

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 1 of 15	

CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF FRENCH RIVER



2023 Accessibility Plan

Submitted to:
Mayor Gisèle Pageau and Members of Council
Municipality of French River

Revised and Submitted by:
Michelle Clark, Operations Coordinator

September 20, 2023

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....3

2.0 ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITY OF FRENCH RIVER3

3.0 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND3

4.0 COMMITMENT AND OBJECTIVES4

5.0 FORMER INITIATIVES TO REMOVE BARRIERS6

6.0 IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS8

7.0 TRAINING9

8.0 CONSULTATION10

9.0 COMMUNICATION OF PLAN.....10

10.0 ACCESSIBLE FEEDBACK10

11. REVIEW AND MONITORING11

APPENDIX ‘A’ - GLOSSARY OF TERMS12

APPENDIX ‘B’ - TYPES OF DISABILITY AND FUNCTIONAL LIMITATIONS.....13

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 3 of 15	

**MUNICIPALITY OF FRENCH RIVER
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

People with disabilities represent a growing part of our population. According to Statistics Canada, about 1.8 million Ontarians have disabilities - about 13.5% of the population. Because disabilities tend to increase with age, it is estimated that 20% of the population will have disabilities by the year 2020.

2.0 ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITY OF FRENCH RIVER

The Municipality of French River is a municipal corporation that commenced operations on January 1, 1999. It is comprised of the former Municipality of Cosby, Mason & Martland and the formerly unorganized Townships of Scollard, Hoskin, Delamere, and parts of the Townships of Bigwood, Haddo and Cherriman. The Municipality has a population of 2,828 people, as of the 2021 Census.

3.0 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) was enacted in 2001 to improve opportunities and access for persons with disabilities. This Act applies to all provincial and municipal governments, school boards, colleges and universities, and hospitals.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was enacted in 2005 and is a law intended to set out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. The overall goal of the A.O.D.A. is to provide for the development of minimum standards to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by January 1, 2025.

The Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards under the AODA was enacted to establish the accessibility standards for each of information and communications, employment, transportation, the design of public spaces and customer service.

The Municipality’s corporate approach to addressing barriers and achieving accessibility through the integrated accessibility standards regulations grouping of five standards are listed below:

3.1 CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Municipality of French River is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. The municipality will provide goods, services, and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others. The Municipality will train all employees in accessible customer service as soon as practicable after hire. The Municipality has developed policies and procedures to achieve accessible customer service for persons with disabilities, these policies and procedures can be found on the municipal website or in accessible format upon request.

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

3.2 TRANSPORTATION

The Municipality of French River is committed to accessible transportation services. Should the Municipality offer transportation services we will ensure that services are accessible to people with disabilities. This would include the municipality providing accessible vehicles, trained staff and appropriate communication and assistance for passengers with disabilities. The municipality would develop policies and procedures to address the needs of passengers with disabilities and make these policies and procedures available on the municipal website or in accessible format upon request.

3.3 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Municipality of French River is committed to creating, providing and capacity to receive information and communication that people with disabilities can access so as to provide an equal opportunity for all individuals to learn and be active in our community. The Municipality has developed polices and procedures identifying how they will remove barriers for persons with disabilities through the use of alternative formats such as braille, digitized text, or large print as well as communication supports such as sign language interpreters, real time captioning or written language, emails and texting. The Municipality is committed to and will provide accessible formats and communication support for any emergency procedures , plans or public safety information as soon as practicable, and upon request.

3.4 DESIGN OF PUBLIC PLACES

The Municipality is committed to making communal spaces more accessible and when applicable, will ensure that they meet accessibility laws when constructing or redesigning public spaces. The Municipality will consult with persons with disabilities, the public, and utilize professional advisory services when constructing or redesigning public places. The Municipality will keep notes on consultation processes and resources accessed to ensure that we are conforming to the design of public places standards which describe ways to make communal spaces more accessible. The Municipality has and will continue to consult with the building department to ensure that accessibility within indoor municipal spaces conforms to accessibility standards outlined within the Ontario Building Code.

3.5 EMPLOYMENT

The Municipality of French River is committed to making workplace practices accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities. The Municipality will continue to achieve this standard through the review and update of policies and procedures that address accessible recruitment and hiring processes, workplace accommodation, and return to work accommodations. These policies and procedures are available on the municipal website or in accessible format upon request.

4.0 COMMITMENT AND OBJECTIVES

The Municipality of French River is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

The Municipality of French River is committed to the continued improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises and services and the provision of services to all members of the community with disabilities.

The objectives of the Municipality of French River’s accessibility planning process are outlined below:

- Work towards becoming a benchmark community in providing barrier free access to citizens and visitors;
- Identify, remove (where possible) and prevent all types of barriers to access for people with disabilities;
- Cultivate an operating environment to prevent the formation of future barriers;
- Undertake appropriate building retrofits to improve the usability of the physical environment for a wide spectrum of users;
- Meet the requirements as outlined in AODA and Integrated Accessibility Regulations (IASR);
- Seek funding opportunities to support these goals; and,
- Commit to providing the plan in an accessible format to all individuals upon request.

The Council authorizes the Operations Coordinator to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable the Council to meet these commitments and objectives.

The accessibility plan describes the measures the Municipality has taken in the past, and the measures the municipality will take in the upcoming year to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities. Our plan focuses on municipal facilities and services with a view to improving access for persons with disabilities, the public, and employees of the Corporation of the Municipality of French River. Our plan will show how we will play our role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Municipal Staff identified various barriers to persons with disability throughout the development of this plan and recommends the consistent review & identification of barriers denying access to persons with disabilities within the municipal environment with a view to reducing barriers and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

5.0 FORMER INITIATIVES TO REMOVE BARRIERS

The following initiatives have been completed within the Municipality:

2023		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Accessible Playground	JC Park	Play structures are designed to exceed the Annex H (accessibility guideline for children’s play space and equipment) requirements for accessibility.
2022		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Accessible Washroom	Alban Community Centre	Automatic door opener
Accessible Washroom	Public Works Garage	Installation of accessible washroom on first floor
Nature Walking Trail	Municipal Complex	Trail Completed (phase 3)
2021		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Nature Walking Trail	Municipal complex	Trail Continuation (phase 2)
2020		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Nature Walking Trail, none available	Municipal complex	Partial trail completed (planned continuation spring 2021)
2019		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
No new initiatives		
2018		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Access to second floor of Arena / Physical & Architectural	Noëlville Community Centre/Arena	Installed a vertical lift to access second floor and added an accessible washroom on the second floor

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

2017		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Upgraded website and information to provide accessible web content
Access to second floor of Arena / Physical & Architectural	Noëlville Community Centre	In the process of installing a family/accessible washroom and a vertical lift on second floor (to be completed in 2018)
2016		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
2015		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
2014		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
2013		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
Physical/Architectural	Municipal Office	Installation of automatic door opener for Suite 3 of Municipal Office
Physical/Architectural	Noëlville Community Centre	Installation of family/accessible washroom
Physical/Architectural	Alban Community Centre	Installation of family/accessible washroom

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

2012		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
Physical/Architectural	Municipal Office	Installation of automatic door opener for main entrance to office
2011		
Barrier and Barrier Type	Location	Strategy Used
Website / Informational	Online	Ongoing: Upgrade website and information to provide accessible web content
Informational	Noëlville, Alban Community Centres	Installation of exterior signage at property entrance

6.0 IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS

Council determines which barriers will be addressed in current and future years depending on budget constraints, available resources, and feasibility. Actions and priorities are determined based on input from municipal staff, council, and members of the public. All future actions and priorities will be considered during annual budget discussions.

The following barriers have been identified:

Municipal Complex

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGY TO REMOVE/PREVENT BARRIER (approx. cost)
Automatic door opener –accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$4,000)
Walking trail	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$25,000)

Alban Community Centre

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGY TO REMOVE/PREVENT BARRIER (approx. cost)
Automatic door opener –accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in ICIP funding

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

Noelville Community Centre

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGY TO REMOVE/PREVENT BARRIER (approx. cost)
Automatic door opener –accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in NOHFC funding application 2023 (approx. \$8,000)

French River Public Library (Noëlville Branch)

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGIES FOR REMOVAL OR PREVENTION
Automatic door opener –accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$4,000)

French River Public Library (Alban Branch)

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGIES FOR REMOVAL OR PREVENTION
Automatic door opener –accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$4,000)

French River Landfill Office

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGIES FOR REMOVAL OR PREVENTION
Exterior automatic door opener	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$4,000)

French River Beach

BARRIER	BARRIER TYPE	STRATEGIES FOR REMOVAL OR PREVENTION
Accessible washroom	Physical	To be included in future budget (approx. \$4,000)

7.0 TRAINING

The Municipality is committed to provide training to all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, transportation services, information and communications supports, public spaces, employment and other Ontario accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities. The municipality will develop and implement training that will be appropriate to the duties of any employee, volunteer, and other persons on an ongoing basis whenever there are any changes to the policies as well as to the accessibility laws and the human rights code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The municipality will train every person as soon as practicable after being hired.

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

8.0 CONSULTATION

Municipal Staff are committed to review barriers that restrict the quality of life of persons with disabilities and communicate the findings to Council through the annual submission of the Accessibility Plan. Council and Staff will continue to update the accessibility plan utilizing their personal experiences and the experiences and feedback shared with them from residents of the Municipality of French River. The Municipality commits to consult and utilize professional advisory, public input, and feedback from persons with disabilities to meet requirements and standards and to actively promote a barrier free municipality.

9.0 COMMUNICATION OF PLAN

Once approved, the Accessibility Plan will be posted on the Municipality's website. The Municipality will provide its plan in an accessible format, upon request.

All accessibility reports filed under section 1 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act will be made publicly available through the municipal website and in accessible format, upon request.

10.0 ACCESSIBLE FEEDBACK

The Municipality will ensure that it has a feedback process which in its entirety is accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Municipality welcomes feedback for consideration on ways we can improve accessibility and barrier free access and will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication support to individuals upon request and will notify the public in regard to the accessible format and communication support through media and website.

All residents can bring concerns, suggestions and inquiries for consideration through the Municipality's Complaint Policy as follows:

By mail or in person:
Municipality of French River
44 St. Christophe Street, Suite 1
Noëlville, Ontario P0M 2N0

By phone:
705-898-2294

By email:
info@frenchriver.ca

Online:
<https://www.frenchriver.ca/p/accessibility-plan->

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 11 of 15	

11. REVIEW AND MONITORING

Municipal Staff will monitor the progress made on the actions contained in the plan and will time the review to coincide with annual budget discussions to consider any budget requirements needed to address identified and prioritized barriers in the following year's budget.

The Accessibility Plan will be presented to Council on an annual basis for approval by Council.

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 12 of 15	

Appendix ‘A’ - Glossary of Terms

What is a disability?

The AODA adopts the broad definition for disability that is set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code. “Disability” is:

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

Barriers

A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice. An example of each of the different kinds of barriers is shown below:

Barrier Type Example

Barrier Type	Example
Physical	A doorknob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter
Informational	Typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low vision
Communicational	A professor who talks loudly when addressing a deaf student
Attitudinal	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair
Technological	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open
Policy/Practice	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 13 of 15	

Appendix 'B' - Types of Disability and Functional Limitations

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively hard to perform everyday tasks. Listed below are different kinds of disabilities and the effects of these limitations on an individual's ability to perform everyday tasks.

1. Physical

Physical disabilities include minor difficulties moving or coordinating a part of the body, muscle weakness, tremors and in extreme cases, paralysis in one or more parts of the body. Physical disabilities can be congenital, such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis.

- Physical disabilities affect an individual's ability to:
- Perform manual tasks, such as hold a pen, grip and turn a key, type on a keyboard, click a mouse button, and twist a doorknob
- Control the speed of ones movements
- Coordinate one's movements
- Move rapidly
- Experience balance and orientation
- Move one's arms or legs fully e.g. climb stairs
- Move around independently e.g. walk any distance, easily get into or out of a car, stand for an extended period of time
- Reach, pull, push or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

2. Sensory

Hearing

Hearing loss includes problems distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words, ringing in the ears and total profound deafness. A person who is deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing may be unable to use a public telephone, understand speech in noisy environments or pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers.

Speech

Speech disability is a partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical voice disorders include problems with:

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023
Page: 14 of 15	

Vision

Vision disabilities range from slightly reduced visual acuity to total blindness. A person with reduced visual acuity may have trouble reading street signs, recognizing faces or judging distances. They might find it difficult to maneuver, especially in an unfamiliar place. He or she may have a very narrow field of vision, be unable to differentiate colours, have difficulties navigating or seeing at night or require bright lights to read. Most people who are legally blind have some vision.

Deaf-blind

Deaf-blindness is a combination of hearing and vision loss. It results in significant difficulties accessing information and performing activities of daily living. Deaf-blind disabilities interfere with communication, learning, orientation and mobility.

Smell

Smell disability is the inability to sense, or a hypersensitivity to odours and smells. A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odours, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

Taste

Taste disability limits the ability to experience the four primary taste sensations: sweetness, bitterness, saltiness and sourness. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify ingredients in food, spoiled food or noxious substances.

Touch

Touch disability alters the ability to sense surfaces and their texture or quality, including temperature, vibration and pressure. Touching sensations may be heightened, limited, absent (numbness), or may cause pain or burning. A person with a touch disability may be unable to detect (or be insensitive to) heat, cold or changing temperatures. Alternatively, a person with a touch disability may be hypersensitive to sound, physical vibrations or heated surfaces of air.

3. Cognitive

Intellectual

An intellectual disability affects an individual's ability to think and reason. The disability may be caused by genetic factors (Downs Syndrome), exposure to environmental toxins (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), brain trauma and psychiatric conditions.

A person with an intellectual disability may have difficulty with:

- Language: understanding and using spoken or written information
- Concepts: understanding cause and effect
- Perception: taking in and responding to sensory information
- Memory: retrieving and recognizing information from short or long-term memory
- Recognizing problems, problem solving and reasoning

Section: Community Services	Policy number: B-1
Subject: Accessibility Plan	Effective Date: March 21, 2007
	Revision Date: September 20, 2023

Page: **15 of 15**

Mental Health

There are three main kinds of mental health disabilities:

- Anxiety: a state of heightened nervousness or fear related to stress
- Mood: sadness or depression
- Behavioural: being disorganized; making false statements or inappropriate comments; telling distorted or exaggerated stories

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; exhibit blunt behaviour; be perceived as being pushy or abrupt; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

Learning

Learning disabilities are disorders that affect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding, processing, organization and use. People with learning disabilities have average or above average intelligence, but take in information, retain it, and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities affect reading comprehension and speed; spelling; the mechanics of writing; manual dexterity; math computation; problem solving; processing speed; the ability to organize space and manage time; and orientation and way finding.

4. Other

Disabilities result from other conditions, accidents, illnesses and diseases, including ALS (Lou Gehrig Disease), asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke and joint replacement.