



To: Council
From: Loriann Harbers, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Date of Meeting: November 27, 2024
Subject: 2025-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Township of South Stormont

Recommendation:

That Council adopt the 2025-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Township of South Stormont.

Executive Summary:

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) mandates that each municipality prepare an Accessibility Plan to outline the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers. This report recommends that Council adopt the attached Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the period of 2025 to 2029.

Background:

The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers so that people living with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life. The AODA mandates that each municipality prepare an Accessibility Plan to outline the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers. Under the legislation, an annual report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year plan is required. In addition, the municipality is required to report compliance with the Province every two years as a public sector organization. 2025 will be a reporting year.

An Accessibility Plan was first adopted by Council in 2003 and numerous updates have been made since that time. The current plan covering the period of 2019-2024 was adopted in 2019 and will expire at the end of 2024. The attached Multi-Year Accessibility Plan covers the period from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2029 and incorporates initiatives and updates from the current plan.

The AODA also provides that each municipality shall have an Accessibility Committee to review and comment on the plan. This review is mandatory every second year. The SDG Accessibility Committee, made up of a representative from each local municipality, will review the new 2025-2029 South Stormont Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on November 25, 2024. If any updates are requested by the committee, they will be made to the attached plan and

communicated to Council at the November 27, 2024 Council meeting prior to adoption.

Items found in Appendix 'A' of the Plan highlight recent accomplishments of the municipality and may include items previously identified on the plan as completed. Initiatives found in Appendix "B" of Plan are either requirements outlined within the given standard or an initiative that can further promote accessibility within South Stormont. Appendix 'C' summarizes the results of the review of the municipal facilities undertaken by the municipal staff to date.

The Appendices to the plan will be reviewed and updated as work is undertaken, projects at facilities are completed, or additional information is obtained.

Achievements incorporated into the 2025-2029 plan include:

- Completion of AODA and Human Rights Code training for all staff in 2024
- Implemented changes and added remediated PDFs to the Township's website following our website accessibility review in 2024
- International symbols of access were installed at/within various facilities, including entrance doors and washrooms
- Emergency call systems have been installed on accessible washrooms at multiple facilities
- Installed signage to designated parking spaces for visitors to the Township Office to enhance access to the building during special events
- Construction of new accessible ramps and porches for several buildings at the Lost Villages Museum
- Construction of accessible concrete walkways at the Lost Villages Museum. Due to budget constraints, portions of the walkway replacement project have been deferred.

Highlights of future activities incorporated into the new plan include:

- Completion of a new Accessibility Plan that establishes risk-based accessibility priorities and an implementation strategy. This item was identified as a strategic priority of Council in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.
- Update our training program on the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Complete the installation of power door operators at facilities identified in the Plan.
- Install Assistive Listening Technology at the main Township building (ie. Hearing Loops)

Although the completion of a new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was initially proposed as a project for 2026 in the strategic plan, staff have included this project with the 2025 budget.

Alignment with Strategic Action Plan:

Goal 2: Welcoming and Vibrant Community

Objective 2.5: Embracing community diversity, equity, and inclusion

Risk and Asset Management Considerations:

The AODA mandates that each municipality prepare an Accessibility Plan to outline the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers.

Options:

1. That Council adopt the 2025-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Township of South Stormont.
 2. Other.
-

Others Consulted:

Directors

Chief Building Official

Facilities Coordinator

SDG Accessibility Advisory Committee

Prepared by:

Ashley Sloan, Deputy Clerk