



## Committee Report

**To:** Warden Janice Jackson  
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

**From:** Mark Paoli  
Land Use Planning Manager

**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Re:** Plan the Bruce: Homes Interim Report

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### Staff Recommendation:

The Plan the Bruce: Homes Interim Report is for information.

### Background:

The Plan the Bruce Discussion Papers are the next step to set out a policy framework for our collective Vision and Guiding Principles for growth and development in Bruce County and form the backbone of the new Official Plan.

The Discussion Paper projects will be presented in a staggered approach over the next year and will be presented in two steps:

- First, an Interim Report with background information and draft recommended directions as a base for broader community engagement; and then,
- Following community engagement and any needed additional analysis, a Discussion Paper with the key findings and final recommended policy directions for the Official Plan.

The Plan the Bruce - Homes Discussion Paper is the second Guiding Principle to advance and the Interim Report (attached) and is focused on increasing the supply and mix of homes in Bruce County through land use planning tools.

This Interim Report provides an overview of housing challenges and current trends in Canada, Ontario, and Bruce County. It also identifies potential opportunities to use land use planning tools to increasing housing supply and mix, with a particular focus on increasing housing supply that is affordable to a broader range of incomes.

The Interim Report was prepared through a collaborative effort between StrategyCorp, a planning firm with experience in Housing, and County Planning and Human Services staff, and draws upon work StrategyCorp completed for the County including the Official Plan Best Practices Report (October PDC).

## Interim Report Recommendations:

The Table below summarizes topics and directions regarding land use planning tools that are recommended to increase the supply and mix of homes in Bruce County. This is a high-level overview, and the next step is to advance public consultation on if, where, and how they should be implemented in Bruce County.

Each topic is discussed in greater detail in the attached Interim Report, including current policies, provincial requirements, and examples of applications.

Of particular note, recommendations for Targets (#1), Community Planning Permit System (#5), and criteria for height and density (#7) are aligned with housing recommendations from the Land Use Service Delivery - Official Plan Best Practices review presented to Committee in October 2020.

For the most part these tools are focused on providing opportunities to enable the market to provide and maintain a greater variety of homes that are more affordable. Targets (#1) may require projects to meet specific densities, and Inclusionary Zoning (#13), would enable municipalities to require dedicated affordable housing units in certain situations.

Targets (#1), Additional Dwelling Units (#2), and using density to lower development costs (#7) are required by the Provincial government, with opportunity for implementation based on local circumstances.

Topic	Recommended Direction
1. Apply housing targets	Develop and implement targets to increase supply of affordable units in areas close to existing jobs, services, and transportation choices. These should align with the Housing and Homelessness plan and focus on the needs of households in the lowest 60% of the income distribution.
2. Permit additional dwelling units	Update County and Local Official Plans (and by-laws) to permit additional units within a dwelling and within a separate building on a lot with appropriate conditions.
3. Permit smaller homes	Consider directing local plans and by-laws to remove restrictions that require dwelling unit sizes that are larger than building code standards
4. Permit more types of homes	Consider directing by-laws to describe and permit a broader range of dwelling unit types
5. Increase stability and flexibility through development permitting process	Investigate opportunities for a Community Planning Permit system (CPPS) which essentially pre-plans neighbourhoods, enables approvals with conditions, and includes opportunities to provide flexibility within a defined range with less risk of appeal.

Topic	Recommended Direction
6. Maintain supply of rental units	Consider criteria for conversions of standard rental units to condominiums or short-term accommodations to maintain rental unit supply. In addition, consider working with local municipalities to establish rules for short-term rentals in houses and apartments that can be used to house year-round residents.
7. Use appropriate density to lower development costs	Together with 'Good Growth' Discussion Paper, consider where services are or can be available to support growth and development, and consider designating serviced areas and corridors as areas for increasing density through infill, intensification, and redevelopment, as well as clear criteria for height and/or density
8. Incentives that lower process and operating costs	Consider updating Community Improvement Plans to reduce application fees, development charges, and/or provide opportunities for Tax Increment Financing, for developments with guaranteed-affordable housing
9. Reduce operating costs by design	Encourage energy-efficient subdivision and building designs that reduce operating costs.
10. Prioritize applications	Consider criteria for prioritizing and/or fast-tracking review of housing development proposals that support affordable housing targets
11. Maintain land inventory	Improve data gathering and reporting to assist Municipalities with maintaining inventory of land for development
12. Use surplus public lands for homes	Apply a "housing first" policy for surplus public lands.
13. Require affordable housing	Consider requesting an inclusionary zoning order from the Provincial Government to enable municipalities to require affordable dwelling units in new developments.

The Final discussion paper will incorporate the results of the public engagement process on these topics with additional research and analysis to round out the final recommendations. The final Discussion Paper will present policies that would support implementation of the planning tools that are ultimately recommended to County Council to support greater supply and mix of homes in Bruce County.

### **Communication and Engagement:**

Communication and engagement approaches will recognize public health considerations to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, while seeking to maximize awareness and involvement.

Communication tactics planned for the next phase of the Plan the Bruce: Homes project are:

- Information and tools on the project website at [www.planthebruce.ca](http://www.planthebruce.ca)
- Social media posts to generate traffic to the project website
- Remote meetings with the Housing stakeholders and developers
- Delegations to Local Councils, in accordance with protocols
- Pop up or virtual booths at community events, where possible.

**Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

**Interdepartmental Consultation:**

Tania Dickson (Human Services) assisted in the preparation of the report.  
Matt Meade (CAO's Office) provided project management support.

**Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:**

Plan the Bruce was identified as a major initiative and Council priority in the 2020 Planning and Development Business Plan

**Report Author:**

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**Departmental Approval:**

Mark Paoli  
Land Use Planning Manager

**Approved for Submission:**

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