



**Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
Meeting**

Thursday, March 27, 2025 –10:00 a.m.

County of Frontenac Administration Building,
2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie, ON

<https://youtube.com/live/CeZwjyA3yFA?feature=share>

AGENDA

Page

1. Call to Order

We begin this gathering by acknowledging and celebrating these traditional lands as a gathering place of the first peoples and their ancestors who are entrusted to care for mother earth since time immemorial. We do so respecting both the land and the Indigenous People who continue to walk with us through this world. Today, the County is committed to working with Indigenous peoples and all residents to pursue a united path of reconciliation.

2. Election of Officers

a) Election of Chair



b) Election of Vice Chair



3. Adoption of the Agenda

a) **That** the agenda for the March 27, 2025 meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

5. Adoption of Minutes

a) Minutes of Meeting held October 9, 2024

That the minutes of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held October 9, 2024 be adopted.

[Minutes of Meeting held October 9, 2024](#)

6. Deputations and/or Presentations

5 - 8

7. Briefings

9 - 26

- a) Mr. Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development provided the Planning Advisory Committee with the planning briefing [Planning Director Briefing](#)

8. Reports to the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee

- a) **Consultant Briefing:** Alex Stettler, Envision Consultants Ltd. and Sonya Bolton, Manager of Community Planning, will brief the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee on the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines.

[See Reports to the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee, clause b)]

27 - 58

- b) **2025-036
Planning and Economic Development
Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines Final Document**
Be It Resolved That the Council of the County of Frontenac receive the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines, as prepared by Envision Consultants Ltd., dated December 12, 2024, in fulfilment of the terms of the project contract;

And Further That Council direct County staff to use the EIS Guidelines, where applicable, for all planning applications where the County is the approval authority;

And Further That Council direct County staff to share the EIS Guidelines with our partner Townships and encourage them to adopt the guidelines for use in applicable planning applications where they are the approval authority, in order to ensure a consistent approach for these types of studies across the County.

[Environmental Impact Study \(EIS\) Guidelines Final Document
Appendix A Frontenac County EIS Guidelines](#)

59 - 74

- c) **Staff Briefing:** Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development, will brief the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee on the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment.

[See Reports to the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee, clause d)]

[The Loop Market Readiness Assessment Briefing](#)

75 - 163

- d) **2025-037
Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment**

Results and Next Steps

That the County of Frontenac Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee receive the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment from Terminus Consulting

And Further That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to enter into a formal partnership with OHTO, relevant municipalities and trail managers to continue and encourage the development of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop

And Further That staff be authorized to participate in the development of a joint strategy, action plan and governance structure for the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop

[Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment Results and Next Steps](#)

[Appendix A - The Loop Trail Tourism Draft Assessment - Frontenac County](#)

[Appendix B Sharbot Lake Trail Town Assessment - Draft Report Dec 2024](#)

164 - 169

e) **2025-009**

K&P Trail

E-Bikes, E-Scooters, Mobility Scooters and other forms of micromobility on the K&P Trail

Be It Resolved the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee receives report 2025-009

And Further That staff be directed to amend Bylaw No. 2022-0033 as follows:

1. **That** Section 2, Definitions, be amended by deleting the following:

a. **“E-Bike”** shall mean a motor assisted bicycle within the meaning of the Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O .1990, c.H.8, as amended.

And replacing with:

a. **“E-Bike”** shall mean a power-assisted bicycle, also called an electric bicycle or e-bike, is a bicycle with an electric motor that has a handlebar for steering, working pedals, two or three wheels, an electric motor and braking systems.

2. **That** Section 2, Definitions, be amended by adding the following definitions, in alphabetical order:

Electric Kick Scooter shall mean an a two-wheeled, handlebar-equipped, stand-up scooter powered by an electric motor and is equipped with a brake, bell or horn, and front and rear lights.

Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) shall mean a four-wheeled electric

vehicle designed for short-distance transportation. It is equipped with essential safety features including seat belts, mirrors, turn signals, headlights, brake lights, and a horn. LSVs can operate at speeds up to 40 km/h and are permitted only on roads with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h or less, as regulated under Ontario's Low-Speed Vehicle Pilot Program. LSVs must be registered, insured, and operated by a licensed driver.

Mobility Scooter shall mean a personal mobility device that is designed to help people with limited mobility travel in pedestrianized spaces. These devices are powered with an electric motor and can reach a maximum speed of 15 km/h. Persons using mobility scooters are treated as pedestrians under the Highway Traffic Act.

3. **That** Section 2 be re-numbered accordingly.

[E-Bikes, E-Scooters, Mobility Scooters and other forms of micromobility on the K&P Trail](#)

170 - 175

- f) **Staff Briefing:** Debbi Miller, Community Development Officer, will brief the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee on the Business Retreat and Awards.

[See Reports to the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee, clause f)]

[Business Retreat and Awards Briefing](#)

176 - 181

- g) **2025-038
Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards**

This report is for information. It is intended to solicit feedback for 2025 from the committee and to provide an update on the 2024 Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards.

[Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards](#)

9. Communications

10. Other Business

11. Next Meeting

- a) The next meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, May 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the County Administration Building.

12. Adjournment



FRONTENAC

**Minutes of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
Meeting
October 9, 2024**

**[Note: Minutes are not Verbatim, please refer to full video at
<https://youtube.com/live/TKySU6xtwgc?feature=share>]**

A meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee was held in the County Council Board Room, County Administrative Office, 2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie on Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 9:00 AM

Present:

Deputy Warden Ron Vandewal, Chair
Councillor Fred Fowler, Vice Chair
Warden Fran Smith
Councillor Judy Greenwood-Speers
Leona Fleischmann (late 9:28 a.m.)
Mike Hage
Phil Leonard
Jim McIntosh

Staff Present:

Jannette Amini, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk
Brianna McEathron, Executive Assistant to the CAO/Treasurer
Sonya Bolton, Manager of Community Planning
Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Debbi Miller, Community Development Officer
Kevin Farrell, Chief Administrative Officer

Staff Present Electronically:

1. Call to Order

We begin this gathering by acknowledging and celebrating these traditional lands as a gathering place of the first peoples and their ancestors who are entrusted to care for mother earth since time immemorial. We do so respecting both the land and the Indigenous People who continue to walk with us through this world. Today, the County is committed to working with Indigenous peoples and all residents to pursue a united path of reconciliation.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved By: Warden Smith
Seconded By: Councillor Greenwood-Speers

That the agenda for the October 9, 2024 meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were none.

4. Adoption of Minutes

5. Deputations and/or Presentations

- a) **Ms. Anne Prichard**, Executive Director of Frontenac Business Services, addressed the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee regarding the request to increase staff capacity for tourism and economic development.

6. Briefings

7. Reports to the Planning Advisory Committee

- a) **Staff Briefing:** Ms. Sonya Bolton, Manager of Community Planning, and Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development, briefed the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee with respect to the 2024-2028 Planning and Economic Development Departments Business Plans and responded to questions on same.

Mr. Allen provided an overview of the Economic Development Business Plan.

In terms of broadband, a contract has been awarded to address this on the Islands.

Mr. Allen provided an overview of the Community Development Officer project proposal.

In terms of open farms, and to the question of is it the same success given how the footprint has expanded, Mr. Allen noted that the expansion incorporates the plowing matches and to chose one specific weekend would eliminate 50% of the farms. It was suggested to survey the markets to find out if they are growing or diminishing, to which Mr. Allen noted that surveys are conducted with all open farms participants to determine where this should go and what our role is in promoting local agriculture.

In terms of communicating this position to Council, staff should focus on or show the financial payback that this position could bring to the County.

Mr. Allen noted that many of the other County's have external partners that promote tourism which the County of Frontenac does not have given the loss of the Land O'Lakes Tourism Association.

Ms. Bolton provided an overview of Planning Business Plan.

In terms of delegated authority around consents, the number of applications coming to Committee of Adjustments are very low.

Mr. Hage exited the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

To questions on cost recovery of services, Ms. Bolton noted that all hours are tracked and at the end of the year, the average is taken, and they are billed quarterly the following year as this provides stability to the Townships. It is cost recovery but not billed the same as a traditional consultant would bill.

To questions regarding Communal Services, Mr. Gallivan provided an overview of the past work and the purpose of establishing the Municipal Services Corporation. He also noted the political conversations that have been taking place to help change the process in terms of studies that are required to be done to implement these, noting that the hold up here is with the province.

Ms. Bolton provided an overview of the Populations Projection project proposal.

The Committee recessed at 10:40 a.m.

The Committee reconvened at 10:52 a.m.

Mr. Allen provided an overview of the K&P Trail Business Plan.

In terms of questions around the hold up at Fish Creek Road, Mr. Allen noted that this was done prior to his time; however, it was observed that this is a nesting area for endangered species, and it was easier to set up a motorized detour. This is how it has become an established area, and it would be a large public consultation process to change this.

In terms of questions regarding trail permits, this information will be brought back to the Committee later in the year.

In terms of bicycle data, it was asked where the \$26 for food came from, pointing to a 2021-2022 cycling data report which points to a much higher impact. Mr. Allen noted that the data in the Business Plan is based on 2023 data for just bicycles and does not factor in overnight data as we do not have the accommodations to support overnight trips, which is what would drive up the economic impact.

In terms of the cost of bridges and comments made on bridge materials and life expectancy, Mr. Allen noted that the bridge itself is minimal cost. Most of the costs are associated with the abutments and work around the bridge.

b) **2024-102
Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
Planning and Economic Development 2025 – 2029 Business Plan**

Moved By: Warden Smith
Seconded By: Ms. Fleischmann

That the County of Frontenac Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend to County Council the approval of the Planning and Economic Development 2025 – 2029 Business Plan; and

And Further That the Director of Planning and Economic Development provide an overview to County Council as part of the 2025 budget deliberations as well as the Councils of the three municipalities which the department provides planning services.

Carried

8. Communications

- a) From Terri-Lynn Brennan inviting members of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee to the National Indigenous Presenters Gathering

[Distributed to Members of the Committee September 26, 2024]

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting

- a) The next meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee will be determined at a later date.

11. Adjournment

Moved By: Warden Smith
Seconded By: Ms. Fleischmann

That the meeting hereby adjourn at 11:33 a.m.

Carried



FRONTENAC

Director's Briefing
Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
March 27th, 2025



FRONTENAC

General Planning Item (County level)

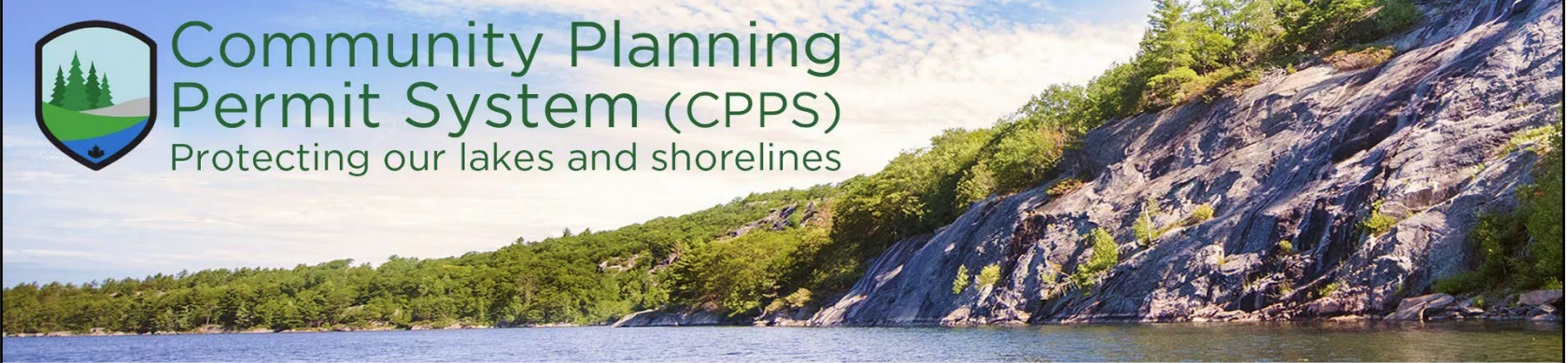
- CPPS project continues to be on schedule and work will continue through 2025
- Communal service policies for township Official Plans – public information sessions to be held in North, Central, and Frontenac Islands
- Additional residential units – updates for Township Official Plans



Community Planning Permit System



Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) Protecting our lakes and shorelines



[Home](#) / [County of Frontenac](#) / Community Planning Permit System: Participate in simplifying the building approvals process

Community Planning Permit System: Participate in simplifying the building approvals process



If you are a resident of any of the four townships in Frontenac County, we need your input on the implementation of a new, streamlined, planning application approvals process.

The new system, called the Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), has two major advantages for residents:

- [It will help to further protect the natural heritage of our lakes and shorelines for future generations.](#)

REGISTER

to get involved!

Frequently asked questions

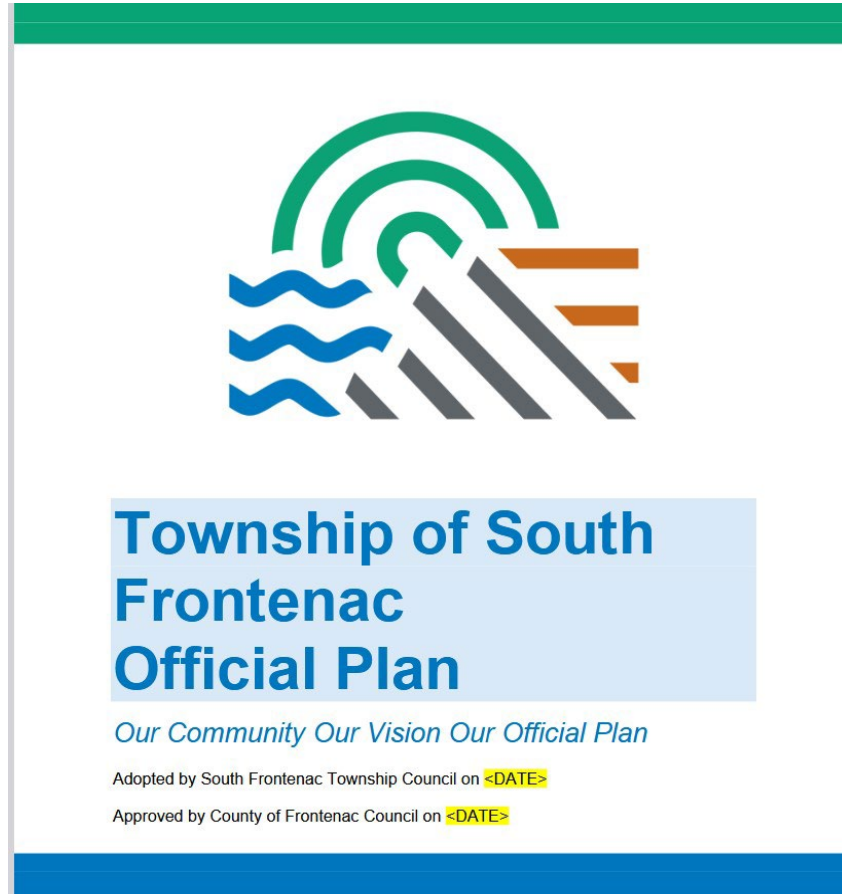
- What is the Community Planning Permit System?
- What are the advantages to CPPS in Frontenac?

<https://engagefrontenac.ca/community-planning-permit-system>



FRONTENAC

South Frontenac Official Plan – Fourth Draft



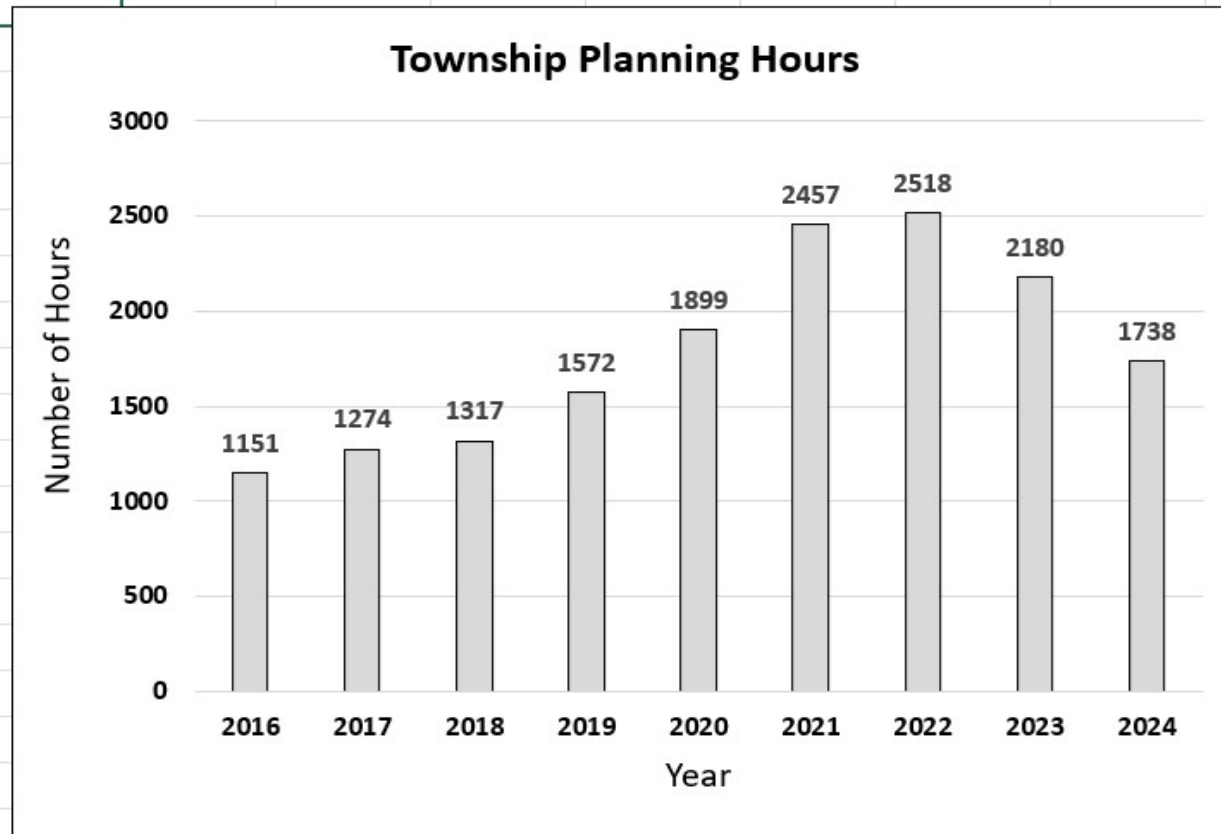
<https://engagefrontenac.ca/official-plan-review-south-frontenac-2040>



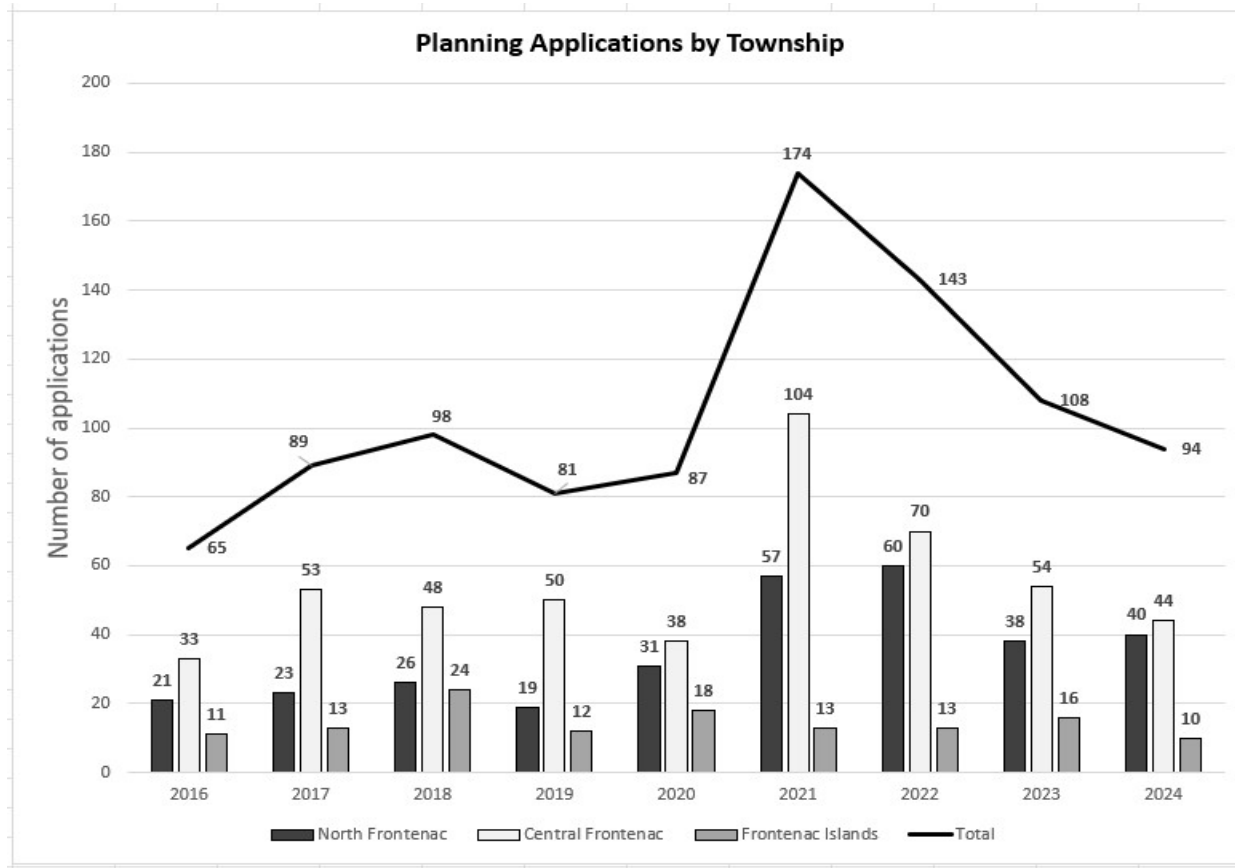
FRONTENAC



County Planning Services – Township Hours (North, Central, Islands)



Township Planning Applications (North, Central, Islands)

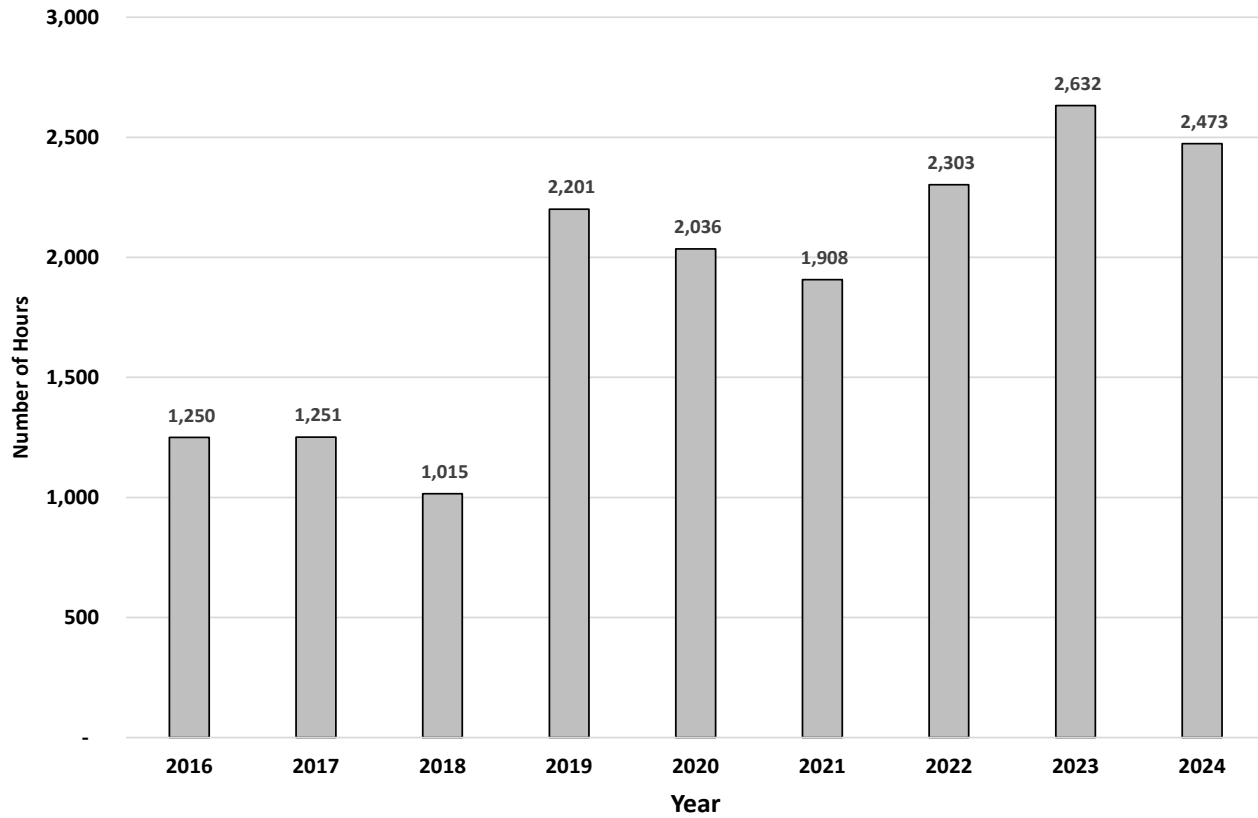


FRONTENAC

Township Planning Applications - 2024 (North, Central, Islands)

Applications	North Frontenac	Central Frontenac	Frontenac Islands	Total
Minor Variances & Permissions	14	14	1	29
Consents – Delegated Authority	18	19	4	41
Consents – Committee or Council	5	5	2	12
Other Planning Applications	3	6	3	12
TOTAL	40	44	10	94

County Planning Hours – 2016 to 2024



County/Regional Planning Hours

- Almost 60% of our total planning hours in 2024 were regional planning, up from 55% in 2023.
- Major projects:
 - » Communal Services
 - » Community Planning Permit System project management
 - » South Frontenac Official Plan review



2025 – 2026 Projects (Regional)

- Community Planning Permit System
- Communal Services – Frontenac Municipal Services (utility)
- Regional Natural Heritage Study
- County Official Plan (2016) update



2025 – 2026 Projects (Townships)

- Sharbot Lake school site redevelopment (staff report Re. preliminary permitted land uses to Township Council March 25th)
- South Frontenac Official Plan Review
- Marysville Design Standards and village zoning
- Official Plan Amendments – Communal Services



Business Engagement

Business Visits

- Frontenac County and Frontenac Business Services continuing to visit businesses monthly
- Next visit is planned for Howe Island

Wolfe Island Business Meeting (December)

- Wolfe Island businesses met with representatives from Frontenac County, Frontenac Business Services, Frontenac Islands, and RTO9 (Regional Tourism Organization)
- Three business groups formed from the meeting: Marketing, Familiarization (FAM) Tour, and Signage.



Frontenac Brand Anthem

- Created by Untold Storytelling to promote County
- Video is set to launch on April 15, 2025
- Looking to have Frontenac representatives play video as part of presentations to external audiences, at conferences, etc.
- Collaboration with RTO9 (Southeastern Ontario) and RTO11 (Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization – OHTO) and Destination Ontario.



FRONTENAC

Healthcare in our community Operational Review

The Healthcare in our Community report was received and its recommendations approved at County Council March 19, 2025. This project was supported by Frontenac Business Services who provided a \$5000 grant towards the review.

- Report Link: [Operational Review Report and Findings Report](#)
- [Consultant Presentation \(Video Recording\)](#)
- [Recruitment Video](#)

Next Steps: Staff will develop an Implementation Plan outlining actions, schedule, and costs associated with the recommendations outlined in the report, which will be presented to County Council prior to 2025 Budget deliberations

Open Farms 2025

The Open Farms was received and its recommendations approved at County Council February 19, 2025.

- Report Link: [Open Farms Days Follow Up 2024 and Open Farms 2025](#)
- [Staff Briefing \(Video Recording\)](#)

2025 Event Schedule

Friday: Kick-off event/ribbon cutting at the Frontenac Farmers Market

Saturday and Sunday:

- Plowing Match events with event coordination support with additional farms & education
- Farm-hosted events, business-led experiences, and community activities.
- Farmers markets across the region.
- Farm-to-table events highlighting local products.



FRONTENAC

K&P Trail – Clarendon Station to Mississippi River Complete

Eight kilometers of K&P Trail have been rehabilitated in Central and North Frontenac. A funding announcement and ribbon cutting featuring the Province of Ontario was hosted on December 15, 2024. 12 kilometers of rehabilitation remain in North Frontenac.



Before



After



Questions ?



Report 2025-036

Committee Recommend Report

To: Chair and Members of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee

From: Sonya Bolton, Manager of Community Planning

Date of meeting: March 27, 2025

Re: **Planning and Economic Development – Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines Final Document**

Recommendation

Be It Resolved That the Council of the County of Frontenac receive the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines, as prepared by Envision Consultants Ltd., dated December 12, 2024, in fulfilment of the terms of the project contract;

And Further That Council direct County staff to use the EIS Guidelines, where applicable, for all planning applications where the County is the approval authority;

And Further That Council direct County staff to share the EIS Guidelines with our partner Townships and encourage them to adopt the guidelines for use in applicable planning applications where they are the approval authority, in order to ensure a consistent approach for these types of studies across the County.

Background

The County is the approval authority for Official Plans, Official Plan Amendments, and Plans of Subdivision and Condominium, while the Townships are the approval authority for all other applications under the Planning Act. Over the last several years, the number of planning applications has increased for all Townships in the County, and all the municipalities are seeing an increase in the number of complex applications. This is mainly because most of the sites that are easier to sever and/or build on have already been developed.

Given the abundance of natural heritage resources in the County, including wetlands, lakes, and other waterfront areas, an increasing number of applications are requiring the completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) as part of the submission of a planning application. The purpose of the EIS is to ensure that a proposed development

does not negatively impact natural heritage resources as defined by the province and the Official Plans of both the County and the Townships, and to recommend any mitigation measures that should be implemented as part of the development, if appropriate.

Changes made a couple of years ago by the province no longer allow Conservation Authorities to provide comments on natural heritage features and resources, but they still comment on natural hazards. In 2023, to address the lack of support that the municipalities in the County can receive from Conservation Authorities, the County and the four Townships issued a request for proposals for a consulting firm to provide review services for natural heritage issues. Envision Consultants Ltd was retained and has been providing peer review services for the County and four Townships.

Previously, each Conservation Authority (of which there are four across the whole County), would have their own guidelines or expectations when it came to what should be included in an EIS and how it should be conducted. Without that guidance, and to ensure consistency across the County, staff asked Envision Consultants Ltd to prepare a proposal and cost estimate for the preparation of EIS Guidelines that could be used County-wide. They provided a proposal for the preparation of the guidelines at a cost of \$10,500.00.

Staff at the Township of South Frontenac had also expressed an interest in developing EIS Guidelines, so the proposal the County received from Envision was shared with South Frontenac staff for their review. The Director of Development Services at the Township of South Frontenac agreed to cover half the cost of the consulting services to prepare the EIS Guidelines. Therefore, the cost to the County was only \$5,250.00.

On February 21, 2024, County Council approved the following motion:

Be It Resolved That the Council of the County of Frontenac receive the report "Planning & Economic Development – Purchase of Consulting Services for Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines";

And Further That the Council of the County of Frontenac approve the purchase of consulting services for EIS Guidelines at 50 percent of the cost of the proposal from Envision Consulting, as outlined in Attachment 1 to this report, to a total of \$5,250.00 plus HST;

And Further That Council authorize the use of the Sustainability Reserve to offset the County's portion of the cost of the EIS Guidelines.

Comment

Work on the EIS Guidelines took place over 2024. It included consultation with staff from all four Townships and the Conservation Authorities. The final version of the document was delivered to staff in December 2024.

The intention is that these guidelines will serve as a 'road map' of expected study contents for biologists and environmental planners working with a property owner on an EIS and associated planning application. The clarity of these guidelines will result in cost savings for any planning application that has a natural heritage component.

County planning staff are recommending that the Committee recommend to Council that these guidelines be received in fulfilment of the contract with Envision Consultants Ltd., and that they be used by staff, where applicable, when dealing with planning applications that the County is the approval authority for.

While South Frontenac staff have been involved in the process of developing the guidelines, County planning staff are also recommending that these EIS Guidelines be shared with the other three Townships, for their consideration, so that there can be a uniform approach across the County to how these types of studies are requested and conducted.

Financial Implications

The purchase of consulting services to prepare the EIS Guidelines was a total of \$5,200.00 (50 percent of the total cost) and was paid for from the County's Sustainability Reserve.

Strategic Priorities

2. Contribute to the Progress of Sustainable Economic Growth and Prosperity Throughout the County: Develop regional tools and policies to support long-term protection of lakes, rivers, and other important environmental features in Frontenac.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development, County of Frontenac

Brad Wright, Director of Development Services, Township of South Frontenac

Attachments

1. Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines



FRONTENAC

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY GUIDELINES

December 12, 2024



Summary of Environmental Impact Study Guidelines

Environmental Impact Study (EIS) guidelines play an important role for citizens, applicants, consultants, and decision-makers by ensuring that environmental considerations are incorporated into project planning and decision-making within Frontenac County.

For citizens of Frontenac County, guidelines promote transparency in assessing potential environmental consequences of proposed developments. Guidelines ensure that assessments are completed in a structured and formal matter, allowing for trust and accountability between project developers and the public.

For applicants, guidelines offer a clear, structured method to identify and mitigate environmental risks related to their projects. By adhering to guidelines, applicants can avoid delays in project progression, minimize potential environmental harm, and enhance credibility and acceptability of projects within Frontenac County.

For consultants and developers carrying out projects within Frontenac County, guidelines provide a basis for making decisions regarding project management and investments. Guidelines ensure that all relevant environmental factors are considered, reducing the likelihood of negative impacts that may lead to legal disputes or regulatory fines.

In conclusion, EIS guidelines are essential in promoting responsible development practices that balance economic growth with environmental protection.

How to use this document

Any applicant or property owner that has been directed by the municipality to prepare an EIS for their project should review this document and must provide a copy to the qualified professional that they retain to conduct the study.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Environmental Impact Study Overview	1
1.1	Definition of an Environmental Impact Study	1
1.2	Purpose of an Environmental Impact Study	1
1.3	When is an Environmental Impact Study Required?	2
2.	Steps Involved in an Environmental Impact Study	5
3.	Components OF an Environmental Impact Study	7
3.1	Existing Conditions	7
3.2	Site Description	7
3.3	Ecological Features and Functions	8
3.4	Corridors and Linkages	9
3.5	Proposed Development	10
3.6	Evaluation of Ecological Impacts	10
3.7	Mitigation Measures	11
3.8	Policies and Legislation	12
3.9	Recommendations	12
3.10	Appendices	12
3.11	Executive Summary	13
4.	Conclusion	14
5.	References	15

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Terms of Reference Checklist

APPENDIX B: Scoping of Inventories, Associated Protocols and Delineations



1. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY OVERVIEW

Frontenac County supports healthy and prosperous communities. To provide this support, specific policies and measures need to be followed when there is a potential impact of site-specific development on natural heritage features (NHF) and hydrologic features (HF).

The term “site” is described as the specific geographical area where a proposed project or development will be located whereas the term “study area” refers to the 120 metres surrounding the site. The term development is defined as any works or the footprint of any structures in or adjacent to a NHF or HF, including but not limited to dwellings, sheds, decks, docks, boathouses, lot grading, or shoreline alterations. Wetlands, woodlands and habitat are examples of natural heritage features. Wetlands, watercourses and groundwater recharge areas are examples of hydrologic features.

The guidelines in this document set expectations for the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) process and for EIS requirements. The guidelines ensure that studies on NHF and/or HF within the County are consistent among one another and that reports follow consistent application of County and Township EIS related policy. This will ensure a balanced approach to development and conservation throughout Frontenac County.

The guidelines intend to identify EIS requirements under the Provincial Planning Statement, County Official Plan, Township Official Plans, and By-laws, to support local natural heritage conservation objectives, and to facilitate the review of EIS studies for land use planning applications by Frontenac County.

The intent of the EIS Guidelines is to:

1. Establish a standardized set of study criteria specific to NHF and HF;
2. Avoid conflicts between proposed development and NHF and/or HF through constraints analysis prior to development layout;
3. Provide a planning tool that can be used by the applicant to address environmental considerations throughout the development process;
4. Ensure high quality, consistent studies and reporting methods; and,
5. Facilitate and expedite the environmental review process.

1.1 DEFINITION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

An EIS is a process that addresses the potential impact of site-specific development on NHF and HF. Studies will identify proposed developments that may impact NHF and/or HF, identify and assess anticipated and potential impacts on NHF and/or HF, identify measures that may be used to mitigate any potential impacts to NHF and/or HF, define development setbacks that are ecologically sustainable, and include statements that address possible negative impacts beyond the boundaries of the site where development is proposed (if applicable). They often provide recommendations for protection, enhancement, and monitoring for NHF and HF.

1.2 PURPOSE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

The County recognizes the importance of natural heritage conservation as a planning objective as it contributes to the high quality of life we have come to expect in our communities. This important connection to natural heritage areas is reflected in the planning policies that are applicable within the County's jurisdiction.

In some instances, plans and policies do not permit development and/or site alteration in certain NHF or HF. In other situations, development and/or site alteration may be permitted in other NHF or HF, and on



lands adjacent to NHF or HF. However, for this to be permitted, it must be demonstrated that the proposed development and/or site alteration will have no negative impacts either on the feature or on its ecological/hydrologic function. It is a priority of the County to avoid negative environmental impacts. When this is not possible, the proponent must then review and provide industry acceptable measures to mitigate all potential negative impacts.

An EIS has two main purposes:

1. The EIS is a planning tool used by the proponent to design the development proposal and/or site alteration to avoid negative environmental impacts and enhance the natural environment to ensure the natural setting is an asset. The environmental constraints section of an EIS must begin early in the design process, prior to development layout. The EIS will identify development constraints and identify areas that are appropriate for development.
2. The EIS is a decision-making tool that provides the information needed by the County to determine whether the proposal complies with the applicable plans, policies and regulations.

The EIS must be based on good scientific data and analyses that are defensible and that adequately address impacts on environmental features and functions. The EIS process must be integrated into the planning of a proposed project to ensure timely consideration of environmental factors and to avoid delays in the planning and approval process.

The municipality is the planning authority responsible for reviewing and approving an EIS. An EIS should be initiated only after a Terms of Reference is approved following a formal pre-application consultation process with municipal planning staff. The County currently lacks the qualified professionals to review an EIS, so the Terms of Reference and EIS will be peer reviewed by a third party, at the applicant's expense.

The completed EIS must be submitted to the County with the application for a development proposal requiring approval under the Planning Act. In accordance with the Complete Application Policies set out in the County's Official Plan, the EIS is to be prepared by a qualified professional. Approval of the EIS means that the study itself meets acceptable technical standards; however, it does not ensure approval of the planning application.

These EIS Guidelines have been arranged in such a way that the first section of the EIS, which constitutes the constraints analysis, can be submitted to the planning authority. Understanding the constraints within a site at a high level provides guidance to understand if the proposed development plan is possible by estimating the net developable area within a site, identifies where potential impacts may occur and then provides the required scoping details to determine the surveys required to address those potential impacts through an EIS. Although submitting a constraints analysis is recommended for all sites as a way for the proposed proponent of the application to complete their internal due diligence, sites with limited or no NHF or HF may choose to skip this step. The relevant Conservation Authority should review when a proposed project is within their regulated areas.

1.3 WHEN IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY REQUIRED?

An EIS must be submitted where development or site alteration is proposed wholly or partially within, or adjacent to a NHF and/or HF as defined in Provincial, County, and Township policies and regulations. An EIS may be required based on multiple features or layers of features/potential features (e.g., development in a woodland, not yet classified as significant) where there is potential for significance, other natural heritage features or habitat to be present (refer to NHFs and HFs described below).

- Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW)
 - Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands within PSWs or the associated buffer as per the relevant policy.



-
- Provincially Significant Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)
 - No development shall be permitted in a provincially significant ANSI or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS, that there will be no negative impacts on the ANSI and its ecological function.

 - Non-Provincially Significant Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest
 - No development shall be permitted in a non-provincially significant ANSI or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS, that there will be no negative impacts on the ANSI and its ecological function.

 - Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species
 - No development shall be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on ecological function through an EIS or the required Provincial or Federal approvals are obtained to permit such impacts.

 - Significant Woodlands
 - No development and/or site alteration in significant woodlands or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS, that there will be no negative impacts on the significant woodland and its ecological function.

 - Significant Wildlife Habitat
 - No development and/or site alteration in significant wildlife habitat or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS, that there will be no negative impacts on the significant wildlife habitat and its ecological function.



-
- Fish Habitat
 - No development and site alteration in fish habitat or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS, that there will be no negative impacts on the fish habitat or on their ecological functions¹ or the required Federal approvals are obtained to permit such impacts.
 - At Capacity Lake Trout Lakes
 - EIS required as development shall not be permitted within at capacity Lake Trout lakes^{2,3}.
 - Significant Valleylands
 - Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant valleylands or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
 - Coastal Wetlands
 - Development and site alteration in coastal wetlands (not including significant coastal wetlands) or the associated buffer, as per the relevant policy, unless it can be demonstrated, through an EIS that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
 - Locally Significant Wetlands
 - Development and site alteration shall not be permitted.
 - Unevaluated Wetlands
 - Development and site alteration shall not be permitted.

¹New development along watercourses and waterbodies which have demonstrated no negative impact on the fish habitat or on their ecological functions shall require a minimum setback. These setbacks shall remain undisturbed and naturally vegetated, where possible.

²Township Official Plans shall contain policies to protect these lakes; however, it includes specific exceptions related to specific development works related to development near at-capacity Lake Trout lakes.

³At Capacity Lake Trout lakes require an EIS. Additionally, there must be a minimum 300 metre distance between the lake and the proposed development including installation of new septic systems (not replacement).



2. STEPS INVOLVED IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

An EIS should include seven overall steps:

Step 1: Initial consultation to determine the scope of the EIS.

- Involves consultation with the appropriate approval authority that has jurisdiction over the study area where the proposed development will occur. Members of the submission review team will be established during this step. Submission review team members may include relevant Frontenac County members, relevant Township members and any other party that will provide input on the submitted EIS. Conversation between the submission party (i.e., the applicant and their consultants) and relevant Frontenac County and relevant Township members will establish the scope, content, format and potential issues and concerns that the EIS should address.

Step 2: Terms of Reference development and a site visit.

- A Terms of Reference is developed by the environmental consultant hired by the applicant, using the 'Terms of Reference Checklist' in Appendix A as a guideline. The applicants, their consultants and the submission review team will then perform a site visit to confirm that the Terms of Reference has been adequately scoped. The submission review team will provide comments on the Terms of Reference prior to the start of the EIS.

Step 3: Undertake appropriate field investigations.

- The environmental consultant will undertake the appropriate field investigations and surveys as determined by the Terms of Reference. Refer to **Appendix A:** Terms of Reference Checklist and **Appendix B:** Scoping of Inventories, Associated Protocols and Delineations.

Step 4: EIS reporting.

- Contents of the EIS report including the relevant sections as described in Section 3 are developed by the environmental consultant.

Step 5: Ongoing consultation.

- Reporting to the submission review team is recommended so that the consulting team and the submission review team can maintain a dialogue throughout the process and the Terms of Reference can be adapted based on dialogue and feedback obtained from the results of the undertaken field studies.

Step 6: Review of submitted EIS by the submission review team.

- Once the EIS report is submitted, the submission review team will begin their review of the document. If the report is not deemed acceptable, the EIS will be sent back to the applicant and their consultants along with comments from the review team which may include the requirements for further studies. The submission review team will inform the applicant when the EIS is deemed acceptable in terms of content, clarity, and completeness. After this process, the County can accept the EIS and process the development application, taking into consideration that the final comments from the submission review team for the EIS have been addressed.

Step 7: Monitoring.

- If the application is approved, monitoring will enable the municipality, through development agreements or other similar, practical tools, the potential to require subsequent changes to site conditions if the environmental effects are found to exceed predicted effects or targets, or if there are identifiable negative effects. Monitoring of the environmental effects of the proposed development also provides well-documented, local examples of best management practices for certain types of development associated with particular types of NHF and/or HF and their



functions that can be potentially applied to other development applications to create a consistent review process. Recommended monitoring programs must be practical in the context of staff capacity.



3. COMPONENTS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

This section lists typical components of an EIS. The level of detail required for an EIS would be outlined in the Terms of Reference and depends on the development proposal and on the presence of significant NHF, HF and their function within the site and study area and any additional NHF or HF identified within the site. Methodologies, timing, and techniques used to perform the ecological inventory, literature review of relevant reports, current intensity of use of the site, and natural heritage planning components relevant to the site must be included within an EIS.

3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A detailed overview of the existing conditions for the site of the proposed development must be documented in the EIS based on survey requirements agreed to in the Terms of Reference and following applicable survey protocols (refer to Appendix A: Terms of Reference Checklist and Appendix B: Scoping of Inventories, Associated Protocols and Delineations). This section should identify potential preliminary issues, outline information gaps and the need for additional surveys and data collection. This section should include:

- Planning context including existing designations, zoning and permitted uses.
- Site location maps and appropriate figures detailing the existing conditions related to documented field surveys.
- Known NHF within and beyond the site limits. This may include ANSI, wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, habitats of Endangered or Threatened species and fish habitat.
- Location of boundaries or edges of relevant identified features and functions.
- Interconnections or corridors with adjacent natural features.
- Identification of hazard lands which includes floodplains, watercourses, wetlands, Great Lakes coastlines, and steep slopes.
- Hydrological assessments to understand how groundwater interacts with features within the site.
- Geomorphological assessments to understand how natural stream movement over time can potentially impact proposed developments.
- A review of critical issues.
- Watershed targets and recommendations.

3.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site should be described at the landscape, vegetation, community and species scale. The following should be included in the site description:

- Description of the soils, landforms and surficial geology based on a review of mapping and available literature.
- Hydrological or hydrogeological resources and issues, including surface water features, recharge/discharge zones, groundwater elevations and flow directions, connections between groundwater and surface water features.
- A pre-development water balance to assess the quantity and quality of existing water budget components on the site.
- Biophysical inventory and analysis of terrestrial and aquatic communities, functions and processes that may be affected by development.
- Analysis of inter-relationships of the biophysical information, to show an overview of the existing ecosystem within the subject site as it relates to the larger local and regional ecosystem. Potential



examples include linkage between features, such as groundwater-vegetation communities or groundwater-surface water relationships.

- Description of natural features and components of the natural heritage system of the site (examples include wetlands, environmentally sensitive areas, ANSI, woodland, rivers, ravine corridor etc.). Criteria to evaluate features significance should be included.

3.3 ECOLOGICAL FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS

An evaluation of components of the natural heritage system and the site's characteristics are included in this section. This includes identification of the key features and functions and:

- Whether the feature or function is measurable in its occurrence, and if so, its significance in terms of maintaining biodiversity.
- Whether the feature or function contributes to the quality and integrity of the area.
- Whether the feature or function contributes to the identification of the area as a NHF or area.
- Whether there is a reasonable expectation that the feature or function is sensitive to the proposed development.

Topics to be considered and to be included in the EIS as required are:

Ecological Functions

- Biodiversity (landscape, community and species levels);
- Habitat for aquatic and terrestrial species as it related to provision of food, shelter, reproduction, refuge from predators and movement for species;
- Habitat contiguity (size and shape);
- Species and habitat representation and abundance;
- Vegetation structure, density, diversity and distribution;
- Connections and linkages;
- Proximity to other relevant natural areas;
- Proximity to hydraulic features;
- Hydrological functions (i.e., hydrogeology, fluvial geomorphology and hydrology);
- Nutrient and energy cycling;
- Succession and disturbance;
- Reproduction and dispersal;
- Landscape linkages; and,
- Relationship between species and communities.

Wetland Functions

- Groundwater recharge and discharge;
- Water storage and release;
- Flood damage reduction;
- Shoreline stabilization;
- Sediment trapping;
- Nutrient and contaminant uptake and removal;
- Food chain support;
- Habitat for fish and wildlife; and,
- Attendant social and economic benefits.



Natural Heritage Features and Landscapes

- Moderating climate;
- Maintaining water cycles;
- Providing habitat for all species; and,
- Supplying oxygen and sequestering carbon dioxide.

Benefits of Importance to Humans

- Contributing to healthy and productive landscapes;
- Cleaning, conveying and storing of water;
- Improving air quality;
- Preventing erosion;
- Converting and storing atmospheric carbon;
- Providing natural resources and green space for human activities; and,
- Aesthetic and quality of life benefit.

Indirect Impacts

- Job creation or loss;
- Property value;
- Community cohesion;
- Public transportation;
- Noise pollution;
- Increased/decreased traffic; and,
- Potential exposure to pesticides and chemicals.

3.4 CORRIDORS AND LINKAGES

Describe existing and potential linkages between natural areas. The EIS should assess the following potential linkages within the site:

- Hydrological function (riparian areas, flood plains, valley lands, drainage areas, surface and groundwater connections, recharge and discharge areas);
- Degree of connection with natural areas (proximity, distance, intervening land use, corridors) and opportunities for connections through restoration; and,
- Linkage along the river corridor and the effect of stormwater management proposals.

Existing linkages should also consider the existing matrix and its ability to facilitate wildlife movement and how this matrix may change after the proposed development occurs. Assessment should include an evaluation of:

- Natural areas and habitats linked (number of sites linked and site sizes and conditions);
- The linkage habitat type (anthropogenic [e.g. utility corridor, hedgerow, plantation]; to natural community, river floodplain, etc.);
- Corridor/linkage main cover type quality;
- Corridor/linkage length and width;
- Continuity (e.g., long gaps greater than 100 metres, or gaps containing roads or other barriers to gaps less than 30 metres wide containing no barriers);
- Existing wildlife use in corridors; and,



- Opportunities to restore or enhance cover within corridors between natural areas.

After the ecological function analysis of each feature noted above has been assessed, a landscape feature containing all the individual features and their functions along with their connections between each other will be developed to form a Natural Heritage System to be protected from development. After the Natural Heritage System is defined on constraints mapping, the preliminary development area is identified.

On-site or adjacent features that are proposed to not be protected from development will be reviewed and assessed through the submitted EIS to determine if removal is possible with regards to form and function and policy compliance.

3.5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This section of the EIS report should include details about the proposed development. This should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- The land use of the subject property and whether the current proposal will change that use.
- A description of the existing conditions on the site, including existing structures.
- A description of any proposed new structures, including buildings and other accessory structures, such as decks, docks, boathouses, gazebos, etc.
- How the property is, or will be, accessed and any areas dedicated to parking.
- How the property is serviced in terms of water and sewage services and whether any upgrades or changes to those services are part of the proposed development.
- A copy of the site plan and any associated drawings that the applicant has prepared for the planning application and/or building permit process.

3.6 EVALUATION OF ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS

It should be noted that scientific literature must be consulted and cited in the body of the report to support statements made.

Evaluation of ecological impacts include:

- Mapping of all resources including existing and proposed grades. The environmental constraints to development should be overlaid onto one map illustrating the subject site and adjacent lands allowing for opportunities and constraints to be clearly identified. A current aerial photograph should also be supplied. Mapping should include an overlay of the proposed development concept onto the opportunities and constraints map. When there is a question of whether there is adequate or suitable area for development, concept plans for what is being proposed will be required to show building envelopes, relevant building setbacks, roads, driveways, parking, grading and location of utilities.
- Mapping and description of sensitivities of all NHF and their functions present within the development proposal boundary.
- A description of environmental effects of the proposed development that may impact natural areas. Impacts could include:
 - Direct on-site effects (i.e., direct loss of the feature or habitat).
 - Description of the nature, extent and duration of potential impacts to the site and adjacent lands, including all potential cumulative effects.
 - Impacts on NHFs identified by Frontenac County's Natural Heritage Study.
 - Effects on surface drainage systems such as ponding, erosion, changes in volume of surface runoff, changes in water quality (e.g., temperature, suspended sediment, chlorides and other



- pollutants, clarity, etc.), timing and intensity of surface flow, associated impacts to natural features and functions, and pre- to post-development water balance changes.
- Effects on groundwater such as reduced surface water recharge to groundwater, changes in groundwater contribution to natural features, impedance of groundwater movement, impacts to groundwater discharge areas, construction-related impacts to aquifer integrity (i.e., puncturing, dewatering requirements), groundwater contamination, and redirection of groundwater flow.
 - A post-development overall water balance assessment may be required depending on the size, form, and use of the proposed development. A post-development feature-based water balance may be required for woodlots, wetlands, and watercourses. The post-development scenario must be compared to the existing condition and mitigation measures will be required to maintain existing flow regimes on a monthly basis for both groundwater and surface water.
 - A description of the municipal requirements and standards, such as setbacks that will affect the development proposal and could impact the ability to maintain appropriate buffers, etc.
 - A preliminary grading plan indicating both existing and proposed grades for services and building envelopes, including usable privacy areas, etc. It will need to be demonstrated that grading can be accommodated without impacts to a NHF or HF.
 - Effects on adjacent areas, including transported effects such as sedimentation.
 - Effects on the key characteristics of the NHF including loss of habitat, change in habitat, edge effects and impacts to sensitive species or communities.
 - Effects on connectivity, and fragmentation and isolation of habitat.
 - Potential for further demand on resources.
 - Irreversible and reversible effects as well immediate and long-term effects as a result of the development proposed.
 - Effects of occupancy (i.e., increased disturbance and indirect impact from increased access, pets, lighting, noise, encroachment, etc.).
 - An explanation of the methods used to determine the above effects and literature references in support of the effects.
 - A summary of the effects in table format.

3.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

This section provides the identification and explanation of alternative options and measures that could mitigate any potential negative environmental impacts. This includes modifications to the proposed development that avoids effects on key features, functions and/or methods to restore features and/or their functions that may be impacted by the development. If avoidance is not possible, a rationale must be provided with alternative options that will minimize potential impacts. This section should include:

- Any feasible mitigating measures that are relevant to the potential impacts of the proposed development.
- An analysis of buffers and setbacks that are relevant to protect the type of natural areas being affected by the proposed development.
- A description of mitigating measures proposed to eliminate or reduce the effects (e.g., timing restrictions, design techniques, buffers, erosion and sediment control measures, tree hoarding, edge or buffer plantings, etc.) that includes drawings or plans indicating the design details.
- A description of any proposed compensation measures to address impacts that cannot be mitigated and/or rehabilitation/restoration plans for areas disturbed.
- Maps depicting the location and extent of all proposed mitigation measures.



3.8 POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

Proposed development may be subject to a wide variety of Federal, Provincial, County and/or Township policy/legislative requirements relevant to the EIS. The proponent should be aware of applicable policies and legislations, and how they affect the property slated for development. The EIS should detail how the proposed development meets the intent and requirements of relevant policies and the legislative framework.

Some potential Federal legislative requirements along with the agency responsible are:

- Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency or Responsible Authority);
- Federal Fisheries Act (Fisheries and Oceans Canada);
- Migratory Birds Convention Act (Environment and Climate Change Canada);
- Navigable Waters (Transport Canada); and,
- Species at Risk Act (Environment and Climate Change Canada and/or Fisheries and Oceans Canada).

Some potential Provincial, County and/or Township legislative requirements along with the agency responsible are:

- Conservation Authorities Act;
- Endangered Species Act, Ontario Water Resources Act (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks);
- Frontenac County Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines;
- Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act, Public Lands Act (Ministry of Natural Resources);
- Local by-laws, where applicable, such as Zoning By-law, Tree Cutting Bylaws, Grading Bylaws, etc. (Frontenac County and relevant Townships).
- Natural Heritage Reference Manual (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry);
- Official Plans (Frontenac County and relevant Townships);
- Planning Act (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing); and,
- Provincial Planning Statement (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing).

3.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section should outline how the proposal can maintain or enhance ecological functions of the NHF and HF. The following issues should be addressed:

- Should the development proposal proceed as planned?
- Should the development proposal be revised to reduce/eliminate effects and if so, how? Any proposed revisions should be illustrated conceptually on the resource mapping base.
- Provide any proposed mitigation/compensation measures.
- Provide any proposed conditions, including any recommended monitoring requirements.

3.10 APPENDICES

Appendices should include all relevant supplementary information such as:

- Literature cited;
- Field collection record, flora and fauna species lists by area and by date of inventory;
- Borehole/water level reading data;



-
- Flow measurements;
 - Water quality data sheets;
 - Calculations; and,
 - List of people contacted during the study or referenced in the report.
-

3.11 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section should be placed at the beginning of the EIS report and should include a description of the proposed development, its effects on the environment, and a summary of all the recommendations.



4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, these EIS Guidelines serve as a comprehensive framework to ensure that environmental considerations are fully integrated into the decision-making processes for proposed projects in Frontenac County. By adhering to these guidelines, proponents can identify, predict, and evaluate potential environmental impacts, ensuring that necessary measures are taken to mitigate adverse effects.

As environmental challenges continue to evolve, it is recommended that these guidelines remain adaptable, incorporating the latest protocols, survey methods and other relevant concepts.



5. REFERENCES

- Bakowsky, W.D., 1997. Natural heritage resources inventory of Ontario: S-Ranks for communities in Site Regions 6 and 7. Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre, Ministry of Natural Resources, Peterborough, Ontario. 11 pp.
- Birds Canada. (2011). Ontario Whip-poor-will Project: Central Ontario Survey Data Form.
- Cadman, M. D., Sutherland, D. A., Beck, G. G., Lepage, D., & Couturier, A. R. (2007). Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas: Instructions for General Atlassing. Online summaries. Retrieved from Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (birdsonario.org)
- Endangered Species Act, 2007, S.O. 2007, c. 6. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/07e06>
- Environment Canada. (n.d.). Monitoring Protocol for Plethodontid Salamanders. Retrieved from Joint EMAN/Parks Canada national monitoring protocol for plethodontid salamanders / [by] Paul Zorn, Valerie Blazeski, and Brian Craig. : En14-144/2004E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca
- Lee, H., W.D. Bakowsky, J.L. Riley, J.M. Bowles, M. Puddister, P. Uhlig and S. McMurray, 1998.
- Ecological Land Classification for Southern Ontario: First Approximation and its Application. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Science, Southcentral Science Section, Science Development and Transfer Branch. SCSS Field Guide FG-02.
- Marsh Monitoring Program. (n.d.). Amphibian Survey Protocols. Retrieved from Marsh Cover (bsc-eoc.org)
- Marsh Monitoring Program. (n.d.). Bird Survey Protocols. Retrieved from Marsh Cover (bsc-eoc.org)
- Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, SC 1994, c 22.
- Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC). (n.d.). Biodiversity Explorer and Rarity Rankings. Retrieved from Natural Heritage Information Centre | ontario.ca
- Niagara Region. (January 2018). Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines. Retrieved from <https://www.niagararegion.ca/culture-and-environment/pdf/environmental-impact-study-guidelines.pdf>
- Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas. (n.d.). Retrieved from Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (birdsonario.org)
- Ontario Ministry of the Environment (OMOE). (n.d.). The Hydrogeology of South Ontario. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca
- Ontario Institute of Pedology. (1985). Field Manual for Describing Soils (3rd ed.). Guelph, ON: Ontario Institute of Pedology.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF). (2014). DRAFT Survey Protocol for Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) in Ontario.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). (n.d.). Ontario Fisheries Inventory and Assessment Protocols. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF). (n.d.). Ontario Fisheries Planning. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). (2002). Ontario Wetland Evaluation System for Southern Ontario. 3rd Edition. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca



Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). (n.d.). Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). (2000). Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide. Retrieved from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | ontario.ca

Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (OMNDM). (n.d.). Geology Ontario. Retrieved from Geology Ontario (gov.on.ca)

Professional Geoscientists Ontario (PGO). (n.d.). Professional Practice Guidelines for Geomorphologists. Retrieved from <https://www.pgo.ca/uploaded/files/pp-guidelines-geomorphology.pdf>

Riley, J. L. (1989). Distribution and Status of the Vascular Plants of Central Region. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). (2015). Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guideline. Retrieved from https://trca.ca/app/uploads/2016/02/EIS_Guideline_-_Jan232015bp.pdf

University of Guelph. (n.d.). Flora Ontario Integrated Botanical Information System (FOIBIS). Retrieved from <http://www.uoguelph.ca/foibis>



APPENDIX A:

Terms of Reference Checklist



TERMS OF REFERENCE CHECKLIST

The following indicates Natural Heritage Policies, scoping of inventories and delineations, and Terms of Reference requirements that may need to be abided by for developments that require an EIS in Frontenac County. These requirements may be changed or scoped depending on the proposal and location. If additional NHF and/or HF are identified during the preparation of an EIS, the Terms of Reference Checklist may have to be reassessed. Additional studies or consultation may be required if the proposed development directly or indirectly affects NHF and/or HF. The Terms of Reference is to be prepared by a qualified professional and submitted in electronic form along with hard copies.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name:

Proponent:

Primary Contact:

Contact Information (Email):

(Phone):

Project Location (street address or lot and concession):

Geographic Township and/or District:

Consultant:

Consultant Lead:

Contact Information (Email):

(Phone):

PROJECT TYPE

- Agricultural building or structure within building cluster
- Agricultural building or structure outside building cluster
- Re-build – same footprint
- Re-build – larger or altered footprint
- Consent to sever and create a new lot
- Consent for a lot addition
- Consent for an easement
- Addition to an existing building/structure
- New single detached dwelling on an existing lot
- Accessory building/structure re-development or modification
- New accessory structure (garage, shed etc.)



-
- Septic system or other servicing
 - New accessory development (swimming pool, driveway etc.)
 - Other development or site alteration (wind farm, logging operations etc.) Please specify:

NATURAL HERITAGE POLICIES TO BE REVIEWED

- County and Township official plans
- Secondary or tertiary plans
- Provincial Planning Statement (2024)
- Ontario Endangered Species Act (2007)
- Conservation Authorities Act (1990)

BACKGROUND DATA TO BE REVIEWED

- Natural Heritage Information Centre
- Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas
- E-bird
- Reptile and Amphibian Atlas
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada Species at Risk Mapping
- Municipal Drain Classification Mapping
- Watershed Study
- Records obtained from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks/Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry/Conservation Authority
- Other:

IDENTIFY FEATURE SIGNIFICANCE USING CRITERIA FROM

- Township official plan
- County official plan
- County Natural Heritage Study
- Natural Heritage Reference Manual
- Significant Wildlife Habitat Criteria Schedules
- Ontario Endangered Species Act (2007)
- Federal Species at Risk Act (2002)



IMPACTS

Include assessment of impacts related, but not limited, to servicing, grading/construction, water balance, water taking/pumping, stormwater discharge, vegetation/habitat removal, lighting, human encroachment/dumping etc. both during construction and post-construction as required.

MITIGATION

Provide a list of mitigation measures, if applicable.

ENHANCEMENT

Provide enhancement in accordance with Protection Plan policies.



APPENDIX B:

Scoping of Inventories, Associated Protocols and Delineations



SCOPING OF INVENTORIES, ASSOCIATED PROTOCOLS AND DELINEATIONS

FIELD STUDIES REQUIRED	NOT APPLICABLE	SITE	STUDY AREA	POTENTIALLY REQUIRED IF FEATURES PRESENT AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED	NOTES
ECOLOGICAL LAND CLASSIFICATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring/summer/fall Ecological Land Classification timing periods and vegetation community classifications can be further described using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological Land Classification System for Southern Ontario (ELC, Lee et al.1998), including the catalogue code updates version (Lee, 2008), Natural Heritage Resources of Ontario: Vegetation Communities of Southern Ontario (Bakowsky, 1997) Ontario Institute of Pedology 1985 Field Manual to Describing Soils, Third Edition.
BOTANICAL INVENTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring/summer/fall botanical inventory periods and species can be further described using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological Land Classification System for Southern Ontario (ELC, Lee et al. 1998) Natural Heritage Information Centre Biodiversity Explorer and Rarity Rankings (Natural Heritage Information Centre ontario.ca) Flora Ontario (http://www.uoguelph.ca/foibis), Distribution and Status of the Vascular Plants of Central Region (Riley 1989)
TREE INVENTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Botanical inventory databases can be used for tree inventory Information.
BUTTERNUT HEALTH ASSESSMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Details regarding Butternut assessments and Butternut exemptions can be found in Section 21 of Ontario Regulation 830/21. Refer to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), 2007 regarding Butternut impacts and habitat.
WOODLAND BOUNDARY STAKING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woodland boundary staking can occur anytime throughout the year.
WETLAND EVALUATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca
WETLAND BOUNDARY STAKING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Wetland Evaluation System for Southern Ontario (OMNR 2002) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca



FIELD STUDIES REQUIRED	NOT APPLICABLE	SITE	STUDY AREA	POTENTIALLY REQUIRED IF FEATURES PRESENT AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED	NOTES
BREEDING BIRD SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas: Instructions for General Atlassing (Cadman et al. 2007), online summaries Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (birdsonario.org) Breeding Bird Surveys following Environment Canada Canadian Wildlife Service protocols (http://www.ec.gc.ca/reommbs/default.asp?lang=En&n=416B57CA-1) Marsh Monitoring Program Bird Survey protocols Marsh Cover (bsc-eoc.org) Migratory Birds Convention Act (1994)
BOBOLINK/EASTERN MEADOWLARK SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to breeding bird survey databases and Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark Recovery Strategy (Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark Recovery Strategy ontario.ca).
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER/ PILEATED WOODPECKER SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to breeding bird survey databases, Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Strategy (Red-headed Woodpecker recovery strategy ontario.ca) and .
EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL/COMMON NIGHTHAWK SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeding bird survey databases DRAFT Survey Protocol for Eastern Whip-poor-will (<i>Caprimulgus vociferus</i>) in Ontario (OMNRF, 2014) (survey protocols) Ontario Whip-poor-will Project: Central Ontario Survey Data Form (Birds Canada, 2011) (roadside survey protocols)
BREEDING AMPHIBIAN SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marsh Monitoring Program Amphibian Survey protocols Marsh Cover (bsc-eoc.org)) Ontario Herpetofauna Summary Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca Environment Canada Monitoring Protocol for Plethodontid Salamanders Joint EMAN/Parks Canada national monitoring protocol for plethodontid salamanders / [by] Paul Zorn, Valerie Blazeski, and Brian Craig.: En14-144/2004E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca



FIELD STUDIES REQUIRED	NOT APPLICABLE	SITE	STUDY AREA	POTENTIALLY REQUIRED IF FEATURES PRESENT AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED	NOTES
WESTERN CHORUS FROG SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to breeding amphibian survey databases.
SALAMANDER SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to breeding amphibian survey databases.
EGG MASS SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
REPTILE SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: https://www.ontario.ca/page/survey-protocol-ontarios-species-risk-snakes#section-2 for relevant survey information
LEAF-OFF BAT HABITAT VISUAL SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species At Risk Ontario (SARO) for bats protected under the ESA (Endangered Species Act) (2007) MNRF Bat Survey Protocol MNRF Maternity Roost Surveys MNRF Use of Buildings by Species at Risk Bats Survey Methodology
LEAF-ON BAT HABITAT VISUAL SURVEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SARO for bats protected under the ESA MNRF Bat Survey Protocol MNRF Maternity Roost Surveys MNRF Use of Buildings by Species at Risk Bats Survey
ACOUSTIC BAT MONITORING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks bat survey standards for protocols and timing.
VISUAL AQUATIC HABITAT ASSESSMENT AND CHARACTERIZATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



FIELD STUDIES REQUIRED	NOT APPLICABLE	SITE	STUDY AREA	POTENTIALLY REQUIRED IF FEATURES PRESENT AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED	NOTES
FISH SAMPLING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Fisheries Inventory and Assessment Protocols Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca Ontario Fisheries Planning available from MNRF Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca
WATER TEMPERATURE SAMPLING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation digital resources depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in.
WATER QUALITY SAMPLING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation digital resources depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in.
SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITAT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide (OMNR 2000) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks ontario.ca
SPECIALIZED WILDLIFE SURVEYS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to relevant survey protocols based on reviewing agency consultation. Surveys could include mammal surveys, Odonata surveys, Lepidoptera surveys, mussel surveys, benthic invertebrates surveys etc.
SAR HABITAT WILDLIFE ASSESSMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to Species at risk in Ontario Ontario.ca for relevant SAR according to Ontario Regulation 230/08.
GEOMORPHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation digital resources depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geology Ontario Geology Ontario (gov.on.ca) Professional Practice Guidelines for Geomorphologists (https://www.pgo.ca/uploaded/files/pp-guidelines-geomorphology.pdf)



FIELD STUDIES REQUIRED	NOT APPLICABLE	SITE	STUDY AREA	POTENTIALLY REQUIRED IF FEATURES PRESENT AND POTENTIALLY DISTURBED	NOTES
HAZARD ASSESSMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation policies, procedures and relevant guidelines depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in.
HYDROLOGY ASSESSMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation policies and relevant guidelines for hydrology studies depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in.
HYDROGEOLOGY ASSESSMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refer to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Quinte Conservation, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority or Mississippi Valley Conservation for relevant guidelines for hydrogeology studies depending on which jurisdiction the proposed development is occurring in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hydrogeology of South Ontario 58, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks Ontario.ca



The Loop

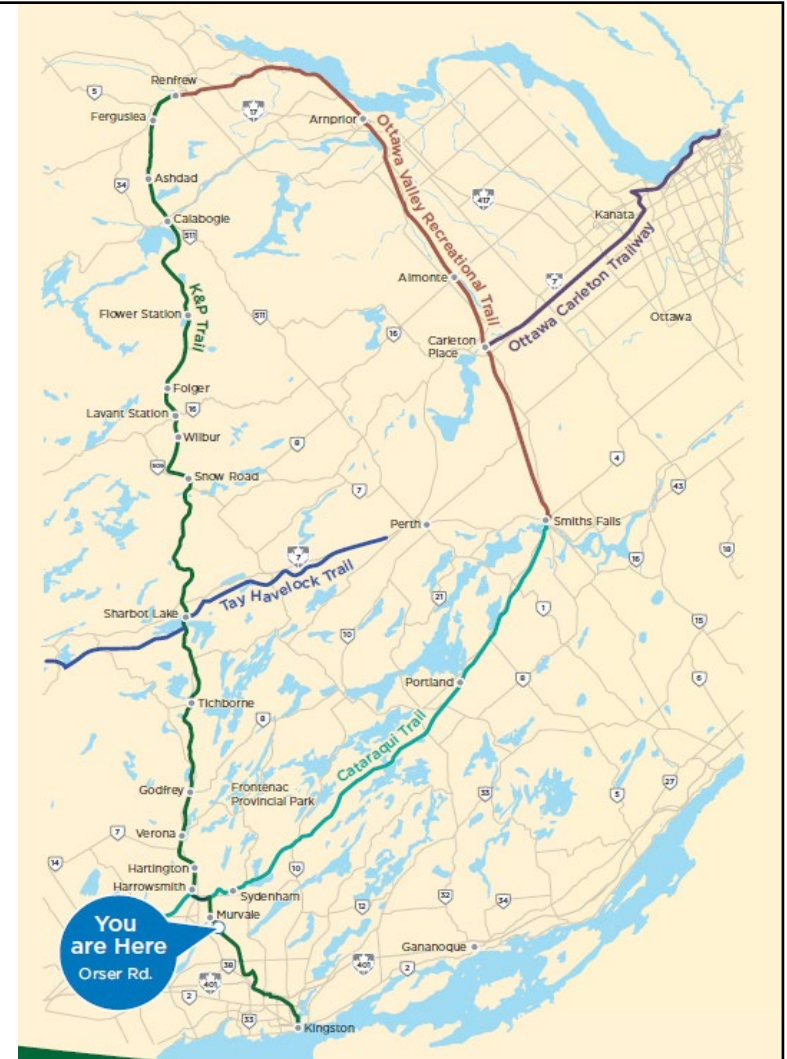
Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market
Readiness Assessment



FRONTENAC

Project Overview

- Introduction to the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop, aka “The Loop”
- A 360-km multi-use trail connecting K&P Trail, Cataraqui Trail, Algonquin Trail and Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail
- Purpose of the project: To develop a signature cycle tourism experience in Eastern Ontario with multi-day itineraries, regional connectivity, and economic development outcomes



Strategic Importance

- Alignment with regional & national plans:
 - K&P Trail Management Plan
 - Frontenac Destination Development Plan
 - Federal Tourism Growth Strategy
- Positioning Eastern Ontario as a cycling tourism destination

Market Readiness Assessment (2024)

- Conducted by Terminus Consulting
- Evaluated infrastructure, tourism services, governance
- Identified strengths and challenges to making the loop “market ready”

Strengths in Frontenac County

- Trail infrastructure in good condition*
- Trail Signage and Wayfinding
- Dynamic and changing landscapes
- Potential for economic benefits through increased visitation and local spending
- Potential for new business opportunities

Challenges & Opportunities

There are 75 kilometres of K&P Trail between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie with:

- Limited Food & Beverage
- Limited Accommodations
- Infrastructure Improvements needed

Potential for:

- Food Trucks (weekend traffic)
- Accommodations – Cabins, Backcountry Camping, Glamping, Campgrounds
- Outfitting – Gear rentals, Bike Rentals, Trip Support
- Shuttle Services (Moving cars, luggage, people)
- Events (Races, Festivals, Challenges)

Markets:

- Day Trips (Gravel Cycling)
- Bikepacking
- Distance Cycling



Frontenac County Challenges

- Limited accommodations & services
- Surface conditions requiring upgrades
- Gaps in wayfinding & signage
- Funding sustainability (Catarraqui Trail)



Frontenac County Action Plan

- Expand business development & tourism readiness: Accommodations Focus
- Improve trail surface
 - » Cataraqui Trail
 - » K&P Trail between Snow Road Station and Lanark County
- Strengthen regional partnerships & governance
- Ensure budget and funding in place for upgrades & marketing initiatives



Next Steps

- Partner Engagement
- Marketing & Brand Development
- Encouraging and Supporting Events
- Planned Capital Projects
- Business Development
- Support for Cataraqui Trail



Engagement & Public Awareness

- Trail Towns engagement sessions
 - » Virtual Event April 3 at 10:00 AM
 - » In Person Events (Locations to be determined)
- Speaking engagements:
 - » Economic Developers Council of Ontario
 - » Ontario East Municipal Conference
 - » Tourism Industry Association of Canada
- K&P Trail Business & User Survey (2025)





North Frontenac Rehabilitation

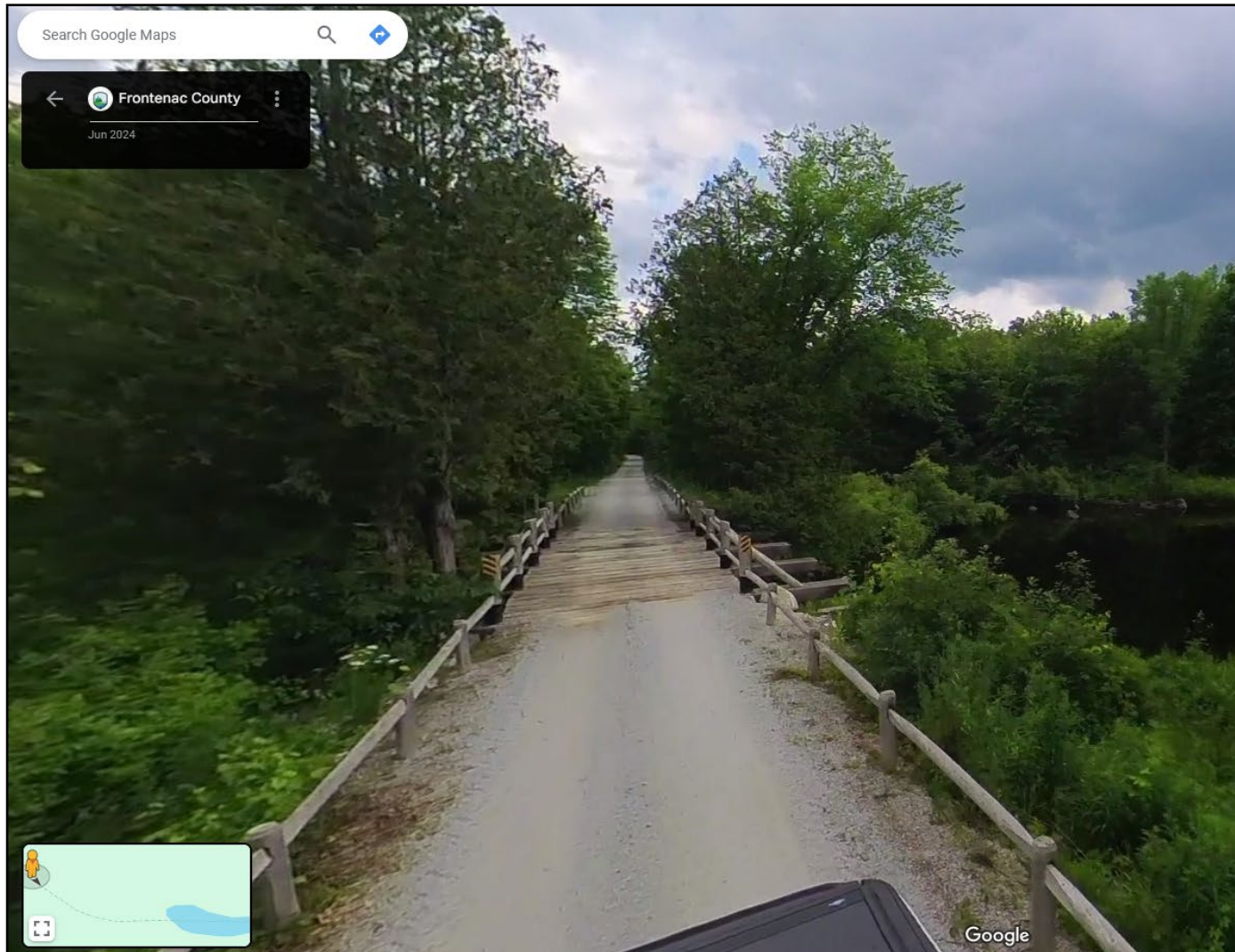
- Rehabilitated 8 kilometres of Trail in Central and North Frontenac with funding support from the Rural Economic Development Program.
- Additional financial support on this project came from Ottawa Valley ATV Club, Frontenac ATV Club, Kick & Push Brewery, Sharbot Lake Business Group, Clarendon Station Accommodation and 1 private donation

North Frontenac Rehabilitation cont.



North Frontenac Rehabilitation cont.





Streetview

Frontenac County added the K&P Trail to Google Street View, enhancing accessibility and trip planning.

- This project resulted in 360 degree footage of the K&P trail.
- Supports visitors, especially those with mobility challenges.
- Planning to capture North Frontenac and any gaps in Summer 2025.

Trail Use Data

Physical Counts	2021	2022	2023
Total Counts:	158,911	170,801	144,384
Peak Day	(Sept 4) 1615	(Jan 22) 2148	(Feb 5) 2264
Daily Average Use	435	468	437
Mobile Data	2021	2022	2023
Total Visits	231,794	218,199	197,110
Unique Visitors	52,025	86,498	82,711
Number of Tourists (100 km)	11,705	11,729	15,632

Questions?



Report 2025-037

Committee Recommend Report

To: Chair and Member, Planning Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Date of meeting: March 27, 2025

Re: **Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee – Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment Results and Next Steps**

Recommendation

That the County of Frontenac Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee receive the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Market Readiness Assessment – Frontenac County, prepared by Terminus Consulting, for information and consideration,

And Further That the Committee recommends to County Council that the Warden and Clerk be authorized to enter into a formal partnership with Ontario's Highland's Tourism Organization, relevant municipalities and trail management organizations to continue the encouragement and development of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop

AND Further That the Committee recommends to County Council that County staff be authorized to participate in the development of a joint strategy, action plan and governance structure for the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop

And Further That the committee recommends to County Council that staff provide annual updates on the progress of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop to the Planning and Economic Development Committee regarding governance planning, funding opportunities and project implementation.

Background

The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop ("The Loop") is envisioned as a premier cycle tourism product for Eastern Ontario. Once complete, the 360 km loop will connect the Cataraqui Trail, the K&P Trail, the Algonquin Trail, and the Ottawa Valley Recreational

Trail (OVRT), spanning Frontenac, Lanark, and Renfrew counties, as well as multiple municipalities. The Loop will offer a diverse experience, passing through historic communities, the Frontenac Biosphere Reserve, the Canadian Shield, and picturesque agricultural lands. The project aligns with regional tourism strategies and has the potential to attract high-yield cycling visitors who seek multi-day experiences and contribute significantly to local economies.

In May of 2024, Jane McCulloch of Terminus Consulting conducted a two-week field review of all 360 km of the loop and has completed the assessment with recommendations. The background report and presentation on this project was shared with the Planning and Economic Development Committee at its regular meeting on February 13, 2024.

This project aligns closely with the K&P Trail Management Plan and the Frontenac Destination Development Plan, reinforcing the County's commitment to sustainable outdoor recreation, economic development, and tourism.

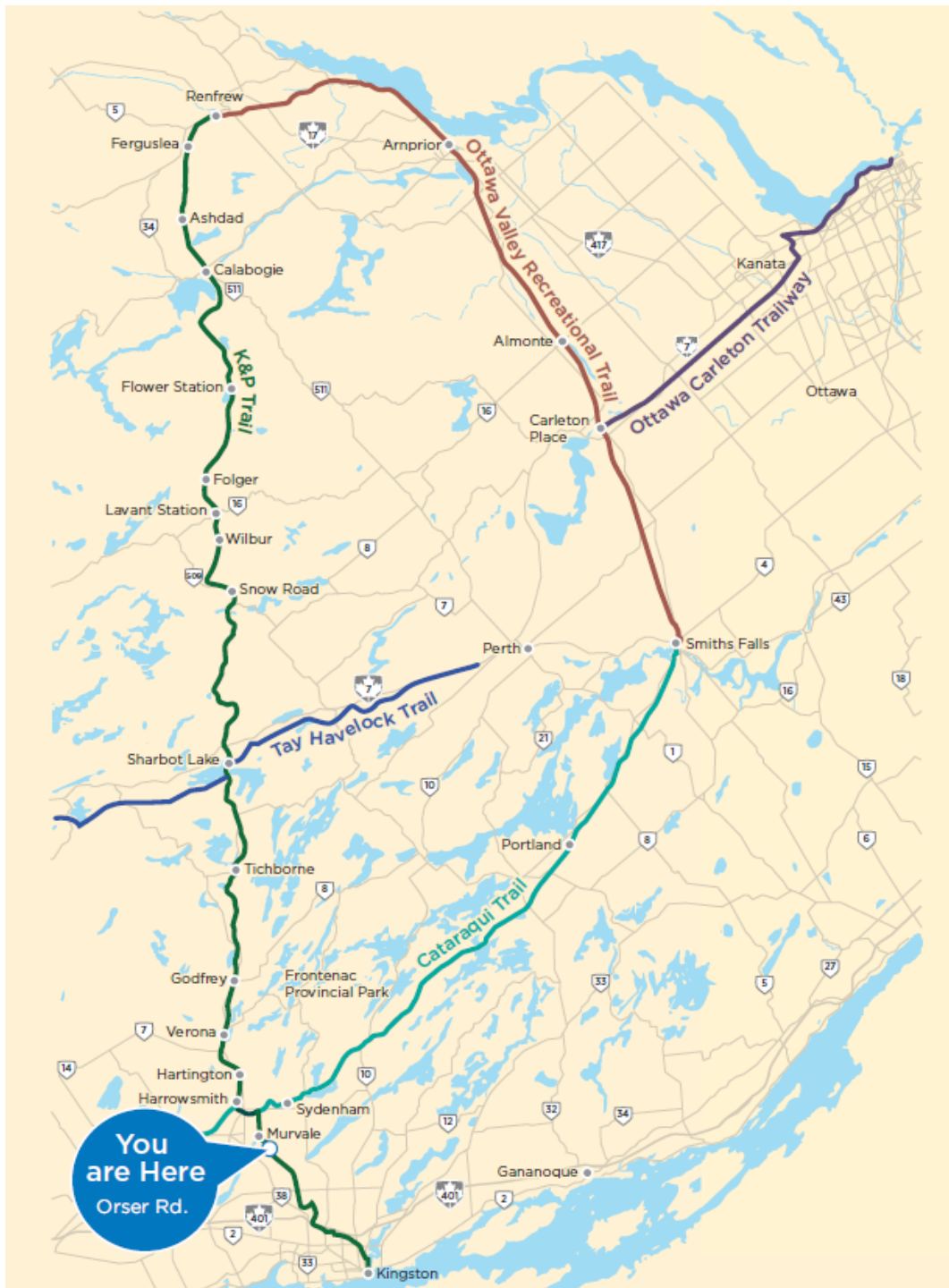
Alignment with the K&P Trail Management Plan

The K&P Trail Management Plan (2021) identifies the K&P Trail as a “spine” for regional active transportation, emphasizing its role as a key connector among communities, businesses, and other trail networks. The plan highlights the economic, environmental, and social benefits of maintaining and improving trail infrastructure, which is directly in line with the vision for the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop.

Alignment with the Frontenac Destination Development Plan

The Frontenac Destination Development Plan (2022) outlines a strategic vision for tourism growth in Frontenac County, with a strong focus on outdoor recreation and sustainable tourism. The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop directly supports one of the plan's primary goals to “Develop and promote a trail-based, sustainable outdoor recreation ecosystem.”

The following page shows a map of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop along with several trail connections. This has been taken from a draft sign to be placed on the K&P Trail.



Comment

The assessment was conducted over a two-week period in May 2024 and involved a multi-faceted approach to evaluate the feasibility and readiness of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop. The assessment included multiple points of evaluation and engagement, including:

- **On-site Field Assessments:** The trail conditions were evaluated by vehicle, bicycle, on foot, and by ATV, covering various terrain types and accessibility points.
- **Consultation:** Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including municipal leaders, trail managers, local businesses, tourism organizations, and community groups.
- **Review of Existing Plans & Policies:** The assessment incorporated a review of related management plans, risk assessments, tourism strategies, and infrastructure reports.
- **Data Collection & Mapping:** Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping was used to document trail segments, gaps, wayfinding elements, and existing infrastructure.
- **User Experience:** The assessment considered signage effectiveness, accessibility, comfort levels for various user groups, and the overall visitor experience.

The consultant compiled a comprehensive report of over 180 pages outlining the various feasibility elements of establishing the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop as a Market Ready Signature Tourism Experience. This report will be available for review in the coming weeks at Ontario's Highland Tourism Organization website. Attached as appendix A to this report are the recommendations from the consultant with a focus on Frontenac County.

Strengths – Full Loop:

The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop benefits from strong regional support from counties, municipalities, and local businesses, which have demonstrated a commitment to its development and long-term sustainability. This backing ensures a collaborative approach to governance, funding, and infrastructure improvements. The loop also features completed and well-maintained segments of the K&P Trail and OVRT, offering a high-quality experience for cyclists of any age or ability.

The Loop's strategic location near Ottawa and Kingston enhances its accessibility to a large population base, providing a strong foundation for attracting domestic and international visitors. Additionally, the trail corridor is enriched by existing tourism assets, such as cultural and historical sites, and natural landscapes as featured by the Frontenac Biosphere Reserve designation which covers a significant portion of the Loop, especially in Frontenac County.

The project also benefits from active local support from a variety of trail user groups, including ATV riders and cyclists, further reinforcing its viability as a multi-use recreational asset. Its alignment with national trail strategies, including the Federal National Trails Tourism Strategy, strengthens its eligibility for funding and promotional support at both provincial and national levels.

Economically, the Loop presents significant growth potential, with opportunities for increased visitation and local spending, benefiting businesses along the route. The growing demand for cycling tourism in Ontario makes this an opportune time to develop the trail into a signature tourism product. Moreover, there is considerable potential for future expansions and linkages with other regional trail systems, allowing for an even broader network of connected cycling experiences.

Strengths – Frontenac County

Frontenac County continues to demonstrate leadership in trail development and management within the broader Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop initiative. County investments in surface upgrades, consistent signage, and the establishment of formal trailheads have resulted in a well-maintained and accessible Frontenac K&P Trail. The implementation of the K&P Trail Management Plan and ongoing partnerships with community organizations, including the local ATV club, have contributed to successful projects such as bridge refurbishments and coordinated maintenance activities.

Trail Town communities including Sharbot Lake, Verona, and Sydenham are showing strong potential for visitor engagement, offering access to recreational amenities, historic features, and emerging tourism experiences. These communities have also taken initial steps to support trail users, including the installation of bicycle repair stations, wayfinding signage, and local service improvements.

The County's work through the Business Signage Program and with local partners has helped establish a foundation for long-term trail-based tourism growth in the County.

Challenges – Full Loop

Several challenges must be addressed to ensure the long-term success of the Loop. Inconsistent trail conditions remain a concern, and these will require surface and infrastructure upgrades and potentially a system for communicating the changing surface conditions on maps and promotional materials.

The trail also has inconsistent signage and missing links between key access points, which hinders the overall accessibility and ease of use for visitors. Additionally, limited cell service and emergency response planning in certain rural areas create potential safety concerns for trail users.

From a promotional standpoint, the Loop lacks cohesive branding and marketing strategies, limiting its visibility in domestic and international cycling tourism markets. Furthermore, long-term financial sustainability remains a challenge, with funding limitations and reliance on grants requiring a diversified approach to securing resources. The lack of a unified governance model across jurisdictions complicates coordination, leading to discrepancies in maintenance standards, enforcement policies, and overall user experience.

Finally, private-sector engagement needs to be strengthened to foster investment in services that enhance the visitor experience, such as bike rentals, guided tours, and hospitality businesses.

Challenges – Frontenac County

While significant progress has been made in Frontenac, several challenges remain that will require coordinated attention and investment. The northern section of the Frontenac K&P Trail, particularly the stretch from Sharbot Lake to the County boundary with Renfrew, currently lacks essential visitor services such as accommodations, food and beverage options, and reliable cellular coverage. These limitations present both safety concerns and barriers to the development of a complete, market-ready visitor experience.

Additional coordination will also be necessary in trail segments managed by external agencies, such as the Mississippi Valley and Cataraqui Conservation Authorities. In particular, the Cataraqui Trail remains in variable condition and is not currently suitable for promotion to hybrid cyclists or casual users without surface and amenity upgrades. Signage gaps, especially at road crossings and informal entry points, continue to present wayfinding challenges for users.

Addressing these gaps will be essential to advancing Frontenac County's section of The Loop to a nationally marketable cycling product and will require both internal planning and collaboration with external partners.

Recommendations for Frontenac County

To support Frontenac County's role in the implementation of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop, staff have identified the following priority actions:

1. **Continue Infrastructure Investment:** Complete surface upgrades and structural improvements along undeveloped or underdeveloped sections of the Frontenac K&P Trail, particularly between Snow Road Station and the County boundary with Lanark. This includes addressing trail surface consistency, signage, drainage, and bridge conditions to ensure user safety and accessibility.
2. **Improve Visitor Services and Safety in Remote Areas:** Conduct an inventory of existing and missing amenities along the trail, with a focus on the remote sections north of Sharbot Lake. Use the findings to identify opportunities to improve access to food, lodging, washrooms, and emergency supports. Enhancements to signage, staging areas, and connectivity should also be pursued to improve safety and the overall user experience.
3. **Advance Trail Town Development and Business Engagement:** Build on the existing Business Signage Program by encouraging trail-oriented services and amenities in Trail Town communities such as Sharbot Lake, Verona, and Sydenham. This may include targeted support for accommodations, centralized

washrooms, bike facilities, and signage that supports a consistent trail identity associated with the Loop. Consider partnerships and advertising opportunities associated with print and online materials as well.

4. Collaborate with Conservation Authorities on Infrastructure

Work with the Cataraqui Region and Mississippi Valley Conservation Authorities to identify shared priorities and support for trail upgrades, maintenance standards, and signage. This may include considering governance or partnership improvements or agreements to support consistent user experience. The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority is in the process of transferring trail lands to the Counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew, which will result in improved maintenance and increased investment.

5. Strengthen Local Trail Promotion and Regional Integration

Coordinate with OHTO and regional partners to support unified branding, visitor information, and marketing for The Loop. Locally, ensure that key entry points, staging areas, and online resources reflect the County's role in the broader network and position Frontenac's assets in alignment with the overall trail experience. While "The Loop" is being established, start raising its profile by hosting or support local events on or along the trail route.

Next Steps

Work to establish the Loop as a signature cycling experience in Eastern Ontario continues as part of this project, and in 2025 the following efforts are being made by Ontario's Highlands and the various municipalities and trail groups participating in this partnership. Activities include:

- Finalizing the governance agreement between regional partners. A partnership event is planned to take place in the Fall.
- Trail Town engagements will be launching in key communities identified in the report, with [an introductory webinar](#) planned for April 4, at 10:00 AM.
- Developing a phased marketing strategy to build visitor awareness and interest.
- Creating infrastructure plans to fill gaps identified in the assessment over the coming years.

Specific to Frontenac County, the following activities are planned:

- Frontenac County is in the process of negotiating the transfer of relevant K&P lands owned by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, and has plans to upgrade the 12 kilometres of infrastructure between Snow Road Station and the Lanark County boundary.
- Conducting comprehensive user and business surveys in the summer of 2025 to better understand the local impact of trails and trail users in Frontenac,

County participation in this partnership ensures that Frontenac remains an active voice in regional planning, funding applications, and tourism benefits associated with The Loop as it becomes established as a signature experience in Eastern Ontario.

Sharbot Lake Trail Town Assessment

On November 18, 2024 the Economic Development Team conducted a trail town assessment with 15 community volunteers in the village of Sharbot Lake. Participants included local volunteers and trail users, municipal representatives, and individuals from the tourism and economic development sectors. The group met at the trailside restaurant, Belong Sharbot Lake before and after the assessment for coffee and a meal. The assessment involved a walking review of the community and its connection to the K&P Trail, focusing on how well the town caters to trail users and identifying opportunities for improvement.

The Rail Trail Loop Assessment defines a “Trail Town” as

a community through which a trail passes that supports trail users with public services, promotes the trail to its residents and visitors and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated. Trail towns are built on a relationship between a town, the trail and its volunteers.

Trail Towns are:

- Destinations along a trail
- Users can enjoy the scenery, services and heritage
- It has character and charm
- It is a safe place
- It can be easily accessed
- It is a friendly place with warm hospitality
- Linked by a long-distance trail
- Users may be passing through town on a day trip, long distance trek or driving to the community

This exercise was completed as part of a Trail Towns training course undertaken this winter by the Economic Development team, and the insight report from the exercise has been included with this report as Appendix B.

Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development will speak to this experience as part of a webinar about trail towns and making businesses and communities more trail friendly on April 4, 2025. More information and registration is available through the [Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization](#).

Charter for Economic Development Alignment

The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop project supports the “Tourism” pillar of the Charter for Economic Development, specifically with respect implementation of the Destination Development Plan and establishing Tourism Trails connecting a variety of recreational experiences, culinary offerings and creative pursuits.

Additionally, the recommendations of the Market Readiness Assessment are aligned with the “Food and Beverage” pillar of the Charter, as the assessment calls for increased culinary experiences to support increased visitation on the trail loop.

For more information about the Charter for Economic Development, please visit engagefrontenac.ca/charter-for-economic-development

Frontenac County Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal 2: “Contribute to the Progress of Sustainable Economic Growth and Prosperity Throughout the County”

- Develop regional tools and policies to support long-term protection of lakes, rivers, and other important environmental features in Frontenac.
- Provide business support and resources to existing and prospective businesses.
- Attract new investments and businesses to Frontenac County.

Financial Implications

The County of Frontenac’s contribution to the Market Readiness Assessment project was \$10,000 in 2024, with no funds planned for 2025.

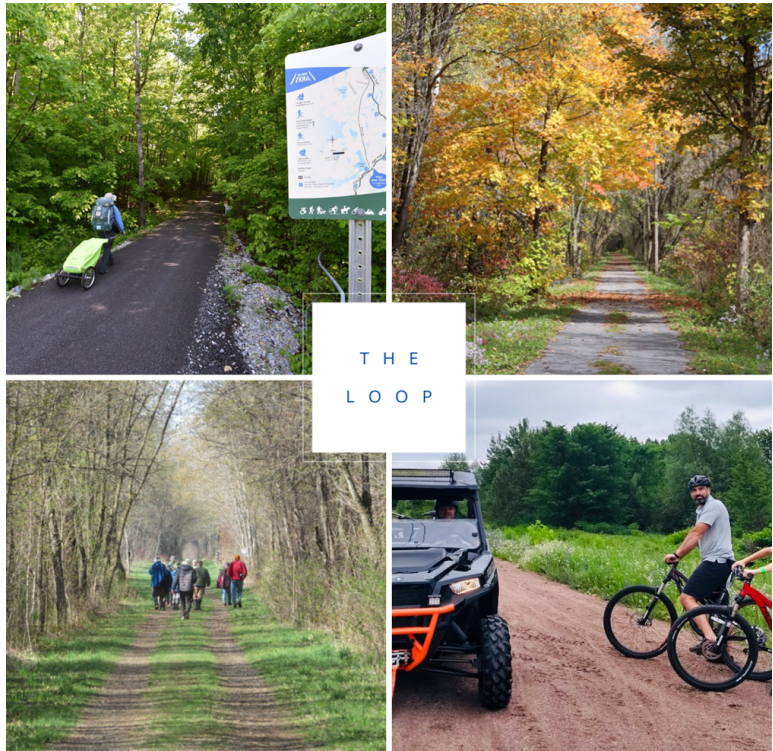
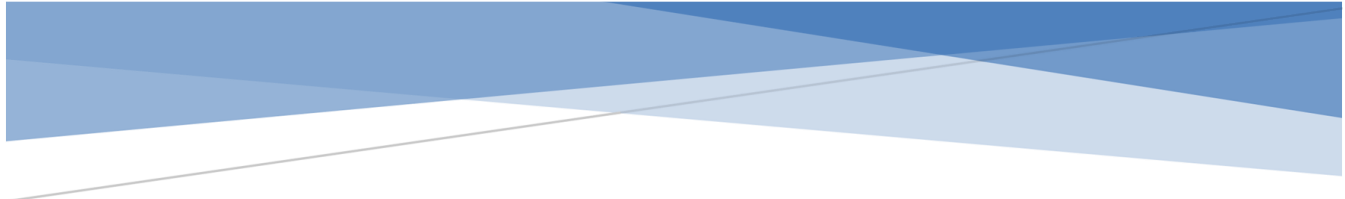
The Ontario’s Highland’s Tourism Organization has secured funding from the Tourism Growth Fund to support the field review portion of the assessment and the launch of Trail Towns programs.

A subsequent application by Ontario’s Highlands or Frontenac County to a future round of applications to the Tourism Growth Fund is anticipated in order to enable the implementation of more assessment recommendations.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Cataraqui Conservation
County of Lanark
County of Renfrew
Ottawa Valley Tourism Association
Ontario’s Highland’s Tourism Organisation (RTO 11)
Regional Tourism Organisation 9 (RTO 9)
Municipality of Mississippi Mills

Town of Smiths Falls
Town of Carleton Place
Township of Rideau Lakes
Township of Central Frontenac
Township of North Frontenac
Township of South Frontenac
Trans Canada Trail



THE EASTERN ONTARIO RAIL TRAIL LOOP ASSESSMENT

COUNTY OF FRONTENAC

Presented to:



Presented by:



For 15 years, the Government of Canada, through [FedDev Ontario](#), has worked to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities and business services that support innovation, growth and job creation in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving productivity, growing revenues, creating jobs, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region. Learn more about the impacts the Agency is having in southern Ontario by exploring our [investment profiles](#), our [Southern Ontario Spotlight](#), and FedDev Ontario's [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

"This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario)."

Funded by:
Federal Economic Development
Agency for Southern Ontario

Financé par :
Agence fédérale de développement
économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario

Canada

terminus.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Trail Tourism Product: A Definition	7
Value and Benefits of Trails	8
The Assessment Process	10
General Observations	11
Strengths	11
Weaknesses	11
RECOMMENDATIONS	12
Governance	14
Trail Infrastructure.....	15
Product	16
Individual Trail Condition Assessments	18
Cataraqi Trail	20
Frontenac K&P.....	29
Trail Town Assessments	38
Trail Towns: A Definition	38
Sydenham	42
Verona	46
Sharbot Lake	50
INVESTMENT ANALYSIS	54
Investment Opportunities for the Entire Loop	56
INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS	2
Frontenac County – Frontenac K&P	3
APPENDICES	4
Appendix A – Sharbot Lake Trailhead Recommendation	5
Appendix B – Partnerships and Business Diversification Opportunities.....	7
Appendix C- Leaning into the Railway theme.....	11
Appendix D- Trail Corridor Options for the Cataraqi Trail	12
Appendix E – Frontenac Business Trail Sign Program.....	13

DRAFT

terminus.

Executive Summary

Trail Description:

When complete, the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (The Loop) will be a 360 km Loop that will include portions of the Cataraqui Trail, the K & P Trail and the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail (OVRT) and will travel through the counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew, as well as the towns of Smiths Falls, Carleton Place and the Township of Rideau Lakes. The trail takes trail users through the portions of the Canadian Shield, Frontenac Biosphere Reserve and lush farmlands and woodlands of Eastern Ontario. The entire trail is developed on abandoned rail corridors, and they all extend beyond the borders of The Loop, thus creating strong connections in all directions, therefore opening up the experience to many communities along the trail and outside of The Loop. The various sections of trail are managed by a number of entities, including the Counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew, as well as the Cataraqui Conservation Authority and the town of Carleton Place.

Overall Assessment:

There is strong potential for The Loop to become a Signature Rail Trail product for Eastern Ontario, despite the fact that there are a number of deficiencies that need to be addressed in order to increase its appeal to a wider variety of trail user groups. Currently, the most immediate potential of the loop can be found in the off-road cycling market which consists of users of mountain bikes, fat bikes, gravel bikes and hybrid bikes. The completed portions of the K&P and OVRT are in very good condition and are suitable for use by mountain bikes and hybrid bikes. The Cataraqui Trail will be better suited for people who have gravel bikes and mountain bikes and practice the concept of bikepacking, however, there will be cyclists that will not be deterred by the condition of the trail regardless of the bike they have. Of the noted cycling user groups, a primary focus for the long term would be on hybrid bike users. They represent a larger share of the off-road cycling market, they typically spend more when they are at their destination, and their expectations of the trail experience are complementary to other trail user groups which could widen the appeal of the loop.

Profile of a cyclist*

- 54% women and 46% men
- 61% are between 45 and 64 years old.
- 41% stayed 3-4 nights during their visit
- 55% are university graduates and 34% have a family income of more than \$100,000.
- 58% have stayed in a hotel or hostel

* Véloroute des Bleuets 2019

terminus.

Market Readiness:

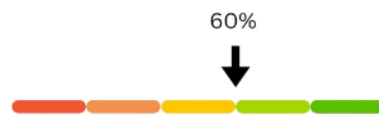
The overall market readiness of The Loop product currently depends on who the market is. For the purpose of this market readiness assessment it will be based on the aspirational goal of developing a product that is marketed to the high-yield hybrid cyclist who typically requires fixed-roof accommodation, access to a diversity of experiences (both on and off the trail), diversity of food options and amenities both on the trail and in the community that cater to cyclists. Some of the outstanding elements that will need to address include:

- Develop a governance model that supports a long-term collaborative commitment among participating partners. This includes identifying roles and responsibilities of the various partners.
- Develop a consistency standard for the entire trail loop. This standard would apply to:
 - Trail conditions
 - Regulatory and wayfinding signage
 - Interpretive program and signage
 - Branding of the loop

There will be some segments that will be market ready before other sections, however, a fully market ready trail product will take time. A 5-year plan (2025-2030) would be a realistic timeline to elevate the entire product that meets the expectations of the cycle tourist.

Completion Status:

The following scale provides an assessment of how close the entire loop is from becoming a Signature Rail Trail for the hybrid bike market. It takes into consideration time, funding requirements and the overall level of market readiness*.



*Note: This scale has been applied to loop in its entirety and specifically to the hybrid bike market. There are certain segments of trail that would score higher and could be marketed to the appropriate off-road cycling market while the aspirational vision of the loop is achieved.

Introduction

When complete the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (The Loop) will be a 360km looped trail through Lanark, Frontenac and Renfrew Counties and will include portions of the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail (OVRT), The Cataraqui Trail, K&P Frontenac, K&P Renfrew and The Algonquin Trail (also part of the OVRT). The trail takes trail users through historic communities, fertile farmland, the Frontenac Biosphere Reserve and the Canadian Shield, providing a dynamic natural and cultural landscape that provides tremendous opportunity for interpretation. The trail is also made up of abandoned rail corridors that will also provide a rich tapestry of stories that will enrich trail users' experience.

As it currently stands, the 360km Loop would not be considered a signature trail, nor would any of the segments that are complete. Despite the excellent condition of many of the trail sections, the experience needs to be enhanced to meet the expectations of the trail user and there are also sections of trail that will require a considerable amount of work to bring them up to a standard that would be acceptable as a trail tourism product. This document will highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of the Loop and provide recommendations that will lead to the development of a world class signature trail in Eastern Ontario.

The report provides a general overview of the trail conditions, signage, and the readiness of the communities along the trail to cater to the trail tourist. The recommendations outlined will be prioritized and provide trail managers and other key staff with the guidance required to fulfill them.

Trail Tourism Product: A Definition

Trail tourism products have the highest tourism and recreation value offering a variety of experiences such as walking, hiking, cycling, snowmobiling and ATVing. They are major regional tourism attractions and are considered economic revenue generators.

A trail tourism product draws people for reasons as diverse and individual as those who use it. Generally, it is set in a distinctive landscape that reflects a region's most distinguishing characteristics such as views, natural features, culture or heritage. A destination trail is often "themed," and elicits a "WOW" factor.

Trail tourism product encourages ease of continuous movement through a potential system of linear, looped and linked pathways that are primarily separated from traffic. Some trail tourism products will be accessible to all, while others will attract a focused market niche. A trail tourism product has high quality standards for design, maintenance and amenities. It has trained and knowledgeable staff and/or volunteers dedicated to the management and maintenance of the trail and its amenities, who provide good quality tourism services.

Value and Benefits of Trails

Trail Tourism

- People come from outside of the region to use the trail and spend money in the communities
- Trails are enhanced to reflect the cultural, historical and natural significance of the region
- Cyclists tend to spend \$250-\$300/day
- Trails become the “heart” of the community
- Creates more vibrant and aesthetically pleasing communities
- Creates a sense of pride

Economic Impact

- Creates economic growth
- Grows local businesses and creates jobs
- Compounds the trail’s economic potential: it turns a simple path into a long-term destination
- Improves infrastructure in rural areas and create active transportation options
- Protects the trail and surrounding nature

Health Benefits

- Active trails and greenways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low- or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, jog or skate
- Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go
- Communities that encourage physical activity by making use of the linear corridors can see a significant effect on public health and wellness

Conservation and Environmental Benefits

- Trails help preserve important natural landscapes, provide needed links between fragmented habitats and offer tremendous opportunities for protecting plant and animal species
- They are useful tools for wetland preservation and the improvement of air and water quality
- They allow humans to experience nature with minimal environmental impact

Additional Benefits

- Increased:
 - Sales tax revenue
 - Private and public investment
 - Employment
- Increased property assessment
- Improved community aesthetics and atmosphere
- Attract new residents
- Proven method of revitalizing small communities
- Help build a strong sense of community and pride

DRAFT

The Assessment Process

The field assessment process took place over a two-week period from May 20 to May 29th, 2024. The assessment was conducted by vehicle, by bicycle, on foot and ATV. For the majority of the assessment process the assessor was accompanied by the various trail managers, volunteers and tourism/economic development staff. The pre-screening assessment and pre-trip review were conducted in advance of the field assessment. This provided the assessor with a strong understanding of the trail management procedures and allowed a review of any supporting documents that would gain further insight into the work that is currently taking place within the region. It is also important to note that some of these were modified, based on the section of trail being assessed and knowledge gleaned from the trail managers.

- **Pre-screening assessment:** management plan, risk management protocols, liability insurance, trail manager
- **Pre-trip:** This is an assessment of the elements available for the tourist when they are planning their trip such as: website and how to get there (i.e. accurate information to the designated entry points, signage to locate designated entry points, etc.)
- **Sense of Arrival:** this includes ensuring that the tourists have a clear and defined access point for parking and accessing the trail
- **On the Trail:** This includes trail signage and trail conditions and maintenance
- **Trail Design:** This includes assessing the trail route and alignment, conservation, safety and interpretation
- **Trail Experience:** This assesses the overall brand/theme of the trail and how it connects with the tourist and the region as well as the natural features of the trail
- **Trail Town Assessment:** Review of basic tourism services, access to communities, package/itinerary development, transportation, washrooms, garbage/waste disposal
 - **Investment Analysis:** This provides all overall understanding what elements within the trail towns require investment and the priority of the investment, as it relates to ensuring that the “towns” are equipped with the essentials of a creating a memorable experience for the trail user.

General Observations

Strengths

- Buy-in from the respective counties and key communities along the trail
- A significant portion of the Loop is completed
- Well positioned near Ottawa (airport/train) and Kingston (train)
- Supportive ATV Community
- Enthusiastic business community in some communities
- The diversity of the trail provides interest (lean into it!)
- Unlike traditional rail trail experience, where trail users travel in one direction to the end of the trail and then return back to their starting point on the same trail, looped experience provides trail users with the opportunity to experience a completely unique landscape the entirety of The Loop.

Weaknesses

- The condition of the Cataraqui Trail is poor and could not realistically be promoted as a tourism product, particularly for hybrid or road cyclists.
- The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority's portion of the K&P is in very poor condition.
- Some long stretches of trail lack the WOW factor necessary to capture the interest and imagination of the trail tourist
- Bringing together 3 (4 if the Algonquin Trail is differentiated from the OVRT) different trails with different management plans, signage and approach to working with communities is a challenge
- Roadway connections – particularly the connection from the OVRT to Smiths Falls and the Renfrew K&P into Calabogie is a challenge
- ATV use may dissuade non-motorized users coming from away (observations from the Trail Journey)
- The Trail between Sharbot Lake to Calabogie is 72km long and there is limited cell service and no services
- The trail within the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority jurisdiction will require significant upgrades
- Some sections of land that will be used to the Frontenac K&P have still not been acquired
- Lack of accommodation and poor cell reception on the northern portion of the Frontenac K&P needs to be addressed
- Land-use challenges in Calabogie (recently made aware of this)

RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAFT

terminus.

Overall Recommendations for the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop

To keep in mind throughout the project: Celebrate SUCCESS -as each new trail is upgraded or developed the story needs to continue to be celebrated publicly.

It is recommended that cyclists should be the target market for this project, based on the assessment of the various trails that will make up The Loop product. Other than a road bike, the trail conditions should be to a standard that a hybrid or cruiser bike can comfortably cycle.

There were a number of factors that contributed to this decision, they include:

- The Cataraqui Trail does not allow ATV use on their trail, therefore, there isn't an ATV loop to promote
- Cyclists tend to spend between \$250-\$300/day on multi-day trips
- Developing the trail to a surface appropriate for hybrid cyclists will ensure that the surface is also better able to support people with mobility issues, parents with baby carriages, etc, therefore making it far more accessible for all residents within The Loop region.

Ride Habits & Preferences of Ontario Cyclists

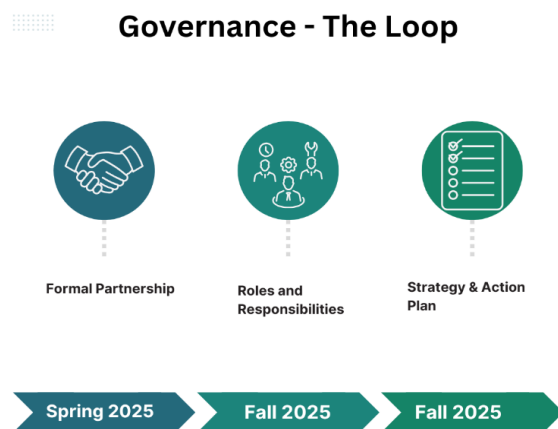
- Road cycling, followed closely by riding off-road trails (paved and unpaved) are preferred types of cycling (same as 2021), followed by gravel cycling, than mountain biking, with a number mentioning fat biking as other preference.
- 52% prefer a daily ride distance of 46km to 99km, 32% who prefer distances between 21km to 45km, on multi-day trips that include cycling.
- Ontario cyclists frequently ride solo, followed by riding with a group (45%), significant other (38%), and one to two friends (37%).
- 49% ride with a cycling club or regularly organized group.

It is important to note, however, that the cost to maintain a trail to this standard requires an annual commitment of maintenance funds. Funding programs for maintenance costs are not readily available, therefore the trail managers must have reliable access for trail maintenance funds. This cannot be an afterthought. Developing a capital funding campaign or business development programs can assist in alleviating the burden on the counties, conservation authorities or towns. The recommendations are listed by priority within each area of topic. Consider breaking the partnership into teams in order to address the various topics (IE. Governance: CAO, Director, Trail Infrastructure: Trail Managers & Product Development: Economic Development, Tourism)

Governance

The Loop

1. Establish a **formal partnership agreement** and identify any other key partners that will need to be at the table (i.e. Carleton Place- they are actively promoting cycling, and they are the trail managers for their section).
2. Determine **roles and responsibilities** related to signage, business engagement programs, etc.
3. A well-defined **strategy** and a clearly articulated **action plan** will be necessary in order to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the work that is required in order to achieve the aspirational goal of a market ready product.



Cataraqui Trail

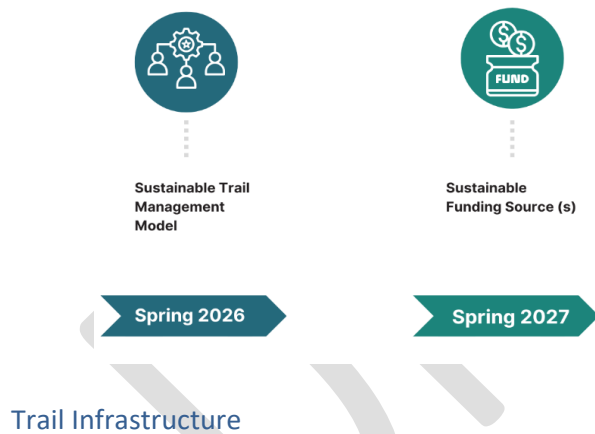
Although these recommendations are specific to the Cataraqui Trail, they have a considerable impact on the overall product, therefore they are included in the general recommendations, as well as being reinforced within the individual trail recommendations and action plan. This will be a significant undertaking and will take time, however, in order to bring the entire product to market and a bicycle tourism product (as defined earlier in the document), upgrades to the trail will be necessary by 2030.

1. **Trail management** for the Cataraqui Trail must be addressed and new model developed. The **current model is not sustainable** over the long term, and the current budget does very little in terms of upgrading the trail. There are a number of models that could be considered; this could include transferring responsibility to an entirely different entity or

management agreements could be developed between the municipalities and the Conservation Authority for maintenance and the Conservation Authority would be responsible outside of municipal jurisdictions.

2. The Cataraqui Conservation Authority needs to identify a **sustainable funding source(s)**. A couple of options could include leveraging the Friends of the Cataraqui Trail to access funds from foundations (Trans Canada Trail), various levels of government and private donors or a capital campaign could be organized to refurbish the bridges, and naming rights could even be given for the bridges. As part of the of a new management model there could also be contribution agreements developed between the Conservation Authority and the communities to provide funding for portions within the management of the Authority, as a recognition of the value of the trail to the communities in its entirety and not simply their portion of the trail.

■ Governance - Cataraqui Trail



- A **signage and amenities plan** will need to be developed for The Loop project, consistency will be critical to creating a seamless experience.
- The **K & P Trail** being acquired from the **Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority** must be a **priority** for the 3 counties and ideally be developed in coordination. Not only will this ensure a consistent experience but also could result in cost savings through the use of the same contractors.
- Establish a **trail maintenance fund** to ensure that there is annual source of funds to ensure that the trail is maintained to a cycling standard.

- **Cataraqui Trail must be upgraded** overtime to a standard similar to the OVRT and the K&P. This can happen overtime; however, it will be very important that trail users are made aware of the trail condition and what kind of bike is best suited for this type of experience.
- Consider establishing **partnerships** that can assist in developing the **amenities** along the trail. For example, the long stretches where there are limited or no accommodations, a partnership could be developed with Algonquin College, and through the Heritage Carpentry class, they could build bunkies or similar structures that are placed along the trail on private property (to be managed by the landowner). These would need to be reserved in advance through an online registration system similar to one used by [Parks Canada](#).



Product

Please note that the recommendations are listed based on priority. An infographic with specific timelines will be added to the final report.

- An **inventory of “experiences”** within a 5km radius should be conducted and cross referenced in relation to access to the trail. It will be important to create experiences that will get trail users off the trail- particularly along sections of the OVRT where there are vast open spaces where you can see down the trails for miles.
- **Branding and trail hierarchy** will need to be sorted out **before a signage plan** is developed NOTE: trail users can be very attached the identity of their preferred trail -it will be important to socialize the concept of the Loop in a respectful manner and ensure residents that the trails will not lose their original identity.
- Look for **partnership** opportunities in **communities** between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie that would be willing to work with the trail manager to potentially create space in community centres for overnight stays or working with a local community association to prepare bagged lunch opportunities (they would need to be pre-ordered).
* County of Frontenac is currently looking at amending by-laws to allow private landowners to erect infrastructure on their properties to support trail users in these remote areas.
- In areas where there is a need to use **road** (particularly Calabogie), there may be an opportunity to **create a shuttle service** that could be pre-booked by cyclists.
- **ATV** use on the trail may pose a challenge as trail use by cyclists increases – **communication** will be critical.
- Build stronger **relationships** with the **cycling community**- this will primarily be a cycling product.
- As part of the relationship building with the cycling community consider starting to socialize the concept of The Loop with **small cycling events**, particularly in areas where there are two trail segments that are connected (for example: a 3-day cycling event from Carleton Place (OVRT) to Chaffeys Lock (Catarauqui) once the Catarauqui is upgraded. An example that could incorporate the rougher sections of the trail could be like the [Paris to Ancaster Race](#), where rougher routes are sought out.
- Given that the railway unites the entire Loop, it is recommended that from a Loop perspective the partnership should lean into the **railway theme**, however, individual trails can continue to develop their own interpretive programs, based on the unique aspects of their respective trails. See Appendix C for examples of a branding opportunity for a railway theme. This is an [example](#) of railway themed interpretive signage created for the Confederation Trail. This can not only focus on the railway and trains, but how the communities along the trail prospered.
- It would be advisable to set up a **search and rescue plan** for the trail. This would entail working with local search and rescue teams, the OPP and other first responder organizations.

- An **inventory of trails and cycling initiatives** should be undertaken to better understand the landscape of trail and cycling opportunities in Eastern Ontario. In particular, a clear understanding of the cycling initiatives such as the Log Drivers Waltz, Cycle MORE, Voyageur Cycling Route, etc. This will help to better understand how to differentiate The Loop from them. It is important to note that these initiatives are also important economic drivers to the region and are not competition for The Loop product.

DRAFT

Individual Trail Condition Assessments

DRAFT

terminus.

Cataraqui Trail

Jurisdictional Breakdown:

Frontenac County: 43.5km from Chaffey's Locks to East and Yarker to the West

Township of Rideau Lakes: Approx. 35.5km to Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls: 1 km

The Cataraqui Trail follows the former Canadian National Railway line from Smiths Falls to Strathcona near Napanee. Therefore, the trail has no steep grades of over 5%. The only exceptions to this are at the Opinicon Road (km 59.1) and Colebrook Road (km 87.8) where the railway overpasses were removed and at km 69 where the trail was detoured up the hill around some cottages.

The trail surface is usually the gravel surface of the old railbed. In many places, an additional layer of crushed stone (granular A-5/8 inch minus) has been added. In 2008 and 2009, stone dust surfacing was placed from Hogan Road (km 66.8) to Boyce Island (km 68.2) and from Yarker (km 88.8) to East Street in Newburg (km 98.4). Approximately 30% of the trail has this stone dust surface so a hybrid or mountain bike is the best choice for cycling on the trail. The trail is managed by the Cataraqui Conservation Authority (the 1 km inside of Smiths Falls is managed by the Town) and the Friends of the Cataraqui Trail managed a bench program along the trail.

Entry Points

There are a number of well-marked entry points along the trail, with the addition of the aforementioned parking area, there is adequate parking along this section of the Cataraqui Trail. There was a considerable amount of discussion regarding the addition of other parking areas along the trail, however, for the purposes of the Loop project, more parking is not required. New signage was fabricated recently, including trailhead signage.



terminus.





On the Trail

Navigation

Built on an abandoned rail-line, the Cataraqi Trail is a relatively easy trail to navigate, although it does have a bit more interest with some



winding turns, but these are very slight, and trail users can still see down the trail for long distances. There are signs located at road crossings to indicate that trail users are on the trail.



Trail Conditions

The 2000 Cataraqi Trail Plan outlines the spatial configuration of the trail:

Clearing width: 4.3m

Clearing Height: 3.5 m

Tread Width: 3.2 km

Tread Surface: various materials: compacted stone fines, gravel and natural terrain.

The assessment of the Cataraqi Trail was not based on whether it followed the original design standards but rather based on the condition and maintenance of the trail. It is, however, worth noting that outside of the sections of the Cataraqi Trail that are built outside of the ROW, they do follow these specifications. The trail is managed by the Cataraqi Conservation Authority and there is also a Friends of the Cataraqi Trail. They have assisted in maintenance activities

terminus.

(particularly vegetation control), and they have contributed financially to signage, trail surfacing, amenities, among other things. They have just started a bench program to increase amenities and they also support and host events on the trail.

It will come as no surprise that the condition of the Cataraqui Trail is not currently at a standard that it could be promoted as a 3-season product (spring/summer/fall). The condition of the trail varies considerably from Smiths Falls to Harrowsmith. A significant factor impacting the trail condition, is the fact that the Conservation Authority owns and maintains the trail, and they have a number of priorities (including the trail), but have financial constraints. The Conservation Authority is currently looking at different management models where they can work with other partners/municipalities. There will be a recommendation included, based on models in other jurisdictions.

Gates

The Cataraqui Trail prohibits the use of ATV/Side-by-sides on the trail, therefore they have a barrier at access points, to prohibit access. These need to be opened in the winter in order to allow snowmobiling. Most of these are gates and they appear to be effective, however, they are unsightly (common on many trails) and could possibly be painted to embrace the theme of the trail to make them look aesthetically pleasing and to tie into the branding.



Surface

The most significant deficiency of the trail is the inconsistency of the trail surface. To bring this up to a similar standard as the K&P and OVRT it will require a significant investment, and the

Cataraqui Conservation Authority does not have the financial capacity to heavily invest in the project, at the moment, as they rely significantly on other funding sources. To get a better understanding of the cost to bring it up to a standard appropriate for cycling (it is recommended that on multi-use trails, the surface should be at the standard that is required for the use that requires a higher standard to ensure a quality experience) a complete technical assessment of the trail is required. The Gravel surface is difficult for cyclists and the vegetation on the trail also creates some challenges.



Additional comments regarding the trail design:

- It is also worth nothing (however, I do not have a photo) that the trail coming into Sydenham is built on private property (leased) and runs very closely to the houses and cottages in the area. The trail is much narrower in this area and there is a point along the route where a road intersects with the trail, and it is difficult to determine where the user must go. Better signage is required in this area.
- The Opinicon Road section is quite steep, the likelihood of finding an alternate route is low, therefore it is advisable to ensure that users are aware of this.

Bridges

The bridges appear to be in good condition, however there is some damage by snowmobiles. A recent study noted that in order to bring them all up to a better standard, there is an estimated cost of over \$3 million, however many of these structures are not on the Loop. A solution could be to add runners on the bridge to reduce the damage from the tracks on the snowmobile and groomers. A review of the structures is conducted every two years.



DRAFT

terminus.

Amenities

Trail users must travel long distances between amenities, as there is very little on the trail. Having adequate amenities, particularly in areas where there is considerable distances between communities will be important for trail tourists. This does not need to be addressed immediately; however, trail users must be made aware of the lack of amenities in order to plan properly.

Benches

Friends of the Cataraqui Trail are exploring a bench that allows them to place benches along the trail. They should be strategic in their placement and be consistent in design. The trail is currently littered with a wide range of styles and the condition of some of them is very poor and are possibly hazards (note the two wooden structures in the photos). The benches on the concrete slab meet AODA standards and something similar should be the standard moving forward.



Washroom Facilities

There are a few outhouses placed along the trail by the Snowmobile Club and are accessible for all trail users. There will need to be more placed in areas where there are long distances between communities, however, this does not need to be a priority. It is also important to note that servicing and cleaning these pose a modest cost and potential logistical challenges.



NOTE: The Conservation Authority recently passed an asset management plan which includes all major infrastructure assets (bridges). They are developing individual asset schedules for their properties as well which will include a detailed inventory of the assets (trail surfaces, signage, amenities) and their condition and the needs to maintain upgrade them depending on the service level that they wish to achieve.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- There is an established “Friends of” group.
- Newly developed signage has been installed along the trail.
- The town of Smiths Falls will be developing a new access point along the 1km stretch of trail that they manage.

Weaknesses

- Trail conditions on the vast majority of the trail is rough and difficult for road or hybrid bicycles
- Some sections of trail near Sydenham are on private land and if that land

exchanged hands in the future they could be reverted back to private land.

- There is a very haphazard array of benches along the trail and some are in very poor condition.

Frontenac K&P Trail

terminus.

Township of South Frontenac to Wilbur (where the Township of North Frontenac borders Lanark County: 90km

Frontenac County owns and operates the 90 km stretch referred to as the "Frontenac K&P Trail" from KM 21 where the City of Kingston borders with the Township of South Frontenac, to KM 90 near Clarendon Station. In Frontenac County, the K&P Trail is a fully developed stone dust rail-trail with stops in the communities of Sharbot Lake, Godfrey, Verona, and Harrowsmith along the way. The trail supports year-round recreational activities such as cycling, walking, hiking, horseback riding, ATV use*, and snowmobiling. The County recently rehabilitated 8km between Clarendon Station and the Mississippi River, there is 12km remaining to be rehabilitated. The trail continues North to Calabogie and Renfrew from that boundary. The trail intersects with the Tay-Havelock Trail in Central Frontenac and the Cataraqui Trail in South Frontenac, and together the three trails form the Trans Canada Trail route through Frontenac County.

*ATV use begins in Verona

Entry Points

Verona

The Verona Entry Point has a well-marked trailhead with ample parking for vehicles and trailers. There are also garbage receptacles, benches and a bicycle repair stand. It is located at km 39 and it is where ATVs gain access to the K&P.



Sharbot Lake

The access point in Sharbot Lake is currently by the public beach, however, Frontenac County and the Town are currently in discussions with identify a more appropriate location. This proposed location is where the Tay Havelock and the K&P diverge near the Railway Park. This area will provide greater access to parking and the trailhead signage will ensure that trail users are aware of which trail is the K&P. A full assessment of the site that was provided to town officials is included in the appendices.



Ideal location for the trailhead

On the Trail

Navigation

terminus.

The trail is relatively straight and easy to navigate. However, more signage is required. Signage is one of the most critical elements of a successful trail project and can become complicated when there are multiple jurisdictions involved with a project. Currently wayfinding signage on the K&P is limited, it would be advisable to consider placing signage at road crossings, not only will this assist in navigation, but also increases awareness of the trail. Signage similar to the signage below could be added at key crossings.



Business Engagement Signage

The business engagement program administered by the County provides great directional signage to the various businesses that are involved in the program.



terminus.



Trail Design

Similar to the OVRT, the K&P is a linear trail experiences where you can see long distances down the trail, however there are some gradual turns that provide some interest. The K&P, however, travels through a more dynamic landscape for the most part and it does provide an interesting trail experience, and, in some areas, there is a beautiful canopy of trees growing. The trail (depending on which direction you are going) travels on a gradual grade upwards (from Harrowsmith north) and can create a bit more of a challenge for unassuming cyclists.



Surface



Trail Conditions

The surface is a hard packed stone dust and is in very good condition for the majority of the trail, and despite the presence of motorized vehicles, the surface remains a condition that is acceptable to cyclists. There are some signs of water pooling in areas, however, this was shortly after a rainfall and may not necessarily be an issue.

There are, however, some sections of trail that are still undeveloped and will require attention before the entire trail can be promoted as a trail tourism, however, if developed to the same standard as the current trail, there should not be an issue with the surface. The K&P developed a Trail Management Plan in 2021, which clearly outlines the standard that must be adhered to.



Bridges

terminus.

The bridges along the trail are in good condition, however, there is evidence of some wear and tear that will need to be addressed in the future. The K&P Frontenac have developed a very good relationship with the local ATV club, and they have recently assisted in the refurbishment of a bridge.



Amenities

While there are some amenities along the trail, there is a need for the addition of more, particularly the 72 km between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie. This stretch poses a significant challenge, as there are only small settlements (not even villages) that don't provide any opportunity to establish partnerships with business. Addressing this large stretch of trail without amenities will require some creative solutions, through the creation of some non-traditional partnerships with community or church groups.

Benches

The County has installed benches along some sections of trail. They are consistent in design and are strategically placed where trails may want to stop and take a break or eat a bagged lunch.



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Well-developed business engagement program
- Good signage program in place along the trail, including newly developed gate signage
- The trail condition is consistent along the Frontenac portion of the K&P

Weaknesses

- The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority portion of the K&P needs a complete upgrade which will require the counties of Lanark, Frontenac and Renfrew to contribute to the development of this section
- There is virtually no accommodation and services from Harrowsmith to Sharbot Lake and Sharbot Lake to Calabogie
- Cellular reception between Sharbot Lake to Calabogie is non-existent

Trail Town Assessments

Trail Towns: A Definition

terminus.

*A trail town is a community through which a trail passes that **supports** trail users with public services, **promotes** the trail to its residents and visitors and **embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated**. Trail towns are built on a relationship between a town, the trail and its volunteers.*

--Adapted from North Country Trail Association's definition

A Trail Town is...

- Destination along a trail
- Users can enjoy the scenery, services and heritage
- It has character and charm
- It is a safe place
- It can be easily accessed
- It is a friendly place with warm hospitality
- Linked by a long-distance trail
- Users may be passing through town on a day trip, long distance trek or driving to the community

Benefits of the Trail Town Program to the Region

- Increased sales tax revenue
- Increased private and public investment in the towns and adjacent areas
- Improved aesthetics and atmosphere in the towns
- Increased employment
- Opportunity to leverage the economic potential of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop
- Trail Towns working together multiplies the value and spreads opportunity throughout Eastern Ontario
- Increased awareness by locals of what the region has to offer in activities, eating experiences, sightseeing and accommodations
- Increased property assessments
- Stability for existing businesses
- Growth opportunities for existing businesses
- Opportunity to attract new residents
- Proven method of revitalizing small communities
- Increased entrepreneurial opportunities
- Helps build a strong sense of community and pride

terminus.

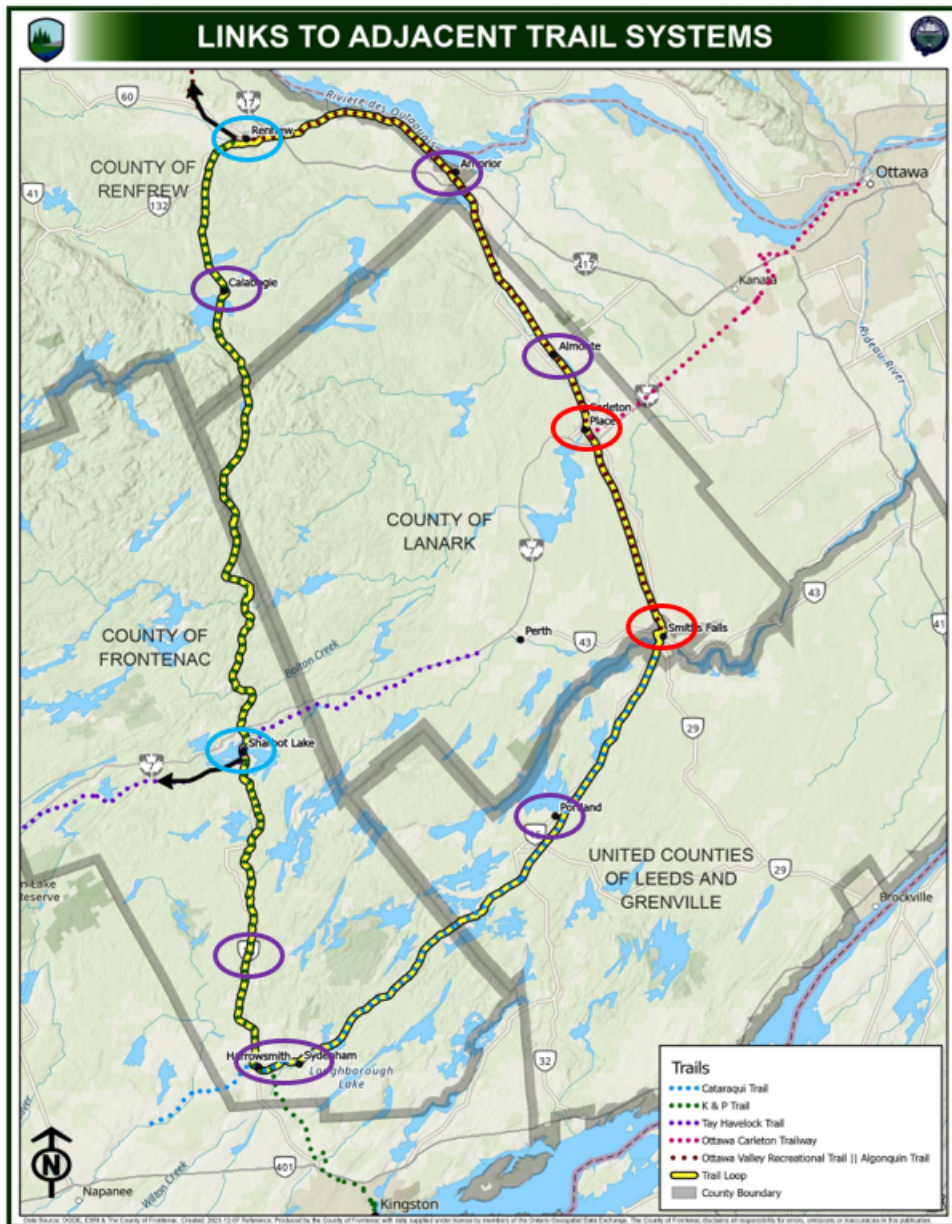
Trail Town Breakdown

Primary Hubs: These are the communities along the trail that provide access to the greatest number of amenities and are connected by trail to transportation hubs.

Secondary Hubs: These are communities that have trail access (Tay Havelock and The Algonquin Trail) have a decent number of amenities.

Overnight/Day Trail Towns: These communities don't offer a lot of amenities but are worth visiting and spending time in them.

DRAFT



Legend

Primary ○ Secondary ○ Trail Town (day or overnight) ○

terminus.

Sydenham

Sydenham is a village located in the County of Frontenac and is the seat of the Township of South Frontenac. It is the commercial hub for the area, and it is where the Rideau Trail and Cataraqui Trail intersect.



Connection to the Town

The Cataraqui Trail runs through the village and trail users can easily access the amenities that the village has to offer. As the trail user enters the village, there is a map placed by a local restaurant to not only indicate where their restaurant is, but also to orient them to where they are in the community (in the absence of a formal business signage program, this was a wise investment by the business, but these types of initiatives need to have regulations put in place. There is also a sign that directs trail users to the various businesses in the community- this needs to be explored further to better understand how this is being administered. This is a possible revenue source.



Amenities and Services

Accommodation

Other than a handful of AirBnB rentals in the village and along the lake there are very few fixed roof accommodations (there is also Glen-Lor Lodge on the lake where a partnership could be developed to arrange shuttles to the Lodge). Camping is also available at Frontenac Provincial Park for those who are cycling with their gear.

Bicycle Shops

There are no bicycle shops in the area, however there is a garage in town and a Home Hardware that could carry bicycle parts. There is also a bicycle repair station along the trail.

Food & Beverage

There are a couple of restaurants, bakeries, coffee & ice cream are available at Trousdale's General Store, and there are grocery stores where people can pick up some food for a picnic lunch.



Complimentary Experiences

There is not a lot of information



available regarding activities that people could do while they are in the village, so this will need to be explored further. That said, there is a public beach, a Conservation Area, provincial park and a few local parks where people could take a break and enjoy the area. There is also a wellness business that could be a potential partner and there is a canoe and kayak outfitter by the provincial park that would be of interest to trail users. The Trousdale General Store has been in operation since 1836 and is well worth a visit.



Bicycle Storage

terminus.

Upon arrival in Sydenham there are bicycle racks conveniently located at the parking lot of the Foodland and across the street there are bicycle racks and bicycle repair station. There are also bicycle racks by the gazebo at Point Municipal Park.



Washrooms

There are public washrooms at Point Municipal Park and there is also a water fountain available for people to refill their water bottles. The Public Library is also centrally located and could be an option for additional washroom facilities.



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

terminus.

- The trail runs through the community and there are bicycle racks, a bicycle repair station and a secondary trailhead which is installed on a post with wayfinding information for the town.
- There is a nice rest/picnic area by the lake. If outfitters were established in the region, they would benefit from the trail tourists who want to enjoy the beauty of the lake.

Weaknesses

Lack of services and amenities is the challenge for the town, however, with creative partnerships, this could be addressed in the short-term, while longer -term options are developed.

DRAFT

Verona

Verona is a community located in South Frontenac.

terminus.

Connection into Town

The trail runs directly through the community and there is a trailhead located as people enter into town. There is also access into town for a local restaurant, and they are part of the Frontenac K&P business engagement program.



Amenities and Services

terminus.

There is not a lot to offer to trail users, however, there are some services and amenities in the area that would provide a good stop along the trail for trail users.

Accommodation

There is not a lot to offer the trail user in terms of accommodation and this is where the lack of accommodation along the K&P Frontenac becomes an issue. There are some options on AirBnB and there is a conservation area and campground north of Verona for those bikepacking, however, there is very little other than that.

Bicycle Shops

There are no bike shops along the trail, however there is a bicycle repair station at the trailhead and there is a unique bicycle rack (which leads to the belief that they are supportive of trail users) at the local food shop, where they may be willing to carry parts.



Food & Beverage

As noted above, there is one restaurant on the trail, and there are a few other options as well as a store that carries local food, where people may be able to pick up food for a picnic.



Complimentary Experiences

Further investigation is necessary in order to determine whether there are other experiences, as there was very little that could be identified through a desktop review. There does appear to be a Conservation Area south of Verona and it has picnic tables and washrooms facilities, therefore, it may be a good place to spend an afternoon.

Bicycle Storage

There is nothing available in Verona with the exception of the ones at the local food shop. There is, however, a great location in front of Muddy Waters Restaurants, where a couple of parking spots could be replaced with bicycle racks.

Washrooms

There were no evident washroom opportunities along the trail, however, there may be a partnership opportunity with the community centre in town.

Interpretation

There is some interpretation at the main trailhead, there are extra panel spaces available where more could be added.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Good entry point with ample parking, bicycle repair station, benches and garbage cans

Weaknesses

- With limited accommodation available in the immediate area, it appears that Verona will be a drive through town at the moment, as cycling the distance between Sydenham/Harrowsmith/Verona is a lot for a casual cyclist.

Sharbot Lake

Sharbot Lake is an unincorporated community located in the municipality of Central Frontenac in Frontenac County.

Connection into Town

The Frontenac K&P goes directly through town and provides excellent access to the community. There are discussions underway to identify a Trailhead for the town. There is a complete assessment in Appendix A that was prepared to support a location with adequate parking and will help trail users better identify the appropriate trail – this is one the areas where the K&P and the Tay Havelock intersect (the arrow in the photo). The photo with the ATVs is where the current “trailhead” is located.



Services & Amenities

Despite the fact that this is a small community, it punches above its' weight with respect to offering a services and amenities that are necessary for trail users.

Accommodation

There is an adequate assortment of places for trail users to stay that are within reasonable proximity to the trail. Rockhill B & B have hosted a number of trail users in the past and there are lodges that are available to rent. There is also a County Inn, however, it does not appear to be open. If trail use were to increase, there may be the opportunity to have this reopened. There also appears to be some cottage rentals on AirBnB.

Bike Shops

There are no bike shops in town, however there is a bicycle repair station that was installed along the trail by the local ATV club and there is a few gas stations on Route 38 as well as a bit of a general store with a lot of items that may include parts for bicycles. Partnerships could be developed with these businesses.

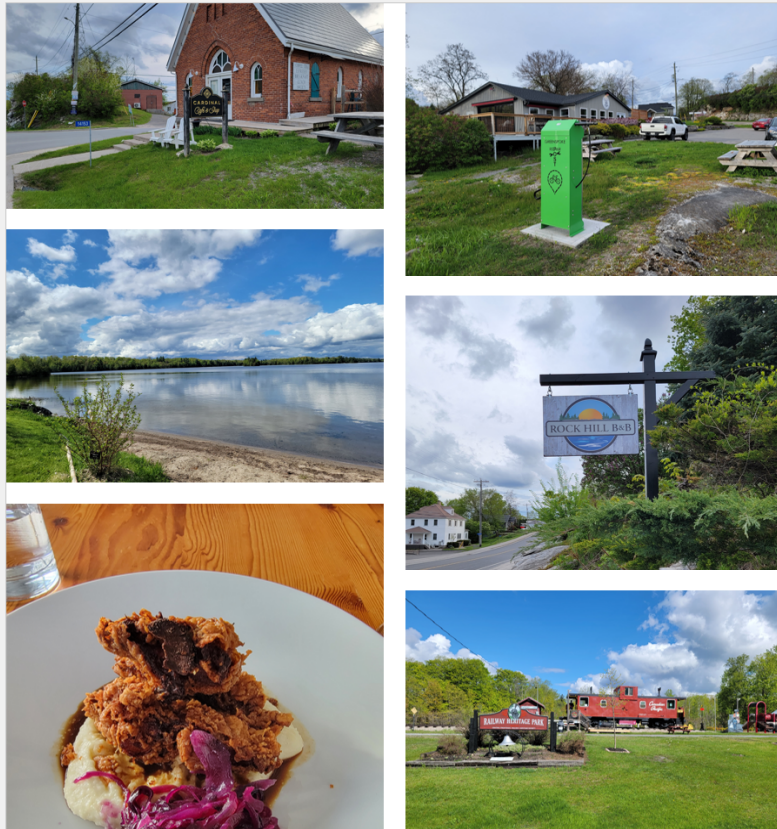
Food & Beverage

There are a number of places for trail users to purchase food. From a high-end restaurant with a convenient take-out window on the trail to pub food, café and a grocery store. There are also options on Route 38, however, they are a distance from the trail. Exploration of developing a route from the trail to the brewery on Route 38 has taken place, however, no suitable route has been found.

Complimentary Experiences

There is a lovely beach located along the trail, the Railway Heritage Trail is also located along the trail and the Cardinal Café carries locally made goods. The Farmers Market runs every Saturday from Victoria Day to Thanksgiving Day and it is located along the trail at the beach. There are also a number of independent artists that could be engaged through the Frontenac K&P business engagement program.

terminus.



Bicycle Storage

There didn't appear to be any bicycle racks along the trail, however, there could be some at the beach. Regardless, there is a need to include more, a highly visible location would be at the beach, however, there could be more added to the new trailhead.

Washrooms

There is a public washroom located at the beach directly along the trail. Part of the discussion regarding the new trailhead involved a potential new washroom public washroom facility in the community.



Interpretation

The Railway Heritage Park is located along the trail, which includes interpretation. There are also some interpretive signs along the trail, more of these should be developed.



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Provides some accommodation opportunities, but still requires more
- The Loop can be accessed by the Tay-Havelock trail by people who may be coming to cycle the trail from the Peterborough region
- A local beach with washroom facilities along the trail

terminus.

- Restaurant and grocery store adjacent to the trail (Opportunity: partnership between Belong and Rockhill B&B to provide a unique culinary experience for trail users).

Weaknesses

- The site for the new trailhead/washrooms has not yet been determined
- Access to services and amenities on Route 38 are difficult to access and would enhance the experience if a trail connection could be made
- Parking at the current “trailhead” is limited and there is a health centre/office with a private parking lot in close proximity which could cause problems for any trail users who choose to stay there for long-term parking, thus potentially creating conflict.

INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

terminus.

DRAFT

This investment analysis is not only the investment required to upgrade services and amenities, but also investments of time for staff or businesses in these communities to create exceptional experiences for the trail users and build support within the business sector.

[Ontario By Bike/Transportation Options](#) has been collecting data over the past number of years to compile an annual study that documents cyclists' riding habits and trip preferences, as well as illustrating that cycle tourism is growing in Ontario and is having a large impact on the tourism economy in the province.

terminus.


Recreation cycling continues to be the most popular type of cycling; however, it is closely followed by cycle touring and events. The two types of cycling styles preferred by cyclists is road cycling and off-road cycling and there is a growing trend towards increased riding distances ranging from 46km to 99km.

- 58% of cyclists in Ontario did one overnight trip
- 68% did a three or more day trip
- There are over 1689 businesses certified as bicycle friendly by Ontario by Bike
- 47% of cyclists visited one or more of these businesses with accommodation and food and beverage are where cyclists spend the most.
- The age of cyclists is decreasing with more riders under the age of 44
- When trip planning, most stated that when trip planning, they get recommendations from trusted sources including family and friends, followed by websites and resources published by Ontario By Bike



Impact on Businesses

- Food & Beverage: 55% of cyclists spent over \$26 and 23% spent over \$50 in 2021
- Attractions, Entertainment and Other Activities: 30% spent over \$26 in 2021
- Retail Shopping: 27% of cyclists spent over \$26 in 2021
- Accommodations: 32% of cyclists spent over \$150/night in 2023

 Cyclists have increased their spending in all areas since 2018.

In order to ensure that The Loop meets the expectations of these cyclists, not only will there be the need to make investments on the trail, but they will also need to make investments within their communities.

The following investment analysis provides recommendations specific to the entire loop product, two primary Trail Town Hub communities and two secondary Trail Town Hub communities. The smaller trail towns along the route are addressed in this section as well.

Investment Opportunities for the Entire Loop



1) Luggage Transportation

There are a number of ways that this could be developed.

- New Business Opportunity

An individual could create a business shuttling the luggage of the trail users from accommodation to accommodation.

- Accommodation to Accommodation Transport

This was a concept that was used on the Bruce Trail, where accommodations along the route created a partnership where they would work together to shuttle luggage from accommodation to accommodation and each year 1 accommodation takes responsibility to book the transport and they each accommodation would be responsible for transporting the luggage.

2) Business Engagement Program

Although each trail/county/town will likely be developing their own business engagement signage program, a similar approach to facilitating relationship building can be developed. Consistent messaging about The Loop and the opportunities for businesses should be consistent throughout the network. A tool kit for business engagement

3) Beautification Program

Developing a beautification program for the entire loop will not only create an aesthetically pleasing community but also create a more cohesive experience throughout The Loop. Some potential ideas:

- Themed light post banners
- Consistent colour theme for planters at businesses that support The Loop.
- Themed public art (i.e. railway theme)

4) Accommodation Investment Attraction Program

Major Gap - Smiths Falls to Clarendon Station (Cataraqui Trail and Frontenac K&P)

There is a severe shortage of accommodations between Clarendon Station and Smiths Falls that needs to be addressed in order to truly make this product “market ready”. As it currently stands, the number of trail users will be limited due to the lack of fixed roof accommodation, however, should trail users be willing to camp or stay in alternative accommodation options there would not be as much of an issue. According to the Transportation Options 2023 Ontario Cycle Tourism & Cycling Activity Report only 18% of cyclists prefer camping while 45% of cyclists prefer staying at hotels/motels/luxury accommodations either often or very often.

terminus.

There will be the need for significant investment of both time and finances.

- Engaging potential investors
- Changes to by-laws
- Meet with community centres, churches, etc. to discuss the possibility of using their facilities in order for groups of trail users to book and stay overnight (this may require the town/counties to purchase cots, etc. for use by the trail users).

5) Trail Town Program

There are smaller communities along the trail that stand to benefit from the trail economy, however, there are some general investments that will need to be made in order to create a strong sense of place within them.

1) Conduct an inventory of empty storefronts

These could be potential opportunities for new businesses. Understanding what potential there is for further businesses investment.

2) Wayfinding Signage

Some of the communities along the trail could potentially be missed if the trail user is not made aware of them. Installing wayfinding signage directing people into town will be critical.

3) Bicycle Racks

While secure storage is not critically important, however, bicycle racks in visible locations throughout the downtown core and key access points will be important.

4) Business Diversification

In order to fill in any gaps in services and amenities partnership members should hold discussions with existing businesses to potentially diversify their offerings in order to better meet the needs of the trail users. This could include accommodations setting up a bicycle repair shed on their property, or restaurants offering packed meals that trail users can easily take with them on the trail.

5) Business Networking Events

In order to create the opportunities above, it would be beneficial to create Trail Town business networking events where businesses can network and explore various partnership opportunities.

terminus.

Investment Opportunities for Secondary Trail Town Hubs

Sharbot Lake Trail Town Assessment

The Village of Sharbot Lake has the potential to become a starting point for many of the trail users coming from communities further east such as Peterborough. Trail users can either travel on Highway 7 by vehicle or use the Tay-Havelock Trail, as it intersects with the Frontenac K&P in Sharbot Lake. It has been identified as a secondary hub, due to the fact that they have a reasonable number of services and amenities to service trail users, and they are the most equipped community along the Frontenac K&P than any of the other communities.

Investment Opportunities for Sharbot Lake and Renfrew*

Staging Area/Long Term Parking

A secure place for trail users to park their vehicles for the duration of their trip on the trail is critical. Planning for the longer term and the increase of usage of the trail needs to be taken into consideration, as well as the types of vehicles that will be parking in the parking area. For sections of trail that allow motorized vehicles, there will need to be adequate room for not only vehicles, but trailers as well. Other elements that should be considered, but are not necessarily in any specific order, include:

- Signage
- Lighting
- Secure garbage receptacles
- Water-filling station
- Washroom facilities
- Picnic tables

***Note:** Renfrew has also been identified as a Secondary Trail Hub

These can be added overtime, however, signage is critically important to begin with, as it sets the tone for the experience. While lighting may seem like a “nice to have” and not necessary, it will be important to consider those trail users who are arriving back to their vehicles later in the night or starting out earlier in the morning. Feeling safe and being able to see what they are packing for their experience is important.

Bicycle Racks

Installation of bicycle racks in strategic locations throughout the town or village core will be important, not only as a Hub, but also for people traveling through the community while on the trail. Racks with multiple spaces for bikes are recommended as they can accommodate a group

cycling together. Ideally these would be placed in high-visibility locations to ensure that the cyclists can see them - do not place them behind buildings or in areas that do not have a lot of foot traffic.

Operational Priority and Staff Time Allocation

In order to create off-trail experiences it will require an investment of time by town staff, businesses and volunteers to create memorable experiences that would be interest to trail users and encourage them to stay in the area longer.

Some examples of opportunities that could be developed in order to extend the stay of the visit include:

- *Bed & breakfast owner + local independent restaurant + outfitter along the trail*
Guests would come and stay at the bed & breakfast where they would have a healthy meal, and they would receive a gourmet bagged lunch for cyclists to take with them. While they are out cycling, they would stop and meet an outfitter who would take them out on a guided kayaking tour of the Mississippi River.
- *Local high-end restaurant + local theatre or storyteller + museum*
The restaurant creates a curated meal with local products and then participants can go on an animated historical walk throughout the community.
- *Business Diversification*
In order to fill in any gaps in services and amenities partnership members should hold discussions with existing businesses to potentially diversify their offerings in order to better meet the needs of the trail users. This could include accommodations setting up a bicycle repair shed on their property, or restaurants offering packed meals that trail users can easily take with them on the trail.
- *Business Networking Events*
- In order to create the opportunities above, it would be beneficial to create Trail Town business networking events where businesses can network and explore various partnership opportunities.

Investment Opportunities for Sharbot Lake

1) Accommodation Investment Attraction Strategy

There is an insufficient number of accommodations along the Frontenac K&P, and although Sharbot Lake has some accommodations, there is still room for more. If trail users were traveling and purely sticking to the Loop route it is more than 136km between Smiths Falls and Sharbot Lake, which is beyond most cyclists' preferences. Sharbot Lake, however, would be an option for trail users who are starting from Kingston (however, in the short-term Kingston is not technically part of The Loop, but could be considered as a spur in the future)..

Conclusion

Through out the life-cycle of The Loop project there may be other opportunities for investment, however, focusing on the opportunities noted above is key to meeting the goal of being fully market ready by 2030.

DRAFT

INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS

terminus.

DRAFT

Frontenac County – Frontenac K&P

Frontenac County has developed a signage program, business engagement program and a management plan, however, there are some areas that should be focused on, as they will be critical to the long-term success and short-term launch (2026) of the product.

Business Engagement Program

Consider the recommendations regarding online and collateral noted in the other recommendations. As well as a more fleshed out program to ensure a successful program.



Accommodation Plan

An accommodation plan will highlight opportunities for collaboration with adjacent landowners between Verona and Sharbot Lake and Sharbot Lake and Calabogie. There are a number of creative opportunities that could be a revenue generator for the County.

- Amend any by-laws that would restrict the development of for-profit ventures on residential property
- Develop a compensation plan for landowners
- Management and maintenance program for sites
- Develop a consistent approach to new development
- Establish minimum standards for community/church facilities (i.e. washrooms, kitchen facilities, etc)

Some examples of potential ideas include:

The [Sentier Nepisiguit Mig'maq Trail](#), a 150km wilderness hiking trail from Bathurst, NB to Mt. Carleton Provincial Park.

The Camino offers hostels called [albergues](#) along the trail that are run by religious organizations, local authorities and other entities. This could be an option along the trail with community centres or church halls.

[Parks Canada](#) offers oTENTik, Oasis pods, Yurts and Rustic cabins both as front-country and back-country camping options.

APPENDICES

terminus.

Appendix A – Sharbot Lake Trailhead Recommendation

Trailhead Location in Sharbot Lake

A destination trail assessment was recently completed by Terminus Consulting, to determine whether the concept of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (EORTL) had merit as a tourism product for the region. The 360km Loop will consist of portions of the Frontenac K&P, Renfrew K&P, The Algonquin Trail, Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail and The Cataraqui Trail.

As part of the assessment process, existing and potential trailhead sites were assessed. This included assessing the options available in Sharbot Lake. Elements taken into consideration were the following:

- Parking area is conveniently located for easy access to the trail
- Parking area is adequately sized for peak visitation and unloading of ATVs and snowmobiles
- Parking area is attractive, well maintained, graded and kept clean with no litter
- Trailhead sign is located at the entrance of the trail or section of the trail
- Trail map is on display

terminus.

- Essential information is provided at trailhead

The following assessments of the Sharbot Lake Beach site and the Boat Launch (old railway station) site were taken from the overall destination trail assessment for the EORTL.

Boat Launch

Factors impacting the placement of the Trailhead at the Boat Launch/Old Railway Station location:

- Provides a clear delineation between the K&P Frontenac and the Tay Havelock trails, and the trailhead can ensure that trail users know which trail to take.
- Provides adequate space for snowmobiles and ATVs to be offloaded.
- Provides adequate space for trailers and trucks to be parked while users are out on the trail.
- Does not have direct access to washroom facilities, however, signage can be placed to direct them to the public washrooms located at the beach.

Sharbot Lake Beach

Factors impacting the placement of the Trailhead at the Beach location:

- Provides access to washrooms, picnic tables and shelters.
- The primary function of this site is a beach and playground, those coming to use it will not be pleased if they are unable to park in the area if there are trucks and trailers parked there.
- There is inadequate parking space available in the area for trailers and trucks, this will likely result in these vehicles parking in the Health Clinic parking lot, the Belong restaurant and along the road.
- Off-loading ATVs and snowmobiles near the beach and businesses could be disruptive and potentially dangerous with children running around.

Recommendation

Based on the factors noted above from the assessment, in particular the need for adequate space for snowmobiles and ATVs to be unloaded and the vehicles parked, it is recommended that the optimal location for the placement of the new trailhead for the Frontenac K&P in Sharbot Lake is at the boat launch (former railway station) where the K&P and the Tay-Havelock intersect.

The bicycle repair stand, located by the Belong restaurant can be relocated to the trailhead, and it can also have picnic tables and shelters and benches added on the site of the former railway station. Boaters, those using the railway park along with the trail users can benefit from these amenities. Dedicated bike stands and secure bike lockers should also be added, this will encourage cyclists to get off the trail and go into town. Directional signage can be placed on site to direct trail users to businesses in town, and direct people to the washroom and the tourist information centre located at the beach.

A primary focus in the development of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop will be the railway history of the region. A trailhead located at the original site of the railway station and next to the railway park

creates a tremendous opportunity for placemaking and can become a feature for the town and the overall trail experience. This makes use of an otherwise underutilized property and can help to enhance the overall aesthetic of the town.



Ideal location for the trailhead

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane L. McCulloch'.

Jane McCulloch
Principal, Terminus Consulting

[Appendix B – Partnerships and Business Diversification Opportunities](#)

Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships are important to develop, particularly in smaller regions. Oftentimes communities will look at what they DON'T have rather than what they DO have. This means that communities will often sell themselves short before they ever get started because they may not have a full compliment of services and amenities to offer. This does not need to be a deficiency, rather think about how the different businesses and services within the region could partner together to fill in the gaps in the offerings. This may require some thinking outside of the box, but once you start considering your assets you may be surprised to find out what unique experiences you can create. Keep these things in mind when you are thinking about potential opportunities:

The logo for Terminus, featuring the word 'terminus.' in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The period at the end is a solid blue dot.

- *Theming and Experiences*: Identify themes that can be carried throughout the entire trail experience and region
- *Think beyond the Trail*: NOT everything has to be “trail based”
- *Community Partnerships to engage residents*: Residents are your best ambassadors
- *Connecting Attractions, Cultivating Assets (non-traditional)*: Farm tours, gastro-tours, local festivals
- *Casual/Experience-based*: Lobster dinners, kitchen parties, etc

You may be wondering where to start when it comes to creating unique partnerships- here are some ideas to get started!

Think of these as “recipes” to assist you in developing your partnership opportunities. There really is no wrong way to develop your partnership scenarios however have a good mix of experiences to make it well balanced.

- Within a municipality
 - Local Restaurant
 - Local Accommodation
 - Local Artisan

= Unique partnership that could keep people in the region for an extra day

- Within the region
 - Local Restaurant
 - Experiential business outside of the town
 - Local shuttle driver

= Unique partnership that allows businesses not directly on the trail to benefit from the trail

Here are some other potential partnership opportunities to consider:

- Food and beverage are a motivating factor for many tourists. Partnering with food producers and local restauranteurs, a seasonal offering can be provided for residents and tourists alike that feature local products and can be eaten at the restaurant or taken as a picnic lunch. One restaurant in each community could be engaged to do this and work together to create unique menu options- this would be a great community building opportunity and unique to the region.
- The Breweries in the region could develop a “themed beer” for the Trail. This has been done in various regions: Saltbox Brewing Company in Mahone Bay (NS) has a beer named “Dynamite Trail Ale” (Dynamite Trail is part of the larger Rum Runner Destination Trail), Port Rexton Brewing in the Bonavista Peninsula (NL) has a beer called the “Skervink Haze” (the Skervink Trail is a hiking trail in the Bonavista Peninsula) and

Brasseux D'La Cote in Tracadie (NB) has created the "Velorousse" based on the Veloroute de la Peninsule acadienne.

- Accommodations along the bicycle route can partner to shuttle luggage from accommodation to accommodation so that the bicycle tourists do not need to make arrangements to have their luggage transported along the routes. This allows users to enjoy the linear trail experience and will provide greater opportunities for people to see more of the region.

Accommodations will work together to coordinate the transportation of the luggage amongst themselves. Ideally one accommodation would take the lead in coordinating (i.e. central contact number) for one year and then another would take on the role.

- Accommodations could provide bagged lunches to their guests for them to take on their journey or they can partner with a local eating establishment to provide bag lunches for their guest to take on their bicycle trip. These would be available upon check-out in the morning at the front desk.
- Accommodations could partner with bicycle rental locations to arrange to have bicycles dropped off (and picked up) if their guests are renting their bikes for their trip.
- Bicycle rental locations along a trail route could partner with each other and allow bikes rented at another location to be dropped off for a tune-up or repair at a discounted rate should something happen along the route.

Business Diversification

Often there are small things that existing businesses can do in order to make their businesses more appealing for the trail tourist. It doesn't take much for a person to feel special and welcome. Think about those hotels that leave a chocolate on the pillow or the restaurant that provides free refills. Going that extra mile means a lot and makes the trip that much more memorable. It is however important to understand the consumer- reviewing the profiles of the bicycle and eco-tourist and doing a bit more research on your own will be a good way to ensure that your changes will have an impact. There are also larger diversifications that can be made, but they will likely cost additional funds. These funds may well be worth it if the business can see a return on its investment, but it may be a project that happens once the trail is further established.

Here are some potential business diversification ideas:

terminus.

- An existing Inn or B & B could make their establishment more desirable for the cyclist by adding a bicycle storage locker with a cleaning & repair station. They could also provide a high carb bagged lunch that guests could order the day before & it would be ready at breakfast for them to take for the day.
- Restaurants could offer special meals on the menus for people who are travelling long-distances. Perhaps some high carb options or “gourmet picnic lunches” to take on their hike or bike ride.
- Walking sticks and trail mix could be available in hotels rooms for people who may not be cycling but might be interested in going out for a walk on the trail.
- Tie into local festivals- there could be a unique opportunity to connect community trails to the festivals and create an “on-trail” component.

** It is worth noting that K & P Brewing located in Sharbot Lake has already jumped on the opportunity and named the brewery after the railway.

Appendix C- Leaning into the Railway theme

THEME

The trail has incorporated their rail history into their theme



The Pinellas Trail in Dunedin, Florida has embraced their railway heritage and have incorporated the theme into their bike racks and roadway crossing in trail towns.

Appendix D- Trail Corridor Options for the Cataraqui Trail

When complete The Shore-Line Trail will be a 150 km greenway that hugs the coast of New Brunswick from Alma to Cap-Acadie. When the railway was abandoned, portions of the trail were reclaimed and there are now significant gaps along the route. Rather than building these new sections to the same standard as a rail-trail, they are building a single-track trail that will be accessible for cyclists and walkers/hikers. This could be an option for the Cataraqui Trail, in so much as some of the sections that require significant work can be narrowed and developed as a single track (allowing clearance for groomers) and focus on developing the rail trail standards in more populated areas or where the current trail is in relatively decent condition.

Trail Corridor Types

Former rail lines 2.5 to 3 meters



Machine built, Single Track 1.5-2 meters



Appendix E – Frontenac Business Trail Sign Program



with the Business Trail Sign Program.



Business signs on the K&P Trail and the Cataraqui Trail in Frontenac County. Frontenac County is adding wayfinding signs to the trail to help trail users connect with local businesses and villages.

The program is a pay-to-play on a cost recovery basis to ensure the expenses for materials and installation are paid through the program.

Signs are for a 3-year placement.

Directional arrows are \$150 and wayfinding signs are \$50 for each location.

To add your business to one or more sign, email Economic Development, ecdev@frontenacounty.ca before April 19, 2024.

terminus.



Trail Town Assessment Insight Report

Frontenac K&P Trail & Tay Havelock Trail in Sharbot Lake, Ontario

Assessment conducted on November 18, 2024

Background & Overview

The Trail Town Assessment for Sharbot Lake, Ontario, was conducted in November 2024. Participants included local volunteers and trail users, municipal representatives, and individuals from the tourism and economic development sectors. The group met at the trailside restaurant, Belong Sharbot Lake before and after the assessment for coffee and a meal. The assessment involved a walking review of the community and its connection to the K&P Trail, focusing on how well the town caters to trail users and identifying opportunities for improvement. This initiative aims to enhance Sharbot Lake's position as a trail-friendly destination.



Sharbot Lake

Sharbot Lake is a rural community in the Township of Central Frontenac, intersected by two regional rail trails: The Frontenac K&P Trail and the Tay-Havelock Trail. These trails serve as a critical link for cyclists, hikers, snowmobilers and ATV Riders and other outdoor enthusiasts travelling through the region, and together these trails form part of the Trans Canada Trail, a 28,000 km network of trails across Canada.

The community of Sharbot Lake offers scenic views, proximity to a waterfront park, and various small businesses. However, limited signage, inconsistent wayfinding, and underutilized amenities present challenges to creating a seamless trail-town experience.



In Town Observations & Recommendations

Key Observations:

1. Participants noted the charm of Sharbot Lake's small-town atmosphere and the potential for eco-tourism.
2. Businesses are dispersed, and signage to guide visitors along the trail, as well as to and from main street is inconsistent or lacking in key areas.
3. The town lacks sufficient bike racks, benches, and public washrooms, which are essential amenities for trail users.
4. Community assets like the waterfront park and local restaurants are strong draws but need better integration with the trail.

Recommendations:

1. Install wayfinding signage connecting the trail to key town amenities, such as the waterfront park and restaurants.
2. Develop a unified branding strategy for trail signage and promotional materials.
3. Add bike racks, benches, and a year-round public washroom near the trailhead.
4. Highlight local businesses and attractions through trailhead maps and interpretive signage.
5. Simplify the amount and type of signage.



On the Trail Observations & Recommendations

Key Observations:

1. The trail through Sharbot Lake is well-maintained and provides scenic views.
2. There is a lack of clear entry/exit points and consistent trail signage.
3. Some trail users expressed concerns about safety at road crossings and the presence of parked vehicles on the trail.
4. Thomson's Cut and the Railway Park were identified as unique features with potential for further development.

Recommendations:

1. Enhance safety at road crossings with better markings and enforcement of no-parking zones. Consider pavement painting to define the trail through the community and along the waterfront park.
2. Develop Thomson's Cut and the Railway Park as trailhead hubs with interpretive signage, directional signage and picnic areas.
3. Collaborate with local Indigenous communities to incorporate cultural elements into the trail's design.
4. Improve accessibility by adding shade structures and rest areas along the trail.



Additional Observations

Points of Agreement

- Participants agreed on the need for consistent trail signage and better wayfinding, to and from trail, as well as through Thomson's Cut as there are areas where it is not clear you are still on a trail as the trail goes through a parking lot.
- There was strong support for enhancing the integration between the trail and the town's core amenities.
- Many noted the beauty and potential of Sharbot Lake's waterfront and Thomson's Cut as key assets.



Divergent Opinions

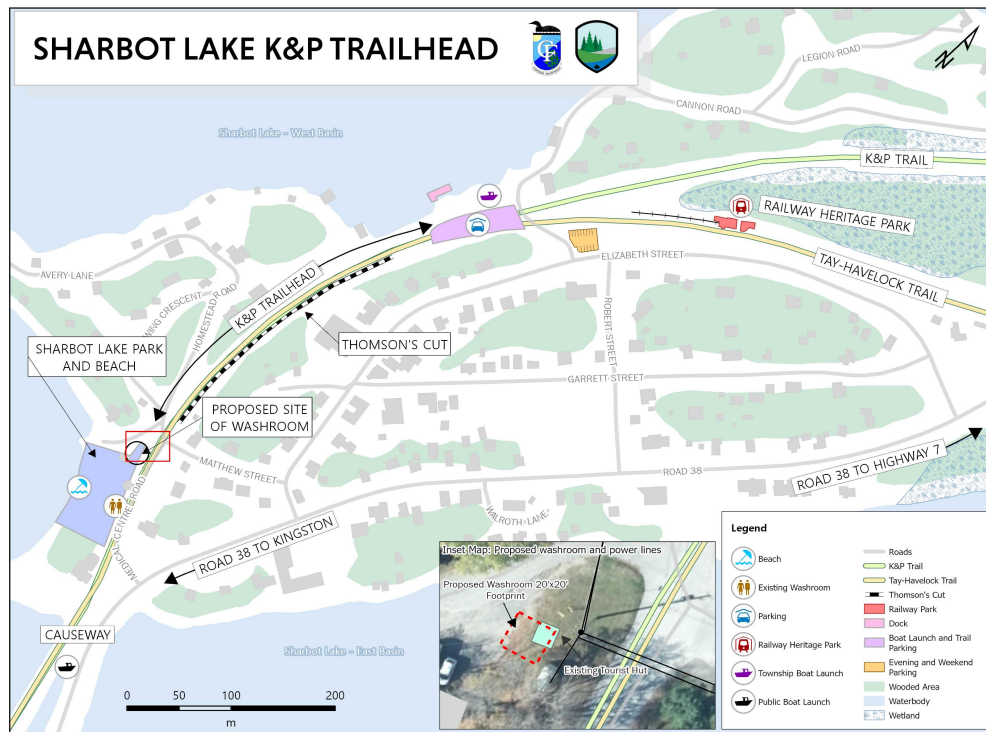
- Some participants viewed the trail's signage as adequate, while others found it confusing and inconsistent.
- There were mixed opinions on the adequacy of current parking facilities for trail users.
- Disagreement existed on whether additional development might detract from the town's small-town charm.



Observations of Interest

- Suggestions were made to explore eco-tourism opportunities, such as guided tours, partnerships, or bike rentals with local businesses.
- The idea of incorporating Indigenous cultural elements and educational signage along the trail was raised.
- One participant highlighted the need for EV charging stations to attract a broader range of visitors.
- Adding artwork in key areas was noted as being an attraction for trail users.

Map of Sharbot Lake



Produced by the County of Frontenac under license with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. © King's Printer for Ontario, 2025. While the County makes every effort to ensure that the information presented is accurate for the intended uses of this map, there is an inherent error in all mapping products, and accuracy of the mapping cannot be guaranteed for all possible uses. This map displays basic topographic features only.



Report 2024-009

Committee Recommend Report

To: Chair and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
From: Kevin Farrell, Chief Administrative Officer
Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Date of meeting: January 27, 2025
Re: **K&P Trail – E-Bikes, E-Scooters, Mobility Scooters and other forms of micromobility on the K&P Trail**

Recommendation

Be It Resolved the Frontenac Accessibility Advisory Committee receives report 2025-009

And Further That staff be directed to amend Bylaw No. 2022-0033 as follows:

1. **That** Section 2, Definitions, be amended by deleting the following:
 - f) **“E-Bike”** shall mean a motor assisted bicycle within the meaning of the Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O .1990, c.H.8, as amended.And replacing with:
 - f) **“E-Bike”** shall mean a power-assisted bicycle, also called an electric bicycle or e-bike, is a bicycle with an electric motor that has a handlebar for steering, working pedals, two or three wheels, an electric motor and braking systems.
2. **That** Section 2, Definitions, be amended by adding the following definitions, in alphabetical order:

Electric Kick Scooter shall mean an a two-wheeled, handlebar-equipped, stand-up scooter powered by an electric motor and is equipped with a brake, bell or horn, and front and rear lights.

Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) shall mean a four-wheeled electric vehicle designed for short-distance transportation. It is equipped with essential safety features including seat belts, mirrors, turn signals, headlights, brake lights, and a horn. LSVs can operate at speeds up to 40 km/h and are permitted only on roads with a posted speed limit of 50 km/h or less, as regulated under Ontario's Low-Speed Vehicle Pilot Program. LSVs must be registered, insured, and operated by a licensed driver.

Mobility Scooter shall mean a personal mobility device that is designed to help people with limited mobility travel in pedestrianized spaces. These devices are powered with an electric motor and can reach a maximum speed of 15 km/h. Persons using mobility scooters are treated as pedestrians under the Highway Traffic Act.

3. **That** Section 2 be re-numbered accordingly.

Background

At its regular meeting on November 20, 2024 County Council considered [Report 2024-119 K&P Trail - Requirement for all motorized off-road trail users to hold a membership with an authorized partner organization](#). The recommendation to implement trail passes for motorized off-road vehicles was deferred until staff provided information regarding the County issuing its own permits to motorized off-road vehicles rather than through a third-party such as the Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs or the Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance.

In their comments, members of Council indicated a desire for other forms of trail transportation to be considered for permit use as well, specifically E-bikes (Power-assisted bicycles) and mobility scooters. It is the recommendation of this report that for the purposes of managing the Frontenac K&P Trail, e-bikes continue to be classified as bicycles and mobility scooters treated as pedestrians in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act.

The discussions regarding e-bikes and mobility scooters reveal the evolving nature of what is termed as “micro-mobility.” Micro-mobility captures an evolving range of devices, and in some cases, vehicles that are powered by a small electric motor. In addition to e-bikes and mobility scooters, this report also describes electric kick scooters and low speed vehicles. It is recommended that these devices be defined in the by-law and recommendations to monitor or manage these devices are included in the report.

The recommendation of this report will be reviewed by both the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Planning & Economic Development Committee prior to final approval by County Council.

Comment

E-Bikes

A power-assisted bicycle, also called an electric bicycle or e-bike, is a bicycle with an electric motor that has:

- a handlebar for steering
- working pedals
- two or three wheels
- an electric motor
- braking systems

In Ontario, a Power-assisted Bicycle (e-bike) is classified as a non-motorized vehicle if it adheres to specific criteria outlined by the Ministry of Transportation. These criteria ensure that e-bikes are treated similarly to conventional bicycles under the law. The key requirements are as follows:

- **Pedal Functionality:** The e-bike must be equipped with functional pedals that allow it to be propelled by human power. Removing the pedals reclassifies the e-bike as a motor vehicle, necessitating a license, insurance, and registration.
- **Maximum Assisted Speed:** The e-bike's motor must cease to provide assistance once the vehicle reaches a speed of 32 kilometers per hour (km/h).
- **Weight Limit:** The total weight of the e-bike, including the battery, must not exceed 120 kilograms (kg).
- **Motor:** The electric motor must have a continuous rated output not exceeding 500 watts. Any modifications that increase the motor's power beyond 500 watts or enable the e-bike to exceed the 32 km/h assisted speed limit are prohibited.
- **Wheel Specifications:** The wheels must have a minimum width of 35 millimeters (mm) and a minimum diameter of 350 mm.
- **Braking System:** The e-bike must be equipped with two independent braking systems, each applying force to a wheel. These brakes must be capable of bringing the e-bike, when operated at a speed of 30 km/h, to a full stop within 9 meters on a level asphalt surface.

By meeting these specifications, an e-bike is considered a non-motorized vehicle in Ontario, allowing it to be operated without a driver's license, vehicle registration, license plates or insurance. However, operators must be at least 16 years old and wear an approved bicycle or motorcycle helmet.

As e-bikes are not classified as motorized vehicles under the Highway Traffic Act, it is the recommendation of this report that e-bikes continue to be classified as non-motorized in the Frontenac K&P Trail Management Plan and in Bylaw No. 2022-0033: A By-Law to Regulate and Govern the Use of the Frontenac K&P Trail.

If an e-bike is modified to have power beyond 500 watts or if it's pedals are removed, it will be considered a motorcycle under Bylaw No. 2022-0033 and only permitted on the Trail as such – currently, motorcycles are not permitted on the K&P Trail in any form.

Mobility Scooters

In Ontario, mobility scooters are classified as mobility aids rather than motor vehicles under the Highway Traffic Act. Designed specifically for individuals with limited mobility, these devices are typically larger than electric wheelchairs and are equipped with three or four wheels for stability. Mobility scooters are intended for those who can balance and steer using both hands. They are propelled by electric motors and have a maximum speed of approximately 15 kilometers per hour.

As mobility aids, mobility scooters do not require a driver's license, registration, or insurance. Operators are considered pedestrians and must adhere to pedestrian rules, such as using sidewalks wherever available, crossing at crosswalks, following

pedestrian signals, and avoiding crossing on red lights. Only when sidewalks are unavailable may mobility scooters be operated on the road.

Additionally, Ontario's Assistive Devices Program (ADP) supports eligible individuals by funding up to 75% of the cost of mobility scooters, ensuring improved accessibility and independence for users. This distinct classification and supportive framework underscore the emphasis on mobility scooters as tools for accessibility rather than motorized transportation.

It is recommended that a definition of mobility scooter be added to Bylaw No. 2022-0033, and that they continue to be permitted on the K&P Trail as a pedestrian in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act.

For the committee's information, newer electric devices that are larger and more powerful have emerged on the market in recent years. These are sold by companies known for assistive devices and advertised as "mobility scooters," However they do not meet the commonly supported definition. They are built with more rugged construction and wheels, can be fully enclosed, and might reach speeds of 40-50 km/h.

When viewed from a regulatory perspective these new devices would more likely fit the definition of an electric all-terrain vehicle or what is now classed as a "Low Speed Vehicle."

E-Scooters

Electric kick scooters (e-scooters) are classified as motorized vehicles under Ontario's pilot program, with specific criteria and operational requirements. An e-scooter is a two-wheeled device equipped with a platform for standing, handlebars for steering, and an electric motor for propulsion. To comply with the pilot regulations, e-scooters must have a maximum speed of 24 kilometers per hour, weigh no more than 45 kilograms, and be equipped with a bell or horn, front and rear lights, and reflective materials for visibility.

Unlike bicycles or mobility scooters, e-scooters require adherence to stricter operational rules. Riders must be at least 16 years old and wear a helmet if under 18. E-scooters are prohibited on sidewalks and must operate on bicycle lanes or roadways with speed limits of 50 km/h or less, unless municipal bylaws permit otherwise. Unlike traditional motorized vehicles, e-scooters do not require a license, registration, or insurance, as their use is restricted to low-speed environments under specific municipal approval.

A provincial pilot program aims to assess the safety and viability of e-scooters as a sustainable, last-mile transportation option. As of the writing of this report, the Frontenac K&P Trail sees very few e-scooters in use, however as the technology evolves additional considerations may be required.

It is the recommendation of this report that a definition of electric kick scooter be added to Bylaw No. 2022-0033, and that their use on the Frontenac K&P Trail be monitored prior to implementation of any firm regulations.

Low Speed Vehicles

Low-Speed Vehicles (LSVs) are classified as motorized vehicles under Ontario's Highway Traffic Act because they are designed to operate on public roadways, with restrictions. LSVs are four-wheeled electric vehicles equipped with a motor and must meet stringent safety standards, including seat belts, mirrors, turn signals, headlights, brake lights, and a horn. They are capable of speeds between 32 and 40 kilometers per hour and are intended for use on roads with a posted speed limit of no more than 50 km/h. Unlike mobility scooters or e-bikes, LSVs are considered motor vehicles because they are designed for roadway use and must be registered, insured, and operated by a licensed driver. As part of Ontario's Low-Speed Vehicle Pilot Program, municipalities must approve their use on specific roads, further reinforcing their classification as motorized vehicles intended for transportation within restricted urban or community settings.

It is recommended that a definition of Low-Speed Vehicle (LSV) be added to Bylaw No. 2022-0033, and that Low Speed Vehicles not be permitted on the Frontenac K&P Trail, as their intended use are for roadways.

Summary

In recent years new forms of transportation and micromobility have emerged, helping individuals have access to more environments, some novel such as the K&P Trail. It will be important for the County to monitor trends in the evolution of these vehicles and devices. It will be difficult to remain up to date on each vehicle category and so the County will need to adapt regulations to meet other criteria – such as size, speed, power type, and user behaviour. For the time being, it is recommended that the County continue to monitor trail use and adapt Bylaw 2022-033 in accordance with the recommendations of this report.

Schedule 1 attached to this report, provides an overview each device and recommendations regarding their permittance on the trail.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

City of Kingston

Schedule 1

Type of Use	Definition	Characteristics	Regulatory Status	Recommendation
Power-Assisted Bicycles (E-Bikes)	A bicycle with an electric motor, handlebar, working pedals, two/three wheels, and braking systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional pedals Maximum assisted speed: 32 km/h Max weight: 120 kg Motor output: Less than 500 watts Two independent brake systems 	Classified as non-motorized under Ontario law; no license, insurance, or registration required.	Continue to classify as non-motorized; comply with Bylaw No. 2022-0033.
Mobility Scooters	A personal mobility device for people with limited mobility, powered by an electric motor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max speed: 15 km/h 3 or 4 wheels Operated as a pedestrian device; 	Classified as mobility aids under Ontario law; operators treated as pedestrians. No license, registration, or insurance required.	Add definition to Bylaw No. 2022-0033; continue to permit devices on K&P Trail as pedestrians.
Electric Kick Scooters (E-Scooters)	A stand-up scooter with an electric motor, handlebars, platform for standing, and required safety features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max speed: 24 km/h Weight: less than 45 kg Required Safety features: lights, bell/horn, reflectors Helmet required if under 18. 	Classified as motorized under Ontario's pilot program; municipal approval needed for trail use.	Add definition to Bylaw No. 2022-0033 and monitor use on the K&P Trail before implementing firm regulations.
Low-Speed Vehicles (LSVs)	Four-wheeled electric vehicles designed for public roadways, meeting specific safety standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed: 32-40 km/h Safety features: seat belts, mirrors, turn signals, headlights, brake lights, horn 	Classified as motorized vehicles under Ontario's pilot program; designed for road use. Registered and insured.	Add definition to Bylaw No. 2022-0033; not permitted on the K&P Trail as they are designed for roadway use.

Frontenac County Business Retreat & Awards 2024



FRONTENAC



FRONTENAC





FRONTENAC

Frontenac County Business Retreat & Awards 2024 overview

November 5, 2024

RKY Camp, Parham

66 attendees from all 4 Townships

- Networking
- Business Tables

Campfire Chats

- Marketing, Content
- Experience through Storytelling
- Wolfe Island Businesses
- Ambassador Program
- Business Supports
- Living Local



FRONTENAC





FRONTENAC

Frontenac County Business Awards 2024 cont.

5 Award Categories, 27 Nominations

- Business of the Year
 - **Maple Ridge Farm**
- New Business
 - **White Lake Pickleball**
- Sustainability
 - **Back Forty Artisan Cheese**
- Partnership & Collaboration
 - **Perry Farm-Local Family Farm**
- Women Led Business
 - **Kate Slagle**





FRONTENAC

Awards

- Awards created by North Frontenac artist
- Cathy Owen, Red Dragon Gallery
- Artist's interpretation of the Frontenac brand





Report 2025-038

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee

From: Debbi Miller, Community Development Officer

Date of meeting: March 27, 2025

Re: **Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee – Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards**

Recommendation

This report is for information. It is intended to solicit feedback for 2025 from the committee and to provide an update on the 2024 Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards.

Background

The first annual Frontenac Business Retreat & Awards were held in October 2022 at RKY Camp in Parham, Central Frontenac. The report about the event was shared with committee in [Report 2023-045](#). There were three panels, called Campfire Chats which explored tourism experiences, digital wayfinding and small-business finance. The first Frontenac Business Awards were presented to the successful nominees. The five physical awards were framed watercolour paintings created by Wolfe Island artist, Nancy Steele, with a plaque including the name of the business and award.

The feedback that was received through the follow up survey and email was very positive, and many businesses requested that it become an annual event.

The second annual Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards, hosted by Frontenac County Economic Development was held in November 2023. The report about the event was shared with committee in [Report 2024-023](#). Fifty-eight people from all four Townships attended the event at RKY Camp in Parham, offering a casual atmosphere in a central location. The event brought businesses and partners together with four Campfire Chats which explored Tourism Brand Standards Toolkit - Let's Talk Storytelling, the importance of Farmers Markets in our community, Frontenac Business Supports and a Partnership panel. The second business awards were created by potter Tracey Bamford from Central Frontenac.

The feedback that was received at the event and in the follow up was very positive.

Comments

Entrepreneurs in Frontenac County have a strong history of collaboration and working together. The third annual Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards, hosted by Frontenac County Economic Development was held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, beginning at noon.

Sixty-six people from all four Townships attended the 2024 event, held at RKY Camp in Parham, offering a casual atmosphere in a central location. The event brought businesses and partners together for an afternoon of networking, learning, connecting and celebrating.

The feedback that was received at the event and in the follow up has been very positive.

Frontenac County Business Retreat

The business networking event included several sessions aimed at encouraging dialogue and connection among attendees.

- **Campfire Chats** - The Campfire Chats which adopted a conversational presentation style, to foster deeper engagement between presenters and attendees continued in 2024, by removing the use of PowerPoint and other technologies. This format facilitated discussion, allowing participants to ask questions and connect on various topics. The decision to eliminate technology has been well received by both presenters and participants.

Topics covered in the Campfire Chats included a variety of subjects with different speakers in each of the panels. The Campfire Chats are outlined below:

Let's Talk Content – Marketing Content, included panelists Andrew Douglas from Story Digital, Piotr Rauchfleisch from The Tall Guy Marketing and Shaunis Sakell from Frontenac Business Services discussing a variety of marketing tools, development of content and a variety of processes to create content.

The second Campfire Chat, Storytelling and your experiences was done with Sarah Sproule of Wayeskad. Sarah and her family operate a traditional trapline in North Frontenac. During the session Sarah demonstrated skinning of a beaver, an experience they offer to their visitors. Sarah shared stories and the importance of the connection throughout her session.

In the Frontenac County Business Supports session, panelists Shaunis Sakell from Frontenac Business Services, Kent Fitzhugh from the Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade, Norman Musengimana from Kingston Economic Development, Kasey Rogerson from Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO11, OHTO) and Bonnie Ruddock from Southeastern Ontario (RTO9) outlined the support available to businesses, including how to access these resources.

The Business on Wolfe Island discussion included four business owners/operators that shared their stories about the changes, and challenges that are part of being on an island. The businesses that were represented during the panel discussion were Annelise Lallemand and Caitlyn Deachman of Fishtale Gifts & Goods and Lured Bake Shop as well as Kate Slagle and James Bambury of Blue Moose B&B and Jean & Aggies Ice Cream Shoppe.

There was a discussion around the Ambassador Program with an ask from the business community about ways to improve or expand on the program. The main comments received during this time were improving the website, specifically around the business directory and listings to make it easier to navigate which also allowed more local connections and awareness of resources available for businesses to access. Support to amplify posts on social media was also an area that was of interest.

The session that rounded out the day was Thinking Local, Living Local and Supporting Local with Tarra Williamson from Bloom Farm and Frontenac Farmers Market, Brad Long from Belong Sharbot Lake and Roland Jensch from Grains & Goods Bakery. The discussion offered the opportunity for each of the business owners to share about the importance of local to them personally, their business and ways for others to support local.

- **Networking** – There were opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs to meet and connect with each other throughout the day. The Campfire Chats encouraged discussions and interaction between participants during the session and into the breaks. During the Ambassador panel all businesses introduced themselves and their business. Prior to the Frontenac County Business Award presentation, a general networking session was held with a cash bar from the three local breweries and a selection of appetizers.
- **Business Tables** – There were opportunities for businesses and partners to highlight their products, marketing materials and share information to attendees. There were eight businesses and organizations that participated in this opportunity. Frontenac County had merchandise available for sale as well as labels and tags for Made in Frontenac products. Planning staff from Frontenac County and South Frontenac attended and set up a table to connect with the businesses.
- **Economic Development Updates** – Staff provided updates on projects, marketing and future opportunities.
- **Marketing materials** – Businesses were encouraged to bring marketing materials to share and distribute to other businesses.
- **Printed program** – A program was provided to event participants that outlined the agenda, awards, Economic Development programs, business support contacts, and connection opportunities that the Economic Development team

provides for businesses. The program included photos of Frontenac County and business owners across the region.

Overall, the event provided a platform for knowledge exchange and networking, with sessions designed to support the business community through informative discussions and interactive experiences.

Frontenac County Business Awards

The day wrapped up with a celebration of the Frontenac County Business Award recipients. Winners were acknowledged in a ceremony where Mayor Lichty presented the awards, and each recipient's nomination was shared with attendees.

The awards were organized into five categories,

- Business of the Year Award,
- New Business Award,
- Partnership and Collaboration Award,
- Sustainability Award,
- Women-Led Business Award.

Nominating businesses within the Frontenac community was done through Engage Frontenac, with Economic Development staff committed to enhancing awareness of nomination criteria to improve submission quality. The nomination window spanned from August to the end of September, during which nominations were accepted across the five categories, totaling twenty-seven submissions. An anonymous selection committee of four individuals were tasked with reviewing nominations, to score each submission based on a set criterion.

The award for 2024 was a glass piece of the Frontenac County brand created by Cathy Owen of Red Dragon Studio in North Frontenac. Each year, the awards are designed by a different artist to reflect and interpret the Frontenac brand. Each award featured a personalized plaque indicating the award category, year, and recipient's business name.

The 2024 award recipients were:

- **Business of the Year:** Maple Ridge Farm
- **New Business:** White Lake Pickleball
- **Partnership and Collaboration:** Perry Farm – Food Less Travelled
- **Sustainability:** Back Forty Artisan Cheese
- **Women-Led Business:** Kate Slagle, Blue Moose B&B

Following the ceremony, photographs of the award recipients that were in attendance were captured, celebrating their accomplishments. In the weeks following the event the photos and links to nominations were shared across Frontenac County's social media channels.

Marketing & Communications

The Frontenac County Business Retreat & Awards were marketed to the business community through various channels. The Economic Development team started

Information Report

Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee – Frontenac County Business Awards & Retreat
March 27, 2025

Page 4 of 6

marketing the event in the early summer with a save the date, followed by an increase in marketing using road signs, the business newsletter, awareness during business events and direct outreach to the business community.

Frontenac County Communications Officer supported the communication with social media posts, and circulating news releases.

The information was shared with the four Townships, Frontenac Business Services, Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO), Southeastern Ontario (RTO 9), and Kingston Economic Development to share in their newsletters and social media to encourage their audiences to attend.

General Comments

The Economic Development Business Plan outlines Frontenac County's commitment to supporting and nurturing the business community overall, while specialized and individualized support is delivered by partners such as Frontenac Business Services or the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre in Kingston.

The popularity of the event in 2024 continues to demonstrate the importance of support for the business community in Frontenac County, by celebrating our local businesses, and providing training and networking events.

Following the Frontenac County Business Retreat & Awards, the Economic Development team asked participants about the event and sought comments. The comments were received in a variety of formats including survey responses, emails, and phone calls.

Questions were again specifically asked around the location, time of the year, day of the week, programming and overall style of the event. From the responses received the central location is best given the size of Frontenac County. Tuesday and Thursday are the preferred days of the week. The fall season as a wrap up to the year continues to be the preferred timing of the business community.

There were comments received around the length of the event as well as offerings and programming for the event. Staff will explore the options for programming to ensure the appropriate length of the event and possible enhancements to ensure the event continues to be well received by the business community and partners.

The award categories and nomination process will be reviewed by staff to ensure a clear nomination process for the community. The review will also consider the categories that have been in place for three years and will update appropriately.

Frontenac Economic Development will host the Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards again in 2025 and will explore opportunities for a change in format to enhance the event and to expand the reach and audience while keeping with the style and feel of the event.

Financial Implications

The budget for the Frontenac County Business Retreat and Awards is included as part of the Economic Development 2024-2028 Business Plan.

Strategic Priorities

County Council approved [Frontenac County Strategic Plan \(2023-2026\)](#). This project is aligned with the intent of the priority listed below, with specific items.

Priority 2. Contribute to the Progress of Sustainable Economic Growth and Prosperity Throughout the County.

- Provide business support and resources to existing and prospective businesses.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Frontenac County Businesses

Matt Mills, Communications Officer, County of Frontenac