



Township of South Stormont Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2026-2030

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Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council, I am pleased to present the Township of South Stormont's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, reaffirming our commitment to building an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming community for all.

Accessibility remains a key priority for Council, guiding how we design our facilities, deliver services, and engage with residents. This Plan builds on the progress we have made and outlines our continued efforts to identify, remove, and prevent barriers across the organization.

Through thoughtful planning and collaboration, we are ensuring that accessibility remains embedded in our decision-making and day-to-day operations. Together, we will continue to foster a community where everyone can participate fully and with dignity.

Thank you to all who contributed to the development of this Plan and to those who continue to support accessibility initiatives across South Stormont.



Commitment to Accessibility

The Township of South Stormont is committed to providing accessible and inclusive services and facilities to all people, including people with disabilities. By enabling accessibility for all, the Township seeks to identify and remove barriers to accessibility and prevent the creation of new barriers. The Township is working to provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of all South Stormont residents, employees and visitors. The Township of South Stormont is dedicated to ensuring that it meets its AODA legislated obligations in a timely manner and that compliance with these standards is maintained.

The Township of South Stormont 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.

Background

Under the AODA, municipalities are required to develop and implement multi-year accessibility plans. The Township of South Stormont's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how the Township will advance accessibility across key areas, including general accessibility, information and communications, employment, transportation, the built environment, and customer service.

While the Township is currently compliant with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, this Plan focuses on maintaining compliance while advancing accessibility by design beyond legislative requirements. Covering the period from 2026 to 2030, the Plan identifies both new and ongoing priorities to support the continued identification, removal, and prevention of barriers.

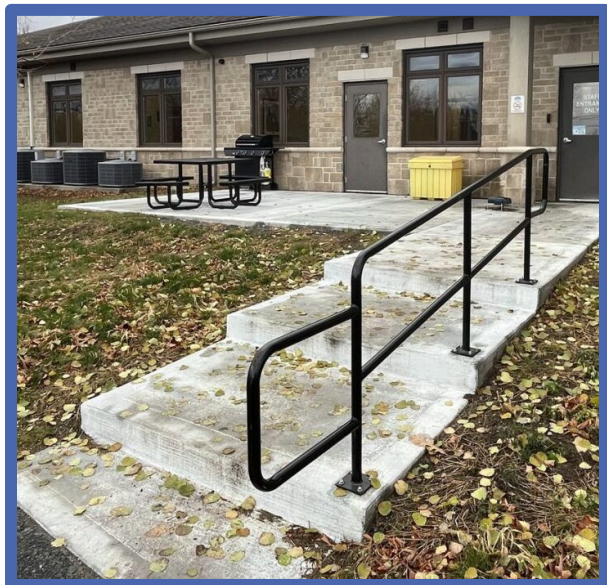
This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan has been informed by residents of the Township of South Stormont through public engagement, the ongoing work of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and consultation with municipal departments. It is a living document that will be reviewed and updated every five years, with annual status reports prepared and shared on the Township's website to highlight progress and demonstrate continued commitment to the actions outlined in the plan.

Highlights from Past Plans

Over the past decade, the Township of South Stormont has made significant progress in advancing accessibility through the implementation of successive multi-year accessibility plans. Key accomplishments have included the completion of AODA and Human Rights Code training for staff, improvements to digital accessibility through website upgrades and the remediation of online documents, and the installation of accessible features across municipal facilities such as signage, designated parking, emergency call systems, and accessible washrooms.

Infrastructure investments have enhanced accessibility in public spaces, including the construction of accessible ramps, porches, walkways, trails, and parking areas, as well as upgrades to recreational amenities and municipal buildings.

The Township has also strengthened its approach to accessibility planning by conducting audits, incorporating public consultation, and embedding accessibility considerations into capital projects and facility design, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for all residents and visitors.



Did you know?

The Township of South Stormont has improved its website to meet accessibility standards, making it easier for residents to access information using assistive technologies.

Key Terms and Legal Framework

The AODA 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 includes, but is not limited to:
 - 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 in Ontario

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations

In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the AODA. Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities 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 standards are contained in one regulation called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, also known as the IASR. The IASR is made up of five standards and several general requirements that apply to the following:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment and Design of Public Spaces

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 Township of South Stormont 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 AODA 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 Act's stated purpose 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.

Consultation

Consultation Process for this Accessibility Plan

In 2025, the Township began the planning the process to develop the next Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. From the beginning, the intention of this process was to ensure that consultation was thorough, community-informed, expert-guided, and accessible.

A consultant assisted with the development process. Four focus groups were convened. Each was facilitated and documented. Subject matter experts from all areas of the municipality were involved and provided valuable information on the areas of HR, IT, Communications and Facilities. A focus group of residents with lived experience of disability was also convened. Valuable and actionable information and opinions were provided. Further, a survey was conducted on the experience of people with disability within the Township.

The plan has also been reviewed by the SDG Accessibility Advisory Committee, a joint committee composed of one representative from each of the lower-tier municipalities within the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

Other Consultation

Consultation is a part of our various projects including development projects.

Consultation may take the form of open houses, surveys, on-line discussions, individual meetings and other "information sharing" methods. Our goal is to continuously improve the quality and quantity of public consultation, making it accessible for all to participate.

Multi-Year Plan Goals

General Accessibility

The general accessibility requirements establish a consistent, organization wide approach to accessibility across all Township services, programs, and operations by ensuring compliance with AODA through policies, training, and a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, while supporting the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers and embedding accessibility considerations into planning, decision-making, and service delivery across all departments.

Legislative Requirements General Accessibility	Actions
• Develop accessibility policies and statement of organizational commitment • Make policies publicly available	• Adopt Corporate Accessibility Policy • The Corporate Accessibility Policy will be made available on the Township website
• Develop Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee • Post Plan in an accessible format on the Township's website • Prepare annual status reports	• Township of South Stormont Multi-Year Accessibility Plan developed and posted on the Township's website • Annual status update posted on the Township's website
• Report AODA compliance to the province	• Report submitted to the province bi-annually
• Ensure that training is provided on the IASR and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities	• New staff and volunteers must complete training as part of their orientation process • Training records continue to be maintained by the HR division of the Office of the CAO as required through regulation

Information and Communication

Accessible information and communication are essential to the Township's operations. The Township is committed to ensuring all information and communications are accessible to persons with disabilities by applying universal design principles and best practices across digital, print, and in-person interactions, while continuously improving accessibility through consultation, staff training, and responsive service.

Legislative Requirements Information and Communication

Actions

• Provide or arrange for documents or information to be made available in accessible formats or with communication supports	• Develop a guideline for accessible formatting, clear language and accessible illustrations/graphics • Develop a resource list of vendors of accessible formats and communication supports
• Accessible website and web content	• Evaluate on-line services for accessibility, i.e. job advertisements, property tax e-payment. • Provide education/skills building opportunities of accessible website requirements to those with on-going responsibility for website maintenance • Ensure all content on the website is accessible-develop a process for checking WCAG 2.0
• Incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so	• Review existing Procurement Policy and modify as required to reflect any changes to the Act and/or its regulations

Employment

Employment Standards apply to all paid employees and requires employers to ensure accessibility at every stage of the employment cycle including recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, career development, and retention. This means employers must provide accommodations, accessible job postings, and inclusive workplace practices. By embedding accessibility into each step, organizations can attract a wider range of talent, foster a more inclusive work environment, and support the growth and success of all employees. These efforts not only fulfill legal obligations but also strengthen the workforce and benefit the entire organization.

Legislative Requirements Employment	Actions
• Recruitment, selection and notification	• Ensure job postings are in an accessible format on the website • Establish a program/resource for providing accessible employment requirements to all managers, supervisors and/or those involved in the interview process • Review job descriptions to identify any accessibility barriers, including unneeded job requirements
• Performance management, career development and redevelopment	• Review HR policies for accessibility issues- including policies related to performance management, career development, accommodations
• Inform employees of supports	• Communicate the Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) process to employees.

• Documented individual accommodation plans	• Review of the IAP Process and identify improvements that can be made
• Standards review	• Monitor changes to legislation and modify training materials as required



Transportation

The Transportation Standard only applies if the municipality provides or regulates transportation services, therefore, Transportation is not included in the South Stormont Accessibility Plan.

Design of Public Spaces

The Design of Public Spaces Standard aims to remove barriers in buildings and outdoor spaces for people with disabilities. In Ontario, these standards set minimum accessibility requirements for areas such as service counters, waiting areas with fixed seating, sidewalks, parks, trails and parking lots.

The Ontario Building Code also includes accessibility requirements for features like ramps, washrooms, power door operators, signs, and pools. These requirements apply to new construction and major renovations. Both the Design of Public Spaces Standard and the Ontario Building Code focus on new builds and planned redevelopments. Municipalities must consult with people with disabilities during the planning process to ensure that design solutions meet local needs and conditions.

The Township of South Stormont is committed to:

- Consulting with residents with disabilities early in the design or redevelopment process.
- Applying accessibility standards to all new public spaces and major renovations.
- Seeking feedback to ensure that public spaces are usable by everyone

Legislative Requirements Design of Public Spaces (DOPS)

Actions

• Consultation	• Continue to consult the SDG Accessibility Committee and the public and people with disabilities in the following areas: ◦ Recreational Trails ◦ Outdoor Play Spaces
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	○ Rest Areas on Exterior Paths of Travel ○ On Street Parking
• Recreational Trails	• Continue to apply all technical requirements of DOPS to trails access routes including boardwalks and ramps • Trail head signage will continue to incorporate the requirements of the regulation
• Outdoor Public Access Eating Areas	• Continue to ensure that a minimum of 20 per cent of outdoor tables are accessible
• Outdoor Play Spaces	• The Township has an ongoing commitment to ensure that our playgrounds meet or exceed the most current CSA safety standards as well as the AODA, Design of Public Spaces
• Exterior Paths of Travel	• The Township will continue to apply all technical requirements of DOPS when constructing new or redeveloping exterior paths of travel, including depressed curbs, curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals
• Accessible Parking	• The Township will continue to apply requirements of accessible parking spaces • The Township will consult regarding the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces
• Obtaining Services	• The Township will continue to apply all technical requirements of

	DOPS when constructing new or renovating existing service counters and waiting areas
Maintenance Planning	Communication regarding preventative maintenance procedures and temporary disruptions to accessible parts of the Township's facilities will continue to be provided through various media. Signage will be provided at locations where appropriate
Review of Existing Public Spaces	- Develop a team to conduct facility assessments to identify barriers to access- including barriers for those with physical, vision, hearing, learning, cognitive, and mental health disabilities - Township Office and Community Hall: address contrast issues, functionality of power door operators and related items more fully outlined in the Assessment Report November, 2025 - Long Sault Arena: address exterior walkway, accessible picnic tables, entrance and related items more fully outlined in the Assessment Report November, 2025 - Conduct Facility Assessment at St. Andrews West Fire Hall - Conduct Facility Assessment at St. Andrews West Pool - Conduct Facility Assessment at South Stormont Seniors' Support Centre



Did you know?

South Stormont is committed to ensuring its playgrounds meet current safety and accessibility standards, helping create inclusive spaces where children and families of all abilities can play and connect.



Customer Service

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

The Township is committed to strengthening its policies, enhancing staff training, and continuously improving services and programs to meet these regulations. For example, we will regularly review our customer service policies, provide targeted training for staff, and seek feedback from residents with disabilities to identify areas for improvement.

Legislative Requirements Customer Service

Actions

- Develop, implement and maintain policies governing its provision of goods services, facilities to persons with disabilities

- Develop overall Corporate Accessibility Policy
- Review existing Accessibility related policies to ensure they remain current with legislation
- Develop an internal Accessibility Group featuring interested employees and stakeholders to assist in consultation, discussion and education
- Develop opportunities for consultation, education and discussion with the Accessibility Group including analysis of survey results, any new accessibility requirements and the preliminary steps to developing a revised accessibility plan for the next term
- Build internal knowledge by creating an "information hub" featuring information on accessibility for all employees to access

• Use of service animals and support persons	• Materials will be reviewed and modified to reflect current legislation
• Notice of temporary disruptions	• Assessment of the Notice of Service Disruption process and its application for development of Policy
• Train staff, volunteers and others who provide goods and services on behalf of the Township about providing goods and services to people with disabilities	• New staff and volunteers will be trained as soon as possible as part of their orientation process. • Identify opportunities to provide additional training in specific areas related to duties, i.e. customer service
• Establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback	• Review and update the current Accessible Customer Service Policy
• Provide or arrange for documents or information to be made available in accessible formats	• Develop an Alternative Formats and Communications Supports Procedure • Review and ensure consultation requirements are considered when providing alternative formats and communication supports when communicating with customers

Action Highlights 2026 to 2030

NOTE: the actions listed herein are part of the forecasted plan only and will be subject to budget decisions and shifting priorities and/or condition assessments.

Activities

- Adopt Corporate Accessibility Policy
- Evaluate on-line services for accessibility, i.e. job advertisements, property tax e-payment.
- Provide education/skills building opportunities of accessible website requirements to those with on-going responsibility for website maintenance
- Develop an internal Accessibility Group featuring interested employees and stakeholders to assist in consultation, discussion and education.
- Build internal knowledge by creating an “information hub” featuring information on accessibility for all employees to access
- Assessment of the Notice of Service Disruption process and its application for development of Policy
- Develop an Alternative Formats and Communications Supports Procedure
- Continue to consult the SDG Accessibility Committee and the public and people with disabilities in the following areas:
 - Recreational Trails
 - Outdoor Play Spaces
 - Rest Areas on Exterior Paths of Travel
 - On Street Parking

Facilities and Public Spaces

- Develop a team to conduct facility assessments to identify barriers to access- including barriers for those with physical, vision, hearing, learning, cognitive, and mental health disabilities
- Township Office and Community Hall: address contrast issues, functionality

of power door operators and related items more fully outlined in the Assessment Report November, 2025

- Long Sault Arena: address exterior walkway, accessible picnic tables, entrance and related items more fully outlined in the Assessment Report November, 2025

- Conduct Facility Assessment at St. Andrews West Fire Hall
- Conduct Facility Assessment at St. Andrews West Pool
- Conduct Facility Assessment at South Stormont Seniors' Support Centre

Stormont Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) Accessibility Advisory Committee

The SDG Accessibility Advisory Committee is a joint municipal advisory body that serves the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and its six lower-tier municipalities. Its primary mandate is to advise on the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers for persons with disabilities across municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. This reflects the requirements of the AODA, which requires municipalities to involve accessibility advisory committees in advancing accessible service delivery and compliance with provincial standards.

The Committee is composed of one community representative appointed by each of the six local municipalities (North Dundas, South Dundas, North Stormont, South Stormont, North Glengarry, and South Glengarry), with a legislated requirement that the majority of members be persons with disabilities. In carrying out its advisory function, the Committee reviews and provides input on multi-year accessibility plans, promotes accessibility awareness, and offers recommendations on municipal initiatives and capital improvements aimed at removing barriers. In line with AODA and Planning Act requirements, the Committee may also review selected site plans and provide advice on accessibility considerations in new developments and public infrastructure projects.

Feedback on the Plan:

If you have feedback on this plan or if you require an alternative format please contact the Director of Legislative Services/Clerk with contact information provided below:

Township of South Stormont,
2 Mille Roches Road,
PO Box 84,
Long Sault, ON K0C 1P0

Telephone: 613-534-8889
Fax: 613-534-2280
Email: info@southstormont.ca
Website: southstormont.ca