



Staff Report to Council - for Information

Title: New Bruce County Official Plan Update

From: Jack Van Dorp, Director of Planning and Development

Date: March 20, 2025

Report Number: PD-2025-003

Report Purpose:

This report is for information.

Report Summary:

Planning staff have reviewed 11 boundary requests submitted or amended since the November 21, 2024 staff [report](#) to County Council. Based on a review of the requests against the criteria set out in the Provincial Planning Statement 2024, staff intend to include 4 of the 11 requests in the final draft of the new Bruce County Official Plan. The final draft will come forward when SON, Municipal and Provincial comments have been incorporated.

Background/Analysis:

In October 2024, Planning staff hosted four public open houses throughout the County. Public engagement on the new Bruce County Official Plan has been ongoing since that time.

Staff attended Council meetings at each local municipality to present the draft new County Official Plan in late 2024 and has been continuing to engage with local municipal staff.

Through public and municipal engagement on the draft new County Official Plan, the County received several boundary adjustment requests that have been evaluated for consideration for inclusion in the final draft of the County Official Plan. Boundary adjustment requests were reviewed against the results of the County's land needs analysis, policies of the proposed official plan, and the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS 2024).

On November 21, 2024 planning staff presented a [review of boundary adjustment requests](#). Of the 33 requests for adjustments, 11 were recommended to be included in the draft new Bruce County Official Plan.

The attached document provides an overview of additional boundary adjustment requests that were received after the report was completed for the November 21, 2024, agenda. These additional requests have been reviewed in relation to the County's land needs analysis. The level of review for conformity with the proposed Official Plan policies and the PPS 2024 is based on the level of information provided by the person or body requesting the change. Four adjustments are recommended to be included in the draft new Bruce County Official Plan.

The following is a brief summary of the four adjustments recommended for inclusion in the draft New Official Plan:

- Boundary Adjustment 34 adjusts the proposed reduction to the settlement area of Sauble Beach. The change would leave areas west of Bruce Road 13 within the settlement area. This change has been made in response to input offered by the Town of South Bruce Peninsula.
- Boundary Adjustment 35 is for a slight increase to the settlement area of Port Elgin to align the settlement area boundary with the edge of the subject property.
- Boundary Adjustment 36 has been requested by the landowner of the subject property. The landowner prefers the designation on his property to be Rural rather than Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational (Formerly Rural Recreational).
- Boundary Adjustment 37 adds lands fronting on Marl Lake to the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area (formerly Inland Lake Development)

In allowing any settlement area boundary expansions, the PPS 2024 states planning authorities shall consider the following:

- a) the need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses;
- b) if there is sufficient capacity in existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- c) whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas;
- d) the evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and, where avoidance is not possible, consider reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;
- e) whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;
- f) whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance; and
- g) the new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.

Staff have reviewed the boundary adjustments against the above requirements and are satisfied the above requests (Boundary Adjustments 34-37) meet these criteria for inclusion in an updated final draft of the new Bruce County Official Plan.

Although not included in the maps package, staff also received a request from several residents in the Inverhuron area related to removal of various lands from the Kincardine business park, Inverhuron Primary Urban area and Kincardine Shoreline Secondary Urban settlement area, and to redesignate Inverhuron to a Hamlet. These were included in the December 19, 2024 [report to County Council](#). Staff reviewed this with Municipal staff and met with representatives of this group and recommend no changes to the settlement area boundaries. We will consider any change to the settlement area designation (e.g. secondary or hamlet) of Inverhuron in the preparation of the final draft.

Next Steps for the Official Plan:

Pending receipt of SON comments and follow up with provincial staff anticipate returning to a future Council meeting with final draft land use schedules and text, specific requests for direction in any unresolved areas and a recommendation that, with that direction staff proceed to schedule a statutory open house and a public meeting.

Council would be able to consider adoption of the final County Official Plan following the statutory open house and public meeting. Following adoption of the new County Official Plan, the Plan is forwarded to the province for approval.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

This work falls within the 2025 budget.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Transportation and Environmental Services and Emergency Management Services staff were consulted regarding impacts of possible boundary expansions on County functions and services delivery.

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

The Bruce County Official Plan is part of the department work plan for 2025.

Report Author:

Monica Morrison, Land Use Planning Manager

Departmental Approval:

Jack Van Dorp, Director of Planning and Development

Approved for Submission:

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Municipal Settlement Area Boundary Adjustments # 2