

Municipality of South Huron

2024 Accessibility Update and Progress

The purpose of this document is to outline the following:

- Accessibility progress in 2024; and
- Overall goals, current and proposed projects, and next steps for accessibility.

The above will be described within five key areas of accessibility, all of which are outlined in the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#) (IASR), ON Reg. 191/11 and include:

- Customer Service;
- Information and Communications;
- Employment;
- Transportation; and
- Design of Public Spaces (and Built Environment).

There are also several General Requirements that apply across all of the accessibility standards. Any updates to the IASR will be reflected in the Annual Status Update Reports to the Accessibility Plan.

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, our last compliance reporting deadline was December 31, 2023, and our next reporting deadline is December 31, 2025.

- The Corporate Accessibility Policy has been updated to reflect changes to any of the standards.
- 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 new Municipal website was launched in December 2024 to assist in user accessibility.
- 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.

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 the [Customer Service Feedback](#) form on the municipal website.
- Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request to the Clerk.

Information and Communications

- South Huron records and where possible 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 the following online training courses annually:
 - Accessibility Training for Employees (AODA). This training covers all 5 standards of the AODA with an emphasis on the Customer Service Standard.

- New employees who have access to editing the corporation's webpage are assigned the following online training course: IASR (Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation): Information and Communications Standards and Employment Standards Training.
- 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

2024 Accessibility Projects

2024 Completed Accessibility Projects

- **South Huron Recreation Centre (SHRC)** – in addition to the renovations completed in 2022 and 2023, the following improvements were made to the facility:
 - Additional signage improvements throughout the facility including blade and braille wall signs.
 - Removal of scrolling screen for dressing room assignment (now displayed as stationary)
- **Stephen Arena** – in addition to the renovations completed in 2022 and 2023, the following improvements were made to the facility:
 - Additional signage improvements throughout the facility including blade and braille wall signs.
 - Removal of scrolling screen for dressing room assignment (now displayed as stationary)
- **“Simplifying Accessibility” Community Accessibility Event** – hosted on April 23, 2024, this event included a presentation and question/answer period from Julie Sawchuk B. Sc., B. Ed., RHFAC of Sawchuk Accessible Solutions, Accessibility Tours of the South Huron Recreation Centre and a take-home Accessibility Resource Guide for South Huron organizations and businesses to implement accessible solutions.
- **New Accessible Council Report template** – implemented in September 2024 to provide enhanced communication, this new report has templated accessibility features to ensure appropriate alternative text, contrast, font style and size, and spacing are achieved within staff reports through the templated settings.

- **Municipal Office Entrance Sign** – a new entrance sign was installed at the Municipal Office entrance which included large font and appropriate contrast. This sign replaces the existing vinyl on the glass insert of the door, which will be removed to ensure clear two-way visual into the building.

On-going 2024 Accessibility Projects

- **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. This project is in progress and will be completed in 2025.
- **Accessible seating at Municipal Office** – two chair styles for seating (stationary chairs with and without arms) will be provided within the facility, prior to the end of 2024.
- **Town Hall** - Signage improvements to be installed prior to the end of 2024 throughout the facility including installation of blade and braille wall signs.
- **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 is in progress and it is anticipated that this will be completed in early 2025, after the migrated municipal website has been launched.
- **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).

Proposed 2025 Accessibility Projects

- **Council Chambers accessible podium and microphone system** – replacement of existing podium with a height adjustable style podium.

- **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.
- **Accessible word document templates for municipal staff** – 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.
- **Review of replacement options for 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 are adhered to.
- **Review of Not Accessible Document List** – Review of fillable PDF forms hosted on municipal website deemed not accessible and explore options to build these into website functions.