

Open for Business



**A Guide for New and Existing
Businesses in South Huron**

Municipality of South Huron
May 2025



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Welcome to South Huron

We are thrilled that you have chosen to join our business community, and we would like to make your move to South Huron as easy as possible.

This document:

- Helps businesses understand what they should know and what they need to do **BEFORE** moving to a new or existing site in South Huron
- Provides resources and assistance for business owners who are looking to open or expand their business in South Huron

How we can help

The Economic Development team is your main point of contact and a key source of information. We're dedicated to helping local businesses grow by connecting them with valuable resources, and we remain committed to attracting and supporting new investments in South Huron

Our services include:

- Assistance with site selection for your new or expanding business;
- Information and statistics on South Huron;
- Information on government programs for business, including funding programs;
- Information on relevant networking and industry events;
- Assistance in connecting with municipal regulatory and planning staff;
- Introductions to existing businesses and support organizations.



Municipality of South Huron

Economic Development

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Finding the right site for your business

There are several ways to search for a suitable location within South Huron, depending on your business's needs and preferences. Some companies opt to hire a professional site selector or a commercial realtor who specializes in finding the right property. Others prefer to rely on their in-house team to conduct the search independently.

It's also beneficial to explore local resources and networks when searching for a location. Engaging with the local business community can provide valuable insights and recommendations on potential locations that may meet your needs.



BEFORE finalizing a lease or purchasing any property:

It is crucial to **consult with the Municipality's Building and Planning staff**. They can confirm whether the intended use of the property aligns with the Ontario Building Code, Ontario Fire Code and local zoning regulations. This step is vital to ensure that the property is zoned appropriately and the building complies for the applicable codes for your business activities.

For more information on building and zoning requirements, be sure to:

- Check the property's zoning and permitted uses, structures, zone provisions by viewing the **Municipality of South Huron Zoning By-law** (see Speaking with a Planner section in this guide for more information).
- Review the **Ontario Building Code (2024)** to understand what a building permit is and when one is required (see Building Permit section in this guide for more information).
- Review the **Ontario Fire Code (O. Reg 213/07)** to understand what may be required for your property (see Fire Inspection section in this guide for more information)

Taking these precautions will help avoid any future complications or delays in your business's operations.



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Speaking with a Planner

Speaking with a Planner will assist you with answering any questions you may have regarding zoning designations of a building/property in relation to your business.



You should contact a Planner in our Planning and Development department if:

- You are unsure if your property is zoned correctly (**Municipality of South Huron Zoning By-law**) for your proposed business;
- You require an official plan or zoning by-law amendment, or site plan approval;
- You have a question about heritage buildings or designations; and
- You require a minor variance at the Committee of Adjustment.



Municipality of South Huron Planning

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Building Permits – What is it and when do you need one?

A building permit is your formal permission from the Municipality of South Huron to begin a building project, such as the construction, demolition, renovation or addition of any building. South Huron Building staff must review your plans to ensure that they comply with the **Ontario Building Code (2024)**, **Municipality of South Huron Zoning By-law** and other applicable regulations.

The Ontario Building Code (2024) requires that you obtain a building permit before you start work on a new structure or an addition or alterations to an existing structure.

Examples of when a permit **is required** may include:

- Constructing or renovating a building
- Structural alterations of the interior of a building;
- Changing the use of the building (for example from office to retail space);
- Remodeling plumbing and heating systems;
- Installation or alteration of a commercial cooking equipment.

Examples of when a permit **is not usually required** may include;

- Painting and decorating;
- Landscaping;
- Eavestrough (installation or replacement);
- Minor repairs to bricks or blocks, etc.



How to apply for a Building Permit

South Huron uses **Cloudpermit** (online permit application system) for submission of a Building Permit. We do understand that not everyone is able to submit digital files and we still accept hard copy submissions to our office.



Municipality of South Huron Building

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planning@southhuron.ca

Webpage: www.southhuron.ca/build-invest/building/



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Building Permit – Other Requirements

If applicable, the following may also be required through the Municipality:

- Plumbing Application and fee – required for any work that involves altering or installing new plumbing systems, including additional fixtures, drainage, venting, or private water, sanitary, or storm sewer systems
- Application for Water/Sewer Service – required for all applicants requesting a new or updated water or sewer connection.
- Application for Entrance – required for all applicants requesting new or modified entrances.
- Energy Design Summary (EEDS) – a detailed energy efficiency design summary for buildings under specific regulations
- Schedule 1 - to be completed in accordance with building code requirements
- Commitment to General Review by Architects and Engineers – this form ensures that qualified professionals will be overseeing the project's compliance with relevant standards and regulations.



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External Approvals/Permits

Depending on your project, you may require the following external approvals/permits:

- Electrical Safety Association – Certificate of Acceptance
- Conservation Authority permit
- Huron Perth Public Health approvals (for example potable water, food premises)



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Occupancy Permit – What is it and when do you need one?

Occupancy permit ensures that the building meets all necessary construction and safety standards.

An occupancy permit is one of the last inspections to complete a [building permit](#). An inspection must be conducted prior to use or occupancy of the space. This ensures that any construction done to the space meets the building code and provides first responders with relevant information in case of an emergency.

Once all requirements in the Ontario Building Code have been completed, an inspection through [Cloudpermit](#) is requested and will be conducted by the Building Department. Once all requirements are met, the Occupancy Permit will be issued.

I want to install a sign for my business – Do I need a permit?

The [Municipal Sign By-law](#) and/or the Ontario Building Code regulates the size, location and number of signs that are permitted on any property, business and/or at special events within the Municipality of South Huron.

All businesses looking to put signage on their premises, whether for an existing building or a new design-build space, ground signage or mobile signs will be required to obtain a sign permit and will require permission from the owner of the property.

Certain signs in the Municipality of South Huron may require both a **sign permit** and a **building permit**. To apply, you must submit both permit applications, often including detailed plans or drawing.



How to apply for a Sign Permit:

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Webpages:

www.southhuron.ca/build-invest/building/ &
www.southhuron.ca/build-invest/building/apply-for-a-permit/



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Municipal By-Laws

The Municipality of South Huron strives to make our community safe, healthy and enjoyable for everyone. By-laws are created as a way to address issues and concerns of the community. They are created to protect the environment, public health, safety and to maintain a pleasant community for everyone.

Below are some of the **Common Municipal By-Laws that may pertain to operating a business in South Huron:**

- Building By-Law
- Burning By-Law
- Development Charges By-Law
- Noise By-Law
- Parking By-Law
- Property Standards By-Law
- Sign By-law
- Snow and Ice Removal By-Law
- Zoning By-Law



Municipality of South Huron Administration (Clerk)

322 Main St South, Box 759
Exeter, Ontario, Canada, NOM 1S6

Tel: 519-235-0310 extension 242
Fax: 519-235-3304

Email (completed municipal form submission): info@southhuron.ca
Webpage: www.southhuron.ca/government/by-laws-enforcement/commonly-requested-by-laws/



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Liquor Licence

A liquor licence authorizes businesses and organizations to legally sell and serve alcoholic beverages to the public.

These licences are issued by the **Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO)**, the provincial body responsible for regulating alcohol sales and service.



Individuals applying for a new Liquor Licence in South Huron can submit their initial application online through the AGCO website. However, applicants are still required to submit a completed municipal form, signed by the Municipal Clerk, along with the a number of supporting documents – the municipal form and support documentation list can be found on our **Liquor Licence** Page.

Once all letters are received, staff will circulate the request to Building Services and the Fire Department for review. The Clerk will then review the completed documents and send the applicant an email with the approved documents, which the applicant is responsible for submitting to the AGCO.

Temporary Extension to Liquor License (Seasonal Patio Program)

For those applying for a temporary extension to their liquor licence, recent amendments to the Liquor Licence and Control Act, 2019, have shifted the approval authority for temporary outdoor extensions (temporary patios) from the AGCO to local municipalities. Applicants for a temporary extension must submit their application and necessary documents to the Municipality for review.



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Tel: 519-235-0310 extension 242
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Email (completed municipal form submission): info@southhuron.ca
Webpage: www.southhuron.ca/services/licenses-certificates-permits/liquor-licence/



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Seasonal Patio Program

This program is available for businesses looking to establish an outdoor patio on Municipal property or for licensed businesses seeking a temporary extension of their liquor licence.

To apply, businesses must complete the application form and submit a legible sketch, site plan, or aerial photo of the proposed outdoor patio. Once approved, businesses are required to display their permit when the patio is open to the public. Additionally, restaurant owners must notify the **Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO)** before selling and serving liquor on their seasonal patio.

Businesses must reapply to the program each year for approval. The program is not applicable to outdoor patios on private property.

The Municipality of South Huron launched the seasonal patio extension program in 2023 to support local businesses looking to establish an outdoor patio on Municipal property or for licensed businesses seeking a temporary extension of their liquor license.



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Fire Inspection

The Fire Department performs inspections based on request, complaint, safety concerns and routine basis. Utilizing authorities, powers, duties, and responsibilities set out under provincial legislation, the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA), Fire Inspectors enforce the **Ontario Fire Code**.

During an inspection, the Fire Department will look for compliance with the Ontario Fire Code. Here is a short list of potential items an inspector will look for:

- Blocked / obstructed exits;
- Fire extinguishers;
- Fire separations and their integrity;
- Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms, where required;
- Records of tests for fire safety equipment;
- Improper storage of flammable liquids or gasses;
- Unsafe accumulations of combustible materials;
- Fire safety plans.

Fire inspections are also completed to meet licensing requirements for:

- Liquor licensing;
- Transient Trader license (refreshment and food vehicles).



Municipality of South Huron

Fire Department

55 William Street
Exeter, Ontario, Canada, NOM 1S2

Tel: 519-235-1981

Email: fpo@southhuron.ca

Webpage:

[www.southhuron.ca/services/
fire-emergency-services/](http://www.southhuron.ca/services/fire-emergency-services/)



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Business resources you should know about



County of Huron - Economic Development

The County of Huron provides insights into workforce trends, industry sectors, demographics, and market opportunities—helping businesses plan strategically and grow with confidence.



County of Huron - Huron Business Centre

The Huron Business Centre offers personalized business consultations, startup support, training, workshops, and access to funding programs. Services are available for entrepreneurs at all stages, including youth and newcomers.



Huron Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber provides advocacy, networking opportunities, promotional services, and educational events to strengthen local businesses. Membership connects you with a supportive business community and a platform for regional visibility.



Community Futures Huron

Community Futures Huron offers business financing, mentoring, and support services for small businesses and rural entrepreneurs. Their programs are designed to encourage economic diversification and sustainability.



Huron Manufacturing Association

The HMA represents the interests of Huron County's manufacturing sector, offering advocacy, workforce development initiatives, industry events, and opportunities for collaboration.



Exeter Business Improvement Area (BIA)

The Exeter Business Improvement Area (BIA) continues to support the growth and revitalization of Exeter's downtown and commercial districts through advocacy, promotions, and beautification efforts.

There are many business resources and organizations that we can connect you with to help you grow your business. Our Economic Development staff would be happy to meet with you to learn more about your business and connect you with the appropriate resources.



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We are here to help.



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