Sault Ste. Marie Airport Development Corporation

Accessibility Plan and Feedback Process 2024-2027

Contents

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank everyone who participated in our consultations. Without learning about the lived experiences of persons with disabilities, we would not be able to reach our goal of being barrier free by 2040.

Commitment

At the Sault Ste. Marie Airport Development Corporation (SSMADC), we are committed to providing a smooth and enjoyable airport experience for all. The Sault Ste. Marie Airport provides a variety of accessible services and facilities designed to enable more choice and greater independence as you travel through the airport. As a terminal operator, the SSMADC is subject to the *Canadian Transportation Agency's Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations* (ATPDR). However, this plan not only complies with the ATPDR and the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) but goes beyond whenever possible. The SSMADC understands that no-one can discriminate against a person with a disability as outlined under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. Our commitment is to honour the rights of people with disabilities and to treat people with disabilities with dignity and respect. The safety of our passengers, employees and communities that we serve is our top priority. Our team, with the help of our airline partners and agencies, are onsite to welcome our guests and ensure that your travels are trouble-free, and accessible to everyone.

Purpose

In order to make the Sault Ste. Marie Airport accessible for all persons with disabilities, it is important to understand the purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) and definitions outlined in the ACA.

Per the ACA, section 5: "The purpose of the ACA is to benefit all persons, especially persons with disabilities, through the realization, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, of a Canada without barriers, on or before January 1, 2040, particularly by the identification and removal of barriers, and the prevention of new barriers, in the following areas:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Information and communication technology
- Communication, other than information communication technology
- Procuring goods, services, and facilities
- Design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation"

The SSMADC understands that new standards relating to the areas above are being developed via the office of the Accessibility Commissioner which are intended to align with the accessibility planning framework.

This plan outlines concrete actions that will help us take our first steps toward becoming accessible by default. The SSMADC is committed to working with all of you, our senior leaders, our employees, passengers and members of the public to create a place that applies an accessibility lens to every context, both internally and externally.

The following definitions are from the ACA, clause 2:

A "barrier" is anything — including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice — that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

"Disability" means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

General

Feedback Mechanism Process and Contact Information

Serving our community is at the heart of what we do. Listening closely to our customers and engaging with our community is one of the key pillars of our Accessibility Plan. Our Accessibility Plan was co-created with our community. By listening to our customers, employees, community partners and responding to their suggestions, we are designing an airport with our customers at the forefront and evaluating our impact based on their lived experiences.

The SSMADC has set up several ways for people to give feedback, compliments, complaints, or to identify barriers, or to offer other suggestions. We welcome your feedback personally or anonymously on this plan and any other issues you encounter. Please share your feedback through any of the methods below. We will acknowledge receipt of your feedback within three (3) business days and follow up with you directly within seven (7) business days to take action and maintain anonymity, if requested.

Appointed Contact Position: Security/Business Administration Manager

At the Sault Ste. Marie Airport, everyone is accountable for creating an accessible experience. We want to ensure that our guests have 24/7 access to information about accessibility. When feedback is received it will be directed to the Security/Business Administration Manager and identified barriers will be considered in our accessibility planning process.

Our appointed contact position is the Security/Business Administration Manager. The person in this position would be happy to speak with you in person as well as to receive your feedback through any alternate formats.

Alternate formats may include, but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats useable by persons with disabilities.

Telephone Number: 705-779-3031 ext. 204

Email: paate@saultairport.com

Feedback Form at Security Desk in Terminal Building

Location in Terminal Building:

Office 221, Second Floor of the Operations Building

Mailing Address:

1-475 Airport Road

Sault Ste. Marie ON, P6A 5K6

Contact Us

We will confirm that we have received your feedback.

Consultation

The SSMADC fully supports the "nothing about us without us" philosophy to include people with lived disability experience in the planning and operation of our facilities. From our professional accessibility consultant to our community partnerships and journey mapping, we continue to work directly with the community of people with disabilities to design the best airport experience for everyone.

We used several methods to gain feedback as we developed this plan, including:

- Running an employee survey
- Speaking with other airports and community partners to learn their best practices
- Running a passenger survey
- Consulting with the Accessibility Advisory committee of the City of Sault Ste. Marie
- Consulting with Dorothy McNaughton, a legally blind accessibility advocate

We are working with Dorothy McNaughton, a former schoolteacher turned local accessibility advocate and recipient of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind's (CNIB) Arthur Napier Magill Distinguished Service Award and the Les Fowlie Intellectual Freedom Award for her activism in defense of people with disabilities. Dorothy is legally blind and has been a passionate volunteer with CNIB for many years. Dorothy has provided invaluable consultation throughout the process of developing this plan.

Consulting with community partners is key to ensure our programs and services are meaningful to those who use our airport. Involving our employees, guests and community is instrumental to ensuring that the Sault Ste. Marie Airport is barrier-free and delivering leading services and solutions to everyone.

Above: Accessibility Committee of the City of Sault Ste. Marie visits the Sault Ste. Marie Airport, April 2024

We are working with the Accessibility Advisory Committee of the City of Sault Ste. Marie to gather the experience of people with disabilities and identify the barriers in moments across all touchpoints of the airport. This journey mapping feedback is essential in developing this plan. Additionally, we have gathered feedback from passengers, community members and employees with disabilities through surveys to identify barriers which may have been missed throughout the other consultation methods.

Our consultation were carried out in a variety of ways including:

- The use of surveys provided to employees and passengers which took place in February, March and April of 2024.
- Feedback received throughout the year prior via customer complaints
- Professional accessibility consultants such as Dorothy McNaughton who was consulted with throughout the entire process of creating this plan

Throughout our consultations, employees noted barriers that have kept them from fully participating within the organization. This includes a means for persons with disabilities to self-identify. This feedback has helped us develop the action items listed in this plan.

Here is some of what we heard through our Accessibility Consultation Survey which was targeted at passengers:

"The only real issue I have had is using the arrivals area doors to enter the terminal - there is no handicap "button" to open the doors. While I realize this is technically an exit, when you have parked your car and are entering the terminal, this access point is easier and more convenient (especially if it is snowing or raining). I highly recommend that this feature be added to this set of doors as they are also rather heavy to open."

"The website could be better organized, with travel information and customer service given higher priority. Better lighting at entrances."

"PA system is difficult to hear. Echoing and muffled. Services inside the terminal are poor. i.e. food and beverage availability both before check-in and after security, especially if flights are delayed. Having to bring luggage to a security belt is inconvenient. Seating is very uncomfortable throughout the building but especially after security."

Our consultation on April 12, 2024, with the Accessibility Advisory Committee of the City of Sault Ste. Marie led to other items which need improving including:

- Parking could be updated, including the painting of handicap spaces.
- No direct accessible path of travel from parking lot to departures door; must go from parking to accessible drop off area and then to entrance; strongly suggest sloping entire entrance to be flush with parking area; ensure adequate drainage so water and ice do not build up in this area
- No door actuator (opener) at the Arrivals area; accessible only to persons leaving this set of doors
- Suggest a change in wording when speaking about mobility devices; Power wheelchair or power chair vs. electric chair (which used to be used in the penal system); positive language
- Suggest lowered writing area/counter at rentals areas
- Your staff at screening were very courteous and helpful at screening; ensure if a device like a cane or other mobility device must go through screening, that it be returned to the person to continue using the device to assist before sending person through to the next phase; this was done for some people, but not for Carol who has vision loss. Instructions were to 'wait over there', which is not an accurate description for a person with vision loss.

The SSMADC will consult people with disabilities in the preparation of the annual progress report. Therefore, before all annual progress reports are finalized, we will consult with people with disabilities and outline feedback received during the year. We will report on how the feedback was addressed.

Progress Report

The SSMADC will prepare and publish a progress report annually respecting the implementation of our accessibility plan.

Accessibility Plan and Related Policies Available in Alternate Formats Upon Request

This Accessibility Plan and related Policies are available upon request in alternate formats. These documents are available in print, large print, braille, audio format, plain language or electronic format. We will send you the document within 15 days. For Braille and audio formats, we will send them to you within 45 days.

Employment

The Sault Ste. Marie Airport is more than simply an airport; we are a hub that connects our region to the rest of the world. This would not be possible without our people. Airport staff either work for the SSMADC or for the broader Sault Ste. Marie Airport employee community. This community consists of a workforce of over 400 staff members. The SSMADC is undergoing a culture shift that is positively cultivating a safe and inclusive place where our employees, including those with disabilities, are supported, championed and ultimately feel a sense of belonging. We want everyone to know that you can work at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport exactly as you are.

What We've Achieved

- Our workforce is diversifying more every year. We want to attract and retain talent inclusive of people with disabilities;
- We practice inclusive- onboarding, including offering new and existing employees flexible accommodation options (e.g., ergonomic work furniture, adaptive technology);
- All new SSMADC employees undergo the Canadian Airports Accessibility Training program within the first 60 days of employment and all SSMADC employees complete the training every 3 years. This training is also provided to all terminal tenant staff including: Security Officers, St. John Ambulance Dog Handler Volunteers, Ground Transportation Providers, Airline Staff, Screening Officers, Cleaning Staff, Restaurant Staff, and Baggage Handlers.
- Provides workplace information in alternate formats including information needed by employees to perform their jobs, in the form of job descriptions, manuals, and standard operating procedures. General information is also provided to all employees at work through several sources including staff meetings, emails, posted memos and bulletins about company policies and health and safety information.
- During performance management or career development processes, the SSMADC considers the needs of employees with disabilities when holding formal/informal performance reviews, change of work duties or job promotion. The SSMADC is committed to making such documents available in alternate formats, providing feedback and coaching in a way that is accessible to the employee and providing the necessary accommodations to successfully learn new skills or take on more responsibilities.
- The SSMADC effectively communicates accessibility policies to support people with disabilities to newly hired employees as well as current employees when policy changes take place.

What We're Working On

- Improve accessible hiring practices which include accessibility statements on our job postings, accommodations during interviews and unconscious bias training for hiring staff.
- Develop organizational systems, measurable objectives and supporting policies, and practices to address work-related barriers caused by both individual actions and systems in the workplace.
- Exploring recruitment partnerships with disability employment agencies.
- Review accessibility of emergency planning.
- Research providing alternate formats for emergency plans.
- Include in evacuation plans provisions for persons with disabilities.
- Develop an Employment Policy which includes all employees, including employees with disabilities.

The Built Environment

At the Sault Ste. Marie Airport, we want our built environment to elevate, ease and support a passenger's journey. Our team works collaboratively to ensure barriers are consistently being identified, prevented and removed to offer meaningful access. In our journey to becoming barrier-free we are taking the steps to integrate universal, human centered design throughout the airport now and into the future.

What We've Achieved

- Our inclusive airport design is built to reflect Universal Design, ease of use and the needs of the community we serve. This includes accessible areas throughout the entire journey, from wayfinding, curbside areas to washrooms and beyond.
- Installed supplementary tactile signage with braille.
- Entrances into the terminal are accessible and include automatic or power operated doors.
- Washrooms are accessible and provided in a variety of fully and semi-private options. Available features include: accessible toilets, grab bars, knee clearance below the sink, accessible height baby change tables, good lighting.
- Audible and visible fire notification system.
- Wheelchair accessible aircraft boarding ramps available.
- Accessible screening, including a fully private screening area for persons with disabilities convenience.
- Accessible parking- including cut curbs, automatic doors, accessible pick-up and drop-off.
- Designated service animal relief areas.

What We're Working On

- Continue to install or upgrade existing power door operators.
- Researching digital supplementary tactile verbal signage or integrative options for passengers who are hearing-impaired or visually-impaired.
- Determine feasibility for creating sensory rooms.
- Research tactile wayfinding signage and orientation systems including potential wayfinding on the floor and tactile maps.
- Identification of hazards and changes in elevation using contrasting colours.
- Install adult change tables into washrooms where feasible.
- Install biohazard bins into washrooms.
- Advance communication through signage and wayfinding.
- Identify barriers to egressibility for evacuating people with disabilities from buildings during a range of possible emergencies that require different response and update plans and policies accordingly.

- Consult with external universal design experts and people with lived experience to ensure the built environment provides meaningful access and meets the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace and public spaces.
    - Follow the *Canadian Standard Association, B651 (2023) Accessible Design for the Built Environment* which specifies technical requirements on how to make buildings and exterior built environment accessible and safe for those with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities.
- Add signage to service animal relief areas in alternate formats
- Review lighting both interior and exterior of buildings
- Improve clear contrast markings and tactile walking surface indicators on stairs, curb ramps and depression curbs
- Improve service counter heights to make at least one service counter for each organization's services accessible to people who use mobility aids, such as wheelchairs. The area should be low enough to allow the person with a disability to interact with the person providing service. Clearly identify all accessible service counters with signs.
- Add clearly marked priority seating in the departures waiting area and accessible passenger loading zones in the Holdroom area for persons with disabilities.
- Improving communication by installing hearing loops at service desks across the airport.
- Implementing and making available a greater variety of adaptable sit-stand desks and ergonomic chairs within our SSMADC working spaces.
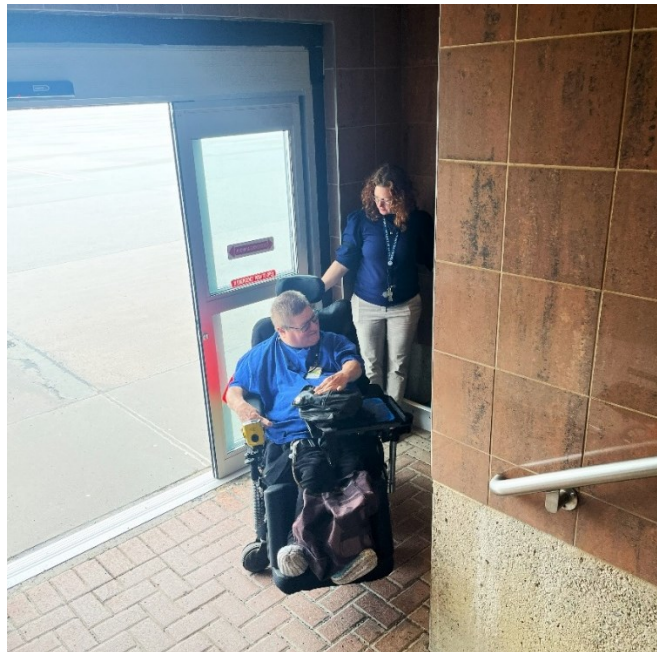
Above: City of Sault Ste. Marie Accessibility Committee Member and Porter Agent tour airport facilities

Transportation

As a regional hub serving many surrounding communities, we know that travel extends beyond the Sault Ste. Marie Airport.

What We've Achieved

- Parking facilities include designated accessible parking spots for people with disabilities (with a valid permit) to provide extra parking width and proximity to facilities.
- Accessible drop-off spaces at the departures area allow for a longer window for those who need extra time.
- The SSMADC has agreements with several ground transportation providers to provide accessible transportation to and from the airport. This includes taxis, ride share and limousine.
- We offer curbside assistance for guests regardless of how they arrive or plan to depart.

What We're Working On

- Working with the City of Sault Ste. Marie to improve accessible transportation to and from the Sault Ste. Marie Airport.
- Identifying the curbside edges of terminal exterior sidewalks with yellow paint to improve visibility of transit areas and the leading edge of pedestrian paths along vehicular routes.
- Add curb ramps in front of the terminal building in stages.
- Add designated pedestrian pathways between accessible parking stalls and lobby entrances using cross-hatching and colour-contrasting for increased safety and easier wayfinding.
- Add tactile attention indicator to exterior curb ramps.
- Improve clear contrast markings and tactile walking surface indicators on stairs, curb ramps and depression curbs.
- Moving all accessible parking spaces to the short-term parking lot.
- Improve markings of accessible pick-up/drop-off spaces and add one at arrivals.

Left: Sault Ste. Marie Airport

Information and Communication Technologies

At the Sault Ste. Marie Airport, we are working with traditional systems that have stood the test of time, and are researching, learning and adopting user-friendly information and communication technology (ICT) tools that have built in accessibility. We want to ensure that our ICT offers independence and ease of use from a user's perspective, but can also adapt with us for the long-term. As we look into the future, ICT is being integrated into aspects of the passenger and employee journey: website, social media, emergency alerts and physical airport experiences.

What We've Achieved

- The SSMADC is currently working on redeveloping our website to be accessible to all travellers, meeting or exceeding the *W3 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines* (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standard.
    - We have ensured that our accessible services navigation is at the top of the homepage and one of the first menu items.
- Airlines and airport security have the ability to visually display pre-recorded audio flight announcements on monitors located in the terminal building.
- Public announcements relating to emergencies, safety and security to be available in audio and visual format.

What We're Working On

- Ensuring that new ICT meets standards for ICT that are recognized internationally such as the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Revised Section 508 Standards,* and *Harmonized European Standard accessibility requirements for ICT products and services.*
- Consider accessibility in lifecycle management for existing ICT, including the development of the new website, and the ATM replacement for this year.
- The new website will be reviewed by a person with a visual disability using ZoomText magnification software and the JAWS screen reader.
- Review inaccessible PDFs on website and find a solution to make the information accessible.
- Ensuring that the website is functional on mobile devices when a person is using speech capability such as Voice Over or Talkback.
- Accessible parking machines with the replacement of the current car park system.
- Installation of hearing loops at service counters.
- Review feasibility of providing Airlines the ability to visually display pre-recorded audio flight announcements on monitors located at boarding gates.
- Understanding the latest web content accessibility guidelines and continuously involving our community partners to enhance our web experience in-line with best practices.

- Increase public awareness of accessible services and technology through the SSMADC's own channels and through partnerships with new and current advocacy groups. Specifically, the importance of self-declaration of disabilities and the need for assistance.
- Review public paging system functionality.

Communication (other than ICT)

What We've Achieved

- Our Accessible website is provided in both English and French.
- Using alternative text descriptions for images across our website.
- We use internationally recognized symbols or a combination of symbols, text and braille on signage to help identify facilities such as washrooms.
- Include more information on the accessibility page of our website to increase awareness of the progress to making the Sault Ste. Marie Airport barrier-free.
- Each new SSMADC employee is onboarded with Job Aids communicating the airport Accessibility programs, services, and facilities. Digital files are available through the CAAT program training.
- Through various national observance awareness days and inclusive events, we contribute to accessibility awareness throughout the airport.

What We're Working On

- Develop and publish on our website an accessibility statement.
- Using alternative text descriptions for images across all social media channels including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.
- Increase internationally recognized symbols or a combination of symbols, text and braille on signage to help identify facilities, such as service animal relief areas.
- Look into assistive devices for communication such as Language Line for our service desks.
- Growing and diversifying our list of national observance awareness days and inclusive events
- Create alternative forms for customer feedback, compliments and complaints.

Design/Delivery of Programs and Services

We know that designing and delivering programs and services in an accessible and inclusive way makes for a better travel experience for passengers and improves the working atmosphere for our employees. For passengers, we are constantly working towards ensuring our programs and services enable more choice, comfort, and greater independence as passengers travel through the airport. We recognize that the same amount of effort needs to be put towards accessible and inclusive programs and services for our employees and partners to foster stronger relationships and retention among our airport community.

What We've Achieved

- Wheelchairs are available for use from the terminal building without the need for pre-arrangement.
- Passengers can arrange with their airline for mobility and wheelchair assistance.
- Passengers can find the St. John Ambulance therapy dogs and their handlers roaming the airports on a bi-weekly rotation.
- Fire alarm systems are equipped with both visual and audible alert signals.

What We're Working On

- Deepening community relationships through ongoing programs and experiences hosted at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport; Improving accessible emergency safety for persons with disabilities.
- Hosting accessibility feedback walk-through days for our accessibility partners.
- Working with our advocacy groups to stay up to date with accessibility standards and best practices to continue improving the travel experience for all passengers.
- Develop a hidden disabilities program.
- Working with our advocacy groups and consultants to stay up to date with accessibility standards and best practices to continue improving the travel experience for all passengers.
- Updating our procurement terms and conditions to ensure accessibility is effectively captured under the Applicable Laws statement within our contracts.

Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

Accessible purchasing at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport includes everything from small, routine purchases to large multi-year contracts. Accessibility is prioritized during our purchasing process so that our vendors know that it is important to us. In our ongoing effort to procure accessible goods, services and facilities, we want to know that accessibility is part of the process from the start. It takes upwards of 20 organizations to make the Sault Ste. Marie Airport operate successfully and efficiently to meet the wants and needs of our passengers and employees.

What We've Achieved

- Achieved accessible procurement of goods, services and facilities by:
  - Depending on the type of work, the contract may require accessibility training for vendor employees;
  - Accessibility codes, laws, and standards are incorporated into our terms and conditions of service agreements.
  - Accessibility codes, laws, and standards are incorporated into our terms and conditions for operational design builds, architecture and technology requests.

What We're Working On

- Updating our procurement terms and conditions to ensure accessibility is effectively captured under the Applicable Laws statement within our contracts.
- Research the inclusive opportunity to adopt accessible payment terminals for payment of parking and build awareness with our commercial tenants to do so.
- Research inclusive ATM machines for replacement of current ATM machine.
- When procuring new equipment, supplies and materials we will pay particular attention to textures and colours and the way these are placed within the airport to minimize sensory challenges and improve ergonomics.

Accessibility Action Plan 2024-2026

Here is the start of our roadmap to a fully barrier-free airport. We have a lot of work happening to advance accessibility and we are excited about it. We are committed to learning, adapting and diversifying to contribute to an inclusive journey for everyone here at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport.

We have organized our action plan into short-term and long-term goals. While we cannot guarantee that all of these goals will be achieved, we do anticipate that short-term goals include those already in progress, to be achieved in the months shortly after publication. Long-term goals include those expected to take a year or more and may include goals that will still be in progress at the time of our next report.

Abbreviations for action items related to their key focus areas

E   Employment

BE   Built Environment

T   Transportation

ICT   Information and Communication Technology

C   Communication (other than ICT)

DDPS   Design/Delivery of Programs and Services

P   Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

Short-term goals for the SSMADC

(we are regularly reviewing our goals and may change, remove or add to them at any time)

- (E) Develop an Employment Policy which includes all employees including employees with disabilities.
- (E) Review accessibility of emergency planning.
- (BE) Continue to install or upgrade existing power door operators.
- (BE) Identification of hazards and changes in elevation using contrasting colours.
- (BE) Add signage to service animal relief areas in alternate formats.
- (BE) Add clearly marked priority seating in the departures waiting area and accessible passenger loading zones in the Holdroom area for persons with disabilities.
- (T) Identifying the curbside edges of terminal exterior sidewalks with yellow paint to improve visibility of transit areas and the leading edge of pedestrian paths along vehicular routes.
- (T) Add designated pedestrian pathways between accessible parking stalls and lobby entrances using cross-hatching and colour contrasting for increased safety and easier wayfinding.
- (ICT) Improve clear contrast markings and tactile walking surface indicators on stairs, curb ramps, and depression curbs.
- (ICT) Consider accessibility in lifecycle management for existing ICT, including the development of the new website, and the ATM replacement for this year.
- (ICT) The new website will be reviewed by a person with a visual disability using ZoomText magnification software and the JAWS screen reader.
- (ICT) Review inaccessible PDFs on website and find a solution to make the information accessible.
- (ICT) Ensuring that the website is functional on mobile devices when a person is using speech capability such as Voice Over or Talkback.
- (ICT) Increase public awareness of accessible services and technology through the SSMADC's own channels and through partnerships with new and current advocacy groups. Specifically, the importance of self-declaration of disabilities and the need for assistance.
- (C) Develop and publish on our website an accessibility statement.
- (C) Using alternative text descriptions for images across all social media channels including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.
- (C) Growing and diversifying our list of national observance awareness days and inclusive events.
- (C) Create alternative forms for customer feedback, compliments and complaints.

- (DDPS) Deepening community relationships through ongoing programs and experiences hosted at the Sault Ste. Marie Airport; Improving accessible emergency safety for persons with disabilities.
- (P) Research inclusive ATM machines for replacement of current ATM machine.

Long-term goals for SSMADC

(we are regularly reviewing our goals and may change, remove or add to them at any time)

- (E) Improve accessible hiring practices which include accessibility statements on our job postings, accommodations during interviews and unconscious bias training for hiring staff.
- (E) Develop organizational systems, measurable objectives, and supporting policies and practices to address work-related barriers caused by both individual actions and systems in the workplace.
- (E) Exploring recruitment partnerships with disability employment agencies.
- (E) Research providing alternate formats for emergency plans.
- (E) Include in evacuation plans provisions for persons with disabilities.
- (BE) Researching digital supplementary tactile verbal signage or integrative options for passengers who are hearing or visually impaired.
- (BE) Determine feasibility for creating sensory rooms.
- (BE) Research tactile wayfinding signage and orientation systems including potential wayfinding on the floor and tactile maps.
- (BE) Install adult change tables into washrooms where feasible.
- (BE) Install biohazard bins into washrooms.
- (BE) Advance communication through signage and wayfinding.
- (BE) Consult with external universal design experts and people with lived experience to ensure the built environment provides meaningful access and meets the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace and public spaces.
  - Follow the *Canadian Standard Association, B651 (2023) Accessible Design for the Built Environment* which specifies technical requirements on how to make buildings and exterior built environment accessible and safe for those with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities.
- (BE) Review lighting both interior and exterior of buildings
- (BE) Improve clear contrast markings and tactile walking surface indicators on stairs, curb ramps, and depression curbs
- (BE) Improve service counter heights to make at least one service counter for each organization's services accessible to people who use mobility aids, such as wheelchairs. The area should be low enough to allow the person with a disability to interact with the person providing service. Clearly identify all accessible service counters with signs.
- (BE) Improving communication by installing hearing loops at service desks across the airport.

- (BE) Implementing and making available a greater variety of adaptable sit-stand desks and ergonomic chairs within our SSMADC working spaces.
- (T) Working with the City of Sault Ste. Marie to improve accessible transportation to and from the Sault Ste. Marie Airport.
- (T) Identifying the curbside edges of terminal exterior sidewalks with yellow paint to improve visibility of transit areas and the leading edge of pedestrian paths along vehicular routes.
- (T) Add curb ramps in front of the terminal building in stages.
- (T) Add tactile attention indicator to exterior curb ramps.
- (T) Moving all accessible parking spaces to the short-term parking lot.
- (T) Improve markings of accessible pick-up/drop-off spaces and add one at arrivals.
- (ICT) Ensuring that new ICT meets standards for ICT that are recognized internationally such as the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Revised Section 508 Standards,* and *Harmonized European Standard accessibility requirements for ICT products and services.*
- (ICT) Accessible parking machines with the replacement of the current car park system.
- (ICT) Installation of hearing loops at service counters.
- (ICT) Review feasibility of providing Airlines the ability to visually display pre-recorded audio flight announcements on monitors located at boarding gates.
- (ICT) Understanding the latest web content accessibility guidelines and continuously involving our community partners to enhance our web experience in-line with best practices.
- (ICT) Review public paging system functionality.
- (C) Increase internationally recognized symbols or a combination of symbols, text and braille on signage to help identify facilities, such as service animal relief areas.
- (C) Look into assistive devices for communication such as Language Line for our service desks.
- (DDPS) Hosting accessibility feedback walk-through days for our accessibility partners.
- (DDPS) Working with our advocacy groups to stay up to date with accessibility standards and best practices to continue improving the travel experience for all passengers.
- (DDPS) Develop a hidden disabilities program.
- (DDPS) Working with our advocacy groups and consultants to stay up to date with accessibility standards and best practices to continue improving the travel experience for all passengers.

- (DDPS) Updating our procurement terms and conditions to ensure accessibility is effectively captured under the Applicable Laws statement within our contracts.
- (P) Updating our procurement terms and conditions to ensure accessibility is effectively captured under the Applicable Laws statement within our contracts.
- (P) Research the inclusive opportunity to adopt accessible payment terminals for payment of parking and build awareness with our commercial tenants to do so.
- (P) When procuring new equipment, supplies, and materials we will pay particular attention to textures and colours and the way these are placed within the airport to minimize sensory challenges and improve ergonomics.

Applicable Accessibility- Related Legislation

The SSMADC strives to create a predictable, stress-free, and enjoyable airport experience that passengers can trust. As the SSMADC is considered a terminal operator forming part of the federal transportation network as a transportation provider (TSP) under the *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA), this Accessibility Plan has been developed in accordance with the application regulations, principals, and provisions of the following accessibility- related legislation:

- *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA), Part 4, Accessibility Plans- Regulations under the *Canada Transportation Act*, and Regulations under the ACA;
- ACA- *Accessible Canada Regulations* (ACR)- Accessibility Plans;
- ACA- *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations* (ATPRR)- Accessibility Plans;
- *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA) Part V Transportation of Persons with Disabilities;
- CTA- *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations* (ATPDR) Part 1 and Part 4 Divisions 1 and 2.

Resources

- Government of Canada, Guidance on the Accessible Canada Regulations Module 1: Accessibility Plan, December 2021

Appendix A- Summary of Disability Rights in Canada

Disability Rights in Canada

The main federal laws which protect people with disabilities from discrimination include the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is a part of the *Canadian Constitution*, which is a set of laws containing the basic rules about how our country operates. Section 15 of the Charter makes it clear that every individual in Canada – regardless of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, colour, sex, age or physical or mental disability – is to be considered equal. This means that governments must not discriminate on any of these grounds in its laws or programs.

At the same time as it protects equality, the Charter also allows for certain laws or programs aimed at improving the situation of disadvantaged individuals or groups. For example, programs to improve employment opportunities for people with mental or physical disabilities may be protected under subsection 15(2).

The Canadian Human Rights Act

The *Canadian Human Rights Act* of 1977 protects Canadians from discrimination when they are employed by or receive services from:

- the federal government;
- First Nations governments; and
- private companies that are regulated by the federal government like banks, trucking companies, broadcasters and telecommunications companies.

People can turn to the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to protect themselves against harassment or discrimination that is based on one or more of the 11 grounds of discrimination. The Act prohibits discrimination based upon physical or mental disability.