



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: Economic Development Status Update May 2024

Date: May. 6, 2024

Report Number: BED-2024-05-11

Department: BED

File Number: C11 BED 24

Prepared By: Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer

Attachments: None

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information report BED-2024-05-11 prepared by Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer.

Background:

This report provides an update from the economic development department.

Discussion/Analysis/Overview:

Bruce County Housing Forum

The Housing Forum hosted by Bruce County provided attendees with updates about the current housing and homelessness situation in Bruce County. The key highlights from the meeting include:

- Bruce County is projecting an increase of 515 individuals or households who will require support from housing services in 2024 (2338 individuals or households received support in 2023, the projected increase is 2853 in 2024).
- The average price of homes in Grey-Bruce-Owen Sound has decreased since January 2022 when average prices spiked upwards of \$800,000. The average purchase price in February 2024 in Bruce County was \$590,270; however, the average purchase price in Huron-Kinloss in February 2024 was the highest in Bruce County at \$778,431.
- The definition of affordable housing has been updated by the Province;
 - Affordable home ownership: purchase price does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income and is below the 6th decile for household income (ie. At the 6th decile, gross annual household income would be \$116,000 and the purchase price of an affordable home would be \$399,100).
 - Affordable rent: rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income and is below the 6th decile for household income OR the rent is below the average market rent in Bruce County of \$1324 (ie. At the 6th

decile, gross annual household income would be \$63,200 and affordable rent would be no more than \$1,580).

- The average monthly rent in Bruce County in March 2024 was \$2,058 for all rental types. For \$2,058 rent to be considered affordable, the renters annual gross household income would need to be \$98,300.
- 80% of job postings in 2023 on Connect2Jobs (Stratford to Bruce Peninsula), where wages were available, would not provide enough income for employees to cover affordable rent. Only 0.25% of the job postings would provide enough income for the employee to afford a \$2058 monthly rent.

Challenges:

- jobs openings are hard to fill,
- employers are feeling pressure to provide housing for their employees,
- multiple incomes are required to meet ends meet,
- many households are spending more than 30% of their gross annual household income on housing.

Opportunities to reduce barriers to develop more housing:

- advocacy to different levels of government for funding and legislation changes,
- funding and incentive programs for developer's,
- updating policies and zoning,
- expedite as-of-right developments,
- remove exclusionary zoning,
- work with non-profits and other partners to facilitate affordable housing projects,
- educate all partners on programs that are available, needs in the community, and opportunities to support developments,
- investigate home sharing opportunities.

Bruce County is developing a Housing Concierge Service that will:

- maintain constant communication with developers,
- provide development support for non-profits and deeply affordable projects,
- maintain inventory of funding programs,
- provide assistance with municipal lands review.

The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan is on hold at the Provincial level, it is mandated that these plans be updated and sent to the Province for review every 5 years. Bruce County will continue to provide updates about the status of the plan.

Bruce Power Community Leaders Breakfast

On April 12th, Bruce Power hosted the first Community Leaders Breakfast at the Underwood Community Centre. The meeting aimed to provide updates to all Bruce, Grey and Huron County and municipal representatives at one time, to ensure consistency and transparency.

The main topics of the meeting were future clean energy demands, medical isotopes, and public opinion polling.

Key highlights from Bruce Power:

- Electricity demands in North America are expected to almost double from 2020 to 2050.
- More than 20 countries plan to triple nuclear energy by 2050.
- Medical isotopes are currently shipped to Germany to be processed and then shipped back to Canada to be used for sterilization and cancer treatments, there are no processing facilities in Canada.
- Bruce Power's guiding principles in relation to powering Ontario are:
 - Extend operation of 8 units to provide clean energy and medical isotopes until 2064,
 - Increase net peak output to 7000 MW for the 2030s,
 - Pursue an impact assessment as a planning tool to evaluate the potential for Bruce Power to produce an additional 4800 MW at the Bruce Power site. Commit to openness and transparency throughout this process with the tri-county region and indigenous communities,
 - Undertake a robust technology review process to guide future decision making,
 - Position economic development, partnerships, localization, workforce development and supply chain as key priorities in development, especially for rural communities.

Key highlights from Ipsos, polling;

- The most important issues to Canadians are healthcare, housing, interest rates, inflation, and the economy,
- 66% of Ontarians support using nuclear energy to generate electricity,
- 74% of Ontarians support refurbishing existing nuclear power plants, 62% support building new nuclear power plants,
- Over 70% of Ontarians believe that nuclear energy can support Canada's goals to reduce the impacts of climate change, that nuclear power can generate electricity safely and nuclear energy should play a significant role in Canada's future energy mix.
- In Bruce, Grey and Huron Counties, 87% of respondents have a positive perception of Bruce Power, over 90% believe Bruce Power is safe, secure and a good community citizen, 86% support the refurbishment project and 71% are aware of the plan to explore Bruce site expansion (Bruce "C").

Digital Modernization Updates

Implementation of the Envisio strategic plan tracking software continues. The public dashboard should be available on the corporate website in June.

Currently, the Township uses Granicus (formerly Bang the Table) for the engagement website www.haveyoursayhk.ca, Staff has provided notice to Granicus to terminate our agreement as of July 31st 2024. The Township will be transitioning to Social Pinpoint to host www.haveyoursayhk.ca. The web address and the annual fee remains the same, but the functionality for staff and the public and technical support will be improved by transitioning to Social Pinpoint.

As part of the digital modernization roadmap, staff continues to explore options to streamline software, increase efficiency and improve functionality.

Upcoming Futurpreneur Workshop and Town Wide Open House

Economic Development staff is hosting a free business basics workshop, in partnership with Futurpreneur Canada for interested entrepreneurs aged 18-39 on May 15 from 5:30-6:30pm at the former Hub location, 84 Huron St., in Ripley. Pre-registration before May 10 is required.

Following the workshop will be a town-wide open house, with available properties open to view to entrepreneurs of all ages. Tour starts at 6:45 p.m., and leaves from 84 Huron Street. Guests will have access to 7 available properties that are currently available for lease or purchase. No pre-registration needed.

Financial Impacts:

All funds required were approved in 2024 budget.

Performance Measurement:

Switching engagement software to Social Pinpoint supports embracing a thriving a rural lifestyle and will be measured by the number of people who visit Have Your Say HK and engage on projects; and,

The initiatives in this report also support preparing for inclusive growth by better understanding housing and homelessness and large infrastructure projects that may impact our community; and through our business recruitment efforts to bring more businesses to downtown Ripley.

Strategic Area:

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|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Municipal Service Delivery |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Inclusive Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Financial Stability |

Strategic Goal:

- **Encourage strong communication and community engagement**
- **Encourage economic vitality**
- **Build Community Capacity**

Respectfully Submitted By:

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Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer

Report Approved By:

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer