



*Multi-Year Accessibility P*

*Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)*

*County of Huron*

*Email: [accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)*

*Contents*

**Multi-Year Accessibility Plan..... 1**

**2024-2029..... 1**

**Land Acknowledgement..... 6**

**Chair’s Address ..... 7**

**Foreword..... 9**

**Contact Information.....10**

**Executive Summary..... 12**

**About HCAAC..... 14**

**Objective.....16**

**Goals and Priorities.....16**

**2023 Goals Overview .....16**

**HCAAC Composition.....**



|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| HCAAC Subcommittees .....  | 19        |
| HCAAC Municipal Working Group .....                                | 19        |
| <b>HCAAC Programs and Initiatives.....</b>                         | <b>20</b> |
| <b>HCAAC Awards for Accessibility Excellence .....</b>             | <b>20</b> |
| The Sandra Thompson Memorial Accessibility Champion Award .....    | 20        |
| The Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access.....                    | 21        |
| <i>The Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access Categories .....</i> | <i>21</i> |
| <b>Collaboration with County Council and Municipalities .....</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| HCAAC Working Group Meetings .....                                 | 22        |
| <b>Support for Small Businesses.....</b>                           | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Accessibility Training .....</b>                                | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Web Accessibility.....</b>                                      | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Universal Design and Accessibility Guidelines .....</b>         | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Public Accessible Spaces Simplified (PASS).....</b>             | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Accessibility Standards in Procurement.....</b>                 | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Public Awareness and Engagement .....</b>                       | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Accessible Tourism Development.....</b>                         | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Strategic Alignment .....</b>                                   | <b>26</b> |
| <b>Integrated Approach to Inclusion and Accessibility .....</b>    | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Intersectionality and Disability.....</b>                       | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Strategic and Action Plan .....</b>                             | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Customer Service.....</b>                                       | <b>29</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Information and Communications</b>   | <b>30</b> |
| Employment  | 31        |
| Public Spaces Design  | 32        |
| <b>Reporting and Accountability</b>   | <b>32</b> |
| <b>Closing</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Appendix</b>   | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Priorities for HCAAC Objectives Mandated by Legislation</b>                                  | <b>35</b> |
| Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Annual Updates  | 35        |
| Annual Accessibility Plan   | 36        |
| Alignment of Both Plans   | 37        |
| Review of Building Plans for Renovation, Construction, Purchase, Lease, and Exterior Site Plans | 37        |
| Provide Accessibility Information to the County and Partner Municipalities                      | 38        |
| <b>Objectives Driven by HCAAC and Community</b>   | <b>38</b> |
| Enhancing Community Engagement and Information Sharing  | 38        |
| HCAAC Awards  | 39        |
| Community Participation   | 39        |
| <b>Accessibility Initiatives in Partner Municipalities</b>                                      | <b>40</b> |
| Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh (ACW)  | 40        |
| Projects Completed  | 40        |
| Ongoing Accessibility Projects  | 40        |
| Town of Goderich  | 40        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Accessible Projects Completed in 2024 .....</i>            | <i>40</i> |
| <i>Ongoing Accessible Projects.....</i>                       | <i>44</i> |
| Municipality of Huron East .....                              | 44        |
| <i>Accessible Projected Completed in 2024.....</i>            | <i>44</i> |
| <i>Ongoing Accessible Projects.....</i>                       | <i>45</i> |
| <i>Accessible Projects Proposed for 2025 and Beyond .....</i> | <i>45</i> |
| Township of North Huron.....                                  | 45        |
| <i>Projects Completed in 2023/2024 .....</i>                  | <i>45</i> |
| <i>Ongoing Accessibility Projects .....</i>                   | <i>46</i> |
| <i>Proposed Projects for 2025 and Beyond.....</i>             | <i>47</i> |

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Infographic .....</b> | <b>47</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------|

## 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 Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee's (HCAAC) greatest strengths is our dedicated members, who are passionate about informing, educating, and inspiring our community to make Huron County accessible for 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 entities—such as businesses, organizations, institutions, services, and facilities.

### *Governance*

Since 2021, our committee has successfully operated virtually. 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.

Trevor Bazinet (he/him),

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee 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 committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible community where everyone can participate fully in all aspects of life. To this end, we present our 2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP), which outlines our strategic approach to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities in 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](#). It is a living document developed in consultation with the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC).

As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our goal of creating a barrier-free and inclusive Huron County. This plan outlines specific actions and timelines to help us achieve this vision, ensuring that our services, facilities, and programs are accessible to all.

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.

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

## **Contact Information**

### **Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)**

1 Courthouse Square

Goderich, ON, N7A 1M2

Telephone: 519-524-8394, ext. 3257

Email: [accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)

Sahil Kaushal (he/they)

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Specialist |

Accessibility Coordinator

County of Huron

Email: [skaushal@huroncounty.ca](mailto:skaushal@huroncounty.ca)

## Executive Summary

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is committed to fostering an inclusive and barrier-free environment for all residents of Huron County. Mandated under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#), HCAAC advises the Huron County Council and its nine partner municipalities on implementing accessibility standards.

Key highlights of the 2024-2029 MYAP include:

- **Strategic Objectives:** HCAAC focuses on removing barriers in public spaces, enhancing accessible practices, improving communication, and providing comprehensive customer service that meets accessibility standards.
- **HCAAC's Role:** The committee, which mainly consists of individuals with disabilities, advocates for and influences the design and development of accessibility plans for public spaces. It ensures that the County meets its legislative obligations under the AODA.
- **Programs and Initiatives:** HCAAC sponsored the [Public Accessible Spaces Simplified \(PASS\)](#) program, which offers guidelines and best practices for designing accessible spaces. The committee also delivers the [HCAAC Accessibility Awards](#), recognizing local entities and individuals for creating inclusive environments.

- **Collaborations:** Strong partnerships with the Huron County Council, partner municipalities, and entities are essential in driving the County's accessibility agenda. This collaboration is vital to the success of the [HCAAC Municipal Working Group](#), which regularly meets to address accessibility challenges and implement solutions.
- **Future Goals:** The MYAP outlines the County's goals for the coming years, emphasizing the need for continuous community engagement, educational outreach, and infrastructure improvements to meet growing accessibility considerations.

## About HCAAC



Huron County Map

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) serves as the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) for Huron County,

mandated by the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#). 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.

1. [Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh](#)
2. [Bluewater](#)
3. [Central Huron](#)
4. [Goderich](#)

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)  
[accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)



5. [Howick](#)
6. [Huron East](#)
7. [Morris-Turnberry](#)
8. [North Huron](#)
9. [South Huron](#)

## Objective

HCAAC is dedicated to championing accessibility across Huron County. It advises and collaborates with the County Council and partner municipalities to identify and remove barriers for individuals with disabilities. Through expert advice, community engagement, and adherence to the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#), HCAAC strives to ensure that Huron County provides an inclusive and accessible environment for all.

## Goals and Priorities

In November, HCAAC reviews and updates its goals and priorities annually. These updates clearly outline the Committee's roles and responsibilities and serve as a tool to ensure that all tasks are effectively completed.

The goals and priorities are divided into two sections (see [Appendix 1](#)):

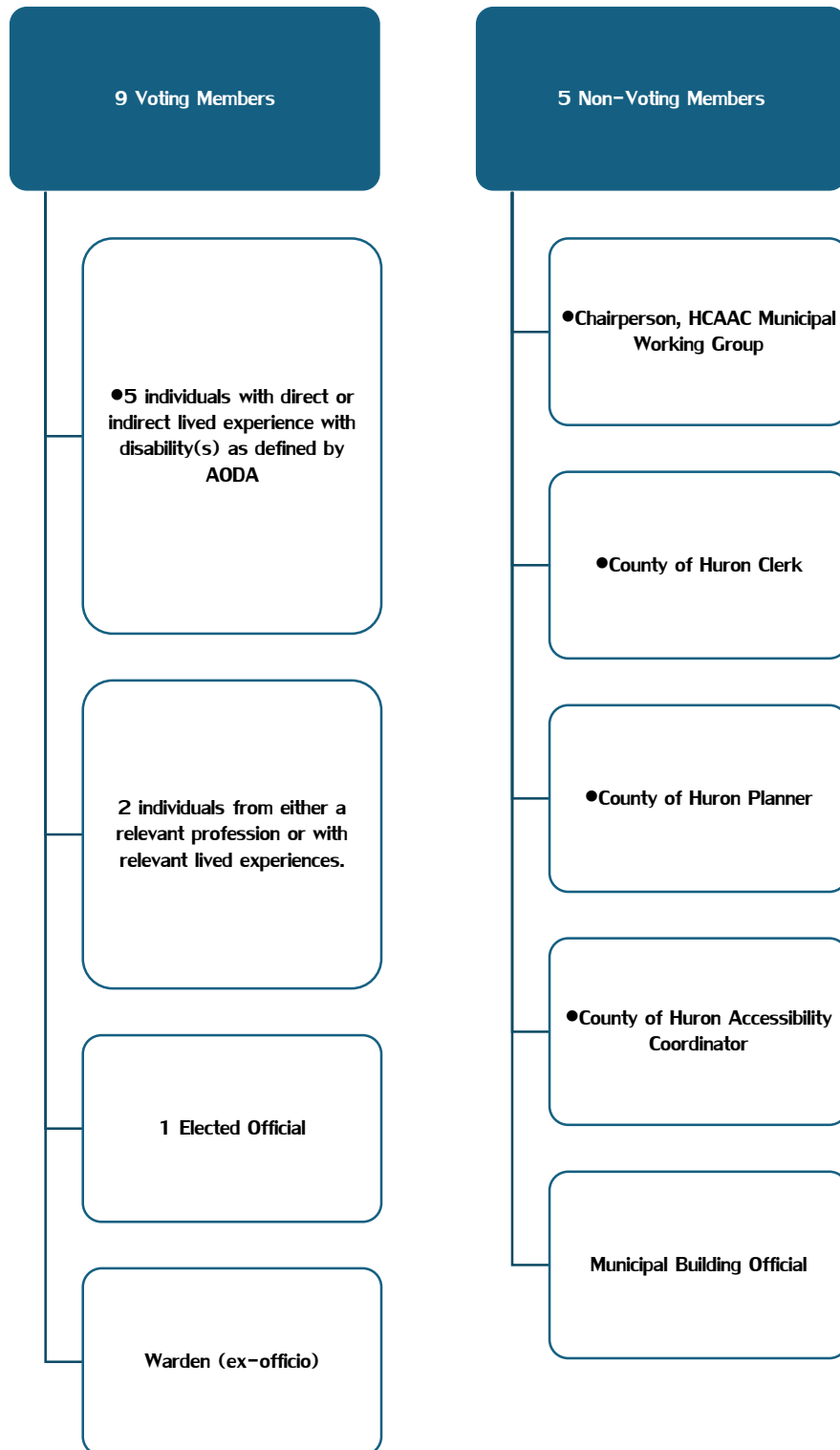
- **Legislative:** Required by the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#) and [O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards](#).
- **HCAAC and Community-Driven:** Aim to achieve the committee's vision of making Huron County accessible to everyone.

## 2023 Goals Overview



*In 2023, HCAAC's efforts included creating and updating the 2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, reviewing municipal building plans and site drawings for accessibility, and providing ongoing advice to the County Council and participating municipalities on accessibility regulations. HCAAC also prioritized strengthening relationships with local municipalities, businesses, and various stakeholders to promote inclusion and accessibility across the County. Additionally, the Committee worked to keep Huron County officials informed about new legislation and best practices related to the built environment, ensuring a collaborative approach to designing accessible public spaces.*

## *HCAAC Composition*



*Note: The Committee may include additional staff as required beyond the core composition of the HCAAC committee.*

# HCAAC Subcommittees

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is organized into three subcommittees, each composed of members from the main Committee.

| Directive and Regulation Review Subcommittee                      | Site and Plan Review Subcommittee  | Education Subcommittee   |
|---|--|--|
| Ensures compliance with accessibility directives and regulations. | Reviews municipal site plans and designs to ensure adherence to accessibility standards. | Develops and implements strategies for raising awareness and providing training on ways to champion accessibility. |

# HCAAC Municipal Working Group

The HCAAC Municipal Working Group brings together employee representatives from partner municipalities within Huron County to collaborate on accessibility initiatives, share best practices, and ensure



consistent implementation of accessibility standards across the region. Additional County of Huron staff may provide support as needed.

## *HCAAC Programs and Initiatives*

### *HCAAC Awards for Accessibility Excellence*

The committee continues to enhance its HCAAC awards program, which recognizes entities and individuals making significant contributions to accessibility. The awards promote public awareness and celebrate those who are leading in creating a more inclusive society.

The HCAAC Awards consist of two distinct honours: the *Sandra Thompson Memorial Accessibility Champion Award* and the *Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access*.

#### *The Sandra Thompson Memorial Accessibility Champion Award*

The Sandra Thompson Memorial Accessibility Champion Award was established by HCAAC in 2022 to honour Sandra Thompson's memory and celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Sandra Thompson was a devoted advocate for accessibility in Huron County, inspiring others to enhance accessibility in our community. They served as the County of Huron's Accessibility Coordinator until 2016 and were a proud resident of the Bluevale area.

This award honours an individual in Huron County who:

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)  
[accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)



- Shows exceptional dedication to promoting accessibility.
- Demonstrates strong leadership in advancing accessibility.
- Makes a significant impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

*The International Day of Persons with Disabilities, observed annually on December 3rd, promotes the rights and well-being of individuals with disabilities in all areas of society.*

### ***The Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access***

*The Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access recognizes outstanding contributions to creating spaces and experiences that remove barriers and foster a more inclusive community. It honours those who have demonstrated excellence in designing spaces, products, or services that enhance accessibility for people with disabilities. The award celebrates a commitment to innovation and design that promotes inclusivity and equity.*

### ***The Award of Merit for Barrier-Free Access Categories***

- **Public:** The Public category honours efforts made by governmental bodies, non-profit, and public entities to create inclusive and accessible environments for all community members.
- **Business:** The Business category recognizes private entities committed to accessibility, ensuring their spaces, products, and services are welcoming and accessible for people with disabilities.

## *Collaboration with County Council and Municipalities*

HCAAC communicates regularly with the County Council, partner municipalities, and local businesses through virtual meetings, phone calls, and in-person engagements. This ongoing dialogue ensures that accessibility remains a key focus in community development.

## *HCAAC Working Group Meetings*

These meetings provide a platform for sharing best practices and addressing everyday considerations. They also include discussions on critical topics related to accessibility, municipal projects, accessibility plans, and training and development opportunities.

## *Support for Small Businesses*

HCAAC has partnered with the County of Huron's Economic Development Department to create AccessSLED. This grant program would help local entities incorporate accessibility into their physical spaces and virtual platforms. This collaboration empowers the community to meet and exceed accessibility standards.

## *Accessibility Training*

HCAAC advocates for comprehensive employee training per the [O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards](#). Training modules are tailored to job roles and include:

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

*Huron County staff, councillors, and board members receive continuous training on accessibility standards. This training ensures that all County employees can accommodate individuals with disabilities.*

#### ***Additional Efforts:***

- *New County employees receive the required accessibility training promptly.*
- *Councillors, committee, and board members received training in 2022-2023, with ongoing virtual training provided as needed from 2024 onwards.*
- *As posted on the County's website, information is provided in accessible formats and with communication support at no additional cost.*
- *Collaboration with the County's Human Resources and Legislative departments ensure continued staff training in Accessibility Standards.*

- Incorporation of the accessibility lens in Corporate policies.

## Web Accessibility

The [AODA](#) mandates that web content must meet [WCAG 2.0 Level AA](#) success criteria, with the following exceptions:

- **1.2.4 Live Captions:** This criterion requires captions for live audio content in synchronized media.
- **1.2.5 Audio Descriptions:** This criterion requires audio descriptions for video content.

The County's Business Technology Solutions (BTS) department regularly assesses the accessibility of the Huron County website to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0 AA standards.

## Universal Design and Accessibility Guidelines

In collaboration with the County of Huron's Planning Department, HCAAC is reviewing the "Huron County Universal Design and Accessibility Guidelines." This document, once revised, will assist municipalities in evaluating site plans under Section 41 of the [Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13.](#)

## Public Accessible Spaces Simplified (PASS)

HCAAC is now a sponsor of the PASS Program. As a result, the educational content produced by [PASS](#) is freely accessible to all County of Huron



employees and those of partner municipalities. These videos showcase best practices for making outdoor spaces accessible, including parks, parking lots, EV charging stations, and trails. This initiative addresses a critical gap in accessible design resources, offering practical guidance to municipalities and other entities committed to fostering inclusivity.

## ***Accessibility Standards in Procurement***

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are integrated into Huron County's procurement process. The procurement policy ensures that accessibility considerations are part of vendor selection and contract management and will be reviewed and updated in 2024-2025.

## ***Public Awareness and Engagement***

HCAAC meetings are open to the public, offering active conversation and dialogue opportunities. In the future, the committee plans to broaden engagement through a virtual platform, enabling ongoing public feedback and allowing HCAAC to solicit input actively.

## ***Accessible Tourism Development***

This initiative, spearheaded by HCAAC, will focus on identifying and cataloging accessible spaces throughout the County, such as parks, trails, and other public spaces. By listing these locations on the County's tourism [website](#), HCAAC aims to make it convenient for everyone to find and enjoy

accessible amenities. This effort will enhance the inclusivity of the County's tourism offerings and promote greater awareness and accessibility within the community.

## Strategic Alignment

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



and diversity, the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) embraces 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 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) 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 accessibility into the IDEA 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.

## *Integrated Approach to Inclusion and Accessibility*

*In alignment with the County of Huron's commitment to inclusion*

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)  
[accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)





### *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.

## Strategic and Action Plan

This Strategic and Action Plan outlines the key initiatives and actions the HCAAC will undertake to meet the requirements of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#), and to proactively address and prevent barriers faced by people with disabilities. Focusing on Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, and Public Spaces Design, the plan details specific steps to enhance accessibility and inclusivity across the County.

### Customer Service

#### Initiatives:

1. **Ongoing Training:** To ensure compliance with the AODA's customer service standards, continuous accessibility training will be provided

for all stakeholders, including new staff, council, and committee members. Additionally, HCAAC aims to extend this training to volunteers in the future.

- **Timeframe:** Ongoing; training provided within one month of hiring.

2. **Community Engagement Mechanism:** Implement and maintain a system for receiving and addressing feedback on accessibility from community members.

- **Timeframe:** HCAAC aims to roll out a virtual engagement platform in the future to enhance community engagement. At present, community members are encouraged to share their input by contacting :

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)

1 Courthouse Square, Goderich, ON N7A 1M2

Telephone: 519.524.8394, ext. 3257

Email: [accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)

## Information and Communications

### Initiatives:

1. **Website Accessibility:** Ensure that the County's website complies with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

- **Timeframe:** Regularly monitored and verified for compliance.

2. *Accessible Formats:* Provide information in accessible formats and with communication support upon request.

- *Timeframe:* In place already

3. *Staff Training:* Train staff on creating accessible documents and communications.

- *Timeframe:* Ongoing; training sessions scheduled as needed.

HCAAC plans to introduce more comprehensive and periodic training to enhance accessibility efforts further

## **Employment**

### **Initiatives:**

1. *Accessible Recruitment:* Ensure job postings and recruitment processes are accessible to candidates with disabilities. HCAAC aims to improve and adapt to meet continuously evolving accessibility standards.

- *Timeframe:* Already in place, with regular assessments for improvements.

2. *Workplace Accommodations:* Provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities and ensure that accommodation requests are handled promptly with the goal of making processes even more responsive and proactive.

- *Timeframe:* Ongoing; policy review and updates as needed.



3. **Employee Training:** Promote comprehensive training for all employees—not just managers or HR personnel—on best practices for accommodating and supporting colleagues with disabilities.

- **Timeframe:** Ongoing with enhanced annual refreshers.

## **Public Spaces Design**

### **Initiative:**

**Public Spaces:** Ensure municipal spaces, including parks, parking lots, and facilities, meet or exceed the evolving accessibility standards.

- **Timeframe:** Work towards compliance with accessibility design standards, with a commitment to continue progress into the subsequent MYAP terms and the flexibility to adapt as legislation evolves and new requirements emerge.

## **Reporting and Accountability**

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in its efforts to enhance accessibility across the County. 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.

- **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.

## Closing

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment for all residents. Through a comprehensive approach that integrates accessibility into broader inclusion and equity frameworks, HCAAC continues to drive meaningful progress across various sectors. The Committee ensures its efforts are impactful and transparent by setting clear goals, implementing strategic initiatives, and maintaining rigorous accountability and reporting practices.

The HCAAC's ongoing work addresses immediate accessibility needs and builds a foundation for long-term improvements and community engagement. As we progress, the HCAAC will continue collaborating with all stakeholders, including the County Council, partner municipalities, entities, and community members, to enhance accessibility and celebrate achievements that reflect our shared commitment to inclusivity.

HCAAC's dedication to advancing accessibility is a testament to our collective vision of a more equitable and welcoming Huron County.

## 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 Accessibility Coordinator 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 it by January 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Accessibility Coordinator 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.
- **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 Accessibility Coordinator will gather feedback on the proposed regulations, work with the Directive and Regulation Review Subcommittee to identify concerns, and ensure compliance.

*Council Responsibility:* The Accessibility Coordinator 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.*

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)  
[accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)



## *Accessibility Initiatives in Partner Municipalities*

### *Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh (ACW)*

#### *Projects Completed*

- *Customer Service: All new hires receive training upon hire in AODA Customer Service Standards.*
- *Information and Communications*
  - *Council meetings are livestreamed and recorded*
  - *eScribe software is used in the creation of agenda packages. This software meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements to ensure compliance when producing Council Agendas and reports.*

#### *Ongoing Accessibility Projects*

- *Continue to develop resources, training and continuing education materials for staff, volunteers and contractors to promote awareness and education regarding accessibility.*
- *Accessible documents – staff are continuing to work ensure that all documents are compliant with AODA standards.*

### *Town of Goderich*

#### *Accessible Projects Completed in 2024*

- *Accessible Floating Wheelchair – In late 2023, a floating wheelchair was donated by Julie Sawchuk to the Town of Goderich for use at the*



Main Beach. It has provided opportunity for individuals with mobility issues to enjoy the waterfront.

- *Accessible Beach Wheelchair* – An accessible beach wheelchair was donated by the Goderich Rotary Club to the Town of Goderich for use at the Main Beach. It has also provided an opportunity for individuals with mobility issues to enjoy the beach as it allows for easy movement from the Mobi-Mats and accessible boardwalk.
- *Goderich Tourism Centre* – In October 2024, the Goderich Tourism Centre moved to 33 St. David Street, an accessible location within the downtown core and offers an accessible public washroom for residents and visitors.
- *Goderich Child Care Centre Infant Playground* – The Goderich Child Care Centre renovated their infant playground area to be inclusive and accessible. The outdoor playground features accessible and inclusive surface areas and playground equipment.
- *Goderich Child Care Centre Sensory Room* – A sensory room is being created at the Goderich Child Care Centre with an expected completion date of December 2024. This room is a sensory-friendly space for children with or without sensory processing disorders to help develop their senses through special lighting, music, and objects. It can also be used as a therapy room for children with limited communication skills.

- *Downtown Rebuild* – Planning for the rebuilding of downtown Goderich has begun. Planning has included public open houses and discussions with various groups and organizations including the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- *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 Town including those pertaining to the following: recruitment, assessment and selection.
- *Municipal Website* – The website has been updated to comply with all mandated features required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11 standards to be met by large organizations. It conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level AA. The Town of Goderich has recently entered into a contract with ReciteMe which will provide an accessible toolbar and analytical tools to assist in maintaining the accessibility standards on the corporate website.
- *Goderich Municipal Airport Website* – The website has been updated to comply with all mandated features required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11 standards to be met by large organizations. It conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

(WCAG) 2.0, level AA. The website is monitored to ensure its functionality and content remain accessible and the Town continues to provides accessible formats upon request.

- *Goderich Tourism Website* – The website has been updated to comply with all mandated features required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11 standards to be met by large organizations. It conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level AA. The website is monitored to ensure its functionality and content remain accessible and the Town continues to provides accessible formats upon request.
- *Customer Service* – All new hires receive training upon hire or return in AODA Customer Service Standards.
- *Information and Communications*
  - *Council meetings are livestreamed and recorded*
  - *eScribe software is used in the creation of agenda packages. This software meets the WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements to ensure compliance when producing Council Agendas and reports.*
- *Design of Public Spaces*
  - *As per standard operational practices, the following is conducted on a regular basis either through legislative or municipal 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
- On-line permitting for building permits – This on-line system is accessible to anyone with any device, browser, and operating system.

### *Ongoing Accessible Projects*

- Regularly reviewing and updating the various websites to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0, Level AA standards
- Continue to develop resources, training and continuing education materials for staff, volunteers and contractors to promote awareness and education regarding accessibility
- Ongoing training for staff regarding the WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements in preparation of reports and documents
- Continue to monitor accessibility issues, trends and legislative changes.

### *Municipality of Huron East*

### *Accessible Projected Completed in 2024*

- Audio Walking Tours

Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC)  
[accessibility@huroncounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@huroncounty.ca)



- BMGCC additions
- Wheelchair accessible front counter in Town Hall

### *Ongoing Accessible Projects*

- Website Accessibility
- Accessible documents
- Adding Huron East businesses to the Access Now App

### *Accessible Projects Proposed for 2025 and Beyond*

- Vanastra Playground
- Upgrades in Brussels – accessible benches and picnic tables
- VRC dressing room upgrades
- Wayfinding Signage Phase 2: Directional Signage to provide clear direction to community facilities within settlement areas

### *Township of North Huron*

#### *Projects Completed in 2023/2024*

- North Huron developed and adopted an Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy. This policy updated and replaced the Township's previous Accessibility Standards for Customer Service & Use of Assistive Device Policy to include updated legislative requirements and to clarify current practices regarding accessibility.
- Accessibility upgrades to the Wingham Firehall washrooms. This project included installing accessible showers, doors, sinks and toilets. This

reconstruction of the space was done to meet accessibility standards set out for public buildings under the AODA.

- Creation of a new, accessible Council Chambers space. The new Township of North Huron Council Chambers was designed to be fully accessible. The space contains a fully accessible Council horseshoe on a level surface (no raised platform) that can be accessed by a wheelchair or mobility device. The space also contains a fully accessible public gallery with accessible seating with armrests on chairs, an accessible podium with adjustable height, multiple accessible entrances and doors with lever door handles, colour contrast throughout whole space, a hearing/audio loop microphone system to amplify sound in the space for assisted hearing, appropriate turning radius all throughout the space, multiple tv monitors for visual accessibility, non-slip carpet tile flooring with colour contrast, and the hallway door has a side light for visual accessibility.

### *Ongoing Accessibility Projects*

- Development of a Removal of Identified Barriers for Accessibility Strategy to assist in the identification of barriers, and to provide the means to remove these barriers to accessibility above and beyond the compliance requirements of AODA. As part of this, the HCACC reviewed the North Huron Municipal Office, the North Huron Children's Centre and the Belgrave Community Centre Playground to identify barriers

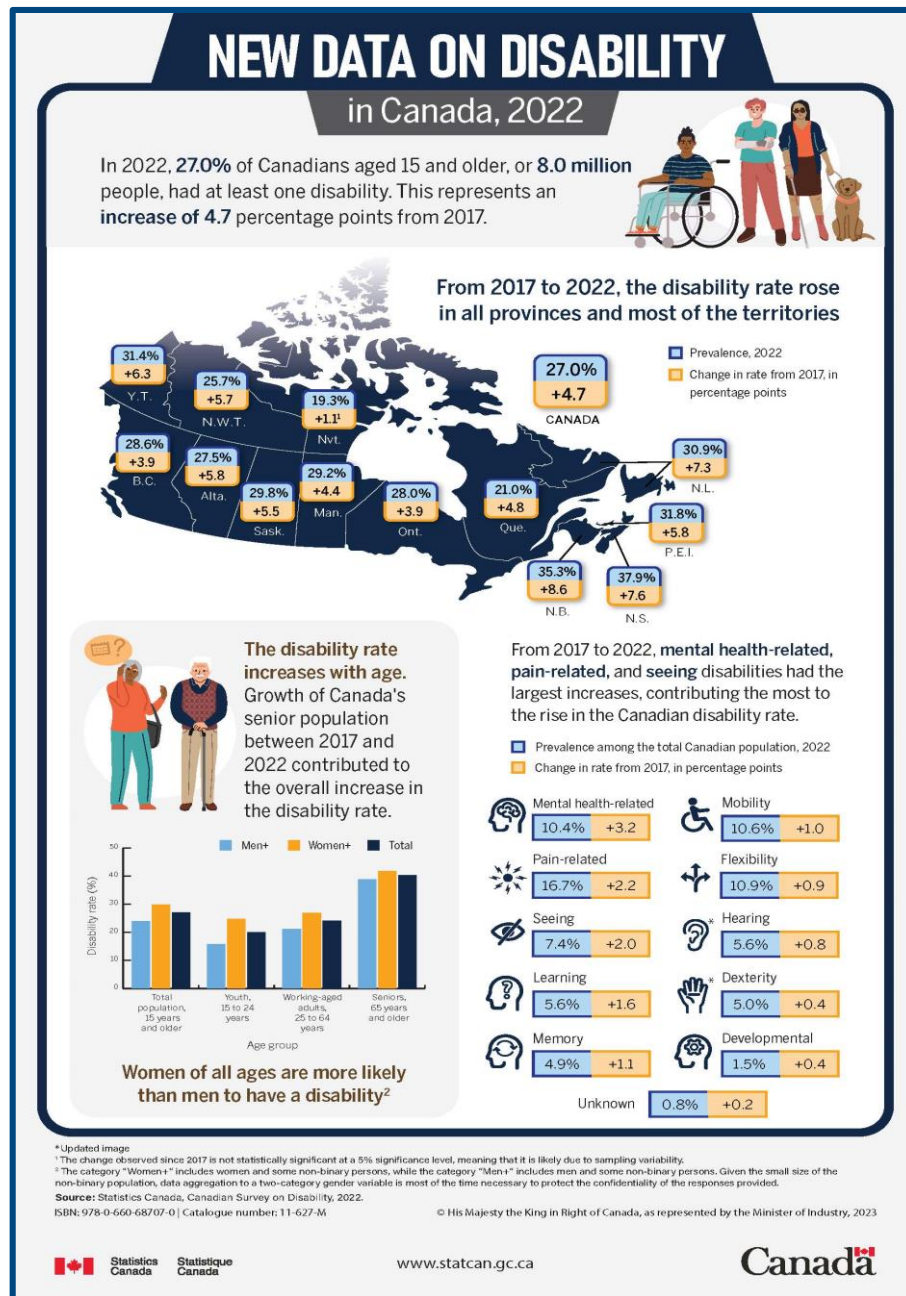
and propose solutions at these locations. In future, these reviews will be conducted across municipal spaces, adding each reviewed location to the Strategy.

- Continuous updates of the municipal website to ensure accessibility.
- The Township of North Huron continues to make accessible documents a priority. All documentation that is provided on the Township's website is in an accessible format and can be provided in another format, upon request.
- Ongoing training for staff continues regarding the Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy and providing accessible customer service.

*Proposed Projects for 2025 and Beyond:* Facilities review of the Blyth & District Community Centre and the Wingham Trail System.

## *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.