

DECEMBER 16, 2022

COUNCIL REPORT

REPORT NO. CC-049-2022

ACCESSIBILITY STATUS REPORT 2022

**ANDREA BOLTON
DEPUTY CLERK/ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATOR**

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Counties Council receive the Accessibility Status Report 2022 as attached to Report No. CC-049-2022; and

THAT the Report be posted on the Counties' website.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Activities identified in the Accessibility Status Report 2022 can be found in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022, which is reflected in the Counties' overall budget.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Where possible reports are provided in a digital format to reduce the Counties' carbon footprint.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

This report can be made available in alternate accessible formats on request.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

The Accessibility Status Report, upon receipt by Counties Council, will be posted to the Counties' website, as required in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

BACKGROUND

The AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation requires designated public sector organizations to prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and O. Reg. 191/11. The report must be posted on the designated public sector organization's website and provided in accessible formats upon requests.

DISCUSSION/ALTERNATIVES

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2022 sets out accessible goals for the Counties to achieve. The Accessibility Status Report identifies which of these goals were addressed in 2022, and suggests the immediate next steps for further accomplishments.

Accomplishments highlighted in the Accessibility Status Report 2022 touch on each of the Accessibility Standards which affect the Counties, including General accomplishments, the Information and Communication Standard, Customer Service Standard, Employment Standard, and Design of Public Spaces Standard.

ATTACHMENTS

Accessibility Status Report 2022

ANDREA BOLTON
DEPUTY CLERK/ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATOR

DECEMBER 6, 2022
DATE

ALISON TUTAK
ACTING CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DECEMBER 7, 2022
DATE

Accessibility Status Report 2022

The Accessibility Status Report is the annual update on the progress of measures taken to improve accessibility and implement the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR) (Ontario Regulation 191/11).

This status report includes accessibility initiatives that were undertaken in 2022 to implement the strategies outlined in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and reflects on the activities of the Leeds and Grenville Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Statement of Commitment

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is a designated public sector organization under the AODA and is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities by providing goods, services, programs, and facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all people. The Counties is committed to provide persons with disabilities the same opportunities to access its goods, services, programs, and facilities in the same manner as other persons, wherever possible.

Highlights and Accomplishments 2022

General

- **Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC):** The AAC held three meetings in 2022. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, these meetings were held via Zoom. The meetings were livestreamed on the Counties' website and participation/questions of the media and the public were invited to be submitted via email.
- **Advocacy:** The Accessibility Advisory Committee played a role in advocacy in several ways.
 - **National AccessAbility Week (NAAW) 2022:** NAAW was commemorated by a series of Tweets from the Counties' Twitter account celebrating the national theme of "inclusive from the start", and was also promoted on the Accessibility Advisory Committee's Facebook page.
 - **Accessible Elections at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Levels:** Upon a recommendation from the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Council instructed staff to send letters under the signature of the Warden to the federal and provincial governments expressing concern over

accessibility at the polls, and also instructed staff to circulate similar letters to each municipality in Leeds and Grenville.

- **Accessible Kayaking:** In February, the Accessibility Advisory Committee welcomed a delegation regarding accessible kayaking in Leeds and Grenville. The presentation detailed the steps necessary to build an accessible dock. The Committee referred the presenters to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission to assist them in furthering their cause. The Leeds and Grenville Clerks' Group were provided an update on accessible kayaking and the movement within Leeds and Grenville to broaden knowledge of the sport. Copies of the presentation were offered to the Group.
- **Collaboration (Municipal AACs):** Other Accessibility Advisory Committees were invited to attend Leeds and Grenville Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings through an invitation extended to the Leeds and Grenville Clerks' Group.
- **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027 Creation, Review and Consultation Survey:** The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the United Counties expires at the end of 2022 and a new plan, with input from the public and persons with disabilities, is required. In order to gather input to assist in the creation of the Plan, a Consultation Survey was made available on the Counties' website, and in alternate formats. The survey was advertised in print, online and on the radio. The 2023-2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, with input from the public, persons with disabilities, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee, will be presented to Counties Council for adoption in December.

Information and Communication Standard

- **Guide to Accessible Word Documents:** Staff continued to promote the Guide to Accessible Word Documents to generate more user-friendly accessible documents.
- **Website Review:** Ongoing website reviews using the Siteimprove software are providing staff with information on areas of the Counties' website that require improvement with respect to accessibility.
- **Equidox Software/.pdf Remediation:** The Counties renewed two licenses of the Equidox .pdf remediation software in 2022. This tool assists staff in remediating inaccessible .pdf documents which can then be posted on the Counties' website.
- **Subtitles/Closed Captioning:** Meetings that are livestreamed and recorded for the public are subtitled and available with closed captioning through the meeting software, eSCRIBE.

Customer Service Standard

- Training continued to ensure staff are aware of the Human Rights Code as it relates to disability, the I.A.S.R. General Requirements and the Customer Service Standard. This training is part of the onboarding process for all new staff.

Employment Standard

- **Accommodations:** Accommodations continue to be available throughout the recruitment process and employment life cycle.
- **Accommodation for Candidates for Employment:** Potential candidates for employment are informed of the availability of accommodation.
- **Individual Emergency Plans:** During the onboarding process, employees are made aware of the availability of individual emergency plans designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. This is also advertised monthly in the staff newsletter.
- **New Employees:** New employees participate in the Counties' Onboarding Program, a part of which focuses on accessibility training. This training is done through the Counties' Learning Management System and administered by Human Resources.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

- **Courthouse Apartments, Kemptville:** The United Counties and the Municipality of North Grenville entered into a partnership in 2022 to renovate and lease the Courthouse Apartments in Kemptville. The Courthouse Apartments are 10 affordable housing units, two of which on the first floor are being converted to accessible units. The Accessibility Advisory Committee received a presentation on the development of the Courthouse Apartments at their meeting in February 2022.
- **Pixie Place:** Another 2022 initiative that came to fruition in 2022 is Pixie Place. This Joint Services Committee project created eight small self-contained units to support individuals who are precariously housed. While not entirely accessible, the construction included a lift and automatic door opener, with larger door openings in the bathroom of two units, and a larger turning radius for assistive devices.

Goals and Next Steps for Accessibility

- The Committee will continue its collaboration with other municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees in Leeds and Grenville, including inviting them to attend Leeds and Grenville AAC meetings.
- Staff will continue to improve the quality of documents on the Counties' website in order to ensure accessibility.
- Equidox software training for staff will continue to be offered and expanded in order to streamline document remediation.
- Staff and the Accessibility Advisory Committee will implement the new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027 once approved by Council.
- Where appropriate, further collaboration on the redevelopment of the Maple View Lodge Long-term Care Home will occur in 2023.

Availability of Report and Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Annual Accessibility Status Reports can be accessed through the Counties website www.leedsgrenville.com.

Contact Information

Accessibility Coordinator
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
25 Central Avenue West, Brockville ON K6V 4N6

Telephone 1-800-770-2170 613-342-3840 ext. 2307
Fax 613-342-2101
Email access@uclg.on.ca

Feedback

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville welcomes public input on how services and programs are delivered to persons with disabilities. Feedback is forwarded to the County Clerk and is collected by phone, email, website comments, in person, or by mail. Feedback in person is accepted at any of the Counties' public facilities. Feedback is accepted in accessible formats and with other communications supports as required.

Accessible Formats Available

Accessible format and communication supports are available upon request.