

# BRUCE COUNTY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026



**BRUCE**  
county





# RECONCILIATION

Bruce County is committed to a meaningful truth and reconciliation process with Indigenous people and communities. We are actively engaged in advancing an Indigenous Reconciliation Planning Initiative. This initiative strives to promote a deeper understanding through education and training while developing and committing to an actionable plan, informed by collaboration, empowered through partnership. Our goal is to foster reconciliation and strengthen the relationships within our communities.





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# MESSAGE FROM THE WARDEN

It is my pleasure to present Bruce County's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan on behalf of Council. As we embark on a journey towards a better future, I am reminded of the words, "We are the explorers. The dreamers who take roads less travelled. Those who turn alternatives into sustainable choices. Those who see tried and true as an invitation to try something new." These words capture the spirit of our community - one that is not afraid to take risks and embrace innovation.

This plan serves as our collective roadmap towards achieving our vision of a welcoming, innovative, and thriving community that is dedicated to the well-being of all. As we move forward with our Strategic Plan, we are committed to fostering innovation and sustainable growth while ensuring that our natural environment is protected for future generations. We recognize the importance of building a strong and inclusive community, enhancing, and growing partnerships, and strengthening our capacity to deliver excellent services to residents, businesses, and visitors.

Our Strategic Plan is built on the collective feedback of the community, reflecting the hopes and goals of the many active and inquiring minds who have come to call Bruce County home. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the development of this plan, including community members, staff, and Council, for your unwavering commitment to our community's future. Together, we can turn those roads less traveled into an incredible journey, one that shapes not just our work, but our lives, our communities, and the way we spend our days together.

Bruce County's updated Strategic Plan is a living document that will be closely monitored and measured as the community works together to turn the outlined goals into reality. It is intended to bridge this term of Council with the next and is a commitment to ensuring Bruce County remains a great place to live, work and play. On behalf of Bruce County Council, it is our privilege to serve the community and collaborate with you to achieve the plan's objectives and priorities.

I am proud to be a part of this community of explorers, dreamers, and innovators. Let us continue to work together to make Bruce County a better place for all.

Sincerely,

**Chris Peabody**  
Warden,  
Bruce County





# MESSAGE FROM THE CAO

We are delighted to present to you our Strategic Plan 2023-2026, a comprehensive and forward-looking document that is designed to guide the organization as we plan, make decisions, and invest in the future of our community. This plan provides a bold and inspiring vision that will propel us forward, as well as a mission grounded in what the organization does each and every day to provide great services to our residents, businesses, and visitors. The themes embodied in this plan express what we want to achieve and how we will work towards realizing those goals.

Our commitment to service excellence and innovation is at the heart of everything we do. We strive to provide responsive services that meet the needs of our community, while also adapting and evolving to meet the changing demands of the future. Whether it's through our infrastructure investments, social programs, or cultural experiences, we are dedicated to ensuring that Bruce County remains a unique and special place for all.

Guiding our every decision and action are our shared values, which reflect the principles that shape Bruce County's identity. Service excellence, a welcoming community, good governance, environmental stewardship, and financial sustainability form the bedrock of our endeavors. These values serve as a compass for our dedicated council and staff, ensuring that their tireless efforts remain aligned with the fundamental principles that safeguard the well-being of our community.

This Strategic Plan is designed to align our everyday operations with Council's strategic priorities. The initiatives set out in this plan will inform our annual budget and business planning processes to ensure that resources are matched to the priorities set out in this plan.

We are making key investments across the organization, adding support positions to ensure continued delivery of quality public service, meeting the challenges of inflation, and improving our financial position to be well prepared for the future. We are focusing on strengthening our core services, operating in a fiscally sustainable manner, building up our reserves, and putting in the work to become the employer of choice in the region.

As we embark on the implementation of the strategic actions outlined in this plan, we remain committed to nurturing meaningful engagement with our community and stakeholders. The Strategic Plan serves as the beginning of our journey, fueling us with enthusiasm and excitement for the tasks that lie ahead. Let's work together, embracing our collective strength and diverse perspectives, to forge a stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable future for Bruce County—one that will endure for generations to come.

**Derrick Thomson**  
Chief Administrative Officer,  
Bruce County







# INTRODUCTION

Located on the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, Bruce County is home to approximately 73,000 people and a diverse range of communities, each with its own unique history, culture, and character. Bruce County is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts, tourists, and residents alike, due to its stunning natural landscapes, sandy beaches, rolling hills, and rugged cliffs. The county is also home to a thriving agricultural sector, as well as a range of industries, including nuclear energy, manufacturing, and healthcare.

The Bruce County Strategic Plan 2023-2026 is a four-year plan to better adapt to changing circumstances and to be more responsive to the evolving needs of the community. The new strategic plan builds on the successes of the previous plan and takes into account new trends and emerging issues, with a focus on promoting sustainable growth, enhancing community engagement, and fostering innovation and collaboration.

Our strategic plan is built on four strategic pillars, through which, we aim to strengthen our community, enhance and grow partnerships, strengthen our capacity to deliver, and increase our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices.

Our vision is to create a welcoming, innovative, and thriving community that prioritizes the well-being of current and future generations. To achieve this vision, we have developed five core values that guide all our decisions and actions: service excellence, a welcoming community, good governance, environmental stewardship, and financial sustainability.

To achieve our goals, we have outlined specific objectives and actions under each pillar. For example, we will increase housing options and encourage innovative solutions to build a strong and inclusive community. We will also work collaboratively with our municipal partners and integrate feedback from stakeholders to improve our services continually.

We invite you to join us on this exciting journey as we work towards a brighter future for Bruce County. Together, we can create a sustainable community that is welcoming, innovative, and thriving.





# HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

As Bruce County matures into a vibrant and dynamic community, we recognize the importance of staying attuned to the evolving needs and priorities of our stakeholders. Through ongoing monitoring and evaluation, we can identify areas where adjustments may be needed, and take action to ensure that our strategic plan continues to reflect the current reality of our community and the broader operating environment. This proactive approach to monitoring and evaluation enables us to stay responsive and relevant as we work towards achieving our strategic goals.

In this strategic plan, we have included several key elements to help readers understand Bruce County's vision, mission, and strategic priorities, as well as the goals, objectives, and actions we plan to take to achieve them.



# STRATEGIC PLAN IN A GLANCE

## VISION

Bruce County, a welcoming, innovative, thriving community, committed to the well-being of current and future generations.

## MISSION

We foster innovation and sustainable growth, leading, engaging, and collaborating in the delivery of excellent services for residents, businesses, and visitors to our community.

## VALUES

Our values guide all our decisions and actions:



### Excellence

Committed to adapting, enhancing, and evolving responsive services for our community.



### Welcoming Community

Cultivate a welcoming community of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



### Good Governance

Prioritize transparency, accountability, integrity, and respect in all we do.



### Environmental Stewardship

Protect, preserve, and celebrate our natural environment.



### Financial Sustainability

Building financial capacity to sustain our resources.



# ABOUT THE COUNTY

## Bruce County

Total Population\*: 72,017

### Northern Bruce Peninsula

Population: 4,404

### Saugeen No. 28

### Saugeen No. 29

### Saugeen Shores

Population: 15,908

### Kincardine

Population: 12,268

### Huron-Kinloss

Population: 7,723

Saugeen Hunting Grounds 60A and  
Cape Croker Hunting Grounds 60B

### Neyaashiinigiing

### South Bruce Peninsula

Population: 9,137

### Arran-Elderslie

Population: 6,913

### Brockton

Population: 9,784

### South Bruce

Population: 5,880

\*Census Data 2021

## COUNTY SERVICES

### SERVICE AREAS

Providing high quality services to the communities we share and taxpayers we work for.



Office of  
the CAO



Long Term  
Care and Senior  
Services



Corporate  
Services



Transportation  
and Environmental  
Services



Museum and  
Cultural  
Services



Information  
Technology  
Services



Human  
Services



Bruce County  
Public Library



Human  
Resources



Paramedic  
Services



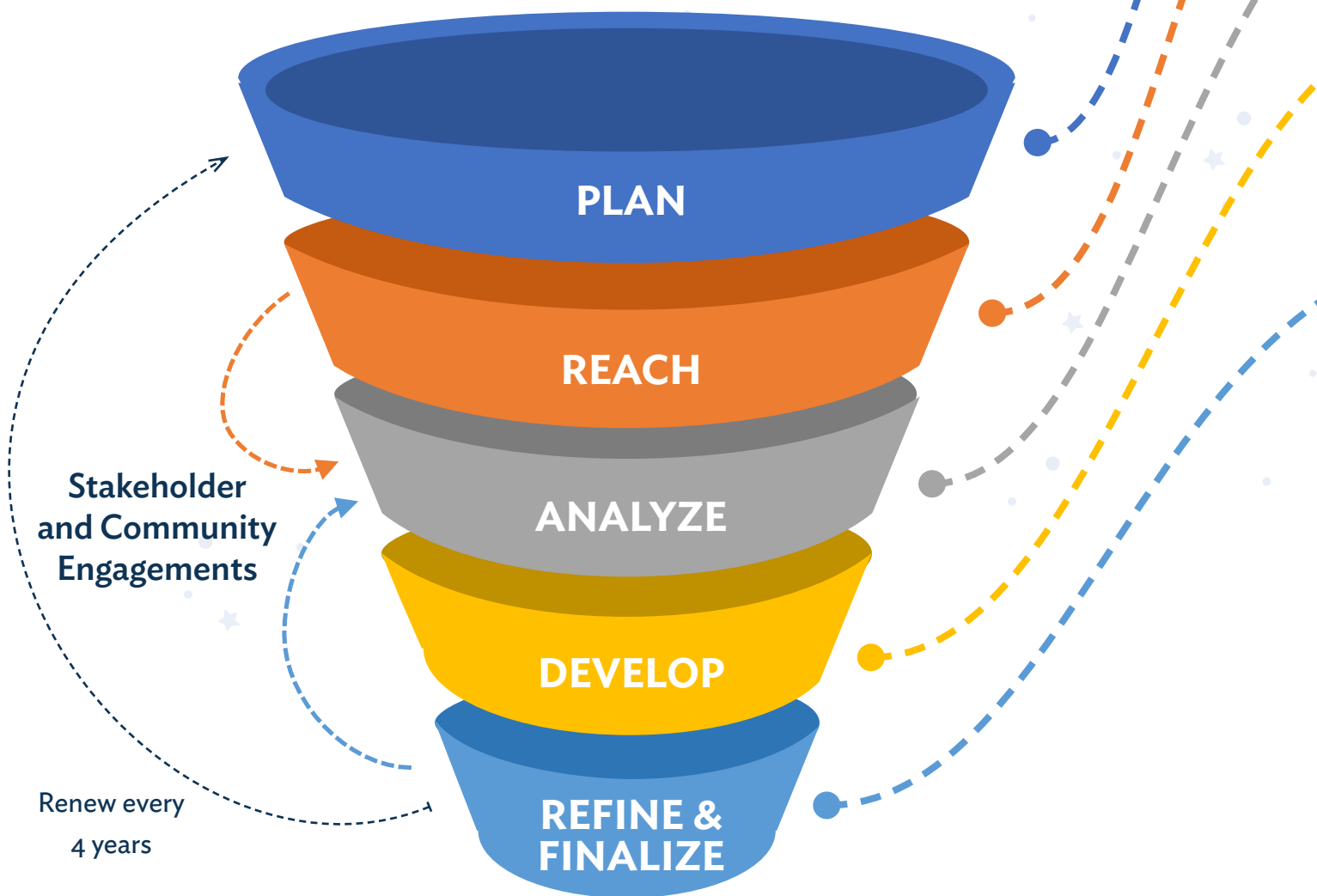
Planning and  
Development



# HOW WE PREPARED THIS PLAN

Bruce County's Strategic Plan public and stakeholder engagement process was a comprehensive approach to gathering input from various individuals and organizations that have a stake in the county's future.

## Methodology for preparing this plan





### Mobilization

- The project team was established, objectives were set, and the scope was identified.
- Mobilization efforts included gathering necessary resources, securing funding, and engaging key stakeholders who were involved throughout the process.



### Engagement

- To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive plan, interviews, workshops, surveys, and consultation sessions were conducted.
- These engagements gathered insights, perspectives, and ideas that contributed to the development of a well-rounded strategic plan.



### Analysis and Priority Setting

- Building on the information gathered, the data collected was analyzed.
- This process helped identify the County's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats.



### Strategy Development

- Once the priorities were set, the strategic plan took shape through the detailing of goals, objectives, and actions in a series of workshops with the County's senior management team.
- The plan was structured to ensure alignment between all the plan elements, providing a clear roadmap for the County's future direction.



### Refinement and Finalization

- Before finalizing the strategic plan, the public was engaged once again in the form of public meetings, surveys, and workshops, where community members had the opportunity to review and provide suggestions on the draft plan.
- Based on the feedback received, refinements were made to further strengthen the plan's alignment with community needs and aspirations.







# THE FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

Bruce County's new four-year strategic plan is built on four key pillars, representing the county's commitment to fostering a thriving community through collaboration with partners, enhancing the county's cultural and organizational capacity, supporting sustainable growth and innovation, and promoting environmental sustainability in the face of climate change. Each pillar is designed to guide the county's decision-making, priorities, and investments over the next four years, as Bruce County continues to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of its residents and businesses.



## Community and Partnerships

support the community and our partners



## Growth and Innovation

embrace innovation and foster responsible growth



## Culture and Capacity

strengthen our capacity to deliver



## Environment and Climate Change

increase our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices

As you read through each of the priorities you will see that it is divided into Goals, Objectives, and Key Activities. Each has been defined below:

### GOALS

Broad, long-term statements of desired outcomes that help define what success looks like for Bruce County.

### OBJECTIVES

Objectives are specific steps that are taken to achieve strategic goals.

### ACTIONS

Actions are specific steps or tasks that are taken to achieve the objectives and goals outlined in the plan. These are the specific activities or initiatives that will be undertaken to implement the strategies and achieve the desired outcomes.

Actions are the answers to "How can we know that we are getting there?"

The key is that actions are specific, measurable or achievable, and focused on realizing the overall strategic goals and objectives.



# STRATEGIC GOALS

## Community and Partnerships

support the community and our partners.

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### Goal 1:

Build a strong and inclusive community.

### Goal 2:

Enhance and grow partnerships.

## Culture and Capacity

strengthen our capacity to deliver

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### Goal 5:

Ensure a positive, inclusive, and accountable work culture.

### Goal 6:

Be an employer of choice.

## Growth and Innovation

embrace innovation and foster responsible growth

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### Goal 3:

Strengthen County's use of technology and innovative initiatives.

### Goal 4:

Promote responsible growth.

## Environment and Climate Change

increase our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices

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### Goal 7:

Build capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.





## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

support the community and our partners

| GOALS                                      | OBJECTIVES                                                   | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Build a strong and inclusive community. | Increase housing options and encourage innovative solutions. | Develop the 2024 to 2034 Housing and Homelessness Plan and implement identified actions.                                                                                                                           |
|                                            |                                                              | Undertake consultation with the development community and stakeholders on ways to increase housing options and affordability within Bruce County.                                                                  |
|                                            | Drive community well-being.                                  | Communicate and collaborate on life stabilization and upstream initiatives that support community safety and well-being.                                                                                           |
|                                            |                                                              | Enhance programming and partnerships that support early learning and development.                                                                                                                                  |
|                                            |                                                              | Increase referrals from Ontario Works to Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Service System Manager to increase employment outcomes and address labour market needs.                                                         |
|                                            | Be a welcoming and inclusive community.                      | Build capacity and integrate the Cultural Action Plan across departments.                                                                                                                                          |
|                                            |                                                              | Finalize and implement the Archaeological Management Plan.                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                            |                                                              | Develop a County-wide framework to achieve age-friendly communities.                                                                                                                                               |
|                                            |                                                              | Decrease the amount of discrimination toward minority and the Indigenous community in Grey/Bruce, using the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership's (GBLIP) 2022 discrimination study numbers as the benchmark. |
|                                            |                                                              | Collaborate with the GBLIP and local community groups to celebrate the diversity of the community.                                                                                                                 |
|                                            |                                                              | Add employment service providers that serve those with disabilities and racialized individuals.                                                                                                                    |



## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

support the community and our partners

| GOALS                             | OBJECTIVES                                                                                                        | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. Enhance and grow partnerships. | Support Indigenous engagement and reconciliation actions.                                                         | Develop and implement an Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan.                                                                                                                      |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Add an Indigenous employment service provider with culturally appropriate services.                                                                                                  |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Prioritize ongoing repatriation and collections management efforts to support Indigenous cultural sovereignty.                                                                       |
|                                   | Work collaboratively between departments and with our partners on integration and continuum of excellent services | Collaborate on innovative service delivery with our municipal partners.                                                                                                              |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Develop a memorandum of understanding with municipal partners for the delivery of planning services.                                                                                 |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Develop and implement policies or initiatives that promote the public and partner engagement in the development and delivery of services.                                            |
|                                   | Live our mission, vision, and values more with partners and the public.                                           | Develop an Intergovernmental Relations Advocacy Program/Office.                                                                                                                      |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Annually host and/or participate in at least one community event, symposium, or forum to increase awareness and understanding of the local government's mission, vision, and values. |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Advocate for Bruce County perspective on provincial legislative changes.                                                                                                             |
|                                   |                                                                                                                   | Promote the good work happening in Bruce County by speaking at conferences, through delegations with other levels of government and being recognized through awards.                 |





## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# GROWTH AND INNOVATION

embrace innovation and foster responsible growth

| GOALS                                                                | OBJECTIVES                                                                                               | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Strengthen County's use of technology and innovative initiatives. | Provide more integrated services and seamless technology that enhance the customer experience.           | Develop and launch a user-friendly digital portal across various service areas that allows for online application submissions and provides the ability to easily track and lookup application status, ultimately improving overall service delivery. |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Pilot innovative virtual services to complement and enhance current service delivery options.                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Increase the number of services available for virtual/online delivery in all the County departments.                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                      | Maximize organizational data and information sharing.                                                    | Work with municipalities to develop a data sharing agreement whereby municipalities share building permit data and County consolidate and aggregate data and report back to municipalities using GIS dashboard.                                      |
| 4. Promote responsible growth.                                       | Promote economic growth and prosperity across all three economic pillars (agriculture, energy, tourism). | Leverage economic development initiatives to support Bruce County's entrepreneurs, investors, and business communities.                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Support the implementation of the economic development strategic plan resulting in:                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Growth of tax base/assessment,                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Growth of population base,                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Diversification of economic base (growth of businesses in sectors outside of agriculture, energy, and tourism), and;                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Businesses retention.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                      | Support the growth of local businesses through business support programs (agriculture, energy, tourism). | Increase the number of businesses participating in the Business to Bruce program.                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                      |                                                                                                          | Implement a business retention and expansion program through Business to Bruce to support the growth of existing businesses in Bruce County by the end of 2026.                                                                                      |



## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# GROWTH AND INNOVATION

embrace innovation and foster responsible growth

| GOALS                          | OBJECTIVES                                                                                                                                          | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Promote responsible growth. | Enhance the attractiveness and vitality of downtown areas through the Spruce the Bruce program.                                                     | Support at least one new downtown revitalization project per year through the Spruce the Bruce program by the end of 2026.                                                                                               |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Increase the number of businesses participating in the Spruce the Bruce program.                                                                                                                                         |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Implement a façade improvement program through Spruce the Bruce to enhance the visual appeal of downtown areas.                                                                                                          |
|                                | Stabilize and grow sustainable revenue through long-term planning supported by a stable financing strategy that reduces reliance on debt financing. | Develop and implement a long-term financial plan that includes revenue growth and diversification strategies.                                                                                                            |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Undertake fees review and implement user fees to offset cost to deliver some services. Identify services that should be cost recovery versus subsidized by the overall tax levy.                                         |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Increase external sources of revenue and reduce reliance on property taxes.                                                                                                                                              |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Reduce the county municipal infrastructure deficit/gap.                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                | Improve transportation options and connectivity in Bruce County.                                                                                    | Develop and implement a transportation demand management program to promote carpooling, active transportation, and telecommuting by 2026.                                                                                |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Consider options to expand the network of multi-use trails in Bruce County by the end of 2026.                                                                                                                           |
|                                | Build forward thinking, evidence informed capital and operating plans.                                                                              | Through the budget process review current capital and operating plans to identify areas for improvement in forward thinking and evidence-based decision-making.                                                          |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Develop 10- or 20-year capital replacement plans to ensure reserve balances and transfers to reserves are sufficiently funded.                                                                                           |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Update reserves policies to include targeted annual funding and balances based on the Asset Management Plan and industry best practices for the operating reserves.                                                      |
|                                |                                                                                                                                                     | Implement public consultation for the County budget to increase satisfaction with the local government's capital and operating plans, including their alignment with community needs and evidence-based decision-making. |



## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# CULTURE AND CAPACITY

strengthen our capacity to deliver

| GOALS                                                          | OBJECTIVES                                                                              | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. Ensure a positive, inclusive, and accountable work culture. | Model transformative leadership and drive engagement at all levels of the organization. | Conduct surveys of employees to assess their level of engagement and satisfaction with the current leadership and management practices. (e.g., Guarding Minds). |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Report following corporate-wide surveys on actions and outcomes for further transparency and openness.                                                          |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Increase the percentage of employees who report feeling heard and valued by their supervisors.                                                                  |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Host at least one leadership workshop or training session for managers and supervisors every year.                                                              |
|                                                                | Create a process in which policies and procedures are continually enhanced.             | Execute and deploy strategies or programs surrounding engagement and well-being.                                                                                |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Develop a standardized format for reviewing policies and procedures, including criteria for evaluation and define roles and responsibilities.                   |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Solicit feedback from stakeholders, including employees, customers, and partners, to incorporate their input in the policy and procedure review process.        |
|                                                                | Actively foster Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in all aspects of our work.      | Form cross-functional teams, as applicable, to revise current policies and procedures identified for improvement.                                               |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Develop and implement policies or initiatives that promote EDI in recruitment, hiring, and retention practices.                                                 |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Conduct corporate-wide EDI training sessions for employees at all levels of the organization by the end of 2024.                                                |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Conduct a survey of employees to assess their understanding of and commitment to EDI principles.                                                                |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Increase the diversity of the workforce every year.                                                                                                             |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Add additional EDI resources by the end of 2026.                                                                                                                |
| 6. Be an employer of choice.                                   | Be an employer of choice across the employment life cycle.                              | Regularly engage employees to assess their satisfaction with the employment life cycle.                                                                         |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Develop and implement initiatives or policies that promote work-life balance.                                                                                   |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Increase attraction and the retention rate of employees year over year.                                                                                         |
|                                                                |                                                                                         | Review compensation structure to provide fair, compliant, affordable, and competitive pay structures.                                                           |



## Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Actions

# ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

increase our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices

| GOALS                                                                     | OBJECTIVES                                                                                             | ACTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. Build capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. | Build organizational capacity to create an Action Plan for environmental sustainability in the County. | Establish a cross-departmental team to build capacity in the preparatory phase of the Climate Action Plan work, with relevant stakeholders represented.                                |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | The cross-departmental team will:                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Conduct a needs assessment to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement of the organization's capacity,                                                                          |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Undertake an Environmental scan and SWOT analysis,                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                           | Protect and enhance the natural environment and green spaces in the County.                            | Provide training and programming for staff, and partner stakeholders, and;                                                                                                             |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Define the timeline and milestones for the development of the Climate Action Plan.                                                                                                     |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Conduct a comprehensive assessment of critical habitats, green spaces, and other environmental features that support biodiversity, ecosystem services, and recreational opportunities. |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Conduct a comprehensive review of current policies and practices related to environmental sustainability and natural heritage conservation.                                            |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Foster partnerships with local organizations, stakeholders, and residents to promote conservation efforts and raise awareness about the importance of protecting natural resources.    |
|                                                                           |                                                                                                        | Encourage the use of renewable energy and energy-efficient practices in both public and private sectors, through partnerships.                                                         |





For more information please contact:

**Matthew Meade**

Corporate Strategic Initiatives Specialist

Office of the CAO

Corporation of the County of Bruce

**[www.brucecounty.on.ca](http://www.brucecounty.on.ca)**

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