

Annual Accessibility Plan 2027

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)
County of Huron
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HURON COUNTY

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the County of Huron is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral peoples and is connected to the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and its resources by the Great Lakes in peace. We also acknowledge the Upper Canada Treaties signed in regard to this land, which include Treaty #29 and Treaty #45 ½.

We recognize First Peoples' continued stewardship of the land and water and the historical and ongoing injustices they face in Canada. As a committee dedicated to fostering accessibility and inclusion, we acknowledge our responsibility to engage meaningfully with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples, reinforce our efforts toward reconciliation and uphold and value the traditions, rights, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples.

Chair's Address

People with disabilities often face barriers that limit their ability to work, shop, travel, and engage fully in their communities. One of the greatest strengths of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is our dedicated members, who are passionate about informing, educating, and inspiring our community to make Huron County accessible to all. Our committee is committed to providing comprehensive accessibility training to community members across various sectors in alignment with the O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards.

We focus on:

- Customer Service
- General Requirements
- Human Rights
- Employment
- Information & Communication
- Design of Public Spaces

Training is tailored to job responsibilities. Facilities staff focus on Human Rights, General Requirements, and Customer Service, while management completes all modules. All stakeholders receive training on accessibility standards and assistive devices. Through training opportunities and resources, we aim to increase awareness and engagement and foster a deeper understanding of government legislation among various entities, including businesses, organizations, institutions, services, and facilities.

Governance

Our committee has successfully operated virtually since 2021. We appreciate the dedication and passion of all our committee members, who contribute to creating an inclusive society.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment.

Leah Noël
HCAAC Chair

Foreword

Accessibility is a cornerstone of an inclusive community, ensuring that every individual can participate fully in their community. Disability affects a growing number of Canadians. From 2017 to 2022, the disability rate increased across all provinces and most territories. There were most considerable increases in mental health-related disabilities (10.4% prevalence,
+3.2 points), pain-related disabilities (16.7% prevalence, +2.2 points), and seeing disabilities (7.4% prevalence, +2.2 points; see Infographic). These trends emphasize the growing need for accessible environments and inclusive practices to accommodate the evolving needs of individuals with disabilities nationwide.

Huron County is dedicated to creating an inclusive and accessible community, ensuring everyone can engage fully in all facets of life. In line with this dedication, we introduce our 2027 Annual Accessibility Plan (AAP), detailing our strategic plan to identify, eliminate, and prevent barriers faced by individuals with disabilities in our County. HCAAC sincerely appreciates the ongoing support and collaboration from the community. Together, we are advancing towards a more inclusive and accessible Huron County.

This plan reflects our dedication to meeting and exceeding the standards set by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11.

We encourage you to review this plan and join us in our commitment to championing accessibility. Please feel empowered to contact us with any questions, comments, or suggestions.

This report is available online (click here) and can be provided in various formats upon request. If your inquiry concerns our partner municipality, please contact them directly.

As we progress on this journey, we remain dedicated to accountability, transparency, active engagement, and ongoing improvement and invite all stakeholders to participate.

Together, we can make Huron County a place where everyone belongs.

Contact Information

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Executive Summary

The 2027 Annual Accessibility Plan (AAP) of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) reflects the County of Huron's ongoing commitment to building a more inclusive and accessible community. This plan outlines the achievements from 2026, highlights our strategic goals for 2027, and underscores our dedication to ensuring that Huron County continues to lead in accessibility and inclusivity.

In 2026, HCAAC advanced accessibility across Huron County through several key initiatives. Achievements included the conclusion of the 2025 AccessSLED program, accessibility reviews of more than 8 municipal sites and projects, and the delivery of an awareness session on inclusive volunteer practices during National AccessAbility Week. These efforts, along with the Committee's continued advisory role and community partnerships, strengthened accessibility outcomes and reinforced the County's commitment to inclusion.

In the latter half of 2026, HCAAC will build on this progress by focusing on both new and standing goals. Priorities include renewing the AccessSLED program in 2027, continuing accessibility reviews with an emphasis on Huron County Library locations, recruiting new community members to the Committee, and developing practical accessibility resources such as quick-reference guides. Standing goals will remain central, including enhancing accessibility in public spaces, strengthening collaboration with stakeholders, and promoting accessibility awareness and education.

The 2027 Annual Accessibility Plan reaffirms the importance of accountability and transparency. HCAAC will continue to monitor progress, provide updates to County Council, and engage with the community to ensure accessibility initiatives are sustainable, responsive, and impactful.

HCAAC at a Glance



HCAAC is dedicated to advising Huron County Council on the implementation of accessibility standards across the County's nine partner municipalities (see Appendix for HCAAC's objectives and priorities). Comprising primarily of individuals with disabilities, the committee plays a vital role in creating an accessible community by providing input on accessibility plans, site developments, and public spaces. Through education, consultation, and advocacy, the HCAAC ensures that Huron County remains inclusive and accessible for everyone.

- Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh
- Bluewater
- Central Huron
- Goderich
- Howick
- Huron East
- Morris-Turnberry
- North Huron
- South Huron



Strategic Alignment

HCAAC is dedicated to ensuring that the County's operations are accessible and inclusive for all individuals.



Integrated Approach to Inclusion and Accessibility

In alignment with the County of Huron's commitment to inclusion and diversity, HCAAC takes an integrated approach where accessibility is seamlessly woven into the broader framework of inclusion. Rather than being a standalone aspect, accessibility is a fundamental component of our overall Accessibility strategy.

This approach ensures that all initiatives and programs reflect HCAAC's dedication to creating a community where everyone can fully participate and thrive. By integrating an accessibility lens, HCAAC strives to foster an environment where accessibility is not just an add-on but a core element of the County's inclusive practices and policies.



Intersectionality and Disability Intersectionality highlights how various aspects of identity, such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability, intersect and influence an individual's experiences. Disability is deeply intertwined with these factors, affecting how individuals experience barriers and discrimination. For example, a person's experience with disability can differ significantly based on their gender, race, or socioeconomic background.

By recognizing these intersecting identities, we can better understand and address the unique challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. This perspective guides our approach to creating inclusive environments, ensuring that our accessibility initiatives consider and accommodate the diverse needs of all community members. This approach helps us move beyond a one-size-fits-all model and fosters a more equitable and supportive community for everyone.

Reporting and Accountability

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in enhancing accessibility across the region. To achieve this, the Committee adheres to a robust framework for monitoring progress, evaluating effectiveness, and reporting outcomes.

- **Regular Monitoring and Evaluation:** HCAAC reviews its initiatives and programs to assess their impact and effectiveness. This involves collecting feedback from stakeholders, analyzing data on accessibility improvements, and evaluating the progress of ongoing projects against established goals and standards.
    - Municipal Reporting Timing: Accessibility initiatives from partner municipalities are incorporated into the Annual Accessibility Plan as they are

received. Because lower-tier municipalities complete their annual accessibility updates at different points in the year - often later in the fall (e.g., November or December) - some initiatives may not be available prior to the finalization of the County's Annual Accessibility Plan. In these cases, HCAAC will include all updates received to date and will note that additional municipal initiatives may be reported following Council review at the local level. This ensures transparency while acknowledging differences in municipal reporting cycles and prevents the appearance that municipal initiatives are missing.

- **Annual Reporting:** The HCAAC publishes an annual accessibility plan update to provide a comprehensive overview of its activities, achievements, and future goals. This report includes details on compliance with accessibility standards, progress on key projects, and any challenges encountered. It is made available to the public and shared with the County Council and partner municipalities to ensure accountability, transparency, and trust.
- **Public Engagement:** HCAAC encourages input from the community through various channels, including public meetings and feedback mechanisms. This engagement helps ensure that the Committee's work is aligned with the priorities and perspectives of the community.
- **Accountability Framework:** HCAAC operates within a clear accountability framework, with defined roles and responsibilities for Committee members and subcommittees. Regular meetings are held to review progress, address issues, and adjust strategies and actions as needed.
- **Reporting to County Council:** HCAAC provides regular updates to the County Council, including detailed reports on accessibility initiatives and their outcomes. These updates help ensure that accessibility remains a priority within the County's broader strategic goals and facilitates informed decision-making.

2026 Achievements

AccessSLED Program

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) launched the AccessSLED program in March 2025 to provide funding support for community-based accessibility improvements. In its first year, the program has awarded $15,300 in grants to 15 organizations across the County. Funded projects support a variety of accessibility enhancements in public spaces and community facilities. The program demonstrates strong community engagement and has established a framework for sustainable, ongoing impact. The 2025 AccessSLED program was

finalized in 2026.

National AccessAbility Week-Education Initiative

As part of National AccessAbility Week 2026, the HCAAC Education Subcommittee, in collaboration with the County's nine partner municipalities, organized a virtual awareness session on inclusive volunteer practices. Representatives from over 15 community organizations attended the session. The central message emphasized the importance of volunteers being trained in the AODA Customer Service Standard. Participants were provided with training resources and advised of the ongoing support available through their municipalities and HCAAC. The recording is available for any additional viewing through every municipal clerk's office.

Accessibility Reviews 2026

As of October 2026, the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) has reviewed over 8 municipal sites and projects to assess compliance with accessibility standards and provide recommendations for improvement. These ongoing reviews ensure accessibility considerations are embedded in infrastructure planning and project design across the County.

Accessible Tourism Initiative Update

In alignment with the 2026 goal to promote accessible tourism, Huron County's Tourism team is dedicated to collaborating with the AccessNow app to improve accessibility information and assistance for visitors and residents, fostering a more inclusive and welcoming tourism environment.

The HCAAC Education Subcommittee has provided guidance and endorses this approach with the Huron County Economic Development Department, enabling the Tourism team to take the lead in implementing this initiative with continued advisory support from HCAAC.

2027 Goals

- **Renewal of AccessSLED Program:** Renew and administer the AccessSLED program to provide continued funding opportunities for community-based accessibility improvements.
- **Continuation of Site Reviews:** Undertake accessibility reviews of municipal sites and projects, to ensure compliance with accessibility standards and best practices.
- **Recruitment of Community Members:** Implement the recruitment process to engage new community members in HCAAC, strengthening

representation and incorporating diverse lived experiences. Complete new term member onboarding.

- **Development of Accessibility Resources:** Create concise accessibility resources, including quick-reference tools and tip sheets (e.g., *10 Considerations for an Accessible Washroom*), to assist municipalities and community partners in enhancing accessibility in facilities and services.

Standing Goals

- **Enhance Accessibility in Public Spaces:** Encourage public entities to request accessibility audits, provide reviews as requested, and share resources to support ongoing improvements throughout the County.

  For exterior municipal sites, trails, parks, sidewalks, and other outdoor public spaces, HCAAC will conduct accessibility reviews as conditions allow. Outdoor assessments will be scheduled weather permitting to ensure safe access for committee members and to support accurate evaluation of accessibility features. This approach helps identify seasonal or weather-related barriers while maintaining the Committee's commitment to ongoing accessibility improvements across the County.
- **Strengthen Collaboration with Community Stakeholders:** Work with community organizations, advocacy groups, and partners to advance accessibility initiatives through joint projects, resource sharing, and regular communication.
- **Promote Accessibility Awareness and Education:** Deliver educational programs and workshops for County and municipal staff, highlight accessibility successes through communication channels and provide training resources.

Closing

As we reflect on the progress and goals set for the coming year, HCAAC remains unwavering in its commitment to fostering an inclusive and accessible community. Guided by the principles of diversity, equity, intersectionality, inclusion, and belonging, we recognize that the achievements of 2026 have established a strong foundation. Our 2027 goals are designed to build upon this progress, addressing emerging needs and advancing accessibility in impactful ways.

Appendix

Priorities for HCAAC Objectives Mandated by Legislation

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Annual Updates

In compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11, and the O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards, the County of Huron is required to develop and maintain a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan outlines strategies for identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities over five years.

- **HCAAC Responsibility:** The County Clerk will annually review and update (if needed) the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Following County Council approval, the revised plan will be posted on the County's website.
- **Council Responsibility**: The County Council will approve and submit the updated plan to the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility. The County Clerk will ensure the plan is shared with the CAO and Senior Management Team for implementation. Local Municipal Councils will also approve and implement the plan.
- **HCAAC Municipal Working Group**: Representatives will present the plan to their Councils for approval and post it on their respective municipality websites.

Timeline Targets: The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan shall be reviewed every five years, and updates shall be posted annually. The County Council shall approve the plan by January 1st of each year, and partner municipalities' Councils shall also approve it by the same date.

Annual Accessibility Plan

The County of Huron is required to create and publish an Annual Accessibility Plan under the AODA. This plan will include the County's goals and achievements from the previous year.

- **HCAAC Responsibility:** The County Clerk will develop the Annual Accessibility Plan in consultation with the HCAAC and County staff, presenting it to the committee by December each year.
- **Council Responsibility:** The County Council will approve and submit the plan to the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.
- **HCAAC Municipal Working Group:** Representatives will present the plan to their Councils for approval and post it on their respective municipality websites.

Timeline Targets: The Annual Accessibility Plan shall be approved by the County Council and partner municipalities'' Councils by January 1st of each year.

Alignment of Both Plans

The goals outlined in the Annual Accessibility Plan should align with those of the

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

- **HCAAC Responsibility:** The Annual Accessibility Plan will be posted on the County's website following County Council approval.
- **Council Responsibility:** The County Clerk will ensure the plan is implemented across all departments and shared with local municipalities.
- **HCAAC Municipal Working Group:** The Annual Accessibility Plan will be posted on partner municipalities' websites once approved.

Timeline Targets: The plans will be aligned with the Annual Accessibility Plan and updated with the Multi-Year Plan.

Review of Building Plans for Renovation, Construction, Purchase, Lease, and Exterior Site Plans

AODA requires timely reviews of building plans to ensure accessibility for renovations, new constructions, and exterior site plans.

- **HCAAC Responsibility:** The Site and Plan Review Subcommittee will review sites and plans to provide feedback.
  Exterior site reviews will be carried out weather permitting to ensure safe conditions for committee members and to allow for proper evaluation of outdoor accessibility elements such as paths of travel, ramps, parking areas, and recreational spaces.
- **Council Responsibility:** The County Council will ensure that partner municipalities understand their duty to request reviews before purchasing, constructing, or leasing properties.
  Municipal Working Group: Representatives will inform their staff and share reviewed site plans with building officials.

Timeline Targets: Reviews will be conducted on an ongoing basis.

Provide Accessibility Information to the County and Partner Municipalities

Provide updates and information on accessibility directives and regulations per AODA.

- **HCAAC Responsibility:** The County Clerk will gather feedback on the proposed regulations, work with the Directive and Regulation Review Subcommittee to identify concerns, and ensure compliance.
- **Council Responsibility:** The County Clerk will regularly update the County Council on regulatory requirements and the County's preparedness.
- **Municipal Working Group:** Representatives will inform their respective staff and provide feedback on regulatory requirements.

Timeline Targets: Updates and feedback will remain ongoing.

Objectives Driven by HCAAC and Community

Enhancing Community Engagement and Information Sharing
Advance the Committee's vision of promoting accessibility across Huron County by building relationships with all stakeholders, including the County Council, partner municipalities,
entities, and community members. Develop and distribute information on new legislation and offer educational opportunities.

Initiatives:

- Host webinars and presentations on accessibility for local stakeholders.
- Provide regular updates to the County Council.
- Review and recommend improvements for municipal facilities.
- Execute annual National AccessAbility Week programming.

Timeline Targets: Ongoing

HCAAC Awards
Recognize entities and individuals who excel in creating barrier-free access and promoting accessibility in the community.
Initiative: Execute HCAAC awards programming annually.

Community Participation
Encourage local events to incorporate accessibility into their operations.

Initiative: Provide resources to facilitators to encourage adherence to accessibility standards and promote inclusive practices.

Timeline Targets: Coordinate with local events throughout the year

Accessibility Initiatives in Partner Municipalities

Municipality of Bluewater

Accessibility Projects Completed in 2026

- The Municipality of Bluewater prepared the Election Accessibility Plan for the Municipal Election.

Ongoing Accessibility Projects

- Accessible documents - Several key/frequently requested by-laws have

been remediated using Accessibility on Demand software.

- New formatting will result in increased accessibility for the 2027 Budget book
- Ongoing sidewalk replacement projects to upgrade to meet AODA compliance
    - Approximately 135m to be upgraded to 1.5m width on the north side of Zurich Main Street from John Street North to 135m west of John Street North.

Proposed projects for 2027 and Beyond

- Rehabilitating several sections of sidewalk in Hensall to meet AODA compliance, including sections on Wellington St., and King St. in Hensall.
- Accessible upgrades to spectator areas at Zurich and Hensall Arenas (pending grant funding).

Municipality of Morris-Turnberry

Accessibility Projects Completed in 2026

- Accessible Documents and Communications – Continued to incorporate accessibility considerations into Council reports, public notices, forms and other municipal documents.
- Records Management and Digitization – Continued the digitization and organization of municipal records, improving the ability of staff to locate and provide municipal information electronically and in accessible formats upon request.
- Website Accessibility – Regularly reviewed and updated municipal website content as part of ongoing website maintenance, with consideration given to accessible formatting, navigation, documents and web content.
- Accessible Customer Service – Continued to provide municipal information and services in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request and to accommodate individual accessibility needs when providing service to the public.
- Accessibility Planning and Collaboration – Continued participation in the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee municipal working group and collaborated with Huron County and neighbouring municipalities on accessibility planning, information sharing and implementation of accessibility requirements.

Proposed Projects for 2027 and Beyond

- Continue to improve the accessibility and consistency of municipal document templates, forms, reports and public communications.
- Continue to review website content and documents for accessibility and incorporate accessibility considerations when new online content is created.
- Continue the Municipality's records digitization program to improve electronic access to municipal information.
- Incorporate accessibility considerations into municipal facility maintenance, rehabilitation and capital projects as opportunities arise.
- Continue to monitor changes to accessibility legislation, standards and best practices and update municipal policies, procedures and practices as required.
- Continue to work with the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee and municipal partners to implement the Huron County Accessibility Plan and identify opportunities to improve accessibility in municipal programs, services and facilities.

Township of North Huron

Accessibility Projects Completed in 2026

- Updated its Removal of Barriers to Accessibility Strategy through By-law No. 30-2026. This update included focus on the Wingham Fire Station, the North Huron Wescast Community Complex, and the Blyth and District Community Centre. This updated strategy assists in the identification of barriers which members of the public may face. The plan outlines various accessibility recommendations at Township owned facilities and provides solutions for improvement. The strategy goes above and beyond the compliance requirements of the AODA and is intended to increase accessibility.
- As 2026 is an election year, in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, the Township is required to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2026 election. The Township of North Huron is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to fully participate in the Municipal and School Board Elections with dignity and in a consistent manner with all North Huron electors and as such, in April of 2026, adopted an Election Accessibility Plan which is available on the Township website, and at the North Huron Municipal Office.

Ongoing Accessibility Projects

- In 2026, the Township of North Huron completed an update to the municipal website in collaboration with the website provider Govstack. This update, while improving upon the overall design of the previous site, ensures that all features required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 are complied with, and that the site is as functional as possible to those with accessibility needs. The new site also continues to conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. The Township continues to ensure that the website maintains ongoing accessibility by ensuring documents that are uploaded are accessible and images include proper and descriptive alt text.
- On August 18, 2026, the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) reviewed the Blyth Fire Hall/Public Works Building, Wingham Public Works Building, and the East Wawanosh Public Works Building to identify barriers to accessibility and propose potential solutions at these locations. Once received, the reports from these site reviews will be reviewed and incorporated into the updated Removal of Barriers to Accessibility Strategy by By-law.
- On August 24, 2026 the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) met with the Township to review the site plan of the new Blyth Daycare being constructed. The Committee provided feedback to the Township which has since been incorporated into the design and construction of the new building to improve accessibility. The construction is ongoing and is expected to be completed in 2026.

Proposed Projects for 2027 and Beyond

- In 2027, the Township of North Huron will continue to update the Removal of Barriers to Accessibility Strategy by completing inspections on various municipal trails, playgrounds and parks.
- The Township of North Huron, with assistance from the Ontario Trillium Foundation will be installing an accessible 2-person lift and renovating the lift shaft and electrical room within the Blyth and District Community Centre. This project which is planned for completion in 2027, will help increase accessibility within the facility for members of the public.

Municipality of Huron East

Accessibility Projects Completed in 2026

- Vanastra Recreation Centre Accessibility Upgrades Completed dressing room renovations that improved accessibility through the installation of doorless entryways and barrier-free shower access. Existing shower curbs were removed to enhance mobility and reduce barriers for individuals using mobility aids.

- Seaforth Lawn Bowling Club Accessibility Improvements Constructed an accessible ramp providing improved access to the clubhouse and bowling greens. Added one accessible washroom and one gender-neutral washroom to promote inclusive access for all users.
- Huron East Job and Volunteer Fair Increased community accessibility and inclusion by expanding the annual event to feature both volunteer and employment opportunities, creating more ways for residents to connect with local organizations and participate in community life. The event was also relocated to a fully accessible venue, improving participation and ease of navigation for individuals with mobility and accessibility needs.
- Skills for Success Program Improved access to employment and volunteer opportunities by removing financial barriers to essential training. The program provided residents with access to courses such as Standard First Aid and CPR and Safe Food Handling, helping more individuals obtain the skills and certifications needed to participate in the workforce and community.
- Municipal Website Redesign Launched a redesigned, mobile-friendly municipal website to improve accessibility, navigation, and access to municipal information and services.
- Website Search and Information Access Improvements Enhanced website search functionality and introduced a centralized online information hub to help residents locate information and access municipal services more efficiently.
- Website Accessibility Review and User Testing Conducted resident surveys and website navigation testing to identify accessibility barriers and opportunities for improved usability.
- Election Accessibility Policy Developed and implemented an Election Accessibility Policy to support equitable access to the municipal election process, including voting opportunities and election-related information for persons with disabilities.
- Accessibility Improvement Grant
  Introduced an Accessibility Improvement Grant through the 2026 Community Improvement Program to support projects that reduce barriers and enhance accessibility throughout the community.

Proposed projects for 2027 and Beyond

- Digital Accessibility Enhancements Continue improving website accessibility features, digital service delivery, and online content to enhance the user experience for all residents, including those using assistive technologies, and to support ongoing compliance with accessibility standards.
- Seaforth and District Community Centre (SDCC) Accessibility Enhancements Install automatic door openers to improve independent access to dressing rooms and create an accessible viewing area to enhance participation and spectator experiences for individuals with disabilities.
- Accessibility Improvement Grant
  Continue the Accessibility Improvement Grant through the 2027 Community

Improvement Program to encourage accessibility upgrades and support initiatives that improve access and inclusion for residents and visitors of all abilities.

Municipality of South Huron

Accessibility Progress
General Requirements

- Procurement
  - The Municipal Procurement By-law incorporates accessibility criteria into the procurement of goods and services.
- Reporting
  - Reports are produced annually on the progress and implementation of the multi-year Accessibility Plan, and this information is posted on our website and available in alternate formats, upon request.
  - The multi-year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated once every five years.
  - The Municipality, as legislated, will file Accessibility Compliance Reports with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility. As a public sector organization, reporting is to be completed every two years, and the Municipality will have the report filed by December 31, 2025.
  - Records will continue to be maintained for training provided on accessibility, including the dates of the training and the number of individuals who attended.

Customer Service

- All new and seasonal staff receive training upon hire or return, a refresher course will be provided every 5 years for full-time staff.
- Staff across the organization have been trained in the functions of the website to conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level AA.
- The website is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure its functionality and content remain accessible.
- The municipality continues to provide accessible formats and communication support upon request.
- South Huron is a member of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) and staff attend Accessibility working group meetings.
- Any municipal service disruptions are published on the Service Disruptions page of southhuron.ca

Feedback

- The Municipality of South Huron welcomes input from the public to help

identify ways in which we can improve accessibility in facilities, goods and services. Members of the public are encouraged to share their comments or suggestions by contacting the Municipal Clerk or complete filing out Report a Problem (Citizen Issue/Request Submission) form on the website.

- Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request to the Clerk.

Information and Communications

- South Huron where and when possible records and live streams its Council meetings on the municipal website and municipal YouTube channel. Watching the meetings online or a recording of a meeting is an effective way that we are reaching our residents who are not able to attend our meetings in person. YouTube provides options for closed captioning of any meetings posted.
- South Huron uses eScribe software in the creation of agenda packages. The software meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA when producing Council Reports.
- South Huron Council chambers has an audio system, including microphones and speakers.
- Staff continue to attend external and internal training to continue the development of accessible forms and documents and continue to update templates for accessibility on the website.
- All webpages contain a caption within the footer of every page about alternative formats and accessing information.
- Bi-weekly HUB in newspaper, and electronic newsletter states that our information is accessible and to contact municipality about receiving information in alternative formats.

Employment

- All employment advertisements inform applicants of our ability to make accommodations throughout the recruitment process, if required.
- All of the requirements in the Employment Standard continue to be maintained by the Municipality including those pertaining to the following:
    - Recruitment, assessment, and selection;
    - Accessible formats and communication support for employees;
    - Workplace emergency response information;
    - Documented individual accommodation plans;
    - Return to work process;
    - Performance management;
    - Career development and advancement; and
    - Redeployment.
- Human Resources continuously monitors the status of employee training. All

employees regardless of their employment status (full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal and Council) take refresher courses on Accessibility Training for Employees (AODA), along with accessibility training on information and communication standards.

- When conducting interviews:
    - On all recruitment postings the following is included in the posting: Accommodation is available upon request for all parts of the recruitment process.

Design of Public Spaces (and Built Environment)

- As per standard operational practices, the following are conducted on a regular basis either through legislative or municipal policy requirements:
    - Repair, maintenance, and removal of barriers on municipal trails, sidewalks, and public spaces.
    - Fire Code inspections of private, public, and municipal facilities.
    - Building Code inspections of new or renovated facilities.
    - Health and safety inspections of all municipal facilities.
    - Emergency management measures to promote the safety of the community within times of emergency.

Overall Goals, Current and Proposed Projects, and Next Steps for Accessibility

The following section outlines accessibility goals, completed and proposed projects and next steps for accessibility in South Huron.

Overall Goals for Accessibility

- Ensure the Municipality of South Huron continues to comply with the AODA, its regulations and all other related pieces of legislation and continue with organizations commitment to accessibility.
- Review Municipality of South Huron's policies and practices to ensure accessibility compliance as part of normal policy review process.
- Strive to ensure that new facilities, programs, and services are designed and created with accessibility features incorporated.
- Continue to develop resources and training materials for staff, volunteers and contractors and promote awareness and education regarding accessibility requirements and obligations throughout the corporation.
- Work with corporate departments to explore new and innovative ways to remove and prevent barriers to access.
- Ongoing training for staff on the Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy.

- Continue to work with in partnership with Huron County Accessibility Committee on Huron County Accessibility Plan and updates.
- Continue to monitor accessibility issues, trends, and legislative changes.2023 South Huron Highlights and Initiatives

2025 Accessibility Projects

2025 Completed Accessibility Projects

- **Replacement of Dashwood Community Centre playground equipment** – in conjunction with adjacent municipality, a comprehensive review of replacement options to ensure AODA, O. Reg 191/11, Canadian Standards Association (CAS) and South Huron Accessibility Policy was completed, public input provided in the selection of the new playground that has been installed.
- **Replacement of South Huron Recreation playground equipment** – replacement of the playground equipment with AODA standards. Public input provided in the selection of the new playground that has been installed.
- **Accessible items at the Centralia Community Park** – following recommendations of the Centralia Community Park Advisory Committee, a new accessible pathway, picnic table and swing were installed.
- **Accessible items at Port Blake Day Park** – following recommendations of the Port Blake Task Force, an accessible pathway, picnic tables and porta potties were installed.
- **Upgrades to Kirkton-Woodham Pool House** – through a successful Enabling Accessibility Program grant application, South Huron and Perth South undertook upgrades to the Kirkton-Woodham Pool House based on the results of an accessibility audit, which included retrofitting two washrooms, construction an exterior walkway and installation of an accessible customer service counter which were completed in 2025 prior to pool season.
- **Description of accessible features within municipal facilities** – staff have begun identifying features within municipal facilities and identifying these on the municipal website. For example, the Arenas page on the municipal website has been updated with text to reflect the accessibility improvements made at both the South Huron Recreation Centre (SHRC) and Stephen Arena. Accessibility features for all municipal facilities will be updated by staff, including descriptor text, photographs (with appropriate alternative text) to accompany the text. This was completed in early 2025, with staff continuing to monitor/update.

On-going 2025 Accessibility Projects

- **Accessible word document templates for municipal staff** – continued creation of accessible word document templates (memos, letters, PowerPoint presentations) for municipal staff to use to ensure accessible font style, font size, spacing, heading styles, colour contrast is suitable for all word documents

produced. A similar document will be created and distributed to South Huron Council to utilize.

- **Accessible seating at Municipal Office** – two chair styles for seating (stationary chairs with and without arms) will be provided within the front office area of the facility (end of 2025/early 2026).
- **Customer service seating** – exploration of seating options that meet the needs of the community within municipal facilities but ensuring that seating choices do not create further barriers.
    - To date, recommendations for seating options for the SHRC Accessible Viewing Platform have been provided by the Site Review Committee (Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee).
- **Review of Not Accessible Document List –** staff continue the review of fillable PDF forms hosted on municipal website deemed not accessible and explore options to build these into website functions.
- **Physical location access project – in partnership with the Exeter BIA and South Huron Chamber of Commerce –** the Municipality was successful in its application for AccessSLED funding program. Proposed projects are to support businesses and service providers within South Huron to improve accessibility for individuals at physical locations by implementing a) high contrast yellow paint for increased visibility of exterior main entrance steps and/or uneven surfaces for businesses and service providers, b) front entrance window cling for 30 interested businesses or service providers with appropriate contrast, containing business contract information for those wo need assistance accessing the location or service, and c) accessibility guide provided to all businesses and service providers within South Huron. It is anticipated that this project to continue into 2026.

Proposed 2026 Accessibility Projects

- **Council Chambers accessible podium, additional accessible seating, contrast strips and handrails in gallery area –** replacement of existing podium with a height adjustable style podium, additional seating in front of the gallery at ground level, contrast strips on the steps leading up the gallery area along with installation of handrails.
- **Community Accessibility Tour –** an opportunity exists for South Huron to host a community accessibility tour, showcasing local businesses and organizations who have completed recent accessibility projects. An event in a tour format provides an opportunity for the community to see accessibility features first hand and ask questions they may have. The audience for this event encompasses various community organizations, businesses and their staff, municipal staff and Council, and interested community members.

Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh

Proposed Accessibility Project

- Installation of an accessible pathway at the Benmiller Playground to improve access to playground amenities.

Ongoing Accessibility Initiatives

- Council meetings continue to be livestreamed and recorded to enhance public access.
- eScribe software continues to be used for agenda and report preparation, supporting WCAG accessibility standards.
- All new employees receive accessibility training upon hire.
- Staff continue to work toward producing accessible documents and communications in compliance with AODA requirements.

Municipality of Central Huron

Accessibility Projects Completed in 2026:

- Municipal Website – The new website was launched in 2026, providing greater flexibility and control over our digital footprint. The redesigned site incorporates responsive design, streamlined navigation, accessible resources links, making information easier to find and uses across many devices.
- Customer Service – All new hires receive training upon hire in AODA Customer Service Standards, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Accessible Kayak Launch – installation of this specialized, stable dock system featuring transfer benches, slide-out seats, overhead support rails, and rollers that allow individuals with mobility impairment to enter and exit watercraft safely and independently.
- Participation in First Impressions Community Exchange Program- Where the focus was for first-time visitors to provide fresh perspectives and valuable insights into our community's services, accessibility, and tourist attractions.
- Updated Procurement Policy – Policy incorporates requirements for goods, services and/or facilities to be in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and that contracts for the acquisition of goods and services shall include that the vendor shall comply with accessibility standards and maintain records of training for staff.
- Update of the Election Accessibility Plan – In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act our plan has been updated with a focus on identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for electors and candidates with disabilities. Accessible voting options and assistance are provided to support full, equal, independent, and private participation, including access to Voter Assistance Centre and alternative voting methods. Municipal Staff received election-specific customer service

training to ensure they can effectively communicate with and assist voters with a range of accessibility needs.
- Façade grant funding provided to eleven (11) local businesses to assist with accessible entrances, and power door operators.
- Harvest Fest 2026 included a sensory friendly zone for individuals who are neurodivergent

Ongoing
- 2027 façade grant funding (pending budget approval)
- Accessible document review to ensure all documentation that is provided on the Municipal website is in an accessible format and can be provided in other formats, as requested
- Ongoing training and policy review to ensure staff are providing accessible customer service
- Accessibility considerations in municipal projects – accessibility is considered during the planning, design, procurement, and implementation of municipal projects.
- Accessibility feedback and barrier identification – monitor and respond to accessibility feedback and identify opportunities to remove and prevent barriers to municipal services and information.

Proposed Projects for 2027
- Sloman Park – School Car Ramp, accessible walkway and Playground upgrades with accessible features.
- Townhall accessibility project
- Washroom upgrades in Recreational facilities (pending grant funding).

Township of Howick

Accessibility Initiatives

The Township of Howick recognizes that accessibility is an important part of building an inclusive and welcoming community. The Township is committed to identifying, preventing and removing barriers so that residents and visitors of all abilities can participate fully in community life.

As part of this commitment, Howick continues to consider accessibility in the planning, maintenance and improvement of municipal facilities, parks and recreational spaces. Current areas of focus include reviewing accessibility features at municipal properties and identifying opportunities for improvements as facilities and infrastructure are upgraded.

The Township is also highlighting the accessibility features already available throughout the community, including the Fordwich, Gorrie and Wroxeter trails, accessible picnic tables at community spaces, accessible features at the Fordwich Ball Park, and accessibility features at the Howick Optimist Pool. The Township will continue to explore opportunities to improve accessible paths of travel, recreation areas, signage, seating and other features within municipal spaces.

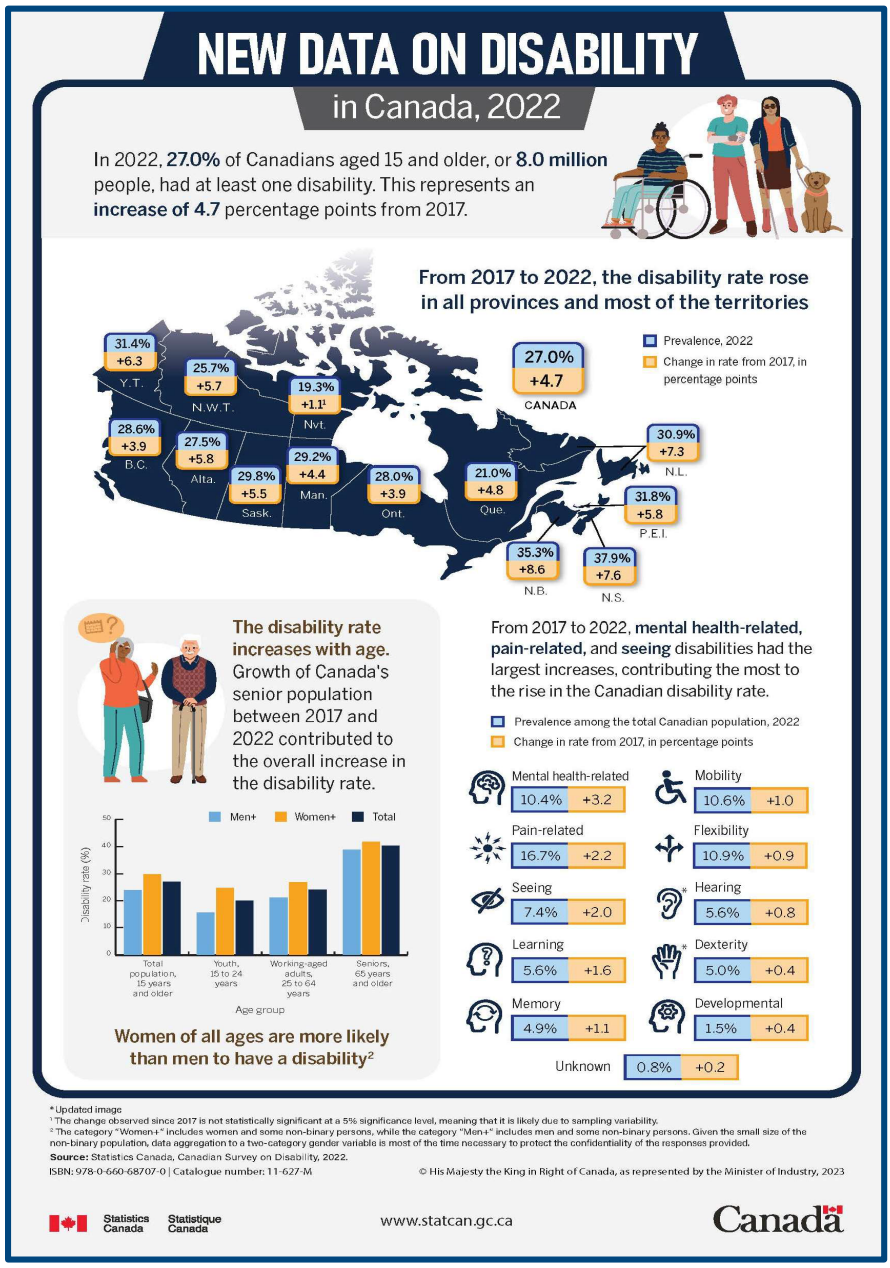
Howick recognizes that accessibility is a shared responsibility. The Township's boards and committees play an important role in the success of our community, and **accessibility** considerations will continue to be encouraged when planning events, programs, projects and improvements.

The Township will also continue to work with the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee and community partners to learn from accessibility reviews, resources and best practices. Through ongoing education, community engagement and practical improvements, Howick is committed to making accessibility an integral part of how we plan and deliver municipal services.

Looking Ahead

The Township will continue to identify opportunities to improve accessibility within municipal facilities, parks and public spaces, promote awareness of accessibility among staff, volunteers, boards and committees, and incorporate accessibility considerations into future projects and improvements. Howick is committed to continuing this work and recognizes that creating a more accessible community is an ongoing process.

Infographic



Source: Canada. Statistics Canada. "A Demographic, Employment and Income Profile of Canadians with Disabilities Aged 15 Years and Over, 2017." ISBN: 978-0-660-68707-0. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2023063-eng.pdf?st=gyJ2u1Yn ***Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada.***