



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 8, 2026

Here are the highlights from the South Dundas Council meeting held October 8, 2026.

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Council Supports Funding Application for Iroquois Civic Centre Renovations

South Dundas Council has endorsed an application to the Province's Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) for renovations to the Iroquois Civic Centre.

The Municipality will apply under Stream 1 (Repair and Rehabilitation), which supports projects that extend the lifespan of existing community sport and recreation facilities and improve programming and accessibility. The application deadline is December 22, 2026. The CSRIF is a cost-sharing program that covers up to 50% of eligible project costs. Staff determined that Stream 2 (New Builds) was not a fit, as no project is currently shovel-ready.

The Civic Centre, which also houses the Iroquois fire hall and library, was identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a facility with untapped potential as a community hub, due to its undersized meeting space and community hall, aging amenities and an underused stage. A 2024 architectural study explored modernizing the building with a gymnasium-type space, multi-purpose rooms, an upgraded kitchen and washrooms, and expanded parking, at an estimated cost of \$1.8 million to \$2.5 million.

If the application is successful, the Municipality would be responsible for the remaining \$900,000 to \$1.5 million. Construction is not expected before 2028, with funding required in 2028/2029.

Next Phase of Dutch Meadows Subdivision

Council has approved By-law 2026-75, authorizing a Subdivision Agreement and a Pre-Servicing Agreement with Swank Construction Ltd. for the next construction phase of the Dutch Meadows Subdivision.

The next phase, known as Phase 2A, will include 15 single detached lots and 6 semi-detached lots, the connection to County Road 2, and a second stormwater pond. It follows Phase 1, which received final approval in 2021 and included 28 lots, a pumping station, and a stormwater pond. Detailed engineering plans for Phase 2A have been reviewed and accepted by the Municipality's consulting engineers, staff, South Nation Conservation, and the SDG Counties engineering department.



The Subdivision Agreement is a condition of the draft plan approval issued by the United Counties of SDG and ensures all municipal requirements are met, including the installation of roads and services and the posting of financial securities. The Pre-Servicing Agreement allows the developer to begin work on portions of the underground municipal infrastructure ahead of the subdivision agreement's execution, an increasingly common approach that helps keep projects moving efficiently.

Council also directed staff to clear the remaining conditions with the United Counties of SDG.

Update on Iroquois Locks Lease and Future of the Site

South Dundas Council has received an update on the Municipality's lease of a portion of the Iroquois Locks site, following a dispute with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) over the Municipality's maintenance obligations. SLSMC's new interpretation of the lease made mowing within the leased area a municipal responsibility, and when talks reached an impasse, Council moved to terminate the lease effective November 29, 2026.

After a September 8 meeting between Mayor Jason Broad, staff, and SLSMC representatives, both parties expressed interest in an expanded lease rather than termination. SLSMC recommended updating the existing lease instead of signing a new one, since newer lease language places additional burdens on leaseholders and the property is going through Transport Canada's disposal process. The terms staff have identified for an updated lease include:

- The Municipality taking responsibility for the entire grassed area, with sole control over and access to it
- The space remaining open for passive public use, with occasional restrictions for revenue-generating events such as weddings, funerals, concerts and transient camping
- The canteen being demolished and the washrooms repaired before the updated lease takes effect
- SLSMC continuing to pay for utilities, and the Municipality not taking on responsibility for the parking lot or capital improvements

The termination remains in effect for now, and staff expect to extend the date to allow the updated lease to be finalized for Council's formal consideration.

Transport Canada has declared the property surplus to its needs and has responded to the Municipality's expression of interest. The property will first be assessed for housing suitability by Build Canada Homes. If it is found unsuitable, Transport Canada will complete its due diligence and then seek expressions of public purpose interest, with municipalities among those given priority. The Municipality's interest has been noted, and Transport Canada will advise on next steps.



Staff will include funding in the 2027 budget to mow the full leased area. The Municipality plans to develop business cases for revenue-generating opportunities in 2027, with implementation in 2028.

Move to In-House Utility Billing

Rideau St. Lawrence (RSL), a company in which the Municipality holds just under 34% ownership, has provided meter reading and billing services since 2005. The Municipality has already given notice that it will take over billing, a change recommended in the business case for the new Customer Service Representative position approved during 2026 budget deliberations. Staff expect the move to bring direct access to account information, improved cashflow, cost savings, and faster response times on account issues.

Staff are working with RSL to transfer data and with Central Square, the Municipality's accounting software provider, to set up the utility billing module at no additional software cost. Staff are also reviewing meter reading, which was originally expected to stay with RSL in 2027. Options under consideration include purchasing a new logging meter reader, contracting another provider, or hiring part-time contract staff, and staff are also looking at replacing aging water meters, which could eventually lead to smart meters that eliminate in-person readings.

Costs for the changeover include an unbudgeted meter reader at about \$8,700 plus freight and HST, and an estimated \$10,000 to \$15,000 for software setup and training. Both will be covered within the water and wastewater budgets. The current RSL contract costs approximately \$170,000 per year, and staff anticipate savings once the scope of any ongoing reading services is settled.

Update on By-law Enforcement, Clean Yards, and Waterfront Park Patrols

Council received an update on property standards and Clean Yards enforcement, along with the results of this summer's weekend by-law patrols at the waterfront parks.

So far in 2026, By-law Enforcement has managed 68 Clean Yards cases and 22 Property Standards cases, with 59 files resolved and closed at the time of the report. Staff have worked with many residents to facilitate cleanups and repairs and have pursued legal action where owners have not progressed toward compliance. The updated Clean Yards By-law, passed in November 2025 and amended in April 2026 to address outdoor vermin, allowed staff to quickly resolve a rat infestation at a Morrisburg property and has since been used in other vermin cases.

Weekend patrols at the waterfront parks were intended to educate the public on permitted uses and provide enforcement outside the regular work week. Staff consider the program a success: post-weekend garbage dropped by about 50%, with 3-4 pickup truck loads replacing five dump trailer loads from the previous year. Extended-stay beach users also arrived later in the day. Staff see opportunities to stagger patrol times and to increase coverage during the



Quebec Construction Holiday, when weekday beach use was higher than usual. Parks, Recreation and Facilities staff report that the officers made a positive difference to the experience of park users.

Wages for the weekend patrols came to \$6,600 against a \$5,000 budget, which staff say was offset by the improved beach experience and reduced cleanup costs. Where the Municipality incurs costs or legal expenses to achieve compliance on a property, it seeks to recover them, so they are not borne by taxpayers.

Summer Recreation Programs and Options for 2027

South Dundas Council has received a review of the 2026 Kids on the Move Summer Camp and the Waterfront Swim Lesson and Lifeguarding Program, along with options to guide staff in preparing the 2027 draft budget. Because 2026 is an election year, final decisions will rest with the incoming Council during budget deliberations.

Kids on the Move ran at full capacity over its 8-week season, hosted entirely at the Iroquois Civic Centre because of the Morrisburg Arena renovation. The camp served 63 children through 207 weekly registrations, and 152 registrations used extended before and after care. A total of 46 registrants remained on the waitlist, and staff note that families increasingly rely on the camp as essential summer childcare. Council was presented with three options: keeping the current single-site model, expanding to two sites in Morrisburg and Iroquois, or adding staff to a single site to take in more campers.

On the waterfront, 67 children and youth took part in swim lessons across four two-week sessions at the Morrisburg and Iroquois beaches, for 105 registrations. Six seasonal lifeguards were employed, short of the 10 budgeted because of ongoing recruitment challenges. Water quality was strong, with no lesson cancellations and only four closure days at Morrisburg Beach, when lessons were moved to Iroquois. Staff presented four options for 2027: maintaining the current service, waiving resident lesson fees (about \$6,000 to \$6,500 in lost revenue), exploring a partnership with a third-party provider such as the YMCA, or expanding to seven-day lifeguard coverage with evening lessons, which would add an estimated \$60,000 to \$70,000 in wages.

Recap of Committees of Council for 2022-2026 Term

With the municipal election set for October 26, 2026, South Dundas Council has received a recap of the work of its Committees of Council over the current term. The report recognizes the many volunteers who have given their time, ideas and effort to the community, and will serve as a reference for the incoming Council as it considers the renewal and composition of committees for the 2026-2030 term.

Highlights from the term include:



- **Economic and Community Development Committee:** Formed by combining the former economic development and tourism committees, it painted and relocated the pop-up shops, hosted three Awards of Excellence Galas, installed and revitalized Waterfront Trail wayfinding signs, took part in physician recruitment, and is working on the revitalization of the Iroquois Lock mural.
- **Waterfront Committee and Sub-Committees:** The Morrisburg sub-committee delivered projects such as a viewing platform, a veterans crosswalk, an accessibility mat and chair for the beach, and community events including a concert series, movie nights and a Christmas tree bonfire. The Iroquois sub-committee delivered a pathway lighting project, an arboretum, bird boxes and beautification work.
- **Environmental Advisory Committee:** Formed in 2026, it launched a rain barrel program and conducted a community survey at It's All About the River.
- **Community Improvement Plan Review Committee:** It reviewed grant and loan applications for façade, signage and awning improvements, and commercial improvement loans.
- **South Branch Community Fund Committee:** It recommended funding for projects including renovations, new flooring, and repainted pickleball courts at Matilda Hall, as well as the Matilda Hall roof.
- **Cemetery Advisory Committee:** It produced a Cemetery Guide, held the first annual cemetery spring cleanup at Dundela Cemetery, and provides advice on the maintenance of municipal cemeteries.

Update on Parks and Recreation Master Plan Progress

Council received an update on progress under the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a 10-year roadmap (2022-2031) completed in September 2022 under the vision of improving quality of life through active and healthy opportunities for all. The report includes a status table covering all 95 of the plan's recommendations, noting which are complete, ongoing or still to be done. Staff note that progress has been made within the limits of the municipal budget and operational capacity.

Highlights include:

- **Parks and trails:** Parkland will be acquired through the new Merkley Oaks subdivision in Iroquois to serve north Iroquois, and new trails have opened in DuPont Park. Pathway lighting has been installed in Iroquois and Morrisburg, and more than 1,000 trees were planted at the landfill in 2025. An arboretum was established at the Iroquois Waterfront.
- **Facilities:** Entrance and accessibility improvements are underway at the Morrisburg Arena, which now has LiveBarn streaming. A schematic design study for the Iroquois



Civic Centre has been completed, and The Hub in Iroquois now offers flexible space for programs and services.

- **Outdoor recreation:** Construction of a new multi-use pad at Earl Baker Park began in 2026, supported by nearly \$75,000 in community fundraising. Resurfacing at J.C. Whitteker Park, funded by an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, is planned for 2027, and work continues on a new multi-use pad at Haldane Park. A new play structure is being installed at Iroquois Beach with the Iroquois-Matilda Lions Club.
- **People and programs:** The Recreation Coordinator position became full-time in 2023, supporting expanded programming and stronger ties with community groups. The Municipality also invests about \$7,000 a year in waterfront safety improvements.

Several items remain outstanding, including an Active Transportation Strategy, park and trail signage, a skate park, a pool feasibility study, and an updated business plan and capital reserve for a future indoor multi-use facility. Staff recommend a formal update to the Master Plan at its midpoint, expected in 2027-2028.

Final Strategic Plan Update for the 2022-2026 Term

South Dundas Council has received a final progress report on its Strategic Plan, along with an overview of the capital work delivered over the term. The update covers the plan's three pillars and closes by thanking staff, volunteers and community partners for their work.

Operational Excellence: The Municipality has modernized services with tools such as Cloudpermit for building and by-law services, online burn permits and marriage licences, a new VOIP phone system, and PerfectMind registration for recreation. Business continuity work included cross-training, upgraded radios, and extended Monday to Thursday hours. Long-term planning milestones include an updated Asset Management Plan, a 2025 Road Needs Study, and a Development Charges Study, and diversion efforts extended the operational life of the Matilda Landfill by 20 years.

A Growing, Connected Community: Progress includes arena improvements, planning for the Iroquois Civic Centre, the opening of the Youth Wellness Hub, and revitalization of the Iroquois Plaza. The Municipality also established the Environmental Advisory Committee and the Youth Working Group, and expanded its rain barrel program, recreation programming, and support for community events.

Sustainable and Dynamic Growth: The Municipality completed a consolidated Zoning By-law, subdivision guidelines, water and wastewater capacity studies for Morrisburg and Iroquois, and several surplus land sales. It secured \$11.8 million in grant and government funding from 2023 to 2026, including \$9.7 million in stable annual funding and about \$886,000 from eight project and program grants. The largest project grant was \$477,181 from the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund for the Morrisburg Arena entrance renovation.



Capital delivered: From 2023 to 2025, the Municipality invested \$11.6 million in more than 200 capital projects and purchases, with annual spending growing 66% from \$2.7 million in 2023 to \$4.5 million in 2025. Roads, bridges and sidewalks accounted for \$3.32 million, followed by fleet and equipment at \$2.71 million. Signature projects include:

- The \$1.2 million Iroquois Plaza revitalization
- A new fire pumper/tanker and full replacement of breathing apparatus, together worth \$1.1 million
- The \$564,000 replacement of the Morrisburg wastewater plant's UV system

Work continues in 2026 on roads, fleet, the Morrisburg Plaza and Arena entrance, and park, water and wastewater projects.

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Upcoming Regular Council Meetings

- November 2, 2026