

May 2024

Huron East
Strategic Action Plan

Working
together
for you.



A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR MACLELLAN

It is my pleasure to present our Strategic Action Plan! This is our roadmap to achieve positive results for our community within this term of Council and beyond.

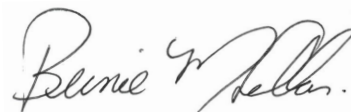
“**Working together to make Huron East even better!**”

Huron East is an incredibly welcoming and vibrant community that provides a great quality of life to our residents. We are blessed with a blend of rich agricultural land and historically significant small towns. Huron East has so much potential! My Council colleagues and I are committed to working hard with our professional staff to make our community an even better place to live, play, work, and raise a family. That is what this Strategic Action Plan is all about.

We know that delivering exceptional services depends on spending our time, energy and

money on the things that matter most to our residents. The input received from the citizen questionnaire and the community focus group sessions were extremely valuable to us. You told us how important well-maintained roads, sidewalks, parks, trails, playgrounds, and recreation spaces are to you and your family. You let us know that we need to pursue opportunities for accelerated economic growth and new jobs. And you want us to find ways to grow our community to better support local businesses and refresh our downtown areas.

On behalf of myself, Members of Council, Chief Administrative Officer Brad McRoberts and the entire Huron East Team, we are committed to working together to achieve positive results for our community.



Mayor Bernie MacLellan



WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

This project began with an invitation to our residents to tell us why Huron East is a great place and what we can do to make it even better. Between December 10 – February 25, 2024, residents had the opportunity to provide their responses to an online questionnaire. We thank the 353 residents who provided valuable input that helped shape this Plan.

We asked you what local government services were most important to you and your household, you told us:



EMERGENCY SERVICES

“Police, fire and emergency services” was the most popular selection, with an average score of 4.6/5



ROADS

“Safe and well-maintained roads” was the second most popular selection, with an average score of 4.4/5.



PUBLIC PROPERTY

“Maintenance of public property” was the third most popular selection, with an average score of 4.1/5.



COMMUNICATION

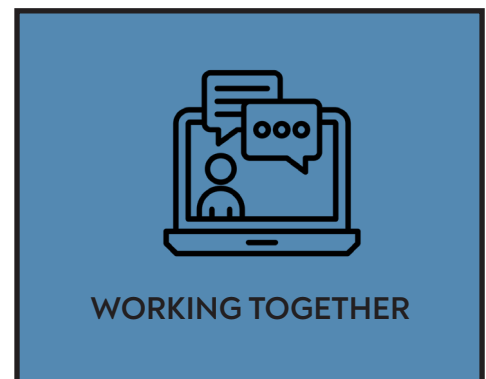
“Communication from the Municipality” was the fourth most popular selection, with an average score of just under 4.1/5.



ECONOMY & JOBS

“Economic investment & local jobs” was the fifth most popular selection, with an average score of 4/5.

OUR ACTION PLAN GOALS





GOAL 1: FINANCIAL STABILITY

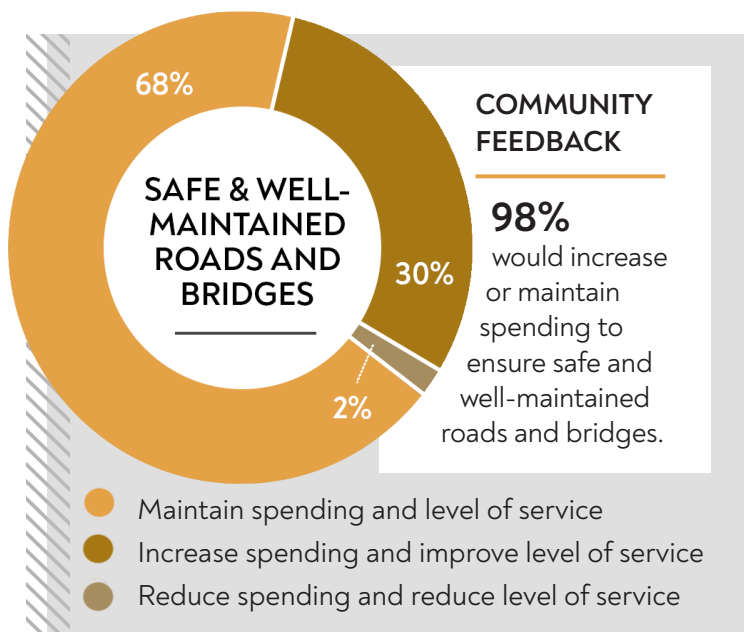
Demonstrate a commitment to making decisions and taking actions that improve the Municipality's long-term financial position.

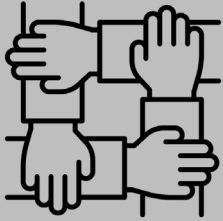
1.1 Taking a long-term perspective and an evidence-based approach to drive budgeting, operations, and projects.

1. Establish a long-term financial plan that includes updated budget, tax, reserve, investment, purchasing, and investment policies. (2024, Q4)
2. Create a Council-approved standard business plan template to be used whenever the Municipality considers using debt to finance projects. (2024, Q3)
3. Complete and maintain an updated asset management plan and ensure linkages between this plan and the budget. (2025, Q1)

1.2 Diversifying our revenue sources and funding innovative cost-savings to reduce the burden on taxpayers.

1. Continue to pursue funding opportunities with upper levels of government. (Ongoing)
2. Explore alternative revenue streams including partnerships and corporate sponsorship opportunities. (2026, Q1)
3. Investigate additional opportunities to share resources with the County of Huron and/or neighbouring municipalities. (2026, Q2)





GOAL 2: FRIENDLY & WELCOMING COMMUNITY

Provide a safe, inclusive, and family-friendly community that we are proud to call “home”.

2.1 Expanding opportunities for healthy living and recreation.

1. Enhance park amenities to better serve youth, seniors, and individuals with accessibility needs (e.g. outdoor fitness equipment). (2026, Q3)
2. Pursue partnership opportunities with community groups to fundraise for new/enhanced community amenities. (2026, Q3)
3. Explore opportunities to work with local groups to offer arts and culture-related events contributing to enhanced youth engagement, community vibrancy, and local storytelling (2026, Q3)
4. Implement a recreation management software to enhance information sharing and program registration. (2024, Q4)

2.2 Providing a greater mix of housing options for residents of all ages and income levels.

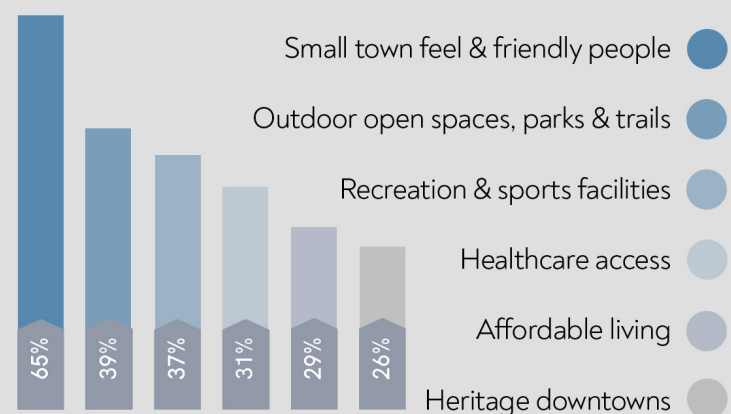
1. Review bylaws and explore Community Improvement Plan-based incentives to contribute to building multi-residential developments in appropriate areas within the Municipality. (2025, Q1)
2. Streamline the approval process for all applications that include multi-residential development. (2025, Q1)
3. Work with the County of Huron to identify locations for the development of more affordable housing options. (2025, Q2)

2.3 Providing attractive and well-maintained neighbourhoods.

1. Review levels of service for the maintenance of public property, including infrastructure, sidewalks, streetscapes, and servicing, and assess whether current staff complement is sufficient. Hire additional seasonal staff if required. (2025, Q1)
2. Coordinate community bi-annual beautification/clean-up campaigns in partnership with community groups contributing to community pride of place. (2025, Q1)



YOUR TOP REASONS HURON EAST IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE





GOAL 3: RESILIENT & VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY

Retain and attract economic investment and local jobs.

3.1 Attracting new and diversified investments and jobs.

1. Conduct a community survey to identify local consumer needs/wants and establish a go-forward plan to attract in-demand businesses to the area. (2025, Q2)
2. Explore new local transportation solutions to better connect residents to services. (2025, Q3)
3. Enhance level of investment readiness by working with Huron County real estate to create and share detailed property portfolios, including size, existing buildings/features, and servicing. (2025, Q3)
4. Maintain an inventory of available employment land and commercial buildings for lease; proactively share this information on the Municipal website, social media and targeted email campaign. (2024, Q4)
5. Identify future employment lands (including highway commercial) and work with Huron County to develop a go-forward plan with costs and timelines to develop these lands. (2025, Q3)

3.2 Promoting our strong agricultural base.

1. Invite local farmers and agri-businesses to submit examples of their innovative practices, and profile these success stories on the Municipal website and social media. (2024; Q4)
2. Engage a marketing firm to work with staff to create digital marketing profiling the Municipality's agriculture/agri-business strategic advantage; proactively share this information to targeted agri-businesses. (2025, Q3)

3.3 Revitalizing historic downtown areas.

1. Use the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to stimulate the revitalization of Huron East's downtown areas through Council-approved and funded incentive programs to fill downtown vacancies; improve façades, signage, and heritage features: and support downtown cafés/restaurants. (2025, Q1)
2. Partner with Heritage Committee to recognize businesses that have improved heritage properties. (2025, Q1)
3. Implement a Vacant Building Bylaw and strengthen the Municipality's ability to enforce property standards bylaws. (2025, Q1)
4. Work with community partners to take actions to improve and beautify downtown areas. (2025, Q1)

3.4 Strengthening our relationship with our local businesses.

1. Complete and maintain an inventory of local businesses within the Municipality; send an initial communique to these businesses introducing them to the Municipality's Economic Development Officer. (2024, Q4)
2. Strengthen the Municipality's relationship with the Business Improvement Areas by working together to develop and implement a businesses visitation program. (2025, Q1)
3. Establish a virtual community of local businesses to celebrate successes, milestones, and new ventures. (2026, Q3)
4. Work with Huron County and neighbouring municipalities to explore new tourism and destination building opportunities. (2026, Q4)



GOAL 4: WORKING TOGETHER

Foster a positive and respectful environment so we can deliver exceptional services to our community.

4.1 Enhancing communications with our residents.

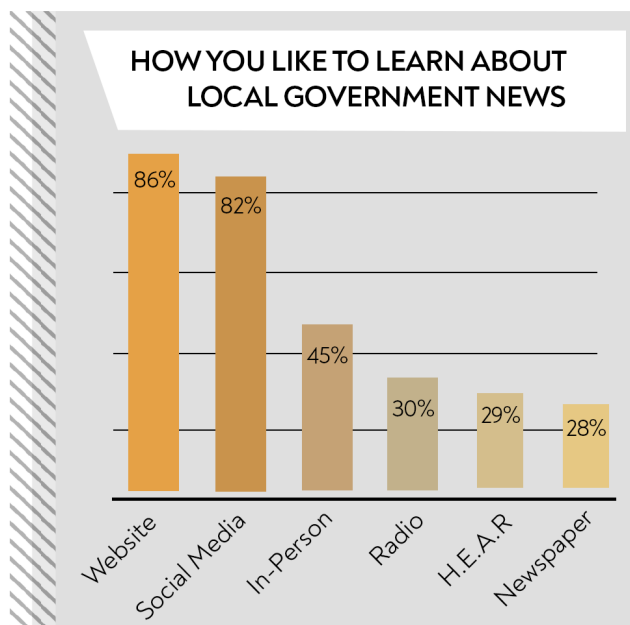
1. Create a one-stop “Huron East What’s Up” page one click away from the Municipal website homepage where residents have access to important community events, infrastructure projects, Council decisions and important upcoming Council agenda items. Other media channels (newspaper, radio, social media) will link/direct residents to this page. (2024, Q2)
2. Establish a one-page Council Meeting Summary and Upcoming Agenda items that can be linked to the “Huron East What’s Up” page as well as pushed out to email subscribers. (2024, Q2)
3. Engage an external company to work with staff to complete a branding project to establish a consistent Huron East brand across all programs, projects, and facilities. (The primary Huron East brand/logo can include secondary branding for the traditional communities within Huron East.) (2024, Q4)

4.2 Continuously improving our internal processes and practices to make them more effective, efficient, and customer friendly.

1. Initiate a CAO-led initiative encouraging staff to submit innovative ideas and suggestions to improve day-to-day operational efficiency. (2024, Q3)
2. Introduce customer-friendly, interactive budget tools to educate the public on how the Municipality spends tax dollars and provide an opportunity for meaningful input. (2026, Q1)
3. Introduce a human resource information system to effectively manage all HR-related processes and activities. (2025, Q2)

4.3 Recognizing and rewarding hard work and excellence among our employees.

1. Continue and improve the bi-annual CAO-led Town Hall staff sessions to provide important updates, progress on strategic priorities, recognize staff excellence, and provide an opportunity for staff questions. (ongoing)
2. Create a Department Spotlight showcasing the important work staff are doing to make Huron East a great place to live. The link to the Department Spotlight should be included on the “Huron East What’s Up” page, pushed out on social media and emailed to all staff. (2025, Q1)
3. Establish a “Huron East Rocks” committee with the mandate to establish and plan staff appreciation/ team-building events. (2024, Q3)



Working together to make Huron East even better.

2022 - 2026
HURON EAST COUNCIL

Mayor **Bernie MacLellan**

Deputy Mayor **Alvin McLellan**

Justin Morrison • Brussels Ward

Jeff Newell • Brussels Ward

Dianne Diehl • Grey Ward

Brenda Dalton • McKillop Ward

Gloria Wilbee • McKillop Ward

Robert Fisher • Seaforth Ward

John Steffler • Seaforth Ward

Raymond Chartrand • Tuckersmith Ward

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