

# TOWN OF MARKHAM

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

"RECOGNIZING THE RICH DIVERSITY OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM, THE CORPORATION IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY ACCESSIBLE SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES THROUGH COMPLIANCE WITH THE *ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT*"



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

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## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* is to “improve opportunities for persons with disabilities by comprehensively identifying, removing and preventing barriers to their participation in the life of the jurisdictions of [those] governments”. The Act requires that each municipality address barriers and opportunities for its residents with special needs by preparing an annual accessibility plan and establishing an accessibility advisory committee.

Markham has had an accessibility advisory committee in place for more than ten years. For six years, Markham has had guidelines in place for the retrofit and construction of municipal facilities, addressing the needs of people with disabilities.

The purpose of this Accessibility Plan is to provide a focus for the Town’s initiatives in implementing standards for the provision of services to persons with disabilities, to improve the quality of these services and to facilitate people with disabilities participating in Markham’s local government and availing themselves of the services offered by Markham.

The Plan sets out the Accessibility Objectives for the Town’s Commissions by Department and Division. The implementation of the plan and the achievement of these objectives will enhance the Town’s commitment to its residents to provide accessible services and programs.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Markham is the largest of nine communities in York Region with a population of approximately 250,000, and a land area 211.53 square kilometres. By 2022, Markham will be home to approximately 326,000 people. The Town is a blend of four communities: Markham Village, Unionville, Milliken and Thornhill and is located just north of Toronto in Ontario, Canada. The Town is well known as "Canada's HIGH-TECH Capital" for our technology companies.

### HISTORY

When Upper and Lower Canada were established in 1791, John Graves Simcoe was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. Simcoe named the Township of Markham, north of the Town of York (now Toronto), after his friend, William Markham, the Archbishop of York.

In 1794, William Berczy led 75 German families from New York State to Markham Township. Each was granted 200 acres. Because of hardships, many returned to York and Niagara. In 1797, because of the revolution in France. (1789), many nobility fled the country and set off for Canada to take advantage of free land grants in Upper Canada. They were totally unprepared for survival under such crude conditions and most of them returned to their homeland.

From 1803 - 1812, the largest group of settlers were Pennsylvania Germans, most of whom were Mennonites. These highly skilled craftsmen and knowledgeable farmers had the best chance for survival because they had already survived harsh conditions in Pennsylvania. From 1830 on, many Irish, Scottish and English emigrated to Upper Canada to escape the famine and overpopulation of their homeland.

Markham's early years blended the rigours of homesteading with the development of agricultural-based industries. The many rivers and streams in the Township soon supported water-powered saw and grist mills, and later woollen mills.

With improved transportation routes, such as Yonge Street and the growing population, urbanization increased. By 1857 most of the Township had been cleared of timber and was under cultivation. Villages like Thornhill, Unionville and Markham greatly expanded and new, specialized industries such as wagon works, tanneries, farm implement and furniture factories sprang up.

In 1871, the Toronto and Nipissing Railway Company, with stations in Unionville and Markham, officially opened its line from Scarborough to Uxbridge. Initially, the railway brought renewed prosperity and rapid development. Farmers and millers had a more convenient means of transporting their products to Toronto. Other merchants had easier access to supplies and business boomed.

The first form of structured municipal government occurred in 1850 when the Township of Markham was created. On November 20, 1872, the Warden of York County signed the By-law of Incorporation, which provided for the election of a Council for the Village of Markham. The Village of Markham grew to a population of 1100 by 1891.

The increased communication with Toronto brought on by the railway and further enhanced by the development of the telegraph, the telephone and the automobile,

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ultimately led to the demise of the villages in the Township after the turn of the century. Local industries were simply unable to compete with the larger manufacturers and suppliers of Toronto, and Markham soon reverted to a quiet, rural community.

From 1945 onward, the face of Markham began to change rapidly. It was no longer a community whose inhabitants worked mainly within the area. It evolved into a community for those who commuted to work in Toronto. As a result, rural Markham disappeared in the face of tremendous urban growth.

By 1969, the Township of Markham consisted of several villages, including Markham, Unionville, and parts of Thornhill. In 1971, the Regional Municipality of York was established. Northern portions of Markham Township were annexed to the municipalities of Richmond Hill and Whitchurch-Stouffville, while the balance of Markham Township was incorporated in the Town of Markham and the present Town boundaries set.

In 1976, Markham's population was approximately 56,000. Since that time, the population has more than tripled to 235,000. Through this change and growth, many reminders of Markham's roots endure. Still rich in fertile farmland, it stands as Canada's pre-eminent high technology centre, known worldwide for innovative products and services.

### **MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT**

The Council of the Town of Markham is composed of the Mayor, four Regional Councillors and eight local Councillors, representing eight wards. Council governs the business of the Town through meetings of committees and Council. The main standing committees of Council are:

- Development Services Committee
- General Committee

Town Administration is divided into three commissions and the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. The three commissions are:

- Corporate Services
- Community and Fire Services
- Development Services

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### **THE ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005**

According to Statistics Canada, approximately 16% of Ontarians (1.9 Million) have disabilities. The number of disabled persons increases with an aging population and it is estimated that by 2020, one in five persons in Ontario will be disabled. Disabilities are usually permanent, but can be temporary and episodic. Disabilities can be:

- **Sensory:** affecting, for example, vision or hearing
- **Neurological:** affecting a person's ability to control their movements, for example, epilepsy
- **Physical:** affecting mobility or a person's ability to use their upper or lower body
- **Intellectual:** affecting a person's judgment, ability to learn and communicate
- **Cognitive:** affecting a person's thought processes, personality and memory resulting from, for example, an injury to the brain
- **Psychiatric:** affecting a person's emotions, thought processes and behaviour, for example, schizophrenia and manic depression

The consequences of such disabilities are barriers to everyday activities such as climbing stairs, reading, hearing and participating in meetings. Barriers may be physical (such as the presence of stairs) or systemic (such as a lack of staff awareness to the needs of disabled patrons or the exclusion of persons with disabilities in recreational programs). Barriers may be overcome, in many cases, by modifications to facilities and programming designed to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.

Services provided by local governments impact directly on the quality of life of all people within the community, especially for many persons with disabilities.

The ***Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001 (ODA)*** is a provincial act that requires the provincial, regional and municipal levels of government as well as public sector organizations such as hospitals, universities and school boards to review their policies, programs and services through the development of annual accessibility plans. The purpose of the ODA is to improve the opportunities for persons with disabilities by comprehensively identifying, removing and preventing barriers to their participation in public-sector programs and activities.

The ODA also requires that municipalities with populations greater than 10,000 to establish accessibility advisory committees, with at least 50% of the members being persons with disabilities.

On May 10, 2005, the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*** received Royal Assent. More comprehensive in scope than the ODA, the AODA will, over time, develop standards of accessibility that apply to both the public and private

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sectors. Until the recommendations of the various standards committees are reviewed and approved (which may take several months or more), the provisions of the ODA will continue remain in force for the public sector.

In 2003, a team of representatives from the Corporate Services Commission, Community and Fire Services Commission, Development Services Commission, Human Resources Department and Legal Department was established to coordinate the preparation of the Markham Accessibility Plan as required by the Act.

Commissions and Department were asked to identify the accessibility challenges they had addressed in the past, the current accessibility challenges they are addressing and the additional accessibility challenges they foresee. Those challenges are set out in this Plan. This Plan shall be in effect for a period of one year from the date of Council's adoption. The Plan shall be updated annually.

Members of the Markham Accessibility Plan Working Group are:

Shirley Marsh	Planner, Urban Design Development Services Commission	(905)477-7000, Ext. 6900
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Nancy Marchant	Senior Employee and Labour Relations Specialist Human Resources Department	(905) 477-7000, Ext. 2412
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For further information regarding this Plan, please contact:

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### **GOALS**

The purpose of this Accessibility Plan is to provide a focus for the Town's initiatives in implementing standards for the provision of services to persons with disabilities, to improve the quality of these services and to allow people with disabilities to participate in Markham's local government and avail themselves of the services offered by Markham.

Goals for the provision of services to persons with disabilities should be developed to ensure accountability and measurability in the provision of these services:

#### **Every person with a disability should:**

- have access to the Town's services based on relative need and availability of resources
- receive services designed to meet his or her needs and personal objectives
- have the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in municipal government and decisions about the delivery of services he or she receives
- have their right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality recognized and respected
- be supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in the life of the community
- have opportunities to develop and maintain skills that enable him or her to achieve their goals in the community
- have an opportunity and forum to raise concerns or issues with respect to the delivery of services.

Achievement of these goals is dependent upon cooperation between all levels of government, the private sector, the public represented by communities and persons who are disabled. The Town's commitment to removing barriers and increasing opportunities for persons who are disabled is embodied in the following mission statement:

**"RECOGNIZING THE RICH DIVERSITY OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM, THE CORPORATION IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE SERVICES TO ALL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES THROUGH COMPLIANCE WITH THE ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT."**

### **MARKHAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY**

Markham has responded to the challenge of ensuring accessibility to Markham facilities and services for disabled persons for many years by initiating studies, implementing programs and retrofitting facilities.



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In 1991, Markham established a Task Force on Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities which later became the Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility. In 1995, a joint Accessibility Advisory Committee for Regional Transit was established with Markham participation.

The Act requires that a majority of the members of the Committee include persons with disabilities. The Act requires that the Committee advise the council about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan. The Advisory Committee on Accessibility reviews the draft Plan on an annual basis and its comments on the Plan are incorporated for consideration by Council in the final approval of the Plan.

In addition, the Committee is to provide Council with its advice on accessibility for persons with disabilities to buildings that Council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates, or leases, or a building that is provided to council as a municipal capital facility.

Markham's Advisory Committee on Accessibility has established its terms of reference, which are attached as Appendix B. The Committee reports to Council through the Town's Community Services and Environment Committee on a wide range of accessibility issues including site plans for municipal facilities, recreational programming needs and initiatives, parking and transit, and facility retrofit capital projects.

In accordance with the provisions of the Act, at least half the members of the Committee have disabilities. Members of the Committee are:

Ted Chivers  
Sidney Polak  
Theresa Kahn  
Michael Kahn  
Prescott Harrison  
Leila Abboud  
Robert Hunn, Chair  
Vito Bigioni  
Bill Broker (Participation House)  
Carole Robertson (NFB Representative)

Regional Councillor Jack Heath

Alan Wolfe, Staff Resource

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### **MARKHAM MOBILITY FOUNDATION**

In 1983, the Town, by Council resolution, authorized the establishment of the Markham Transit for the Disabled Charitable Foundation. The Foundation is a separate legal entity from the Town of Markham, being a non-share corporation incorporated by Letters of Patent issued March 23, 1983, pursuant to the *Corporations Act of Ontario*. The Foundation is managed by a board as follows:

Jean-Anne Dodge	Bob Mansour
Bob Sherwood	Vivienne Hansford
Glenn Reid	Tom Gove
Don Gordon	Gary Kay
Linda Doyle	Enzo Morini
Bonnie Leonard	Ralph Davidson
James Li	Tony Masongsong
Jason La Londe	Paul Kay
Carole Bell	Rick Dominico
Regional Councillor Bill O'Donnell	

The Foundation's mandate is to organize and operate a charitable organization to provide transportation to persons with disabilities in the Town of Markham on a non-profit basis. The Foundation's activities have primarily been confined to raising funds to help offset the cost of purchasing new vehicles for the former Markham Mobility Bus Service. Over \$600,000 has been raised since the Foundation was established, which has been contributed primarily to the purchase of new wheelchair accessible buses and vans.

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### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Clerk's Department**

The Clerk's Department is responsible for providing secretariat support to Council and its Committees, administering municipal elections, vital event registrations, records management, Corporate-wide printing and mail services and By-Law Enforcement and Licensing. The Clerk's Department provides services to Council, staff and residents of the Town of Markham. In order to ensure that all residents have access to Council and Committee decisions, a process was established whereby all Council and Committee agendas, complete with reports, and the minutes are available on the website. As well, the meetings are audio streamed and residents are able to listen to them live over the net.

The primary role of the Clerk's Department is driven by provincial legislation, most notably *The Municipal Act*, *The Municipal Elections Act*, *The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Planning Act*. The Department provides administrative support to Council and its Committees and ensures that all of the actions taken by Council are recorded and communicated.

One of the important functions of the Clerk's Department is the co-ordination and management of the municipal elections. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, every three years the Town Clerk as Returning Officer, conducts elections for the offices of: Mayor, Regional Councillors, Councillors, York Region District School Board Trustees, York Catholic District School Board Trustees, Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest Trustee and Conseil Scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud Trustee. Ensuring accessibility by the physically disabled has always been a challenge and even though the Town of Markham met the legislative mandate, the product was not up to the Town of Markham service level. Similarly, requests for the ability for visually impaired to be able to vote by themselves has been a challenge.

In the past, every poll location that was used was accessible for the physically disabled. Voting by the visually impaired was accommodated by either the Deputy Returning Officer assisting the elector or by authorizing a friend by oath to assist the elector.

In 2003, the Town of Markham implemented the use of touch screen voting machines for the visually impaired. This is an audio program that leads the elector through the voting process. In addition, the Town of Markham introduced the option of voting online over the internet during the advance polling days. This is a vast improvement over previous elections whereby the only method of ensuring accessibility was to choose accessible buildings. Seniors and the physically disabled will no longer find it necessary to go out, especially during inclement weather, to cast their vote.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

Another important service of the Clerk's Department is the registration of vital events. This is the registration of births and deaths and the issuance of burial permits and marriage licences.

One of the major customer service divisions of the Clerk's Department is the Enforcement and Licensing Division. Currently By-Law Enforcement Officers provide proactive enforcement services for all of Markham's regulatory and licensing by-laws.

### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

1. Ensuring residents access to relevant information and Council actions
2. Ensuring residents the ability to participate in local government
3. Ensuring accessibility

### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

1. Implement a wireless hearing assist system in the Council Chamber for persons with hearing impairment
2. Implement internet broadcasting of Council meetings
3. Post all Committee and Council agendas, reports and minutes on the Town's website
4. Applications for licences posted on the website
5. Applications for vital event registrations and marriage licences posted on the website
6. Provide access to voters in the municipal elections through touch screen voting for the visually impaired and internet voting for the physically challenged and seniors
7. Amend the Parking By-Law to provide for a minimum \$300 fine for parking in a spot designated for the disabled without a permit
7. Require sensitivity training for taxi drivers in handling clients who are blind or physically disabled

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES:**

1. Lower all counters in the Clerk's Department.
2. Make representations to the Canadian Hearing Society to engage their services to provide for "signing" at public meetings

### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Clerk's Department**

### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Ensure an equal level of service for the visually impaired elector.	Inability of persons visually impaired to vote on their own accord. Previously required either assistance by the D.R.O. or, by oath of a friend	Touch Screen Voting. Part of an integrated system of voting.	2006	
Ensure an equal level of service for the physically challenged and for seniors.	Difficulty in securing accessible facilities. Weather plays a major role for seniors and the physically disabled in municipal elections Difficulty accessing transactions at the Town Centre	Internet Voting. Part of an integrated system of voting	2006	On target
		Lowered the Parking and Licensing Counters.	2005	Complete
Ensure all residents in the Town of Markham have access to public information and to the services provided	Distance necessary to travel for information	Website Improvements: Post all Committee/Council agendas, reports and minutes; Post all licence applications; Post applications for birth certificates and marriage licences Implemented internet broadcasting of Council meetings	2005	Complete

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Easy access for the physically challenged resident in and around the Town	Insufficient handicapped parking available	Amend Parking By-Law to provide for minimum \$300 fine for parking in a designated disabled parking spot		Complete
Provide easy access to services for all residents in Markham	Clerk's counter too high	Request Capital Assets Management to include sufficient funds in 2006 capital budget to facilitate the lowering of the counters in the Clerk's Area.	2006/2007	
Ensure seniors and the disabled are treated with respect	Untrained taxi drivers	Provide sensitivity training	2006/2007	
Ensure access and simplify the election process	Inclement weather Both visual and physical barriers	Plans for 2006 election to include both internet and touch screen voting. Taxis will be made available for the transport of visually impaired to use the touch screen voting method.	2006	

### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Information Technology Services**

Information Technology Services (ITS) supports the Corporation in its efforts to provide effective public services and maintain efficient government operations through appropriate and innovative application of Information Technologies. Headed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO), the Department has been recently re-structured into three divisions:

- **Application and GIS (Geographic Information Systems)**
- **Client Delivery**
- **Technology**

#### **Applications and GIS Division**

The Applications & GIS division works with departments and other internal IT divisions to evaluate, acquire, implement and support enterprise-wide software and services, as well as having responsibility for setting up the web infrastructure. It is also responsible for setting GIS standards and providing a wide range of GIS services to the corporation.

Applications & GIS has four functioning teams:

- **Applications and Support**
- **Data Management (Centre for GIS)**
- **Data Production (Centre for GIS)**
- **Web Development**

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **The Applications and Web Support Team:**

- Evaluates, acquires and implements software applications for the corporation based on business unit needs and requirements
- Provides application support for enterprise systems, and internal and external web sites as required by the Helpdesk and/or user departments
- Develops small scale software applications, including web applications, as needed by business units in an effort to fulfill specific business requirements
- Establishes technical standards for applications, the web and in-house developments
- Works closely with the Data Management and the Data Production teams as well as other ITS staff

### **The Data Management Team:**

- Manages both spatial and aspatial data and databases for the corporation, including data storage, restoration, security, availability, performance, etc.
- Sets data standards in consultation with impacted departments in an effort to create and maintain consistency and accuracy of data and datasets
- Converts data into information by understanding corporate and departmental information needs and delivers value from data that exists within the organization
- Closely works with the Applications Support and Data Production teams as well as other ITS staff

### **The Data Production Team:**

- Creates and maintains corporate datasets (Street network, Land parcel files, orthophotography, digital elevation model, and other data sets) for the corporation
- Provides GIS data support to GIS and other corporate systems, provides support to desktop and mobile GIS applications (GPS)
- Understands the data needs of the corporation and creates and maintains data sets as needed to satisfy a business need
- Provides GIS maps to internal and external clients, as well as GIS technical support to other users as required
- Closely works with the Applications Support and Data Management teams as well as other ITS staff



## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **Client Delivery Division**

Client Delivery works with clients in all Town's departments to address and implement information technology needs and applications that enhance the Town's service delivery. This division is also responsible for establishing and implementing service improvement programs.

Client Delivery has three functioning teams,

- **Service Desk**
- **Client Advisory**
- **Project Management**

The **Help Desk** Team:

- Acts as the first and single point of contact for the internal clients to report information technologies related incidents and obtain resolution of various technical issues.
- Takes full ownership of all incidents from the time that they are reported and are responsible for the prompt delivery of satisfactory resolutions, either by resolving the situation over the phone or dispatching a technician for rectification at site

The **Client Advisory** Team:

- Develops partnerships with Client Departments in addressing business needs. Coordinate with other divisions to research, evaluate and recommend implementation of IT best practices and solutions
- Assists the Client Departments in preparing business cases, annual IT Tactical Work Plan and budgeting for IT related projects.
- Prepares and administers Service Level Agreements (SLA) between ITS and user departments

The **Project Delivery** Team:

- Establishes IT Project Management Standards, Procedures and Methodologies
- Prepares and manages IT Divisional annual work plan.
- Establishes Corporate ITS Project implementation schedule
- Manages ITS Corporate projects for delivery

### **Technology Division**

Technology Division works with all Town's departments to ensure that all platforms of technologies are able to cohabitate in the Town's standard computing environment. Technology currently covered includes network infrastructure, telecommunications, computers, and desktop productivity hardware and software.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

Technology Division has three functioning teams that work closely with clients in resolving technology issues and to minimize disruption to their daily operation:

- **Network Infrastructure**
- **Telephone Support**
- **Integration and Support**

The **Network Infrastructure** Team:

- Designs and administrates local and wide area networks, including security, server maintenance, data backup and restoration, intrusion detection and virus protection

The **Telephony Support** Team:

- Maintains optimum telephony operation and security of phone switches and voicemail systems, including capacity planning, call centre support, cellular and paging technology, and voicemail administration

The **Integration and Support** Team:

- Distributes and supports desktop technologies, including desktop and laptop computers, printers, Personal Digital Assistants, such as Palm Pilots and Pocket PCs, and digital imaging technology, such as scanners, projectors, digital camera, and digital video recorders
- Monitors and ensures technology licensing requirements are met
- Plans, implements and supports audio-visual technology in public meeting rooms and council chamber

### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES:**

- Ensure that physical disabilities do not impair Town residents' abilities to access information easily
- Ensure look and feel of all computers in the Town is similar with accessibility features installed on each and every machine, so that staff with physical disabilities are not discouraged from computer usage

### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- Ensure that information on computer screens can be easily read by the visually impaired
- Ensure use of computer keyboards is made as easy as possible for those who are physically disabled
- Ensure equal opportunity for all residents of the Town to participate in or be kept abreast of Town Council issues

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- Further enhance convenience of access to computer content for the physically or visually impaired
- Innovate and introduce accessibility aware computer content

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### Information Technology Services

#### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Ensure all residents can access public information easily	Disabled persons are not as mobile and cannot travel long distances for information.	Web enabled much of the Town's information and implemented continual web-site improvements and updates on council meetings and reports.		Complete
Standardize on Windows 2000	System applications and features not fully accessible to the visually impaired or persons with special needs.	Upgrade to and ensure Windows 2000 is used as operating system platform with all accessibility features installed and available to users.		Complete
Ensure staff can work remotely	Staff may be incapable of traveling to work when disabled.	Upgrade Citrix access to allow authorized users to remotely connect to the Town's intranet to facilitate alternative work arrangements.		Complete

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Facilitate easy reading of print by the visually impaired at public kiosk	Impaired vision – client unable to read screen content comfortably	Provide Magnifier application in Windows for easy reading		Complete
Ensure all residents have an equal chance to participate in municipal affairs	Disabled persons are not as mobile and cannot travel long distances to vote especially during inclement weather	Introducing Internet voting to ensure disability does not discourage or prevent participation in election		Complete
	Impaired Hearing – Persons unable to hear public meeting in Canada Room properly	Retrofit audio (and visual) system in Canada Room to resolve issues		Complete
Respect voters' wish for privacy when voting	Empower visually impaired voters so that they do not rely on third persons	Implementing touch-screen voting		Complete
Provide easy access to computer content for visually impaired for staff and public kiosk	Content not easily readable by persons with poor vision	Investigate Narrator technology. Narrator is a text-to-speech utility for users who are blind or have impaired vision. Narrator reads what is displayed on the screen. This technology is currently available however, not mature enough yet.		Complete

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OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Facilitate easy typing for the physically impaired at public kiosk	Impaired mobility – client has difficulty using more than one finger to type on occasion	Enable sticky keys - this feature is handy for people who have difficulty pressing 2 keyboard keys simultaneously		Complete
	Typing on keyboard is difficult for persons with impaired mobility	Investigate alternative solutions (voice to text conversion etc.)		Complete
	Typing on keyboard is difficult for persons with wrist strain and impaired mobility	Supply ergonomic keyboard – A keyboard that is designed to minimize strain on the wrist.		Complete
Provide touch-screen capable applications where possible for public kiosk	Persons find it difficult to maneuver through pull-down menus or have physical difficulties using a mouse because of impaired mobility & diminished perception	Install and setup Touch-screen terminals at various low-height kiosks	2007	
Standardization of document format which is voice recognition software compatible for staff	Voice recognition software limitations	Investigate voice recognition technology to feed data. This technology is currently available but not deemed to be mature enough yet	2007	
Ensure document, web and application screens are colour blind friendly	Persons cannot see content clearly because they are colour blind	Increase contrast and avoid use of known problem colour combinations (such as red and green, blue and yellow etc.)		Complete

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Investigate voice activated services	Persons with impaired vision unable to call-in and listen to Council and Committee meetings	Consult with Telco/software providers and stakeholders	2006	
Review Town's web-site to make it more accessible	Web-site needs to be navigable easily by users with disabilities	Work on website improvement to W3C level 2 in order to facilitate better use and navigation	2006	

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Finance Department**

##### **Department Functions/Services/Facilities/Users**

- Services include Accounts Payable & Receivable, Payroll, Financial Reporting, Financial Planning, Development Finance and Purchasing.
- Users are primarily internal. External clients are met at the Purchasing counter. They include developers submitting payments, proponents picking up or dropping off bid documents and clients for Accounts Receivable/Payable picking up or dropping off payments.

##### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- Purchasing counter is not accessible. Plans are currently underway to address this issue



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Finance Department

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Make the Purchasing Department more accessible	Purchasing counter	Direct all clients to the Contact Centre on the ground level Contact Centre staff will be able to serve existing external clients Remove the purchasing counter		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Finance Department**

#### **ASSESSMENT**

Provide public access to property assessment information as required by the Assessment Act

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES:**

Assessment information was accessed in an area located in the Clerk's Department on the main floor prior to the year 2002. It was relocated to the Finance Department in 2002 on the lower level near the foot of the stairs. The area in the Clerk's department was wider and provided more area for movement than the current area does.

#### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES:**

It is anticipated that the entrance to the dedicated area may be too narrow and would not facilitate a wheelchair. This area should be studied with respect to wheelchair accessibility.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Finance Department – Assessment

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
To undertake a study of the Assessment Room to determine whether improved accessibility can be accommodated.	The room itself is long and narrow and although a wheelchair may be able to gain entrance there is not sufficient room to manoeuvre,	Undertake a study.	2004	Complete
		Move Assessment Room upstairs for easier access.	2005	Complete

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Finance Department**

#### **TAX CASHIERS**

##### **Department Functions/Services/Facilities/Users**

- Cashiers/Tax Information
- Cashiers Counter/Tax Information is located on the main level inside the Thornhill doors
- Provides all cashiering services - payment for tax, parking fines, and provides property tax information and responds to inquiries.

##### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

In 2002, tax office was moved from the lake level to the cashiers area on the main floor to provide "one stop shopping"

##### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Cashiers/ tax counter is not wheelchair accessible, and, if necessary, staff will leave their work area behind the counter to assist a client.

##### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Counter needs to be remodeled to make it more user friendly, particularly with respect to wheelchair accessibility. Counter level needs to be lowered and, for at least part of it, the counter top must be wide enough to allow a wheelchair sufficient room to get close enough to allow the person to use it to write cheques and conduct other business.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
To provide residents with a single location to get tax information and make payments	Tax Information counter was on the lake level and cashiers on the main level. This required residents to go to both levels to complete their business	Most tax staff from the lake level were moved into the cashiers area on the main floor in 2002 to provide "one stop shopping"		Complete
To make cash counter on the main level more accessible, especially for wheelchairs	Cashiers Counter/ Tax Information Counter	Remodel counter to provide more access by lowering it and making it wheelchair accessible	2007	

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Planning and Urban Design Department**

The Planning and Urban Design Department activities relate to long range strategic planning and current development control: formulation of plans, policies, regulations and guidelines on land use, development, urban design and growth management; processing and evaluation of development applications; data collection, analysis, research and monitoring on land use, planning policy and growth related matters; digital mapping related functions; community outreach, liaison and information dissemination.

The functions of the department include the administration of the Planning Act, implementation of the Official Plan and Zoning by-laws, processing of development applications such subdivision plans, site plans, zoning amendments, minor variances and land severances. Furthermore, the Urban Design Section is involved with the review of Community Design Plan, advises on design issues, built form, architectural control, landscape architectural matters, approval of park plans, design, construction, inspection, environmental planning, protection and enhancement.

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Our services are used by the general public, residents, developers, builders, and consultants such as engineers, planners, architects, and landscape architects.

Prior to 1998, there were no Accessibility Guidelines to implement, and as a result standards were not consistently applied when reviewing development applications. As the Guidelines are now available for our reference, we have a more consistent approach to the review of development applications by different planners ensuring that accessibility requirements are addressed. These include appropriate park design, sidewalk width, paving material, slope/grading, curb cuts, parking spaces, and other features.

#### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

We constantly strive to improve the quality of the built environment to increase accessibility for all groups. Through experiences from past projects or site designs that did not work, we are improving on design in new developments in order to make them as barrier free as possible. We take extra care and effort to work with developers, property owners and agents to come up with the best possible site plans and landscape plans to meet the needs for all.

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

The Accessibility Guidelines that we apply are not mandatory requirements for all development applicants to follow. As such, sometimes due to financial difficulties or other competing interests; some accessibility criteria are being omitted. It is our hope that the attitude “accessibility for all” becomes increasingly accepted as the normal expectation for site development.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### Planning and Urban Design Department

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Develop accessibility guidelines and standards for application through review of development applications	No standards were being followed or applied consistently during review of development applications	Accessibility Guidelines completed by York Region in 1998 and have been consistently applied to the review of site plans and landscape plans		Complete
Review accessibility issues for development projects with the Accessibility Advisory Committee	Lacked input and ideas from users, on development projects	Take public projects to the Accessibility Committee for review and to receive input (projects taken included Markham Centre plans, Angus Glen Community Centre, Markham Museum Visitor Centre, Centennial and Thornhill Community centre additions)		Complete
Educate the public and the development industry about accessibility standards and guidelines	Public and developers lacking knowledge about accessibility standards and guidelines	Provide any literature, publications, information on standards and guidelines available at the counter to the public and the development industry	2006 and ongoing	



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Encourage barrier-free design within any site developments	Inaccessible sites due to the lack of wheelchair ramps	Exempt wheelchair ramps that promote accessibility from setback requirements Enacted in 1992		Complete
Encourage adequate supply and range of housing to meet diverse needs	Access to appropriate housing	Official Plan policies re supply and range of housing for those with special needs. Addressing accessibility through high density development, primarily focused on transit accessibility within Markham Centre and along Hwy 7 corridor		Complete
Improve accessibility to public transportation	Access to public transportation	Official Plan policies re improving accessibility to public transportation		Complete
Provide improved accessibility to Town public parks and play facilities	Limited accessibility to existing Town parks and play facilities	All new parks are designed to be accessible. Certain play facilities(3-5) Town-wide are designed to be fully accessible (Bishop's Cross, Centennial, Milliken Mills)		Complete
Develop site circulation and parking layout that promotes accessibility for 'all'	No parking spaces available or accessible for people with disabilities	Parking by-law with requirement for handicapped spaces By-law enacted in 1997		Complete
Monitor and assess success of Guidelines	Work with users and residents to identify barriers	Review completed projects against "Guidelines and standards"	2006 and ongoing	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Establish accessibility checklist for review of completed projects	Staff to identify the barriers	Accessibility issues to be part of the inspection process Request added staffing to address accessibility review and issues	2006 and 2007	Checklist Complete
Learn by example what other places have done to accommodate universal accessible designs	Educate staff, developers, applicants of innovative ideas, designs, and best practices from other locations	Research and develop "best practices" manual for universal accessible designs	2006 and ongoing	
Improved district team communication to ensure a seamless review process among planners, landscape planners, engineers and inspectors	Communication barrier among the design professionals to achieve accessible site planning and designs (i.e. engineering grading plan and it's implications on ramps and pathway slopes)	Development district teams to attend team building and communication workshops, considering the change or turn-over of team members. Team leader / coordinator to facilitate and enforce efficient communication within each team	2005 and on-going	
Incorporate accessibility planning as part of the overall community planning and design	Identify and address barriers with developers, community groups relating to transit, road layout, traffic circulation, land uses, etc.	Incorporate accessibility standards and requirements as part of draft plan approval conditions and subdivision agreements	2006 and ongoing	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Learn and incorporate ideas, comments, and input from disabled persons into the planning and design process	Lack of input and ideas from users on development projects	Public projects to be reviewed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee for consultation and comments	As required and ongoing	
Work towards making accessibility guidelines a mandatory requirement in Site Plan Review process	Achieve developers' "buy-in" to Accessibility Guidelines	Develop Town by-law to make accessibility standards mandatory requirements Pursue changes to the Planning Act	2006	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION**

##### **Engineering Department**

Responsible for engineering approvals of all new development projects (such as site plans and subdivisions).

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Accessibility Challenges have mainly been related to sidewalk availability and design and street intersection designs.

#### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

With recent revisions (such as sidewalk on one side of all local roads and revisions to sidewalk criteria) to the Town's standards, we have improved accessibility in new development within the Town.

### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Improve sidewalk Intersection Design	Curb Depression requirements and max. grades of sidewalks and path ways	Criteria revised and provided to consultants for all new subdivision designs in Markham	Design criteria approved May 2004	complete

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Building Department**

The Building Department is primarily responsible for enforcing the Ontario Building Code on behalf of the Town. Our customers present at the public counter inside the Milliken entrance of the Civic Centre, are met at their own occupied premises or are served on job sites. The Building Code includes requirements for barrier-free design and in our enforcement capacity, we become involved in the construction of facilities required to incorporate such provisions.

#### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Improvements could be made to public counters to improve their convenience to persons confined to wheelchairs. The popularity of motorized “scooters” may impose demands on facilities that comply with wheelchair-based standards.

### **COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

The Community and Fire Services Commission include departments designed to serve and protect the people of Markham and to make Markham a vibrant place to live, work and play. The departments are,

- Asset Management
- Recreation and Culture
- Fire Services
- Construction and Utilities
- Parks Construction
- Strategic Services
- Libraries

Programs and facilities include a wide range of services geared towards public safety, public works, recreation and culture activities. The following outlines the varied approach of each department within the Community and Fire Services Commission.

#### **DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

##### **Asset Management Department**

Asset Management administers and maintains 135 buildings totaling over 1,500,000 square feet including the Civic Centre, community centres, fire stations, libraries, and cultural and heritage facilities. Asset Management intends to manage these facilities by developing and implementing strategies and operating standards to attain optimal use for all members of the public.

##### **Recreation and Culture**

Recreation and Culture operate 22 recreation facilities (community centres, pools and fitness centres) and 30 cultural sites (Markham Theatre for Performing Arts, Markham Museum, The Frederick Horsman Varley Art Gallery of Markham and The Kathleen Gormley McKay Art Centre) throughout the Town. The Museum site comprises 26 heritage buildings. Recreational programs are provided in the facilities for the residents of Markham.

##### **Fire Services Department**

The 7 firehalls throughout the Town provide fire safety and emergency services to the residents of the Town of Markham. The Fire Department also provides safety instruction and life saving programs.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **Construction and Utilities Department**

This department is responsible for the construction of new facilities and the delivery of utilities to the residents of the Town of Markham.

### **Parks Construction Department**

The Parks Department maintains the many parks and boulevards throughout the Town. Their responsibilities include playgrounds, parks maintenance, ball diamonds, soccer fields and streetscapes.

### **Street Services Department**

Street Services Department maintains the many roads in the Town of Markham. They are responsible for street lighting, pavement repairs, parking lots, signage, snow clearing and traffic controls.

### **Strategic Services Department**

Strategic Services acts as a vehicle for public input into Town programs, services and facilities through partnerships and liaisons with municipal government.

## **JOINT MUNICIPAL GUIDELINES**

In July of 1997, the Joint Municipal Guidelines for Accessibility Working Group, of the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan, appointed Associated Planning Consultants Inc. of Toronto, to prepare a set of comprehensive Accessibility Guidelines for the three communities, which met or exceeded current accessibility requirements identified in the Ontario Building Code (part 3.8) and the C.S.A. Barrier Free Design Guidelines.

As a result of these efforts, the “Joint Municipal Guidelines for Accessibility for the Corporation of the Town of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill / City of Vaughan” was established to address the accessibility needs of a wide range of people with disabilities, including persons with mobility, sensory, co-ordination and cognitive limitations, of all ages. This document has since been used extensively during retrofit and new construction projects, such as the Angus Glen Community Centre and Library.

### **COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Asset Management Department**

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Asset Management has managed accessible retrofit projects for all the Town's facilities since 1996. The general public uses community centres, libraries and cultural facilities. The Civic Centre and the Firehalls provide administrative and emergency services to the people of Markham.

Past challenges included the three priorities as established by the Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility:

- Washroom Accessibility
- Automatic Doors
- Drinking Fountains

##### Washroom Accessibility

Proper sizing of washroom stalls, lowering of counters, proper fixtures, flush valves and general access posed physical challenges which were solved by automatic doors, new counters, approved fixtures, automatic flush valves and partitions. In some instances, existing facilities could not be retrofitted. In these cases, new accessible washrooms were built where possible.

##### Automatic Doors

Automatic doors to improve general entry into buildings and subsequent entry to washrooms have been provided through the purchase and installation of 49 automatic doors since 1996.

##### Drinking Fountains

Drinking fountains have not been addressed in any retrofit programs to date.

##### Other Challenges

Many physical challenges have been identified since 1996 and have been addressed through the retrofit program. Some examples are,

Ramps- New or altered installations done at the Museum and Theatre.

Curb Alterations- Several sites had the curb cut to make access easier from parking lots.

Specific Facility Alterations- Armadale Community Centre, for example, had all the shower valves lowered so people in wheelchairs could reach them from a sitting position.



### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Challenges faced by Asset Management are,

- Multiple Projects and Priorities - Addressing and completing all projects in a timely fashion.
- Public and Staff Awareness - Diversity of impairments require public awareness to understand needs.
- Accessibility Project Planning - Current list of projects is out-dated and requires proper facility audits to identify all accessibility issues. Past focus has been on wheelchair users.

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Future challenges include,

- Budget for and conduct an update to the "Joint Municipal Guidelines". Further integration of the Guidelines to address all issues of accessibility. **OUTSTANDING**
- Establishing a program for facility audits whereby a quarter of the facilities are reviewed every 2-3 years using the criteria from an updated "Municipal Guidelines". **OUTSTANDING**
- Centralizing all Town accessibility facility retrofit projects under Facility Maintenance in Operations and Asset Management. This would facilitate continuity and standardized retrofit practices. **OUTSTANDING**
- Finalizing the processes / procedures for accessibility implementation on new facility projects. **STARTED**
- Long-term planning for retrofit projects tied to other facility enhancements. **OUTSTANDING**
- Complete all outstanding accessibility projects identified over the past years. **OUTSTANDING**

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Asset Management Department

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address Accessibility Issues at Armadale Community Centre	Difficulties in Using Showers by Wheelchair Users	Lower shower valves and alter seating		Complete
	Washroom and Building Access by Wheelchair Users	Automate washroom doors, change automatic buttons		Complete
	Washroom Fixtures Difficult to Reach	Moved soap dispensers, installed grab bars, re-positioned towel dispensers		Complete
Address accessibility issues at Crosby Community Centre	Access and Use of Hall Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Install accessible sinks and fixtures. Access reviewed and altered.		Complete
Address accessibility issues at Centennial Community Centre	Use of Arena Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Moved soap and towel dispensers		Complete
	Access to Office Information for Wheelchair Users	New counter installed with lower areas		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
	Access to pool by wheelchair users	Install automatic doors on entrance and pool change-room doors		Complete
	Lounge washroom use for wheelchair users	Alter counter height, install grab bars, move soap dispensers		Complete
	Use of pool washrooms for wheelchair users	Install grab bars in toilet partitions		Complete
Address accessibility issues at Markham Community Centre	Access to facility for wheelchair users	Install automatic doors on east and west entrances		Complete
Address accessibility issues at Milliken Mills Community Centre	Access and use of Library washrooms by wheelchair users	Install wider automatic doors, accessible sinks and fixtures.		Complete
	Access and use of hall washrooms by wheelchair users	Install accessible sinks and fixtures.		Complete
	Use of arena washrooms by wheelchair users	Moved soap and towel dispensers		Complete
	Access to office information by wheelchair users	Install new counter with lower areas		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Mt. Joy Community Centre	Facility Access by Wheelchair Users	Provide curb cut and automatic doors at East Entrance		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	Use of Soccer and Arena Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Install accessible taps, grab bars and dispensers		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Clatworthy Arena	Facility Access by Wheelchair Users	Install automatic door at south entrance		Complete
	Use of Mens and Ladies Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Installed accessible sinks, moved grab bars and dispensers		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Thornhill Community Centre	Access and Use of Hall Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Install automatic doors and automatic flush valves		Complete
	Access and Use of Arena Washrooms by Wheelchair Users	Install automatic doors and automatic flush valves		Complete
	Access to Courtyard by Wheelchair Users	Install automatic door		Complete
	Lack of Sufficient Accessible Washrooms	Build dedicated accessible washroom		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Markham Public Library	Facility access by wheelchair users	Install automatic doors on east entrance		Complete
	Washroom access by wheelchair users	Install dedicated accessible washroom in basement		Complete
	Difficult use of stairwells by the vision impaired	Installation of bright stair treads to highlight steps		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Address accessibility issues at Unionville Public Library	Facility access by wheelchair users	Install automatic doors by northwest entrance		Complete
	Washroom access and use by wheelchair users	Install automatic doors and accessible washroom fixtures		Complete
Address accessible issues at the Markham Museum	Access to Mt. Joy Office Building for wheelchair users	Install automatic doors on west entrance doors and washrooms		Complete
	Access to several buildings for wheelchair users	Install ramps to 6 different historic buildings		Complete
Address accessible issues at the Civic Centre	Access to Departmental Wing and Washrooms for Wheelchair Users Hindered	Install 6 automatic doors to washrooms and 4 automatic doors		Complete
	Access to Council Chambers for wheelchair users restricted	Install automatic door		Complete
	Use of Washrooms by wheelchair users	Install automatic flush valves and taps in 10 washrooms		Complete
	Access to Information Desk and staff counters difficult for wheelchair users	Build new counters or alter old counters for lower access		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Address Accessible Issues at the Markham Theatre	Access to facility by wheelchair users	Install automatic door doors, curb cuts from parking lot and ramps		Complete
	Use of washrooms by wheelchair users	Install automatic door to accessible washroom		Complete
Address accessible issues at the Varley Art Gallery	Access to facility by wheelchair users	Install automatic doors on east entrance		Complete
	Access to washrooms by wheelchair users	Install automatic door on dedicated washroom		Complete
	Use of washroom by wheelchair users	Lower dispensers and coat hanger, altered sink drainage lines		Complete
Address Accessible Issues at the Firehalls	Wheelchair access to Firehalls	Newer stations equipped with accessible washrooms and ramps		Complete
Update Municipal Guidelines	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Budget engage consultant to accomplish	2006	
Conduct Facility Audits	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Establish regular audits every 3 years with consulting firm.	2006-2008	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Establish Standards and Procedures	Multiple barriers and departments involved	Address resources required to establish procedures across departments	2006-2008	
Long Term Project Planning	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Review and prioritize projects identified by audits.	2006	
Completion of Outstanding Projects	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Review feasibility of Projects, prioritize and establish program to complete	2007	
Address Signage Issues	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Review facilities with "Updated Guideline" standards	2006	

**COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Recreation and Culture Department**

**PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Recreation and Culture Services address the recreation and culture needs of the Town of Markham and have a large impact on residents with special needs.

Past challenges have included,

- Accessibility of facilities including travel from parking lot, entry to building and use of building
- Programming for various age groups with special needs
- The department developed the following policy to address the challenge of inclusion of people with disabilities and access to recreation programs:

“Every effort will be made to integrate individuals with special needs into the programs offered by the department whenever it is safe and enjoyable to all participants.”

If a participant requires assistance to participate the department will link the participant with a trained volunteer.

**CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Challenges faced by Recreation and Culture are,

- Public and Staff Awareness - Diversity of impairments require public education and communication
- Special Needs Programming - Identification of the gaps in services for the various age groups with special needs.



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Recreation and Culture Department

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address Accessible Issues at the Old Unionville Library C. Centre	Access and use of washrooms by wheelchair users	Install automatic door and accessible fixtures		Complete
Address Accessible Issues at the Seniors Centre	Access to stage by wheelchair users	Install chair lift for auditorium stage		Complete
Address Accessible Issues at the Markham Theatre	Difficult to access auditorium seating by visually impaired	Install contrasting stair nosing		Complete
Address Accessible Issues at the Markham Museum	Access to transportation building for wheelchair users	Install automatic entrance doors		Complete
	No access by wheelchair users to the Ward Bldg Carriage Section	Install ramp		Complete
	Difficulty for touring grounds by the walking impaired	Obtain wheelchairs for use by the public		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address Accessibility Issues at Markham Community Centre	Access and use of hall and lobby washrooms for wheelchair users.	Renovate Hall washrooms. Install automatic doors and renovate Lobby washrooms		Complete
Address the Integration of Recreation Programs for Individuals with Special Needs	Access to Recreation Programs	<u>Summer Day Camps:</u> Hire a Special Needs coordinator who works with families and agencies in placing children with special needs into camps. Hire mediators who work with the special need participants in the day camp settings. Offer a Leadership in Training Integration specialist program to train young leaders to work with children with various special needs. Train all summer day camp staff in inclusive programming.		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address the Integration of Recreation Programs for Individuals with Special Needs	Access to Recreation Programs	<u>General Programs:</u> Introduce a Leisure Buddy Program which is a volunteer program; individuals work with participants who require assistance in order to participate in a program. Offer segregated programs to address specific special needs: Learn to Skate, Social Leisure Program for young adults, Body Awareness program for children, Youth Drop In Program		Complete
Address the Integration of Recreation Programs for Individuals with Special Needs	Access to Recreation Programs	<u>Aquatics:</u> Offer Learn to Swim programs for individuals with special needs; Older Adult Aquafit program which accommodates various health issues for instance, arthritis		Complete
Address the Integration of Recreation Programs for Individuals with Special Needs	Access to Recreation Programs	<u>Fitness:</u> Offer classes geared to specific needs such as Osteoporosis Walk for Wellness Program.		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Address the Integration of Recreation Programs for Individuals with Special Needs	Access to Recreation Programs	Work with regional agencies through representation on the Region of York Special Needs Committee which coordinates training for Recreation Instructors on inclusion and sharing of information on current issues faced by the agencies' clients. Partner with Association for Community Living – Adult Lifeskills Program and Living Room – Youth Service which focuses on Youth mental health issues.		Complete
Establish Standards and Procedures	Multiple barriers and disabilities	Update standards and procedures addressing disabilities and Town Plan	Annually	Complete
Long Term Project Planning	Multiple barriers to be identified and addressed	Review and identify new programs and training for staff	Annually	Complete

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Fire Services Department**

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

The Fire Department has historically been charged with staff that are physically able to perform their duties and the general public did not have to enter these facilities. However, it has become increasingly apparent disabled people require access to all facilities. In this regard, Station 96 in Milliken was designed with an accessible washroom and the new Riviera firehall has been specified to include wheelchair parking spots, curb depressions, ramp access and accessible washrooms. Other achievements are,

- Production of the “Fire Safety for the Physically Challenged” pamphlet addressing numerous fire safety tips.

#### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Current challenges include,

- Formulating safety training programs for the disabled.
- Facilitating access to all firehalls for disabled personnel.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Fire Services Department

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address Accessibility at Station 96	Access and use of washrooms by wheelchair users	Install accessible washroom during construction		Complete
Address Accessibility at New Riviera Firehall	Access and use of facility	Alter construction specifications to include accessibility issues		Complete
Addressing Fire Safety Training for the Disabled	Multiple barriers related to the disabled and Fire Prevention and Safety	Produce Fire Safety Pamphlet		Complete

**COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Construction and Utilities Department**

**PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

The Construction and Utilities Department work with architects, designers and contractors when constructing new facilities in the Town of Markham.

As part of the design of any new building, the Building Code addresses many issues regarding accessibility. In an effort to increase the level of service in this area, Construction and Utilities have been utilizing the Joint Accessibility Guidelines in their specification documents.

**CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Current challenges include,

- Financial restraints involved with new projects.

**FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Future challenges include,

- Addressing changes in the guidelines and diverse realm of accessibility
- Ensuring financial programs to complete accessible aspects of new facilities

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Construction and Utilities Department

### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
Address Disability Issues at Angus Glen C.C. and Library	Use of Town Facility	Incorporate Building Code and Joint Accessibility Guidelines in Specifications		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Riviera Firehall	Use of Town Facility	Incorporate Building Code and Joint Accessibility Guidelines in Specifications		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Thornhill Seniors Addition	Use of Town Facility	Incorporate Building Code and Joint Accessibility Guidelines in Specifications		Complete



## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Parks Construction Department**

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

A staff initiative to provide accessible playgrounds in major Town parks has resulted in two such installations in 2001 at Centennial and Ashton Meadows. Milliken Mills Community Park and Bishop's Cross will be retrofitted with new equipment in 2003.

Accessible equipment was originally installed in Ashton Meadows when the park was built because of the large number of physically challenged residents in the area. It is also being replaced in 2003, as it no longer meets the CSA Guidelines for safety.

Playgrounds are routinely replaced every 10 to 12 years due to CSA Guideline changes and equipment life cycle. All the Parks playgrounds have been replaced within the last five years, including the safety surface under the equipment.

#### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Current challenges include,

- Financial restraints involved with new projects.

#### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Future challenges include,

- Addressing changes in the guidelines and diverse realm of accessibility

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Parks Construction Department**

### **ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Address Disabled Population at Ashton Meadows	Use of Park Playground	Install accessible playground in Aston Meadows Park		Complete
Address Disabled Population Throughout Town	Use of Town Parks and Playgrounds	Install accessible playgrounds at Centennial Park, Milliken Mills Park and Bishops Cross Park		Complete

**COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Street Services Department**

**PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Through staff initiatives, the Street Services Department has,

- Installed intersection audible signal devices to aid visually impaired crossing the street
- Arranged for curb depressions at all crosswalks. This has become the standard throughout the Town.
- Installation of audible signal devices at certain intersections with high incidence of sight disabilities
- Adjustment of signal walk times at certain intersections with high concentration of elderly people

**FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Future initiatives include,

- Ensuring future crosswalk signal design includes possibility of audible signal installation
- Anticipating the need for adjusted signal walk times at intersections to accommodate the elderly and young

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Street Services Department**

#### **ACCESSIBILITY ACHIEVEMENTS**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Address Accessibility Issues Around Austin Road and Bullock	High number of seniors in this area with vision impairment	Install intersection sound systems at crosswalks		Complete
Address Accessibility Issues at Centre and Main Streets, Markham	High number of seniors in this area with vision impairment	Install intersection sound systems at crosswalks		Complete
Address Crosswalk Issues Throughout Town	Address issues dealing with the walking impaired	Curb depressions at all crosswalks becoming the standard in the Town		Complete

**COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Strategic Services**

**PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

Strategic Services provided a vehicle for Jillian's Place to present a proposal to Recreation and Culture on providing programs for persons with disabilities and vulnerable seniors.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **COMMUNITY AND FIRE SERVICES COMMISSION**

#### **Markham Public Libraries**

##### **Functions:**

Providing library and information services and programming in response to customer needs in a growing community.

##### **Services:**

- Circulation of materials for home and workplace use.
- Information services, instruction and training.
- Access to resources for lifelong learning.
- Programs for all ages in support of literacy and learning.
- Free public access to Internet and digital information.
- Public space for meeting, gathering and study.

##### **Facilities:**

- Angus Glen Community Centre Library
- Markham Village Library
- Milliken Mills Library
- Thornhill Community Centre Library
- Thornhill Village Library
- Unionville Library

##### **Customers:**

All members of the Markham community.

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- An Accessibility Audit in 1995 identified several architectural and physical barriers in library branches. In subsequent years, the Libraries have been able to secure capital funding to address many of these barriers and make access improvements.
- Since 1997, the Libraries have partnered with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Library in a project which allows blind and visually impaired residents of Markham to access the resources of the CNIB Library through their local library branch.
- As part of the Libraries' commitment to providing service to the visually impaired, library staff periodically receive CNIB Sensitivity Training in dealing with blind and visually impaired customers.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- The new Angus Glen Library and the expanded Markham Village Library provide opportunities to design fully accessible, barrier-free public library facilities.
- Introducing assistive/adaptive technologies in the branches involves the challenges of ensuring that staff are trained in their use, and providing appropriate levels of technical support.

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

- Future building projects—a new library for Central East Markham and the expansion of the Milliken Mills Library—will provide further opportunities to advance accessibility standards.
- Developing inclusive programming with limited staff resources while continuing to support existing programming.
- Funding accessibility initiatives, including staff training, assistive/adaptive technologies, furniture replacement, and access improvements to older library facilities.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

#### Markham Public Library

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
To reach out and provide library services to disabled and homebound residents.	Homebound residents physically unable to visit libraries and access collections.	Library staff coordinate a homebound delivery service which provides volunteers to deliver library materials to homebound residents.		Complete
To provide full electronic access to library services.	Before the introduction of the Markham Public Libraries website, information on library services and programs was not readily available to people with disabilities who were physically unable to visit the libraries.	Website makes information available online, providing access to information for those who cannot physically visit the library.		Complete
To ensure that people with disabilities have access to library job opportunities.	Limited distribution of job opportunities—posted only at work sites.	Post employment opportunities on website to ensure availability for people with disabilities		Complete
To ensure that library staff are sensitive to the needs of visually impaired customers.	Staff untrained in providing service to visually impaired customers.	Through CNIB, provide sensitivity training for staff in serving the visually impaired.		Complete



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
To provide fully accessible service desks.	Service desks not accessible to customers in wheelchairs.	Introduce service desks with lowered sections for wheelchair access at all branches.		Complete
To provide public access computers with adaptive/ assistive technology features.	Branches lacked public access computers with adaptive/ assistive technology features	Every branch to provide a Public Access Computer with large (21") screen monitor. Screen monitors on Gates computers (18) are capable of large print option.		Complete
To provide wheelchair-accessible computer workstations.	Public computer workstations were not wheelchair-accessible.	Install Gates computers (18) on wheelchair-accessible workstations in all branches.		Complete
To improve access to the CNIB Library for visually impaired customers.	Visually impaired customers lacked convenient access to the resources of the CNIB Library.	Partnership with CNIB in pilot project to allow blind and visually impaired residents to access resources of the CNIB Library through their local library branch.		Complete
To provide more convenient access to suitable materials for visually impaired customers.	Library materials in demand by visually-impaired customers (Large Print, Talking Books) were inconveniently located on the upper level of the Markham Village Library.	Markham Village Library to create a VIP (Visually Impaired Persons) Centre on its main/ground level, grouping together materials for the visually impaired (Large Print and Talking Books).		Complete
To provide fully accessible library entrances in all branches.	Persons with mobility issues experienced difficulties entering library buildings, due to non-automated entrance doors.	Install automatic door openers on entrance doors of all branches.		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
To provide wheelchair access to the Thornhill Village Library.	Thornhill Village Library had inadequate wheelchair access.	Build access ramp.		Complete
To provide easy access from the parking lot to the public entrance of the Unionville Library.	At Unionville Library, the drop curb was located by staff entrance rather than public entrance.	Cut curb in front of entrance area; Repair sidewalk.		Complete
To provide a more convenient and welcoming wheelchair entrance to the Markham Village Library.	At Markham Village Library, there was a poorly marked wheelchair access route from the parking lot to the handicapped (side) entrance.	Repair driveway and sidewalk were to provide curb cuts; crosswalk markings to the building's exterior and handicapped (side) entrance to be provided.		Complete
To provide appropriate elevator service for the disabled at the Markham Village Library.	At Markham Village Library, the elevator doors closed before disabled customers had time to enter or exit.	Elevator doors to be equipped with sensors to provide a slower closing.		Complete
To provide handicapped washrooms at the Markham Village Library.	Markham Village Library had no handicapped washrooms.	Construct a unisex washroom for the disabled with a wide, power-assisted door.		Complete
To provide adequate washroom services for the disabled at the Unionville Library.	Handles on washroom faucets were difficult to operate for customers with limited physical strength.	Install paddle type handles on all washroom faucets.		Complete

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
To improve the accessibility and safety of the staircase at the Markham Village Library.	Staircase was steep and slippery, with no warning to visually impaired of staircase's presence.	Install tread inserts on staircase and detectable warning surface at top of stairs.		Complete
To improve lighting levels at the Markham Village Library.	Due to inadequate lighting, those with impaired vision had difficulties seeing in public areas.	Install lighting improvements—energy-efficient and with higher light output.		Complete
To provide furniture that meets the physical needs of all customers.	In all branches, Older Adults experienced difficulties in getting up from lounge furniture.	Through furniture replacement, branches to acquire ergonomically designed furniture to better accommodate persons with diminishing physical agility and coordination.		Complete
To enable the hearing-impaired to access library services by telephone.	Telephone service not designed for access by the hearing-impaired.	Staff will conduct review of telephone service to ensure that it is responsive and user-friendly for the hearing-impaired.	Ongoing	
To ensure that Libraries' printed materials meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	Libraries' printed materials (Customer Services Guide, What's On flyers, etc.) are not designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	Review printed materials to identify communication barriers; research best practices regarding graphic standards to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	Ongoing	
To ensure that the Libraries' website can be accessed by persons with disabilities	Markham Public Libraries' website design lacks accessibility features.	Review website to identify communication barriers. Investigate large-print viewing option and other website accessibility features.		Deferred pending Network Technical Merger

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
To enable participation in library programs for all individuals.	Libraries do not provide inclusive programming for children, teens and adults with disabilities.	In consultation with access groups, staff will develop inclusive library programming that meets the needs of all Markham residents.	Ongoing	
To improve customer service for disabled customers.	Library staff are not trained in service to customers with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities.	Provide training for staff regarding understanding of and sensitivity to disabilities	Ongoing	
Improve access to the Libraries' print and electronic resources for people with visual or hearing impairments, physical or learning challenges.	Lack of assistive / adaptive technology, e.g. screen readers, screen magnifiers, on-screen keyboards, one-handed keyboards, and augmentative communication devices (e.g. Braille devices).	Research and acquire a variety of software and hardware options designed for use by persons with disabilities. Train staff in use of assistive technologies.	Ongoing	
Improve signage in branches to meet accessibility criteria.	Branch signage not designed to meet needs of visually impaired.	Introduce new signage designed to meet accessibility criteria—more highly visible. Introduce Braille signage.	Ongoing: Accessibility-compliant Angus Glen Library signage package to be implemented at expanded Markham Village Library and other branches	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Provide more library furniture that is fully accessible.	Older furniture does not meet accessibility needs of disabled customers.	As furniture is acquired/ replaced, ensure that new furniture meets accessibility criteria, e.g. height-adjustable desks at Public Access Computers.	Ongoing through life-cycle replacement and capital projects. Accessible workstations for customers and staff provided at Angus Glen.	
Improve access to Milliken's children's collections for customers in wheelchairs and others	In Children's Area of Milliken Mills Library, narrow aisle widths impede movement of customers in wheelchairs.	Reconfigure layout of stacks to provide wider aisles.	2005	Complete
To improve staircase safety and ease of use at Thornhill Library for the visually impaired.	At the Thornhill Community Centre Library, staircases with open risers are difficult to use for the visually impaired with canes.	Close risers on staircases between mezzanine and other levels.	Future renovation	

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

OBJECTIVE	BARRIER IDENTIFIED	SOLUTION	TARGET	STATUS
<p>Improve the accessibility of the Markham Village Library through barrier-free design.</p>	<p>Accessibility in the existing Markham Village Library is limited by narrow aisles and corridors, overcrowded collections, a congested lobby/ entrance area, a separate “back-door” entrance for the wheelchair-bound, steep staircases, and public washrooms located in basement, accessible only by elevator.</p>	<p>Expansion and renovation will provide a barrier-free single main entrance, fully accessible public washrooms on the main level, wide barrier-free aisles and pathways with ample turn areas, and library service desks and furnishings that are sensitive to the needs of disabled users.</p>	<p>Design provides fully accessible public entrances, fully accessible washrooms on all levels, wide aisles and pathways, height-adjustable service desks and workstations, adult-sized change table in family washroom. Scheduled to open late 2006.</p>	

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER**

#### **Human Resources Department**

The Human Resources Department supports the achievement of the Town of Markham's goals by providing strategic human resources management solutions in the areas of recruitment and selection, employee and labour relations, compensation and benefits, learning and employee development, and occupational health and safety.

The facilities available include a meeting room and the Learning and Employee Development Resource Centre. The facilities in the Centre are wheelchair accessible and are designed to be fully adjustable. In addition, the Corporation has recently acquired a heritage building known as the Pingle House, which is located near the Angus Glen Community Centre. The Pingle House is intended as a learning and meeting center, and is currently being restored with heritage standards and accessibility factors in mind.

Although the Human Resources Department primarily provides services to individuals already on staff, it is imperative that it be accessible as it is the first contact that many individuals have with the Town of Markham during the recruiting process. Physical accessibility issues will be addressed in conjunction with Capital Assets.

#### **PAST ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES:**

Two years ago the Human Resources Department embarked on an initiative to develop more inclusive hiring practices. Members of staff began attending job fairs which targeted individuals with accessibility challenges, and were met with an enthusiastic response from potential applicants. Markham's profile as an employer was enhanced with this particular applicant pool. The Department also has a positive record with respect to accommodating staff that require temporary or permanent modifications to their duties as a result of illness or injury.

#### **CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

In recognition of the challenges that an organization can face with respect to all aspects of diversity, the Department is negotiating with a Diversity Consultant to provide services with respect to needs assessment, examination of current practices, and creation of policy and strategy. One of the mandates will be to examine the Department's accessibility policy and practices. In addition, the Department is reviewing and revising current HR policies and incorporating language addressing inclusiveness issues wherever appropriate.

### **FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES**

The Human Resources Department has identified that one of the barriers to accessibility is attitude. There is a large education component in making an organization more accessible. This challenge will be addressed by the Learning and Employee Development section of Human Resources, with assistance from the Employee and Labour Relations section, and with budgetary support.

The Department's long term goal for itself and for the Corporation is to have inclusive hiring practices in an accessible facility, with a workforce educated in the *Act* and accessibility issues.



## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

#### Human Resources Department

#### ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVES & ACHIEVEMENTS

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>BARRIER IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Inclusive hiring practices	Access to individuals with accessibility issues	Attendance at job fairs targeting these individuals		+ve ongoing results
Accommodation of staff requiring temporary or permanent modifications to duties or work area	Barriers are particular to each job and each employee's circumstances, and are dependent upon individual capability, positions available, and awareness of responsibilities	Examine positions, identify and enact modifications to work stations and duties		+ve ongoing results
Make HR department physically accessible, including satellite facility (Pingle House)	Department door, narrow aisles Pingle house has limited accessibility  Department Door HR Dept may have hidden barriers	Design Pingle House main floor to be completely accessible, with handicapped washroom installed. Auto door installed March of Dimes assessment		Complete  Not Met Report pending
Develop Corporate Diversity Strategy	Current practices and policies	Diversity consultant to be hired to coordinate strategy. Policies reviewed.	2006	Pending budget
Educate workforce	Low awareness of Act and accessibility initiatives	Educate management and staff through courses, workshops and newsletters	2005/6	First course offered in 2005

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **ANNUAL REVIEW AND MONITORING**

The Act requires that municipalities prepare an accessibility plan each year. This is the second such plan prepared in compliance with the Act. This Plan must be updated annually to comply with the provisions of the Act and therefore, staff within each commission should continue to meet on a regular basis to continue the work of identifying barriers, addressing means of eliminating such barriers and improving access of disable persons to programs, facilities and opportunities provided by the Town.

In addition, the Town should continue to consult with the Markham Accessibility Advisory Committee on a broad range of issues relating to disabilities, including the review of site plans, technology innovations to improve services, access to services and communication.

1. Each Commission and Department should be required to annually self-assess its achievement of the goals of the Accessibility Plan and their individual commission or department objectives
2. The self-assessment should be provided annually to the Manager of Corporate Quality for review and preparation of an annual update to this Accessibility Plan.
3. Where appropriate, public consultation prior to completion of the self-assessment should be undertaken.

## 2006 Accessibility Plan

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Manager of Corporate Quality, within the Strategic Initiatives Department be appointed to:
  - a. Coordinate responses of Commission staff assigned to implement the Plan, monitor accessibility and update the Plan annually.
  - b. Maintain records with respect to accessibility issues and actions
  - c. Report to Council on the implementation of the Plan on a regular basis and recommendations for future initiatives.
2. That a staff person be identified within each commission to be responsible for inquiries relating to accessibility, annual updates of the Accessibility Plan, implementation of Commission accessibility initiatives, monitoring accessibility and following up on complaints related to accessibility.
3. That this Plan be made available to the public through the Clerk's Department and the Town's website.
4. That this Plan be provided to the Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility for comment.
5. That a public meeting be held and that notice of a public meeting be given by newspaper publication and by notice on the Town's website.
6. That the following mission statement be adopted:

**"RECOGNIZING THE RICH DIVERSITY OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM, THE CORPORATION IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY ACCESSIBLE SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES THROUGH COMPLIANCE WITH THE *ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT*".**

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Backgrounder**

**May 10, 2005**

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005**

Ontario's legislative assembly has passed Bill 118, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. It will take effect on royal assent. The new act is strong and effective legislation that will allow people with disabilities to participate in building a stronger province.

The purpose of the new act is to benefit all Ontarians by achieving accessibility for people with disabilities. This will be done by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards concerning goods, services, accommodation, facilities, buildings and employment. Improvements will be phased in, in stages of five years or less, moving towards an accessible Ontario in 20 years.

#### **Importance of Standards**

Standards will set out the measures, policies, practices and other steps needed to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. They will be mandatory and will include time periods for implementing accessibility requirements in stages of five years or less.

Standards could cover such areas as: accessible buses, safe pedestrian routes into buildings, automatic doors at entrances, lower counter heights at cash registers, large-print menus, accessible washroom facilities, staff training in serving customers with learning disabilities, and adaptive technology in the workplace.

#### **Why This Act Is Needed**

Improving accessibility is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do, because of demographics and economics.

The workplace and the marketplace are changing. With an aging population, 20 per cent of Ontarians are likely to have a disability in 20 years, up from about 13 per cent today. People with disabilities already have an estimated spending power of about \$25 billion a year across Canada. In the U.S. hospitality industry, implementing standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act increased annual revenue by 12 per cent. People with disabilities also represent a wealth of untapped employment potential.

#### **Scope of Legislation**

The new legislation covers both the public and private sectors. It also applies to the legislative assembly.

Standards will address the full range of disabilities – including physical, sensory, hearing, mental health, developmental and learning. That is, both visible and invisible disabilities will be included.

#### **An Inclusive Process for Developing Standards**

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

The act will set up committees that include persons with disabilities, representatives of industries or sectors, the Ontario government and others to develop standards.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will appoint committees for various sectors or industries to determine long-term accessibility objectives as well as five-year targets for achieving them. Each will set a target date for implementing the steps required in the first five years or less – as well as target dates for successive stages of five years or less.

Committees will have the flexibility to tailor accessibility requirements and timelines to economic realities. They could set different requirements and timelines for different kinds of organizations. Since change will be phased in, the cost of accessibility improvements could be absorbed in regular planning and budget cycles.

Committees will submit proposed standards to the government for approval as regulations.

### **Enforceable Legislation**

Once a standard has been adopted as a regulation, all affected persons and organizations will be required to comply within the timelines set out in the standard.

The government will take a modern, transparent approach to enforcement. Organizations covered by standards will be obliged to file accessibility reports annually or as required, confirming compliance, and make them public. Spot audits will verify the contents of reports, and there will be tough penalties for non-compliance.

To strengthen accountability, the minister will prepare an annual report on progress in removing and preventing barriers. In addition, the government will appoint a person to undertake a comprehensive review of the act's effectiveness after four years. The annual report and the comprehensive review will provide timely information on the measurable results achieved under the act.

### **Public Education**

Attitudes are one of the biggest barriers facing people with disabilities. Under the bill, the responsibilities of the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario will include conducting public education programs on the purpose and implementation of the act. Among the public education activities will be information and training for schools, colleges, universities, trade or occupational associations and self-governing professions to build awareness of accessibility into the educational experience.

### **New Advisory Council to Be Appointed**

A new Accessibility Standards Advisory Council will advise the minister on the progress made by standards development committees, public information programs and other matters. Like the existing Accessibility Advisory Council of Ontario, a majority of the members of the new body will be persons with disabilities.

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### **Contact:**

Mary Dowding-Paré, Communications Branch, (416) 314-7230

### APPENDIX B

#### MARKHAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY

##### TERMS OF REFERENCE

##### Mandate

The Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility shall assist Council in improving opportunities for persons with disabilities by promoting the implementation of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) in Markham. The Committee will advise Committee/Council as required by the *Act*, on its annual Accessibility Plan. The Plan will focus on reducing and/or eliminating barriers regarding the accessibility to, and enjoyment of, facilities and services by all residents of the Town of Markham.

The Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility will work with organizations of and for persons with disabilities in the pursuit of shared goals.

##### Reporting Structure

The Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility will report to Markham Council through the Community Services and Environment Committee.

##### Duties

- Ontarians With Disabilities Act 2001

To advise Markham Council about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its annual Accessibility Plan and other mandated obligations under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) 2001*. The Accessibility Plan shall include:

- (a) a report on the measures the municipality has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities;
- (b) the measures in place to ensure that the municipality assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities;

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

- (c) a list of the by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that the municipality will review in the coming year in order to identify barriers to persons with disabilities;
  - (d) the measures that the municipality intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities; and
  - (e) all other information that the regulations prescribe for the purpose of the plan.
- To review the site plans and drawings of new or renovated municipal buildings and structures or parts thereof.
  - To appoint the Chair of the Committee as Markham's representative on the Region of York Accessibility Advisory Committee.
  - To review proposals and plans for new and major renovation projects (in consultation with architects, designers, developers, operators and municipal staff) in order to ensure barrier-free access to facilities and services throughout the Town of Markham.
  - To conduct periodic audits of public facilities and recommend accessibility retrofits.
  - To conduct periodic audits on business establishments as agreed upon.
  - To encourage the adoption of innovative design principles that allow for full access; to acknowledge (through publicity and/or awards) examples of outstanding projects.
  - To advocate, promote and support programs and initiatives for persons with disabilities.

### **Composition and Size**

This Committee shall consist of nine members, at least five of who must be persons with disabilities. One member shall be a member of Council and the remainder shall be citizen volunteers and/or professionals from the stakeholder community.

In addition, municipal staff and consultants may attend Committee meetings as deemed necessary and appropriate.

## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

The majority of members on the committee shall be persons with disabilities within the meaning of the *ODA*.

### **Membership Selection, Term and Resignation**

Future ACA's will serve a term of three consecutive years and at the pleasure of Council. Members may be reappointed for an additional term of three consecutive years.

Recommended that ACA report through the Community Services and Environment Committee.

ACA will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.

Council will approve a replacement member when resignations occur during the term of the ACA.

### **Membership Responsibility**

Members are expected to be familiar with the Act and Terms of Reference.

Each Member of the Committee is an independent representative to the Committee and does not represent the concerns of only one disability or group. The members shall work together for the purpose of developing a common approach that is reasonable and practical.

Members are expected to contribute their expertise actively during ACA meetings.

Members shall declare any situation that is, or has the potential to be, a conflict of interest.

### **Remuneration/Reimbursement Of Expenses**

Members of the Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility serve without remuneration, with the exception of those members who are persons with disabilities. Members who are persons with disabilities will be provided with the resources related to their disability and that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the Committee (e.g. sign language interpretation services, Braille translation services, transportation, support care services, etc.)



## **2006 Accessibility Plan**

### **Frequency of Meetings**

Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of every month (except July and August, when no regular meetings are held). Sub-committee and ad-hoc meetings may be arranged at other times. The Chair may call special meetings.

### **Resources**

The ODA Staff Committee will provide advisory staff support. The Clerks Office will provide administrative support, including the taking of minutes, distribution of minutes and agendas, and the general administrative coordination of meetings on the Markham Advisory Committee on Accessibility and any subcommittees that it may form.

### **Procedure**

All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Town of Markham Procedure By-law.

### **Evaluation and Review**

Markham Council will have the prerogative of making changes to the Terms of Reference as required.

The Terms of Reference could be modified due to the upcoming release of the Provincial Regulations of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.