

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Accessibility Advisory Committee Agenda December 3, 2025, 11:00 – 2:00 pm

[Link to Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 836 2497 2816

Passcode: 280622

One tap mobile Canada +12042727920,,83624972816#

Canada Toll-free 855 703 8985

[YouTube livestream link](#)

- 1. Meeting called to order**
- 2. Chair's comments**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. AAC meeting November 19, 2025
- 4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**
- 5. New Business**
 - 5.1. APS update
 - 5.2. Draft Accessibility Plan 2026-2030
 - 5.3. Draft Accessibility Compliance Report

6. Old Business

6.1. **AAC Resolution:** AAC recommend that Transit include an option for weekend Community Bus service in addition to Council's request to explore Community bus service at all Senior's Centres.

Mover: Diana Gerhart

Seconder: Kerri Tuckett

7. Barrier Removal Updates

7.1. Barrier Removal Update, none

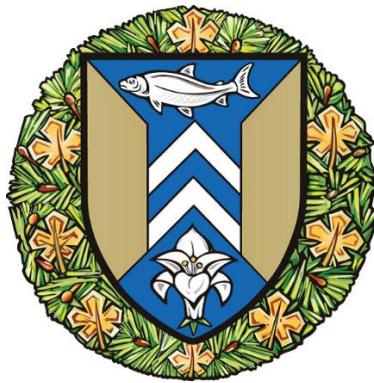
8. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

8.1. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report, none

9. Adjournment

Next meeting January 21, 2025, at the Northern Community Centre

In-person and via Zoom, 2:00 to 4:00 pm



The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Minutes, Date November 21, 2025

Meetings may be viewed on the [City's YouTube Channel](#)

Present: Don McConnell, Carol Magnan, Diana Gerhart, Kerri Tuckett, Wayne Sharfenberg, Derrick Lavallee, Councillor Sandra Hollingsworth,

Absent: Craig Kohler, Andree Lebonte

On Zoom: Councillor Lisa Vezneau-Allen, Leslie Sawchyn (ASL Interpreter)

Officials: Diane Morrell (Accessibility Coordinator), Peter Tonazzo (Planning), Robin Miners, Christian Frost, Stephanie Barstead, Jenna Ricard (Legal)

1. Chair's Comments

January meeting date change to January 21

2. Approval of Minutes – October 14, 2025

Moved by: Derrick Lavallee

Seconded by: Kerri Tuckett

Resolved that the Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of Oct 14, 2025, be approved.

Carried.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

3.1. None

4. New Business

- 4.1.** Transit Route Optimization Study results; guests Robin Miners (Manager of Transit and Parking), Stephanie Barstead (Transit Inspector), Christian Frost (Training Supervisor)
- 4.2.** Request for new routes to be produced in large print
- 4.3.** Transit will send out the Community Bus changes in the spring as result of Council Resolution
- 4.4.** Request for Autism awareness training for Transit drivers
- 4.5.** Parabus scheduling software to be reviewed; Push notifications and reminders of Parabus bookings
- 4.6.** Council Resolution to include all Senior's Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities on Community Bus service. Request for Community Bus expansion to include weekends as well.
- 4.7.** Accessibility Open House Nov 20, 2025, at Northern Community Centre
- 4.8.** AAC member request; Lack of safe crossing at Willow and Chapple
- 4.9.** Request for PXO or other to assist seniors crossing; will be sent to Planning for ATMP project
- 4.10.** Accessibility Plan – 2026-2030; not reviewed due to lack of time

5. Old Business

5.1. Item 5.6 from October 8/25 agenda – item missed: Request was withdrawn.

5.2. Northern Avenue Intersection update

5.2.1. Further discussion required about wording for budget request

5.3. Permanent move to NCC upcoming in January

5.4. Draft Accessibility Plan review; tabled to next meeting

6. Barrier Removal Updates

6.1. Barrier Removal Update - None

7. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

7.1. Site Plan Sub-Committee Report reviewed

8. Adjournment

Next meeting Dec 3, 2025 In-person and via Zoom, 2:00 to 4:00 pm



SAULT STE. MARIE

Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) 2026 – 2030

**This Accessibility Plan and all documents
referenced within are available in accessible
formats upon request.**

Approval Date:

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Message from Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and/or CAO

Placeholder

Message from the Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair

Placeholder

DRAFT

Approval Date:

Land Acknowledgement

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie acknowledges, with respect, that we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory, on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, known as Bawaating. Bawaating is the home of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, and the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council.

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Introduction

The prevalence of disability in Ontario

According to the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD) by [Statistics Canada](#), approximately 27% of Canadians aged 15 years and older—about 8 million individuals—reported having at least one disability. This represents a 5% increase from 2017, when the rate was reported at 22%.

Commented [DM1]: Don: Add in 'other disabilities or invisible disabilities stats.'

While Ontario-specific data is limited, national trends show a steady rise in disability prevalence, largely due to increased reports of mental health-related disabilities among youth and working-age adults. [Statistics Canada](#)

Statement of Commitment

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie is guided by the four core principles of:

Dignity,
Independence,
Integration, and,
Equality of Opportunity.

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is committed to fostering an inclusive, accessible community for all residents, visitors, and staff. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan reflects our ongoing efforts to identify, remove, and prevent barriers across all municipal facilities, services, programs, and public spaces.

Accessibility is a shared responsibility, and the City recognizes that continuous improvement requires collaboration, innovation, and engagement with the community. We welcome feedback from residents, visitors, and organizations on how we can further enhance accessibility and inclusion in our services and facilities.

Accessibility Legislation in Canada

Provincial: Ontario introduced accessibility legislation through the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(ODA 2001\)](#), followed by the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA 2005\)](#), and the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR 2011\)](#), establishing accessibility standards for organizations of all sizes. The [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) guarantees freedom from discrimination and promotes respect for dignity and equality.

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The Sault Ste. Marie Accessibility Advisory Committee's Mandate, Mission, and Vision

The Sault Ste. Marie Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meets monthly to provide input on municipal projects, site plan applications, and City programs and activities. The Committee is composed of community members with lived experience of disability, whose input, education, and expertise are highly valued by the City.

Mandate:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee advises Council on promoting and advancing a barrier-free Sault Ste. Marie for people of all abilities, with the Accessibility Coordinator supporting City Departments in advancing the Committee's mandate.

Mission:

The Committee works to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to ensure full participation in community life for people of all abilities.

Vision:

A Sault Ste. Marie that is fully accessible, inclusive, and barrier-free for all residents and visitors.

Application and Scope of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)

The **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan** outlines the City of Sault Ste. Marie's goals and actions, to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities. It serves as a roadmap for continuous improvement, guiding how accessibility is achieved across all City services, programs, facilities, and public spaces.

The **Accessibility Policies** provide the framework that supports this work. They establish the standards and expectations that guide City employees in delivering accessible and equitable service to residents, visitors, and staff.

Together, the **Accessibility Plan** and the **Accessibility Policies** create a unified approach to accessibility and inclusion, ensuring that accessibility is embedded in both daily operations and long-term planning across all areas of municipal service.

The MYAP is applicable to all departments that report directly to City Council through the Chief Administrative Officer, and include:

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Corporate Services

Clerk's Department
Finance Department
Human Resources Department
Information Technology Department

Community Development and Enterprise Services

Community Services Department
Local Immigration Partnership
Planning and Enterprise Services
Future SSM
Economic Development
Tourism

Fire Services**Legal Department****Public Works and Engineering**

Building Division
Building Services

The MYAP does not apply to:

Algoma Public Health
Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority
District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board
Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre
Sault Ste. Marie Police Services
Sault Ste. Marie Public Library

Departmental Responsibilities

Each department is responsible for identifying and addressing barriers within its own facilities, programs, and services. Departments will include accessibility improvements in their annual budgets to fund barrier removal and prevention initiatives.

Approval Date:

The Barrier Removal Budget managed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee is intended for **new accessibility projects** and is not intended to be used for routine maintenance, operational needs, or replacement of worn-out accessibility items.

Accessibility is a shared responsibility, and all departments play a key role in creating an inclusive environment. If a department has identified a **barrier removal** project, the Accessibility Advisory Committee will consider a request for funding contribution from the Barrier Removal Budget.

Commented [DM2]: Add item stating that the annual Barrier Removal budget will be planned on an annual basis with input from staff, the AAC, public and ppl with disabilities by using a well defined and transparent process and presented to Council for their approval.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)

1. General

Accessibility Plan and Policies

This plan is guided by the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#), which requires the City to develop, implement, and maintain [Accessibility Policies](#) that outline how the City will achieve accessibility and meet the requirements that inform the actions in the [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#).

GOAL:

Ensure effective barrier identification, prevention and removal through the Accessibility Policies and the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

ACTIONS:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Update and implement the City's Accessibility Policies to ensure accessibility for all City-owned and operated facilities, services, and programs.
- **Consultation:** Engage with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and people with disabilities through various means.
- **Governance:** Establish a Corporate Management Working Group to oversee MYAP implementation through the departments
- **Governance:** Accessibility Coordinator to lead MYAP implementation with support from departments for tasks including:
 - Review of the goals and actions in the Accessibility Plan
 - Review of Accessibility Policies to ensure effectiveness.

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- Review of customer service feedback to inform future barrier removal activities.
- **Develop Guides and Tools:** Develop and maintain accessibility guidelines and tools to support continued barrier removal.
- **Annual Status Report:** Provide an Annual Status Update to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and City Council and post updates on the City website.

Procurement

GOAL:

Ensure accessibility is considered at every stage of procurement.

ACTIONS:

- **Develop Guides and Tools:** Develop and implement tools such as guidelines, templates, and sample language to integrate accessibility in procurement.
- **Consultation:** Establish a consultation process with the Accessibility Coordinator to review accessibility requirements in procurement.
- **Review:** Develop and review procurement processes annually to evaluate how well they support accessible outcomes.

Training

GOAL:

Ensure all staff, volunteers, and contractors receive required training on the IASR and the Human Rights Code, and additional role-specific training where applicable.

ACTIONS:

- **AODA and OHRC Training:** All new employees will receive training in the accessibility standards, the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities and a review of the City's Accessibility Policies.
- **Customer Service Training:** All employees who provide customer service will receive customer service training.
- **Accessible Document Training:** All employees who create public-facing documents will receive training in creating accessible and conversion ready documents.

Approval Date:

- **Employment Standards Training:** All new employees will receive training in Employment Standards and workplace supports through the onboarding process.
- **Training:** Training for employees who are responsible for accessibility features in the built environment regarding how people with disabilities navigate and interact with their environment.
- **Training:** Provide additional learning opportunities for staff, such as awareness events, guest speakers, and experiential learning to build knowledge and skills in accessibility and inclusion.

2. Information and Communication

Accessible Customer Service Feedback

GOAL:

Ensure the customer service feedback process is accessible and includes processes that meet the needs of people with disabilities.

ACTIONS:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Implement an updated Accessibility Policy that includes information and communications requirements.
- **Training:** Train staff to provide accessible customer service, which includes interacting with and receiving feedback from people with disabilities.
- **Accessible Customer Service:** Develop and implement a communications strategy to inform the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, including signage in customer service areas.
- **Tracking Customer Service Feedback:** Explore and implement an effective tracking, reporting and responding system for accessible customer service feedback.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

GOAL:

Provide accessible formats and communication supports in a timely manner and at no additional cost than for other documents.

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ACTIONS:

- **Accessible Document Training:** Provide training for staff on creating accessible, conversion-ready documents.
- **Provide Accessible Formats:** Ensure public documents, forms, and notices are available in accessible formats upon request.
- **Explore Accessible Technology:** Explore and use various technology solutions to enhance communications such as use of QR codes for printed materials.

Emergency Procedure, Plans and Public Safety Information

GOAL:

Ensure emergency procedures, plans, and public safety information is available in accessible formats upon request.

ACTIONS:

- **Provide Accessible Formats:** Ensure the Emergency Response Plan is conversion-ready for accessible formats.
- **Communication:** Provide ASL interpreter services for public emergency information, whenever possible.
- **Communication:** Make emergency communications and notices available in accessible formats to the greatest extent possible.

Commented [DM3]: Expand ASL to full words

Accessible Websites and Web Content

GOAL:

Ensure City websites and web content are accessible to all users, meeting WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards and exceeding them where feasible.

ACTIONS:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Include web accessibility requirements in the City's Accessibility Policies.

Approval Date:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Require all third-party websites and content procured by the City to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards in line with procurement policies.
- **Training:** Train staff to create accessible and conversion-ready documents and web content.
- **Develop Guides and Tools:** Create an accessible content style guide
- **Build in Accessible Processes:** Integrate accessibility checks into content publishing workflows.
- **Maintenance:** Continuous improvement and maintenance of the City website to provide an accessible online customer service experience.
- **Maintenance:** Ongoing accessibility audits of all website content to ensure WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance.
- **Consultation:** The Accessibility Advisory Committee will be consulted on a regular basis regarding website accessibility audits.

3. Employment Standards

GOAL:

Ensure employees have equitable access to supports and opportunities throughout their employment lifecycle.

ACTIONS:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Annual review of the Accessibility Policies to ensure effectiveness.
- **Training:** All new employees receive training in the Employment Standards and available workplace supports within the onboarding process.
- **Accessibility Supports:** Ensure the Return-to-Work Coordinator is available to provide required supports for employees with disabilities.

4. Transportation

4.1 Public Transit Services

GOAL:

Provide accessible public transportation that meets the needs of the community.

ACTIONS:

Approval Date:

- **Accessibility Policies:** Annual review of Accessibility Policies which include Transportation Services, to ensure continued compliance with accessibility standards.
- **Accessibility Policies:** Develop accessible design criteria for new or replaced bus stops and shelters, in consultation with Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities
- **Consultation:** Continue ongoing engagement with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities on public transit services on the prevention and removal of barriers.
- **Service Enhancement:** Proactively work to make all bus stops and shelters accessible.
- **Service Enhancement:** Explore opportunities to update Parabus service.
- **Service Enhancement:** Explore and implement emerging and best practice navigation technology such as the BlindSquare Event App to support accessible navigation.
- **Service Enhancement:** Review and implement opportunities for efficiencies and improved service using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for disability statistics to inform Parabus service.
- **Training:** Continue to provide travel training program, for new passengers with disabilities.

4.2 Vehicles for Hire Services

GOAL:

Ensure reliable accessible on-demand Vehicles for Hire are available and equitable for persons with disabilities.

ACTIONS:

- **Maintain Policies:** Review and update the Taxi By-law to reflect current accessibility needs.
- **Consultation:** Engage the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities to determine the required proportion of accessible vehicles for hire.
- **Consultation:** Engage with vehicles for hire service providers to develop and implement strategies that improve accessible vehicles for hire.
- **Explore Innovative Solutions:** Explore innovative solutions with licensed vehicles for hire to enhance and sustain accessible service.

Approval Date:

- **Accessible Customer Service:** Explore and implement a feedback process specifically for vehicles for hire to ensure equitable service for persons with disabilities throughout the customer service experience.

5. Public Spaces and Facilities

Goal

Create public spaces that are accessible, inclusive, and designed to meet the diverse needs of all community members.

Actions

- **Accessibility Policies:** Update Accessibility Policies to ensure that accessibility requirements are included in all new construction, redevelopment, and major maintenance of public spaces, including:
 - Recreational trails and beach access routes
 - Outdoor public eating areas
 - Outdoor play spaces
 - Exterior paths of travel (e.g., sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas)
 - Accessible parking facilities
 - Service counters, fixed queuing guides, and waiting areas
- **Consultation:** Engage the Accessibility Advisory Committee, people with disabilities, and interested parties early in the design and planning stages of all projects, including those under the Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS)
- **Review site plans for accessibility:** Incorporate accessibility design criteria into the City's site plan review process to identify and address potential barriers early.
- **Facility and Infrastructure Reviews:** Regularly inspect City-owned facilities, parks, and services to identify and address barriers through ongoing maintenance and capital improvements, incorporating public feedback where applicable.
- **Preventative Maintenance:** Develop and implement procedures for ongoing preventive maintenance of all accessible features to ensure reliable usability.
- **Accessible Pedestrian Signals:** Continue to explore and implement solutions to increase the number and usability of Accessible Pedestrian Signals.

Approval Date:

6. Accessible Customer Service

Goal

Provide excellent, accessible customer service that meets the needs of all members of the public, including people with disabilities.

Actions

- **Accessible Customer Service:** Provide accessible customer service training for all customer service employees including but not limited to:
 - Interacting and communicating effectively with people who have various types of disabilities.
 - Supporting individuals who use assistive devices, service animals, or support persons.
 - Using assistive equipment or devices provided by the City
 - Responding appropriately when a person with a disability encounters difficulty accessing services.
- **Accessible Communication:** Develop and implement a communications strategy to inform the public about the availability of accessible customer service, including accessible formats and communication supports.
- **Accessibility Policies:** Develop and implement a procedure for staff to effectively provide public notice of temporary service disruptions when accessibility equipment or features are not working.
- **Feedback:** Explore and implement an effective method of receiving, recording, tracking and responding to customer service feedback.

7. Priorities

Preamble

While all of the actions contained in this Plan are essential to achieve a fully inclusive Sault Ste. Marie, the following are priority action items:

- **Training:** Provide training and experiential learning for all Municipal staff.
- **Public Accessible Washrooms:** Identify, prioritize and update Municipal facilities to ensure the adequate provision of fully accessible, universal washroom facilities that are designed utilizing current best practices, with various features such as adult change tables.

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- **Fully Accessible Programming Opportunities:** Develop and provide recreational and community programs that are inclusive for people with diverse disabilities.
- **Facility Accessible Design Standards:** Explore options for creating, updating or adopting a new Facility Accessible Design Standard (FADs), including developing the required processes and procedures to ensure that new or renovated city facilities adhere to the FADs.

Providing feedback:

To provide feedback, comments, suggestions or questions regarding the MYAP or accessibility, please contact:

Diane Morrell, Accessibility Coordinator
Email: d.morrell@cityssm.on.ca or accessibility@cityssm.on.ca
Phone: 705-541-7310
In Person: Ronald A. Irwin Civic Centre, 99 Foster Drive

Your input helps to create a City that is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to everyone.

Approval Date:

DRAFT Accessibility Compliance Report 2025

City of Sault Ste. Marie Organization information:

Organization category:

Designated Public Sector

Number of employee range in Ontario:

50+ employees

Reporting year:

2025

Organization legal name:

Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Number of employees in Ontario:

920

Business number (BN9):

122023120

Organization operating name:

City of Sault Ste. Marie

Organization sector:

91 - Public Administration

Subsector:

913 - Local, Municipal and Regional Public Administration

Industry group:

9139 - Other Local, Municipal and Regional Public Administration

Business address:

99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie ON (Ontario), P6A 5X6
Canada

Mailing address:

99 Foster Drive
Sault Ste. Marie ON (Ontario), P6A 5X6
Canada

Acknowledgement

Complete

Certification date

2025/11/24

Certifier information

Tom Vair, CAO, Corporation for the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Primary contact information

Diane Morrell, Accessibility Coordinator for the City of Sault Ste. Marie

Compliance questions:

- 1. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the General Section?**

Yes

- 2. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Information and Communications Standards?**

Yes

Comments:

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie meets all requirements under the Information and Communications Standards.

The City has created a new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2026-2030), which includes implementation of an updated Accessibility Policy. The new Policy will contain a more proactive process to meet all requirements in the Information and Communications standard.

- 3. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Employment Standards?**

Yes

Comments:

The City has formal policies in place to meet the requirements under the Employment Standards.

4. Does your organization provide transportation services, either directly or through a third party?

Yes

Comments:

5. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Transportation Standards?

Yes

Comments:

The City of Sault Ste. Marie follows the requirements under the Transportation standards.

The City is in the process of updating the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2026-2030), which includes Sault Ste. Marie Transit Services. The Plan includes an action item to update the Accessibility Policies.

The Accessibility Policies include how the City meets the requirements under the Transportation Standard and how this information will be communicated to staff and the public.

6. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Design of Public Spaces Standards?

Yes

Comments:

The City of Sault Ste. Marie follows all requirements under the Design of Public Spaces standard.

The City is in the process of updating the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2026-2030), which includes an action item to update the Accessibility Policies.

The Accessibility Plan and Policies will outline how the City will proactively meet the requirements under the Customer Service Standards.

7. Is your organization in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Customer Service Standards?

Yes

Comments:

The City of Sault Ste. Marie follows all requirements under the Customer Service Standards.

The City is in the process of updating the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2026-2030), which includes an action item to update the Accessibility Policies.

The Accessibility Plan and Policies will outline how the City will proactively meet the requirements under the Customer Service Standards.

DRAFT