



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE December 2019

**Municipality of South Dundas
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by contacting the Municipal Office**

Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Improving accessibility is important for all residents of South Dundas. It is not only important, but it is the right thing to do given that 1.85 million Ontarians or over 15% of Ontario's population has a disability, including more than 40% of people over the age of 65. This number will only increase as the population ages.

Mission Statement

The Municipality of South Dundas is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to facilities and services for people with disabilities.
- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans.
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

Definition of Persons with Disabilities

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, as amended, defines persons with disabilities in the following manner, which is the same definition used in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

A "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; or,
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; ("handicap").

Accessibility Legislation

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, (AODA). Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025 by creating, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario must follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people living with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life. The AODA will be discussed in greater detail throughout this plan.

The AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code

The AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code) work together to promote equality and accessibility. The Code states that people living with disabilities must be free from discrimination where they work, live and receive services, and that their needs must be accommodated.

Under the Code, the Municipality has a legal obligation to accommodate any person with a disability regardless of whether they are an employee, volunteer, resident or visitor. The duty to accommodate means that wherever unequal treatment or discrimination exists, it must be remedied unless the remedy would cause undue hardship. The Code has primacy over the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act legislation.

Federal Accessibility Legislation – Accessible Canada Act (Bill C-81)

On June 20, 2018, the Federal Government introduced Bill C-81 the Accessible Canada Act: An Act to Ensure a Barrier-Free Canada. The purpose of this Act is to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers in areas that fall under Federal jurisdiction. Under this legislation, organizations under Federal jurisdiction will be required to follow accessibility regulations, develop accessibility plans and will be required to establish processes for receiving and dealing with feedback about their accessibility plan and barriers that a person may have encountered in dealing with the organization.

Although this legislation does not directly impact Municipal operations, it does highlight the Government's commitment to improve accessibility for all Canadians in all levels of government.

Jurisdiction of the Plan

The Plan referred to in this document is under the jurisdiction of the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Dundas, facilitated by Administration. The Municipal contact is the Director of Corporate Services/Clerk with contact information provided below:

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Executive Summary

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, (AODA) outlines the requirement for Municipalities to establish, maintain and document a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to outline the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers. The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities by providing for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in the Province.

The Municipality's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our approach to being an inclusive and accessible service provider and workplace.

This Multi-Year Plan is based upon requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, (AODA). Under AODA, all Municipalities have a legal obligation to prepare Multi-Year Accessibility Plans. The AODA sets out the roadmap for an accessible Ontario by 2025. The standards are contained in one regulation called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, also known as the IASR. Currently, the IASR contains standards in the following five (5) areas:

1. Customer Service;
2. Information and Communications;
3. Employment;
4. Transportation; and
5. Design of Public Spaces.

This Multi-Year Plan will only examine customer service; information and communications; employment; and design of public spaces. Transportation will be excluded due to the relatively small size of the Municipality and the lack of transportation services.

In accordance with the AODA, all Municipal facilities will be compliant with the relevant requirements by 2025.

The Accessibility Standards produced by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility is as follows:

Integrated Accessibility Standards (Regulation 191/11)

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 191/11, entitled, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" (Regulation), came into force on July 1, 2011. This Regulation establishes accessibility standards for Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Design of Public Spaces and Transportation. As noted earlier, Transportation standards are not included in this plan.

Some of the requirements are: developing policies to ensure that our communication is accessible to people with disabilities; ensuring we are able to provide information in a format that considers an individual's disability; ensuring that our website is compliant with applicable standards; and developing policies on ensuring potential employees with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations during the recruitment phase.

Customer Service

The requirements set out under the Customer Service Standard applies to all organizations in Ontario that provide goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties that has at least one employee in Ontario. These standards address business practices and training needed to provide better customer service to people with disabilities.

The Municipality will continue to focus on providing policy, training support and continue to improve services and programs to meet these regulations.

Information and Communications

Information and communications are a large part of the Municipality's daily business. It is because of this that it is so important to ensure that information

and communications are created and presented in a way that considers accessibility.

The Municipality will follow universal design principles and best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communications strategies and products. This includes websites and print communications materials as well as face-to-face interactions. The Municipality is committed to ensuring that information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts based upon the needs of the community and upon request within the constraints of being a small Municipality.

For the purposes of this Policy, reasonable efforts by the Municipality shall be based on the frequency of indications for needs of service, the availability of the service requested, the relative cost compared to the overall Municipal budget, best practices recognized by similar rural Municipalities and Provincial regulation.

Employment

The requirements set out under the Employment Standards apply to paid employees. Through this Standard, employers are mandated to provide for accessibility throughout the entire employment cycle. Incorporating accessibility into all facets of the employment process benefits everyone by broadening the talent pool and assisting employers in supporting and maintaining a skilled workforce.

Design of Public Spaces

The Design of Public Spaces Standard is intended to help remove barriers in buildings and outdoor spaces for persons with disabilities.

Ontario's Design of Public Spaces Standards establish a baseline level of accessibility for service counters, waiting areas with fixed seating and outdoor spaces, such as sidewalks and parking lots. The *Ontario Building Code* covers most requirements for making buildings accessible. These include requirements for ramps, washrooms, power door operators, signs, and pools. Accessibility requirements under the *Ontario Building Code* only apply to new construction. They also apply if an existing building has plans for extensive renovations.

The Design of Public Spaces Standards set requirements to make most external public spaces accessible. Like the Ontario Building Code, the standards only apply to new construction and planned redevelopment of existing public spaces.

The Standard requires Municipalities to consult with people with disabilities in certain circumstances to develop design solutions that reflect local conditions and meet the needs of all users. Consultation is required when an organization plans to construct or redevelop:

- Recreational trails
- Beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Playgrounds and outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Service counters
- Waiting areas with fixed seating
- Sidewalks
- Parking lots

Under the Standard, Municipalities must consult with the public and persons with disabilities in addition to consulting with their Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. This consultation should occur as early as possible in the construction or redevelopment process so that the Municipality can weigh all considerations before decisions are made and design plans are finalized.

The Standard also allows for consultations to be combined on varying projects to allow for efficient and effective decision-making.

Identifying, Removing and Preventing Barriers

A “barrier” means 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.

People with disabilities may face unnecessary barriers almost everywhere: at home, at work, at school, in parks, in recreational facilities, in the streets, in theatres, in stores and restaurants and in municipalities.

The following are examples of types of barriers that may exist in South Dundas:

Barrier Type

Examples

Architectural

A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter or lack of ramps or ramps with improper grade for access.

Attitudinal	A recreation program which can inadvertently discriminate and/or discourages persons with disabilities from participating.
Communication	A Professor who talks loudly when addressing a person with a hearing disability or lack of sensitivity training for front counter Staff to identify persons with disabilities.
Informational	Typefaces that are too small to be read by persons with low vision.
Physical	A door knob that cannot be operated by any person with limited upper mobility.
Policy / Practice	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that persons with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly. Lack of Human Resources policy with respect to hiring persons with disabilities.
Technological	Information on a Municipal website, which cannot be accessed by a person who is blind who has reading software for a computer.

Monitoring Process

In order to ensure that the targets established to address the removal of barriers are completed, annual reviews will be conducted by Municipal staff.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Municipality shall be for a 5- year period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024. It is anticipated that the Plan will be updated biennially. Any outstanding and new issues will be brought forward prior to the annual Budget review.

Appendix 'A' includes the program with respect to the areas identified within the Legislation and Regulations and will be updated as needed.

Appendix 'B' will summarize the results of the review of the Municipal facilities undertaken by Staff. Appendix 'B' will be reviewed and amended when reviews of facilities are completed, work is undertaken or additional information regarding the implementation of the Built Environment regulations is obtained

Appendix "A" Multi-Year Plan

Customer Service

PROGRESS		TIME FRAME
1.	Accessible Customer Service Policy	Completed(to be reviewed in 2019)
2.	Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities.	Completed/ Ongoing
3.	Communicating with a person in a way that respects their disability	Ongoing
4.	Allowing people with disabilities to bring their support person or service animal with them	Ongoing
5.	Provide accessible training for staff, Council and volunteers on how to serve people with disabilities.	Ongoing
6.	Review policies to ensure up to date and for compliance.	Ongoing
FUTURE ACTIVITIES		
1.	Review Accessible Customer Service Policy	1-3 years
2.	Review opportunity for accessible customer service kiosk in reception area at SDMC	1-5 years
3.	Investigate fitness and recreational programs for persons with disabilities	1-5 years

Information and Communication

PROGRESS		TIME FRAME
1.	Communication and Information Policy	Completed
2.	Establish standard for key words and consistent font on website	Completed
3.	2018 Municipal Elections conducted via internet and composite paper ballot. An Accessibility Plan was prepared to coordinate all accessible elections preparations	Completed
4.	Inclusion of information regarding AODA and disability issues in orientation information prepared for new Council	Completed
5.	Review and update the Municipal Multi-Year Accessibility Plan	Reviewed Annually
FUTURE ACTIVITIES		
1.	Visual and audio recording of Council meetings to provide greater accessibility to meetings	1-3 years
2.	Review Communication and Information Policy	1-3 years
3.	Reviewing current processes to receive feedback from the public.	1-3 years
4.	Review current processes on how public can request an alternate format.	1-3 years
5.	Additional staff training for forms of social media, i.e. Facebook and Twitter when posting was also provided	1-3 years
6.	Develop a training strategy to ensure that staff has the knowledge, tools and technical advice to create accessible materials	Ongoing

Employment

PROGRESS		TIME FRAME
1.	Orientation for new staff includes Accessible Customer Service training	Completed as Necessary
2.	Staff Education on Accessible Customer Service Policy and Communication and Information Policy	Ongoing
3.	Defibrillation Training	Ongoing
1.	Train relevant staff on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.	Ongoing
2.	Ensure job advertisements specify that accommodation is available for job applicants with disabilities, if applicable.	Ongoing
3.	Keep employees abreast of changes to policies	Ongoing
4.	Identifying and removing barriers in the workplace	Ongoing
FUTURE ACTIVITIES		
5.	Enhancing workplace emergency responses through individualized emergency response information and assistance, as required.	1-5 years
6.	Review policies for employees returning to work after being away with a disability.	1-5 years
7.	Review policies that take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities during the performance process.	1-5 years
8.	Develop employee individual accommodation plan template for employees with disabilities, as required.	1-5 years

Design of Public Spaces

PROGRESS		TIME FRAME
1.	Incorporation of pedestrian crossovers (pedestrians right of way) at refurbished sidewalks (Fifth Street/Ottawa Street Morrisburg; Island Park Dr. and Lakeview Drive, Iroquois)	Completed

2.	New sidewalks were installed on Ottawa Street, Morrisburg making them 1.8 metres wide and transition points from roadway to sidewalks were also completed	Completed
3.	New sidewalks were installed on Lakeview Drive and Island Park Drive making them 1.5 metres wide and transition points from roadway to sidewalks were also completed	Completed
4.	Sidewalk upgrades at the Morrisburg Plaza to make proper transitioning from sidewalk to parking lot; accessible parking spots were increased	Completed
5.	Play structure areas at Haldane Park, Dunbar and Meadowbrook playgrounds have had replace pea stone replaced with cedar weave mulch safety surface and accessible ramp up to the equipment	Completed
6.	Iroquois Beach – tilted mirrors and lowered soap dispensers in washrooms Morrisburg Beach – tilted mirrors and lowered soap dispensers in washrooms and installed pathway from parking lot to washrooms	Completed
7.	Morrisburg Arena – installed accessible ramp for better access to the arena floor	Completed
8.	Pave trail between Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary and Upper Canada Village with South Stormont.	Completed
FUTURE ACTIVITIES		
1.	Matilda Hall – new accessible doors and refurbish washrooms to meet accessibility standards	2020
2.	Morrisburg Arena – proposed new entrance with easier ramp access, accessible lift to lobby area and a new viewing area in the stands	2020
3.	Line painting at both Plazas to reflect current requirements.	2020
4.	Purchase of mobi-mats for Iroquois and Morrisburg beaches to allow wheelchair access to beach	2020
5.	Accessibility and EV Charging Stations	1-10 years
6.	New crosswalk flashing lights be installed in Iroquois and Morrisburg school crossings	1-3 years

Appendix "B" Municipal Facilities

Targets and Actions and Review Dates

It has been a number of years since a thorough review of our Municipal facilities has taken place. Site inspections are required from both a Building Code and AODA perspective.

It is should be noted that until the Built Environment Standard in the Building Code Act is amended, the barriers identified are only suggestions as the facilities need only to comply with the current Building Code Act. Staff's audit will only identify the existing barriers that warrant further review.

Targets need to be set to help establish when these barriers will be addressed or actions taken to address preventative measures. Under the following headings there may be numerous barriers and the corrective measures may be grouped together into one section.

An internal tracking system will be kept for status of each actions identified in The Plan and will be reviewed by the corresponding departments. Targets are to be completed based on priorities and budget allocations and the target time frames will be approximations, not exact dates.

EXAMPLE:

Facility: XYZ

Type of Barrier	Barrier	Strategy for Removal or Prevention	Target Time Frame
Physical/ Informational	No accessible parking spaces	Implement accessible parking space with accompanying vertical sign, markings on pavement and access aisle close to entrance	1-2 years
Architectural	Washroom is not wheelchair accessible	Renovate to meet standards	1-5 years
Informational	No plans for emergency evacuation	Establish plan for emergency evacuation	1-3 years