The Municipality of
SOUTH DUNDAS

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Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 3, 2026

Here are the highlights from the South Dundas Council meeting held November 2, 2026.

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Matilda Landfill Holiday Hours

Council approved reduced hours for the Matilda Landfill Site over the 2026 Christmas holidays, allowing staff to spend time with family and friends.

The site, which normally operates Tuesday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 24, Tuesday, December 29, and Tuesday, January 5. It will be closed on all other days between December 25 and January 4.

Council approved similar reduced hours in 2025 with no reported issues or complaints. This year's schedule includes an additional open day between Boxing Day and New Year's Day to give residents a chance to use the facility. The reduced hours have no budget impact, as staff will use vacation allocation.

Updated Personnel Policy

Council adopted By-law 2026-77, updating the Municipality's Personnel Policy Manual (Policy 3-11) for the first time since the current version took effect in 2013. The updated manual takes effect January 1, 2027.

CAO Benjamin de Haan's report noted that the changes are largely housekeeping: they reflect Employment Standards Act requirements and practices already in place, and keep South Dundas aligned with the SDG Counties manual so the two can share human resources expertise. The update does not introduce new benefits or entitlements for employees. Council had reviewed the changes in detail at its October 7 meeting and provided input that shaped the revisions.

Council also rescinded five outdated policies that are now covered by legislation or other municipal policies: Convention Expenses, Hand-held Devices, Telecommuting, Mandatory Face Covering, and COVID-19 Workplace Safety.

The update has no direct budget impact.

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Council Approves Corrected 2026 Excluded Expenses Report

Council approved the corrected 2026 Excluded Expenses Report, which was first presented at the October 7 meeting when the 2025 version of the schedule was attached in error.

Under Ontario Regulation 284/09, municipalities may exclude three non-cash expenses from their annual budgets: amortization, post-employment benefits, and landfill closure and post-closure costs. When they do, Council must adopt a report outlining the impact of those exclusions. Since 2009, public sector accounting standards have required municipalities to record the cost of tangible capital assets and related amortization in their annual financial statements, but they do not require budgets to be prepared on the same basis. South Dundas, like most municipalities, continues to prepare its budget on a cash basis, and the tax rate is set without including these non-cash items.

The report has no direct financial impact on the municipal budget. The attached reconciliation shows that, on an accounting basis, the 2026 budget reflects roughly $2.4 million in amortization expense and an annual surplus of about $914,000.

Open Air Fire By-law Updates

Council adopted By-law 2026-78, an updated Open Air Fire By-law that replaces the 2024 version (By-law 2024-37).

Fire staff described the changes as minor and aimed at making the by-law easier to administer. The most notable change for residents is the removal of the time restriction on recreational fires, which were previously limited to between 5 p.m. and midnight. Residents can now enjoy recreational fires in the morning, afternoon or later into the evening, though they are still expected to be mindful of their neighbours.

Other updates include:

- Applicants for a burn permit on land they do not own must provide the property owner’s written consent at the time of application.
- Agricultural Burn Permits can now cover multiple properties belonging to the same farming operation.
- Holders of a higher class of burn permit may also conduct lower-class fires, provided they follow the conditions for that type of fire.
- The “Brush Fire and Burn Drum Fire” permit has been renamed “Rural Fire Permit,” the commonly used name.
- A spelling error (“windows” instead of “windrows”) was corrected.

Fire Senior Officers reviewed the changes and raised no objections.

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Stampville Road Streetlight Considerations

Council received an update from Director of Transportation Jeff Hyndman on yard lights located on private property along Stampville Road, which the Municipality has paid to operate since amalgamation.

The lights date back to the former Matilda Township, whose council assumed all Stampville Road streetlights even though some sit on private property and serve individual homes rather than the road. Several no longer work, and residents have been asking for repairs. In May, Council directed staff to tell residents the Municipality will no longer maintain them. Hydro One has since confirmed it will not transfer ownership of the lights to residential properties.

On October 14, staff wrote to affected property owners with three choices: leave the light in place until it fails, after which the Municipality will remove it at no cost; replace it with a solar light purchased by the owner, with the Municipality covering installation; or have it removed entirely. The pole remains in place in every case. Residents were asked to respond by November 6, and staff will proceed with the first option where no reply is received. One response has been received so far, from the owner of 10831 Stampville Road, whose light is on their own hydro bill and requires no action.

If the Municipality were to cover the cost of a solar light head and arm, the estimated cost is about $3,000.

South Dundas Expands Snowsuit Fund Program to House of Lazarus Warming Hub

Council received an update on the Snowsuit Fund Program, which is expanding to include the House of Lazarus Warming Hub as a second registration location and as the new home for storing and distributing snowsuits.

The Municipality has supported the program for many years, collecting donated snowsuits to help local families whose children need one for the winter. Until now, Community Foodshare has handled intake and income verification, while the Municipality has stored the suits, received donations, and served as the pick-up location. Staff noted that the Municipality ends up with a surplus of donated suits each year that are never claimed.

Under the new arrangement, residents can register through either Community Foodshare (28 Ottawa Street) or the House of Lazarus Warming Hub (22 High Street). Registered families can pick up their snowsuits at the Warming Hub, Monday to Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and the program will run throughout the winter. Each eligible family may receive up to two snowsuits per year. If a requested size is not in stock, the Warming Hub will place an order and contact the family when it is ready.

House of Lazarus is well placed to deliver the program because many eligible families already use its services, making access easier and more familiar.

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Matilda Memorial Park Shed Replacement After Fire

Council received an update on the replacement of the storage shed at Matilda Memorial Park in Brinston, which was destroyed by fire on August 28, 2026. The structure and everything stored inside were a total loss.

Staff notified the OPP and the Municipality's insurer immediately, and worked with the Matilda Memorial Recreation Committee to inventory the lost contents. Site cleanup, debris removal and preparation of a new stone base pad have been completed. A new 10' x 14' skid shed has been ordered, with delivery expected within two to three weeks. Once it is installed, staff will purchase replacement contents, including outdoor rink supplies, a snowblower and recreation equipment, in time for winter operations and the community outdoor rink.

The total cost to return the site to pre-incident use is estimated at about $17,000 plus HST. Because the Municipality's insurance carries a $10,000 deductible, a claim would pay out only about $6,000 to $7,000 and could raise future premiums. Staff, in consultation with the CAO, are therefore not filing a claim unless the OPP investigation links the fire to a broader incident across municipal properties. The unbudgeted cost will be absorbed within the facilities budget and may result in a year-end deficit in that account.

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Upcoming Regular Council Meetings

- November 16, 2026 – Inaugural Meeting
- December 16, 2026 – Regular Meeting