

Plan the Bruce: Communities

Presentation to Council

August 12, 2021



Purpose

- The Planning Partnership and MDB Insight were retained to collaborate with Bruce County to prepare the **Plan the Bruce: Communities Interim Report** and **Final Discussion Paper**.
- The Discussion Paper includes a summary of the public feedback on the recommendations set forth in the Interim Report and a refinement of the recommended directions for enabling healthy community development policies in the Official Plan Update.



Factors that Influence Healthy Communities



Built Environment



**Sustainability +
Climate Change**



**Natural Environment
+ Open Space**



Economic Resilience

Key Topics + Trends Affecting Bruce County

- Public health and chronic disease
- Aging population
- Varying contexts - broad range of towns, villages, and rural townships
- Need for a full range of housing types and tenures
- Mobility options
- Access to services and amenities - recreation, health care, long-term care, education, retail and commercial, etc., parks and open spaces
- Access to healthy food
- Climate change

Recommended Directions

The Plan the Bruce: Communities Interim Report set out a series of recommended directions under 6 theme areas to provide a base for public consultation.

- 1. A Healthy Community;**
- 2. A Complete Community;**
- 3. A Viable Community;**
- 4. A Beautiful and High Quality Community;**
- 5. A Sustainable Community; and,**
- 6. A Resilient Community.**

Community Engagement

The community was asked to provide feedback on the recommended directions. The purpose was to engage a large, representative sample of Bruce County citizens to measure levels of support for the vision, the strategic recommended directions identified for the Communities Interim Report, and to gauge citizens' priorities amongst the draft recommended directions.



Virtual presentation to Council **March 18, 2021**



Telephone survey conducted by MDB Insight between May 27th to June 10th, 2021
(485 interviews)



Online Survey using Bang the Table, an online engagement tool **(124 responses)**



Social Media through the County website, Facebook, and LinkedIn
26,810 impressions
7,173 views



Paper copies of the survey for written comments

A Healthy Community

What We Heard

- Active transportation is needed, especially for inter- and intra-municipal travel
- Intergenerational presence should be maintained by incorporating age-in-place facilities
- There is a need for year-round local food access and the preservation of viable farmland
- Access to health & medical care is needed
- Services & amenities should be accessible to all, especially for those with disabilities
- Crime reduction initiatives are desired

Recommended Directions

- Policies should: support walkable & connected communities, universally accessible housing options and safe neighbourhoods, site design and buildings; encourage developers to use Healthy Development Checklist; implement AODA; and support opportunities for local food systems and urban agriculture.

A Complete Community

What We Heard

- Greater mix of housing types and options for all life stages is necessary, and there is also an urgent need for affordable housing options
- There is a desire for expanded public & outdoor activity spaces, especially those that promote intergeneration exchange

Recommended Directions

- Prioritize a variety of housing forms and mixed income housing developments
- Ensure policy framework supports an appropriate parks & open space network, including the potential for more urban park typologies
- Prioritize public/event space in downtowns and near other activity centres (e.g., schools, senior's centres, workplaces, higher density developments)

A Beautiful Community

What We Heard

- Improvements in Bruce County are necessary; however, community character should be respected and maintained
- An action plan that protects and enhances natural beauty and environmental features is necessary, as they improve quality of life and mental & physical health
- Desire for natural, historic and signature architecture design standards in all buildings

Recommended Directions

- Consider development of County-wide urban design guidelines
- Strengthen policy framework for public realm and streetscapes
- Create policies that support accessible parks & open spaces, the adaptive reuse of older buildings, and ensure high degree of connectivity to natural areas for pedestrians

A Viable Community

What We Heard

- More people & businesses are needed and welcomed in Bruce County, especially those that cater to the County year-round
- Sustainable and inclusive economic development is needed as the County grows
- Transportation and mobility options for the aging population and those with physical limitations are necessary
- New development should consider diverse needs of individuals from all walks of life

Recommended Directions

- Policies should: protect and establish business & commercial opportunities; support Community Improvement Plans; facilitate innovative investment opportunities; support a highly integrated active transportation system; and optimize use of existing infrastructure

A Sustainable Community

What We Heard

- Support for strategies that promote the responsible use of resources to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, demands for energy, water and waste systems
- Balance is needed - green energy, buildings and people → there must be enough space to accommodate housing for all in Bruce County
- Natural areas should remain with little to no development occurring in them
- Concerns over tree removal and deforestation as a result of development opportunities

Recommended Directions

- Consider policies that: enhance the sustainable design of new development & buildings; incorporate low impact development techniques; protect local & regional ecosystems and biological diversity; protect urban forest and tree canopy, and identify objectives for how it can be enhanced.

A Resilient Community

What We Heard

- The climate crisis should be a key consideration of every aspect of the Official Plan
- Sustainability and climate change need to be a priority to ensure that other policies and strategies can also be accommodated

Recommended Directions

- Explore opportunities to support Emergency Preparedness Planning with respect to development, infrastructure and systems
- Ensure access to basic needs are designed in a way that mitigates the impacts of a changing climate and related extreme weather events

Next Steps

- **The Plan the Bruce: Communities Discussion Paper** forms the foundation for developing detailed land use planning policies for healthy community development in the new County Official Plan.
- The process for the new Official Plan will begin soon and will feature additional opportunities for community input.

