

Staff Report

Report From: Jay Pausner, Supervisor, Development Services

Meeting Date: February 22, 2022

Subject: Plan the Bruce Discussion Paper

Recommendation

That Council endorse this report as comments on the *Plan the Bruce: Business Discussion Paper*.

Report Summary

Bruce County's Planning Department has circulated for comment the Plan the Bruce: Business Discussion Paper. This report outlines the paper and recommends that the Town provide the comments outlined in this report.

Background/Analysis

Bruce County's Planning Department has circulated for comment the [Plan the Bruce: Business Discussion Paper](#). The Paper outlines recommendations on key economic and business matters affecting Bruce County (County) that are anticipated over the coming years.

It offers recommendations in three areas:

1. Economic Development as a Key Objective
2. Economic Development Strategy
3. Land Supply

1. Economic Development as a Key Objective

The County recommends that Economic Development should be a key objective of the County's Official Plan, ensuring that, as a key objective, it will inform and enhance decisions related to economic development at the County level, through its area municipalities and with businesses and other stakeholders. The recommendation for a flexible approach to economic development should be supported. By taking a flexible approach, it will allow the County to respond to needs as they change over the years.

2. Economic Development Strategy

In a similar manner, the County recommends referencing the Bruce County Economic Development Strategic Plan and acknowledging that it, like the flexible approach recommended, should be updated from time to time to address changing times.

3. Land Supply

Likewise, consideration of land supply, one of the key tangible tools of an Official Plan, should be viewed to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to economic needs. One notable departure from enhancing flexibility is the examination of a new concept for the County in determining an appropriate supply of employment lands: the concept of “effective supply” is being considered to acknowledge that some land is shovel ready versus land that is identified as available over a long term. Having an effective supply will mean area municipalities and, in particular, businesses will have access to land when it is needed, without the need for expansive or uncertain processes to accommodate long-term needs.

One key issue missing from the range of recommendations is how major economic-related decisions may be integrated into housing-related matters, and vice versa. Throughout the Paper it is acknowledged that housing, both the availability and affordability of, is key to supporting economic development and a balanced, healthy economy. It is recommended that the County consider foregrounding housing: the creation of policy and major economic-related programs, how they impact or are impacted by housing-related matters.

Linkages

- Corporate Strategic Plan Priority #1: Facilitate Appropriate Growth in our Communities

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

None.

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