



Staff Report to Council - for Direction

Title: Bruce County Housing Action Plan - 2024-2026

From: Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Date: June 25, 2024

Staff Recommendation:

That the Bruce County Housing Action Plan - 2024-2026 be endorsed.

Report Summary:

The Bruce County Housing Action Plan identifies 25 actions Bruce County will lead to create conditions locally that can lead to an increase housing supply and impact affordability of housing. The Community Development Office will provide strategic leadership and coordination on the activities identified in the Housing Action Plan. Implementation of actions will be carried out through the Housing Cross-Functional team, aligning the focus and capacity of multiple County departments between 2024 and 2026.

Background:

Like many communities in Ontario and Canada, Bruce County is challenged by the rising cost and availability of housing. To meet current and future community housing needs, a wide range of actions need to be taken by all levels of government, agencies, non-profit organizations, and developers.

Bruce County Council established the Community Development Office to provide strategic leadership and coordination on activities that Bruce County can lead to help create conditions locally to increase the supply and impact the affordability of housing.

The Housing Action Plan includes 25 actions that Bruce County will advance across six (6) areas of practice between 2024 and 2026. Areas of practice include research, policy development, programs, incentives, engagement and advocacy for investment in housing solutions to meet the need for housing across the County.

The Housing Action Plan will further [Bruce County's Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#) priority to increase housing options and encourage innovative solutions to build a strong and inclusive community. Actions included in the Housing Action Plan are focused on increasing the supply and affordability of housing options, including facilitating community housing, below-market rental/ownership, and more affordable private rental and home ownership.

Bruce County Human Services Department, through the Housing Services Division, is responsible for the delivery and administration of provincially mandated social and affordable housing programs, as well as initiatives to prevent and address homelessness. Actions impacting homelessness services, emergency housing, transitional/supportive housing, and community housing will be set out in a new 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan for Bruce County, being prepared independently of this Housing Action Plan.

Implementation of this plan will be undertaken in consultation with municipalities, Saugeen Ojibway Nation Environmental Office and Indigenous serving organizations, and stakeholders within Bruce County. When considering actions to take on housing, Bruce County is focused on using the tools currently available to the County and its member municipalities, as well as advocating to other levels of government for funding and additional tools to implement housing solutions in Bruce County.

This Plan recognizes all levels of government need to work together to take aligned action to impact the supply and affordability of housing. The County does not have all the tools or funding to singularly solve current housing challenges. That said, the County does have the ability to impact County and local planning policies, implement process improvements, communicate information, provide education, establish incentives and provide concierge services that all contribute to creating local conditions have the potential to increase the supply and impact the affordability of housing.

As other levels of government look to establish funding programs for affordable housing and infrastructure, acting within the County's jurisdiction, in partnership with municipalities, the 25 actions outlined in the Housing Action Plan will help contribute to increasing the housing supply and impacting affordability of housing across the County.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

Bruce County is well positioned to undertake the actions outlined in this Plan. The Housing Cross Functional Team represents the work of multiple departments and focuses the County's organizational capacity to deliver on the 25 actions identified in this Plan.

The implementation of the actions of the Plan largely relies on exiting staff resources.

Any actions that may result in financial impacts, such as the creation of incentives through an affordable housing Community Improvement Plan or waiving of fees for affordable housing development, will be brought forward as part of the 2025 or 2026 budget for Council's consideration.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

The Actions identified in the Bruce County Housing Action Plan have been developed by the Housing Cross-Functional team with representation and input provided by staff from multiple departments including Human Services, Planning & Development, Economic Development, Government Relations.

The Office of the CAO have been consulted on the preparation of the Housing Action Plan.

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Community and Partnerships - Build a strong and inclusive community

Community and Partnerships - Enhance and grow partnerships

Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

N/A

Report Author:

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Departmental Approval:

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Approved for Submission:

Christine MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer