review of draft AODA standards when issued Drafts Accessibility Plan as required for submission to Accessibility Advisory Committee and then Council
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) – Accessibility Guidelines
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Corporate Services – Facilities/Properties Management
Barrier:	Policy/Practice Architectural
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation, Accessibility Advisory Coordinator Promote FADS adoption to 12 municipalities within Niagara Region
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Niagara Region has now adopted the 2007 version of Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) Incorporate outcomes expected in the near future from the AODA’s Built Environment Standard

Initiative:	Facility Accessibility (new/existing, leased/owned)
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Corporate Services – Facilities/Properties Management
Barrier:	Architectural
Resources/Comments:	Use FADS as guideline for all improvements and as criteria for leasing and lease renewals
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Facility – Fire Alarms
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Corporate Services – Facilities/Properties Management
Barrier:	Communicational
Resources/Comments:	Add visual strobe to audible fire alarms Included in all new construction and retrofits of existing facilities
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing with scheduled renovations

Initiative:	Council Chambers
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Corporate Services – Facilities/Properties Management
Barrier:	Architectural
Resources/Comments:	Accessibility Improvements to Council Chambers
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Employment and Workplace Accommodation
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Human Resources
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise Practices and procedures to promote employment of persons with a disability Gain input from a corporate diversity team Continue support of workplace accessibility and accommodation for all departments
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Policy Plan Local Official Plans
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Integrated Community Planning
Barrier:	Policy/Practice
Resources/Comments:	Planning regulations and practices that mandate accessibility: <i>Planning Act 2005</i> , Section 2 (h1) Part VI, Policy 51(24) Provincial Policy Statement Section 1.1.1 (f) Regional Policy Plan Section 5, Urban Areas Approval authority for local official plans Reviewed from Regional and Provincial perspective to meet or exceed mandates in the provision of accessibility
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Regional Emergency Management, Emergency Evacuation and Emergency Shelters Public Education program
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Integrated Community Planning
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise, Red Cross, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation, stakeholders, Ontario's Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities or Special Needs Guide, 2007
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Road Construction/Sidewalk Construction
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Public Works
Barrier:	Architectural
Resources/Comments:	Review with FADS and Design of Public Spaces – Built Environment Standard as guiding documents Work in conjunction with municipalities as sidewalks are their responsibilities
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing

Initiative:	Road Crossing Protection (audible signals)
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Public Works
Barrier:	Architectural
Resources/Comments:	Technical sub-committee, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation, CNIB consultation, Integrated Community Planning and Public Works
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing Installation of new and replacement of existing traffic signals will comply with AODA requirements

Initiative:	Inter-Municipal Specialized Transit
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Public Works
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Staff expertise, Accessibility Advisory Committee consultation, community consultation Expanded medical trip criteria now includes employment and education
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing Incorporate AODA's Transportation Standard

Initiative:	Construction Projects and Snow Removal
Department (reference Section 6.2):	Public Works
Barrier:	All
Resources/Comments:	Consideration of barriers to accessibility during periods of construction or snow removal
Timeframe (Ongoing = initiated and continually addressed):	Ongoing



Section 10: Summary 2012-2017 Highlights

- Improve facility accessibility on a continual basis
- Ensure AODA legislation is incorporated into policies and practices
- Support the continued implementation of audible pedestrian signals at Regional traffic intersections
- Advocate for increased availability of accessible transportation
- Endorse the inclusion of accessibility planning into emergency preparedness initiatives
- Ensure availability of alternative formats for information and material
- Further the accessibility sensitivity/awareness and customer service training for staff, new hires and other members of obligated sectors
- Development and delivery of training for AODA Customer Service compliance, including Ontario Human Rights component – ongoing and included in new hire orientation



- FADS and Design of Public Spaces – Built Environment Standard continue to be adopted by area municipalities for use in their facilities. The use of FADS as a guideline for creating accessible environments is available to businesses and the general public. The Region recognizes the benefit of updating the FADS to a more current edition, however, is waiting until the Built Environment Standard becomes part of the AODA. Niagara Region encourages its use throughout the community. This document is available in the Living Section on the accessibility webpage at www.niagararegion.ca
- In November 2006, Niagara Region introduced its new inter-municipal specialized transit system, Niagara Specialized Transit (NST). Its success and use has grown monthly since that time. It was designed for eligible Niagara residents who need to travel between the Region's municipalities for medical appointments and thereafter expanded to include employment and education as well. During the period of January-December 2007 and January-December 2008, the ridership increased by 56 per cent. The increase was due to both the expanded trip criteria and public awareness of the availability of this service. Information details and applications are available at www.nstniagara.ca.
- The program for the placement of audible pedestrian signals (APS), as identified, was continued. APS installations provide added safety to persons who are blind, or have low vision, crossing at these signals (e.g. Glenridge Ave. pedestrian crossing linking Brock University's Main Campus with its East Academic Campus) Funding has been approved to continue with installations at locations identified by the CNIB. There is sufficient budget available to complete approximately eight intersections which have been prioritized by the Accessibility Committee and the CNIB
- Customer Service Standard training continues with a focus on compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)*
- Establish feedback line for accessibility-related issues on Region's website
- Increased Regional department staff representation to the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and staff committees to address AAC concerns and issues. Representation now includes Niagara Regional Housing, Niagara Regional Police Service as well as Facilities, Integrated Community Planning, Corporate Communications, Community Services, Transportation, Public Health and Human Resources
- Inventoried communication materials that must be made available in accessible formats
- Website updated to incorporate plain language and improved readability

- Communication materials developed with plain language guideline and larger fonts
- Timeline developed to establish compliance with AODA Standards as they are introduced into the Act
- Redrafted housing options to include specific accessibility requirements (both partial and full modifications)
- Special events hosted in accessible venues - AAC meetings - October 2012 Perspectives on Accessibility brought speakers from around North America to offer their thoughts and ideas

