

Take Action for Sustainable Huron Update

Community Sustainability Plan

County of Huron

2025



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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we stand upon today is 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 regards to this land, which include Treaty #29 and Treaty #45 ½.

We recognize First Peoples' continued stewardship of the land and water as well as the historical and ongoing injustices they face in Canada. We accept responsibility as a public institution and as treaty people to renew relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people through reconciliation, community service, and respect.

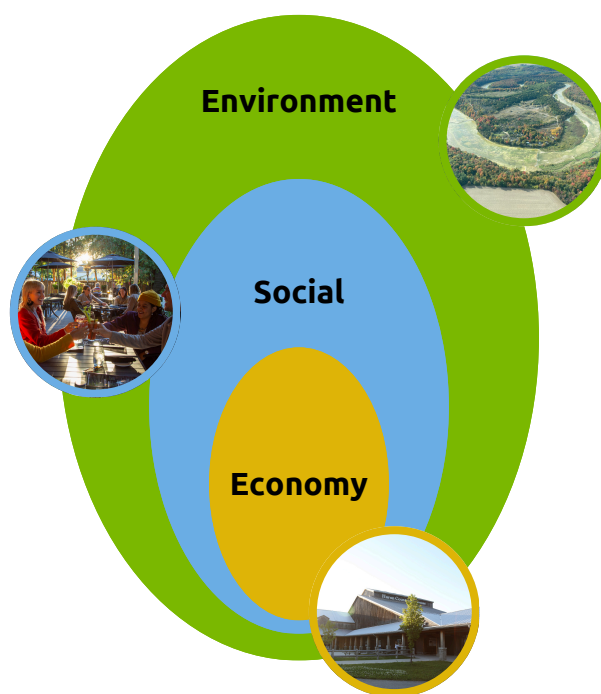


Background

Sustainability requires the long-term well-being of the planet, people, and economy. Models of sustainability have evolved to recognize that strong economies and a thriving society rely on a healthy environment. A healthy environment ensures clean air, soil, water, and natural resources, which are essential for life and business. At the same time, a thriving economy creates jobs and opportunities for people, while social well-being and connections ensure everyone has access to basic services like education, healthcare, housing, and a support network. When these areas work together, communities can grow sustainably, benefiting the planet and its people.



Overlapping Model for Sustainability



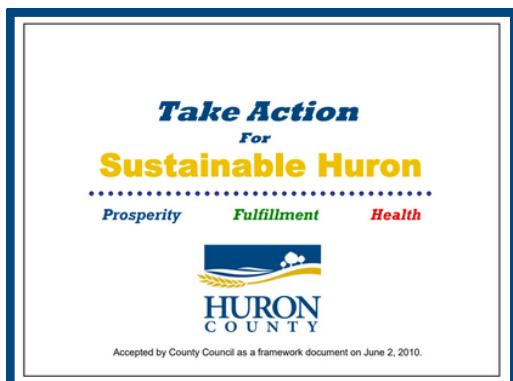
Nested Model of Sustainability

'Sustainable Huron' is a community-wide initiative intended to raise awareness and foster action to enhance community capacity in the face of global issues. Local communities will be affected by changes in climate, energy prices and supply, demographics, international competition, and other trends. The root of sustainability in Huron County is expected to rely on local solutions while understanding connections to global trends.

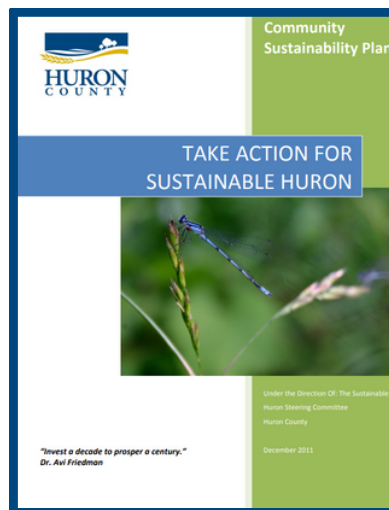
In 2008, the first Take Action for Sustainable Huron Report was developed through the participation of more than 1,300 Huron County residents, including 60 community groups and organizations. This strategy was balanced, thoughtful, and planned through an intentional approach to understand the three spheres, Environment, Society & Culture, and Economy, and identify directions which incorporate all three. The actions in the report are led by the Sustainable Huron Steering Committee which is a multi-stakeholder group with a geographical representation from across all parts of Huron County. A copy of the report can be found on the Huron County website.

In 2011, the Sustainable Huron Committee had a desire to further refine and prioritize the many actions identified by the community through the development of a Community Sustainability Plan. The vision, goals and actions for a sustainable Huron were included in the Take Action Report and the Plan included more detailed priority projects for specific focus areas.

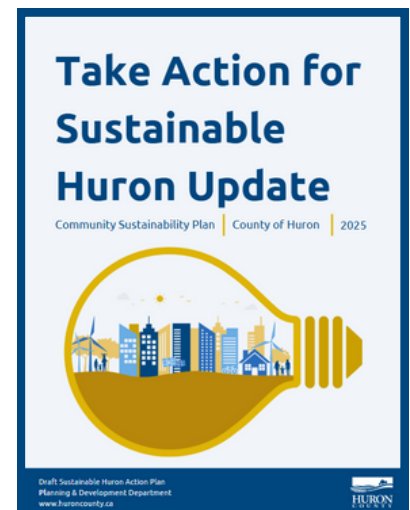
In 2024, Sustainable Huron worked to update the actions within the Take Action for Sustainable Huron Report and the Community Sustainability Plan to reflect on actions that have been completed over the past decade, highlight actions that the community wants to continue and demonstrate the new priorities of Sustainable Huron members. During the March Sustainable Huron meeting, members were given 7 broad categories and brainstormed actions that do or could make Huron County more sustainable. In addition, Eco Exeter high school students provide valuable input as well. The final actions included in this Plan were proposed and prioritized by members through an online survey on Huron County Connects.



2008

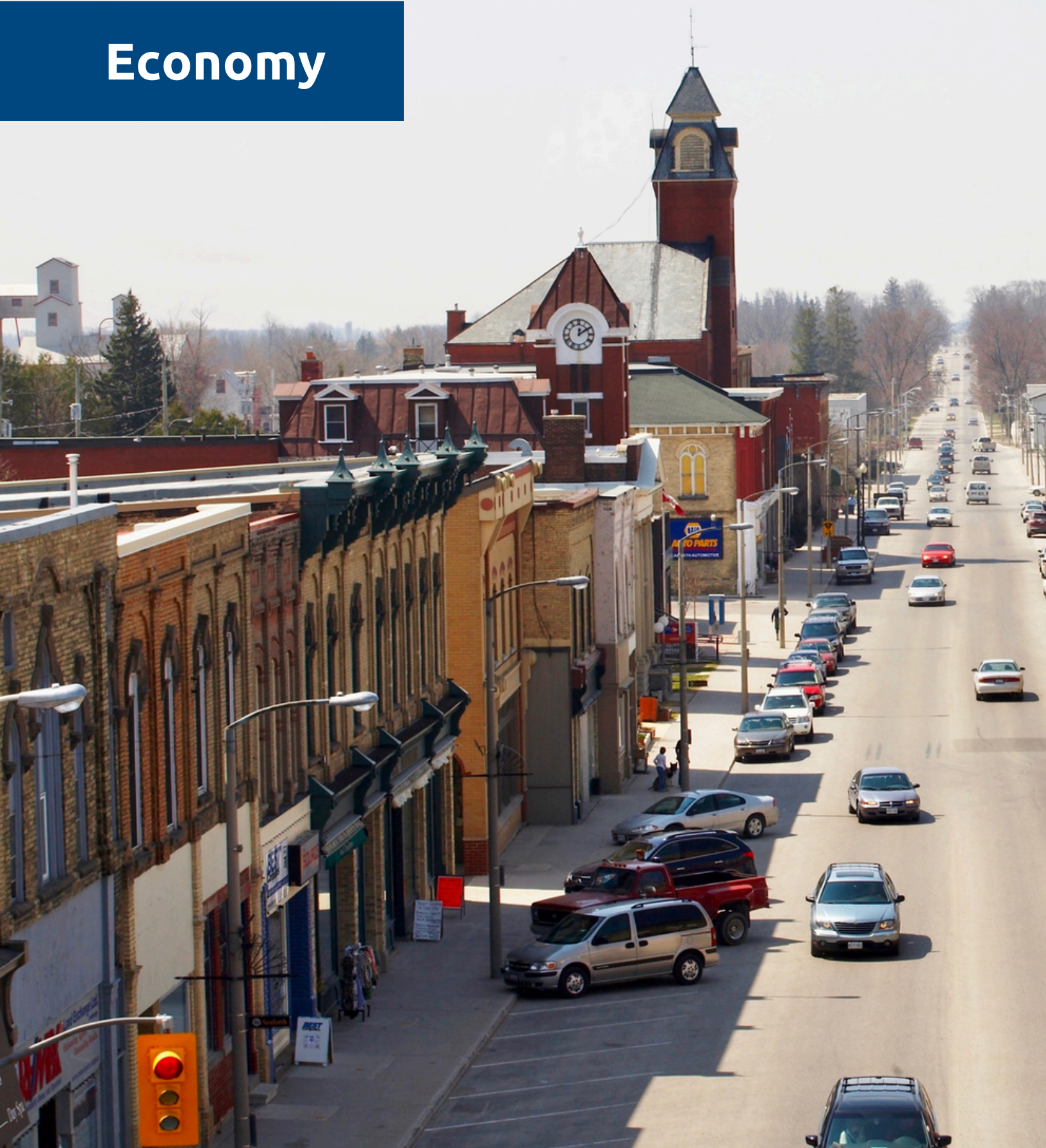


2011



2025

Economy



ACTION: Continue to offer training, programs, and grants to support local businesses.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Business Improvement Associations/Chamber of Commerce
- Community Futures Huron

Performance Measures

- # of training programs offered
- # of individuals/businesses that attend
- # of businesses supported through programs and grants each year
- # of businesses who apply to the programs

Future Action: continue to adapt training programs and grants to meet the needs of upcoming businesses, tourism and industry.



ACTION: Preservation of downtown heritage fabric through Community Improvement Plans.

Lead Organization: Local Municipalities

Potential Partners/Support:

- County of Huron (Planning and Development)

Performance Measures

- # of downtown businesses that apply for funding for each category
- # of downtown businesses that receive Community Improvement Plan funding

Future Action: continue to adapt Community Improvement Plan funding opportunities to meet the needs of downtown businesses and maintain heritage.



Did you know?

Community Improvement Plans are commonly used by municipalities to promote the revitalization, redevelopment and enhancement of defined community improvement project areas. They incentivize private investments and provide financial programs to stimulate and support economic growth.



ACTION: Celebrate and promote businesses that support youth through scholarships, certificates, skill development and training opportunities (i.e., co-op placements).

Lead Organization: County of Huron

Potential Partners/Support:

- School boards and students
- Local businesses
- Local Associations (Huron Manufacturers Association, etc.)

Performance Measures

- # of co-op placements that occur every year across Huron County
- # of businesses/organizations invested in offering co-op/training

Future Action: highlight businesses that support youth and identify new opportunities to engage youth to revitalize the workforce.



ACTION: Connect tourism to local heritage and promote history through various forms of media.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Cultural Services Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Other County departments
- Local historians

Performance Measures

- # of events centered on Huron County history
- # of visitors to the Historic Gaol and Museum each year
- # of interactions with social media posts centered on history events

Future Action: Provide easy access to information on what is happening in Huron County to generate more awareness and greater participation.



Did you know?

The Huron Historic Gaol, located in Goderich, is a unique octagonal building which served as the County Jail from its opening in 1841 until closure in 1972. The Gaol is now a National Historic Site visited by thousands of people each year.

HURON HISTORIC GAOL GHOST TOURS

Friday nights in October
6:45 p.m. | 8:30 p.m.

ite to register:
ountyMuseum.ca

STORIES FROM STORAGE

The Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol collection holds a variety of artifacts donated over the last 70 years. As portions of the collection are brought out for examination, enjoy these stories from storage!



Transportation



ACTION: Advocate and plan for accessible and improved EV infrastructure on public land and private spaces.

Lead Organization: County of Huron

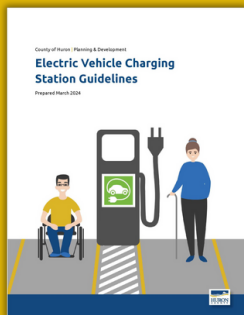
Potential Partners/Support:

- Local municipalities
- Private industry
- Neighbouring municipalities

Performance Measures

- # of EV charging stations in Huron County
- # of EVs reported in Huron County

Future Action: continue to explore future low-carbon fuel opportunities for the community.



Did you know?

In 2024, the County of Huron created the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Guidelines to ensure a consistent design, operation, and maintenance of EV charging stations across the corporation. When installing EV charging stations, the Corporation of the County of Huron will do its part to ensure all stations are consistently designed to meet accessibility standards to promote use by all members of the public.

ACTION: Create accessible multi-use pathways in communities.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning and Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Conservation Authorities
- Trail Associations and G2G
- Local Municipalities

Performance Measures

- # of metres of new trails created and # of metres of trails maintained
- % of the population within a certain distance of a nature-based trail
- # of metres of accessible trails in Huron County

Future Action: when feasible, encourage active transportation and upgrade trail systems to accessible standards and consider accessibility at the onset of any new trails.



Community



ACTION: Continue to offer diverse initiatives, events and festivals to support the community, welcome newcomers, and foster connections.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development and Cultural Services Departments)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Local Immigration Partnership and Community Futures Huron
- Ontario's West Coast and Taste of Huron

Performance Measures:

- # and types of community events/festivals offered throughout a year
- The addition of new events/festivals to meet the demands of a changing demographic
- # of attendees at each event

Future action: continue to alter events to meet the changing demographics (age, culture, gender, etc.) of the community.

Future action: facilitate connections between different service groups to ensure coordination and broaden their community reach.



ACTION: Offer a variety of support services to enhance physical, social and mental wellness for different age demographics.

Potential Partners and Support:

- Health professionals and private medical providers
- Huron Perth Public Health
- MacKay Centre for Seniors, Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health, Rural Response for Healthy Children

Performance Measures:

- # of individuals that access each service type
- # of resources, programs and facilities available per community
- Rural Ontario Institute's Wellbeing Dashboard

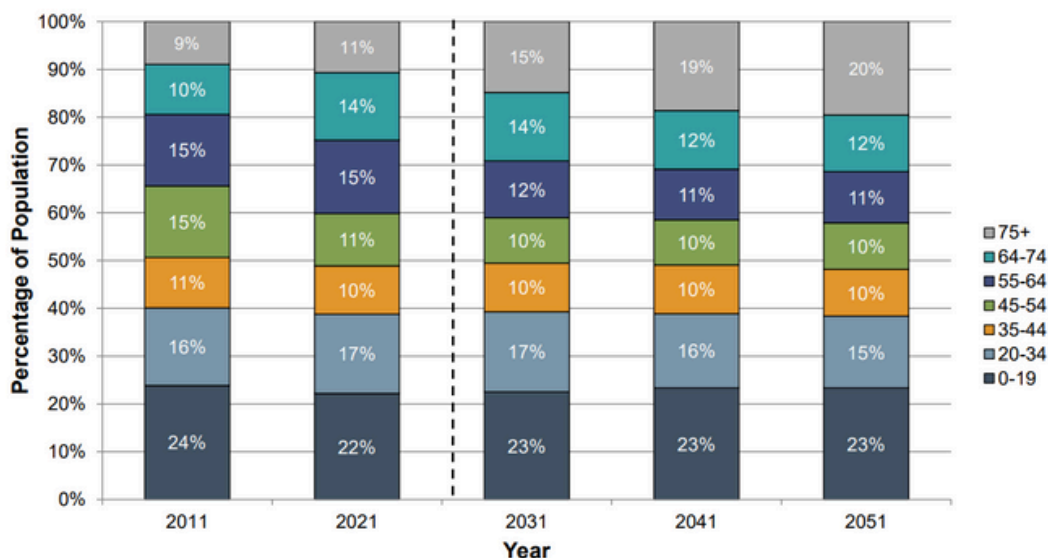
Future Action: continue to innovate and adapt health services to meet the needs of the changing demographics.



Did you know?

In 2024, the County of Huron released a population and housing growth forecast for 2021 to 2051. Huron County can expect to see an additional 26,100 residents by 2051. Over the forecast period, the County's population is expected to age. Most notably, the percentage of population in the 75+ age group (older seniors) is forecast to almost double over the forecast period, from 11% in 2021 to 20% in 2051.

Population by Age Forecast, 2021 to 2051



ACTION: Promote and explore the feasibility of creating transportation connections within Huron County and to communities outside of Huron County.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development Department)

Potential partners/Support:

- Private industry
- Local and Neighbouring municipalities
- Western Ontario Warden's Caucus
- Provincial and Federal Government

Performance Measure:

- # of feasible transportation options explored
- # of users of previous or existing transportation options



Did you know?

In 2024, the Ontario Express Bus became available to Bruce, Middlesex and Huron County residents. ONEXBUS provides transportation services to communities across Ontario and has begun to focus on connecting rural and suburban areas. The new service is offered between Friday and Monday and is available between Port Elgin and London to connect people and places across southwestern Ontario. Find up to date information on the route and available stops on their website at www.onexbus.com.



Huron Shores Area Transit (HSAT) was launched December 2020 and operates four routes with two 20-person buses, all of which offer wheelchair lifts and carry up to two bikes to provide safe, reliable and affordable public transit. These routes connect Huron, Lambton and Middlesex Counties with Kettle & Stony Point First Nation, Sarnia, London, and Strathroy. HSAT improves community residents' access, equity, and mobility to community assets, such as employment, education, medical, social, retail, and recreational, thereby reducing outmigration.

ONE CARE was formed in 2011 as a community based, charitable, not-for-profit health organization committed to providing quality services that enable seniors or persons with disabilities to be healthy, safe in their homes, and active in their communities within Huron and Perth Counties. ONE CARE operates EasyRide 7 days a week which allows coordinated scheduling of door-to-door transportation. Eligibility is determined on an individual basis, rates vary, and subsidies may be available. Call ONE CARE toll free 1-844-482-7800 for more information.



ACTION: Continue to diversify public engagement through interactive websites, social media, and physical notices in community spaces to connect with individuals.

Lead Organization: County of Huron

Potential Partners/Support:

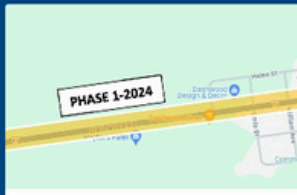
- Local municipalities
- Private businesses

Performance Measures

- # of interactions with social media posts or County of Huron website pages
- # of responses to public surveys
- # of annual interactions on Huron County's Job Board

Future Action: collect feedback from community members on their preferred engagement methods.

Have your say!



County Road 83 Dashwood Urban Reconstruction

Reconstruction of County Road 83 (Dashwood Road) is starting in 2024!

[Contribute](#)



Developing More Affordable Homes in Huron

Learn more about the County of Huron's three affordable housing projects currently underway!

[Contribute](#)



Volunteer Sign-up: Supporting Newcomers

Become a volunteer with the Huron County Immigration Partnership!


[Contribute](#)



County Road 3 - CIR, Paving and Culvert Replacements

Various stages of work and rehabilitation is planned for County Road 3!

[Contribute](#)



Addressing the Housing Continuum in Huron

The Housing Continuum represents the range of housing types available in a community. Learn more!

[Contribute](#)

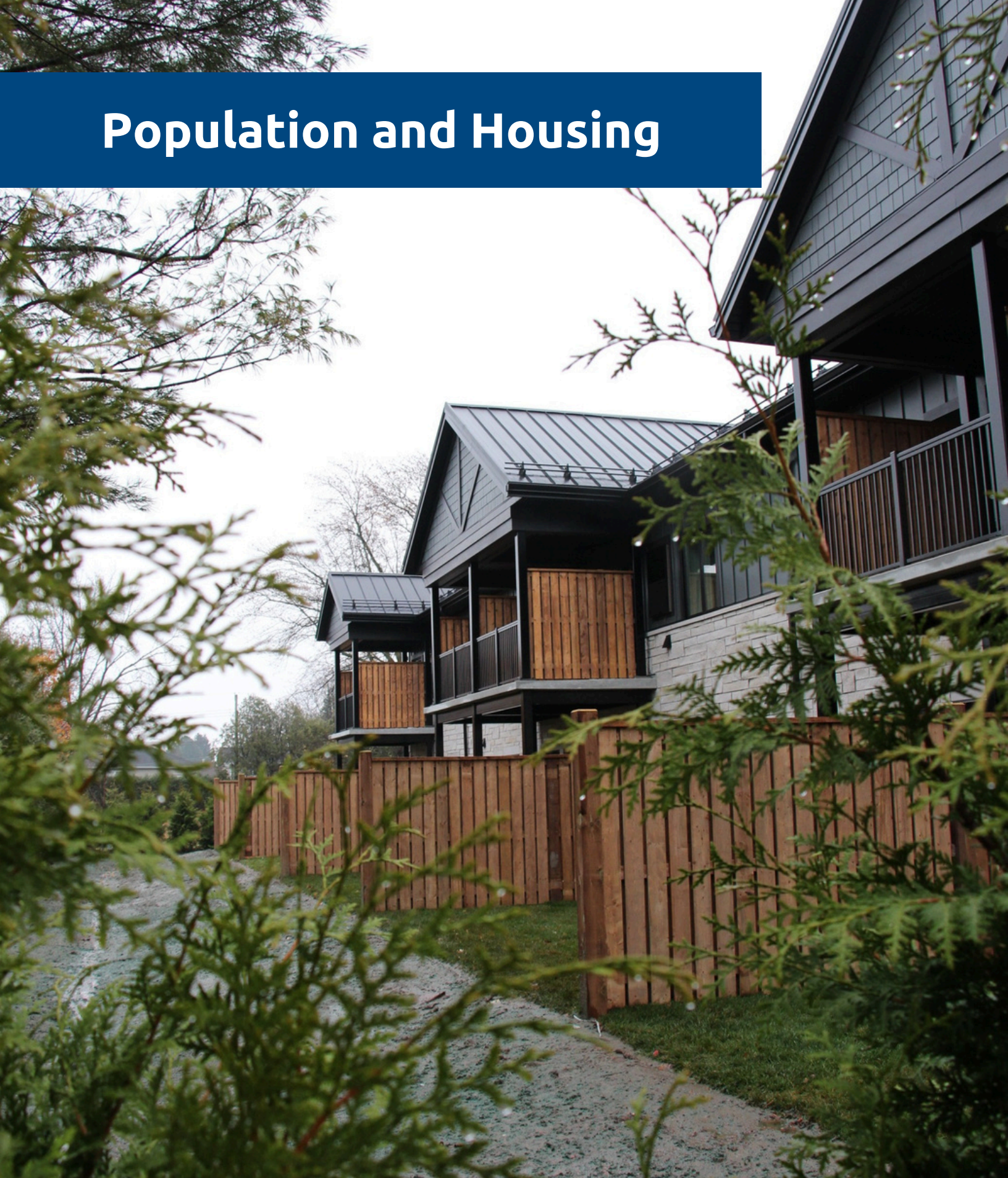


Rehabilitation of Fitch's Bridge on County Road 7

This project is for the rehabilitation of Fitch's Bridge (07-04.8) on County Road 7 (Howick Tu...)

[Contribute](#)

Population and Housing



ACTION: Focus efforts on affordable housing opportunities throughout Huron County.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Social and Property Services)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Local municipalities
- County of Huron (Planning and Development)
- Huron Perth Builders Association
- United Housing

Performance Measures

- # of affordable units owned and operated by Huron County
- # of individuals off the by-name list connected with housing
- # of households receiving a rent subsidy



Did you know?

Two new triplexes were built on Bennett Street in Goderich. These triplexes were developed on an existing County housing site utilizing funds from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative, Social Services Relief Fund, and the County of Huron. The triplexes are designed with a lens of accessibility for the main floor units.



A 20-unit apartment building is currently under construction on Sanders Street in Exeter. This apartment building is being constructed on an existing County housing site utilizing funds from the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative.

A 40-unit apartment building is currently under construction on Gibbons Street in Goderich. This apartment building is being constructed on a site that was sold to the County of Huron from the Town of Goderich for \$1. The apartment building was designed using the County's High Performance Building Standard to maximize energy efficiency.



ACTION: Continue to provide funding and opportunities for new and existing EarlyOn programs and Child Care options.

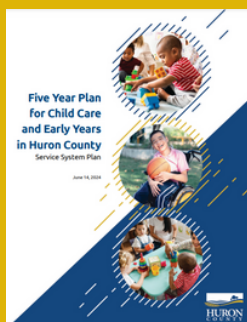
Lead Organization: County of Huron (Children Services)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Private businesses
- Provincial Government
- Existing Childcare Providers

Performance Measures:

- # of children participating in childcare programming
- # of attendees at Huron County childcare events
- # of registrations through the OneHSN platform



Did you know?

The County of Huron currently has 25 EarlyON program locations across the county with over 25 programs per week through the EarlyON Child and Family Centres including programs such as baby time, songs & stories, parent chats, parent/caregiver sessions and many more! Qualified early years professionals can help families and caregivers find support, get advice, make personal connections and access a network of resources.



Agriculture



ACTION: Continue to connect farmers with best practices to further the sustainable management of their properties.

Lead Organization: Conservation Authorities

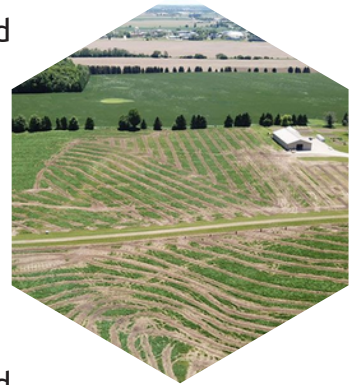
Potential Partners/Support:

- Local Service Groups (Huron Perth Woodlot Association, Huron Soil and Crop Improvement Association, etc.) and Agricultural Associations
- County of Huron (Forestry and Stewardship)

Performance Measures

- # of attendees at Huronview Demonstration Site events and tours
- # of Huron Clean Water Project applications and successful projects

Future Action: continue to expand testing of innovative opportunities and new categories to meet the needs and interests of the agricultural community.



Did you know?

The Huronview Demonstration Farm is located south of Clinton. The County of Huron currently rents the agricultural land to the Huron Soil and Crop Improvement Association (HSCIA) for a dollar a year. This site is used to demonstrate sustainability in action.

ACTION: Create partnerships with community groups to further support and promote local food.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Taste of Huron
- Community Future Huron
- Agricultural and Producer Organizations

Performance Measures

- # of local food businesses in Huron County
- # of participants or applicants to food programs
- # of attendees to farmers markets each year



Future Action: continue to partner and amplify existing local food producers and events.

ACTION: Recognize local agricultural operations for their contributions to environmental stewardship on their land.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning & Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Conservation Authorities
- Healthy Lake Huron

Performance Measures

- # of nominations for agricultural land stewardship awards
- # of interactions with social media posts related to stewardship awards

Future Action: Explore opportunities to recognize unique, reoccurring or exemplary projects through local knowledge-sharing events and workshops.



Did you know?

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) has presented the Conservationist of the Year Award since 1984 to recognize significant conservation efforts. The Conservation Award acknowledges one individual or group per year who demonstrates positive conservation principles. The nominee must have undertaken conservation efforts over a number of years that have shown long-term benefits for the natural environment and society.



ACTION: Continue to provide programming and resources to community members on farm succession planning.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- FCC Advisory Services
- Huron County Federation of Agriculture
- Elaine Froese, Farm Family Transition Expert
- Life on the Coast Podcast

Performance Measures

- # of views on each Life on the Coast podcast episode
- # of inquiries for farm succession planning services
- Community feedback on sessions, services and podcast episodes



Natural Environment



ACTION: Explore the feasibility of a composting program or pilot project to reduce food waste at the county or municipal level.

Lead Organization: Local Municipalities

Potential Partners/Support:

- County of Huron (Planning and Development)
- Private Waste Management Organizations

Performance Measures

- # of inquiries regarding composting services
- Waste diversion data from the Town of Goderich compost program

Future Action: Share the costs, benefits and feasibility of municipal compost collection with all local municipalities in Huron County.



Did you know?

Both Maitland Valley and Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authorities offer tree planting services and tree orders for landowners who have a desire to plant trees on their properties including windbreaks, stream buffers and block plantings.

ACTION: Explore the creation of native tree and shrub plantings and naturalization events with service groups.

Lead Organization: Conservation Authorities

Potential Partners/Support:

- Local service groups
- County of Huron (Forestry and Stewardship)
- Huron Stewardship Council

Performance Measures

- # of trees planted each year
- # of individuals engaged in naturalization projects each year
- # of hectares of natural area restored and kilometers of riparian buffer planted



ACTION: Continue to support environmental stewardship of soil, water, and land through the Huron Clean Water Project.

Lead Organization: Conservation Authorities

Potential Partners/Support:

- County of Huron (Forestry and Stewardship)
- Landowners

Performance Measures

- # of approved and implemented projects annually
- Total value of approved projects
- # of rural stormwater management projects and hectares of cover crops planted annually

Future Action: leverage Huron Clean Water Project with external funding opportunities.



ACTION: Continue to share environmental funding options and partner with local organizations to increase opportunities for funding success.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning and Development Department)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities
- Huron Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Performance Measures

- # of joint funding applications
- # of projects accomplished through partnerships within County of Huron

Future Action: continue to expand partnerships with local organizations.



Did you know?

The Huron Stewardship Council is a community-based, incorporated non-profit organization that promotes responsible resource use and environmental protection in Huron County through networking, cooperation, and collaboration. Our staff and volunteers conduct ecological monitoring and research programs, manage invasive species and other environmental threats, and work with community members to improve the natural environment.



ACTION: Continue to provide residents with easy and accessible locations to test their well water and promote water safety at public beaches.

Lead Organization: Drinking Water Source Protection Committee

Potential Partners/Support:

- Huron Perth Public Health
- Service Groups
- Conservation Authorities

Performance Measures

- # of individuals that bring well water samples to get tested



ACTION: Continue to naturalize underutilized areas of land to reduce mowing practices and create habitat connections.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning and Development and Public Works Departments)

Potential Partners/Support:

- Conservation Authorities
- Landowners

Performance Measures

- # of acres of naturalized area created annually
- # of naturalization projects completed in Huron County each year

Future Action: create educational content and promote road safety with naturalization projects.

Did you know?



Huron County started the Rural Roadside Pilot Project to focus on the creation of pollinator habitat and the removal of invasive species within and adjacent to two County forest's in the road's right-of-way. In 2024, monarch caterpillars, bees and butterflies were seen and the following native wildflowers are growing - asters, black-eyed susan, great blue lobelia, swamp milkweed, wild bergamont, and common evening-primerose.



Energy and Climate Change



ACTION: Promote existing incentives for EVs, heat pumps, or other innovative options to reduce natural gas, gasoline, and propane use for residents.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning and Development Dep

Potential Partners/Support:

- Local Municipalities

Performance Measures

- Yearly updates to the Home Energy Savings Guide incentive chart

Future Action: explore local opportunities to fund energy efficiency projects.



Did you know?

In 2024, Huron County released the [Home Energy Savings Guide](#). This resource provides homeowners with a comprehensive list of energy efficiency incentives for their next renovation or home retrofit project, along with a list of energy efficient alternatives to traditional heating, cooling, electricity, and water uses for their home.

ACTION: Gather information on climate risk and vulnerability of people and places throughout the County.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Planning and Development Department)

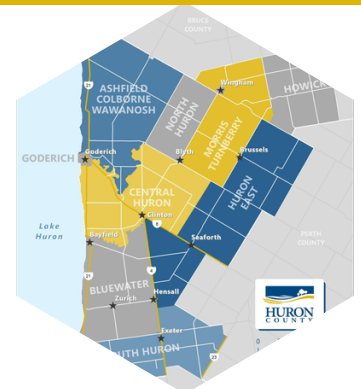
Potential Partners/Support:

- Huron Perth Public Health
- Rural Ontario Institute

Performance Measures

- Completion of a preliminary risk and vulnerability assessment
- # of data and indicators considered in the assessment

Future Action: use the results to develop programs that reduce vulnerability and risk.



ACTION: Advocate and promote energy-efficient practices and training opportunities to local businesses, home owners and builders.

Lead Organization: County of Huron

Potential Partners/Support:

- Huron Perth Builders Association
- Local Municipalities

Performance Measures

- # of contractors and builders interested in an information session
- # of individuals that engage with social media content

Future Action: work with local contractors to create energy efficient buildings.



Did you know?

The Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh partnered with Sommers Brothers Ltd with the development of the Dungannon Passive House Project. A Passive House is not just a home; it's a concept designed to minimize energy consumption while maximizing comfort. These homes are built to rigorous standards, focusing on energy efficiency, insulation, and ventilation. By utilizing passive solar gain, superior insulation, and airtight construction, Passive Houses maintain a comfortable indoor climate year-round with minimal reliance on traditional heating and cooling systems.



ACTION: Promote Huron County's role in the clean and green energy frontier.

Lead Organization: County of Huron (Economic Development Department)

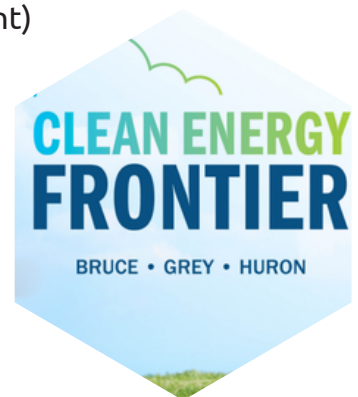
Potential Partners/Support:

- Clean Energy Frontier, Southwestern Ontario Isotope Coalition and Nuclear Innovation Institute
- County of Huron Economic Development Board

Performance Measures

- Outline responsibilities and desire for clean energy in Huron County

Future Action: attract clean and green energy companies to Huron County to diversify local businesses.



Reaching Success: Monitoring and Reporting

The 'Take Action' plan is a living document that will evolve as the community's goals and aspirations change over time. All Huron County residents, community groups, organizations, and agencies will have a role in the implementation of the 'Take Action' plan.

The County will seek external funding to assist with the implementation of the 'Take Action' plan. Existing County staff will work to ensure that the 'Take Action' plan is implemented over time. Council approval of special projects and partnerships with community agencies and organizations, are essential elements of implementation.

Regular reporting will be provided to and from the Sustainable Huron Steering Committee members for project progress on the 'Take Action' plan through meetings and the year-end survey. Each year, County staff will highlight actions accomplished by member organizations and community groups related to the 'Take Action' plan and share the meeting topics covered that year.

Annual Reporting:

- Sustainable Huron Steering Committee members will provide updates to County staff
- County staff will create a one to two page addendum to the 'Take Action' plan highlighting impactful projects from the members

Progress Reporting:

- Every five years County staff will create a progress update to share accomplished actions and updates on next steps

Under Council's direction and where determined appropriate, the County will update existing actions and facilitate implementation.

