

## Report to Council

**Report Title:** Plan the Bruce – Bruce County Official Plan Consultation Report 1

**Prepared By:** Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO

**Department:** Building and Planning

**Date:** May 25, 2021

**Report Number:** BLDG2021-12

**File Number:** C11BU

**Attachments:**

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### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number BLDG2021-12 – Plan the Bruce – Bruce County Official Plan Consultation Report 1, prepared by Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO and recommends that staff prepare and submit comments in response to the Plan the Bruce consultation documents based on staff recommendation and Council input from tonight’s discussion.

### Report:

#### Background:

In March of 2021, the County of Bruce began consulting with residents and stakeholders on the creation of a new Official Plan. To aid in this work, they are developing policy direction through eight land use planning projects:

- Homes: Increasing availability and mix
- Good Growth: Combining development with preservation of character
- Business: Growing economic health through business diversity
- Connecting: Bringing our communities closer together
- Communities: Making healthy communities a priority
- Natural Legacy: Managing what we inherited for future generations
- Agriculture: Ensuring the future of food thrives here
- Heritage: Identifying and promoting our unique culture

The Projects currently open for input are Homes, Agriculture and Good Growth. Municipal staff have had discussion and consulted with the planning consultants assigned to Homes and Agriculture Interim Reports. An upcoming session is scheduled for the Good Growth Interim Report with the Bruce County Planning Department. Consultation and input for the development of the County Official Plan is meaningful to Brockton as any future land development decisions will have to conform to the Official Plan document once complete.

Mark Paoli, Director of Planning and Development and Jack Van Dorp, Manager of Land Use Planning from the County of Bruce have been invited to present an overview of these two important plans to Council. This report outlines our comments for thought and consideration and further discussion during the meeting.

**Analysis:**

Staff wish to seek comment and direction from Council on the interim reports. The primary focus of staff's comments is to ensure flexibility is being considered and incorporated into all areas of the planning review. The proposed Official Plan document needs to be implemented in a manner to ensure appropriate and attainable growth and development can continue to occur within Brockton. Consideration needs to be given for overlapping areas of policies within the Bruce Official Plan to ensure that a well-balanced plan is created that limits conflicting requirements and ensures all areas of policy are treated and considered equally. We have provided the stakeholder workbook and staff comments below for consideration and submission as agreeable by Council:

**Agriculture: Ensuring the future of food thrives here - [Stakeholder Workbook](#);**

**Section 2.1 Mapping**

The County has completed a Land Evaluation and Area Review and has identified some areas that will change from the current Rural Area designation to potential Prime Agriculture Area. Staff comments for consideration on this change is as follows;

- Ensure consistency with available soil studies such as "Soil Capability for Agriculture" for Prime Agriculture Area and Rural Area designated lands.
- Agriculture Area lands with suitable soils may not be suitable for Prime Agriculture uses due to potential other site characteristics, features and location of lands such. Potential examples;
  - Natural heritage features such as valleys, hills where topographic elevations on property may be too steep for crop growing, pasture land, or livestock farm buildings
  - Proximity to natural heritage features such wetlands and flood fringe or flood plain areas adjacent to water courses or water features potentially limit crop growing, pasture lands use and livestock farm buildings
  - Proximity to Urban settlement boundaries may limit lands to crop or pasture use only, no prime agriculture building site for livestock farm operations
- Ensure accuracy of proposed detailed mapping to potentially be incorporated from the Land Evaluation and Area Review
- Removal of Rural Area lands to Prime Agriculture Area lands may impact and restrict some rural developments and land use. A large number of restrictions are already in place in our Agriculture Area and Rural Area lands that protect or restrict development, ensure flexibility is incorporated into policy to protect Agriculture areas while allowing development in the Rural Area where appropriate.

**Section 2.2 Minimum Size for New Agricultural Lots**

- Additional information could be beneficial on what the growth rate has been for the average farm size since last Official Plan review.
- Approach for variable farm size in area seems appropriate to allow new farmers access to land

- Flexibility in location of available lands should be considered if proceeding with recommendation of 50-acre farm parcel size and not based on “Bruce County Historical Atlas with original 50-acre Survey”. Creation of 50-acre lands should be considered within entire Municipal boundaries. This would create fair and consistent approach for all landowners. Policy should include detailed scope for consistent approach and implementation with main intent of policy for creation and access of new farm lands for new farmers.

### Section 2.3 Surplus Farm Dwelling Severances

- Traditional square/rectangle lot approach should be implemented for numerous factors.
  - Support Implementation of Additional Dwelling Units
  - Repairs of relocation of driveway entrances
  - Replacement locations for onsite sewage systems
  - Available lands and space for future construction projects or replacement of buildings
  - Continue with bonafide farm for the ownership of the farm land consent provisions

### Section 2.4 New Residential Lots in Woodlands

- Woodlands general located with naturally heritage features and environmental restrictions
- Proximity to existing livestock farm operations and minimum distance setback requirements
- Access to woodlands at back of farm parcels

### Section 2.5 Industrial and Commercial Uses on Farms

- Supportive of incorporating Agriculture Commercial Industrial provisions into Agricultural lands for supporting agriculture community.

### Section 2.6 Urban-Agriculture Edge Planning

- Supportive of incorporating Urban-Agriculture Edge Planning due to limits on growth and expansion of livestock farm operations in proximity to urban boundaries related to minimum distance separation requirements. Urban-Agriculture Edge Planning areas could potential be suitable for light agricultural commercial uses such as listed as those listed as “on farm diversity” to support both rural and urban communities potential increase for sustainability.

### Section 2.7 Cannabis Production

- Cannabis is a plant and growing plants or crops is agriculture. The onsite industrial and commercial processes are where the difficulties arise with Cannabis as an agriculture use. Potential odour nuisances need to be considered in all instances to mitigate conflict when involving the industrial and commercial processes.

### **Homes: Increasing availability and mix - [Stakeholder Survey](#)**

#### **Topic #1: Apply housing targets for number of units, density or affordability.**

1. Balanced approach should be considered to allow flexibility for growth and development. Monitor growth and development within community as a whole for number of units, density or affordability.

2. Again, balanced approach encouraging all types of developments, include areas for more affordable housing units, options for an estate style housing, including estate type lots in hamlet areas where there are growth options recognizing limits on available municipal servicing.

Topic #2: Permit additional dwelling units.

3. Staff to provide comments to Council on proposed interim amendment related to Additional Residential Units. Interim amendment proposed June 2021 for public consultations. Further report will follow.
4. New smaller subdivision lots potentially more difficult to add a detached dwelling, semi detached would be more likely and already in the plans and could potentially count in density.

Topic #3: Permit smaller homes.

5. Does your municipality use zoning to regulate minimum dwelling unit sizes? – Yes
6. Potential support for minimum areas be removed from zoning by-law and apply Ontario Building Code provisions for minimum sizes or rooms and spaces only to allow more flexibility.
7. To date not aware of any dwelling units unsized related to zoning purposes
8. Question not applicable
9. No comment from staff

Topic #4: Permit more types of homes.

10. All of types would be ideal and beneficial. Estate Lots (acre lots), encourage addition of apartments less than 5 story, retirement home style housing additionally.

Topic #5: Increase stability and flexibility through development permitting process.

11. Would your Municipality consider a development permitting system? - Yes
12. Minor, reasonable and straightforward in nature – otherwise should go through formal planning process.
13. Proper establishment of policy to implementation and consistent approach.

Topic #6: Maintain supply of rental units.

14. Staff supportive of any resource and working with other agencies to establish and keep availability of affordable housing

Topic #7: Use appropriate density to lower development costs.

15. Staff supportive of high density in all appropriate areas, consideration should be given for higher density units with proximity to town resources, ex. retail stores, downtown core, municipal facilities and complexes etc.

Should Bruce County consider establishing design guidelines? - Potentially, see 17.

16. Guidelines or policy should be flexible to encourage potential development the appropriate areas
17. Public consultation should be conducted prior to implementation of a guide for public comments

Topic #8: Incentives to lower process and operating costs.

18. Not applicable as Brockton does not currently have development charges.
19. Direction from Council would be required.

Topic #9: Reduce operating costs by design.

20. Potentially but consideration for increase in cost of construction and long-term operating cost.

Topic #10: Prioritize applications.

21. Affordable housing is a supported type of development however, all application types should be of focus to ensure timely approvals.
22. No comment provided

Topic #11: Maintain land inventory.

23. Knowledge and understanding of developments occurring in neighbouring municipalities for local trends and demands.

Topic #12: Use surplus public lands for homes.

24. Potentially, consideration for neighbouring land use and compatibility should still be considered for surplus public lands. Surplus public lands may not be desirable for homes and more appropriate for other types of uses. Needs of community should be considered for surplus public lands.

Topic #13: Require affordable housing.

25. No comment as inclusionary zoning provisions are currently not required within Bruce County.
26. No comment
27. No additional comments or feedback provided by staff on the discussion paper.

**Sustainability Checklist:**

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy?       | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity?     | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity?           | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity?                 | Yes |

**Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:**

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?  
N/A

No budget implications are imposed related to the report.

**Reviewed By:**



**Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer**

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**Respectfully Submitted by:**



**Dieter Wetz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO**

**Reviewed By:**



**Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer**