

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2020-2025



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Table of Contents

1.0	Mission Statement	3
2.0	Definition of Persons with Disabilities.....	3
3.0	AODA Accessibility Plan Objectives	3
4.0	Accessibility Legislation.....	4
	The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.....	4
	The AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code	4
	Federal Accessibility Legislation – Accessible Canada Act (Bill C-81).....	5
	Jurisdiction of the Plan	5
	Executive Summary	5
	Integrated Accessibility Standards (Regulation 191/11)	6
	Customer Service	6
	Information and Communications	6
	Employment.....	7
	Design of Public Spaces	7
	Identifying, Removing and Preventing Barriers	8
	Monitoring Process.....	8
5.0	Summary of Actions 2020 & 2021	9
	Customer Service	9
	Information and Communications	9
	Employment.....	9
	Design of Public Spaces	10
6.0	Summary of Proposed Actions 2022 - 2025.....	11
	Customer Service	11
	Information and Communications	11
	Employment.....	11
	Design of Public Spaces	12

1.0 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.

2.0 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”).

3.0 AODA Accessibility Plan Objectives

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers.

Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of South Dundas has authorized Staff and the Accessibility Advisory Committee to assist with fulfilling the requirements and intent of the Act by performing the following duties:

- Work with staff in the preparation of the Municipality’s multi-year “Accessibility Plan”;
- Advise on accessibility issues related to the operation, purchase or lease of buildings or structures or parts of buildings or structures used as Municipality buildings with special attention to those that the public are encouraged to visit or use as a place of employment;
- Research and report on specific matters; and,
- Perform other functions that are specified in the Regulations of the *“Ontarians with Disabilities Act”*.

Improving accessibility is important for all residents of The Municipality 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. In an effort to provide a proactive and planned approach to this significant sociological change, the Municipality of South Dundas will strive toward:

The continual improvement of access to Municipally owned facilities and services for citizens and staff with disabilities;

- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its Annual Accessibility Plans;
- The provision of quality services to members of the community with disabilities; Seeking and responding to the input and suggestions made by members of the disabled community;
- Encouraging the local business sector to provide accessible services;
- Providing equal access for all citizens to maintain a high quality of life; and,
- Providing public education and awareness of the benefits of inclusion for all people.

The Municipality of South Dundas's Accessibility Plan was prepared by Municipal Staff with input from members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The plan describes measures currently in place, and measures that will be taken over the next five years to comply with new and emerging legislation. It will assist Council with the identification of barriers, helping Council prioritize for their removal, as the budget permits. This Plan will be a communication tool for residents, informing them of strides taken in the removal and prevention of barriers within the Municipality, thus creating a community inclusive and accessible to all.

The Municipality is committed to the continual improvement of barrier free access to municipal facilities and services.

4.0 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:

<u>Barrier Type</u>	<u>Examples</u>
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.

5.0 Summary of Actions 2020 & 2021

Customer Service

Location	Action
South Dundas Municipal Center	Installation of an accessible customer service kiosk in reception area at SDMC
N/A	All current and new employees provided with mandatory training AODA training

Information and Communications

Location	Action
N/A	Installation of an accessible customer service kiosk in reception area at SDMC
South Dundas Municipal Center	Upgrades to the Council Chambers to allow for the recording of video and audio of all council meetings. Additionally allows for delegations be completed remotely
N/A	Staff training and creation of guidelines on the creation of accessible documents

Employment

Location	Action
N/A	Ensuring that accessibility accommodations are available throughout recruitment and that all offers of employment include opportunity for any accessibility requirements
N/A	Completion of interviews through both in-person and virtual means (depending on COVID restrictions)

Design of Public Spaces

Location	Action
Morrisburg Waterfront	Installation of new street and pathway lighting along Cruickshank Way and Waterfront walking paths
Iroquois Waterfront	Installation of new 1.5m wide asphalt pathways at the Iroquois Waterfront
Morrisburg Waterfront	Installation of additional and replacement of all pathways with new widen pathways
Iroquois Campground	Construction of a new Campground Administration and Recreation Facility. Complete with four accessible washroom and showers
Matilda Hall	Upgrades to the parking lot including the installation of 2 AODA accessible parking spaces.
Morrisburg Plaza and Streetscape	Installation of the Morrisburg round-a-bout and the installation of new sidewalks and pathways along Cty. Rd 2 and Ottawa St. in Morrisburg.
South Dundas Municipal Center	Refurbishment and upgrades to the elevator at the municipal office
Matilda Hall	Installation of new entrance doors to meet all AODA requirements
Iroquois Outdoor Rink	Construction of a new outdoor rink facility complete with 2 AODA compliant washrooms
Morrisburg/Iroquois Street	Annual replacement of sidewalks in the Villages of Iroquois and Morrisburg as per the Municipal Sidewalk Management Plan. Replacing uneven, undersized, and deteriorating sidewalks
Haldane Park	Installation of AODA compliant swing along with accessible entrance to play area
Morrisburg/Iroquois Streets	Installation of a visual signal at the crosswalks on Ottawa St in Morrisburg and Elizabeth Dr in Iroquois

6.0 Summary of Proposed Actions 2022 - 2025

Customer Service

Location	Action
N/A	Annual reviews of all policy related to accessibility and distribution to staff
N/A	Continued training of all new hires with respect to current AODA standards using Municipal Health & Safety programming
N/A	Preparation of a new Recreation Master Plan with a 10-year outlook plan. Using this to aide in updates to the recreation programming including ensuring accessibility within the programs
N/A	2022 Election conducted via internet and composite paper ballot. Ensure that the election location and procedure has is in conformance with the Municipality Accessibility Plan

Information and Communications

Location	Action
N/A	Rollout of the new Municipality of South Dundas website and ensuring all new/existing content meets the requirements of AODA
N/A	Research the possibility of using a mass notification system to all direct contact with all local residences to ensure fast, effect communication to all residences
N/A	Implementation of new complaint, feedback and public information sessions using alternative methods such as online forums. Using new software and the "Speak up South Dundas" software.

Employment

Location	Action
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N/A	Hiring of an HR Coordinator for the Municipality to aide in the training, hiring and records of all employees
N/A	Continue to ensure that accessibility accommodations are available throughout recruitment process and that all offers of employment include opportunity for any accessibility requirements
N/A	Develop employee individual accommodation plan template for employees with disabilities, as required.

Design of Public Spaces

Location	Action
Morrisburg Waterfront	Installation of additional lighting at the Morrisburg Waterfront
Iroquois/Morrisburg Waterfront	Procurement of AODA compliant picnic tables for the high traffic areas of the parks
Morrisburg Waterfront	Upgrades to the Morrisburg Beach and Dock washroom to bring the facilities up to the requirements of AODA/OBC
Iroquois Campground	Construction of a new parking lot including AODA required parking spaces.
Matilda Hall	Upgrades to the washroom facilities to improve accessibility
Morrisburg Arena	Re-Design of facility entrance to improve the accessibility of the ice surface and various areas within the Arena
Iroquois/Morrisburg Beach	Procure accessibility mats for the Morrisburg and Iroquois beaches to allow for easier access to the water
Iroquois/Morrisburg Plaza	Begin repaving of the plaza parking lots. Ensure that parking and signage is in conformance with AODA requirements
Morrisburg/Iroquois Street	Continue annual replacement of sidewalks in the Villages of Iroquois and Morrisburg as per the Municipal Sidewalk Management Plan. Replacing uneven, undersized, and deteriorating sidewalks

Haldane Park

Installation of AODA compliant swing
along with accessible entrance to play
area