



Committee Report

To: Warden Chris Peabody and
Members of the Executive Committee

From: Derrick Thomson, CAO

Date: September 7, 2023

Re: Community Development Office

Staff Recommendation:

That Bruce County Council approves the Community Development Office; and

That Council direct staff to explore potential long-term funding opportunities

Background:

There are several large-scale and complex projects emerging within Bruce County that require coordinated, strategic County leadership and focused resources. Each of these projects have the potential to positively impact community development, provided the County is at the table engaging with project proponents, developers and municipal partners to actively prepare the right environment to achieve positive community outcomes.

The current range and scope of these projects include:

- Housing Supply in Bruce County
- Growth of the Clean Energy and Medical Isotope Sectors
- Deep Geological Repository in South Bruce
- Pre-Development - New Nuclear Reactor at Bruce Power

These projects have the potential to positively impact the growth, development and economic well-being of the County and its residents, provided they are managed and positioned to ensure broad community benefit. A significant driver to ensure community benefit of these projects is early, active, and on-going engagement between the County and project proponents.

The success of each of these projects requires significant and coordinated effort between County Programs, and municipal partners to create the right environment for achieving project and community success, and to prepare for the service delivery demands each project generates.

This report outlines the anticipated engagement required from the County to provide strategic leadership and shape positive community development outcomes for each project.

1. Housing Supply in Bruce County

As opportunities occur for investment in the clean energy and medical isotope sectors, deep geological repository and new nuclear, there is a need for the County to provide leadership in growing the supply of housing.

Bruce County has been investing in, and developing resources, to increase awareness of the need for affordable and attainable housing in Bruce County. Housing and Planning Services have collaborated to develop the following resources and initiatives:

- [Plan the Bruce – Homes Discussion Paper](#) (2021)
- [Affordable Housing Toolkit](#) (2022-23)
- [Growth Management – County Official Plan Amendment](#) (Adopted by County Council October 2022 – awaiting provincial approval)
- [Demographic Housing Study](#) by KPMG (January 2023)
- Housing Forum with municipal staff and elected officials (February 2023)
- Creation of a [2024-2034 Housing and Homelessness Plan](#) (launched in August 2023)
- Delegation with Ministry of Municipal Affairs at AMO Conference requesting upper-tier authority to develop an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (August 2023)

Focused and coordinated leadership is required from the County to review the initiatives underway and co-ordinate County efforts on the creation and promotion of affordable housing into a broader housing strategy. The strategy would examine housing needs outside of the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Plan. This work would look further at implementation of the affordable housing initiatives by public, not-for-profit and private sectors in Bruce County.

Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan

A portion of this work would also look at the development of an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Following a delegation with the associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing at AMO in August, staff are optimistic the province will grant Bruce County the ability to develop an upper-tier Affordable Housing CIP to facilitate the County's investment in affordable housing initiatives that would encourage private investment in affordable and attainable forms of development. County staff would also work with local municipalities to consider implementing local affordable housing CIP programs.

Affordable Housing Concierge Program

A significant area of focus for the County is to establish a concierge service to work with the not-for-profit and private sectors to help bring affordable housing to market. A concierge program would work across key sectors providing one-on-one assistance to guide investors, owners, and not-for-profits in navigating government approvals. The program could deliver customized guidance, assist with site selection and pre-purchase review, partnerships, funding and development considerations.

Concierge services are provided via a single point of contact that coordinates the resources of a cross-functional team that would have staff support from:

- Planning
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Municipal partners (local CBOs, Planning Coordinators, Operations and Public Services staff)

The County would establish criteria (e.g. size of project, percentage and threshold of affordable housing), for private and not-for-profit sector affordable housing builds to focus staff time and resources on projects that would provide the most success towards meeting the County's goals for affordable housing.

Having a single point of contact, with support from a cross-functional team, will provide the tools and advice to ensure proponents who are meeting County goals of increasing the supply of affordable and attainable housing, have the best chance of success.

The County would also focus on assisting private developers with pre-existing planning approvals (draft approval and final approvals) to understand barriers to construction. Understanding and working to reduce barriers that are limiting the construction of housing coming to market is key to building the right environment to facilitate success for other large-scale projects, such as the new nuclear project at Bruce Power and the DGR in South Bruce who are going to depend on attainable housing to meet the needs of their workforce as projects progress.

2. Growth of the Clean Energy and Medical Isotope Sector

Significant innovation and growth is occurring rapidly in both the Clean Energy and Medical Isotope sectors within Bruce County.

Recent announcements relating to the pre-development work for new nuclear, and innovations in the energy storage industry, such as pumped storage, battery storage, and hydrogen, create exciting opportunities for further growth and development of the Clean Energy Frontier in Bruce County.

The nuclear industry plays an important role in the fight against cancer through the production of medical isotopes. For more than 50 years, Canada has been a global leader in the research, development, and production of medical isotopes. Bruce Power is a leader in the production of medical isotopes in Canada and internationally.

Recent announcements indicate provincial and federal support for growth and innovation in the medical isotope sector:

- On [March 11, 2022](#), Bruce Power unveiled a new Isotope Innovation Hub and launched a Global Expressions of Interest Process (EOI) for radiopharmaceutical organizations interested in isotope production in Ontario. This announcement was made by Premier Ford.

- On [June 27, 2023](#), the federal government announced \$35 million to support the development, production, advancement, and distribution of medical isotopes, in response to the Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council's (CNIC) [Isotopes for Hope Report](#).
- On [August 17, 2023](#), Bruce Power announced they are working with Nordion to increase their production of the medical isotope to meet the increasing demands of the world market. The companies will increase the amount of Cobalt-60 Bruce Power is able to produce in its reactors by innovating a new adjuster component configuration. Ontario produces about 50 per cent of the global supply, which helps to sterilize billions of medical devices, such as gloves, masks and syringes, while also treating some forms of cancer. The majority of Ontario's supply is produced at Bruce Power.

With the demand for medical isotopes expected to double by 2030, Canada will be expanding its role in research, production and innovation in this sector. Bruce Power and its partners are well positioned to be a global leader in isotope production. The refurbishment of current reactors to have isotope generating capability at Bruce Power, as will any new-build nuclear reactors having this capacity, will increase medical isotope production locally for the global market.

As growth in the Clean Energy and Medical Isotope sectors occurs within Bruce County, focused and timely resources will be needed at the County-level to work with municipalities, Bruce Power and its partners to create the right environment to support the needs of these economically important sectors. The growth of these sectors is happening rapidly, and the County needs to be prepared to respond in a timely manner.

Next steps for County leadership to support the Clean Energy and Medical Isotope sectors include:

- Engage with Bruce Power, and producers of medical isotopes (domestic and international) to discuss opportunities for investment in processing and expansion within Bruce County.
- Create a favourable local environment to facilitate attraction and expansion of the supply chain related to the production of medical isotopes, including clean energy suppliers and companies involved in the processing and shipment of isotopes.
- Strengthen the relationship with nuclear, medical isotope, and clean energy suppliers locally to determine opportunities for expansion and business spin offs.
- Work closely with the Nuclear Innovation Institute to engage their expertise as experts in innovation in the clean energy and medical isotope sectors.

3. Deep Geological Repository in South Bruce

The Saugeen Ojibway Nation-South Bruce area is one of two potential host areas for Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel. The other area still being considered as a potential host area is the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (WLON)-Ignace area in Norther Ontario.

Nuclear Waste Management Ontario (NWMO) has identified that to achieve success of the Deep Geological Repository (DGR) project, a partnership approach is required. NWMO has stated this project will be implemented through a long-term partnership involving the host

community, the larger region in which it is located and the NWMO. NWMO have said, only through engagement, dialogue and collaboration will NWMO ensure that the needs of the community are addressed at each stage of the process. NWMO has identified this is how they will build trust and confidence on the DGR project.

NWMO has indicated as the siting process proceeds, a more regional perspective will become their focus. Planning at a regional scale for the impacts of the Deep Geological Repository and Centre of Expertise will ensure benefits associated with the project are maximized and any challenges are assessed early and are addressed comprehensively to optimize positive outcomes. Understanding issues at a regional scale is an important component of the project and will help ensure those who are potentially affected by locating the project at a particular site will have the capacity and the opportunity to be involved in planning how the project will be implemented.

To date, much of the discussion has been between NWMO and local municipalities through the potential host area siting process. As the process moves towards site selection, there will need to be significant conversations and agreements established with the County to address planning, service delivery and how to work together to create conditions for positive community impact. Several Program areas will be impacted including:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Planning
- Paramedic Services & Emergency Management
- Economic Development
- Employment Services
- Human Services

NWMO has indicated they will establish a Community Well-Being project. This project will be implemented through a long-term partnership involving the community, the larger region in which it is located and NWMO. It is important that the project be implemented in a way that will help foster long-term well-being and sustainability. As the DGR project moves towards site selection, significant local and County effort will need to be invested into shaping a positive environment that contributes to the well-being of South Bruce, as well as the broader region.

NWMO has said that the DGR project will only move forward at a site with informed and willing hosts. That means people living there need to understand what it means to host a project like this and support having it located in the area. The County is well positioned to be able to support South Bruce as a host community, but it will require a focused and coordinated effort on behalf of the County to prepare and actively engage with NWMO. Engagement between the County and NWMO is required to ensure the scope and impact to regional service delivery are achievable, and sufficient measures are put in place to create broad positive impacts for the community and the region.

4. Pre-Development Work - New Nuclear Reactor at Bruce Power

Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) has recommended the province begin planning, siting and environmental assessment work for long-lead assets, including nuclear power, to meet increasing demand for electricity, driven by strong economic growth, electrification and population growth.

In line with the IESO recommendations, the Ontario government announced on July 5, 2023, it supports long-term planning and consultation work to explore expansion of clean nuclear at the Bruce Power site.

A major component of the pre-development work will involve Bruce Power undertaking community consultations and conducting the environmental assessment for federal approval to determine the feasibility of siting up to 4,800 megawatts (MW) of new nuclear generation on its current site.

The Province will provide support for Bruce Power to commence the planning and consultation work to meet federal regulatory requirements, and the process will be used as a planning and early engagement tool for potential future large infrastructure projects. It is expected that the County and its member municipalities will be engaged early in the pre-development work with Bruce Power.

The range of consultation on the planning and consultation work with the County will be broad and will include require input from many Programs including:

- Planning
- Paramedic services and Emergency Management
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Employment services
- Communication, including stakeholder, indigenous and public engagement

Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator, as well as the Ontario government has indicated that long-term planning and consultation is prudent and proactive. The County needs to be resourced to actively engage in the planning and consultation process to ensure long-term impact on service delivery is well understood to support this project and to ensure that broad community benefits are optimized.

County staff has also recently learnt that IESO is also moving quickly to open applications processes for smaller, broad and innovative energy assets and infrastructure. Some of the projects being considered include pump storage, battery storage, solar, wind and hydrogen electricity generation. Proponents who were successful in the first round of applications with IESO are currently consulting on projects with municipalities across Ontario. Several of these smaller-scale projects have extremely short timelines and require supportive Council resolutions, which require engagement with local municipal and County staff.

As Ontario's Clean Energy Frontier, Bruce County is well positioned to play a central role in growth, diversification and innovation of the energy sector needed by the province to meet

its future energy demand. The focus on new and innovative projects in the energy sector will require timely and on-going engagement by the County.

Proposed Community Development Office

Strategic leadership is required within the County to coordinate the work of multiple Programs, including Transportation and Environmental Services, Planning, Development & Employment Services, Housing, Paramedic Services & Emergency Management, to create the right environment to ensure community readiness and obtain a broad community benefit from the large-scale projects that have been outlined in this report.

The County response to these large-scale projects requires the creation of cross-functional, multi-disciplinary teams to provide active and timely engagement. Preparing coordinated early and active input, service design and unlocking barriers to success for projects and community benefit, are key strategic priorities for the County.

To achieve this active level of coordinated engagement and to create the right environment for community success on these large-scale, complex projects, County staff are proposing to structure a Community Development Office.

This Community Development office would be led by a senior leader seconded to the position of Commissioner of Community Development that has experience working cross-functionally to structure service delivery, and has experience executing multi-disciplinary projects for a period of two years.

The Commissioner of Community Development will lead cross-functional, multi-disciplinary teams drawing on existing staff resources to ensure strategic oversight with the coordination of input, execution of projects and alignment of services to support projects such as addressing the housing supply in the County, development readiness for investment, the Deep Geological Repository, and the work required to support a new nuclear build at Bruce Power. This office would also lead a coordinated strategy to increase the development readiness of employment lands to facilitate the growth of the energy and medical isotope sector. It would also lead the development of a housing strategy for the County, which would include creating an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan and providing concierge services to the private/not-for-profit sectors to support affordable housing builds.

The Community Development Office would provide a one-stop-shop service to external partners, such as private and not-for-profit developers, and project proponents (NWMO & Bruce Power). It would create a central point of contact through which the resources of multiple departments and programs would be coordinated and executed to deliver timely, responsive input and service.

The Community Development Office would also focus on strengthening and partnering with Saugeen Ojibway Nation and the Historic Metis Nation to understand the needs of their community on these large-scale projects and look for areas of alignment to be furthered through project and advocacy work.

In collaboration with the Intergovernmental Office, the Community Development Office will work to understand the needs of Bruce County and its member municipalities and advocate

for support from provincial and federal levels of government to ensure community benefit from the large-scale projects that are proposed within Bruce County.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

This will involve some increased salary implications that will be managed within the existing budget. The role of the new office will be to obtain additional funding sources which will allow for future capacity expansion and review staffing resources at key decision points.

- Director of Planning & Development
- Director of Corporate Services
- Office of the CAO

Link to Strategic Goals:

The proposed work of the Community Development Office is grounded in the vision and mission of Bruce County, as set out in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

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.

The work of the Community Development Office would focus on the four key strategic key pillars:

1. Community and partnerships to support community and our partners;
2. Growth and innovation by embracing innovation and foster responsible growth;
3. Culture and capacity by strengthening our capacity to deliver; and
4. Environment and climate change by focusing on our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices, including supporting the growth and success of the clean energy industry and innovation.

The work of the Community Development Office aligns with the following goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan:

GOAL 1. Build a strong and inclusive community.

OBJECTIVES - Increase housing options and encourage innovative solutions. Drive community well-being.

ACTIONS - Undertake consultation with the development community and stakeholders on ways to increase housing options and affordability within Bruce County.

GOAL 2. Enhance and grow partnerships.

OBJECTIVES Work collaboratively between departments and with our partners on integration and continuum of excellent services.

ACTIONS Collaborate on innovative service delivery with our municipal partners. Develop and implement policies or initiatives that promote public and partner engagement in the development and delivery of services.

GOAL 4. Promote responsible growth.

OBJECTIVES Support the growth of local businesses through business support programs.

ACTIONS Leverage economic development initiatives to support Bruce County's entrepreneurs, investors, and business communities.

Report Author:

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