



FRONTENAC

The Corporation of the County of
Frontenac

Annual Accessibility Status Report 2024

ACCESSIBILITY
IN FRONTENAC

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Welcome to the Frontenac's Annual Accessibility Status Update

This report provides an annual update on the progress made and work completed by the County and Townships in 2024 to improve accessibility and implement the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), Ontario Regulation 191/11.

In 2022, the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee recommended to Council the approval of the 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Plan included additional paragraphs related to the County's focus on continuous improvement, which includes accessibility. A section regarding Barriers was also included as well as a more high level overview of the Standards and how the County and Townships will work towards meeting the goals of those standards and ensuring compliance

Significant achievements have been seen in 2024 by all of the Frontenacs in part by the significant work and direction of the Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Statement of Commitment

Through accessibility planning and with the advice of the Frontenac Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Frontenacs (County of Frontenac and the Townships within the County) will strategically identify, remove, and prevent as many barriers to persons with disabilities as possible.

The Frontenacs are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting the accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Joint Frontenac Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee (JFAAC) worked hard in 2024! Providing input and recommendations on several municipal projects and initiatives, the JFAAC accomplished its goal towards improving accessibility in our community through the continual removal of barriers, including:

- Awarding of the Celebrating Accessibility Award.
- Received a report and update on the Provincial Release of the Final Report of the Fourth Independent Review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and provided input on comments submitted by the County.
- Provided a review and site visit of the new County Administration building and provided recommendations.
- Provided continued guidance on the K&P Trail, as the County continues to develop this trail system.
- Received quarterly updates on the County's K&P Trail, including providing input to staff on accessibility requirements/enhancements of the trail.
- Aided and guided local businesses, specifically around barrier free access to older buildings.

Accessibility Achievements in 2024

Accessibility Updates to the K&P Trail

With the completion of core infrastructure on the Frontenac K&P Trail between the City of Kingston and Sharbot Lake in 2019, and with subsequent trail development to Clarendon Station in 2020 the County now actively manages 70 kilometers of multi-use trail daily. As a result of this work, and with the influence of the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic on recreational behaviour, the Frontenac K&P Trail has seen a significant increase of use by walkers, cyclists, and ATV users.

The Committee continued to guide staff and make recommendations for the accessibility of the K&P trail in 2024 in infrastructure improvements including preliminary discussions on road crossings in order to make some improvements which will guide staff in 2025. The Committee also provided input and recommendations on the request in front of County Council regarding permitted motorized uses on the trail.

Re-Development of the County Administration Building

At the June 15, 2022 regular Council Meeting, Council approved the awarding of the RFP for the redevelopment of the Administrative Building to Emmons & Mitchell Construction (2000) Ltd for the Renovations & Additions for the Joint Admin Facility for the County of Frontenac and Cataraqui Regional Conservation Authority. This is a \$4.5M project.

Construction began in July of 2022. Submission of pertinent documents to the City of Kingston included a site plan application along with a completed Accessibility Checklist

required by the City of Kingston. Significant accessibility inclusions in the construction include 2 new fully accessible washrooms, accessible entrances and accessible shared common areas. Construction is anticipated to be completed by end of 2023.

The Committee continued in 2024 to provide input on the renovations, and in early 2024, three members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee had the opportunity to attend a site visit of the newly redeveloped space and was impressed with the new space and had no issues maneuvering throughout the main portion of the building. The Review Team recognized that great care was taken to ensure an accessible space was created, including the details of the colours chosen and ensuring adequate contrast when transitioning from room to room or wall to floor.

As a result of the site visit, a number of accessibility issues and recommendations of the Review Team were forwarded to Senior Staff for consideration. The County accepted the recommendations with most being implemented, with some that will be implemented during redevelopment, equipment replacement, or reconfiguration.

Site Plans and Building/Renovation drawings and upgrades/improvements at the Townships

Township of North Frontenac

2024 Achievements

- Accessible Outhouses regarding the replacement of all outhouses with accessible washrooms – 2024 replacement of outhouse at Sand Lake Beach to an accessible outhouse.

Township of Central Frontenac

2024 Achievements:

- Installation of accessible ramps in Townships halls
- Application of an inclusive community grant to install lighting in parking lots to increase visibility

Township of South Frontenac

2024 Achievements:

- Municipal Town Hall Renovations. The project scope includes a new addition to expand the current facility and interior renovations to the existing facility. Work commenced in summer of 2024 and continues into 2025.
- New website that is focused on AODA compliance
- Continued and ongoing AODA training of staff
- Focus on process improvement through an accessibility lens
- Administrative practices with a key focus on accessibility

Key Focus for 2025:

- Development of a Service Disruption Policy
- Continue with focus on accessible document creation/training

- Continued corporate awareness focus on accessibility for AODA compliance and better service to all residents and visitors of South Frontenac.

Township of Frontenac Islands

2024 Achievements:

- Accessible washroom at Pat Norris park on Howe Island with installing an accessible ramp for easier access into the washroom

Celebration of Accessibility Award

The joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee works all year to make sure that Frontenac County is as accessible as possible for people living with disabilities. Each year since 2013 the committee has bestowed the Frontenac Access Award on groups or individuals who have worked to those ends during the year.

“Access” can include designing new or renovated buildings, an employment program; a transportation system, a recreational or leisure program; or anything that contributes significantly to persons with disabilities living independently.

For the 2024 Award, the Committee chose the following recipient.

The Hotel Wolfe Island

Hotel Wolfe Island, like many historic buildings in Frontenac County, played a memorable role in the lives of grandparents and parents of many Kingston area families. At one time it was the place to go for a romantic or celebratory dinner with a view of the sunset over downtown Kingston. Over time, it declined. Under new management, it has rebranded and reimagined both the hotel and the waterfront patio area, creating accessible spaces that are enjoyed by the community year round.

To improve accessibility to the hotel for individuals with mobility impairment, sturdy metal handrails have been installed beside all exterior steps. A rear door providing an accessible entrance to the bar and dining room for wheelchairs and rollators is clearly marked and staff ensure it is open for use at any time. Staff readily swap out chairs and reconfigure tables to accommodate individual needs.

In the exterior waterfront patio area, in addition to superb accessible washrooms that are available for public use, a covered pergola has been added to provide a large and level seating area for seasonal diners who cannot negotiate the stepped sections of the patio. The hotel also makes its spacious parking lot available for use as the Wolfe Island Commons, a fully accessible space that hosts waterside picnics, seasonal farmer’s markets and indigenous events. The furnishings include tables and chairs and planter boxes with integrated seating, making it a perfect all ages family gathering spot for viewing the fireworks shows produced by the City of Kingston.

In August 2024 the Kingston / Wolfe Island ferry service returned to the village of Marysville after a four year absence, making it possible for visitors to once again access

the village of Marysville easily. We have noticed an increase in social media questions about accessibility in the village and suitability for visitors with wheelchairs and walkers. Hotel Wolfe Island offers one of the largest accessible entertainment spaces on Wolfe Island, and the only dining establishment accessible to wheelchairs. Its ongoing improvements will allow families with diverse needs to enjoy dining and entertainment options. The hotel also welcomes local charities to use its interior spaces for meetings at no cost, allowing a wider group of volunteers to actively work with charities and community members to participate in events hosted by those charities. The rebranding of the hotel itself has communicated a message of reconciliation and welcome to all who live on or visit Frontenac Islands.

The Standards

Information and Communications

Topic	Barrier or Goals Identified	Accessibility Updates
Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove barriers that may be preventing the County website from being fully compatible with assistive technology and ensure web content meets W.C.A.G.2.0 level AA compliance requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All PDFs are remediated to ensure all web content on the County of Frontenac website is accessible.
Information and Communication Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase training and awareness and clarify expectations for creating or procuring accessible information and communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adobe Acrobat Pro DC used to ensure all PDFs are in an accessible format ✓ Staff trained on how to create accessible documents including Word and PDF

Transportation

The County of Frontenac and its member municipalities do not provide a conventional transit system and the Howe Island Ferry and the Township Ferry do not meet the minimum tonnage under the Standard; however the County of Frontenac provides annual funding in the amount of \$96,000 to ensure seniors and those with accessibility needs receive rides to appointments.

Design of Public Spaces

Topic	Barrier or Goals Identified	Accessibility Updates
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make accessible improvements to the K&P Trail • Continue to work jointly with the JFAAC on ensuring the development of the K&P Trail, as it continues to move north, meets the standards set out in the AODA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In 2024, staff reviewed road crossings in order to make some infrastructure improvements which the Accessibility Advisory Committee provided comments on. ✓ In 2024, bridge re-development continued.

Customer Service

Topic	Barrier or Goals Identified	Accessibility Updates
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote public engagement and use of accessible feedback channels • Solicit and respond to community feedback to help direct accessibility planning efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ With the implementation in 2021 of the County's new Engage Frontenac community engagement tool, the site features a "Help promote accessibility in Frontenac County" project. In addition, the County continues to encourage members of the public to submit their comments or concerns through one of our feedback channels: online "accessibility feedback" forms, speaking with a County staff member, or reaching out through all of its social media channels. ✓ The County will continue to ensure feedback channels are in accessible formats and will respond to feedback, upon request, in a manner that considers individual preferences and abilities.

Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support training initiatives to equip staff with knowledge and skills to deliver high quality customer service to all residents and visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All new staff receive training on the AODA and the Human Rights Code through the County's New Hire Orientation, delivered once a month.
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Employment

Topic	Barrier or Goals Identified	Accessibility Updates
Commitment to accessible employment practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to encourage a diverse work force by identifying and removing any barriers to employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue to promote and support a diverse work group through our hiring processes and our accommodation plans.

The Frontenacs, The Employer

In addition to the County's municipal goods, services, programs, and facilities, it is important to remember that we are also an employer with over 400 full and part-time employees. The County is committed to maintaining a barrier-free recruitment and hiring process and recognizes the strength of a diverse workforce. In keeping with our Multiyear Accessibility Plan, the County will make continuous upgrades to our policies, procedures, and workplaces to foster a safer, more accessible, and inclusive work environment. Some highlights from 2024 include:

- Continue to advertise on all employment opportunities that, upon request, accommodations and alternate formats are available throughout the recruitment, assessment, and selection processes.
- Continue to use Individualized Work Modification Plan's and Individualized Emergency Response Plan worksheets.
- 2069 Batterssea Road: The Administration building re-opened in 2024 following an 18 month total redevelopment and renovation. The new building and site features better located accessible parking, accessible sidewalk from the parking lot, and power door operator. Parking and entrance are fully accessible for staff and visitors, with 2 new accessible washrooms now added on the main floor of the building.
- The County of Frontenac Human Resources now provides Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training for the Management Team to address aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion for the County of Frontenac.

- Staff, including Council, Committee and public meetings, moved back into the newly redeveloped County Administration Building in February 2024. The opening of the new building involved the FAAC and accessibility played a key focus

Training

- Trained all County administrative staff on the use of Adobe Acrobat Pro, the County's remediation tool for creating accessible PDF content posted to the County's website.

What's up for 2025

County of Frontenac

- The County will continue to work jointly with the JFAAC on ensuring the development of the K&P Trail, as it continues to move north, meets the standards set out in the AODA
- Continue to make accessible improvements to the K&P Trail
- Continue to work with and support the Townships in the continuation of a barrier free Frontenac.

Township of South Frontenac

- Development of a Service Disruption Policy
- Continue with focus on accessible document creation/training
- Continued corporate awareness focus on accessibility for AODA compliance and better service to all residents and visitors of South Frontenac.