



**Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Monday, May 29, 2017 – 10:00 a.m.  
Township of South Frontenac Council Chamber  
4432 George St, Sydenham, ON**

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## **AGENDA**

Page

**1. Public Meeting – Accessibility on the K&P Trail Tichborne to Sharbot Lake**

The Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee will host a public meeting at 10:00 a.m. on May 29, 2017 to consider accessibility on the K&P Trail from Tichborne to Sharbot Lake in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards, Section 80.08 - Consultation, recreational trails.

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- a) **2017-077  
Planning and Economic Development  
Public Meeting Report K&P Trail Design - Tichborne to Sharbot Lake**

**2. Call to Order**

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

- a) **That** the agenda for the May 29, 2017 meeting of the Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee be approved.

**4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

- a) Minutes of Meeting held February 13, 2017  
**That** the minutes of the Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held February 13, 2017 be adopted.

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**6. Deputations and/or Presentations**

**7. Briefings**

- a) **Councillor McDougall** will speak to the Committee regarding a citizens request regarding Accessible Transportation.

Representatives of the Frontenac Transportation Services will be on hand for this discussion.

[See Communications a)]

- 25 - 63**      b) **Neil Allen**, Chair, will provide the Committee with an update on his meeting with Township of South Frontenac Public Works regarding accessible upgrades to Point Park upgrades.
- 64 - 93**      8. **Reports to the Accessibility Advisory Committee**  
a) **2017-078**  
**Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee**  
**2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Review of First Draft**
- This report is for information purposes only; however feedback and input is being sought from the Committee.
- 94 - 97**      9. **Communications**  
a) Correspondence from the Southern Frontenac Community Services providing correspondence from a resident outlining possible solutions for accessible transportation.
- 98 - 102**      b) From Kurt Halliday providing article on Access is for Everybody
- 103 - 105**      c) From Kurt Halliday providing article on Community Developments - Seeing 'age-friendly'
- 10. Other Business**
- 11. Next Meeting**
- 12. Adjournment**



# FRONTENAC

**Report 2016-077**

## **Council Recommend Information Report**

**To:** Accessibility Advisory Committee

**From:** Kelly Pender, Chief Administrative Officer

**Prepared by:** **Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development**

**Date of meeting:** 29 May 2017

**Re:** **Planning and Economic Development – Public Meeting Report  
K&P Trail Design (Tichborne to Sharbot Lake)**

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### **Recommendation**

This report is for information purposes only.

### **Background**

Frontenac County is scheduled to begin construction on the portion of the K&P Trail that runs from Tichborne to Sharbot Lake, completing ten years of work to build this connection. The basic trail route, approved by Council, is attached as Exhibit A, with all road crossings highlighted with a red marking. The detailed design and route specifics are subject detailed design and survey on some portions that divert from the rail bed. This work will further evaluate existing conditions of the trail, road crossings, and grades.

### **Comment**

Section 80.8 of the Design of Public Spaces Standard specifies that obligated organizations shall consult with the public, persons with disabilities and their Accessibility Advisory committees on the following before they construct new or redevelop existing recreational trails:

1. The slope of the trail.
2. The need for, and location of, ramps on the trail.
3. The need for, location and design of,

- a. rest areas,
- b. passing areas,
- c. viewing areas,
- d. amenities on the trail, and
- e. any other pertinent feature. O. Reg. 413/12, s. 6.

In addition, the Design of Public Spaces Standard has several minimum technical requirements for recreational trails. Details of these requirements can be found in Exhibit B, "Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes," an excerpt from the [Design of Public Spaces Standard](#).

**Design Requirements**

- Have a minimum clear width of 1,000mm
- Have a clear height that provides a minimum clearance of 2,100mm above the trail.
- The entrance to a trail must provide a clear opening of between 850mm and 1,000mm whether the entrance includes a gate, bollard or other entrance design.
- The surface of the trail must be firm and stable.

**Edge protection**

- When a recreational trail is located directly beside water or a drop-off, edge protection is required.
- The top of the edge protection must be at least 50mm above the trail surface.
- Edge protection must be designed so as not to impede in the drainage of the trail surface.

- Edge protection does not need to be provided if the trail is not adjacent to water or a drop off.



### **Trail Signage**

Trail signs must include the following:

- The length of the trail.
- The type of surface which the trail is constructed.
- The average and minimum trail width.
- The average and maximum running slope and cross slope.
- The location of amenities where provided.

See Exhibit C for examples of accessibility signage used in the City of Kingston for the urban portion of the K&P Trail.

Staff will address the above regulations over the course of project construction.

As per the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, County Staff seek input from the public and from the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee on trail considerations such as slopes of the trail, rest areas, passing areas, viewing areas and other amenities.

### **Sustainability Implications**

Multi-Use trails provide options for transportation and recreation to residents and visitors to Frontenac County alike. Completion of the K&P Trail project will support active transportation, healthy lifestyles and improve access to nature in Frontenac.

**Financial Implications**

None applicable.

**Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected**

City of Kingston, Parks Department  
Township of Central Frontenac  
Tri-County Trails Group



# FRONTENAC K&P TRAIL



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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## Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes

### Overview

Accessible recreational trails and beach access routes provide an inclusive experience that allows people of all abilities to enjoy natural spaces in our communities.

A recreational trail is a public pedestrian trail intended for recreational and leisure purposes. The standard applies to newly constructed or redeveloped recreational trails that an organization intends to maintain. The standard does not apply to the certain types of recreational trails, such as wilderness trails, backcountry trails and portage routes. These types of trails are difficult to access because of their location, and are built in a way that reduces their impact on the natural environment.

Multi-use trails are used for different purposes at different times. For example, pedestrians may use a trail in the summer, but in the winter, the trail becomes a snowmobile trail. Another example is a pedestrian trail that is also a biking trail. These types of trails are not "solely intended" for either snowmobiling or biking, and are required to comply with the Standard.

Beach access routes are routes constructed for public pedestrian use that provide access to public beaches from off-street parking facilities, recreational trails, exterior paths of travel and amenities. The standard applies to beach access routes that can be either permanent or temporary, but does not apply to beach access routes that are created through repetitive use and without formal authorization.

Organizations must meet the requirements of the standard when they construct a recreational trail or beach access route that they intend to maintain or redevelop an existing one.

Trails not constructed or redeveloped by an obligated organization but rather created in an unplanned way are not required to meet these requirements. For example, decommissioned railway lines that now serve as trails, but were never constructed or redeveloped by an obligated organization with formal authorization to serve as a trail are exempt. If an organization replaces a decommissioned railway line or other unplanned trail, such as a path created in a



wooded area by frequent travel, with a new pedestrian trail, that new trail must meet the requirements.

Requirements for recreational trails and beach access routes apply on a go-forward basis to new construction and redeveloped trails and beach access routes. Organizations are not required to retrofit or change existing trails or beach access routes unless they choose to redevelop them.

This section is divided into the following five areas:

- 80.6 – 80.8 Recreational trails and beach access routes, general
- 80.9 Technical requirements for recreational trails
- 80.10 Technical requirements for beach access routes
- 80.11 – 80.13 Technical requirements common to recreational trails and beach access routes
- 80.14 – 80.15 Exceptions to the requirements for recreational trails and beach access routes

## **Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes, General**

### **Requirements as Stated in the Regulation**

#### Trails

80.6 This Part applies to newly constructed and redeveloped recreational trails that an obligated organization intends to maintain, but does not apply to the following types of recreational trails:

1. Trails solely intended for cross-country skiing, mountain biking or the use of motorized snow vehicles or off-road vehicles.
2. Wilderness trails, backcountry trails and portage routes.

#### Beach access routes

80.7 This Part applies to newly constructed and redeveloped beach access routes that an obligated organization intends to maintain, including permanent and temporary routes, and temporary routes that are established through the use of manufactured goods, which can be removed for the winter months.

#### Consultation, recreational trails

80.8 (1) Obligated organizations shall consult on the following before they construct new or redevelop existing recreational trails:



- 4. The slope of the trail.
- 5. The need for, and location of, ramps on the trail.
- 3. The need for, location and design of,
  - i. rest areas,
  - ii. passing areas,
  - iii. viewing areas,
  - iv. amenities on the trail, and
  - v. any other pertinent feature.

(2) Obligated organizations shall consult on the matters referred to in subsection (1) in the following manner:

- 1. Obligated organizations must consult with the public and persons with disabilities.
- 2. Municipalities must also consult with their municipal accessibility advisory committees, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Act.

**Intent of these Requirements**

These sections clarify the types of recreational trails and beach access routes that must comply with the regulation and those that do not. These requirements also outline the features of recreational trails that are subject to consultation as required before an obligated organization constructs new, or redevelops existing, recreational trails.

**Table 49 - When do Organizations have to Comply**

<b>Affected Organizations</b>	<b>Compliance Dates</b>
Ontario Government and Legislative Assembly	January 1, 2015
Designated public sector organizations with 50+ employees	January 1, 2016
Designated public sector organizations with 1-49 employees	January 1, 2016
Private and not-for-profit organizations with 50+ employees	January 1, 2017

A Guide to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – Design of Public Spaces Standard



**Affected Organizations**

**Compliance Dates**

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Private and not-for-profit organizations with 1-49 employees      January 1, 2018

**Implementing the Requirements**

**Consultations for recreational trails**

Before constructing a recreational trail or redeveloping an existing trail, obligated organizations must consult with the public, including people with disabilities.

Municipalities with an Accessibility Advisory Committee, established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, must also consult with the committee.

Consultations must address the following design elements that may be part of the trail:

- The slope of the trail (e.g. the appropriate cross slope, running slope or both)
- Need for, and location of, ramps on the trail
- Need for, location and design of:
  - rest areas
  - passing areas
  - viewing areas
  - amenities on the trail
  - any other accessibility feature.

It is important to note that consultation on beach access routes **is not required**.

The intent of consultation on these specific elements is to give people with disabilities the opportunity to provide input as part of the planning and development of accessible trails. Consultation is important because it prevents organizations from assuming what accessibility features the people accessing the trail will need.

There is a common misconception that an accessible trail that is useable by people with disabilities must be flat. However, not every person with a disability wants to use a flat trail, as they may appreciate a challenging experience. Some



people with disabilities will be able to use a trail regardless of the design specifications, even if it has a steep running slope. Understanding this can help designers and decision-makers when developing design solutions that meet the needs of the local population.

Consultations should be held as early as possible in the planning and design process to add value. That way, organizations can weigh all considerations before making decisions and finalizing design plans.

The consultation requirement does not set out a particular process or way to consult. The requirements recognize that consultations can be conducted in a wide variety of ways, depending on the organization.

This requirement also allows organizations to use consultation processes they may already have in place, or to combine consultations (e.g., consultations on play spaces and recreational trails may be conducted at the same time, based on an organization's need to do both). For more information about accessible consultation processes, organizations may wish to consult the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association's [Guides for Accessible Community Engagement](#). These guides were developed through the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's EnAbling Change Program.

## **Technical Requirements for Recreational Trails**

### **Requirements as Stated in the Regulation**

80.9 (1) Obligated organizations shall ensure that any recreational trails that they construct or redevelop, and that they intend to maintain, meet the following technical requirements:

1. A recreational trail must have a minimum clear width of 1,000 mm.
2. A recreational trail must have a clear height that provides a minimum head room clearance of 2,100 mm above the trail.
3. The surface of a recreational trail must be firm and stable.
4. Where a recreational trail has openings in its surface,
  - i. the openings must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm, and



- ii. any elongated openings must be orientated approximately perpendicular to the direction of travel.
- 5. Where a recreational trail is constructed adjacent to water or a drop-off, the trail must have edge protection that meets the following requirements:
  - i. The edge protection must constitute an elevated barrier that runs along the edge of the recreational trail in order to prevent users of the trail from slipping over the edge.
  - ii. The top of the edge protection must be at least 50 mm above the trail surface.
  - iii. The edge protection must be designed so as not to impede the drainage of the trail surface.
- 6. Despite paragraph 5, where there is a protective barrier that runs along the edge of a recreational trail that is adjacent to water or a drop-off, edge protection does not have to be provided.
- 7. The entrance to a recreational trail must provide a clear opening of between 850 mm and 1,000 mm, whether the entrance includes a gate, bollard or other entrance design.
- 8. A recreational trail must have at each trail head signage that provides the following information:
  - i. The length of the trail.
  - ii. The type of surface of which the trail is constructed.
  - iii. The average and the minimum trail width.
  - iv. The average and maximum running slope and cross slope.
  - v. The location of amenities, where provided.
- (2) The signage referred to in paragraph 8 of subsection (1) must have text that,
  - (a) has high tonal contrast with its background in order to assist with visual recognition; and
  - (b) includes characters that use a sans serif font.
- (3) Where other media, such as park websites or brochures, are used by the obligated organization to provide information about the recreational trail, beyond advertising, notice or promotion, the media must provide the same information as listed in paragraph 8 of subsection (1).



**Intent of these Requirements**

These requirements provide organizations with minimum accessibility requirements that must be met when constructing new or redeveloping existing recreational trails that the organization intends to maintain.

**Table 50 - When do Organizations Have to Comply**

<b>Affected Organizations</b>	<b>Compliance Dates</b>
Ontario Government and Legislative Assembly	January 1, 2015
Designated public sector organizations with 50+ employees	January 1, 2016
Designated public sector organizations with 1-49 employees	January 1, 2016
Private and not-for-profit organizations with 50+ employees	January 1, 2017
Private and not-for-profit organizations with 1-49 employees	January 1, 2018

**Implementing the Requirements**

**Minimum clear width**

The minimum width of the surface of a new or redeveloped trail must be 1,000 mm. This is wide enough to accommodate a person using a mobility device, a cane or a service animal.

**Minimum head room clearance**

Head room clearance refers to the area above the surface of the trail. This area must be clear of any obstacle that a person may have to duck under, such as tree branches or signs. Obstacles in the overhead area above the trail are safety hazards for people with low or no vision.



The minimum head room clearance on a trail is 2,100 mm above the trail surface. Obstacles must not be located lower than this height.

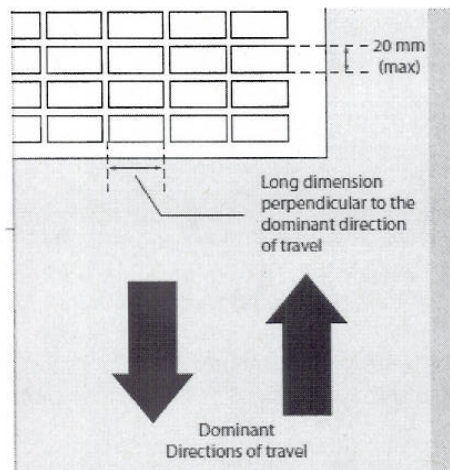
**Trail surface**

A firm and stable surface resists indentations. For example, when a person walks or wheels across it, the surface should return to its original condition once this pressure is removed. The trail surface must be firm and stable so that the wheels of a mobility device or the tips of canes, crutches or walkers will not sink into the surface.

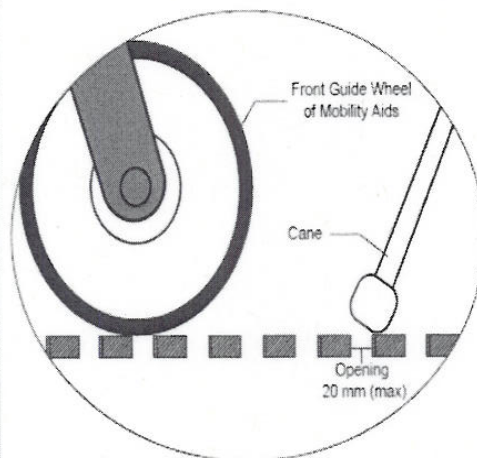
Organizations can choose from a variety of materials that will achieve a firm and stable surface. Organizations have the flexibility to choose the most appropriate surface material, while still considering maintenance requirements or budget. The requirement for a firm and stable surface does not mean that organizations must use concrete or asphalt. When determining if a surface is firm and stable, organizations should consider whether the wheels of a mobility device could sink into the surface or cause the surface to move.

**Openings in the surface**

Openings in the surface can come from grates or other objects designed and placed in the ground to provide drainage or ventilation. This does not include openings in the trail's surface caused by naturally occurring erosion.



**Figure 2 – Elongated openings**



**Figure 3 - Openings in the surface**



Openings on the surface of a recreational trail must not allow for the passage of an object that is greater than 20 mm in diameter. This is so that mobility device casters (small front wheels) or cane tips cannot pass through them.

For elongated openings (i.e., those that are not square), such as those on certain grates, length should be placed at a right angle to the direction of travel to prevent slipping. If openings, such as those on a grate, have a longer length than width, the length should be placed at a right angle to the direction of travel to prevent slipping.

#### **Edge protection**

When a recreational trail is located directly beside water or a drop-off, edge protection is required. A drop-off may exist, for example, where a trail is located beside a cliff edge or other sudden, significant change in level. Edge protection is a small curb built at the side of the trail that would stop, for example, a mobility device from rolling off the edge of the trail and allow a person with low or no vision to detect the edge of the trail. The top of the edge protection must be a minimum of 50 mm in height above the boardwalk surface.

In addition, the edge protection must be designed so it does not prevent water from draining away from the trail surface, which could cause erosion of the trail surface, water pooling and unsafe pathways. However, in cases where a protective barrier is already in place, such as a wall or a railing, edge protection is not required.

#### **Trail entrance**

The entrance to a recreational trail must provide a clear opening of between 850 mm and 1,000 mm. This applies whether the entrance uses a gate, bollard or any other entrance design that restricts access to the trail.

The minimum range allows for the passage of people who use mobility devices or service animals. At the same time, the maximum range will prevent the passage of devices not desirable on a pedestrian trail, such as snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles or small cars. A maximum range for entrances only applies to recreational trail entrances and does not apply to entrances elsewhere in the standard (where only a minimum is set out).

The entrance opening should be clear of any obstructions like handles, locks or hinges that could reduce the width to less than 850 mm.



**Signage**

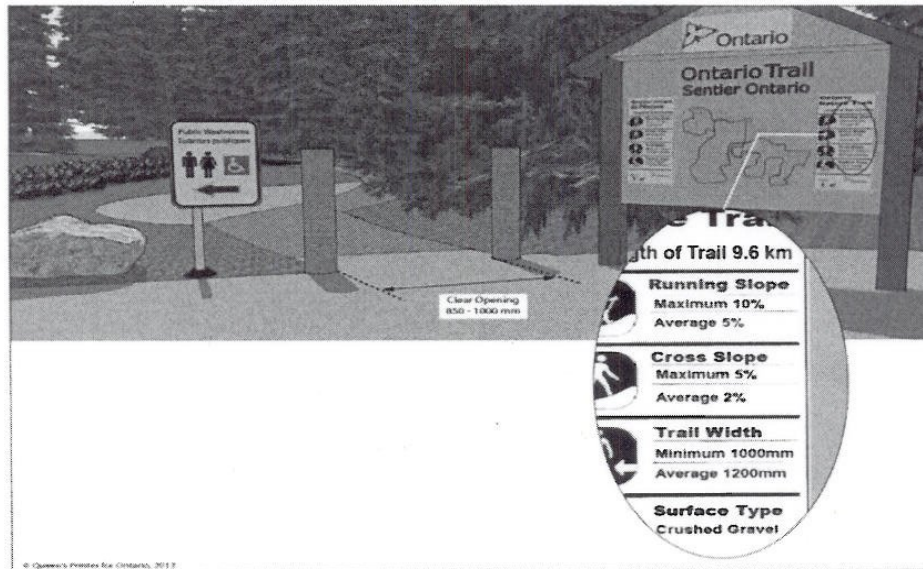
For new or redeveloped recreational trails, signage must be placed at each trail head and provide the following information to all trail users:

- Trail length
- Surface type on the trail
- Average and minimum trail width
- Average and maximum running slope
- Average and maximum cross slope
- Location of amenities, where provided

A trail head refers to a point of access to a trail. They are commonly located close to a sidewalk or parking area. Organizations must identify which entrance/exit points to a recreational trail are trail heads to determine where the signage requirements will apply.

To help people with low or no vision and make the signage easier to read, the text on the signage must:

- Have high tonal contrast with its background
- Use sans serif font for its characters

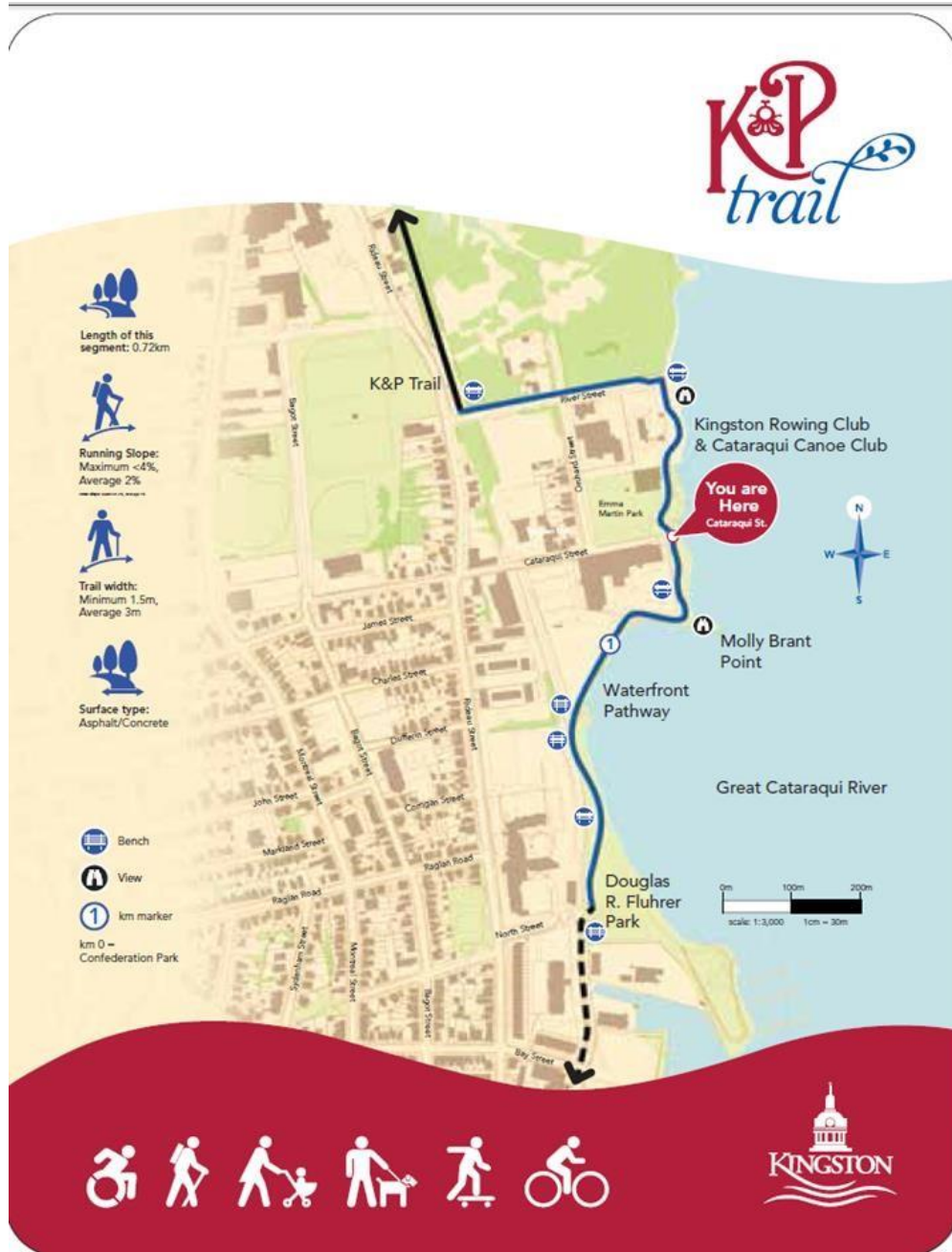


**Figure 4 - Trail signage**

These requirements provide minimum standards for accessibility. Organizations have the flexibility to decide on the size of their signage, as well as what other information to provide, based on their specific needs.

Some organizations use other media to provide information about the recreational trail, such as park websites or brochures. Those media must also provide the same information listed on the signage as noted above, except when the media is used specifically for advertising, notices or promoting special events. For example, if an organization advertises the opening of a new trail in a newspaper, the accessibility information does not need to be included in the advertisement.

Exhibit C: Example of K&P Accessible Signage from City of Kingston





**Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 13, 2017**

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A meeting of the Frontenac Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee was held at the Township of South Frontenac's Council Chambers, 4432 George Street, Sydenham on Monday, February 13, 2017 at 10:00 AM

**Present:** Kurt Halliday, Community Representative, Central Frontenac  
Margaret Knott, Community Representative, Frontenac Islands  
Councillor Tom Dewey, Council Liaison  
Councillor John McDougall

**Regrets** Neil Allen, Community Representative, South Frontenac, Chair  
Ed Schlievert, Community Representative, North Frontenac

**Staff** Jannette Amini, County of Frontenac  
Sherry Corneil, Township of South Frontenac  
Donna Longmire, Township of Central Frontenac  
Eric Korhonen, Township of North Frontenac

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Amini called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. and proceeded to the Election of Officers

**Election of Chair**

Moved By: Councillor Dewey  
Seconded By: Ms. Knott

**That** Neil Allen be elected Chair of the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2017.

**Carried**

Moved By: Councillor McDougall  
Seconded By: Councillor Dewey

**That** nominations for Chair be closed.

**Carried**

There being no further nominations, Mr. Allen was elected Chair for 2017.

**Election of Vice Chair**

Moved By: Councillor McDougall  
Seconded By: Mr. Halliday

**That** Margaret Knott be nominated Vice-Chair of the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2017.

**Carried**

Moved By: Councillor Dewey  
Seconded By: Mr. Halliday

**That** nominations for Vice-Chair be closed.

**Carried**

There being no further nominations, Ms. Knott was elected Vice-Chair for 2017.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda**

Moved By: Councillor McDougall  
Seconded By: Councillor Dewey

**That** the agenda for the February 13, 2017 meeting of the Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee be approved.

**Carried**

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

There were none.

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

**Minutes of Meeting held November 22, 2016**

Moved By: Councillor Dewey  
Seconded By: Councillor McDougall

**That** the minutes of the Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held November 22, 2016 be adopted.

**Carried**

**5. Deputations and/or Presentations**



**6. Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan**

- a) **2017-025  
Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee  
4th Quarter Update Report**

Ms. Amini provided some key high level highlights of the report, including the Age Friendly Community Action Plan of which this Committee would be involved and the advertising of the Committee vacancy.

It was suggested that a two page Executive Summary of the Age Friendly Community Action Plan be created as the current document is very long. It was also suggested that this Committee provide input on that Executive Summary.

- b) **2017-026  
Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Review of Duties of the Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**Be It Resolved That** the agenda template for the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee be amended to include the heading “Reports from Committee Members”.

**Deferred**

(pending Ms. Amini’s meeting with the CAO’s group)

Ms. Amini provided an overview of the report, specifically noting that at present, given that the County does not provide services or programs, this Committee only considers policy and is not providing input into the built or physical environment of the townships nor are the townships making use of this Committee which is mandated under the AODA. Ms. Amini will be meeting later in the coming months with the CAO’s group to discuss this issue; however questioned if Committee members might find it useful to bring specific township issues to the committee themselves so that recommendations may be made back to the townships.

It was noted that accessibility is only one piece of the picture and that accommodations also needs to be considered, specifically around transportation for persons with disabilities. The Committee was updated on the Big Data for Small Places sessions that are currently being carried out at the County, with one working group focusing on rural transportation and how we ensure that the needs of residents in the County who require transportation for Doctors appointments are being met. One solution being considered is ride shares in which the Northern Frontenac Community Services is in the process of applying for a Trillium grant to study this further. Discussions with the City of Kingston around the potential of Kingston Transit coming out to the rural car parks along highway 38 is also being investigated.

The Committee questioned if townships were able to apply for trillium grants and then disperses these grants to private organizations to carry out accessible retrofits. Ms. Amini indicated that funding could be provided through Community Improvement Plans which can either be done locally or the County now has the ability to do a County wide Community Improvement Plan; however there is a cap on this type of funding and the business would need to come up with 50% of the cost.

Mr. Halliday suggested that he do regular articles in the Frontenac News around why accessibility makes sense for your business. These would be approximately 500 word articles that could be done once a month.

Ms. Knott noted that many things are happening around accessibility, pointing out the meals program currently happening on Wolfe Island where meals are delivered to those who are unable to get out. Prepared meals are brought to the medial centre and a group of volunteers then deliver those meals to seniors.

Ms. Amini was also discuss with the CAO's the potential to also meet with the public works managers.

It was noted that Central Frontenac has long term projects that they go through every month and maybe this committee should be updated on the progress of those projects. Ms. Amini will speak to the CAO's to have Project Update Reports from the Townships that includes what projects are coming up and what projects are currently in progress and their status.

**2017-027**

**Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**Review of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities Access Award**

Moved By: Mr. Halliday  
Seconded By: Councillor Dewey

**That** the presentation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities Access Award be presented at the annual Warden's Reception which takes place during the fall;

**And Further That** the award be changed to a Celebration of Accessibility #inFrontenec with the names of all those being nominated to be placed on the plaque

**And Further That** the County of Frontenac International Day of Persons with Disabilities Access Award Selection criteria and nominations form be amended to reflect these changes.

**Carried as Amended**

(See motion to amend below which was Carried)

Motion to Amend

Moved By: Councillor Dewey

Seconded By: Mr. Halliday

That the motion be amended to include:

**And Further That** the award be changed to a Celebration of Accessibility #inFrontenac with the names of all those being nominated to be placed on the plaque

**Carried**

**7. Communications**



**8. Other Business**

Mr. Halliday noted that he will pitch the idea to Jeff Green to have occasional articles in the Frontenac News. He suggested it could include things happening at the committee level. Ms. Amini could provide Mr. Halliday with bullet points of what is happening.

**9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee is scheduled for May 15, 2017.

**10. Adjournment**

Moved By: Councillor McDougall

Seconded By: Mr. Halliday

**That** the meeting hereby adjourn at 11:36 p.m.

**Carried**

**SYDENHAM POINT –Park Improvement Project**

*In order to continue to provide information to questions about the work that is planned at the Sydenham Point, we have prepared the following FAQ's.*

**What is being done at the Point this year?**

This spring the Township will undertake the following work to further enhance the Point Park:

- upgrading Point washrooms/change room, as well as the summer camp facility/bunker to increase their functionality and meet accessibility requirements
- converting the old tennis courts to a multi-use sport pad
- installing new play structure equipment
- paving the accessible pathway down through the Point.
- Installation of a water bottle filling station

In 2016 the Township undertook work to restore the shoreline of the Point while enhancing the area for public use. This included the replacement of the old railway ties with rock, creating a more gradual sloped entrance into the water using pea stone and placing large flat rocks at the water's edge to protect the beach from wave action and provide a natural sitting area. Other enhancements included creating a meandering path down to the beach area and forming dedicated sand play areas.

**Why is this work occurring?**

The requirement for this work has been driven by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act/ Built Environment Standards guiding us to make changes to meet accessibility requirements and by the Canadian Safety Council standards for Playground Equipment to meet safety guidelines.

The work being proposed will provide an opportunity to improve and enhance the Community's ability to lead a more active lifestyle. It will help overcome the challenge of access in creating a space that is more accessibility for all to participate in and enjoy the Point Park. The need for the work has been demonstrated and supported through the results of the recreation and leisure survey. The Point Park is one of the most used assets in the Township.

**What is the cost of this work?**

The estimated cost of the project \$155,000

**How is this work being funded?**

This year, the Township of South Frontenac learned that it was one of 203 recipients of an Ontario150 Community Capital Program grant. The two-month grant of \$77,500, along with matching Parkland reserve funds approved by Council, will cover the estimated \$155,000 cost for upgrades at Sydenham Point.

Additionally, the Township received \$4,000 in funding from the KFL&A Public Health, Healthy Kids Community Challenge to support the installation of a water bottle filling station at the Point.

**When will the work occur?**

The work scheduled to run from early April to mid-June

**Will the Public be able to use the Park during the improvements?**

The park will remain open during most of the period, with only specific areas/ buildings closed off for the safety of residents during the construction process.

**Any update on the grass at the Point?**

Due to the lack of precipitation and hot weather in 2016 the hydro seed did not germinate. Additional top soil and re-seeded occurred in the fall of 2016 and the Township continues to monitor and maintain as required.

**Who should I call if I have any further questions or concerns?**

Residents are encouraged to contact us at 613-376-3027 or through the contacts section on our website. [www.southfrontenac.net](http://www.southfrontenac.net)

**4.3 OTHER AMENITIES**

**4.3.15 BENCHES**

**RATIONALE**

Benches provide convenient resting places for all individuals and are especially important for those who may have difficulty with standing or walking for extended periods. Benches should be placed adjacent to pedestrian walkways to provide convenient rest places without becoming potential obstructions. Appropriate seat heights can facilitate sitting and rising for individuals such as senior citizens. Armrests may also provide assistance in sitting and rising. A person with a visual impairment may find it easier to locate benches if they are located adjacent to a landmark, such as a large tree, a bend in a pathway, or a sound source.

**APPLICATION**

All benches, except those located in unpaved areas of parks, wilderness, beach or unpaved picnic areas, shall be accessible to persons using wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

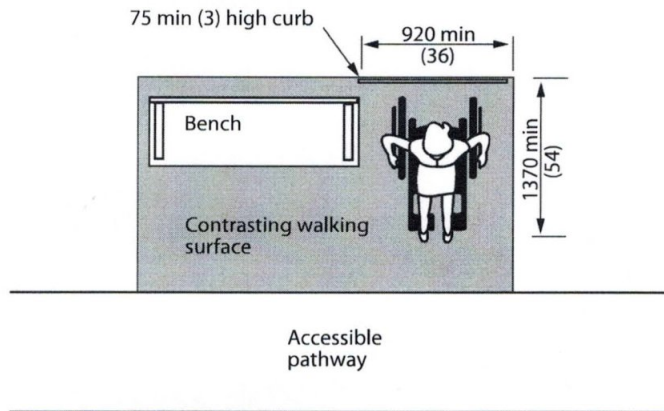
**DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

Benches shall

- be adjacent to an *accessible route* complying with 4.1.4;
- be stable;
- have a seat height between 450 mm (17-3/4 in.) and 500 mm (19-5/8 in.) from the ground;
- have arm and back rests;
- be of contrasting colour to their background; and
- have an adjacent level, firm ground surface at least 920 mm (36 in.) x 1370 mm (54 in.).

**RELATED SECTIONS**

- 4.1.1 Space and Reach Requirements
- 4.1.2 Ground and Floor Surfaces
- 4.1.3 Protruding and Overhead Objects
- 4.1.4 Accessible Routes, Paths and Corridors
- 4.4.8 Detectable Warning Surfaces
- 4.4.14 Materials and Finishes
- 4.4.15 Texture and Colour



**Figure 4.3.15.1**  
Rest Area



**Figure 4.3.15.2**  
Bench Seating

**4.3.16 PICNIC TABLES**

4.3 OTHER AMENITIES

**RATIONALE**

Picnic tables with an extension of the table surface make them *accessible* to a person using a wheelchair. A firm, level surface around the table, with an *accessible* path leading to the table, is required for wheelchair accessibility. A change in texture from a pathway to the picnic table area is an important cue for a person with a visual impairment.

**APPLICATION**

If picnic tables are provided in an *accessible* public or *common use* area, at least 10%, but not less than one, for each cluster of picnic tables shall comply with this section. It is preferable to have all picnic tables comply with this section.

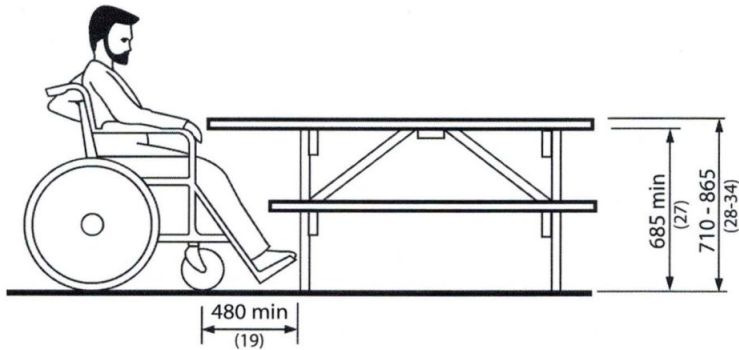
**DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

- Picnic tables shall
- be adjacent to an *accessible route* complying with 4.1.4;
  - have knee *space* under the table at least 760 mm (30 in.) wide by 480 mm (19 in.) deep and 685 mm (27 in.) high;
  - have its top surface located between 710 mm (28 in.) to 865 mm (34 in.) above the finished floor or ground surface;
  - be of contrasting colour to their background; and
  - have a level, firm ground surface extending min. 2000 mm (78-3/4 in.) where *accessible space* is provided at a picnic table for persons who use wheelchairs or scooters and min. 1220 mm (48 in.) on all the other sides.

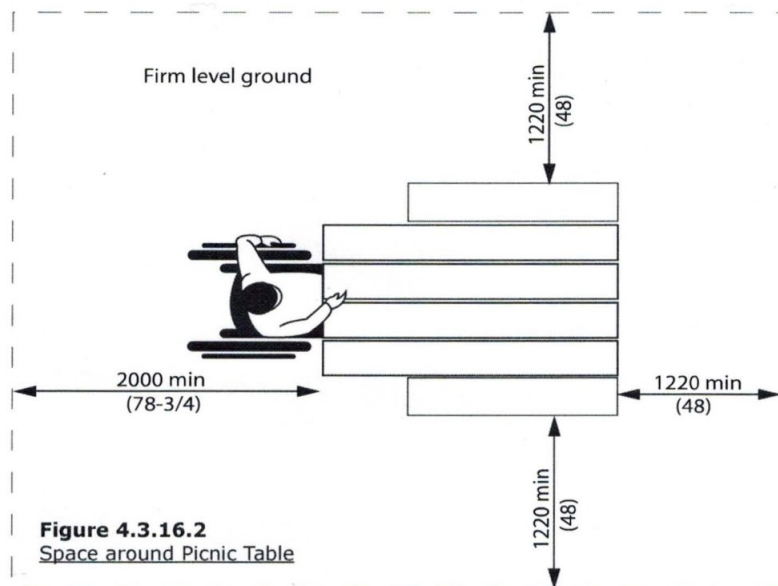
In a retrofit situation where it is *technically infeasible* to provide the required level surface, the dimensions may be reduced to min. 1220 mm (48 in.) on all sides.

**RELATED SECTIONS**

- 4.1.1 Space and Reach Requirements
- 4.1.2 Ground and Floor Surfaces
- 4.1.3 Protruding and Overhead Objects
- 4.1.4 Accessible Routes, Paths and Corridors
- 4.4.8 Detectable Warning Surfaces
- 4.4.14 Materials and Finishes
- 4.4.15 Texture and Colour



**Figure 4.3.16.1**  
Picnic Table



**Figure 4.3.16.2**  
Space around Picnic Table

# Let's PLAY

## CREATING ACCESSIBLE PLAY SPACES A TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOL-BASED GROUPS

“ One OF THE GREATEST JOYS OF BEING A CHILD IS THE ABILITY TO PLAY, SOCIALIZE AND INTERACT WITH OTHER CHILDREN. THIS TOOLKIT HAS ALL THE INFORMATION AND BEST PRACTICES YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS TO DESIGN AN ACCESSIBLE PLAY SPACE THAT ALL CHILDREN, INCLUDING THOSE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS, CAN ENGAGE IN AND ENJOY. FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SPACES TO THE RENOVATION OF EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS, MY HOPE IS THAT ALL COMMUNITIES WILL BECOME FULLY ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE.”

- Rick Hansen

This toolkit has been developed by the Let's Play Project, a partnership of the Rick Hansen Foundation and the Province of British Columbia administered by the Rick Hansen Institute.

The toolkit was researched and written by Shira Standfield MRM, MBCSLA  
Everyoneincluded, [www.everyoneincluded.com](http://www.everyoneincluded.com)

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LET'S PLAY



# 1) INTRODUCTION

**ALL CHILDREN NEED TO PLAY. IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR THEIR PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING.**

Accessible play spaces are designed to encourage shared play among children of all abilities. They offer a rich variety of play opportunities to children both with and without disabilities, based on an overall site design that draws children into inclusive play experiences. They also allow parents and caregivers with physical disabilities to safely supervise and play with their children.

This toolkit aims to raise awareness throughout the school community of the value and practicality of incorporating accessible design and diversity into outdoor play spaces at schools. It is both an overview of best practices and a concrete how-to guide in undertaking the development of a new inclusive play space project or the renovation of an existing play space at a school. The focus of this resource is accessibility in relation to mobility impairments. Although some issues related to the inclusion of children with other disabilities are included, detailed information falls outside the scope of this toolkit.

Many local examples point to successful and innovative outdoor schoolyards and play spaces that have been created by teachers, parents, students and staff. This toolkit includes photos and examples of successful natural play spaces as well as principles and guidelines for ensuring universal access for all students.

Whether your school is planning a brand new play space or considering renovations on a limited budget, this toolkit presents many ways in which you can enhance accessibility and the quality of play opportunities at your site.



Example of universal play equipment. PHOTO COURTESY OF COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES INC.



Example of accessible entrance to play area. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Example of performance space/outdoor classroom. PHOTO COURTESY OF DOLORES ALTIN, EVERGREEN

**LET'S PLAY**



**WHY IS OUTDOOR PLAY IMPORTANT?**

Many studies have shown that play, and especially play in natural spaces outdoors, is an essential component in child development. The more diverse the natural and physical surroundings, the greater the range of learning and developmental opportunities will be for all children including those with disabilities (Tai, 2006).

**PLAY IS IMPORTANT FOR:**

- Brain development, physical development and health
- Building social, emotional and life skills
- Helping to develop an awareness for risk
- Encouraging children to experiment, generate ideas, practice skills, role play, invent
- Allowing an opportunity for children with disabilities to interact with their peers
- Offering opportunities for choice and decision making
- Establishing a critical bond with nature during childhood (Moore 1986, Tai 2006)



Natural features offer a great opportunity for discovery. Balmaha Play Landscape, Scotland, PHOTO COURTESY OF SUE GUTTERIDGE

Studies have shown that one of the best ways to inspire stewardship for a more responsible future is “to instill a love of nature during childhood” (Moore 1986, Tai 2006). A well-designed and inclusive play space offers these rich and formative learning opportunities to all children at your school and in your community.



This sand table provides a great opportunity for all children regardless of ability to play together. PHOTO COURTESY OF COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES INC.



Accessible route throughout the playspace also create opportunities for play. PHOTO COURTESY OF KEN WILLIAMS, CONCORD MONITOR

**LET'S PLAY**



**WHY ARE SCHOOL PLAY SPACES SO IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT?**

Throughout the school year, schoolyards provide young children with daily opportunities for recreation, creative play, and learning. Play areas with diverse natural and built elements enrich and expand on the potential for rich imaginative, social and independent play. Hands on activities, such as planting a tree, add a “real” element to biology class. Bird feeders in the schoolyard inspire observation and promote learning through experience.

The emphasis of an accessible, learning based schoolyard is on diversity and inclusion, encouraging participation from all students. To maximize inclusion and diversity in a schoolyard, the design should:

- appeal to the five senses
- provide children of all abilities and at all developmental stages with opportunities for discovery
- create spaces that are child-scaled and rich in features that can be explored
- provide a variety of types of play including physical and creative play



Natural features and planting incorporated into the play setting.  
BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE



An example of bird feeders and a weather station for environmental education programs. PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE STONE , BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE



These posts encourage physical and creative play.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF WENDY SIMONSON, EVERGREEN

LET'S PLAY



**2) DESIGN**

**DIVERSITY and INCLUSION  
IN PLAY SPACES**

Play spaces that welcome children of all abilities to interact and play with each other should be the starting point when thinking through the design for a new play space. Universal design is an approach that meets this goal by focusing on creating a space that meets the needs of the greatest number of people. Diversity is built into the design: parts of a space can be used by more than one child at a time, in more than one way, with a variety of different circuits and ways to get up and down, and a variety of different activities.



This equipment offers a variety of ways to play. PHOTO COURTESY OF ELEPHANT PLAY

Natural features and equipment both play an important role. A play space is more than a structure — it encompasses the total environment in which play occurs. It is the system, not the objects. As outlined in work by King, Goltsman and Brooke (2001), “an exceptional play environment is more than a collection of play equipment. The entire site with all of its elements from vegetation to storage can become a play and learning resource for all children with and without disabilities.” The authors identify 17 types of play and learning settings that address a child’s developmental needs. Many of these settings are described in this toolkit and include: entrances, pathways, signs and displays, enclosures, manufactured equipment, game areas, ground covers and safety surfaces, lands forms, trees and vegetation, gardens, animal habitats, water, sand and dirt, play props, gathering meeting and working places, stages, and storage areas.



Real items are often a favorite feature in a playspace. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

## LET'S PLAY



### HOW DO WE DEVELOP A GOOD PLAY SPACE?

A rich play environment challenges the social, physical, emotional and intellectual skills of children and encourages constructive play which invites children to play, experiment and learn. The challenge is to combine as many of the “17 play and learning settings” as possible while considering relationships between activities, how features are oriented on the site and how the circulation around the site works. The settings included in the design depend on the desires and values of the school and the site itself. Each setting can be designed thoughtfully to ensure universal access to all areas of the play space.



This play space in Richmond, BC has a diverse mix of equipment and natural play features. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFIUK

A successful play space is specifically designed around the site. This means that existing natural features are incorporated, play zones are well located with respect to entrances and connecting pathways, and sun and shade are considered. Issues such as drainage and maintenance are addressed as well as the opportunity to change and evolve the site over time.

Issues such as drainage and maintenance are addressed as well as the opportunity to change and evolve the site over time.



The pathways and boardwalks that provide access to elevated play structures, are also a fun play feature. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

### HERE ARE A FEW KEY PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN:

- The majority of features and spaces are usable by all people, instead of having separate “accessible features” for people with disabilities. Features like play equipment, planter boxes or benches are of different heights and sizes to meet the needs of more people.
- Circulating around and using the play space is simple and easy. Accessible surfacing allows wheelchair access to play equipment with minimal effort. The design provides adequate space for all people to access and manoeuvre around play equipment and features regardless of mobility.
- The play space provides opportunities for challenge for all users but minimizes hazards.

**LET'S PLAY**



**HELP! HOW DO WE GET STARTED ON OUR DESIGN?**

Whether you are working with a designer, with an equipment supplier, or are working on the design yourself, it is important to develop a clear **DESIGN PROGRAM STATEMENT**, usually by consulting with students, staff and the community.

A design program statement, given to the designer/supplier, outlines the goals and objectives, activities, needs and elements that should be considered in the design. The design program statement can outline what experiences should be offered and what it should feel like to be in the site. For example, a design program may include specific functions required in the play space, such as a quiet space for reading and a place for older children to climb, as well as details on ages and numbers of children using the space. It outlines the basic requirements of the play space.

Once the design program is established, a **CONCEPT DESIGN** can be developed. In this stage, a drawing is developed showing what goes where and how elements relate to each other. It is always important to check back that the concept plan addresses the needs outlined in the **DESIGN PROGRAM STATEMENT**.

Involving a designer with a background in landscape architecture/playground design in the design stage of your project has a major impact on the quality and accessibility of the play space. The quality of play is directly related to the quality of the play environment. The cost of having some professional help does not have to be prohibitive and the designer can tailor the design to meet the available budget.

**EXAMPLE OF DESIGN PROGRAM STATEMENT**

- *place for outdoor learning*
- *quiet space for art projects, outdoor classroom*
- *active area for climbing, sliding, swinging*
- *play area for 150 grade 1-5s*
- *universally accessible for students and teachers*
- *natural spaces for wildlife and people*
- *cool places to hang out*



Completed Concept Design - Everett OC Plan. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSS MILLER, KMDG BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE



Example of Preliminary Concept Design. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSS MILLER, KMDG BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE

## LET'S PLAY



### a DESIGNER can:

#### Help to create a strong **DESIGN PROGRAM** by:

- pulling together design ideas as well as identifying site issues and challenges to help inform the concept design
- leading a visioning session with community members, staff and play space users

#### Develop a **CONCEPT DESIGN** by:

- creating a concept drawing based on the design program
- leading the process of choosing appropriate equipment and site features
- ensuring that safety and accessibility needs are met

#### Implement the design by:

- preparing a budget, drawings and construction documents
- develop a phasing plan if the PAC cannot afford to complete the whole project at once
- coordinating construction, trades people and volunteers

### WHAT SHOULD WE LOOK FOR IN A GOOD DESIGNER?

- Ask the designer for samples of work and call any relevant references
- Visit some of the designer's completed sites and ask the school staff how well the site works for the people using it
- Ask if the designer is familiar with universal design concepts and has experience incorporating natural features into play spaces
- Ask if the designer has experience working with groups, children and stakeholders in order to be able to understand the needs and issues to be addressed in the design phase
- Ensure the designer is familiar with safety and accessibility standards (CSA/Annex H standards)
- Find out if the designer has experience working with contractors and overseeing the construction of play spaces

### HOW MUCH WILL A DESIGNER COST?

Cost will vary depending on the extent of involvement of the designer and his or her level of experience. A designer can be involved in a brief consultation early in the process for help with a concept plan, or he or she can be involved throughout the construction process. Input from a designer is invaluable in developing a really unique and inclusive play space even within a modest budget. A written letter/agreement between the play space committee/PAC and the designer should outline proposed tasks and expectations as well as fees.



Working on play space design ideas.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTER FOR WOODEN BOATS

**LET'S PLAY**



# 3 BEST PRACTICES

The sections below provide important best practices for designing inclusive and accessible play spaces and are also helpful to recheck when reviewing completed designs.

As you think through the individual elements of your play space, keep in mind the underlying value of designing a space that will engage children with their natural surroundings, provide a rich variety of sensory activities to stimulate the senses, and foster rich and imaginative opportunities for shared play.

## 1.0 SURFACING MATERIALS

Surfacing is a key component in designing safe and accessible play spaces. Many existing play spaces have been built with non-accessible surfacing materials including pea gravel and sand. Accessible options include pour in place rubber surfacing, rubber tile, engineered wood fibre, engineered carpet and crushed rubber products. Sand is not an accessible fall surface, but in combination with other surfacing (e.g. pour in place rubber) can provide an important play element for all children. Other materials such as asphalt paths combined with engineered wood fibre can improve access to equipment.

Although more expensive, rubber surfacing can be used selectively to maximize access to particular pieces of equipment or entry points. Engineered wood fibre, although less expensive, requires fairly frequent maintenance to ensure that ruts around equipment are minimized and adequate depths are maintained to ensure fall safety.



Pea gravel is not an accessible surface and should be phased out of all playspaces. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHERRY CAVES



Rubber tile provides good universal access. PHOTO COURTESY OF LUKE B, PLAYFALL NWR



Engineered carpet provides an accessible alternative in areas with low fall heights. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARATHON ATHLETIC SURFACES INC.



Engineered wood fibre combined with asphalt provides good access to the play equipment. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



**2.0 PARKING AND CURBS**

If provided, parking areas should allocate at least one space for people with disabilities (3.7 m wide, 7.5 m deep including a 1.2 m wide walkway) with a safe, curb-free route to the main walkway. The walkway should connect directly with the play space.



This walkway allows for direct access to an adjoining path, minimizing exposure to traffic. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**3.0 WALKWAYS**

The most important element of a play space is being able to get to it! Walkways connecting to the play space from buildings, sidewalks and adjacent parking lots are important in creating an easy to navigate site. Play happens along walkways and pathways, and attention should be paid to the design of the route including places to sit and “things to discover.”

Accessible walkways that allow all people to easily circulate are:

- made of firm surfaces (asphalt, concrete, compacted crushed stone, pavers)
- wide enough: at least 1525 mm
- gently sloped: less than 5%
- well drained



Example of walkway that also provides visual and auditory interest. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**4.0 CIRCULATION**

A site does not need to be level to make it wheelchair accessible. To add interest and stimulation, existing slopes can be utilized and the site excavated to create a shallow depression or add a slight slope to flat terrain. Ensure that slopes are not at a steeper grade than 5% to remain wheelchair accessible.



A wavy pathway that also provides challenge and fun for children using bikes, trikes and wheelchairs. PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUCE DAY, EVERGREEN

Ramps to a structure, if required, can be combined with landscaping to blend equipment into the setting more effectively. Ramps should have a maximum grade of 1:12 slope.

Variety in surfaces and textures to create zones, edges, and approaches helps to improve circulation for people with sensory impairments. This variety also provides more diverse sensory experiences for all children.



Example of multiple ways of accessing the slide. PHOTO COURTESY OF RIC MCCONAGHY

**LET'S PLAY**



**5.0 BORDERS AND ENTRY POINTS**

The best practice for accessible entry into a play space allows for entry points anywhere along a border to a play area. This is provided through flush access with a maximum of ½” drop from the adjacent path onto the play surface.

Other options, if it is not possible to provide flush access, include curb cuts, dropped concrete curbs, and ramps over wood borders in asphalt, concrete or plastic.

Using grading, berms (small mounds) and boardwalks to provide access to raised equipment eliminates the need for additional ramps, and is a more cost effective manner of providing universal access to raised areas.

The practice of providing ramps directly to equipment platforms without providing accessible ground surfacing should be avoided as some children and caregivers are then excluded from being able to circulate freely around the play space.



Gap in raised border to provide access.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Universal access provided around entire play space. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Using a boardwalk to access raised play feature. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Concrete ramp into play area.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Using a berm to provide access to slide.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Using grading to provide access to raised play area. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



**6.0 HEIGHT AND KNEE CLEARANCES**

For universal access, knee clearance (680 mm high) helps to provide wheelchair access under tables, counters and drinking fountains. Reach heights for seated or small users should generally be within the range of 380 mm- 1200 mm above the ground. Items such as gate latches and dispensers should be installed within this range.

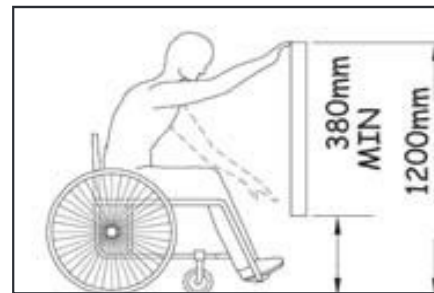


Knee clearance for adults at table. IMAGE COURTESY OF WWW.FS.FED.US

**7.0 Amenities (Seating, Shade, Site FURNISHINGS)**

Benches and seating areas are important components of a play area. They offer important social spaces for students, caregivers and teachers. Here are some important considerations to ensure that they are accessible:

- Benches and seating areas that are integrated into a site should provide a comfortable back support and arm rests for easy movement in and out of the bench.
- Seating areas should be located on firm stable surfaces (asphalt, concrete, compacted crushed rock, pavers).
- A space 760 mm wide by 1200 mm deep beside benches should be provided to allow for wheelchair users to sit beside or transfer to a bench.
- Drinking fountains, trash cans, and other amenities are easiest for all people to use when located on firm, level surfacing.
- Bike racks and accessible washrooms are other amenities that are important if the play space is also shared with the local community.



Average reach height. IMAGE COURTESY OF WWW.FS.FED.US



Adjacent wheelchair seating provided. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Accessible drinking fountain. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



**8.0 Landscape Elements**

Natural elements offer some of the most interesting and meaningful play experiences for all children, instilling a sense of autonomy, curiosity and discovery. The elements listed below can be configured with universal design principles in mind, creating a sensory-rich and stimulating environment for children of all abilities. Many schools have incorporated low cost, low maintenance materials to create more natural spaces. The following elements can be incorporated into a school site, providing a more enriching outdoor environment.

- Pathways and boardwalks (supporting exploration, providing better access)
- Garden space providing opportunities for children to create food or create a native plant garden. Raised planter boxes can provide universal access
- Performance spaces (stage) for free play or school programs



Raised planter boxes create inviting space for seating. PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN HYDESMITH, EVERGREEN



Example of performance space/outdoor classroom. PHOTO COURTESY OF DOLORES ALTIN, EVERGREEN



Using berms and grades to create interest and variety in the play space. PHOTO COURTESY OF SUE GUTTERIDGE, CHAPELFIELD PLAY AREA, SCOTLAND



Interesting performance space that also provides seating for quiet games and reading. PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE STONE, BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE

**LET'S PLAY**



*landscaped elements cont'd...*

- Painted games area (oversize chess board, chalkboard, mazes, 4-square, ball games, hopscotch)
- Landforms/topography (exploration of movement)
- Seating and gathering spaces, for informal play or outdoor classroom
- Games tables and work spaces
- Trees and plants for shade, exploration and creating habitat for butterflies and other wildlife
- Boulders and logs for climbing, discovery, seating and social play
- Sand and water and other loose components for manipulation and discovery
- Rain garden to demonstrate where stormwater goes
- Public Art pieces including murals or sculptures for play and discovery
- Arbor or trellis for shade and visual interest



Log for climbing and discovery.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFUIK



Raingarden with boardwalk for circulation and discovery.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFUIK



Gathering space for socializing or outdoor classroom.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF EVERGREEN

**LET'S PLAY****9.0 Manufactured Equipment**

Equipment can play an important role in addressing developmental needs of children. If working with a designer, ask for recommendations on what equipment works well for the site. In some cases school groups will be working directly with suppliers to identify equipment for their site. As you think about equipment choices for your play space, keep in mind the following key principles:

- Focus on providing rich, unique and imaginative play opportunities with opportunities for both active and quiet play. Prioritize features that stimulate open-ended, social and creative play rather than elements that offer limited play opportunities.
- Include a rich variety of interesting ground-level play features to enhance the accessibility for children with mobility impairments.
- When you design access routes to elevated areas of the play space (through ramps and transfer stations), ensure that you are providing access to high-interest, fun areas of the play space. Too often, ramps lead to a platform where there is not much to do for a child using a wheelchair or mobility aid who arrives there.

**WHAT DIRECTION SHOULD I GIVE A PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER WHEN SELECTING EQUIPMENT FOR THE PLAY SPACE?**

- Provide age range and number of children using site
- Describe your vision for the proposed play space. Provide a **DESIGN PROGRAM** (which outlines the goals and objectives for the play space). Discuss the elements you envision such as social and gathering spaces, a focus on creative play, a variety of play choices, and an inclusive environment that fosters shared play.
- Describe the site context - what is around the play area and how it will be used. Provide a site plan if possible.
- Provide your budget for the equipment, keeping in mind costs for landscaping and natural features.
- Emphasize the need to follow CSA/Annex H accessibility standards to ensure universal access.
- Emphasize that equipment should fit into the site plan, not vice versa.

**WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK A PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER ONCE I RECEIVE A PROPOSED DESIGN?**

- How does the play equipment area relate to the overall site?
- How does the equipment accommodate various interests and abilities?
- How does the play equipment foster inclusive play and allow for children with disabilities to be part of the action?
- Does this design meet CSA/Annex H standards?
- Is there an information table provided specifying the number and type of ground level play components to confirm it meets accessibility requirements?
- What age group is this equipment suitable for?
- How is this space unique? How is this fun?
- How is this equipment accessible to parents/caregivers with disabilities?
- What are the required safety zones and no-encroachment zones?

LET'S PLAY



## EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES FOR MANUFACTURED PLAY EQUIPMENT

Equipment suppliers offer a wide variety of equipment that is accessible to all children with and without disabilities. Specialized equipment may also be available, but a universal approach offers more opportunity for interaction and fun for all kids.

- **Social and emotional development** - includes features that can be shared by all children encouraging social interaction and inclusion.
  - Work, sand and play tables - promote quiet cooperative activities alone or in groups
  - Play counter, play hut/fort - encourages imaginative play with other children
  - Roller slide- encourages social interaction
  - Saucer swing- promotes integration and co-operative interaction
  - Spinning nets - promotes integration and co-operative interaction
  - Crawl tunnel – encourages socialization



Social play at counters. PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER TAMMETTA, HIGHWIRE



Crawl tubes provide an opportunity for social interaction. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIGTOYS, INC.



This sand table provides a great opportunity for all children regardless of ability to play together. PHOTO COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES INC.



Saucer swing encourages social play. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



• **PERCEPTUAL MOTOR DEVELOPMENT** - includes activities that promote gross and fine motor co-ordination. Activities should include children who may have difficulty perceiving shapes, form, depth or movement. The equipment listed below helps to improve coordination and balance as well as gross motor skills.

- Saucer Swing
- Spring Teeter totter
- Spring rides or platform
- Spinner (bowl or net)
- Slides



Spinner bowl. PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER TAMMETTA, HIGHWIRE



Spring platforms promote coordination and balance. PHOTO COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES INC.



Spinning equipment also offers social opportunity for older children. PHOTO COURTESY OF HILDE RICHTER SPIELGERATE



An accessible swing seat is often a favorite play feature with children of all abilities. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



This spring teeter totter helps to enhance balance, coordination and social play. PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER TAMMETTA, HIGHWIRE



Double springers provide an inclusive play experience. PHOTO COURTESY OF PLAYWORLD SYSTEMS®

**LET'S PLAY**



- **Physical Development** - includes activities that promote strength and coordination.
  - Chinning bars, inclined ladders – improve upper body strength and coordination
  - Parallel bars – improve strength, coordination and balance
  - Nets- improve upper and lower extremity strength
  - Slides- improve upper and lower extremity strength
  - Bridges – improve balance and coordination
  - Basketball hoops- improve strength and hand eye coordination



Chinning bars promote strength development and coordination. COPYRIGHTED PHOTO REPRODUCED FROM THE NATIONAL CENTER ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND DISABILITY AT WWW.NCPAD.ORG

- **Sensory Development** - includes features incorporating texture, manipulative devices, contrasting colours and sound to enhance auditory, tactile and sensory awareness. Sensory features also encourage artistic and aesthetic development.
  - Sound panel or music panel – stimulates auditory awareness
  - Sand and water play – stimulates tactile awareness



This sand table provides a great opportunity for all children regardless of ability to play together. PHOTO COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES INC.

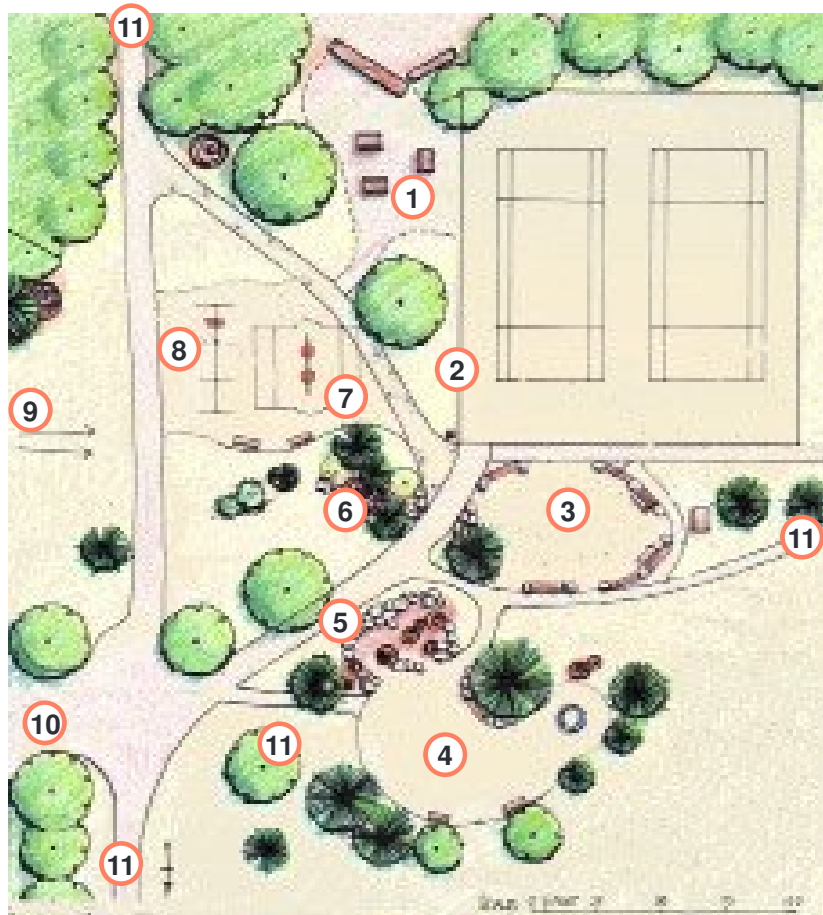
Manufactured equipment should conform to the Canadian Safety Standards Children’s Play Spaces and Equipment Guidelines (CAN/CSA-Z614-07). Annex H, “Accessibility to Children’s Play spaces and Equipment” an addition to the CSA standard, contains guidelines with specific details and measurements for providing accessible play spaces ([www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Play\\_spaces/files/Annex\\_H\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Play_spaces/files/Annex_H_Guidebook.pdf)).

**LET'S PLAY**



**Well-Designed Universally Accessible Play Space**

This successful example of a universally designed accessible play space engages children with their natural surroundings, provides a rich variety of sensory activities to stimulate the senses, and fosters rich and imaginative opportunities for shared play. The design also considers how people arrive at the site, how they move around, where they sit, and the many different ways of playing and having fun with other adults and children.



- ① Accessible picnic tables
- ② Wildlife interpretation- Årst nation animal images on fencing, animal prints on court surface
- ③ Preschool play area with accessible equipment and outdoor classroom
- ④ Junior play structure, spinning element, ground access featured
- ⑤ "Fort" Natural play area- cedar stumps, boulders and mineral samples
- ⑥ Natural play area- stumps, trees, planting, boulders and play binoculars
- ⑦ Saucer swings
- ⑧ Regular swings with accessible moulded bucket swing
- ⑨ Toboggan hill cleared of hazards
- ⑩ Path to parking area with 2 accessible parking spaces
- ⑪ Path connections to adjacent trails

IMAGE COURTESY OF SALLY HOCKING

LET'S PLAY



Landscape Features

Natural play features such as stumps, trees, plantings and boulders provide rich sensory opportunities for play and discovery. Details including the fence art, animal prints, globe and mineral gardens are features can be experienced by all users and also relate to school curriculum.



Logs and boulders for climbing. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Planting and landscape details create a more enriching playspace. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFIUK



The dotted circles show natural play features found throughout the play space. IMAGE COURTESY OF SALLY HOCKING

LET'S PLAY

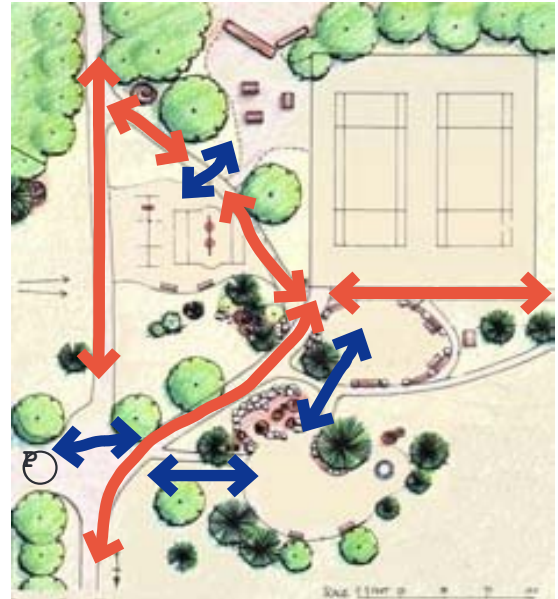


CIRCULATION

Play areas are linked to the main circulation paths and each other by accessible routes. The paths are connected to adjacent trails providing direct and clear circulation within the site. The internal paths create a variety of loops which also encourage play.

Fall surfacing in play areas is universally accessible, without raised borders.

A path leads directly to accessible parking which facilitates easy access for people arriving by vehicle.



Clear circulation throughout playspace. Orange indicates main pathways, blue shows secondary paths. IMAGE COURTESY OF SALLY HOCKING



This path creates a fun experience for trike riders, wheelchair users, roller bladers. PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUCE DAY, EVERGREEN



This path provides good circulation as well as an accessible border to the play zones. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



The treatment of the path edges creates shade as well as a more interesting playspace. PHOTO COURTESY OF DOLORES ALTIN, EVERGREEN

LET'S PLAY



Play Zones

The play space has different activity zones that allow for age groups and activities to be separated. The separation creates a unique and varied play environment addressing the needs of a wide range of users. Quiet spaces, active spaces, and combinations of the two help to create a flexible, safer and usable play space.

Multiple opportunities exist for inclusive social play. Features such as the play counter, natural play spaces and seating areas facilitate social interaction.

The design takes into account adjacent play activities and how they relate to each other in terms of circulation and function.

Manufactured Equipment

Equipment choices including a spinner bowl, springer platform, and saucer swings, are accessible to most users and caregivers. Much of the equipment is accessed from the ground and some users may transfer from mobility devices. The equipment was specifically chosen to work with the site and fits in well with the setting.



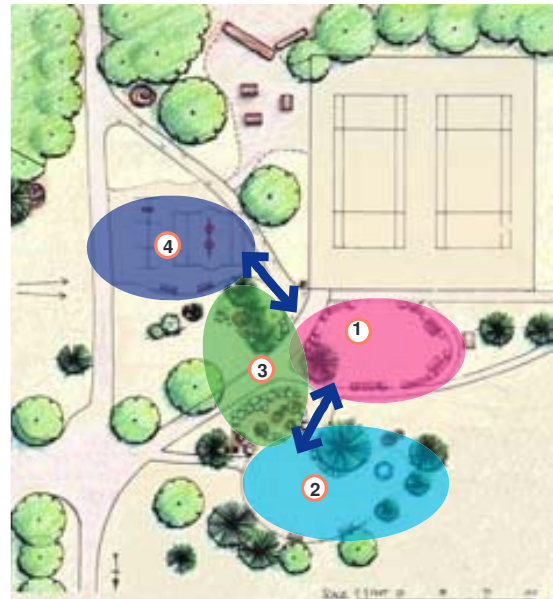
Example of ground play feature. PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER TAMMETTA, HIGHWIRE

Amenities

Consideration has been given to providing accessible picnic tables and seating areas associated with each play zone. These areas are places for caregivers/supervisors to sit and socialize as well as places for children to hang out slightly away from the action.



Example of accessible picnic table. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



- 1 Pre-school zone with equipment and outdoor classroom
- 2 Junior zone with climbing and spinning equipment
- 3 Natural play- stumps, boulders, planting, minerals
- 4 Swings with accessible seats

Play zones allowing for separation of age groups and activities. IMAGES COURTESY OF SALLY HOCKING



The circles indicates locations for seating areas for caregivers/supervisors. IMAGES COURTESY OF SALLY HOCKING

**LET'S PLAY**



**FREQUENT MISTAKES TO AVOID**

**DESIGN PROBLEMS**

- Ramps are built to equipment but access is not provided to ground features and site circulation.
- Ramps are built to platforms with little or no play value.
- Specialized equipment that segregates children with disabilities is selected, an approach which is both isolating to children with disabilities and more expensive to maintain (platform swings, for example). This type of equipment, however, may be useful at specialized facilities/centres specifically for children with disabilities.
- Inaccessible surfacing, including pea gravel and sand, is in place.
- Play features are limited to manufactured equipment without natural features.



Example of ramp to equipment, but no accessible circulation on ground. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Inaccessible safety surface - pea gravel. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHERRY CAVES



No natural features limits play. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD.



Specialized equipment. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES

## LET'S PLAY



### INSTALLATION PROBLEMS

- Play equipment is inaccessible to users with mobility impairments due to raised borders without curb cuts.
- No connections are provided from play features to pathways within or connecting to the play space. A single access point (ramp or curb cut) to a play area often forces users to circle around the entire area to the entry point. Several access points (or a barrier free border) are preferred to provide direct and easy access for all to the play area.
- Top of fall surfacing is too far below entry access point, creating a drop down into the play space, a barrier for wheelchair users.
- Awkward access points to ramps have been installed with sharp turns and/or steep grades to structures.
- Access points are blocked due to plantings or site furniture.
- Inattention to precise grading creates awkward transitions and sometimes the need for adding steps, creating a barrier for some users.
- Barriers are created at concrete pad edges when site amenities are installed (tables, trash cans, benches).
- Poor drainage installation can create wet areas in play zones, and slip hazards across pathways.



No wheelchair access to play equipment due to raised border. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Access point into play area not provided in convenient/accessible location. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

### Maintenance PROBLEMS

- Fall surfacing is not maintained to adequate height to work with access points.
- Ruts are not smoothed out in play surfacing, creating inaccessible areas.



Poor drainage creates barrier and hazard. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Ruts in play surfacing create a barrier. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

## 4) CREATING a GREAT PLAY SPACE

### STEPS FOR CREATING a GREAT PLAY SPACE

The development of a successful accessible play space project that stays well maintained and viable requires thoughtful planning. Whether the process is lead by a PAC member, play space designer, educator or other stakeholder, a series of steps outlined below can help to organize the development of the play space. Although projects range in scope and scale, the steps from planning and research through to design and implementation can be applied to every site.

#### Planning

1. Form a team to undertake the planning process.
2. Organize a working session with the team.
  - a. Evaluate the existing play space
    - i. What do you like/dislike about the existing site?
    - ii. What do the kids/like or dislike? Ask them!
    - iii. Use the questionnaire provided at the end of this toolkit to evaluate the existing site
  - b. Discuss a preliminary vision:
    - i. Who are the users, what are their needs?
    - ii. What do you want to achieve?
    - iii. Consider your community's values and needs and how they can best be reflected in the development of your project.

#### Research

3. Research
  - a. Look at examples of good play spaces (on internet, or in person).
  - b. Use resources provided in this toolkit.
  - c. Make contact with the appropriate school board staff person/s who you will be working with as you develop plans for the play space. Ensure continued communication throughout the project as you will likely need your project reviewed by a variety of staff members in various departments.
  - d. Inform yourself about school, school district and union policies, standards, safety issues regarding volunteer labour, maintenance concerns and any long term issues (school expansion, closures etc.)
  - e. Determine what construction costs may be covered by the District (e.g. demolition, fall surfacing) if applicable.
  - f. Investigate funding sources and available resources (labour and materials).

#### Design

4. Consultation
  - a. Consider hiring a park designer to help with the consultation and design process. Emphasize the need to incorporate universal design principles and Annex H guidelines into the design.
  - b. Organize workshops (see sidebar) with children, families, teachers and the community to generate new ideas for your play space. This group should include children and caregivers with disabilities and their families as well as disability resource groups.

**LET'S PLAY**

5. Determine final vision for the play space
  - a. Incorporate feedback and research to create a play space plan. (A designer can really help with this!). Review ideas with your school and appropriate school district staff.
  - b. Work with play equipment supply companies (if applicable) to select equipment and determine costs. Instruct companies that equipment and site design should meet CSA/Annex H standards and guidelines.
  - c. Review ideas with School Board/Facilities Staff. Determine if any permits or other permission are required.
6. Finalize design and budget
  - a. A play space designer can put together construction drawings and finalize the budget. On more complicated projects, a contractor/installer may require:
    - i. Grading and layout plan (location and dimensions of all existing and proposed site elements as well as proposed elevations to accommodate drainage and contouring of the site)
    - ii. Planting plan (plant name, size, location, quantity, spacing)
    - iii. Site details (borders, paving, site furnishings)
    - iv. Specifications (detailed written requirements for installation)
  - b. When working on projects without a designer, it is important for school groups to work closely with district staff to ensure written specifications and directions are provided to installers and contractors.
  - c. Discuss and develop with school district staff a maintenance and safety inspection plan to ensure the long term viability of the play space.
  - d. Obtain final approval with school district staff.

**Implementation**

7. Coordinate build
  - a. A play space designer can work with the school district, contractors, equipment installers, and volunteers to coordinate construction. Permits may be required and should be coordinated through school district staff. For smaller projects, a school group may decide to coordinate construction directly with a contractor or equipment installer.
  - b. School district staff will likely require a playground safety inspector to review the constructed site and issues any approvals.
  - c. Consult <http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/files/PlayspacePolicyTemplate.pdf> for more information on construction procedures for equipment installation.
8. Project use
  - a. Ensure that ongoing maintenance is organized with school district staff and volunteers (if applicable).

## ORGANIZING A WORKSHOP TO CONSULT WITH PLAY SPACE USERS

Consultation is key to ensure your play space is well used and enjoyed. Holding a hands-on workshop with children and caregivers who will be using your play space is a great way to gather creative ideas and design a space that is responsive to the needs and interests of its users. Consult with disability organizations and children and caregivers with disabilities in your community as you develop your plan. As school play spaces are often also used by the community, consider how your community's values and needs can be actively included in the project development. A play space designer can help with this step or you can organize a workshop on your own.

### Here are some ideas on holding a workshop with play space users including children and caregivers:

- Gather images of accessible play spaces to spark discussion and interest. Provide a brief overview of how play spaces can be designed to be inclusive of all children/caregivers with pictures to illustrate accessible design.
- If the group is large, break into smaller groups.
- Encourage the children and adults to design a model play space with materials you provide such as playdough, modelling clay, paper, markers, and pens.
- Ask each group to present their designs to the larger group.
- Give the workshop participants an opportunity to vote on their favourite design elements.
- The creative and innovative elements designed by the children often inspire groups to create a unique play space that goes beyond standard models.
- Summarize the ideas and develop a “**design program**” (goals, objectives and needs of the play space)
- The design program can then be developed into a “**concept design**”

## LET'S PLAY



### WHAT ADDITIONAL HELP IS AVAILABLE?

- Page 31 of this toolkit includes a list of resources to support your school in developing an accessible play space.
- Evergreen is a national non-profit environmental organization with a mandate to bring nature to cities through naturalization projects. Through its Learning Grounds Programme, Evergreen provides some funding, expert advice, design tools and workshops, as well as policy and educational materials, to help encourage the greening of school grounds. [www.evergreen.ca/en/lg/lg.html](http://www.evergreen.ca/en/lg/lg.html)

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS THAT I COULD DO ON A SMALLER BUDGET?

There are many ways of enhancing accessibility at your play space if you are not currently planning a major installation or renovation. Projects budgeted at under \$15,000 can make a real difference for children and caregivers with a disability.

- Replace inaccessible surfacing (pea gravel, sand) in an existing play space with accessible surfacing (wood fibre, rubber tile etc.).
- Provide a curb cut/ramp into a play box.
- Add an accessible seating area to an existing play space including tables, child sized seats, shade.
- Add pathways and improve pedestrian circulation to and within the play space.
- Add an accessible sand play/and or small water play area.
- Purchase and install a few small inexpensive pieces of accessible play equipment.

If your current play space is already accessible, here are examples of inexpensive features that can be added to create an enhanced and inclusive experience for children of all abilities:

- Enhance an existing play space with natural features including boulders, trees, logs and plants.
- Create a sensory garden with colourful and fragrant plants with seasonal interest.
- Plant some fruit or shade trees.
- Create small grassy hills to encourage imaginary play.
- Add one interesting piece of public art (giant chair, interesting sculpture) to enhance your play space.



Access pathways can also create fun and interesting places in the playspace. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



A pathway with edging helps in navigation for people with visual disabilities. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Natural features, such as logs and rocks add interest to a playspace. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Details such as a weather vane create a rich and more interesting playspace. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROSS MILLER, BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE

## 5) FAQs

### Making Site Changes

#### Is an INCLUSIVE PLAY SPACE more expensive?

A well designed play space does not need to be expensive. Often, equipment is the most expensive part of a play area, and not well used in many cases. Interesting natural spaces, trees, planted areas, seating and other features that all people can get to and enjoy can be inexpensive and built with volunteer help and donated materials. Some surfacing options including pour in place rubber can be more expensive than non-accessible materials (sand and pea gravel). However, when used selectively in combination with other materials, accessible surfacing provides access to the play space for all users. Striking a balance among surfacing, landscaping and equipment is crucial in creating an engaging, accessible and affordable play space.

#### DO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRE SPECIALIZED PLAY EQUIPMENT?

An accessible and inclusive play space is designed to create varied and interesting play opportunities for children of all abilities. It fosters shared play by providing universal access to fun and appealing areas at the heart of the play space. An inclusive play space does not require that every piece of equipment be accessible to every child. When selecting manufactured pieces, however, try to choose a variety of features that are usable by children of all abilities.

Inclusive play spaces do not focus on separate stand-alone features designed for the exclusive use of children with disabilities. Keep top of mind access to the social experience of play for all children.

#### HOW MUCH WILL THE PLAY SPACE COST TO BUILD?

Costs of play spaces vary depending on equipment chosen, the overall size, surfacing, availability of volunteers and donated materials. A designer can work with the available budget and can suggest options for more modest overall costs. A phasing plan can help to determine how to build the play space in phases (over time) as more funds become available. Costs may range from \$8-\$35 (or more) per square foot but highly depend on location and features included in the design. A redesign of a site with existing drainage and pathways may be significantly less than a completely new site.

#### HOW DO WE MAINTAIN AN UPGRADED PLAY SPACE AT THE SCHOOL?

Maintenance needs to be considered in the master plan and design details including planting, grading and materials. It is important to work with district staff to outline any special maintenance requirements in the design not normally undertaken by the district and to inform yourself about relevant school district and union policies and safety issues. Many schools have successfully coordinated "special" maintenance by having a PAC subcommittee organize volunteers. A maintenance manual for the new play space helps to outline specific tasks and a volunteer can ensure that maintenance tasks are assigned. Volunteers can then select a specific task and agree to volunteer for one year. The manual helps to ensure that "special" maintenance tasks are completed in perpetuity, so that as PAC members change, the special features in the play space are still maintained.

Examples of volunteer tasks include weeding planter boxes, cleaning out bird boxes, etc. Routine maintenance such as grass cutting, and safety surface renewal can be maintained by the school district. Communication and cooperation will help to ensure that the new play space is well maintained.

## 6 REFERENCES

- A guide to the ADA access guidelines for Play Areas [www.access-board.gov/play/guide/intro.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/play/guide/intro.htm)
- Annex H, "Accessibility to Children's Play spaces and Equipment" and additional information on design, construction and maintenance policies: <http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/index.html>
- BC Landscape Architects [www.bcsla.org](http://www.bcsla.org) has an online list of designers with skills in play space design
- Designing Outdoor Environments for Children: Landscaping schoolyards, gardens and playgrounds, Tai, Lolly. McGraw Hill, 2006.
- Developing Accessible Play Space: A Good Practice Guide [communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/131052.pdf](http://communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/131052.pdf)
- Evergreen Foundation [evergreen.ca/en/lg/lg.html](http://evergreen.ca/en/lg/lg.html)
- Examples of Natural Play from [freeplaynetwork.com](http://freeplaynetwork.com) and [www.Playlink.org](http://www.Playlink.org)
- [Kaboom.org](http://Kaboom.org) (examples, online workshops, fundraising etc.)
- King, S., Goltsman, S. and Brooke, C. 2001. Enhancing the Quality of Children's Lives Through Exceptional Play Area Design. ASLA Parks/Recreation
- Learning Through Landscapes (UK based organization) [ltl.org.uk](http://ltl.org.uk)
- Moore, R. 1986. "Power of Nature: Orientations of Girls and Boys Toward Biotic and Abiotic Environments. "Children's Environments Quarterly, 3(3), 52-69.
- Natural Learning Initiative [naturalearning.org](http://naturalearning.org)
- Play for All Guidelines, 1997, Moore, Goltsman and Iacofano, Mig Communications, Berkeley, CA
- Play and Natural Learning Spaces Design, Construction and Maintenance Policy Template <http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/files/PlayspacePolicyTemplate.pdf>
- Playability Toolkit (Ontario Parks Association) [ontarioparksassociation.memberlodge.com/Default.aspx?pageId=485482](http://ontarioparksassociation.memberlodge.com/Default.aspx?pageId=485482)
- The Universal Playground: A Planning Guide, 1993. Ministry of Education, Province of British Columbia

# APPENDIX 1

## PLAY SPACE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire will help you to evaluate the existing school playground and think about areas for improvement. It is designed to give you a sense of what is important in meeting the needs of all people (with and without disabilities) using the play space - including kids, educators and caregivers. If working with a designer, the answers from the questionnaire will assist the designer in understanding some of the challenges and opportunities in the play space. The questions can also be used to evaluate equipment proposed by an equipment supplier.

It will be helpful to take photos of the site as you work through the questionnaire to illustrate important site issues for everyone involved in the project.

This questionnaire is modified from the Ontario Parks Association's "Playability Toolkit."

**ENTRANCE TO THE PLAY SPACE** – the entrance is important because it helps create a welcoming space for all users, and also aids in way-finding for people with visual impairments. Accessibility of the primary entrance make an important statement to users with disabilities.

1. **Is there a formal entrance to the play space (archway, main path, sign, bulletin board, map, etc.)?**
  - If yes, describe
  - If no, what is the transition to the play space?
2. **Are there gates, bollards or other features that obstruct the entrance?**
3. **Is there a steep pathway, curb or other barrier at the entrance?**

**PATHWAYS** – are crucial in providing a universally accessible play space. People and especially those with mobility impairments can more easily circulate on wide, smooth and level pathways.

1. **Is there a path connecting the adjacent street sidewalk or school to the play space?**
2. **Is there a path connecting elements within the play space?**
3. **If yes to either or both above:**
  - a. Is the pathway in good repair? What is the surface material?
  - b. Is the pathway free from obstructions (concrete barriers, tree roots, garbage cans)?



Welcoming entrance to play space  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Poor entrance to play space (no connecting path, steep slope). PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Path in poor repair, no connection to play area  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Pathway into play area blocked by tree  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



- c. Is there a steep slope to the pathway?
- d. Is the width of the pathway a minimum of 1525 mm (allows 2 wheelchairs to pass each other)? If no, what is the width?
- e. Is the surface texture of the play space different from the pathway (to help persons with vision impairment detect play space)?

**Play Equipment** – can provide excellent accessible play opportunities if well maintained and well configured with universal access in mind. Structures may contain a number of play components which should be evaluated for universal access. (For more information see Annex H of the CSA Playground Standards at [http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/iles/Annex\\_H\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/iles/Annex_H_Guidebook.pdf))

1. **Is there a play structure, made up of multiple components in the play space?**
2. **What is the condition of the structure? (ok, needs repair, beyond repair)**
3. **What is the total number of play components making up the structure? (ie. 3 - if there is a play panel, climbing ladder and slide). A play feature could be a panel, steering wheel, talk tube, overhead climbing bars, slide, etc. Ramps, stairs, roofs, steps and decks are not considered to be play features.**
  - a. How many features are elevated (accessed by a ladder, or stairs)?
  - b. How many features are elevated but are accessible by a ramp?
  - c. How many features are accessible by transfer steps (accessible to some users able to transfer from wheelchair to transfer steps)
  - d. How many features are at ground level? (Accessible)



- Total features:**
- 4 (2 slides, ladder and rope ladder)
    - 2 elevated features (slides)
    - 0 are accessible by ramp
    - 0 are accessible by transfer steps
    - 0 features at ground level
    - 0 features are at ground level

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



- Total features:**
- 9 (2 slides, play counter, ladder, steering wheel, panel, binoculars, talk tube and rope climb)
    - 4 elevated features (slides, steering wheel, binoculars)
      - 1 is accessible by ramp (small slide)
      - 0 are accessible by transfer station
      - 2 are accessible at ground level
      - 0 features at ground level
      - 0 features are at ground level

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

Annex H recommends that at least one of each type of ground level play component (e.g. swing, springer, play panel) be accessible. Table H.1 in the guidelines outlines the minimum number of ground level play components required to be on an accessible route based on the number of elevated play features provided. A play structure with less than 20 elevated play components may use a transfer system to connect to 50 percent of elevated components. A play structure with more than 20 elevated components must provide access to a minimum of 25 percent of those components. For more information consult [www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/iles/Annex\\_H\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://www.allabilitieswelcome.ca/Playspaces/iles/Annex_H_Guidebook.pdf).

**LET'S PLAY**



4. **Is there space on the structure for an adult caregiver to assist a child accessing the play structure?**
  - a. Caregiver with a disability- yes (adult with a disability can access upper area of structure to assist child) or no (adequate space or ramp access not provided)
  - b. Caregiver without a disability- yes (enough space for adult to access upper area of structure) or no (space too small or awkward for adult to assist from upper area of structure)
5. **Are there stand-alone play features, such as spring rockers, or teeter totters?** (Stand alone features often provide good universal access, because they can be accessed from the ground surface)
  - a. If so, what are they?
  - b. Could someone using a wheelchair transfer to use them? (Is there a backrest? Are they about the same height as a wheelchair seat?)
6. **Are there swings?**
  - a. What types of swings (belt swings, disc swing, tot swing)?
  - b. Do any have a back rest?
7. **Are there upper-body activities at appropriate heights for children standing and sitting?** (Examples include low chin up bars, rope dimbers, etc.)
8. **Is there a range of activities providing different levels of challenge for different ages?** (Examples include big and small slides or high and low decks, play houses for smaller children and challenging climbing equipment for older children)
9. **Are there manipulative play opportunities like sand, water, moving activity panels, moveable objects?** (objects children can move themselves are an important feature for children to experiment, discover and control their own environment)
  - a. How are they accessed? (Is there an accessible route to the objects?)
10. **Are there activities to stimulate the senses?** (Examples include things to touch or smell. Consider whether there are colour contrasts, sounds, shade, water.)
  - a. What are they?
11. **Are there activities to stimulate imaginary play such as a counter, clubhouse or stage? If so, list them.**



Example of swing with back rest.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Example of raised border with no wheelchair access.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD



Example of equipment in inaccessible surface (pea gravel/sand mix).  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**LET'S PLAY**



**SURFACING**

1. **What are the safety surfaces under the play equipment? (I.e. sand, wood chips, rubber tiles, pea gravel, poured in place rubber, grass) Sand and pea gravel are not accessible surfaces.**
  - a. Under swings?
  - b. At the bottom of the slide?
2. **Is there wheelchair access to the area where the play equipment is located? Is there a curb cut, ramp or level access? (If there is a raised border, or a barrier more than 1 cm high, the equipment is not accessible).**

**Play Space Layout/Amenities**

1. **If there are structures and play features for different age groups, are they attached in any manner or are they separate from each other? (It is preferable to have a separate play area for younger children who have different needs)**
2. **Are there quiet spaces for children who need to play quietly or observe others? (Examples include a small play house or quiet seating area).**
3. **Is there wheelchair-accessible seating, for both children and adults, out of the way but with a view of the main area of activity? (Seating would include a space wide enough for a wheelchair located adjacent to a bench. Benches with armrests and backs are preferable)**
4. **Are there shady areas to sit?**
5. **Are amenities including picnic tables usable by all (wheelchairs, small children?) Are they located on level firm surfaces? (Accessible picnic tables allow for knee clearance for wheelchair users under the table)**



Bench is not located on accessible surface and there is no path to reach it. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIRA STANDFIELD

**Social and Natural Features**

1. **What type of natural features are found on the site? (Examples include trees, boulders, logs, plants.) How are they used for play?**
2. **Is there an area where plants and other features could be placed that would enhance the play area?**
3. **What are some features (besides play equipment) that could be used by the school for outdoor learning? (Examples include an outdoor classroom, vegetable garden, performance space, stormwater feature).**



**Report 2017-078**

**Committee Report**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee

**From:** Jannette Amini, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

**Date of meeting:** May 29, 2017

**Re: Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee – 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Review of First Draft**

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**Recommendation**

This report is for information purposes only; however feedback and input is being sought from the Committee.

**Background**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is mandated to assist County and Township Councils of the County of Frontenac in enabling persons with disabilities to have equal access to all opportunities within the County as well as work with Council and the community at large to identify and address the needs of persons with disabilities within the community.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), Ontario Regulation 191/11 Section 4, directs designated public sector organizations to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which will outline the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and meet the requirements of the Regulation. The plan must be made publicly available and updated at least once every five years.

The County of Frontenac, which is considered a large public sector organization under the AODA, adopted its first multi-year accessibility plan on December 18, 2012 for the years 2013 to 2017, the content of which addressed AODA regulations related to training, employment, and information and communications. During the preparation of this document, the Townships were invited to include their own multi-year plans with the County's, with the intention of producing a joint plan. The Township of North Frontenac was the only Township that provided its multi-year plan. The invitation to the remaining Townships remained open; however the remaining Townships did not provide individual plans.

**Comment**

The purpose of a Multi-Year plan, as noted under Section 4(1) (a) of Ontario Regulation 191/11 is to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan

which outlines the organization’s strategies to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation. The following is a list of recommended changes to the current plan, most notably, the inclusion of Appendix A – which outlines improvements made since 2013, and Appendix B – Accessibility Strategic Action Plan for each of the member municipalities. The inclusion of these Appendices will help create a Multi-year plan that is a living document, which will moving forward, be reported on and updated annually to track the status of projects as well as add new projects as they are identified. A second key change is that this Plan will now cover all of the Frontenacs as opposed to each individual Township creating its own plan and incorporating it into the Joint Plan. As such, wording has been changed throughout the document to from “County of Frontenac” to “the Frontenacs”. This draft document incorporates the new branding for the County and will be reviewed by the County’s Communications Officer to ensure the document adheres to the branding guidelines.

Below is an overview of the recommended amendments and updates to the current Multi-Year Plan:

**Table of Contents**

The table of contents has been updated to reflect the changes in the Plan.

**Introduction**

The previous Plan provided an introduction to the County of Frontenac and the Township of North Frontenac. The Plan has been amended to add introductions to the Townships of Central Frontenac, South Frontenac and Frontenac Islands.

The Statement of Commitment has been amended to add:

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*.

This was an additional Statement of Commitment that was located under Accessibility Policies and Plan for the County of Frontenac and can be considered general in nature that would reflect all 4 Townships.

**Background**

It is suggested to change the heading of “Background” to “Guiding Legislation” to bring a better understanding that the Frontenacs are not alone in moving accessibility forward and that this is a Provincial move across the province to become barrier free by 2025.

The language has also been updated to reflect that now all 4 Standards, those being Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, Design of Public Spaces and Customer Service are in effect and all forming part of Ontario Regulation 191/11, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

**The Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee**

This section has seen some slight language change to reflect that the Committee assists all Frontenac Councils and not just County Council. It has also been updated to include the composition of the Committee which reflects representation from all 4 Townships.

**Overview: What we have accomplished so far.**

The accomplishments prior to 2013 which were listed in the previous plan have been removed. A key accomplishment that being the mandatory training under the IASR is noted under this section. Physical accomplishments over the last 5 years, which have been provided by the Townships, are now included in an attached Appendix A.

**Accessibility Policies and Plan for the Frontenacs**

This section has received some minor word changes to reflect the Customer Service Standard now being incorporated into the IASR. Specific policies and actions related to the IASR such as website conformity and updates to the website are now located in Appendix B which identifies the Strategic Goals of the Townships and the County.

Reference to HR policies that were to be developed and their content has been removed and added to Appendix A Improvements. Word changes have also occurred to incorporate the Frontenacs as opposed to just the County of Frontenac.

**For More Information**

This section has been amended to provide contact information for all the Frontenac municipalities.

Once the first draft has been reviewed by the Committee with comment and feedback, the Plan will be forwarded to the Townships for review of their respective internal accessibility committees as well as the County accessibility committee, with a final plan for review and adoption by the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee at its September meeting followed by final approval by County and Township Councils.

**Sustainability Implications**

Creating barrier-free communities through accessibility planning will enhance the County's goal of sustainability in both the social and economic pillars of the County's sustainability plan. As stated in *Directions for Our Future*, social sustainability is based on equity, diversity, connectivity, democracy and a good quality of life. It further states that economic development takes health, community, education, and environmental and social objectives into account.

**Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

**Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected**

Eric Korhonen, Township of North Frontenac  
Donna Longmire, Township of Central Frontenac  
Sherry Corneil, Township of South Frontenac  
Darlene Plumley, Township of Frontenac Islands



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**Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan  
2013 - 2017**

**ACCESSIBILITY  
INFRONTENAC**

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## **Introduction**

This multi-year plan is one piece of the ongoing commitment of the County of Frontenac and all four Townships within the County to making our services and the County more accessible for all. The plan establishes clear directions for how the County and Townships will implement accessibility improvements, as well as the timelines by which we will do so. The plan has been developed in tandem with community members who have provided input and advice into its form and content.

### **The County of Frontenac**

The County of Frontenac is a rural county with several small hamlets and four townships. As of the 2011 census, the County had a population of 26,375. The County provides services to its residents directly and also shares services with the City of Kingston. These responsibilities include:

- Administration;
- Land Use Planning - including approval authority for plans of subdivision and condominium and Township Official Plans;
- Economic Development;
- Fairmont Home, a municipal long-term care facility operated by the County of Frontenac and funded by the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac;
- Emergency and Transportation Services including the provisions of land ambulance service for the Frontenac-Kingston region;
- Frontenac-Howe Islander Ferry, a 24-hour on demand service;
- Emergency Management;
- Weed Inspection.

The mission of the County of Frontenac is to efficiently and measurably deliver excellent services, recognized as an employer of choice with dedicated and capable staff, adding value in all areas of service delivery, while simultaneously working to strengthen the capacity of the local municipalities we represent.

### **The Township of North Frontenac**

The Township of North Frontenac is 1,164.73 square kilometers in size and is a lower-tier municipality, being part of Frontenac County and home to over 1,842 permanent residents. In addition, there are an estimated 5,000 seasonal residents, total private dwellings of 2,823, private dwellings occupied by usual residents of 904 and a population density per square kilometer of 1.6.

North Frontenac Township provides the following services to its residents:

- Administration;

- Economic Development;
- Emergency Management;
- Fire;
- Police (O.P.P. paid by Township);
- Building Department;
- By-law Enforcement and Animal Control;
- Streetlights in Hamlet Areas;
- Road Systems;
- Waste Disposal and Recycling Depots;
- Cemeteries;
- Community Halls;
- Recreation Programs and provide Library Facilities;
- Crown Land Stewardship Program;
- Planning.

### **The Township of Central Frontenac**

The Township of Central Frontenac is 1,025 square kilometers in size and is a lower-tier municipality, being part of Frontenac County and home to over 2,058 permanent residents. In addition, there are an estimated 2,048 seasonal residents, and total private dwellings of 4,106.

Central Frontenac Township provides the following services to its residents:

- Administration;
- Economic Development;
- Emergency Management;
- Fire;
- Police (O.P.P. paid by Township);
- Building Department;
- By-law Enforcement and Animal Control;
- Streetlights in Hamlet Areas;
- Road Systems;
- Waste Disposal and Recycling Depots;
- Cemeteries;
- Community Halls;
- Recreation Programs and provide Library Facilities;
- Crown Land Stewardship Program;
- Planning.

### **The Township of South Frontenac**

The Township of South Frontenac is a growing rural lower-tier municipality located just north of Kingston within the County of Frontenac. South Frontenac offers a combination

of agricultural, small-town and cottage-country environments. The municipality has 18,646 residents who occupy 10,336 private dwellings of which about 3,033 are seasonal. The population is spread across 971 square kilometers leading to a population density of 19.2 residents per square Kilometer.

South Frontenac provides the following services to its residents:

- Administration and Financial Management;
- Economic Development;
- Emergency Management;
- Fire;
- Police (O.P.P. paid by Township);
- Building Department;
- By-law Enforcement and Animal Control;
- Streetlights in Hamlet Areas;
- Sydenham Water Service;
- Road Systems;
- Park Maintenance;
- Waste Disposal and Recycling Depots;
- Cemeteries;
- Community Halls;
- South Frontenac Museum;
- Recreation Programs, Frontenac Community Arena and provide Library Facilities;
- Crown Land Stewardship Program;
- Planning.

### **The Township of Frontenac Islands**

The Township of Frontenac Islands Frontenac Islands was formed in 1998 by the amalgamation of two of Ontario's oldest rural municipalities: Howe Island and Wolfe Island. Both islands can trace their European roots back to New France, but it was only in the years after the War of 1812 that settlement took place in any numbers.

The islands are named after two of Britain's generals from the time period of the Seven Year's War: James Wolfe and William Howe. Frontenac Islands have a mixture of agricultural and rural lifestyles with a growing proportion of residents working off the islands in Kingston or elsewhere in Frontenac County.

The islands, situated as they are at the beginning of the St. Lawrence River, provide a unique location to live and work. Access to the mainland is by boat: both islands are serviced by ferries year-round with the addition of a seasonal ferry to the USA from Wolfe Island from May to November.

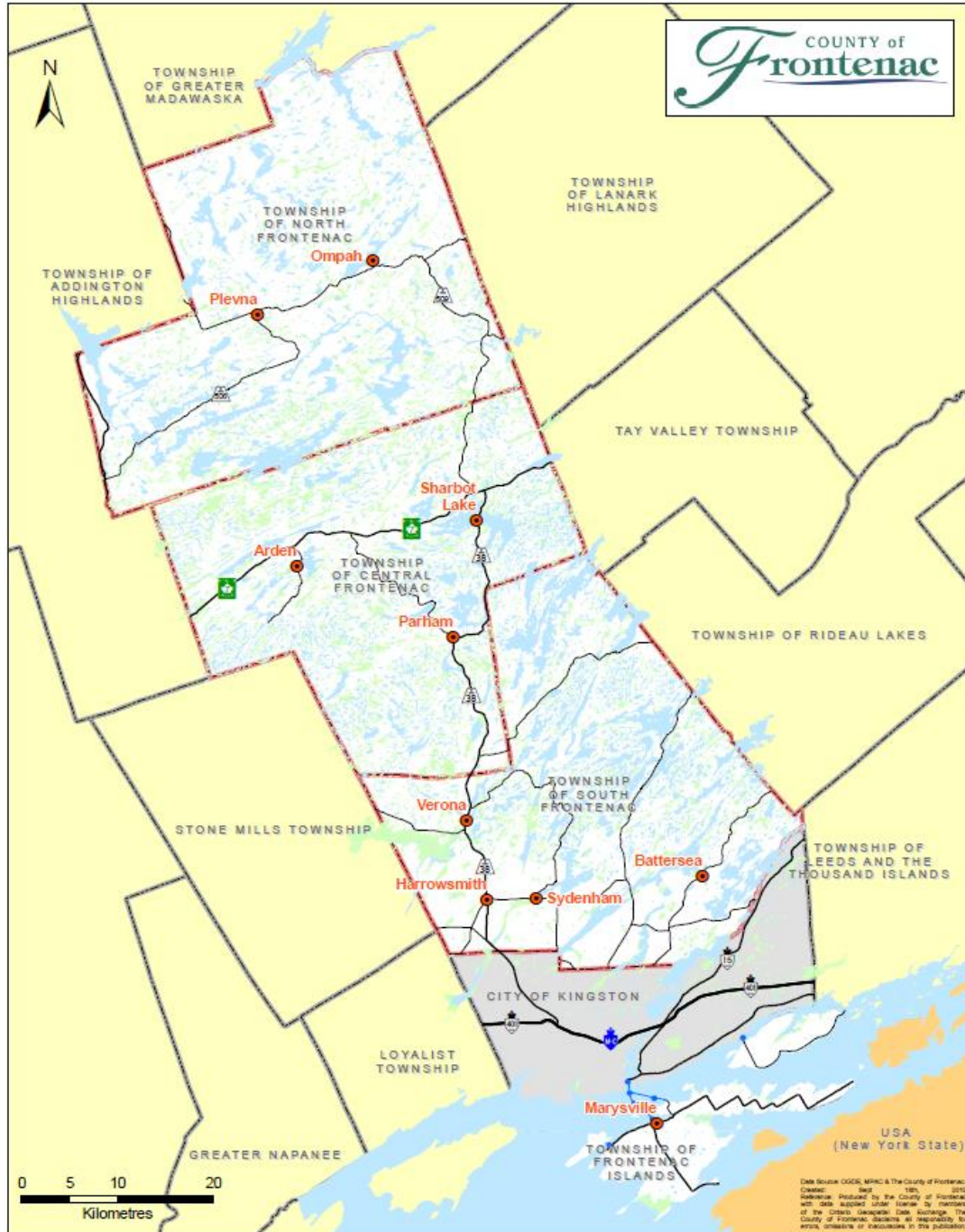
Frontenac Islands Township provides the following services to its residents:

- Administration;
- Economic Development;
- Emergency Management;
- Fire;
- Police (O.P.P. paid by Township);
- Building Department;
- By-law Enforcement and Animal Control;
- Streetlights in Hamlet Areas;
- Road Systems;
- Waste Disposal and Recycling Depots;
- Cemeteries;
- Community Halls;
- Recreation Programs and provide Library Facilities;
- Crown Land Stewardship Program;
- Planning.

### **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*.



## **Guiding Legislation**

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) is part of the province’s goal of making all of Ontario accessible by 2025. This law sets out firm standards and deadlines for removing barriers to accessibility and accommodating the needs of those with disabilities.

A “Disability”, as defined under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, includes:

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

Ontario Regulation 191/11, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* establishes the accessibility standards for each of information and communications, employment, transportation, the design of public spaces and customer service.

### **Customer Service**

Addresses the removal of barriers to customer service at private and public sector organizations.

### **Information and communication**

Addresses the removal of barriers in access to information. Includes information provided in person, in print, on a website, or through other means.

**Employment**

Addresses the supports given to employees and those who are being assessed for employment.

**Transportation**

Addresses the barriers and supports for transit customers.

**Design of Public Spaces**

Addresses the barriers and supports for the construction and redevelopment of public spaces including recreational trails and beach access routes; outdoor public use eating areas; outdoor play spaces; exterior paths of travel; accessible parking; obtaining services; and maintenance of accessible elements.

This multi-year plan is also part of what is required by legislation. The Act requires organizations to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation. The Frontenacs are required to post the accessibility plan on the following web sites:

County of Frontenac – [www.frontenacounty.ca](http://www.frontenacounty.ca)

Township of North Frontenac – [www.northfrontenac.ca](http://www.northfrontenac.ca)

Township of Central Frontenac – [www.centralfrontenac.com](http://www.centralfrontenac.com)

Township of South Frontenac – [www.township.southfrontenac.on.ca](http://www.township.southfrontenac.on.ca)

Township of Frontenac Islands – [www.municipality.frontenacislands.on.ca](http://www.municipality.frontenacislands.on.ca)

and to provide the plan in an accessible format upon request. The plan must also be updated every five years.

**The Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee**

In 2002, the County and the four Townships established a Joint Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee. The mandate of the Committee is to assist the Frontenac Councils in enabling persons with disabilities to have equal access to all opportunities within the County. The Committee holds up to six meetings per year, which are held during the day and last for one or two hours. Committee members currently sit from their date of appointment for the term of Council (November 30<sup>th</sup> of an election year), and are paid a per diem of \$75 for each meeting, along with reimbursement for mileage to and from the meeting. The composition of the Committee includes one

representative from each township, one representative from the community at large and two members of County Council.

The duties of the Committee include:

- (a) advise County Council about the legislative requirements and implementation of the accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the Council may seek its advice;
- (b) review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects in terms of how they address the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities;
- (c) perform all other functions as specified by legislation;
- (d) in consultation with Council and Municipal Staff, review new and existing municipal by-laws and policies as applicable;
- (e) work with Council and the community at large to identify and address the needs of persons with disabilities within the community; and
- (f) provide recommendations to Council on the promotion of public awareness and understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.

The Committee played an important role in the development of this multi-year plan.

### **Overview: What we have accomplished so far?**

In 2009, Frontenac Councils adopted the Accessible Customer Service Policy, making the Frontenacs compliant with Ontario Regulation 429/07. This regulation established accessibility standards for customer service across the province, ensuring that Ontarians receive services based on the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The County's Accessible Customer Service Policy commits us to communicating with persons with disabilities using multiple alternative formats, welcoming persons who are accompanied by service animals or support persons, and training our staff in the provision of goods and/or services to persons with disabilities.

Along with the Accessible Customer Service Policy, County Council also adopted "*How May I Help you?*" Accessible Customer Service Best Practices and Procedures. This document provides clear and detailed instructions on how to best serve persons with disabilities.

In 2013 Frontenac Councils adopted the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, making the Frontenacs compliant with Ontario Regulation 191/11. The Integrated Accessibility Policy encompasses all requirements of the new IASR, including the

Information and Communications Standard, the Employment Standard, the Transportation Standard and the Design of Public Spaces Standard, and IASR training for all employees, volunteers and members of Council.

A full list of individual accomplishments of each of the Frontenacs are noted in Appendix A.

The Frontenacs continue to review existing and develop new policies, practices and procedures in relation to AODA accessibility requirements

### **Accessibility Policies and Plan for the Frontenacs**

This 2018-2022 accessibility policies and plan outlines the policies and actions that the Frontenacs will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

#### **Statement of Commitment**

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 accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

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

#### **Accessible Emergency Information**

The Frontenacs are committed to providing our customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

#### **Training**

The Frontenacs will provide training to all employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

The Frontenacs will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws:

The Frontenacs have implemented training procedures to meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard. These procedures ensure that the following persons are trained to meet Ontario's accessibility laws, the Integrated Accessibility Standard, and the Human Rights Code.

- (a) all employees, and volunteers;
- (b) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- (c) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

The training will include a review of the purposes of the Act and the requirements of Customer Service Standard and instruction about the following matters:

1. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
2. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
3. How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability.
4. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods, services or facilities. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16.

The method and amount of training shall be dependent on the trainee's role in terms of accessibility. Consistent with current practices, training records shall be kept, including the dates when the training is provided and the names of the individuals to whom the training was provided.

For new employees, training shall be provided to each person as soon as practical after he/she is assigned the applicable duties, but no later than 6 months after a person commences employment with any of the Frontenacs. Training shall also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies, practices and procedures concerning the Frontenacs accessibility policies and procedures.

The Frontenacs will ensure that expanded training procedures are developed and maintained according to legislative requirements and amendments and that the Frontenac Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be consulted throughout this process.

**Information and Communications**

The Frontenacs are committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

The County of Frontenac, the Township of Frontenac Islands and the Township of South Frontenac websites and content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A. A comprehensive redevelopment of the Township of Central Frontenac and the Township of North Frontenacs websites will be undertaken before the end of 2017. The new website will conform to the standards of WCAG 2.0, Level A.

Current processes allow for the creation of accessible documents upon request, provided they remain in digital format. The Frontenacs shall review and update their content creation policies and practices to ensure that any new content made available on the website conforms to WCAG 2.0, Level A, and is available in an accessible format. Staff members responsible for creating content for the website shall be trained in these policies and practices.

The Frontenacs will take the following steps to ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request:

In response to the Customer Service Standard, the Frontenacs have established a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities, and has made information about the process readily available to the public.

The feedback process permits persons to provide their feedback using the following methods:

- (i) in person;
- (ii) by telephone;
- (iii) in writing;
- (iv) by electronic mail; or
- (iv) on diskette or otherwise.

All feedback, including questions regarding this policy, is directed to the respective municipalities Accessibility Coordinator. A response can be expected within ten (10) working days.

These practices shall be continued and expanded to encompass all Frontenac operations. The Frontenacs shall ensure that the public is notified about the

availability of accessible formats and communication supports. The notice shall be given by posting the information: (i) at a conspicuous place on Frontenac premises; (ii) on the Frontenac official web sites; or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

A County-wide Communications Plan will encompass communications strategies for Staff, Councils and Advisory Committees of Council. Strategies will ensure that all publicly available information is made accessible.

Accessibility strategies shall require the Frontenacs to:

- 1) Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities upon request;
- 2) Provide the accessible format in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons, and;
- 3) Consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Further, the Communications Plan ensures that the public is notified about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. The notice shall be given by posting the information: (i) at a conspicuous place on Frontenacs premises; (ii) on the all Frontenacs official web site – or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Frontenacs will take the following steps to make all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021:

A comprehensive redevelopment of the County websites was undertaken. Conformity with WCAG 2.0, Level AA has been integrated into the website project proposal. At a minimum, this will allow the website to transition to WCAG 2.0, Level AA well before the 2021 deadline.

Ahead of the 2021 deadline, the Frontenacs shall review and update their content creation policies and practices to ensure that any new content made available on the website conforms to WCAG 2.0, Level AA, and is available in an accessible format. Staff members responsible for creating content for the website shall be trained in these policies and practices.

Frontenac Municipal Information Services will undertake quarterly website validations to ensure ongoing conformity with WCAG 2.0 standards.

**Employment**

The Frontenacs are committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, the Frontenacs will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired:

Recruitment procedures have been amended to ensure that all job postings include a notice informing prospective applicants and employees that accommodations are available upon request. The notice shall also be provided by posting the information: (i) at a conspicuous place on the premises; (ii) on the respective Frontenacs web site; or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Frontenacs currently informs candidates selected for assessment that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials to be used in the assessment. The Frontenacs ensure that this notice is provided in writing to the applicant when the assessment is scheduled. Should a candidate request accommodation, the appropriate staff shall consult with the candidate and provide or arrange for the accommodation that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to a disability.

At the time of offer, the appropriate staff will notify the candidate in writing of the Frontenacs policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

The Frontenacs have in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are taken into account if when the Frontenacs are using performance management, career development and redeployment processes:

The Frontenacs will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

The mandate of Accessibility Staff Committees is to serve as the primary internal resource for identifying potential and actual barriers to accessibility. The Staff Committees are comprised of staff members who represent various departments, and meet regularly to develop recommendations for maintaining and improving accessibility.

**For more information**

Members of the public are encouraged to make comments on the Frontenacs Accessibility Plan and on accessibility matters in general. To provide your comments or for more information on this accessibility plan there are a number of ways that you can contact the Frontenacs:

County of Frontenac  
2069 Battersea Road,  
Glenburnie ON K0H 1S0  
Phone: 613-548-9400 ext. 302  
Fax: 613-548-8460  
Email: [jamini@frontenacounty.ca](mailto:jamini@frontenacounty.ca)  
[FrontenacCounty.ca](http://FrontenacCounty.ca)

Township of North Frontenac  
6648 Road 506, Plevna, ON, K0H 2M0  
Phone: 1-800-234-3953 or 613-479-2231 Ext. 232  
[firechief@northfrontenac.ca](mailto:firechief@northfrontenac.ca)

Township of Central Frontenac  
1084 Elizabeth Street  
P.O. Box 89, Sharbot Lake, ON K0H 2P0  
Phone: 613-279-2935 ext. 243  
Fax: 613-279-2422  
Email: [dlongmire@centralfrontenac.com](mailto:dlongmire@centralfrontenac.com)  
[www.centralfrontenac.com](http://www.centralfrontenac.com)

Township of South Frontenac  
Box 100, Sydenham ON, K0H 2T0  
Phone: 613-376-3027 Ext 2244  
Fax: 613-376-6657  
Email: [scorneil@southfrontenac.net](mailto:scorneil@southfrontenac.net)

Township of Frontenac Islands Box 130  
Wolfe Island ON K0H 2Y0  
Phone: 613-385-2216  
Email: [dplumley@frontenacislands.ca](mailto:dplumley@frontenacislands.ca)

Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from:

**Appendix A**

**Improvements Made**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
<p><b>County of Frontenac</b></p>	<p>A comprehensive redevelopment of the County’s website was undertaken in 2013. Conformity with WCAG 2.0, Level AA was integrated into the website project proposal. This has allowed the website to transition to WCAG 2.0, Level AA well before the 2021 deadline.</p> <p>The County shall review and update its content creation policies and practices to ensure that any new content made available on the website conforms to WCAG 2.0, Level AA, and is available in an accessible format. County staff received Accessible Document training in May of 2015 and updated its content creation policies and practices to ensure that any new content made available on the website conforms to WCAG 2.0, Level A, and is available in an accessible format. Staff members responsible for creating content for the website have been trained in these policies and practices.</p> <p>Information Services perform quarterly website validations to ensure ongoing conformity with WCAG 2.0 standards.</p>
	<p>In response to the Customer Service Standard, the County of Frontenac established a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities, and made information about the process readily available to the public.</p> <p>The feedback process permits persons to provide their feedback using the following methods:</p> <p>(i) in person;</p>

	<p>(ii) by telephone;</p> <p>(iii) in writing;</p> <p>(iv) by electronic mail at <a href="mailto:info@frontenacounty.ca">info@frontenacounty.ca</a>; or</p> <p>(iv) on diskette or otherwise.</p> <p>All feedback, including questions regarding this policy, is directed to the Clerk's Department. A response can be expected within ten (10) working days.</p> <p>These practices are continued and expanded to encompass all County operations. The County ensures that the public is notified about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. The notice is given by posting the information at County reception areas and on the County's official web site – <a href="http://www.frontenacounty.ca">www.frontenacounty.ca</a>; or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.</p>
	<p>In 2013, Human Resources will review and update the County's orientation and training material to ensure that it adequately addresses the County's policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including the provision of job accommodations. This training shall be provided to each person as soon as practical after he/she is assigned the applicable duties, but no later than 6 months after a person commences employment with the County of Frontenac. Human Resources shall provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to County policies on the provision of job accommodations.</p> <p>In 2013, Human Resources shall develop procedures to address accessible formats and communication supports for employees. These procedures shall provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed for an employee to perform his/her job, and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. The procedures will also ensure that the County consults with an employee who requests such an accommodation.</p>

	Fairmount Home’s Kingston Frontenac Rotary Auditorium Fairmount Home’s Kingston Frontenac Rotary Auditorium
	Accessible automatic door openings in the County Administrative Building
	Reconfiguration of the Fairmount Home reception desk that includes a lower section for residents and others to be better served and meets the requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standard
<b>North Frontenac</b>	Administration Office – designated accessible parking spaces available; Ramp installed and power door at front entrance; Walkway around Main Office building leading to meeting room from the office; Open hours posted on front door and outside entrance visible to the designated accessibility parking spaces; Front counter placards reads: ‘Services Also Available in Writing Upon Request’; and Installed a lower counter in Municipal Office
	Clarendon-Miller Community Hall – automatic door opener and lighting; Front door has a push bar; and Installed signage for two (2) designated accessible parking spaces.
	Clarendon-Miller Fire Hall – Chair lift available to upstairs meeting room; and Washrooms are accessible for wheelchairs.
	Ompah Community Hall – Front entrance accessible; and Two (2) designated accessible parking spaces available
	Snow Road Community Hall – Women’s washroom – toilet and sink are correct height; Wheelchair ramp installed; and Two (2) designated accessible parking spaces available.

	Harlowe Community Hall – Wheelchair ramp at front of building; Washrooms – both accessible by wheelchairs, bars installed, etc.; Two (2) designated accessible parking spaces available; Power door installed at entrance door; and Railings at back steps.
	Barrie Community Hall – New wheelchair ramp built in 2012; Accessible door installed – 34” door; Front door has a push bar; Rear entrance accessible; Washrooms – accessible for wheelchairs with bars installed; and Kitchen – countertops, sink, etc. are at correct height, etc. and are accessible
	Plevna Library – Wheelchair ramp outside and Accessible washroom.
<b>Central Frontenac</b>	District 4 Firehall/Library Parking area accessible upgrades
	Parham Play Area at the Parham Ballfield
	Accessible reception area at the Municipal Office
<b>South Frontenac</b>	Completed work on Sydenham Point Beach, the playing field and cenotaph
	Renovated the Public Works office building on Keeley Road with accessible standards
	Provided the Planning Accessible Events Book to our facility booking volunteers and on our website
	Provided Guide to Accessible Festivals & Outdoor Events Book to Recreation Department for distribution when events are booked

	Built five (5) new accessible picnic tables for parks and beaches
	Accessibility upgrades to Centennial Park
	South Frontenac Township Museum
<b>Frontenac Islands</b>	Accessible Ramp to Community Hall allowing for access to Township Office through the use of a fully automated accessible entrance and door
	Fully accessible washroom for Community Hall/Town Hall/Municipal Office (shared use)
	Internal access ramp with handrails connecting Community and Town Hall
	Street cuts for accessible curb along Main Street
<b>For completion in 2017</b>	Five Unit Seniors Apartment Building built to accessibility standards of Building Code
	Accessible Parking spot added for Community Hall
	Accessible Washroom for Community Centre Grounds (public use)
	New Transfer Station Building for Staff with an accessible washroom

## Appendix B1

## Accessibility Strategic Action Plan – County of Frontenac

The County of Frontenac continues to incorporate accessibility planning into all renovation and building projects and continues budget money into its Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Reserve in order to remove barriers and promote accessibility to its facilities and services. The County will also continue to consult regularly with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC) concerning any projects.

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

Initiative	New Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Status
Administrative Building	Consult with ACC once the plans have been received; washrooms will be made accessible	CAO and Clerk		
K & P Trail	Consult with ACC regarding accessibility of the trail including requirements under the Design of Public Spaces Standard	Economic Development	2018	Budgeted

Appendix B2

## Accessibility Strategic Action Plan – Township of North Frontenac

The Township of North Frontenac

Initiative	New Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Status

Appendix B3

## Accessibility Strategic Action Plan – Township of Central Frontenac

The Township of Central Frontenac.

Initiative	New Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Status

## Appendix B4

## Accessibility Strategic Action Plan – Township of South Frontenac

The Township of South Frontenac has taken a very aggressive approach to accessibility and continues to look for ways and means of incorporating accessibility into all renovation and building projects. The Township will continue to look for opportunities and plan budget money in order to remove barriers and promote accessibility to facilities and services. The Township will also continue to consult regularly with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC) concerning any projects.

Initiative	New Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Status
Storrington Centre, Battersea Road, Sunbury	Consult with ACC once the plans have been received; doors, hall and washrooms will be made accessible	Public Works	Plans in 2017 & completion in 2018	Budget approved
Keeley Garage & office, Keeley Road, Sydenham	Consult with ACC once the plans have been received; garage lower level washroom will be made accessible	Public Works	By 2022	Needs to be budgeted
Portland Garage, Hinchinbrook Road, Hartington	Consult with ACC once the plans have been received; washroom will be made accessible	Public Works	By 2022	Needs to be budgeted
Glendower Hall, Westport Road	Accessible ramp and entrance door with push button to be installed	Public Works	By 2017	Already has accessible washroom
Harris Park Hall, Perth Road Crescent, Perth Road	Accessible entrance to washroom	Public Works	By 2022	Accessible door completed

Centennial Park, Centennial Park Road, Harrowsmith	Washrooms to be made accessible	Public Works	By 2018	To be budgeted in 2018
The Point Beach & Park, Point Road, Sydenham	Accessible path & washrooms	Public Works	By 2017	Underway
Gilmour Beach, Wellington Street, Battersea	New building is planned with full accessibility	Public Works	2017 for plans & 2018 for work	Needs to be budgeted in 2018
Existing South Frontenac Playground Structures & Platforms	Any upgrades or replacements will include accessible features; will look at usage to determine priorities; as budget allows will look at accessible surfaces	Public Works	By 2022	As budget and usage allowed
Battersea Playground	Community is actively fundraising successfully	Public Works	Likely by 2018 depending on fundraising	Funds have been allocated

Appendix B5

## Accessibility Strategic Action Plan – Township of Frontenac Islands

The Township of Frontenac Islands continues to incorporate accessibility planning into all renovation and building projects

Initiative	New Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Status

**WHEEL CHAIR ACCESSABLE TRANSPORTATION  
for SOUTH FRONTENAC RESIDENTS**

Rural Routes provides transportation for South Frontenac residents (seniors and other people with transportation needs ) to medical appointments.

The client must be able to walk , and or, be able to transfer, if they are in a wheel chair.

There is no transportation available for people who are confined to a wheelchair and can not transfer. Kingston has the Kingston Access Bus which can pick people up in their wheel chair.

A flyer just came out this past week in the Frontenac News newspaper looking for more volunteer drivers. It stated that the greatest demand was for clients in the Glenburnie, Inverary and Battersea areas.

**SOME IDEAS for wheel chair access transportation**

**IDEA # 1**

Due to the geographic nature of the city of Kingston boundaries, it wraps around the south end of South Frontenac Township in a “ U ” shape.

The Kingston Access bus comes all the way out north to nearly Seeleys Bay, on the east.

The Kingston Access bus comes all the way out north to Orser Rd. on the west.

Between these two areas are Battersea, Inverary and the northern Glenburnie residents.

Is it possible that the Township and City could work together to formulate a plan where this Access Bus could take residents ( who can only be in their wheel chairs) from these areas in to their medical appointments?

IDEA # 2

It is well known that the baby boomer population is aging !

( although I know we would all like to deny it ! )

Could South Frontenac look into the possibility of having their own Wheel chair Access Bus for our township?

( Inverary, Battersea, Sydenham, Harrowsmith, Verona ..... )

The need for this kind of transportation is only going to increase over future years.

IDEA # 3

I phoned Tri Board Transportation for the Limestone District School Board and they said they have 22 wheel chair access buses. Is it possible that the Township and Tri Board could work together to formulate a plan where some of their buses , during the middle of the day when they are not transporting students, could be used by South Frontenac residents in wheel chairs.

Wheel chair residents would need to be made aware that the number one priority for these buses is student transportation. Therefore any medical appointments would have to be booked through the middle of the day , so as not to interfere with the hours of operation of school bus hours.

Probably, some of these access buses are sitting all day in the driveway of

South Frontenac residents who drive them as bus drivers. They might like making some extra money and doing some more bus runs through the day.

**South Frontenac Community Services**

The volunteer drivers we have now are amazing !

It is a service which is greatly used in our township and very much appreciated.

Wheel chair transportation could become an add on to this service.

Thank You

██████████

(current client of the Frontenac Transportation Service)

**Government Funding for Access Bus**

On the weekend I was just reading an article on line from Quinte News.

“ Quinte Access gets funding boost for new location, storage and buses.”

They just announced that they received \$169,000 in Federal Government funding and will be purchasing two new access buses.

They said ridership demands for access buses has been increasing by 15% year after year.

Their region covers Quinte West, Brighton and Prince Edward County.

Their challenge was similar to what South Frontenac Township would face.

Servicing a very large and spread out geographic area.

I have no idea how Politics and Government processes work.

Just wondering if obtaining an Access Bus might be something South Frontenac

Township might want to look into in the future.

Thanks

Anne

## Access is for Everybody

“Ensuring accessibility for employees, job applicants, customers or clients, and the general public helps organizations to better meet the needs of everyone, and to improve the organization’s image, both internally and externally.”

- HRdownloads

Access is a world-wide phenomenon today. Accessibility, the practice of making access work, is world-wide, too. Increasingly, both are understood to be in everyone’s interest.

Accessibility, in some regions, is still understood as a form of disability-related accommodation. Although many seniors and families with small children are often put in the “accessibility” picture as well, persons with disabilities and their needs are the common framework for discussion.

Sometimes this leads to talk of rights and the stress or enforcement issues that may result – often putting people with disabilities in a silo and convincing some private organizations that they don’t need that customer base or hiring someone with a disability could just be very complicated. Since people with disabilities can represent 15% of the population, however, and friends or family another large sector, this is not healthy for business or the rest of us. It just makes more sense to do the work – to build access for everybody.

There are many ways to see this move in thinking. Multiculturalism, inclusiveness and participation in society are often mentioned in the public sector. Legislation and protection of rights are usually cited by advocates or activists. In the human resources

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field, both of these levels are flagged, but also discussed is the good sense it makes to consider the sector that requires accessibility and the resources it can bring – without pre-judging who is the customer or candidate for a job.

Thinking, then, has become universal.

In that spirit, Universal Design was developed at the end of the last century. It's defined as "The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design" by the Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University. Communities, buildings, transportation, rooms, furniture, devices, documents, items online and more are considered in this framework. So is everyday living and working. In Universal Design, it's recognized that the usefulness, clarity or handy location of a thing just makes good sense, and doing things the first time so that they work for everyone, and especially so that they don't have to be changed later, is a core principle.

One application of Universal Design is facility, site or building design. Facility Accessibility Design Standards or FADS, currently applied in many municipalities, sets out a well-developed guideline for ensuring accessibility and usability. Created with participation from people with disabilities as well as engineers and designers, FADS is available in Ontario through the City of London.

An important source of design standards like this is legislation beginning with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and happening now in Canada. Ontario's AODA or Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is currently being applied and will reach its final stage of impact in 2025.

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Universality is applied in looking at much of our public life today and much of our economic life. While individuals with disabilities, mobility-restricted seniors or families with children in strollers are often central to a business's or community's accessibility vision, organizations are also urged to see how much of society needs and seeks access ... and how well things work when open access is provided.

The tourist industry around the world is undergoing an accessibility revolution. While it changes continually to fit with interests like nature tourism or seniors' tourism, recent evolution has added a significant inclusiveness. Tourism is becoming aware that places that welcome all are now valued even by those who experience no mobility problems.

At the level of local business we might consider a family traveling to an area for a holiday, products being delivered or picked up, businesses and services seeing things as customers do, online accessibility as efficiency, insurance companies and regulators concerned about safety.

It's true that there are limits. Realities such as cost, risk, missing or dated policy, staffing and training, know-how and change from outside impact businesses and other organizations every day. This includes the world of access, accessibility and accommodation.

It's also true, however, that the times are changing, that governments are moving ahead with access, that rules and funding are evolving to "accommodate accommodation."

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## About “accommodation”

By 2017, governments, communities and many organizations across the world have adopted accessibility and universality practices. They’ve also embraced what is often called “accommodation” – actively thinking about, providing for or assisting others who face barriers.

If *accessibility* is putting into place physical capability related to use by anyone, *accommodation* might be considered adjustment to assist specific people here and now, as well as broader accepting of and support for people who experience non-physical barriers. Sometimes accommodation is carried out by persons who see needs, gaps, challenges. Often, accessibility and accommodation are both necessary.

For example, a senior who could not bring her wheelchair arrives at the hospital by taxi and requires assistance from the driver to get out of the vehicle, then to move to the building where a porter makes a wheelchair available - or the driver may enter the building to bring a porter out.

This accommodation of the patient is today considered a courtesy by the taxi company, is not paid, is uninsured and unregulated, could help prevent an injury or an insurance claim, might seem like an “extra” but is often very important, and may be getting the taxi company a lot of business.

Many service-related organizations experience similar “extra need” situations in the course of their normal business as they accommodate different languages, ways of understanding, experience, physical abilities, non-standard product uses and more.

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An interesting aspect here: a sometimes-hidden customer base or side to many customers. We've all heard the one about the long-time successful business or non-profit everybody loves because of the "service" they provide. What that service amounts to is a willingness to accommodate, to meet people half-way about how they really see it and what they really need.

## **Community Developments**

by Kurt Halliday

### **Seeing “Age-friendly”**

If you're a senior and you live in Frontenac County, you might be challenged sometimes to pay the bills, get a ride, be fit or visit with folks like yourself. But there's a reason to be encouraged.

The County, along with other municipalities in Ontario, is working up an Age-Friendly Community Action Plan.

In 2017, community change with seniors in mind is happening in Canada. Governments and community services are focusing on quality of life areas like needs, resources and opportunities.

The goal is each of us living at home longer and better: aging actively.

The “age-friendly” framework concerns life and how it's lived – health and mental health, accessibility and mobility, useful information and connection with others, fitness and recreation, social and economic difficulties.

Most concretely, it changes the built environment, taking on barriers in sidewalks, entrances, pathways, spaces inside buildings, often applying a model called universal design. Most generally, it reduces isolation and stress by connecting us with our peers and friends, and helping us take an active role in the life of the community.

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In Ontario, following the lead of the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat and ultimately the United Nations, Action Plans include public consultations to make sure Plans fit local vision, needs and experience.

Several areas for possible improvement are under consideration: Outdoor spaces and buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services.

Rural communities, with lower populations and sometimes dispersed services, also face resource challenges, finding it more difficult to get building blocks like staff and money.

Frontenac County's work so far includes delivery of the Plan itself along with Ottawa-based consulting firm WSP/MMM Group. The Plan is a blueprint for local action that extends work in the County's Official Plan with advice from residents in the County. The Official Plan, for instance, supports "aging in place," which means not being moved to a care facility unless necessary.

Opportunities for improvement are, of course, part of the Plan. Building accessibility, through things like curb cuts, accessible entrances or public seating are highlighted in the document. In the northern part of the County, money and transportation are the chronic barriers, and so resources are part of the discussion.

Community development and economic development often go together. Things have to

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be paid for, after all, and things have to work.

The “age-friendly” approach is a common sense part of development now. It makes sense not just for seniors and people with disabilities, but for families with small children, visitors to our area, people using public sites and businesses.

For example, tourism is often strengthened when services and businesses are accessible, useful and friendly. And the world is going this way. Accessible tourism, sometimes paired with green tourism, is booming around the planet.

To consider this further: American tourists and those from our larger cities may expect accessible services and facilities. Re-locating to our area or travelling here for a nature weekend may come down to the fact that a family member who has mobility barriers can work, shop, dine or get to entertainment.

For most of us in remote areas, the same reasoning may apply. A family might well travel to a larger centre to buy groceries or clothes, even if local selection and prices are good, because the doors are automatic, the aisles are wide, the staff is aware of the issues ... the thinking, like the place, is more welcoming.