

2024-2046

Bruce County Official Plan

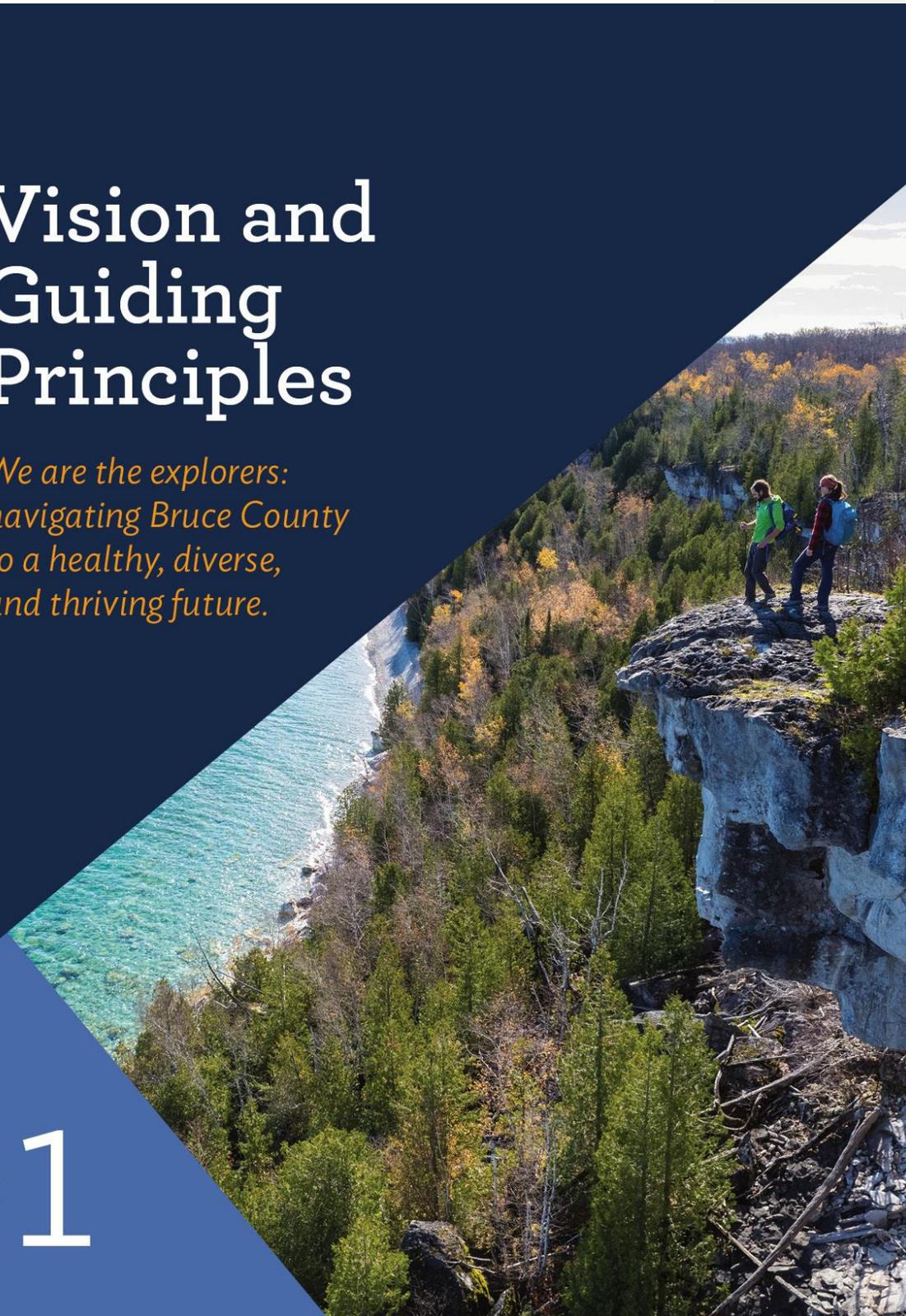


Vision and Guiding Principles

*We are the explorers:
navigating Bruce County
to a healthy, diverse,
and thriving future.*

SECTION

1



Part 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Plan

Bruce County is an upper-tier Municipality in Southern Ontario, founded in 1867 and consisting of eight local Municipalities. Bruce County is entirely within Saugeen Anishnaabeking, the ancestral, traditional and treaty lands and territories of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Saugeen First Nation, together known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

The Bruce County Official Plan (“the Plan”) is a strategic policy document to manage growth and change within the County over the planning horizon. It provides direction on matters related to physical, social, and economic development and for the continued stewardship of the natural environment within the County.

The Plan represents the vision and aspirations of Bruce County while having regard for matters of provincial interest as set forth in the Planning Act. It establishes a comprehensive policy framework to advance the community vision and builds on eight guiding principles described below. The Plan provides direction to local Official Plans and zoning by-laws, and functions as the Official Plan for areas not covered by local Plans. All decisions by a council are required to conform with the plan in effect. The County is committed to working collaboratively with local municipal partners to implement this Plan.

This Plan acknowledges the Indigenous Peoples of Bruce County whose rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 and by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is to be implemented in a manner consistent with these rights.

Through this Plan Bruce County is committed to meaningful inclusion of Saugeen Anishnaabek world views and knowledge systems, and to honouring the unique and enduring spiritual relationships that Saugeen Anishnaabek have with the lands, waters, animals, and all life in Bruce County.

This Plan must be read and interpreted in its entirety, including all schedules and annexes.



1.2 Vision

The Plan is intended to inform long-range planning decisions within the County over the planning horizon. The Vision flows from a comprehensive consultation and engagement program with the community and reflects community aspirations for the future of Bruce County.

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The Vision of this Official Plan is:

“To navigate Bruce County towards a healthy, diverse, and thriving future.”

1.3 Guiding Principles

The Vision is supported by eight Guiding Principles which collectively shape the overall direction of land use planning across the County.

The Guiding Principles of this Official Plan are:

- (1) Good Growth: Put growth in the right locations with the right services.
- (2) Homes: Increase the supply and mix of homes.
- (3) Agriculture: Support our key economies, including a thriving agriculture community.
- (4) Business: Create opportunities for a diversity of businesses, jobs and employers.
- (5) Connecting: Improve our ability to move people, goods, and information between communities.
- (6) Communities: Create wellbeing through access to complete and healthy communities.
- (7) Heritage: Identify and manage cultural heritage resources.
- (8) Natural Legacy: Manage natural resources wisely for future generations.



Part 2 Growth Management

This Section establishes the foundation for responsibly managing growth and change within the County to the year 2046 (the 'planning horizon'). The growth management strategy balances population and economic growth in a sustainable and coordinated manner within the County and local municipalities.

Growth management policies help the County and local municipalities plan for future land needs and invest in the services and infrastructure required to accommodate projected growth. These policies recognize the unique interests of local municipalities and balance these with County interests and Provincial direction.

2.1 County Structure

The County Structure represents the settlement pattern and is comprised of land use designations and overlays established by this Plan. The County Structure recognizes that comprehensive planning includes a coordinated approach to growth management, a settlement area hierarchy, and infrastructure planning to accommodate forecasted growth. The County Structure is used to achieve the vision and guiding principles of this Plan by laying out how projected growth will occur in an efficient, coordinated and sustainable manner. Schedule A illustrates the following elements of the County Structure.

2.1.1 Settlement Areas

Settlement Areas are planned to accommodate most of the County's growth over the planning horizon. Designated settlement Areas include Primary Urban Communities, Secondary Urban Communities and Hamlets. These designations will have the greatest concentration of development and mix of land uses and include:

- (1) Primary Urban Communities: have infrastructure and services and are expected to accommodate the majority of forecasted residential, commercial and employment growth, and to meet minimum density targets.
- (2) Secondary Urban Communities: are planned to accommodate some forecasted residential, commercial and employment growth, with densities of development limited by available or planned infrastructure and services.
- (3) Hamlet Communities: may have limited infrastructure and services and are

anticipated to accommodate a smaller portion of forecasted residential, commercial and employment growth within the County.

2.1.2 Countryside Area

Many of Bruce County's natural assets are finite, non-renewable resources. Agricultural lands are the foundation for food, fibre, the local food economy, agri-food exports, and economic prosperity. The Countryside Area is therefore planned to support the long-term viability and prosperity of agriculture, rural land uses, natural areas and open spaces, and to accommodate some growth over the planning horizon. The Countryside includes the Agricultural Area, Rural Area, and Open Space land use designations, as follows:

- (1) Agricultural Areas protect prime agricultural lands for long-term agricultural uses and to support a thriving agricultural sector.
- (2) Rural Areas support a range of natural resource-based uses, including agriculture, but are not recognized as forming part of prime agricultural lands based on the Provincial land classification system.
- (3) Open Space lands are primarily owned and managed by government or non-government organizations and are used for conservation and recreational purposes.

2.1.3 Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area

The County's proximity to numerous recreational and leisure opportunities creates a unique need to plan for a range of land uses. The Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area includes areas around the Great Lakes shoreline, inland lakes, and campgrounds.

2.1.4 Natural Environment System

The Natural Environment System represents the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System within the County. It is comprised of natural heritage and hydrologic features and associated functions, linkages, areas, and buffers.

The Natural Environment System Overlay exists to maintain and, where possible, enhance the natural function of various ecosystems within the County and plans for the conservation of their biological integrity for future generations to enjoy, while recognizing that compatible land uses may be permitted in accordance with the policies of this Plan.



2.1.5 Niagara Escarpment Plan

The Niagara Escarpment and adjacent areas are recognized as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve and are subject to the provincial Niagara Escarpment Plan and Greenbelt Plan. These plans apply to protect unique geological and ecological features that contribute to the overall quality of life for residents of Bruce County and beyond. This plan supports implementation of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

2.1.6 Hazard Lands

Hazard lands within the County pose an imminent risk to public health and safety due to inherent physical conditions, such as flood and erosion susceptibility or unstable substrates such as karst. This Plan discourages development on hazard lands for the long-term protection of life and property.

Some areas of the County have forest types that are prone to wildland fire. This plan discourages development in wildland fire risk areas where risk mitigation is inconsistent with maintaining natural heritage features and functions.

2.2 Growth Management Strategy

The Growth Management Strategy builds on the County Structure by providing policy direction on how the County will manage growth and change over the planning horizon. It also implements provincial direction regarding where and how communities grow.

The Growth Management Strategy is integral to determining land needs and planning for infrastructure, housing, public services, and responsible municipal fiscal management. It is also an important tool to guide stewardship of the natural environment and prioritize public health and safety.

2.2.1 Growth Management Objectives

The Growth Management Strategy of this Plan will achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Plan for forecasted growth within the County in accordance with Section 2.3 of this Plan.
- (2) Manage growth in an efficient, orderly, and sustainable manner that provides housing and employment opportunities, while protecting agricultural land, supporting continued stewardship of the natural environment, and safeguarding public health and safety.



- (3) Prioritize future growth and intensification in communities where there is existing or planned full municipal servicing.
- (4) Permit limited growth in the County's Hamlet Communities to ensure long-term vitality and well-being, while recognizing their unique character and function within the County.
- (5) Plan for a full range of housing options by type and tenure, including affordable and attainable housing, to meet the current and future needs of the County.
- (6) Plan for a full range of employment types and opportunities throughout the County to achieve the economic development objectives of this Plan and to support a thriving economy.
- (7) Responsibly manage the provision of infrastructure, servicing and human services to correspond with the forecasted growth over the planning horizon of this Plan.

2.2.2 Where and How to Grow

This Plan establishes a range of land use designations to advance the Vision and Guiding Principles. These land use designations form the basis of the County Structure.

- (1) A majority of forecasted residential and employment growth is planned to be accommodated within areas designated by this Plan as Primary Urban Communities, Secondary Urban Communities and Hamlet Communities.
- (2) Intensification of Primary Urban Communities and Secondary Urban Communities is expected over the horizon of this Plan, with at least 15% of growth expected through intensification. Intensification will be subject to existing or planned infrastructure, including available municipal servicing.
- (3) Hamlet Communities are integral to the long-term vitality and viability of rural areas within the County. Growth in Hamlets will be supported through development of existing lots, minor infill and minor rounding out, and limited non-residential development.
- (4) The ability for Hamlets to accommodate new growth will be predicated on their ability to provide appropriate infrastructure, including servicing.
- (5) Full municipal servicing within Hamlets may not be feasible over the planning horizon, and therefore private communal servicing is the preferred alternative servicing to accommodate new growth, including minor infill and rounding out of

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existing development.

- (6) Where private communal servicing is not feasible, minor infilling and the rounding out of development within Hamlets may be approved where individual on-site servicing is proposed, provided that site conditions are suitable, and it can be demonstrated that the provision of individual on-site servicing will have no negative impact.
- (7) To support the long-term vitality and viability of rural and agricultural communities, this Plan recognizes that limited growth may also occur in Rural Areas outside of Primary Urban Communities, Secondary Urban Communities and Hamlet Communities.
- (8) Non-agricultural development will be primarily directed to existing built-up areas within the County to support the growth-related objectives of the built-up areas, protect agricultural land and provide housing and employment opportunities within existing communities.

2.2.3 Land Needs Assessment

The land needs assessment is critical to understanding how much land is required to support community growth and when it will be required. It also guides how new development will be planned and phased, requirements for infrastructure and public service facilities, and municipal financial impacts associated with new development. The policies of this Section identify County-wide land needs over the planning horizon.

- (1) At a County scale, there is an adequate supply of lands within Primary Urban Communities, Secondary Urban Communities, and Hamlet areas to accommodate forecasted growth over the planning horizon.
- (2) If growth proceeds in accordance with the forecasts outlined in this Plan, the Walkerton Primary Urban Area is expected to become constrained with respect to current residential land supply and commercial land supply over the plan horizon.
- (3) If growth proceeds in accordance with the forecasts outlined in this Plan, the Saugeen Shores Primary Urban Areas are expected to become constrained with respect to current employment and commercial land supply over the plan horizon.
- (4) If growth proceeds in accordance with the forecasts outlined in this Plan, the Kincardine Primary Urban Area is expected to become constrained with respect to current employment land supply over the plan horizon.



- (5) If growth proceeds in accordance with the forecasts outlined in this plan, Sauble Beach, Tiverton, Mildmay, Lucknow, Ripley, Chesley, Paisley, Teeswater, and Tara may be constrained by their current designated commercial land supply over the plan horizon.
- (6) Local Municipalities are best positioned to understand land supply constraints in their communities. Local municipalities with expected or potential constraints in one or more land use designations are encouraged to review opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth through redesignation within existing Settlement Area boundaries where feasible and appropriate, including through intensification strategies.

2.2.4 Settlement Area Boundary Expansions or Adjustments

The County prioritizes intensification and redevelopment in existing Settlement Areas to support compact, complete communities. The County may permit the expansion or adjustment of Settlement Areas through an amendment to this Plan, in accordance with the policies of this Section.

- (1) Where it is not feasible or appropriate to accommodate forecasted growth within existing Settlement Area boundaries, and where local forecasts and growth strategies identify that existing Settlement Area boundaries are not sufficient to accommodate forecasted growth, the County in consultation with local municipalities may identify Settlement Area boundary expansions or adjustments.
- (2) It is expected that Brockton will require a boundary expansion to the Walkerton Primary Urban Area within the planning horizon to accommodate forecasted residential growth and support continued development as a complete community.
- (3) Expansions or adjustments to Settlement Area boundaries will only be considered by the County through an amendment to this Plan where it has been demonstrated that:
 - (a) There is sufficient capacity in existing or planned infrastructure for the proposed expansion or adjustment;
 - (b) The lands can be developed efficiently and at a density consistent with the development policies of this plan
 - (c) No undue financial burden will be placed on the County or local municipality;

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- (d) The proposed expansion or adjustment has regard for the Natural Environment System policies of this Plan;
- (e) Impacts on agricultural lands and operations which are adjacent or close to the settlement area are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible, in accordance with the policies of this Plan;
- (f) Early engagement and consultation is undertaken with key stakeholders;
- (g) Early consultation with Saugeen Anishnaabek is undertaken to ensure input, traditional knowledge, and traditional or treaty rights are considered.

2.2.5 Phasing of Development

The purpose of phasing policies is to ensure that development to accommodate the County's growth is delivered in a manner that is fiscally responsible and sustainable.

- (1) Local municipalities will prepare phasing policies through local planning processes in accordance with the following to ensure:
 - (a) Phasing plans anticipate and enable achievement of the intensification targets outlined in Section 2.2.2 and
 - (b) The orderly progression of development within designated Settlement Areas and the timely provision of the infrastructure and public service facilities required to meet current and projected needs.

2.2.6 Municipal Servicing

The provision of municipal servicing to accommodate long-term growth is critical to ensuring that development occurs in a sustainable manner while having due regard for responsible fiscal management. The County will work collaboratively with local municipalities to achieve the policies of this Section.

- (1) Land use planning, asset management and investment in capital improvements will be undertaken in a coordinated manner when implementing the policies of this Plan and through local planning processes.
- (2) Development, redevelopment, infill, and intensification will demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County and the local municipality that the provision of municipal servicing is consistent with provincial direction and the policies of this Plan.
- (3) Local municipalities are encouraged to plan for investment in future capital



improvements required to accommodate growth and development that is forecast over the planning horizon, as established by this Plan.

- (4) Local municipalities are encouraged to undertake local growth management planning processes which plan for service levels based on the growth projections of this Plan, as well as the growth management strategy to ensure investment in capital improvements is financially sustainable.
- (5) Planning for capital improvements will have regard for the asset management policies of this Plan, which emphasize the objectives of maximizing benefits, managing risk, and providing the necessary levels of service to the public in a sustainable manner.
- (6) The County and local municipalities may implement the full range of tools and instruments afforded under the Planning Act, Development Charges Act, Municipal Act, and other statutes, as applicable, to ensure that investment in capital improvements occurs in a financially sustainable manner and provide for the recovery of growth-related costs.

2.3 Growth and Housing Forecasts

This Section forecasts minimum expected growth for population and employment over the planning horizon. It also includes forecasts for households including seasonal dwellings. Residential, employment, and household growth will occur in accordance with the County Structure and land use designations established by this Plan.

2.3.1 Population and Employment Forecasts

This Plan is based on a forecast that projects growth within the County over the planning horizon. The forecast projects both population and employment growth as shown in Table 1 and Table 2. The growth forecast serves as the basis for establishing land requirements to accommodate growth and determining County services.



Table 1: Population Projections for Bruce County by Municipality to 2046

Area / Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046
Arran-Elderslie	7,200	7,500	7,700	7,900	8,100	8,200
Brockton	10,000	10,700	11,500	12,200	12,800	13,200
Huron Kinloss	8,000	8,700	9,200	9,800	10,300	10,600
Kincardine	12,300	13,100	13,700	14,400	14,900	15,400
Northern Bruce Peninsula	4,600	5,000	5,300	5,600	5,900	6,100
Saugeen Shores	16,400	17,600	19,200	20,300	21,200	22,200
South Bruce	6,000	6,300	6,600	6,900	7,200	7,400
South Bruce Peninsula	9,000	9,400	9,700	10,000	10,300	10,500
Bruce County	73,500	78,400	82,900	87,000	90,700	93,600

Table 2: Employment Projections for Bruce County by Municipality to 2046

Area / Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046
Arran-Elderslie	2,240	2,340	2,410	2,490	2,570	2,590
Brockton	4,670	5,030	5,350	5,650	5,910	6,090



Area / Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046
Huron Kinloss	2,280	2,480	2,620	2,770	2,890	3,000
Kincardine	13,860	14,950	15,400	15,520	15,600	15,700
Northern Bruce Peninsula	1,570	1,690	1,780	1,880	1,980	2,040
Saugeen Shores	5,270	5,680	6,210	6,570	6,940	7,270
South Bruce	1,900	2,080	2,170	2,280	2,380	2,450
South Bruce Peninsula	3,140	3,370	3,490	3,610	3,750	3,840
Bruce County	34,900	37,600	39,400	40,800	42,000	43,000

2.3.2 Number, Range, and Mix of Housing Units

This Plan establishes forecasts for the County's permanent and seasonal housing base. The forecast projections for both permanent household and seasonal dwellings growth are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

- (1) By 2046, the County's permanent housing base is forecast to increase to 40,100 households, which represents an increase of 9,600 households over the planning horizon. Detailed household projection ranges for the County and each local municipality are provided in Table 3.



Table 3: Household Projections for Bruce County by Municipality to 2046

Area / Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046
Arran-Elderslie	2,810	2,910	2,980	3,090	3,160	3,220
Brockton	3,950	4,270	4,640	4,970	5,280	5,520
Huron Kinloss	3,030	3,280	3,460	3,680	3,870	4,010
Kincardine	5,110	5,450	5,730	6,060	6,360	6,590
Northern Bruce Peninsula	2,100	2,260	2,350	2,480	2,580	2,650
Saugeen Shores	6,940	7,660	8,500	9,090	9,650	10,180
South Bruce	2,250	2,370	2,480	2,610	2,720	2,790
South Bruce Peninsula	3,890	4,040	4,150	4,300	4,430	4,520
Bruce County	30,500	32,800	34,800	36,900	38,700	40,100

(2) By 2046, an additional 1,590 dwellings are forecast to be occupied seasonally within the County. Seasonal dwellings are most significant as a share of development activity along the shoreline, with approximately 1,570 units anticipated within the Municipalities of Huron-Kinloss, Kincardine, Northern Bruce Peninsula, Saugeen Shores, and South Bruce Peninsula. 5-year projections are provided in Table 4.



Table 4: Additional Seasonal Dwellings Projections for Bruce County by Municipality to 2046

Area / Year	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046
Huron Kinloss	10	30	40	60	70
Kincardine	10	15	15	20	20
Northern Bruce Peninsula	300	480	720	920	1,060
Saugeen Shores	30	70	100	120	140
South Bruce Peninsula	70	120	190	240	280
Arran-Elderslie, Brockton, & South Bruce	10	10	15	20	20
Bruce County	430	725	1,080	1,380	1,590



Part 3 County-Wide Policies

The following policies apply County-wide and build on the Vision, Guiding Principles and Growth Management framework of this Plan.

3.1 Complete Communities in a Thriving Region

These objectives guide the growth of complete communities in a thriving Bruce County.

- (1) Achieve the development of complete, healthy, prosperous, safe and connected communities within Bruce County.
- (2) Encourage development patterns that make efficient use of land and resources.
- (3) Promote responsible land stewardship, including the long-term protection, conservation, and enhancement of the natural heritage system, water resource system and agriculture system by directing most development to settlement areas.
- (4) Support climate change mitigation, resilience and adaptation by creating complete communities that offer easy access to services, recreation, work opportunities and housing without requiring long distance travel.
- (5) Offer a mix of housing options within communities throughout the County to accommodate a diverse range of ages, abilities, needs, and incomes.
- (6) Identify, conserve and promote the unique cultural assets, look and feel of communities within Bruce County for the benefit of residents, visitors, and future generations.
- (7) Co-ordinate and support the efficient delivery of social, cultural, healthcare, and other necessary services and community facilities to maximize benefits for communities within Bruce County.
- (8) Apply universal accessibility in community design to enhance safety, mobility, agency, and independence at all stages of life. Create safe, accessible, vibrant, and attractive spaces that are welcoming to those of all ages and abilities.
- (9) Improve social equity and overall quality of life for people of all ages, abilities and incomes, including equity-deserving groups.



- (10) Restrict development where this is an imminent risk to public safety, public health, or property.

3.2 Housing

Ensuring the provision of housing options that meet the needs of current and future residents is a key objective of this Plan. This Plan also provides opportunities in response to evolving housing needs and market conditions that may create barriers to achieving the County's housing objectives.

3.2.1 General Policies

- (1) A range of affordable housing types will be provided throughout the County, having regard for the policies established in Part 2 and Part 5 of this Plan.
- (2) This Plan will be implemented in a manner that supports the Bruce County Housing and Homelessness Plan and Housing Action Plan, as amended.
- (3) Community, supportive, and affordable housing will be directed towards Primary Urban Communities and Secondary Urban Communities to provide residents with access to complete communities, as contemplated by this Plan.
- (4) Local municipalities in the vicinity of Bruce Power are encouraged to work in partnership with Bruce Power, the County and other housing providers to address the short-term housing needs of temporary Bruce Power and supplier employees.
- (5) The County may adopt guidelines for new development to address matters relating to the physical character of infill or redevelopment projects, including for additional residential units.

3.2.2 Housing Strategy

Housing is the foundation for a strong, resilient community, sustainable economy and a place where people can grow and thrive. The County is committed to developing a people-focused, collaborative, and solution-based approach to address the diverse and evolving housing needs of the community.

Residential growth forecasts established in this Plan will be accommodated through a broad range and mix of housing types and tenures to meet people's needs. This Plan emphasizes compatibility of built form and provision of diverse housing options



designed for various ages, abilities, and incomes to meet the needs of a growing community.

- (1) To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet the projected needs of current and future residents, the County and local municipalities will maintain at all times:
 - (a) The ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and lands that are designated for residential development; and
 - (b) Where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment including units in draft approved and registered plans.
 - (c) Where there may be a deficiency in land supply to accommodate forecasted growth, land use redesignations, Settlement Area boundary adjustments and Settlement Area boundary expansions may be considered, as outlined in Section 2.2.4.
- (2) The County and local municipalities support opportunities to increase the supply of housing through infilling, intensification, and redevelopment in appropriate locations, where impacts to existing uses can be minimized and where existing municipal services and facilities can be efficiently used.
- (3) The County will ensure that the development and redevelopment of housing occurs in appropriate locations in an orderly, efficient, and sustainable manner, in keeping with the capacities of infrastructure and public services, and the financial capability of the County and the local municipalities.
- (4) Local official plans will support implementation of the County's housing strategy through any number of tools afforded to municipalities under the Planning Act and other relevant statutes, which may include but are not limited to:
 - (a) Establishing local housing targets to support achieving County-wide population and employment forecasts;
 - (b) Planning for capital improvements, including servicing to facilitate housing development and redevelopment;

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- (c) Incentivizing the development of affordable housing;
 - (d) Utilizing surplus public lands develop affordable housing;
 - (e) Maintaining, protecting and developing new purpose built rental housing; and
 - (f) Consideration of enabling policies to implement a Community Planning Permit System or other tools available to assist with the implementation of sustainable development and intensification.
- (5) The County will partner with local municipalities, the provincial and federal governments, the development industry, community partners and stakeholders to implement the housing policies of this Plan.
- (6) The County, in partnership with municipalities, will monitor, review, and update the Bruce County Housing & Homelessness Plan in accordance with provincial direction.

3.2.3 Residential Infilling and Intensification

This Plan supports intensification within Primary Urban Communities and Secondary Urban Communities to accommodate forecasted population and employment growth over the plan horizon.

- (1) For the purposes of this Plan, residential infilling and intensification includes:
- (a) Infill development;
 - (b) Development on vacant, underutilized lots and brownfields sites;
 - (c) Reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings; and
 - (d) Additional Residential Units in existing homes and/or accessory to a principal dwelling unit.
- (2) The County, in cooperation with local municipalities, will support opportunities to increase the supply of housing through intensification and redevelopment, based on the following criteria:
- (a) Availability of existing or planned municipal infrastructure, including servicing;
 - (b) Proximity to employment opportunities and public service facilities;



- (c) Connections to multi-modal transportation options;
 - (d) Compatibility with adjacent lands; and
 - (e) Protection of the Natural Environment System and Agricultural System.
- (3) Where development is permitted on partial or private services in Settlement Areas, intensification opportunities will be based on lot size, servicing availability, compatibility, and zoning.
- (4) Local municipal plans will include intensification policies that conform to this Plan. Through intensification strategies, local municipalities will:
- (a) Identify intensification areas to support the achievement of the intensification target;
 - (b) Promote and facilitate intensification and efficient use of land;
 - (c) Promote the development of mixed-use spaces within Settlement Areas;
 - (d) Identify areas appropriate for revitalization and redevelopment;
 - (e) Identify the type and scale of development appropriate for intensification areas;
 - (f) Develop cost-effective and land effective development standards;
 - (g) Undertake appropriate study to ensure that forecasted growth is appropriate for and makes efficient use of infrastructure, including planned or available servicing; and
 - (h) Identify a program for monitoring growth by intensification and evaluate the ongoing feasibility of achieving the targets.
- (5) Infill and intensification strategies will be implemented through local planning processes, including official plan review and zoning by-law reviews, pursuant to provincial direction.
- (6) Where full municipal services are not available, intensification is encouraged subject to servicing capacity.

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3.2.4 Housing Options

The County encourages a broad range of housing options, including different types and tenures and housing for people with additional needs, to ensure the provision of safe, affordable, and suitable housing for residents, workers, and tourists at all income levels, ages, abilities, and stages of their lives. Increasing affordable housing stock is a key strategy in the County's Housing and Homelessness Plan. The policies of this Section should be read in conjunction with the most current Housing and Homelessness Plan and Housing Action Plan.

3.2.5 Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is generally defined as the cost of housing relative to household income. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation defines affordable housing as when households spend no more than 30% of pre-tax income on housing costs. This Plan recognizes that the definition of affordable housing may evolve over time in response to changing market conditions, which may put housing out of financial reach for some members of the community.

This Plan therefore establishes the following objectives for the adequate provision of affordable housing over the planning horizon:

- (1) A target that at least 30% of new residential development within the County be affordable at the 6th income decile. Progress toward this target will be monitored.
- (2) A diverse mix of affordable housing options for all residents, including young families, new professionals, and seniors, in Primary and Secondary Urban Communities.
- (3) The use of strategies to achieve the affordable housing target including:
 - (a) Higher density housing forms where there are appropriate levels of servicing either planned or existing through intensification, redevelopment and new development;
 - (b) Development of affordable housing in proximity to employment, everyday amenities, and community facilities and services;
 - (c) Smaller dwelling unit sizes and alternative residential development standards to facilitate affordable and accessible housing and a more compact development form;



- (d) Inclusion of additional needs or supportive housing that is also affordable;
 - (e) Housing options that address the needs of an aging population and persons with disabilities; and
 - (f) Encouragement of energy-efficient housing that reduces operating costs;
 - (g) Educational materials to increase awareness of affordable housing needs within the County.
- (4) The County and local municipalities may provide a range of planning and regulatory incentives where authorized by provincial direction that encourage affordable housing, including but not limited to:
- (a) Implementation of a Municipal Housing Facilities By-law to enable the County and local municipalities to provide incentives to the public and private sectors to create new affordable rental units;
 - (b) Fast-tracking development applications that contain an affordable housing component;
 - (c) Application of height and/or density bonusing;
 - (d) Collaborating with community partners to foster the provision of affordable housing;
 - (e) Providing targeted financial relief from development, planning, permit, and other fees charged for affordable housing projects;
 - (f) Supporting the reduction of housing costs by streamlining the development approvals process;
 - (g) Implementing a “housing first” policy as a priority use for surplus public lands and collaborating with other levels of government and agencies to make surplus land available to providers of affordable or accessible housing development at little or no cost;
 - (h) Encouraging energy efficient housing to reduce operating costs
 - (i) Reduction to minimum parking requirements for projects that provide affordable or accessible housing; and



- (j) Negotiating agreements with the public and private sectors to address the provision of affordable housing through the development process.
- (5) To support the maintenance of existing rental housing, the County may decline to approve conversion of existing rental apartments in buildings with more than four rental apartment units to condominium or other uses when rental vacancy rates in the community are below 5%.
- (6) To support the maintenance of existing rental housing, local municipalities may:
 - (a) Use planning and licensing tools to appropriately regulate short term rental occupancy of residential units; and
 - (b) Establish rental replacement by-laws that address matters such as temporary rehousing, offers to return tenants, and maintenance of rental rates, when properties with existing rental units are redeveloped.
- (7) This Plan provides opportunities for monitoring and adjusting County policy related to housing if there are changes in the market, or similar, that create barriers to achieving our housing objectives. To this end, the policies of this Section must be read in conjunction with the Bruce County Housing and Homelessness Plan, as well as all other applicable policies, studies and implementation tools related to affordable and attainable housing.

3.2.6 Additional Residential Units

- (1) The term “Additional Residential Unit” (ARU) is defined by provincial direction.
- (2) Additional residential units in fully serviced settlement areas are to be permitted in accordance with provincial direction.
- (3) Local municipalities may permit more ARUs than required by provincial direction.
- (4) Where the province has not provided direction regarding additional residential units, they may be permitted in any designation where residential uses are permitted as a primary use or in the Agricultural designation, subject to the requirements of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, local Official Plan, where one exists, and the Comprehensive Zoning By-law, where the zoning by-law permits a detached, semi-detached, or rowhouse dwelling.
- (5) In the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area designation only one Additional Residential Unit may be permitted, and only within a building containing a primary



residential dwelling.

- (6) In the Agricultural Area designation, up to two additional residential units are permitted with at least one unit required to be located in or attached to the principal dwelling which may be in the form of a dwelling with apartment, semi-detached or duplex dwelling. Detached additional residential units must be located within the existing building cluster. Additional residential units may not be contemplated for severance from the farm except in accordance with provincial direction.
- (7) Subject to provincial direction, a Zoning By-law may provide Additional Residential Unit regulations which:
 - (a) Address compatibility with the main dwelling and surrounding land uses;
 - (b) Regulate or prohibit business or commercial enterprises within the primary and/or additional residential unit(s); and
 - (c) Set out restrictions involving the unit size, alteration to the outside of the principal dwelling, parking requirements, and water and sewer/septic servicing requirements; and
 - (d) Establish maximum separation distance between primary uses and detached additional residential units.
- (8) Additional residential units on private services will be required to conform to the development criteria in Section 5.7.3 of this plan
- (9) Outside Settlement Areas, in most cases, the driveway will be shared with the existing residence. In extenuating circumstances, a new driveway may be permitted for the Additional Residential Unit.
- (10) Outside of a fully serviced Settlement Area, the combined total of a primary residential unit, additional residential unit(s) and a Garden Suite will not exceed three units on a lot, or two units on a lot in the [Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area](#) designations.

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3.2.7 Garden Suites

- (1) The term “Garden Suite” is defined by provincial direction.
- (2) Garden Suites must be permitted within the Residential designation of local official plans and may be permitted in any designations where residential uses are



permitted as a primary use or in the Agricultural designation, subject to the requirements of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, local official plan where one exists and the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw, where the zoning by-law permits a detached, semi-detached, or rowhouse dwelling.

- (3) Garden suites would be counted as an additional residential unit for the purposes of establishing the number of additional residential units on a lot.
- (4) Garden suites may be converted to permanent additional residential units where they conform to the additional residential unit policies of the County Official Plan, local official plan (where applicable) and zoning by-law.
- (5) As a condition to passing a by-law authorizing the temporary use of a Garden Suite, the municipality under the powers of the Planning Act, may enter into an agreement with the owner or occupant of the Garden Suite to cover issues such as:
 - (a) Conditions for the removal of the Garden Suite from the property;
 - (b) The Garden Suite will not be used as a rental dwelling unit for profit or gain;
 - (c) The Garden Suite meets all health, safety, servicing, fire and building code standards;
 - (d) The need for bonding of security to ensure that certain conditions of the agreement are met; and
 - (e) Other issues deemed important by the Municipality.
- (6) Garden Suites may be subject to Site Plan Control, where permitted by provincial direction.

3.3 Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Incorporating principles of sustainability in new development is important to create a healthier, more vibrant, and sustainable place to live while also contributing to addressing the global issues of climate change.

3.3.1 General Policies

- (1) The County will work with local municipalities, First Nations, Conservation Authorities, agencies, and stakeholders to integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies into planning and development tools.



- (2) To prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, the County will support land use and development patterns which:
 - (a) Support complete communities;
 - (b) Protect the County's Agricultural Areas and promote sustainable agricultural practices;
 - (c) Protect, maintain, restore, and enhance the quality and ecological integrity of the Natural Environment System; and
 - (d) Mitigate and prevent potential impacts of climate change that may increase risks associated with human made and natural hazards.
- (3) In implementing this Plan, the County and local municipalities may develop and implement an action plan or strategy to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- (4) The County and local municipalities may develop resources to direct, guide, and/or encourage development that incorporates elements of sustainable design, including but not limited to green infrastructure, energy and water conservation, and waste diversion.
- (5) The County will support efforts to advance development of clean energy technologies and reductions to greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing supply chains, subject to the policies of this Plan.
- (6) The County may identify strategies and actions that will reduce vulnerability and improve the resilience to a changing climate. Community sector and infrastructure risk and vulnerability assessments are important tools to implement this Plan.
- (7) The County may consider the use of implementation and incentive tools identified in Part 5 of this Plan to encourage sustainable development and intensification.
- (8) The County will promote local agri-food networks, including but limited to community gardens, local markets, urban agriculture, and other local food initiatives to support a strong, affordable food system.



3.4 Economic Development

This Plan supports continued growth and sustainability of the Bruce County economy. It is recognized that this can be achieved through a strong workforce, encouraging a culture of economic innovation and opportunity, fostering diversity in the economic base, and creating a competitive business environment for investment.

3.4.1 General Policies

- (1) The County may collaborate with key stakeholders to maintain and implement an Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- (2) Where it exists, an economic development strategic plan will be designed to align with this Plan and the economic development goals and objectives of the land use designations, as may be applicable.
- (3) Agriculture is an important economic contributor to the County's economic prosperity. The County will support the long-term economic development of the agriculture sector.
- (4) Tourism is one of the most important and largest economic bases in Bruce County. The County will collaborate with local municipalities, First Nations, and relevant agencies, stakeholders and organizations to support the long-term growth and sustainability of communities and the tourism industry.
- (5) The energy sector is a major economic driver in Bruce County and the surrounding region. Reinvestment, new investment, and secondary industries have the potential to significantly shape growth within the County.
- (6) Opportunities to support the diversification of the economic base in the County, these should be pursued. This diversification helps to form complete communities by capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

3.5 Cultural Heritage

Bruce County has a rich history and inventory of cultural heritage resources, including built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, and archaeological resources. The County will continue to honour and celebrate the diverse heritage and cultural expressions that shape the character of our communities and the County as a whole.



Bruce County recognizes and respects the unique heritage, culture, and artistic expressions of the Saugeen Anishnaabek and the indigenous peoples and communities that have traditional and historic ties to this land.

3.5.1 General Policies

- (1) The Bruce County Cultural Action Plan and Archaeological Management Plan play an important role in the preservation and enhancement of the County's diverse heritage. The County will regularly review and update the Cultural Action Plan and the Archaeological Management Plan to align with Provincial direction, County plans, and policy.
- (2) Local municipalities are encouraged to prepare plans, strategies, or policies in local plans specific to cultural heritage planning.
- (3) The County and/or Local Municipalities may use, but will not be limited to, tools identified in Part 5 of this Plan to identify, protect, and enhance cultural heritage resources, and may develop and adopt guidelines for the thoughtful integration of new development into communities.
- (4) To manage and protect cultural heritage resources, each local municipality may maintain a register of properties within its boundaries that are of cultural heritage value or interest in accordance with provincial direction.
- (5) The County may develop a policy and implementation program addressing opportunities for the County and local municipalities to incorporate artwork in County-owned buildings, properties, or other infrastructure to reflect the diverse heritage, culture, and artistic expressions of Bruce County.

3.6 Connecting Our Communities

Connectivity and Mobility are facilitated in Bruce County through a network of roads, trails, waterways, and communications infrastructure that provide connections within and between communities both near and afar.

3.6.1 Connected Communities

- (1) The Master Transportation Plan (MTP) forms the basis of the County's transportation decisions and the County's role in public transportation services. The County will work with stakeholders to implement and regularly update the MTP.



- (2) The County will coordinate transportation and land use planning to develop context sensitive solutions to accommodate travel demand for all modes of transportation, in consultation with the appropriate stakeholders.
- (3) The County and/or local municipalities may prepare complete streets policies and/or design guidelines supplementary to policies of this Plan and the recommendations of the Master Transportation Plan.
- (4) In collaboration with the Province, local municipalities, and neighbouring jurisdictions, the County will work to:
 - (a) Improve inter-municipal and inter-regional transit connections;
 - (b) Promote safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation connections including active transportation and transit; and
 - (c) Support transit service integration within and across municipal boundaries.
- (5) The County will work with local municipalities, developers, providers, and stakeholders to provide and enhance internet connectivity across the County, where appropriate.

3.6.2 Road and Active Transportation Network

- (1) The County supports the planning, design and operation of a fully integrated road network. The road network is depicted on Schedule B and is comprised of:
 - (a) County Arterial Roads;
 - (b) County Collector Roads;
 - (c) Local Roads (all types);
 - (d) Provincial Highways; and
 - (e) Active Transportation systems including Rail Trails.
- (2) Roads within the planning area will be classified according to the policies in this Plan and Schedule B.
- (3) Schedule B may be amended without an amendment to this plan where an Environmental Assessment or similar process has been undertaken, or a similar process, to reclassify roads or establish new road alignments.



(4) Where additional land is required for widenings, realignments, extensions and intersection improvements, such land will be obtained, wherever possible, through the approval of [planning act applications for land use or land division](#) or agreements thereto.

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(5) Where the construction of new or improvements/alterations to existing transportation components are undertaken, any surplus lands which do not meet the minimum lot requirements of the local zoning by-laws will be amalgamated where possible with adjoining lands.

(6) The County may identify or participate in a broader network of scenic roads, either through the county road system or jointly with local municipalities.

3.6.2.1 County Arterial Roads

(1) The County will support maintenance and upgrades to the Arterial Highway system to ensure improved regional access to major markets and urban centres, within and outside of the County.

(2) In consultation with the local municipalities and the Province, the County will encourage the construction of by-passes around Primary and Secondary Urban Communities, where traffic volumes and congestion warrant.

3.6.2.2 County Collector Roads

The County [will](#) ensure a continued program of improvements to [Collector Roads](#).

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3.6.2.3 Local Roads

(1) Local municipalities will provide local roads, which are consistent with, and accessible by, the road network of the adjacent municipality, the County and the Province. [Where a local municipality identifies a local road as an arterial or collector road development may be subject to the policies of this plan.](#)

(2) Private roads are local roads which are not maintained by a municipality, located either on a municipal or private right-of-way providing access to a cluster of residential properties. No new private roads will be permitted, with the exception of roads approved through a plan of condominium. Development policies in Section 5.7.8 will address development on existing private roads.

3.6.2.4 County Road General Policies

(1) The County's Master Transportation Plan and Asset Management Plan will be used



to inform ongoing decision making with regard to the County's road network.

(2) The County will provide development policies and by-laws to address development adjacent to County roads.

(3) A County road will have a minimum right-of-way width of 30 metres for those road sections shown as Rural on Schedule B unless otherwise established through an Environmental Assessment or similar process. All other County Roads will have a minimum right-of-way width of 20 metres for those road sections shown as Urban on Schedule B unless otherwise established through an Environmental Assessment or similar process.

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(4) Road widenings will be obtained in accordance with Section 3.6.2.4 above. Where there has been no application through the development approval process, the County will acquire or expropriate the necessary lands for such widenings.

(5) Notwithstanding any road widening provisions in this Official Plan no road widening will be taken along the West Road until the completion of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment or similar process undertaken by the County of Bruce pursuant to Part II.1 of the Environmental Assessment Act or similar provincial direction and that any subsequent road widening will be in accordance with the findings of this Environmental Assessment or similar process.

(6) Any proposed road improvements to the West Road as designated on Schedule B will be subject to the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment or similar process undertaken by the County of Bruce pursuant to Part II.1 of the Environmental Assessment Act or similar provincial direction including consultation with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, and any proposed development applications that might prejudice the completion of this Municipal Class Environmental Assessment or similar process will be considered premature by the County.

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3.6.2.5 Provincial Highways

(1) There are three provincial highways serving Bruce County (Highway 6, Highway 9 and Highway 21). These highways are under the jurisdiction of the Province of Ontario and are regulated by the applicable Ministry.

(2) The County and local municipalities will work with the Province to plan for the continued use of provincial highways and land development and associated access connections to all provincial highways and intersections within the County.



- (3) The County will work with the Province to improve access to the provincial highway network where necessary to accommodate growth.

3.6.2.6 Active Transportation Corridors including Rail Trails

- (1) Active Transportation corridors including Rail Trails provide opportunities for recreation and travel between and within communities.
- (2) Authorities having jurisdiction for these facilities are encouraged to prepare and implement plans for their maintenance, enhancement, and connection to other transportation infrastructure, where appropriate.

3.6.3 Airports

- (1) Airports serve an important emergency management function in the County. To preserve this function, the County supports the enhancement of airport facilities, including access to and capacity of both municipally and privately owned licensed airports or airstrips.
- (2) Airports will be protected from incompatible land uses and development in accordance with Transport Canada regulations and provincial direction.
- (3) Airports and sensitive land uses will be appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other, in accordance with applicable legislation and regulations.
- (4) The County will encourage and support the development of compatible land uses in the vicinity of airports to maintain and support their economic function.

3.6.4 Harbours

- (1) The County will plan for land uses in the vicinity of recreational and commercial harbour facilities to protect their long-term operation and economic role.
- (2) Recreational and commercial harbour facilities and sensitive land uses will be appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other, in accordance with the policies of this Plan and the Province.
- (3) The County will encourage a continued program of improved recreational and commercial harbour facilities along the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay shorelines.

- (4) The Saugeen Anishnaabek have significant interests in offshore fisheries and shoreline development. The County will consult with the Saugeen Anishnaabek on

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the development of any major new or significantly expanding recreational or commercial harbour facilities.

3.6.5 Major Utilities

(1) Major utilities including water lines, natural gas, electricity transmission and distribution, hydrogen, and inter-regional and/or inter-Provincial communication lines located above or below ground will be constructed, maintained and operated as follows:

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(a) Utilities are to be located in an orderly and economic manner for those areas they are intended to serve, being readily available to all development at levels necessary to ensure the safety and convenience of residents and businesses;

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(b) Utilities are to be located in such a manner that their impact on people, the adjacent land uses, and the natural environment is minimized;

(c) Public and/or private transmission and distribution and linear infrastructure providing service to the public are generally permitted in all land use designations as required to service and promote new development in appropriate locations; and

(d) Where public and/or private utility infrastructure is permitted and deemed necessary by the County, it will be provided in advance of or concurrent with any new development.

(2) The County will seek the cooperation of corporations and commissions, responsible for the regulation, transmission and delivery of electricity, gas, oil and communication services within the County in planning the future development and staging of their systems in order to implement the policies in this Plan and local official plans.

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(3) The County will support the provision of electronic communications technology and especially high-capacity fibre optics to enhance telecommunications services throughout the County, where appropriate.

(4) Where feasible, the County encourages the multiple use of utility corridors including the rights-of-way of roads and railroads including their use for passive recreation, recreational trails, and corridors.

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(5) Utility services will be developed to be compatible with the general character of the



surrounding uses and minimize visual impact, where feasible. Local official plans may establish more prescriptive policies regarding the design of utility services.

3.7 Powering our Communities

(1) Bruce County is a leader in meeting Ontario's growing energy needs, as largely provided for by activities located within the Bruce Power Nuclear Development Area. The County is committed to working collaboratively and in partnership with the Federal government, the Province, and Ontario Power Generation to support the continued operation of Bruce Nuclear Generating Station in recognition of the benefits it affords residents and businesses within the County and beyond.

(2) The Federal government has exclusive regulatory jurisdiction over nuclear facilities. No municipal regulation of land uses or development within the Bruce Power Nuclear Development Area will occur while a nuclear facility is operated within lands identified as the Bruce Nuclear Generating Station, except as pursuant to a license granted by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

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(3) Council will exempt from the provisions of this Plan in compliance with the *Planning Act*, electric power facilities which are owned by or are located on easements of Hydro One and/or Ontario Power Generation and which have been approved under the Environmental Assessment Act or similar provincial direction. As well, existing electric power facilities are not subject to the provisions of this Plan.

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(4) Land and buildings owned by Hydro One and/or Ontario Power Generation and used for executive or administrative purposes, or held under license from Hydro One and/or Ontario Power Generation and any other undertakings of Hydro One and/or Ontario Power Generation, which have not been approved under the Environmental Assessment Act or similar provincial direction, will be subject to the policies of this Plan and local official plans, where they exist.

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(5) Renewable and other energy sources can play a role in increasing the capacity and resilience of energy systems. The County will work jointly with local municipalities and the Province to investigate the need, feasibility, implications and suitable locations for renewable or non-traditional energy sources, such as solar, wind, battery energy storage, and bio-energy projects, to promote local low-carbon, renewable and alternative electricity generation or energy storage facilities, where appropriate. Where these projects have been approved under an Environmental Assessment or similar process, or where the proponent is Hydro One and/or

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Ontario Power Generation, an amendment to this Plan will not be required.

- (6) Electricity generation and energy storage facilities that are subject to the policies of this plan are expected to conform to the implementation policies of this plan, including Section 5.10.

3.8 Servicing Our Communities

Safe, reliable, and cost-effective servicing is necessary to enable the County to grow in an orderly, coordinated, and sustainable manner.

3.8.1 Water and Wastewater Management

- (1) Water and wastewater services will be provided and maintained in accordance with the County's servicing hierarchy:
 - (a) Full municipal servicing is the preferred form of servicing for existing and new development.
 - (b) Communal servicing is the preferred means of servicing multiple unit/lot developments in areas where full municipal sewage and water services do not exist and where full municipal services are not feasible and where site conditions are suitable over the long term. The County, in partnership with local municipalities, may explore the feasibility of communal service systems, where appropriate.
 - (c) Where full municipal servicing or communal servicing is not available, planned, or feasible, individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used, provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts. The County may act as a resource to support local municipalities who are interested to undertake area-specific hydrogeological investigations of long-term suitability and development potential in privately serviced areas.
 - (d) Partial services may be used for infilling and rounding out of existing development on partial services, or for new development in hamlets where municipal or communal wastewater treatment is provided. Partial services may also be used to address failed private services or due to physical constraints.
- (2) This plan recognizes the regulatory gaps between the Planning Act and Regulations, Provincial Planning Statement, Ministry Guidelines for Groundwater



Quality Impact Assessments, and the ultimate approval of development in accordance with the Building Code Act. The County and local Municipalities will continue to advocate to the province to address the regulatory gaps. When the province addresses these regulatory gaps the policies of this plan that are substantively resolved may be considered to be superseded by provincial direction.

3.8.2 Multi-year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan

- (1) A Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan **must** be prepared in support of any new local official plan and/or as part of any review or update to an existing local official plan as required by provincial direction.
- (2) A Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan **must** be prepared with reference to provincial **direction**. The local official plan must take direction from the conclusions and recommendations of the Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement and any other background studies carried out in support of the Servicing Plan.
- (3) Where a Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan has been prepared all development approvals must be consistent with that Plan.
- (4) Water and wastewater infrastructure will be developed and provided in accordance with the Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan, where provided.
- (5) Implementation policies will address provision of infrastructure and criteria for evaluation of the hierarchy of infrastructure in planning applications.

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3.8.3 Stormwater Management

- (1) Stormwater management techniques are constantly evolving as well as being dependent on the location.
- (2) Municipalities are encouraged to plan comprehensively for stormwater management.
- (3) Development policies in Section 5 will provide for the evaluation of stormwater management through new development.

3.8.4 Waste Management

- (1) Through the County's Waste Management Plan and in collaboration with local municipalities the County review landfill site capacity, identify when more capacity



is needed, work to protect and conserve landfill site capacity and continue develop diversion practices.

- (2) The County will cooperate with the Governments of Ontario and Canada and local municipalities in the development of programs, which aim at reducing the quantities of solid waste generated at source.
- (3) County Council will continue to support and promote reduction, re-use, and recycling of waste in Municipal, industrial, commercial and institutional operations and the location of associated facilities throughout the County.
- (4) Existing active and closed landfill facilities are depicted on Schedule C. Local official plans and zoning by-laws will identify existing landfill facilities in their planning documents and protect these facilities from incompatible land uses.
- (5) The County may explore alternative waste disposal technologies (e.g., mixed waste processing and energy from waste incineration to divert waste from landfill.

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3.9 Natural Environment System

Bruce County is home to unique landforms, pristine shorelines, lakes and rivers, intact natural areas, rare habitats, and species uncommon within southern Ontario. The County is part of the Niagara Escarpment, a significant geological and ecological landform that is recognized as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. The County is part of an important migratory bird pathway along the Lake Huron Shore, and is home to the Greenock swamp, the largest forested wetland in Southern Ontario.

This natural legacy contributes to the quality of life, economy, and health of the community in Bruce County and beyond.

To ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of the natural environment, this Plan builds on a history of policy-based protection for the natural environment and identifies a County-wide Natural Environment System. This systems-based approach considers the connections that occur in nature to support social, cultural, and economic opportunity while contributing to climate change mitigation and resilience.

The County-wide Natural Environment System is comprised of two sub-systems:

- (1) The Natural Heritage System: a network of natural features and areas such as woodlands and wetlands that are connected across the landscape by linkages which enable movement of plants and animals between features and areas; and



- (2) The Water Resource System: a combination of water-based features such as wetlands or watercourses and areas that serve important functions, such as significant ground water recharge areas, which are necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the watershed.

These systems depend on each other and are together called the Natural Environment System to acknowledge the relationship and the role each plays in the health and resilience of Bruce County's natural environment. The Natural Environment System supports the overall diversity and interconnectivity of natural and water resources.

3.9.2 Objectives

The Natural Environment System will be protected, restored and enhanced through a systems-based approach to stewarding natural and water resources to ensure a resilient, diverse and healthy environment for future generations.

It is the objective of this Plan to:

- (1) Identify, protect, enhance, and restore the County's Natural Environment System as described in this Plan and shown on Schedules E1, E2 and E3.
- (2) Support comprehensive, integrated, and long-term land use planning for and responsible stewardship of the Natural Environment System.
- (3) Adapt to and mitigate climate change through stewardship of the Natural Environment System.
- (4) Recognize that the Natural Environment System offers a broad range of social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits and therefore must be managed in consideration of all policies of this Plan.
- (5) Recognize that much of the Natural Environment System is held in private ownership and provide for continued private use while encouraging landowners to voluntarily protect and manage the unique environmental resources of their land.
- (6) Demonstrate wise environmental management of public land.
- (7) Manage development and site alteration within and adjacent to the Natural Environment System in accordance with the policies of this Plan.
- (8) Provide for existing agricultural uses within the Natural Environment System to continue.

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3.9.3 Natural Heritage System

- (1) The Natural Heritage System is made up of natural heritage features and areas which vary in size, connectivity, ecological function, and vulnerability to adverse effects from development or site alteration. Due to different contexts the approach to conserving, protecting, and enhancing the Natural Heritage System differs in the northern and southern parts of the County.
- (2) In the northern part of the County, which has extensive existing natural cover, the Natural Heritage System is composed of Core Areas, Linkages, and Key and Supporting Features and Areas. Section 3.9.3.4 applies to Northern Bruce County in addition to the other policies of Section 3.9.3.
- (3) In the southern part of the County, where there has been more agricultural and urban development, the Natural Heritage System is made up of Key Features and Areas, Supporting Features and Areas, and Linkages.
- (4) Criteria for wetlands and for woodlands are different for Northern Bruce County and for Southern Bruce County. In Northern Bruce County where there is extensive natural cover, larger size thresholds apply in order to identify features as key or supporting features. In Southern Bruce County, where there is less natural cover, smaller features are more significant.
- (5) A local municipality may use the natural heritage mapping and policies identified in this Plan within Settlement Areas.
- (6) If a local municipality undertakes a process to identify or refine elements of the Natural Heritage System within a local official plan area, that is consistent with provincial direction and the approach outlined in this Plan, then the local mapping, when adopted by the municipality and approved by the County will be incorporated into the County Official Plan without requiring further amendment to this Plan.
- (7) Nothing in this Plan is intended to limit the continuation of existing agricultural uses on lands within the Natural Environment System;
- (8) Policy-based protections for the natural heritage system may be augmented by acquisition of areas that contribute to the natural heritage system, through purchase or donation, by the County, a municipality, First Nation, other public authority, or Land Trusts having conservation objectives.
- (9) Lands owned and managed for conservation purposes by government (public) or



non-government (private) organizations may be identified as forming part of the Open Space system, and may be further identified in terms of public or private ownership. However this plan does not assert jurisdiction over provincial or federal lands.

- (10) Mapping of natural heritage features extends into First Nations Reserve Lands to demonstrate the continuity of natural features, however this plan does not assert jurisdiction over First Nations Reserve Lands.
- (11) Lands within the Natural Heritage System which are privately owned, including by Non-Government Organizations or Land Trusts, are not free and open for the public to use. Public access may occur by and subject to the permission of the land owner.
- (12) Large projects, such as aggregate developments, which have specific processes and environmental reporting requirements are to address all requirements of those processes and policies of this plan with respect to the Natural Heritage System

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3.9.3.1 Key Features and Areas

- (1) Key Features and Areas are identified as significant by the Province or by the County to meet County targets or objectives.
- (2) Criteria for Key Features, as well as development criteria are outlined in the Table below:

Table 5: Criteria for Natural Heritage Key Features

Key Feature / Area Criteria	Criteria for Development Within Feature	Adjacent Lands Width / Criteria for Development
Provincially Significant Wetlands and Coastal Wetlands	New Development / Site Alteration Not Permitted per Provincial Direction	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction
All other Wetlands larger than 4 hectares in Core Areas (Northern Bruce County only)	New Development / Site Alteration not permitted	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function



All other Wetlands larger than 2 hectares (Southern Bruce County only)	New Development / Site Alteration not permitted	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function
Provincially Significant Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest	No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction
Provincially Significant Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest	No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction	50 metres; maintain educational, scientific and interpretive values per provincial direction.
Fish Habitat (watercourses and water bodies)	Not permitted except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction
Core Area Significant Woodlands – Northern Bruce County Within Core Area; Average width greater than 40 metres and minimum area of 100 hectares; or >15 ha of interior habitat (> 100m from edge); or any deep habitat (>200m from edge); or Black bear habitat or areas of use	No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction



<p>Significant Woodlands Outside Core Areas – Northern Bruce County</p> <p>a . Average width greater than 40 metres and minimum area of 200 ha; or</p> <p>b. Average width greater than 40 metres and minimum area of 150 ha; and</p> <p>i. >20 ha of interior habitat (> 100m from edge); and/or</p> <p>ii. Black bear habitat or areas of use; and/or</p> <p>iii. Contains uncommon characteristics as outlined in Provincial Direction</p>	<p>No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>	<p>120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>
<p>Significant Woodlands – Southern Bruce County</p> <p>a. Average width greater than 40 metres and minimum area of 4 hectares; or</p> <p>b. Any interior habitat (>100m from edge)</p>	<p>No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>	<p>120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>
<p>Significant Valleylands (defined by province) – unmapped</p>	<p>No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>	<p>120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction</p>
<p>Significant Habitats of endangered and threatened</p>	<p>Prohibited except in accordance with</p>	<p>Generally 120 metres; may vary by species; No</p>



species, defined by province (unmapped)	provincial and federal requirements, per provincial direction	negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction
Significant Wildlife Habitats (S.W.H.) as defined by province (unmapped); includes deer wintering areas and S.W.H. alvars	No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction	120 metres; No negative impact to feature or its ecological function per provincial direction

- (3) While effort has been made to map as much as possible of the natural heritage system, not all key features are mapped in this plan.
- (a) The County, at this time, has insufficient data to support the mapping of Significant Valleylands. Many areas that may meet criteria as valleylands are also identified as Hazard lands through this plan and are not at significant risk for development.
 - (b) Habitats of Endangered and Threatened Species are not specifically identified in this Plan because species may be added or removed from lists and habitats change over time. The Natural Heritage System has been defined to identify features and areas that generally would serve these purposes. Where study is required to address features that are mapped as part of the Natural Heritage System then such studies will address the potential for Habitats of Endangered and Threatened Species in those areas. Landowners are however responsible to ensure compliance with applicable legislation even if an Environmental Impact Study is not required.
 - (c) Significant Wildlife Habitat is largely unmapped as it generally relates to habitats of specific species and is subject to change over time. Core areas in Northern Bruce County, Wetlands, and Significant Woodlands are generally intended to capture a broad range of significant wildlife habitats.
 - (d) Alvars are not specifically identified due to the potential for natural succession. Alvars primarily occur in Northern Bruce County and Core Areas are identified which generally capture the majority of alvar areas.
- (4) Unless or until mapping becomes available for those Key Features and Areas listed



in Policy 3.9.3.1 above, and as incorporated into this Plan, such features will be identified on a case-by-case basis when site-specific evaluation is required.

- (5) Site-specific studies may identify additional areas that meet the criteria outlined in provincial direction or the policies of this Plan as key features or as supporting features. Where this occurs the features must be evaluated in accordance with the applicable policies.
- (6) New buildings and structures for agricultural uses, agricultural-related uses, or on-farm diversified uses may be permitted in Key Features and Areas where in accordance with provincial direction, and may be subject to a scoped EIS;
- (7) Landowners are encouraged to maintain and/or enhance natural vegetation and forest cover on lands within 30 metres of any fish habitat or stream to maintain and improve fish habitat, ecological function of the stream and to increase natural connections on the landscape.
- (8) The Aquatic Ecosystem Classification for Ontario dataset may be used to identify known cold, cool, or warm water streams as a basis for establishing associated setbacks. Where this data is not available the default assumption will be that fish habitat is cold water and will be protected as such, unless a thermal regime characterization is undertaken to support determination of a stream as a cool or warm water stream with associated setbacks.
- (9) The fragmentation of significant woodlands is discouraged by this Plan.
- (10) The County may undertake regular monitoring and/or evaluation of significant woodlands and subsequently update Schedule E accordingly without an amendment to this Plan.

(11) The approval authority will consider the use of land within an Earth Science ANSI identified on Schedule C in accordance with the underlying land use designation on Schedule A, provided it can be shown that the development would not adversely impact upon the ANSI. To further clarify the intent of this policy, the following use of land and buildings as they existed on the date of adoption of this Plan may continue:

- (a) Farming operations and the expansion of the same in accordance with the Minimum Distance Separation Formula;

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(b) Management and harvesting of timber in accordance with good forestry practices and the County's Forest Conservation By-law;

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(c) Construction or expansion of a residence on a legally separated parcel of land existing on the date of the adoption of this Plan, provided that measures are taken to minimize negative impacts on the ANSI and subject to other policies of this Plan, the local Municipal Zoning By-Law and the applicable policies and regulations of other agencies or Government ministries; and,

(d) The existing use of the area for public recreational uses.

(12) When a change in the use of land not in conformity with the above policy is proposed for lands within the earth science ANSI such that adverse effects on the ANSI are likely to occur, a study evaluating the merits of the proposal, potential impacts, alternatives, and opportunities for mitigation, must be prepared prior to the consideration of approval of the proposal, with opportunity given to the province to review the Terms of Reference and the submitted study. Where it cannot be shown that the development proposal will have minimal impacts on the ANSI, the proposal must be refused.

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3.9.3.2 Supporting Features and Areas

- (1) Supporting Features and Areas are natural heritage features that provide a supportive function to Key Features and Areas in the County. Although they do not meet the threshold for being identified as Key Features and Areas, they provide an important function to maintain a systems-based approach to the Natural Heritage System.
- (2) Natural heritage features or areas will be considered Supporting Features and Areas in accordance with Table 6 and Table 7 for northern Bruce County and southern Bruce County, respectively.

Table 6: Criteria for Supporting Features and Areas in Northern Bruce County

Supporting Feature / Area Criteria	Development Criteria
Wetlands larger than 2 ha that are not "Key Features" and are in a "Core Area"	Development / Site Alteration not permitted except in accordance with offsetting and mitigation policies and procedures, where



Wetlands larger than 1 ha that are all or partly in “Linkage” areas that are not key features All other wetlands larger than 4 ha that are not “Key Features”	they apply, to ensure no net loss of wetlands.
Regionally Significant Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest	In accordance with Niagara Escarpment Plan
Core Area Woodlands larger than 4ha that do not meet criteria as Key Features	Per Core Area policies
Woodlands all or partly in Linkages that are larger than 2 ha	Maintain linkage function
All other woodlands larger than 20 ha outside core areas that do not meet key feature woodlands criteria	Per Bruce County Forest Conservation By-law and local Tree By-laws where applicable
Woodlands that have previously been divided and zoned to facilitate development	Follow site-specific directions where they apply, Bruce County Forest Conservation By-law and local Tree By-laws where applicable; Minimize tree removal to what is necessary for development
Alvars that do not meet ‘Key Feature’ criteria as significant wildlife habitat	Demonstrate no negative impact to feature or function

Table 7: Criteria for Supporting Features and Areas in Southern Bruce County

Supporting Feature / Area Criteria	Development Criteria
Wetlands 1 ha or greater in size that are not identified as Key Feature(s).	Development / Site Alteration not permitted except in accordance with offsetting and



Supporting Feature / Area Criteria	Development Criteria
Wetlands 0.5 ha or greater in size that are not identified as Key Feature(s) and that are wholly or partially within a linkage.	mitigation policies, where they apply, to ensure no net loss of wetlands
Woodlands 2ha or greater in size that do not meet criteria as Key Features.	Minimize tree removal to what is necessary for development and follow Bruce County Forest Conservation By-law and local Tree By-laws where applicable;
Woodlands 0.5 ha or greater in size that are not identified as Key Feature(s) and are wholly or partially within a linkage.	Maintain linkage function
Alvars that do not meet 'Key Feature' criteria as Significant Wildlife Habitat	Demonstrate no negative impact to feature or function.

- (3) The approval authority may require that development proposed within a Supporting Feature or Area be supported by an Environmental Impact Study demonstrating that there will be no negative impacts on the Supporting Feature or Area or on their ecological function.
- (4) Where an Environmental Impact Study is required, it will determine the importance, function and means of protection of Supporting Feature or Area, and/or maintenance of function, as appropriate, to the satisfactory of the approval authority.

3.9.3.3 Linkages and Enhancement Areas

Linkages provide ecological connectivity between Core Areas and between Key Features and Areas. They accommodate the natural movement patterns of plants and animals, support biodiversity, promote conservation, and contribute to the long-term viability of the Natural Heritage System.

Enhancement Areas represent potential to improve features or functions.

3.9.3.3.1 Linkages



- (1) Linkages are shown conceptually on Schedule E to this Plan to indicate movement corridors for both flora and fauna between Core Areas, Enhancement Areas, and Key and Supporting Features and Areas.
- (2) This Plan supports and encourages the maintenance and where possible enhancement of Linkages throughout the County, including on lands used for agriculture. The identification of a Linkage will not preclude agricultural uses and operations as they may provide habitat for species and/or offer opportunities for stewardship.
- (3) Natural features within Linkages should be maintained.
- (4) Linkages are encouraged to be enhanced with natural features. Where there is a significant land use change requiring a planning application, Linkages may be required to be enhanced.

3.9.3.3.2 Enhancement Areas

- (1) Enhancement Areas are not mapped on a schedule to this Plan. Enhancement areas may be determined through subsequent comprehensive or site-specific studies or analysis and incorporated into the Natural Heritage System.
- (2) Enhancement Areas may support the Natural Heritage System because they have the potential to:
 - (a) Maintain or enhance water flow and/or quality;
 - (b) Improve wildlife habitat value;
 - (c) Improve species movement and/or dispersal;
 - (d) Provide restoration options;
 - (e) Improve overall connectivity; and/or
 - (f) Improve the likelihood of maintaining self-sustaining vegetation.
- (3) The County and local municipalities will explore opportunities to enhance the natural heritage system in accordance with provincial direction through the development approvals process, conservation easements, donations, or land acquisition.



3.9.3.4 Policies for Northern Bruce County

The following policies provide direction specific to the natural heritage context of Northern Bruce County, being lands within Bruce County which are north of Highway 21.

- (1) Portions of Bruce County are subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan and Greenbelt Plan and are subject to the policies of that Plan. Natural Heritage System mapping in this plan is intended to illustrate the continuity of features within and beyond the Niagara Escarpment Plan and to complement and support the implementation of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.
- (2) Northern Bruce County has extensive natural cover and provides areas of habitat for large ranging species. Approximately 50% of this area of the County has been identified as 'Core' areas on Schedule 'E' to this plan to conserve large areas of intact habitat.
- (3) Core Areas are areas where Key Features are concentrated, or significant portions of natural areas remain intact. The objective of identifying Core Areas is to protect critical ecological functions such as maintaining or enhancing biodiversity, movement of species and materials, and habitat needs.
- (4) Core Areas are identified using several criteria, key among them being percentage of natural cover and size. The purpose of Core Areas is to protect large areas including culturally significant keystone and other species for Saugeen Ojibway Nation while providing greater flexibility for land uses in the largely intact Natural Heritage System of Bruce Peninsula.
- (5) A range of uses are permitted within core areas and 120 metre adjacent lands as outlined below. Permissions for these uses are further subject to Key Features and Areas policies.

Table 8: Permitted Uses in Northern Bruce County

Use	Permitted in Core Areas	Permitted in adjacent lands	EIS Required
Home occupations within existing buildings	Yes	Yes	No



Existing Uses, Buildings, and Structures and Minor Expansions of same	Yes	Yes	No
Reuse of existing buildings and structures provided there is no additional environmental impact	Yes subject to other policies of this plan	Yes	No
Agricultural uses that include new buildings and structures	Yes	Yes	Maybe for large scale (see (6) below)
Agriculture-related uses requiring new buildings and structures	Yes	Yes	Maybe for large scale (see (6) below)
On-farm diversified uses requiring new buildings and structures	Yes	Yes	Maybe for large scale (see (6) below)
New Residential dwellings or accessory uses on existing lots of record	Yes	Yes	No
Conservation and Flood Control projects	Yes	Yes	No
Forest, fish, and wildlife management	Yes	Yes	No



Transportation, utility, and service corridors	Yes if avoidance is not possible	Yes	Maybe – see (8) below
Passive recreation	Yes	Yes	Maybe
Good Forestry Practices as defined in the County’s Forest Conservation By-law	Yes	Yes	No
Existing Mineral Aggregate extraction Operations	Yes	Yes	No
Expanded mineral aggregate extraction operations	Yes with detailed phasing and rehabilitation plan	Yes	Yes – see (9) below
New Mineral aggregate extraction operations	No	Yes	Yes

- (6) An EIS may be required when a new 500 square metre or larger building or structure requires clearing of natural vegetation in or in adjacent to a feature within the core area.
- (7) Where a Settlement Area abuts a core area, discretion will be applied to determining whether an Environmental Impact Statement is required within the settlement area.
- (8) New or expanded uses in or adjacent to Core Areas not discussed above will require the completion of an Environmental Impact Study, unless otherwise exempted by this Plan.
- (9) Where possible, transportation, utility, service or other equivalent corridors should avoid Core Areas. Where avoidance is not possible, an Environmental Assessment or similar process may be required, subject to Provincial or Federal requirements.



- (10) Where a new or expanded mineral aggregate extraction operation is proposed the technical reports prepared in support of the proposal to meet provincial licensing requirements shall also meet the EIS requirements of this plan and guidelines as amended from time to time.
- (11) Lot creation in Core Areas is permitted in accordance with the policies of Section 5.10.1.

3.9.4 Offsetting

- (1) The County, local municipalities and/or conservation authorities having jurisdiction within Bruce, may choose to develop and use ecological/ecosystem offsetting (also called biodiversity offsetting) policies or procedures for private land development proposals and/or public infrastructure undertakings.
- (2) Offsetting must follow the mitigation hierarchy of Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, then Offset. It should only be considered after a detailed analysis has determined that avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of loss is not possible or feasible.
- (3) Offsetting should generally be considered only:
 - (a) in settlement areas where natural heritage features and functions may be reasonably and successfully relocated to facilitate focused, clustered, and compact development; or
 - (b) in agricultural areas, where the removal and relocation of natural cover can be undertaken within a single parcel to facilitate improved agricultural operations and natural connectivity.
- (4) Offsetting may only be considered where it is consistent with the appropriate legislation, regulations and supporting policies and guidelines (Provincial Direction, Official Plans, Forest Management Plans, Forest Management By-laws, Tree-Cutting By-laws, etc.).
- (5) Offsetting does not replace or negate the requirements of other legislation applicable to impacts to species or ecosystems at the municipal, regional, provincial, or federal levels. Protection, and ideally restoration and improvements of existing natural systems remains the primary goal of natural heritage systems planning (as per provincial direction).
- (6) Offsetting policies or procedures should target an ecological net gain. Where



determined to not be feasible, they should ensure no-net-loss and fully replace the same level of lost ecosystem structure and function in proximity to where the loss occurs.

- (7) Offsetting policies or procedures should address matters including but not limited to avoidance of impacts to the Water Resource System and avoid creating or exacerbating natural hazards in consultation with Conservation Authorities where they exist.
- (8) Where other compensation or offsetting programs exist (i.e., tree cutting by-laws that speak to tree replacement planting or funds), efforts will be made to coordinate the separate processes to limit duplication. All programs of this nature should offer a comprehensive approach to restoring unavoidable losses.

3.9.5 Requirements for Environmental Impact Studies

Environmental Impact Studies (EISs) identify and assess the potential impacts of development proposal on known or potential areas in the County's Natural Environment System. The purpose of an EIS is to assess whether the development can integrate into the natural environment in accordance with provincial direction and this plan. The policies in this Section will guide the County and proponents with the preparation of an EIS, where required.

3.9.5.1 General Policies

- (1) In order to achieve the objectives of this plan for the protection of the Natural Environment, an Environmental Impact Study will be required as part of an application for development within the Natural Heritage System, including all of its component natural heritage features and functions and/or on adjacent lands, where indicated in the 'Core Areas' 'Key Features and Areas' and 'Supporting Features and Areas' policy tables above unless the requirement is waived by the approval authority.
- (2) The EIS must be prepared prior to any development approvals and any site alteration (except as may be necessary for the preparation of pre-development studies or surveys) or development.
- (3) The approval authority may exempt a proposal from the requirement for an EIS when:
 - (a) A development is subject to a duplicate or similar environmental assessment or similar process; or

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(b) An initial assessment determines that the project is low-risk with well understood potential for impacts,

(4) The approval authority may seek outside independent advice as to whether the proposed development is low risk with well understood potential for impacts,

(5) An EIS must be completed by a qualified professional;

(6) The proponent is responsible for the cost for preparing an EIS,

(7) The EIS should be initiated early in the development design process so that areas of constraint and opportunity can be identified and the design developed accordingly.

(8) The County may establish technical guidelines in accordance with Section 5.14 that support the policies of this section including but not limited to initial assessment and exemption criteria, the required contents of Environmental Impact Studies, required qualifications for preparers of EIS, and standard/best practice mitigation measures that may be applied to development proposals.

(9) The proponent is encouraged to consult early in the application process with the County and other appropriate agencies including First Nations regarding the specific EIS requirements.

(10) In considering potential for impact to functions or features, particularly with regard to shoreline hardening, wetlands and fish habitat, the proponent is also advised to consult with First Nations to determine potential impacts on resources, utilization, interests, and other cultural values.

(11) The EIS must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the approval authority that the proposed development or use is consistent with provincial direction in respect of natural heritage and the policies of this plan and any applicable local official plan.

(12) The approval authority will involve First Nations and may involve any other entity including but not limited to other Indigenous peoples, Conservation Authorities, the Province, local municipalities, and independent peer reviewers in the evaluation of the EIS, with the proponent responsible for costs of such review where applicable.

(13) Where an EIS does not demonstrate to the satisfaction of the approval authority that the proposal is consistent with provincial direction or the policies of this plan and would have a negative impact on the Natural Environment System and/or the

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The site conditions for a development are such that the preparation of an EIS would serve no useful purpose for the protection of the significant environmental features...

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natural heritage feature or area, function, attributes or linkages for which the lands were identified, the application will not be supported or approved by the approval authority.

3.9.6 Water Resource System

Provincial direction describes and directs municipalities to identify Water Resource Systems, maintain linkage and function, and take other actions to protect, improve, or restore the quality and quantity of water.

For Bruce County three interconnected components have which are identified as significant by the province or by the County to meet County objectives:

- (1) Key Hydrologic Features, which are discrete features such as wetlands, watercourses, lakes and littoral zones, seepage areas and springs;
- (2) Key Hydrologic Areas, which are broad areas protecting and supporting water quality and quantity such as significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and significant surface water contribution areas; and
- (3) Other components, including natural hazards that pose risks to life and property if not appropriately managed.

The Water Resource System depends on the cycle of precipitation, ground water infiltration, evapotranspiration, and surface runoff. Ground water and surface water are important resources in Bruce County. Not only do these resources supply drinking water and crop irrigation, but they also play a vital role in maintaining ecological integrity of ecosystems.

While Bruce County has an abundance of water resources, there are growing water management challenges as the extent and intensity of land uses impact natural systems.

The interconnections and relationships among human activities and the Water Resource System must be recognized. These features are adversely affected by climate change and are also essential for adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts. Identifying, maintaining, and protecting the Water Resource System is important to sustaining and enhancing the quality and quantity of water resources for future generations.



3.9.6.1 General Policies

Implementation of the following policies supports and enhances the Water Resource System:

- (1) The County will collaborate with local municipalities, conservation authorities, First Nations, and other agencies and stakeholders, as required, to protect, improve and restore the Water Resource System.
- (2) Watersheds are the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development.
- (3) Potential negative impacts, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts will be minimized.
- (4) The County will evaluate and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate to water resource systems at the watershed level.
- (5) Development and site-alteration will be undertaken with the objective to protect, improve or restore ground water quality and quantity and ecological and hydrological characteristics of Key Hydrologic Features and Key Hydrologic Areas.
- (6) Local municipalities may refer to, duplicate, or expand upon these policies to protect, improve or restore water resource systems in local official plans, where they exist.
- (7) The County will encourage:
 - (a) Efficient and sustainable use of water resources through water conservation best practices; and
 - (b) Sound management practices for agriculture which promote proper storage, use, and application of fertilizers, nutrients, herbicides and pesticides, and where possible, the reduction of their use.

3.9.6.2 Key Hydrologic Features and Areas

Key Hydrologic Features, Key Hydrologic Areas, and their functions are necessary components of the Water Resource System that require long-term protection. It is the intent of this Plan to protect, restore and maintain key hydrologic features and areas to ensure that development within or near these features and areas will support and not negatively affect the hydrological and hydrogeological functions and processes.



Components of the Water Resource System, and associated criteria are outlined in the table below.

Table 9: Key Hydrologic Features

Feature and Criteria	Criteria for Development	Adjacent lands Width/Criteria
Permanent and intermittent streams and associated riparian lands	Maintain flow and drainage function; Table 5 criteria for fish habitat where applicable	30 metres; Maintain linkage and function; Table 5 criteria for fish habitat where applicable.
Lakes and their littoral zones;	Maintain Surface water quality Minimize disturbance to littoral zone	30 metres from ordinary high water mark; Avoid shoreline hardening to littoral zone to adjust to water level variation
Seepage areas and springs	Maintain flow Table 5 criteria for fish habitat where applicable	30 metres
Wetlands	As outlined under Natural Heritage System	As outlined under Natural Heritage System
Significant groundwater recharge areas;	Maintain recharge function by avoiding or mitigating intensive development and large impervious areas	
Highly vulnerable aquifers including karst and karst-prone areas;	Avoid water quality impacts by avoiding or mitigating intensive development and large impervious areas	Not Applicable



Significant surface water contribution areas (unmapped)	Maintain function by avoiding or mitigating intensive development and large impervious areas	
Headwater drainage features (unmapped)	large scale development should evaluate and determine approach to maintain function	
Meanderbelts (unmapped)	Address through hazard policies and Conservation Authority Regulations where they apply	
Natural hazard areas including areas subject to shoreline and flooding hazards	Address through hazard policies and Conservation Authority Regulations where they apply	

Area	Criteria for Development
Highly Vulnerable Aquifers	Significant groundwater recharge areas;
Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas	Highly vulnerable aquifers including karst and karst-prone areas;
Karst Prone Bedrock	Large scale development in accordance with a Karst assessment. Small scale development to manage risk by: (a) Do not locate buildings or structures in a depression that does not have clear overland or engineered drainage.



	<p>(b) Do not block or plug sinkholes or rock cracks in a way that would prevent water flow.</p> <p>(c) Prevent livestock from clustering in areas of exposed bedrock or depressions.</p>
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- (1) While efforts are made to map features and areas, some features and areas are not identified on schedules.
- (2) If the boundaries of Key Hydrologic Areas are refined through local planning processes, the refined boundaries may be adopted into this Plan.
- (3) Where mapping or site-specific studies or observations for headwater areas or groundwater recharge areas is made available by the proponent and/or review agencies, new development will be required to demonstrate protection of these sensitive water resources and that the associated environment and any water resource uses are not negatively impacted.
- (4) The County will encourage consultation and communication between the County, local municipalities, the appropriate Provincial authority, interested agencies, and development interests to identify and protect headwater areas, groundwater recharge areas and aquifers.
- (5) The impact of development applications on groundwater will be considered in planning decisions by the County and local municipalities.

3.9.6.2.1 Karst

The northern part of Bruce County has a high concentration of known karst topographies. Karst topographies are dominated by porous limestone or dolostone, which is susceptible to erosion both aboveground and underground, causing potential hazards to development. The greatest potential for karst is where there is a strong hydraulic gradient, such as where there is gradual elevation change in one direction and a steep change in another direction, and water aims to find the shortest path downward.

- (1) Karst topographies are shown on Schedule F and include areas within 2 kilometres of the Niagara Escarpment, where there is a strong hydraulic gradient, and areas where the dominant bedrock type is paleozoic dolostone.
- (2) In some cases karst can present risk to life and property due to the inherent unstable nature of the substrate.



- (3) More commonly, karstic drained areas can be subject to flooding impacts in the event that flow through a karstic feature is impacted, either resulting in pooling above the feature if it becomes blocked or unpredictable increased flows below the feature if it becomes unblocked.
- (4) Karst topographies and their associated formations are also recognized as representing heightened risk for direct contamination at the surface and underlying aquifer.
- (5) In large part the impacts of development in a karst-prone area can be addressed through a risk management approach that includes:
 - (a) Do not locate buildings or structures in a depression that does not have clear overland or engineered drainage.
 - (b) Do not block or plug sinkholes or rock cracks in a way that would prevent water flow.
 - (c) Prevent livestock from clustering in areas of exposed bedrock or depressions.
- (6) Where larger scale or multi-unit development is proposed within areas of karst it will be subject to site-specific evaluation, including a karst assessment.
- (7) A karst assessment will determine what, if any, risk management measures may be required as a condition of development approval.
- (8) At a minimum, the karst assessment will determine:
 - (a) The stability of the karst formation relative to the proposed development or site-alteration; and
 - (b) The potential for surface water management issues associated with the development and karstic features forming part of the drainage system; and
 - (c) The potential threat of the proposed development or site alteration to groundwater resources.
- (9) Where there are identified risks to groundwater resources due to the proposed development or site-alteration, it must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the approval authority or authorities that the risks can be mitigated.

3.9.6.2.2 Source Water Protection



- (1) The Province has established the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) program that is guided by the Clean Water Act, 2006. The purpose of this Act is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water. Under this program, it is the responsibility of a Source Protection Committee to develop Assessment Reports and Source Protection Plans for a Source Protection Region.
- (2) This program is generally designed to identify and protect Municipal Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA), and Intake Protection Zones (IPZ), and to identify Highly Vulnerable Aquifers (HVA) and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas (SGRA).
- (3) The Approved Assessment Reports evaluate the degree to which vulnerable areas are vulnerable through the assignment of a 'vulnerability score'. The term "vulnerability" describes how easily a source of water can become contaminated with a hazardous material. The vulnerability score of an area can range from 1 to 10, with 10 being the most vulnerable. The vulnerability score is used, together with a table of drinking water threats published by the Province to determine whether a drinking water threat is significant, moderate, or low.
- (4) The Source Protection Plans provides regulatory policies at this time that apply only to the protection of Municipal drinking water supplies and are to be followed by municipalities, landowners, and others, to address significant threats to these areas.
- (5) The County and local municipalities will support the implementation of the Approved Source Protection Plan for the Saugeen, Grey Sauble, and Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region and the Approved Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan, for vulnerable areas associated with municipal drinking water supplies as identified within **Schedules D1-Dxx**.
- (6) Protection for drinking water supplies which are not relied upon for municipal drinking water systems are addressed through the water resources system policies of this plan.
- (7) Intake Protection Zones (IPZ's) are areas of land and water, where run-off from streams or drainage systems, in conjunction with currents in lakes and rivers, could directly impact on the source water at the municipal drinking water intakes.

Table 10: Source Water Intake Protection Zones

Intake Protection Zone	Description
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IPZ-1	One (1) kilometre circle around the water intake.
IPZ-2	Two (2) hours of travel time for water to reach the water intake.
IPZ-3	Areas prone to contamination of untreated source water during extreme weather conditions. Also known as Events-Based Areas

(8) A Wellhead Protection Area is a ‘vulnerable area’ around a municipal wellhead where land use activities have the potential to affect the quality and quantity of water that flows into the well. Table X summarizes the factors that represent each WHPA.

Table 11: Well Head Protection Areas and Associated Time of Travel Zones

Well Head Protection Area	Time of Travel
WHPA – A	100 metre radius surrounding well
WHPA – B	The area within which the time of travel to the well is up to and including two years (excluding WHPA – A)
WHPA – C	The area within which the time of travel to the well is up to and including five years (excluding WHPA – A and WHPA - B)
WHPA – D	The area within which the time of travel to the well is up to and including twenty-five years (excluding WHPA – B and WHPA - C)
WHPA – E	The area within which surface water could reach a ‘Groundwater under Direct Influence of Surface Water’ (GUDI) well within two hours

(9) Land Use activities which may pose a drinking water threat to municipal water supplies are defined by the Clean Water Act, 2006 as an activity or condition that



adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely affect, the quality and quantity of drinking water that is or may be used as a source of drinking water. Significant drinking water threats are prescribed by Ontario Regulation 287/07 of the Clean Water Act, 2006, and include the following:

- (a) Waste disposal sites within the meaning of Part V of the Environmental Protection Act.
- (b) The establishment, operation or maintenance of a system that collects, stores, transmits, treats or disposes of sewage.
- (c) The application of agricultural source material to land.
- (d) The storage of agricultural source material.
- (e) The management of agricultural source material.
- (f) The application of non-agricultural source material to land.
- (g) The handling and storage of non-agricultural source material.
- (h) The application of commercial fertilizer to land.
- (i) The handling and storage of commercial fertilizer.
- (j) The application of pesticide to land.
- (k) The handling and storage of pesticide.
- (l) The application of road salt.
- (m) The handling and storage of road salt.
- (n) The storage of snow.
- (o) The handling and storage of fuel.
- (p) The handling and storage of a dense non-aqueous phase liquid (DNAPL).
- (q) The handling and storage of an organic solvent.
- (r) The management of runoff that contains chemicals used in the de-icing of aircraft.



- (s) An activity that takes water from an aquifer or surface water body without returning the water to the same aquifer or surface water body.
 - (t) An activity that reduces the recharge of an aquifer.
 - (u) The use of land as livestock grazing or pasturing land, an outdoor confinement area or farm-animal yard.
 - (v) The establishment and operation of hydrocarbon pipeline.
- (10) Significant drinking water threats within Wellhead Protection Areas are either prohibited or regulated in accordance with Sections 57 and 58 of the Clean Water Act, 2006 and the Source Protection Plan. The significance of a prescribed drinking water threat depends on the characteristics of the activity and where the activity is occurring within a WHPA. The policies of the Source Protection Plan set out whether a significant drinking water threat is to be prohibited or regulated within a WHPA.
- (11) Notwithstanding the land uses permitted by the underlying land use designation in this Official Plan:
- (a) Permitted land uses that involve a significant drinking water threat within a WHPA identified in **Schedule 'D-Dxx'** to this Plan may be either prohibited or regulated by the applicable Source Protection Plan;
 - (b) An application for development, redevelopment, or site alteration within a WHPA that involves a significant drinking water threat must only be deemed complete under the Planning Act, if the designated Risk Management Official (RMO) has issued a Section 59 Notice in accordance with the Clean Water Act, 2006, where applicable;
 - (c) The Municipality's Risk Management Official must determine whether a new land use or activity is, or involves, a significant drinking water threat in accordance with the Clean Water Act, 2006 and whether the use or activity is prohibited or regulated through a Risk Management Plan in accordance with the applicable Source Protection Plan;
 - (d) The following waste disposal activities must be prohibited within WHPA's with a vulnerability score of 8 or 10, where they could be considered a significant drinking water threat:



- (i) Land disposal of petroleum refining waste within the meaning of clause (d) of the definition of “land disposal” in Section 1 of Regulation 347 (General – Waste Management) R.R.O 1990 made under the Environmental Protection Act;
 - (ii) Land disposal of municipal waste, hazardous waste, liquid industrial waste, or processed liquid industrial waste, within the meaning of clauses (a) and (b) of the definition of “land disposal” in Section 1 of Regulation 347 (General – Waste Management) R.R.O. 1990 made under the Environmental Protection Act; and,
 - (iii) Land disposal of liquid industrial waste, industrial waste, or commercial waste within the meaning of clause (c) of the definition of “land disposal” in Section 1 of Regulation 347 (General - Waste Management) R.R. O. 1990 made under the Environmental Protection Act.
- (e) Where the establishment, operation or maintenance of a septic system within WHPAs with a vulnerability score of 10 would be considered a significant drinking water threat, new lots created through severance or plan of subdivision may only be permitted where the lots will be serviced by a municipal sewage system or where an on-site septic system could be located outside of a WHPA with a vulnerability score of 10;
- (f) Where no municipal sanitary sewers exist and where septic systems already exist within a WHPA with a vulnerability score of 10, all future or replacement private septic systems on lots where they would be a significant drinking water threat must be located as far as practically possible from the wellhead while remaining in compliance of the Building Code;
- (g) Stormwater Management Facilities may be restricted or regulated within Wellhead Protection Areas, where they are considered significant drinking water threats. If stormwater management facilities are required within the Wellhead Protection Area, such facilities should be designed to minimize infiltration to groundwater from ponds, constructed wetlands, swales, and other similar components. Infiltration trenches, galleries, and other similar sub-surface components that all for direct infiltration of collected stormwater to groundwater should not be employed.
- (12) Events-Based Areas have been established to address risks associated with fuel storage on lands where a spill could impact a surface water intake. Events-based



areas are illustrated in Schedule 'D-XX' and the associated policies are outlined below:

Table 12: Source Water Protection Events-Based Areas

Location	Description of Area(s)	Source Protection Plan Policy	Policy Summary
Kincardine	EBA-3000	15-04	See 3.8.3.3.12 (below)
Kincardine	EBA-5000	15-05	See 3.8.3.3.13 (below)
Warton	EBA-5000 and EBA-8000	15-05	See 3.8.3.3.13 (below)
Lion's Head	EBA-5000, EBA-7500, EBA 22500	15-05	See 3.8.3.3.13 (below)
Southampton	EBA-13000, EBA-22500	15-05	See 3.8.3.3.13 (below)

- (13) Within the Kincardine Events-Based Area policy “EBA-3000”, New fuel storage in excess of 3000L is prohibited, under Section 57 of the Clean Water Act. Expansion or replacement of existing fuel storage is permitted if it can be demonstrated to the Risk Management Official’s satisfaction that the expansion or replacement will provide greater integrity, as per Policy 15-04 of the Source Protection Plan for [location].
- (14) Fuel Storage in greater quantities than indicated in the Area description (e.g. greater than 5000 litres in EBA-5000) is designated for the purposes of the Clean Water Act, under Section 58. The expansion or replacement of existing fuel storage is permitted if it can be demonstrated to the Risk Management Official’s satisfaction that the expansion or replacement will provide greater integrity. The Source Protection Plan for the Saugeen, Grey-Sauble, and Northern Bruce Peninsula Region requires a Risk Management Plan, sets out required content and terms of



renewal, and provides that fuel storage may only occur in accordance with an approved Risk Management Plan.

- (15) Existing lands that are designated or zoned for Industrial or Commercial development within any WHPA are intended to be subject to Site Plan Control in accordance with Section 5.6.6 of this Official Plan or local Official Plans where they apply. The local Municipality must pass a Site Plan Control By-law designating such lands as areas of Site Plan Control pursuant to the Planning Act. Site Plan Control may be used as a means of incorporating mitigating or remedial measures, annual updates of disclosure reports to the Risk Management Official, proper siting and containment of storage facilities, and lot grading and drainage as identified through the development review process.
- (16) Where there is a conflict between the policies of this Plan and the Source Protection Plan, the policies of the Source Protection Plan will prevail. Updates to the approved Source Protection Plan may be incorporated into the Schedules of this plan and may be incorporated into the schedules of local official plans and zoning by-laws without requirement for an amendment to said plan or by-law.

3.10 Wildland Fire Risk

- (1) Portions of the County and especially the northern region have forest types that present increased risk of wildland fire as identified by the province.
- (2) The County will support the local municipalities in preparing mapping of hazardous forest types for wildland fire and establishing policies in their official plans to ensure that the risk of wildland fire will be addressed through local planning approval processes, as appropriate, and in accordance with the Wildland Fire Assessment and Mitigation Standards.
- (3) Approval authorities will generally direct development to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for development due to the presence of hazardous forest types for wildland fire.
- (4) In the absence of detailed municipal assessments, proponents of development applications will undertake a site review to assess for the presence of areas of high to extreme risk for wildland fire on the subject lands and, to the extent possible, on adjacent properties.
- (5) Where areas of high to extreme risk for wildland fire are present, measures should



be identified as to how the risks will be mitigated and should consider the application of land use planning mitigation and management approaches, determined in consultation with the Province.

- (6) Development may be permitted in lands with hazardous forest types if risk can be appropriately mitigated in accordance with applicable direction without creating a conflict with provincial direction and the policies of this plan for the protection of the natural environment system.

3.11 Mineral Aggregate Resources

3.11.1 Objectives

- (1) Utilize the mineral aggregate resources of the County in an efficient environmentally sustainable manner;
- (2) Identify and protect mineral aggregate resources from incompatible development.
- (3) Encourage and support recycling of aggregate materials in appropriate locations.
- (4) Recognize that mineral aggregate resources are a non-renewable natural resource and facilitate mineral resource extraction close to where resources are needed.
- (5) Encourage the orderly site extraction of mineral resources and the appropriate development in these areas to ensure the utilization of mineral aggregate resources is not negatively affected;
- (6) Encourage the proper comprehensive rehabilitation and reuse of extracted sites.

3.11.2 Wayside Pits and Quarries and Portable Asphalt Plants

- (1) Wayside pits and quarries are temporary facilities used only for specific public road construction projects.
- (2) Portable asphalt plants are mobile facilities used to combine materials to produce asphalt.
- (3) This Plan does not regulate the location or permitting of wayside Pits and Quarries or of portable asphalt plants located in support of specific public road construction projects.
- (4) Approval authorities will refer to the schedules of this plan and local zoning by-laws

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when seeking permits for wayside pits or quarries in accordance with criteria outlined in provincial direction,

- (5) Extractive industrial zones will generally permit portable asphalt plants unless specifically stated to the contrary for specific locations.

(6) [Redacted]

Deleted: Unless specifically stated to the contrary in this Plan, these uses shall be permitted in all designations throughout the County without an Amendment to this Plan or any local Official Plans or By-Laws provided they are located in accordance with industry best practices and Provincial direction. , except in existing built-up areas or environmental sensitive areas as identified in the Plan.

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Part 4 Land Use Designations

4.1 Area of Application

The land use designations are shown on Schedule A of this Plan.

4.2 Settlement Areas

Settlement Areas are planned to accommodate most of the County's projected growth and development. Settlement Areas are locations for the broadest range, mix, and concentration of land uses, including housing and employment, as well as everyday amenities. Future growth within Settlement Areas will be in accordance with existing or planned servicing infrastructure.

4.2.1 Objectives

It is the objective of this Plan to support the development of Settlement Areas by:

- (1) Promoting the development of complete, sustainable communities that create and improve physical and social environments;
- (2) Managing growth and economic development to maintain the defining characteristics of the County as an environmentally and agriculturally rich area;
- (3) Supporting the achievement of density targets established in Section 2 of this Plan;
- (4) Ensure that new development supports a full range of economical, safe, and accessible mobility options, including transit, when it becomes available.
- (5) Expanding community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential;
- (6) Providing an appropriate range and mix of housing options, transportation modes, employment opportunities, and recreation or leisure activities for residents of all ages, genders, and abilities; and
- (7) Managing natural and cultural resources to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience for the County and its residents.



4.2.2 General Policies

- (1) Where they exist, Local municipal Official Plans for Primary Urban Communities and Secondary Urban Communities will include policies or reference this plan for policies in accordance with Provincial Direction and this plan that contemplate the following:
 - (a) Detailed direction and land use policies and designations to complement this Plan and the local context.
 - (b) Policies to accommodate the County's growth projections in accordance with this Plan;
 - (c) Policies for Residential uses, including low, medium, and higher density residential uses, affordable housing, infilling and intensification, additional residential units, and housing that is universally accessible and can accommodate a range of abilities and ages;
 - (d) Uses accessory to residential uses, including home occupations and home industry;
 - (e) Commercial uses, including downtown commercial, highway commercial, neighbourhood commercial, and other commercial uses, as may be permitted by this Plan or a local official plan;
 - (f) Industrial or Employment uses and policies dealing with the protection or redevelopment of industrial sites, where appropriate;
 - (g) Institutional uses, including health, cultural and educational facilities, public recreation facilities, government offices, public utilities and related uses and activities;
 - (h) Protection and enhancement of the Natural Environment System, including hazard lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and conservation;
 - (i) Recreation and open space, including active and passive recreation activities;
 - (j) Community improvement opportunities;
 - (k) Municipal servicing requirements;
 - (l) Conservation of heritage resources;

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- (m) Transportation, including opportunities for active transportation and public transit
- (n) Managing natural and cultural resources to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience for the County and its residents; and
- (o) Other specific land use designations necessary to reflect the unique needs and character of each Primary Urban Community and Secondary Urban Community designations.

4.2.3 Uses Prohibited in Settlement Areas

The following uses are prohibited within Settlement Areas:

- (1) New livestock operations; and
- (2) Expansion of existing livestock operations beyond the existing livestock unit capacity calculated pursuant to the Minimum Distance Separation Formula.

4.2.4 Primary and Secondary Urban Communities Designation

- (1) Primary Urban Communities are Settlement Areas that are planned to accommodate the largest concentration of growth and the broadest range and mix of land uses. Primary Urban Communities play an important role as regional service centres for residents across the County.
- (2) Secondary Urban Communities are local service centres and may also be tourism/recreation centres, accommodating a more limited scale of residential, tourism, economic and community services, and facilities than Primary Urban Communities.

4.2.4.1 General Policies

- (1) Primary Urban Communities will accommodate most of the County's projected growth and development.
- (2) Secondary Urban Communities are anticipated to accommodate some forecasted growth within the County over the planning horizon.
- (3) The County will coordinate with local municipalities to ensure that existing and new development within Primary and Secondary Urban Communities is aligned with Servicing policies of this plan.



- (4) This plan applies where a Primary or Secondary Urban Area is not within a local official plan area.

4.2.4.2 Permitted Uses

Where they exist, local official plans will permit a full range of uses that are consistent with existing or planned municipal servicing, as well as the planned function of the Settlement Area to meet the growth objectives of the municipality and the County.

4.2.4.3 Employment Lands within Settlement Areas

The County prioritizes the protection of employment areas to support economic development and prosperity. Employment areas provide opportunities for jobs, services, and goods within the Region and beyond, and are planned to be protected over the planning horizon.

- (1) Employment areas will be identified and protected in accordance with provincial direction.
- (2) Compatibility between employment areas and adjacent uses will be addressed in accordance with provincial direction.
- (3) The removal of lands from employment areas to permit other uses will occur only in accordance with provincial direction.
- (4) Local municipalities are encouraged to prepare and implement an employment lands strategy or equivalent local planning process to plan for the long-term protection, servicing and development of employment lands to accommodate projected employment growth.

4.2.4.4 Highway Oriented Land Uses

Several local plans have identified lands along major roads for commercial, employment, and other non-residential land uses due to their ability to serve the commercial and employment needs of the community and the County more broadly. While some of these lands may be underutilized and appropriate for redevelopment to accommodate a mix of uses including housing, any proposals to change lands from a non-residential land use must be evaluated based on the potential to impact plan function of these areas and local and regional commercial market needs.



4.2.5 Hamlet Designation

Hamlets generally function as rural service centres, with a mix of housing, tourism and commercial uses, as well as community uses and facilities. Some Hamlet Communities are surrounded by the Agricultural and Rural Areas while others are in Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Areas. This Plan intends to promote and enhance the function of Hamlet Communities as rural service centres.

As Hamlets are typically unserved by municipal infrastructure, the scope and scale of growth and development in Hamlets will be smaller and less dense than in Urban Communities. Development will occur in accordance with servicing policies in Section 4 of this plan.

4.2.5.1 General Policies and Permitted Uses

- (1) Hamlet Communities serve as rural service centres accommodating a range of residential, employment and community services and facilities.
- (2) The built form, compatibility and the availability of appropriate servicing and infrastructure will be the determining factors for facilitating the types of development permitted in each Hamlet, in accordance with the policies of this Plan.

4.3 Countryside Areas

4.3.1 Objectives

The Agriculture policies of this Plan support the continued protection and enhancement of the Agricultural System in Bruce County by:

- (1) Protecting prime agricultural areas for long-term use for agriculture and maintaining a continuous agricultural land base, by minimizing fragmentation;
- (2) Supporting and enhancing the Agricultural System by addressing the impacts of development through the planning approval process;
- (3) Ensuring that farmers can succeed in a changing climate by maintaining a permanently connected, secure, and economically viable agricultural industry;
- (4) Protect farms from incompatible activities and land uses in the Agricultural Areas;
- (5) Recognizing the role farmers play in a clean, prosperous, and climate-resilient future;



- (6) Providing flexibility to enable agricultural innovation, the adoption of new farming practices, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses; and
- (7) Encouraging the provision of the necessary infrastructure required to support the growth of the agricultural sector.

4.3.2 Agriculture Area Designation

Agricultural Areas are an essential component of the County through the recognition of an Agricultural Systems approach that extends across Ontario. The Agricultural System consists of:

- (1) A geographically continuous and productive agricultural land base comprised of Agricultural Areas and of Rural Areas, linking prime agricultural areas within Bruce County and beyond; and
- (2) A complementary agri-food network that consists of infrastructure, transportation networks, agricultural services, distributors, farmers' markets, and other elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector.
- (3) Agricultural operations are a significant employment source, important to the County's historical, cultural and economic character and key to the ability of other sectors such as tourism to create jobs and sustain prosperity. This Plan recognizes that Agricultural Areas constitute a strong, prosperous, and established component of the County's economy. The policies of this Plan recognize a need to protect and enhance this important resource.
- (4) This Plan establishes a policy framework to ensure agriculture remains viable, prosperous, and adaptable. The County supports the continuation of a thriving and sustainable agricultural industry, creating an environment that enables farmers to respond to changing conditions through diversification, agricultural innovation, and the adoption of new agricultural practices.

4.3.2.2 General Policies

- (1) A range of farming sizes will be permitted to ensure that agriculture remains a long term sustainable economic activity, and to encourage the establishment of new farm businesses in the County.
- (2) Development within the Agricultural Areas will occur in a manner which provides for large continuous areas of prime farmland free from conflicting and incompatible land uses.



(3) It is the intention of County Council to encourage the retention of large farming areas within the County. These areas will be largely unencumbered from non-agricultural uses by restricting the establishment of non-agricultural uses. A minimum farm size of generally 40 hectares (100 acres) has therefore been established for new or remnant farm parcels, subject to the consent policies of Section 5.10 [Land Division Policies], and except as provided elsewhere in this Plan. Smaller, specialized, farm parcel sizes will only be permitted in accordance with Provincial direction and the policies of Section 5.10.3

4.3.2.3 Permitted Uses

The following uses are permitted in the Agriculture Area designation:

- (1) Agriculture uses, as defined by the Provincial Policy Statement including agriculture, aquaculture, apiaries, agro-forestry, associated on-farm buildings and structures, growing of crops for biomass, maple syrup production, the growing of plants for food production, nurseries, the primary and secondary farm residence, and temporary farm accommodation for workers;
- (2) Agriculture related uses, as defined by the Provincial Policy Statement, including commercial or industrial uses that are directly related to the processing of agricultural products produced on the same property or providing products or services to farm operations in the area, in accordance with the policies of Section 5.8.1.1, and retail stands for the sale of agricultural products produced on the farm unit upon which the retail stand is to be located;
- (3) Limited on farm diversified uses, as defined by the Provincial Direction, and accessory to the agriculture operation are permitted on farms. All on-farm diversified uses **must** be: compatible with and not hinder surrounding agriculture operations; and limited in area to a maximum of 2% of the subject property area up to one hectare. Lot area and lot coverage for on farm diversified uses will be in accordance with the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas; The following uses **must** be permitted by local Zoning By-Laws: Bed and breakfast establishments, farm vacations, and occasional agricultural demonstration events such as a plowing match.
- (4) Further on farm diversified uses, secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property may be permitted within Agricultural Areas provided that such uses **are**:
 - (a) zoned in the Zoning By-law for that use;

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(b) Wayside pits and portable asphalt plants are permitted uses in accordance with the Zoning By-Law.

(5) Schools, ~~places of worship~~, and cemeteries that service the immediate rural community relying on horse-drawn vehicles as the primary means of transportation ~~are~~ permitted in accordance with Section 5.8.31 [Institutional Uses ~~in the Countryside Area~~].

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(6) A Temporary Garden Suite and/or Additional Residential Unit are permitted on the same lot as part of the farm unit. Forestry, public conservation, public open space and passive recreation are also permitted in the agricultural area.

(7) Most non-agricultural related development will be directed to settlement areas. Limited non-residential, non-agricultural uses may be permitted in the agricultural designation through an amendment to the local zoning by-law in accordance with Provincial Direction and the policies of this plan.

(8) Extraction of mineral aggregate resources may be permitted in prime agricultural areas as an interim use, subject to all other applicable policies of this Plan and implementing by-laws.

(9) Cannabis production and processing facilities are permitted in the Agricultural Area and Rural Area in accordance with the policies of this Plan, applicable federal and provincial approvals and any applicable municipal licensing and/or zoning or other by-laws.

4.3.3 Rural Area Designation

Rural Areas within the County are diverse and vibrant with agricultural and agriculture-related operations, forestry, aggregate extraction, conservation, and tourism-based activities such as nature appreciation and outdoor recreational uses.

This plan intends to maintain the natural, scenic, and cultural heritage attributes of Rural Lands while supporting compatible activities.

Economic activities will recognize the natural attributes of the Rural Area while conserving and protecting the rural landscape for enjoyment in the long-term. Rural lands are and will continue to be a defining part of the County's character.

4.3.3.1 General Policies

(1) Development on Rural Lands will be directed to areas:



- (a) Where development will not negatively impact or constrain agricultural operations;
 - (b) That are well serviced by municipal roads, facilities and other services;
 - (c) That front on a year-round municipally maintained road that does not require any undue extension or improvement to the County road system; and
 - (d) Where the development will not negatively impact the natural environment system.
- (2) Commercial uses will be encouraged to locate in existing, urbanized Settlement Areas. Where commercial, tourism and recreational uses require a rural location, these uses will be permitted within the Rural Area subject to the following criteria:
- (a) The use is primarily related to, or serves, the rural economy, agricultural operations or rural-based recreational activities;
 - (b) The lot upon which the use is located is of an adequate size and configuration to support the proposed use and the scale of the operation is appropriate to the site and the surrounding area;
 - (c) The activity is limited to low water use and low effluent producing uses and the site is capable of accommodating private water and on-site private sanitary sewage treatment systems with no adverse effect on the water resources system; and
 - (d) Recreational and tourism uses will be related to and be within proximity to a rural resource that supports the use.
- (3) In Rural Areas, newly created farm lots should generally be 20 hectares (50 acres) or larger.
- (4) This Plan does not intend to prevent the creation of smaller farm parcels where they are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain for future changes in the type or size of the agricultural operation.
- (5) Development by consent for the creation of new lots may be permitted in accordance with Section 5.10.4 of this Plan.



4.3.3.2 Permitted Uses

The following uses are permitted on a lot in the Rural Area designation:

- (1) Agriculture uses in accordance with Section 4.3.2.3;
- (2) Agriculture-related uses, subject to Policy 5.8.1.1;
- (3) School, place of worship, and cemetery, subject to Policy 5.8.1.3; and
- (4) A residence, an additional residential unit(s), and accessory home industries and home occupations subject to Policy 5.8.1.4
- (5) Rural resource-based recreation and tourism uses, subject to Policy 4.4.4
- (6) Industrial uses that serve the immediate agricultural community and other such similar industrial uses that require a rural location, cannot be located within a settlement area, and generally have minimum servicing requirements, including water and wastewater treatment in accordance with the policies of Section 5.7.10.
- (7) The following commercial uses are permitted in the Rural Area designation:
 - (a) Space extensive recreational commercial uses that require a rural location and/or cannot be located in a built-up settlement area such as golf courses, riding stables and equestrian centres, cross country ski facilities and other similar recreational uses, marine and recreational vehicle repair and storage. In addition to having large lot requirements, these uses normally rely upon naturalized areas as an integral part of the commercial enterprise.
 - (b) Tourism related commercial enterprises, such as [short-term accommodation that caters to the travelling public](#), that are in close proximity to a tourism resource or attraction.
 - (c) Rural commercial enterprises serving the surrounding agricultural community and rural residents that cannot be practically located in a built-up settlement area, such as farm implement dealers, kennels and veterinarian services or other similar uses.

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4.4 Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area

The County's proximity to numerous recreational and leisure opportunities creates a unique need to plan for a range of land uses. The Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational



Area is a designation that applies to generally developed areas along the Great Lakes Shoreline, Inland Lakes Shoreline, and Seasonal Recreational Areas including commercial campgrounds.

Much of the Great Lakes Shoreline Area along Lake Huron and Georgian Bay has been developed by way of seasonal and permanent residential uses, and, to a limited extent resort related commercial uses.

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All of the inland lakes in the County are environmentally sensitive due to their size, depth, rate of in-flow and rate of outflow. In some cases, the extent that many lakes may be at or above their natural carrying capacity.

Undeveloped land in Shoreline Areas is subject to environmental constraints and may not necessarily be suitable for development.

4.4.1 Objectives

(1) Promote the function of the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Areas as important for tourism and recreation in the County;

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(2) Provide for limited commercial development and seasonal and permanent residential development;

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(3) Increase and improve the amount of public access to waterways; and

(4) Protect the natural environment and ensure new development is compatible with existing land uses.

4.4.2 General Policies

(1) Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Areas policies are intended to function as parent policies to those areas with local Official Plans, and to provide detailed development polices for those areas without detailed development policies.

(2) Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Areas are recognized as a primary area for tourism and recreation, including the residential accommodations required to support these uses.

(3) New development will generally take the form of residential infilling in areas substantially developed or the rounding out of existing development. Such development must not be interpreted to include any development which would have the effect of significantly expanding the existing built-up area.

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- (4) New and existing resource-based recreational uses are permitted within Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Areas subject to the policies in Section 5.8.1.3 of this Plan. This Plan supports the continuation and expansion, where appropriate, of existing uses to accommodate new resource-based recreational development and uses.
- (5) Where expansions are considered beyond the boundaries of the existing designation, and amendment to this Plan will be required in accordance with the policies of Section 5 of this Plan.
- (6) Where zoning by-law provisions have been established to address site specific constraints further development will only be allowed in accordance with the policies of this plan or the local plan, if applicable. Development within the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area may only proceed when a complete and comprehensive evaluation of a proposed development proposal and its location with respect to the Natural Environment System, Hazard Land Areas, wildland fire risks, and emergency access has taken place. Depending upon the scale and intensity of a new development proposal, plans and/or studies may be required in order to determine the suitability of the development.
- (7) When reviewing development proposals in proximity to inland lakes, special attention must be paid to the impact of the proposed development on the carrying capacity of the lake;

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4.4.3 Permitted Uses in the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area Designation

The following uses are permitted in Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area designation:

- (1) Permitted uses on a lot in the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreation Areas designation include the following:
- (2) A Seasonal residential dwelling;
- (3) A year-round residential dwelling on roads that are maintained by the municipality on a year-round basis;
- (4) An Additional Residential Unit within a building containing a residential dwelling, subject to Section 5.7.3.



- (5) Public parks and open spaces;
- (6) Limited small-scale convenience type commercial uses serving residential developments;
- (7) Home occupations
- (8) Bed and breakfast establishments;
- (9) Places of worship; and
- (10) Travel Trailer parks and commercial campgrounds in accordance with Section 4.4.4.

4.4.4 Campgrounds

Campgrounds are an important contributor to tourism and economic activities within the County. New campgrounds may be permitted by way of a zoning by-law amendment in settlement areas or in the 'Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area' and by way of an amendment to this Plan in the Rural Area.

4.4.4.1 General Policies

The following policies apply to new campground proposals:

- (1) A campground may be permitted in a rural area through an amendment to this plan.
- (2) For campground proposals in the Rural Area, scenic recreational areas and Rural Areas with poorer soil classification will be considered.
- (3) Frontage and access to an existing public road is required.
- (4) Proximity to an existing paved road is required so as not to increase travel on gravel roads.
- (5) Development must be located outside of Hazard Land Areas, as shown on Schedule A.
- (6) Development must be in accordance with the setback requirements of the Minimum Distance Separation Formulae.
- (7) Development may not be located within 500 metres of an existing quarry, pit, landfill site, sewage lagoon, holding pond, or field used for the disposal of sewage



or holding pond wastes by spray irrigation or spreading.

(8) Campgrounds must be located outside of mineral resource areas identified on Schedule 'C'.

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(9) The scale and density of development in the campground shall be established in the local municipal zoning by-laws related to lot area, density, and future expansion.:

(10) Campgrounds may be subject to site plan control in accordance with the by-laws of the local municipality including, but not limited to, emergency service access, servicing, transportation access, and on-site amenities.

(11) Further development standards for campgrounds may be outlined in local official plans, where applicable and in local municipal zoning by-laws.

4.5 Niagara Escarpment Plan Area

(1) The purpose of the Niagara Escarpment Plan is to provide for the maintenance of the Niagara Escarpment and land in its vicinity substantially as a continuous natural environment, and to ensure only such development occurs as is compatible with that natural environment.

(2) Policies for the use of land within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area are set out in the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and are generally regulated by the Niagara Escarpment Commission through the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, and its regulations and local municipal zoning by-laws where Development Control is not in effect. All development, changes of use and lot creation within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area must conform to the Land Use Policies and Development Criteria of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and the appropriate policies of the Bruce County Official Plan and local Official Plans where they exist and are not in conflict with the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

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(3) Lands within the boundary of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, a World Biosphere Reserve, as illustrated on Schedule A and Schedule C are subject to the goals, objectives, policies and development criteria of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The boundary of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area as illustrated on Schedules A and C, and the designations shown on Schedule D, must be interpreted in accordance with Section 1.1 [Interpretation of Boundaries] of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

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(4) The Niagara Escarpment Plan contains Land Use Policies (Part 1) and Development Criteria (Part 2) which determine where and how proposed development should occur within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area. The policies and development criteria of the Niagara Escarpment Plan apply to all lands within its boundary and take precedence over the policies of the County Official Plan except where the policies of the County Official Plan are more restrictive than, but not in conflict with, the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Development Policy

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(5) Development proposals within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area are expected to conform to the criteria of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the applicable policies of this Plan, and any applicable Local Official Plan, and with the zoning provisions that would be in effect were the area subject to municipal zoning.

(6) Where a proposal meets the criteria of the Niagara Escarpment Plan but would deviate from zoning provisions that would be in effect if the proposal were subject to municipal zoning, the commission should consider:

- (a) Whether the deviation is necessary to address a site constraint;
- (b) Whether the development maintains the intent of this official plan and any local official plans in effect;
- (c) Whether the development maintains the intent of the zoning provisions that would be applicable if the proposal were subject to municipal zoning;
- (d) Whether the deviation is appropriate and desirable for the use of the land; and Whether the deviation is minor in nature.
- (e) Where the appropriate analogous zoning is unclear, Commission staff may seek clarification from the municipal zoning administrator.

4.6 Open Space Area

Bruce County has extensive areas of lands [that are owned or managed for conservation uses](#) which contribute significantly to the rural character of the County and are a major component of the tourism/recreation economy. [Some existing privately owned commercial recreational enterprises such as golf courses are also included](#). In order to preserve and enhance these areas, this Plan contains policies that recognize these areas and limit the range and intensity of uses permitted.

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4.6.1 General Policies

- (1) The use of Open Space Lands will maintain the integrity of the natural environment system in accordance with the applicable policies of this Plan.
- (2) Where Open Space Lands are under private ownership, this Plan will not be construed as implying that such areas are free and open to the general public. Further, it will not imply any obligation for the County or any other public agency to purchase the lands.
- (3) Public access to Publicly Owned Open Space Lands may be restricted due to their features and/or the nature of their former and ongoing uses.
- (4) Development will be compatible with its surrounding areas and adjacent land uses, including natural heritage features and areas. Where necessary, facilities will be designed to provide adequate spatial separation, buffer planting with native plants, landscaping and fencing to minimize potential adverse effects.
- (5) Adequate parking facilities will be established for outdoor recreational uses. Access points to recreational areas and associated parking will be designed to protect and conserve the natural environment and to minimize potential conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- (6) Wherever possible, communal as opposed to individual docking and boat launching facilities will be encouraged to reduce the disturbance caused to the bed of the water body and the visual obstructions along the shoreline.
- (7) Prior to development in the Open Space Lands designation, consultation will take place between the appropriate entity, the County, and the local municipality to consider such plans for development and to ensure that development is carried out in a manner which protects and conserves the natural environment system and minimizes social and economic impacts.

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4.6.2 Permitted Uses

The following uses are permitted in the Open Space designation:

- (1) Public parks and beaches;
- (2) Major open spaces;
- (3) Conservation areas, including wildlife observation points;



- (4) Boat launching, boat docking and marine facilities;
- (5) Sports grounds and other areas associated with public recreational uses, such as ballparks, tennis courts, playgrounds, golf driving ranges and golf courses;
- (6) Recreational trails for active transportation, such as walking, hiking, bicycling and cross-country skiing, and Open Space activities such as snowmobiling;
- (7) Agriculture, forestry, fish and wildlife management and other natural resources management uses;
- (8) Uses complementary and necessary to the permitted outdoor recreational land uses such as food concessions, general variety stores, offices, storage and service areas and buildings, and accessory residential accommodation for attendants; and
- (9) Public uses and public and private utilities.

4.7 Hazard Lands

Hazard lands are areas that represent imminent threat or risk to life and property. Hazard lands may include floodplains, steep or erosion prone slopes, organic or unstable soils, poorly drained areas, and lands along shorelines which can be impacted by flooding, erosion, and/or dynamic beach hazards or have poor drainage, or any other physical condition that is severe enough to pose a measurable risk if developed. While these lands are intended to be regulated so as to avoid natural hazards, they also contribute to the natural environment within the County.

[Hazard lands are identified in accordance with provincial direction.](#)

4.7.1 General Policies

- (1) No building, or structure, nor the placing or removal of fill of any kind whether originating on the site or elsewhere, nor land grading ~~is~~ permitted in the Hazard Land Area except where such building, structure, or fill ~~is~~ intended for flood or erosion control or maintenance and management of the natural environment, and ~~is~~ approved by the Conservation Authority where ~~one~~ exists, and the Chief Building Official.
- (2) The Regulatory Flood Standard is specific to the main watersheds in the County and shall be used to define the limits of floodplains associated with watercourses. A 'One Zone Concept' for floodplain management will generally be used, however,

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other floodplain management options including “Two-Zone” or Special Policy Area (S.P.A.) approaches will be permitted where where they are consistent with Provincial direction and approved by an applicable conservation authority and local municipality.

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(3) The Grey-Sauble Conservation Authority has conducted a study of the Sauble River Watershed. This study has determined that the Provincial standard for flood protection in the watershed can be reduced from the Regional (Timmins) Storm to that of the 1:100 Year Flood. However, due to known flood levels at Allenford due to ice jams, an exception to the 1:100 Year Storm level is required as follows:

(a) For lands within Lots 10, 11 and 12, Concession “A”, Township of Amabel and Lots 28, 29 and 30, Half Mile Strip, Township of Arran, in the vicinity of the Hamlet of Allenford, the Environmental Hazard Area will be delineated by a flood line equivalent to the Regional Storm flood line on mapping prepared by the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority dated 1993 to reflect the incidence of flooding due to the ice jams.

(b) Within the delineated flood line new development will generally be discouraged. Development may be permitted on an existing lot of record provided sufficient area exists outside the 1:100 year flood line to accommodate the proposed development. Development on an existing lot of record shall be protected from flooding to a level equivalent to the Regional Storm Flood.

(4) For lands next to watercourses and inland lakes where erosion or slope instability exists or potentially exists, all new development will be prohibited or restricted within the 100-year erosion limits and/or stable slope allowance plus appropriate setbacks. The actual boundaries of these erosion limits will be determined in consultation with the Conservation Authority and/or appropriate Provincial authority.

(5) Great Lakes Shoreline Hazard Areas includes shoreline floodplain, wave effects, erosion and dynamic beach features.

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(6) Municipalities and Conservation Authorities where they exist may undertake technical studies to further refine the limits of the Regulatory Shoreline for specific locations, in accordance with established standards and procedures.

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(7) Along watercourses and in low lying areas the remediation of hazard lands through filling in order to facilitate development is not permitted except where in

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accordance with an established 2-zone regulatory floodplain model.

- (8) In Shoreline areas, remediation of hazard lands through filling and/or shoreline hardening will be considered only in exceptional circumstances on existing and severely constrained lots where coastal engineering has been completed and where potential impacts to the natural environment system have been addressed in accordance with provincial direction and the policies of this plan. Such proposals will require a zoning by-law amendment or community planning permit where applicable.

4.7.2 Permitted Uses in the Hazard Lands Designation

The following uses are permitted in the Hazard Lands designation:

- (1) Permitted uses are restricted to conservation, forestry, wildlife areas, passive recreation but not including golf courses, public parks, non-intensive agriculture, horticulture, and hydroelectric power facilities. Only those uses which do not impair ecological processes and the environmental features so identified will be permitted.
- (2) Uses existing on the date of approval of this Plan may be recognized in the Zoning By-Law as legally conforming despite the Environmental Hazard Area Zone in the implementing Zoning By-Law. The expansion or enlargement of non-conforming uses is discouraged.
- (3) The replacement or rebuilding of a legal non-conforming building in accordance with Section 5.4

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4.7.3 Uses Prohibited in Hazard Lands Designation

The following uses are prohibited in the Hazard Lands designation:

- (1) Buildings and structures are generally not permitted, except structures supportive of passive recreation such as docks, stairs, guardrails, benches and shade structures may be permitted subject to approval from the applicable regulatory authority.
- (2) Emergency services facilities, including fire, police, and ambulance stations, which would be impaired during an emergency because of a hazard, will be prohibited in hazard lands.



Part 5 Implementation

This section describes how the Plan will be implemented. Local Official Plans may also rely upon this Plan as the applicable policy framework.

Reference within this Section, or elsewhere in this Plan, to “provincial direction” means any Act or Regulation of the Province of Ontario (e.g. the Planning Act or the Municipal Act and their regulations), Provincial Policies, (e.g. the Provincial Policy Statement), Guidelines published by the Province of Ontario (e.g. Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas or Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Formulae). The required level of conformity with Provincial Direction is as outlined in that direction or its enabling Act.

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5.1 Indigenous Peoples

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Recognizing and respecting Indigenous Peoples as holders of constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights within the municipal boundaries of Bruce County.

(1) Bruce County will:

- (a) Pursue stewardship of lands within the County in partnership and collaboration with Indigenous peoples, especially Saugeen Ojibway Nation, guided by the principles of trust, mutual respect, openness and transparency, responsiveness, and good faith;
- (b) Meaningfully engage in early and ongoing consultation at all stages in the development, implementation and amendment of this Plan, and in relation to all matters addressed in the Plan, including but not limited to development proposals; local Official Plans, Secondary Plans, Guidelines, Community Planning Permit Systems, Plans of Subdivision, and Consents;
- (c) Freely share and exchange all relevant County-held information as part of County consultation and engagement processes;
- (d) Fully inform itself of and give consideration to concerns and perspectives regarding potential and consequential impacts on Aboriginal and treaty rights, and on Indigenous peoples’ aspirations and needs; and



- (e) Meaningfully consider and demonstrably integrate, as part of County decision making processes for the Plan, reasonable responses to and accommodations of those concerns and perspectives.
- (2) The County commits to co-development of mutually acceptable processes and protocols that facilitate notification and ongoing engagement of Indigenous peoples in land use and related planning processes of the County.

5.2 Public Participation

- (1) Recognizing the importance of transparent and inclusive planning processes, the County is committed to meaningful and timely public participation in accordance with the Planning Act. The following policy outlines the County's approach to public engagement:
 - (a) For all planning applications the requirements of the Planning Act for public consultation and notice will be met. In addition, the approval authority will strive to make notices and information pertaining to these applications available online.
 - (b) Applicants will be required to submit a public consultation plan where required by provincial direction.
- (2) The County and/or local municipalities will provide a tailored consultation approach, where appropriate. In those cases, the following will be taken into consideration:
 - (a) A range of communication methods and activities to facilitate broad participation and input;
 - (b) Accessibility of venues for individuals of different ages and abilities;
 - (c) Engaging the community in gathering spaces, such as farmers markets, fairs, festivals, public libraries, parks, and other popular locations;
 - (d) Collaborating with local community organizations and service providers to encourage participation from diverse communities;
 - (e) Employing virtual, in-person, or hybrid meeting formats; and
 - (f) When relevant, conducting public consultation in proximity to the geographic areas most impacted or affected by the matter under consideration.



- (3) Alternative public consultation measures to notify prescribed persons and public bodies of proposed development may be adopted by By-Law outside of this Plan provided the By-Law is approved by the approval authority with appropriate public input.
- (4) The approval authority may delegate its authority to administer these procedures to an appointed committee, officer, or employee identified by by-law.

5.3 General Policies

- (1) County Council or its delegate and local municipalities have the power to administer various planning and development tools under the Planning Act, Municipal Act and other statutes as may be applicable to support the goals of this Plan. The County and Local Municipalities may use all such tools available under their authority to carry out the policies of this Plan.
- (2) Unless otherwise required by statute, an amendment to this Plan or a local official plan is not required to pass a by-law that implements this plan or a local official plan.
- (3) The following policies provide further direction for the use of these tools in addition to that provided by Provincial direction.
- (4) Some tools are available to carry out the policies of this plan that do not require further implementation policies to be provided in this plan. These tools are described separate from the policy text in boxes entitled “Did you Know?”.

5.4 Legal Non-Conforming Uses

- (1) This Plan recognizes that existing land uses may not conform with the designations and long-term vision for the County that is outlined in this Plan or that municipalities have outlined in local Official Plans. This plan recognizes rights to legal non-conforming uses outlined in the Planning Act.
- (2) An existing, legal, non-conforming use may continue regardless of this Plan and the zoning by-law as provided in the Planning Act. Legal non-conforming buildings or structures may be repaired, renovated, or reconstructed provided there are no increases to extent of non-conformity with permitted uses or non-compliance of the use, building, or structure with provisions of the zoning by-law. In the case of non-



conforming uses in natural hazard, including shoreline areas, reconstruction may occur in a different location provided it is further from the source of the natural hazard including the shoreline. Height and volume may be increased for the purpose of addressing floodproofing or other hazards.

(3) An existing non-conforming use may be extended, enlarged, or changed to a similar or more conforming use by the municipal Committee of Adjustment, as provided in the Planning Act. In considering such applications the following should be considered as the intent of this Plan.

(a) The development must be appropriate in scale and avoid new or increased adverse impacts, including visual impacts to the surrounding lands or the environment;

(b) Safe access must be evaluated relative to the degree of change or intensity of use;

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(c) Consultation with relevant conservation authorities will determine requirements for permits in accordance with Conservation Authority regulations;

(d) Each case will be reviewed individually by the Council or Committee of Adjustment and may be subject to site plan control and/ or conditions of approval, where permitted by the Planning Act; and

(4) For extension or enlargement in Hazard, including Shoreline areas, the following additional policies apply:

(a) The development should contribute to a net environmental gain through measures such as reducing hard surfaces, controlling runoff, and enhancing riparian vegetation;

(b) The potential for future compliant septic systems to be located away from the shoreline and sensitive environmental features should not be negatively affected;

(c) The setback from the highwater mark or source of a natural hazard should be maximised, considering the physical constraints of the lot, and proposals must not further increase deficiencies;

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(d) Efforts must be made to minimize the impact of new construction on the natural aesthetic and environmental qualities of the area;

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(e) The development must not negatively alter existing drainage patterns, directing runoff into nearby water bodies or neighboring properties. Proposals affecting waterfront lands must incorporate mitigation measures, including low-impact development, eavestroughing, vegetated buffers, and other features that manage runoff, improve water quality, and prevent off-site drainage; and

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(f) The amount of structural coverage within the immediate shoreline area and within the 30-meter zone adjacent to water bodies should be minimized. Options for offsetting environmental and aesthetic impacts by removing, downsizing, or relocating structures with deficient water setbacks must be explored.

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(5) A legal non-conforming use may be recognized through a local zoning by-law amendment if it meets the following criteria:

(a) The use is compatible with and does not harm or present risk to the surrounding land uses;

(b) The use does not affect the planned future use of nearby lands;

(c) The Minimum Distance Separation Formulae (MDS) has been considered;

(d) The use must not be located within an area affected by flooding or other natural hazard;

(e) The means of access to the public road network is acceptable to the appropriate authority; and

(f) Recognizing the legally existing use through a zoning by-law would not establish precedent to encourage similar nonconforming land uses within the municipality.

(6) In the Agriculture and Rural designations, where a use has been recognized as a legal use in accordance with Section 5.4, the Councils of the local municipalities may zone to permit the continuation, expansion or enlargement of a legally existing use, or a change to a similar use, provided that:

(a) The proposed use is permitted in either the 'Rural' or 'Agricultural' designations;



- (b) The existing use of the land, buildings or structures is a legal use currently recognized in the implementing comprehensive zoning by-law or is a legal nonconforming use under Section 34(9) of the Planning Act;
- (c) The proposed use does not require large volumes of water nor generate large volumes of effluent;
- (d) The proposed use is subject to any conditions that may be contained in a local Municipal Official Plan; and
- (e) The proposed use must be in appropriate proportion to the size of the existing use.

5.5 Archaeological Resources

- (1) The County’s Archaeological Management Plan will be used to identify and conserve archaeological heritage resources within the County.
- (2) Where **existing or potential** archaeological resources involve sites or burial grounds **related to Saugeen Anishnaabek within the County’s municipal boarders. Saugeen Anishnaabek** must be consulted regarding the manner in which these resources and features are to be dealt with.
- (3) In collaboration with the local municipalities, the County will assess, preserve or mitigate, where necessary, archaeological resources, as prescribed by the Province’s archaeological assessment standards and guidelines.

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5.6 Land Use Planning Tools

The County and the Local Municipalities are afforded various tools under the Planning Act, and other provincial statutes to implement Provincial Direction and the policies of this Plan. The County and Local Municipalities may use one or more of the following tools in this regard.

5.6.1 Local Official Plans

This Plan sets the framework for growth and development in Bruce County, including local municipalities. Local Municipalities may have Official Plans to further define areas for land uses and appropriate policies. Where they exist, the following policies apply to local official plans:



(1) Local municipalities must review their official plans as required by the Planning Act.

(2) County Council or its delegate is the approval authority for local official plans and plan amendments.

(3) Local Official Plans refer to the County Official Plan as the applicable policy framework as an alternative to including the same policies within the Local Official Plan.

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(4) Local Official Plans may also duplicate the policies of the County Official Plan and may contain policies that permit the incorporation of revisions to the County Official Plan to their duplicate policies by way of a resolution of Council.

(5) Local municipalities may adopt policies aligning with this Plan that are more restrictive, where permitted by the province.

(6) In case of conflict, the more restrictive policy will prevail, provided the more restrictive policy does not conflict with the intent of this plan or provincial direction.

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5.6.2 Secondary Plans

(1) Secondary Plans are detailed area-specific policies that provide guidance for long-term community development and growth management. They aim to offer a more comprehensive and specific level of land use planning than this Plan.

(2) Secondary Plans may be prepared for major developments or specific areas where a comprehensive approach is necessary to ensure organized and logical development. The preparation of Secondary Plans will involve consultation with the community and follow the procedures outlined in the Planning Act.

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(3) Upon approval, Secondary Plans become amendments to the local official plan or this plan if they are not within an area covered by a local official plan.

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(4) Secondary Plans will be implemented in accordance with provincial direction.

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5.6.3 Local Zoning By-laws

Zoning by-laws are important tools used by municipalities to implement land use regulations in accordance with the Planning Act. The following policies apply to zoning by-laws:

(1) Existing zoning by-laws must be amended where needed to conform with this plan and the applicable local official plan, as required by the Planning Act.

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- (2) Zoning by-laws may be amended through a process outlined in provincial direction and this Plan, provided the amendments conform to this Plan and any local Official Plan.
- (3) As provided by the Planning Act, Local municipalities may delegate the authority to pass minor by-laws to a committee or an authorized municipal officer, provided that all notice and public meeting requirements are met and in accordance with the following:
 - (a) Delegated authority is limited to the following:
 - (b) Applying or removing Holding 'H' symbols;
 - (c) Temporary use by-laws; and
 - (d) Minor administrative amendments, such as zoning amendments to reflect minor lot boundary adjustments.
- (4) Council may apply conditions to its delegation of authority.
- (5) Zoning by-laws may include provisions which implement the policies of this plan and allow other provisions to come into effect with the approval of certain planning applications. For example, a provision may be included in a zoning by-law to automatically prohibit a residence on the retained land following the approval of a consent for a surplus farm residence severance, and for zoning schedules to be updated accordingly.
- (6) Provincial Direction provides for alternative consultation processes for planning. Alternative processes for statutory public meeting requirements for minor amendments to Zoning By-Laws are provided as follows:
 - (a) A Statutory Public Meeting under the Planning Act is not required for minor administrative or technical revisions to the Zoning By-law as listed in Section 5.6.3.
 - (b) A Statutory Public Meeting under the Planning Act is not required for a minor amendment to the Zoning By-law that is only to remove all or part of a Hazard designation based on up-to-date floodplain limits issued by the Conservation Authority.
 - (c) The requirement for a Statutory Public Meeting under the Planning Act may be waived for a minor amendment to the Zoning By-law if no public comments are



received within 30-days after the issuance of a statutory notice of complete application.

5.6.4 Temporary Use By-laws

Municipalities may pass temporary use By-Laws in accordance with the Planning Act.

5.6.5 Interim Control By-laws

A Local Council may pass an interim control by-law in accordance with the Planning Act.

5.6.6 Site Plan Control

- (1) The Site Plan Control policies of this Plan may form the basis of policies for local municipalities within Bruce County, and therefore local official plans are not required to establish Site Plan Control policies. Local Municipalities may establish additional, or more detailed Site Plan Control policies.
- (2) All land use designations in this Plan are proposed as Site Plan Control Areas, in accordance with the definition of development provided by the Planning Act.
- (3) Specific areas and uses where Site Plan Control will be applied as well as criteria for exemption, will be designated by By-Laws.
- (4) Applicants must provide necessary information and materials to the local municipality to address matters within the scope of Site Plan Control as outlined in the Planning Act, including an application and site plan drawing, conformity with the Zoning By-law and applicable development standards, assessments or reports, and details concerning land abutting County highways. The approval authority may also require any information outlined in Section 5.12.
- (5) Applicants may be required to provide land for the widening of highways that are under the jurisdiction of the County as described in this plan in Schedule B at no expense to the County in accordance with the Planning Act.

5.6.7 Community Planning Permit System

- (1) In accordance with the Planning Act, municipalities may use a Community Planning Permit System to regulate development.
- (2) The following policies outline the development and implementation of a Community Planning Permit System:



- (a) All designations within the County or Local Official Plans may be Community Planning Permit areas as established by By-Law in accordance with Provincial direction.
- (b) The Council of a local municipality or its delegate is the approval authority for a Community Planning Permit.
- (c) The scope of the authority that may be delegated by a Council to its delegate is not limited by this plan.
- (d) A Community Planning Permit may be used to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan or a Local Official Plan.
- (e) Any use that conforms to this Official Plan and a Local Official Plan may be considered as a class of development or land use that can be permitted through a Community Planning Permit or exempted from the requirement to obtain a permit.
- (f) Conditions and evaluation criteria may be specified within the Community Planning Permit Planning System By-Law provided those criteria conform with this Official Plan and the Local Municipal Official Plan.
- (g) Complete application requirements may be specified within the Community Planning Permit System By-law and may include the complete application requirements outlined in Section 5.12.

5.6.8 Inclusionary Zoning

- (1) If permitted by the Province, inclusionary zoning may be implemented in one or more municipalities in Bruce County to require affordable housing units through the development process and ensure their affordability for a specified time period.
- (2) Local municipalities are encouraged to partner with the County in implementing inclusionary zoning, where available.

5.6.9 Community Improvement

- (1) Any area within the County can be designated as a community improvement project area for the purpose of carrying out comprehensive improvements in specific areas of a community.
- (2) These improvements are meant to enhance the social, economic and/ or



environmental vitality of the community and can involve various projects, including but not limited to improving the natural or built environment, and building affordable housing.

- (3) Local municipalities are encouraged to establish Community Improvement Areas and adopt Community Improvement Plans in accordance with the Planning Act and provincial direction and the policies of this plan. Municipalities may, but are not required to, provide additional Community Improvement policies within their official plans.
- (4) County Council may make grants or loans to one or more local municipalities, for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan.
- (5) When authorized by the provincial government, County Council may identify a community improvement project area or areas for purposes prescribed by provincial direction such as affordable housing. When Bruce County is authorized to implement a community improvement plan local municipalities may make loans or grants to Bruce County for the purpose of carrying out a community improvement plan.

5.6.10 Heritage Conservation

- (1) Local municipalities may identify and designate properties having heritage value in accordance with Provincial direction.
- (2) Local municipalities may identify and designate one or more areas of their municipality as a Heritage Conservation District, in accordance with process and criteria outlined in the provincial direction. Ontario Heritage Act.
- (3) Prior to designating a Heritage Conservation District, a local municipality will complete a Heritage Conservation District Study that meets the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- (4) A local municipality may pass a By-Law to designate the area of interest as a Heritage Conservation Study Area for up to as outlined in provincial direction one year while the study is being completed and require applicants for development within the Study Area to meet applicable requirements as authorized by provincial direction complete a Heritage Impact Statement as part of a complete application submitted during that time.



5.6.11 Holding Provisions

- (1) A local municipality can use a zoning by-law to apply a "Holding H" Symbol to ensure that specific criteria or conditions are met before allowing development, subject to the policies of this Plan, the local official plan, and the implementing zoning by-law.
- (2) When the "Holding H" Symbol is applied to certain lands through a zoning by-law, the by-law may specify uses that are permitted while the holding provision is in effect, such as:
 - (a) Agricultural uses, excluding livestock and new building construction;
 - (b) Existing uses that were legal at the time the Holding By-law was passed;
 - (c) Open space and conservation-related uses; and
 - (d) Other appropriate uses as identified by the Council, as long as they do not conflict with or limit the future development potential of the land, or cause land disturbance that may negatively impact archaeological resources or the natural environment, where applicable, and are compatible with neighboring land uses.
- (3) If in the opinion of the Council of the local municipality or their delegate the criteria for removing the holding have been met, the holding may be removed by amendment to the Zoning By-law.
- (4) Criteria for removal of a "H" Holding provision may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (a) Availability of services consistent with the municipal servicing strategy;
 - (b) Extension of roads, or where agreements are in place with respect to permanent access; or
 - (c) The completion of studies or plans including but not limited to, archaeology, natural heritage, stormwater management.
- (5) By-laws may use specific or general holding provisions to offer direction on applicable criteria. The criteria for removing the "H" Holding should be clearly stated in the Zoning By-Law provisions used to apply the "H" holding.



5.6.12 Community Benefits Charges

Local Municipalities may implement Community Benefits Charges in accordance with the Planning Act.

5.6.13 Maintenance and Occupancy By-laws

- (1) A local Council may pass maintenance and occupancy by-laws in accordance with Provincial legislation and in accordance with the policies of this plan.
- (2) A local official plan may have more detailed or restrictive maintenance and occupancy policies than those outlined in this plan.

5.6.14 Land Acquisition

The County or a local municipality may acquire land to implement any policy of this Plan in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, Municipal Act, or any other Act.

5.7 General Development Criteria

The following criteria apply to development within the County.

5.7.1 Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan

- (1) Where a Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan has been prepared as part of a master planning process in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment or similar process under the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Act or similar provincial direction all development approvals must be consistent with that Plan.
- (2) Where a Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan has not been prepared in accordance with Section 5.7.1.1 then:
 - (a) A Water and Sewer Servicing Study may be required at the discretion of the County in support of:
 - (b) A Local Official Plan Amendment proposing major new development on lands that have not been reviewed as part of a Multi-year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan or similar type of study; or
 - (c) An application to expand a settlement area boundary where the lands to be incorporated within the settlement area have not been previously reviewed as part of a Multi-Year Sewage and Water Servicing Plan; or

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- (d) Any planning application that has the potential for significant environmental health risks that need to be addressed; or
- (e) Any planning application which has the potential to significantly affect the carrying capacity of the regional groundwater system in providing potable drinking water and/or the assimilative capacity of a receiving water body for sewage waste disposal.

(3) The policy direction for an Official Plan Amendment, or planning approval of any type, **must** be consistent with the conclusions and recommendations of the Water & Sewer Servicing Study and any other background studies carried out in support of the Study.

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(4) The Water & Sewer Servicing Study **must** be completed to the satisfaction of the County **and** the local municipality **and may be required to** include the following:

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- (a) An assessment of the appropriate type and level of servicing necessary to support future growth and development including financing, phasing and administrative requirements;
- (b) An analysis of the hydrology and hydrogeology to determine the capability of surface and groundwater water resources to provide sufficient quantity and quality of water supply and to accept sewage effluent in consideration of the ecological function of water resources in achieving the Environmental Goals and Objectives of this plan;
- (c) Where municipal services exist an assessment of existing servicing systems, their capacities and their condition, and identify requirement upgrades, and/or expansion;
- (d) Where subsurface sewage treatment and disposal is proposed, an assessment of the long term suitability of the soil conditions;
- (e) An identification of existing or potential restrictions to future growth and development;
- (f) An assessment of the potential impact of new growth and development on the natural environment; and
- (g) An assessment of the economic feasibility of the proposed servicing.



5.7.2 Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems

- (1) Bruce County recognizes the potential role for advanced wastewater treatment technology and that this technology is constrained with respect to municipal capacity to enforce the performance of this technology.
- (2) This Plan recognizes the authority of the Ontario Building Code to regulate wastewater treatment systems as outlined in the Building Code.
- (3) Generally where development is proposed at a scale that requires advanced wastewater treatment technologies in order to maintain groundwater quality the development should proceed by way of a clustered or communal wastewater treatment system wherein performance is regulated by the province through an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) or its equivalent.
- (4) Where a proposal for development requires the use of advanced wastewater treatment technologies in order for the resulting wastewater to meet water quality standards and would not be subject to an ECA then proponents may be required to enter into an agreement with the municipality for the monitoring of the system's performance and to provide securities to support municipal capacity to ensure system performance.
- (5) Reliance on advanced wastewater treatment systems to support intensification will only be permitted in Settlement areas and will not be supported in Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational areas, Agricultural, or Rural areas.
- (6) Where there is no legal mechanism to support a registerable agreement in respect the effluent quality of wastewater treatment then development reliant upon advanced wastewater treatment systems will not be supported.

5.7.3 Small Scale Development on Private Services

This plan recognizes there are large areas including some settlement areas or areas therein without municipal wastewater treatment infrastructure and identifies opportunities for a risk-managed approach to permitting minor development proposals on private wastewater treatment systems.

As such:

- (1) An additional residential unit proposed on a lot that is smaller than 0.4 hectares in size, or 2 additional residential units on a lot smaller than 0.6 hectares with private onsite sewage disposal must be supported by a Nitrate Study.



- (2) Notwithstanding (1) a dwelling or use existing as of the date of passage of this plan may be converted renovated or redeveloped to contain one or more additional residential units provided that the changes would not trigger a septic system performance review under the Building Code Act relative to the dwelling or septic system in place as of the date of passage of this plan.
- (3) Notwithstanding (1), outside of Settlement areas and Shoreline and Seasonal Recreation areas, an Additional Residential Unit may be permitted on an undersized lot where there is at least 30 metres from the septic system to any drinking water supply.

5.7.4 Stormwater Management

- (1) New development will comply with the stormwater management standards in general acceptance at the time a development application is made, through consultation with [the County and](#) appropriate agencies.
- (2) Where viable, the County will support the integration of low impact development techniques to manage stormwater.
- (3) Planning for stormwater management will:
 - (a) Be integrated with planning for water and wastewater servicing and ensure that systems are optimized, feasible and financially viable over the long term;
 - (b) Minimize, or, where possible, prevent increases in contaminant loads;
 - (c) Minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate;
 - (d) Mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment; and
 - (e) Maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces.

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5.7.5 Provincial Minimum Distance Separation

- (1) New land uses, expansions of non-agricultural uses, and new or expanding livestock facilities must comply with the MDS Guideline and Formulae.
- (2) Cemeteries that are closed, receive low levels of visitation, or are not connected to a place of worship are considered a Type A land use.
- (3) MDS is not required to be applied for the establishment of on farm diversified uses



or agricultural related uses except where the use will introduce the potential for conflict with surrounding uses due to a high level of human activity, including but not limited to, a high number of visitors or overnight accommodations.

- (4) Relief from MDS requirements can be obtained through a Minor Variance or Zoning By-law Amendment. Where relief is sought, the intent and purpose of the Plan is to consider the circumstances where relief is appropriate as outlined in the MDS Guideline and Formulae.

5.7.6 Contaminated Lands

- (1) To assist in identifying contaminated sites, development applications may be required to complete a Record of Site Condition.
- (2) Where a contaminated site has been identified, a remediation plan should be prepared in accordance with Provincial policies, regulations and guidelines prior to approval.
- (3) Remediation of a contaminated site will be required as a condition of the approval of any development applications and will be completed to the satisfaction of the Ministry of the Environment and the County.
- (4) Sensitive land uses are to be buffered and/or separated to prevent adverse effects from odour, noise, and other contaminants, and to minimize risk to public health and safety.

5.7.7 County By-laws

All development must satisfy County By-laws that regulate:

- (1) The construction or alteration of entrances;
- (2) Structural setbacks for the installation of signs on or adjacent to County Roads; and
- (3) Drainage onto County rights-of-way.

5.7.8 Preservation of Soil

Soil must be preserved to support a strong agricultural industry. Soil must not be removed within the County except in accordance with Provincial direction.

5.7.9 Development on Private Roads

- (1) New development on existing private roads may be considered by the local

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municipality provided that:

- (a) Such development occurs on lots which existed on the date of adoption of this Plan and which could legally be conveyed on that date;
 - (b) The development application conforms to all other policies of this Plan; and
 - (c) The applicable zoning regulations are satisfied.
- (2) This Plan does not prohibit development of Plans of Condominium using private roadways of a standard acceptable to the local municipality.

5.8 Specific Use Development Criteria

The following policies establish specific development criteria for uses permitted in certain land use designations established by this Plan.

5.8.1 Specific Use Development Criteria in the Countryside

In addition to all other policies of this Plan, the following development criteria also apply to certain uses permitted in the Countryside.

5.8.1.1 Agriculture-related Uses

- (1) Agriculture related uses, as defined by the Provincial Direction, may be permitted subject to the following criteria:
- (2) Be directly related to local farm operations and related to commercial scale agriculture as a primary activity and not have as a primary activity provision of goods or services that are normally required by the public;
- (3) If proposed in an Agriculture designation, demonstration that the use cannot be reasonably located in a rural designation and is required in proximity to agricultural operations; Conformity with criteria outlined in Section 5.8.1.3.

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5.8.1.2 On-farm Diversified Uses

On-farm Diversified Uses, as defined by the Provincial Direction, may be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- (1) On-farm diversified uses may be permitted, provided that:
 - (a) The use is located within the limits of a farm operation;



- (b) The use is limited to no more than 2% of the land area of the farm in accordance with Provincial direction; and
 - (c) The use remains secondary to the agricultural uses of the property.
- (2) On farm diversified uses are not subject to Provincial Minimum Distance Separation I, except those that attract a high number of visitors or include overnight accommodations. Uses that attract a high number of visitors or include overnight accommodations must be regulated by the local Zoning By-Law and meet the requirements of MDS as a Type A land use.
 - (3) Home occupations and home industries are permitted as an on-farm diversified use. Zoning By-Laws will establish regulations for the size, scale and operations of these uses.
 - (4) For the purposes of this Plan, a home occupation is a commercial use carried on within the primary residence, and does not change the character of the building as a residence.
 - (5) For the purposes of this Plan, a home industry is a small-scale, industrial use and is conducted within an accessory building located on the same property as the owner/operator's principal residence.

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5.8.1.3 Commercial and Industrial Uses

The following criteria apply to commercial and industrial uses within the Rural Area designation and to applications to amend the County Official Plan to permit Commercial and Industrial Uses not otherwise permitted in the Agriculture designation, where permitted by provincial direction.

5.8.1.3.1 General Development Criteria

- (1) An application to develop a non-agricultural use in the Rural Area Designation must demonstrate:
 - (2) Not adversely impact surrounding agricultural operations;
 - (3) Be sensitive to the natural environment by minimizing impacts on water courses, wetlands, groundwater resources or other environmentally sensitive features;
 - (4) Be individually serviced with a private water supply and sewage disposal system which comply with the requirements of the appropriate approval authority;



(5) The commercial or industrial operation cannot reasonably be located in an urban, or hamlet industrial area;

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(6) The industrial or commercial use must not require large volumes of water or generate large volumes of effluent; and,

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(7) Conformity with provincial direction related to separation of industrial and sensitive uses which may include distance separation and landscaping, fencing and site design.

(a) Adequacy of the transportation system for the additional volume and type of traffic generated by the use;

(b) Adequacy of on-site parking and loading spaces;

(c) Conformity with the MDS formula where applicable;

(d) Conformity with provincial direction and this plan related to the natural environment system.

(e) Conformity with provincial direction and this plan related to natural and human made hazards.

5.8.1.3.2 Design and Site Plan Criteria

(1) Minimum lot size will be dependent on the nature of the use, the topography and drainage, and the method of sewage treatment and disposal.

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(2) It is not intended nor likely that rural industrial or rural commercial uses will be provided with municipal water or sewers. Permitted uses must not require or create large volumes of water and must be capable of being serviced by private septic and wells.

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(3) The method of servicing will be determined on an individual basis and will be assessed by a qualified individual, based upon the type and volume of waste produced, the size of the proposed lot and the nature of the receiving soils.

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(4) The following site development standards must be satisfactorily addressed by all rural industrial and/or rural commercial development proposals:

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(a) Landscaping may be required between any parking areas, service buildings, roadways, and abutting uses;

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- (b) All outdoor storage will be located to the rear or side of the main building on the lot and will be fenced or suitably screened from adjacent uses; and
- (c) Signs will be limited in number, designed to be functional and avoid visual cluster and distraction, and where possible, be consolidated on shared sign structures.

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- (5) Adequate off-street parking and loading facilities will be provided; off-street parking, driveways and/or loading areas will be suitably screened or buffered through the application of fences, berms, or other appropriate landscape treatment.

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- (6) Direct access must be provided onto a public road of suitable standard to accommodate any increased traffic generated by the use.

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- (7) The effects of rural industrial and/or rural commercial development on adjacent uses will be minimized by:

- (a) Providing distance separation and for the construction and maintenance of buffer strips and/or screening between such uses;
- (b) The arrangement of lighting facilities and commercial signs to minimize impact on surrounding uses;
- (c) Ensuring safe vehicular access and that off-street parking facilities do not adversely affect surrounding uses;
- (d) Requiring that new commercial uses are set back from abutting agricultural buildings in accordance with the Minimum Distance Separation; and
- (e) Implementation of measures required to conform to provincial direction

- (8) The following site plan criteria will apply:

- (a) Adequate distance separation, buffer planting, landscaping, and/or fencing and site design will be required between any industrial and or commercial use and adjacent sensitive uses.
- (b) Specific standards for distance separation and buffer planting will be set out in the local Zoning By-Law.
- (c) Other measures not capable of being addressed by zoning, such as landscaping, may be dealt with through site plan control.



5.8.1.4 Additional Residential Units and Garden Suites

- (1) Additional Residential Units or Garden Suites, may be permitted together with a primary farm residence on a farm lot in accordance with the policies of Section 3.2.6.

5.8.1.5 Temporary Farm Accommodations

- (1) Temporary farm accommodation, as a building or park model trailer used for seasonal accommodation of workers is permitted in addition to the permitted primary residence and additional residential unit(s).

5.8.1.6 Mineral Aggregate Resources

- (1) Schedule 'C' shows primary and secondary sand and gravel resources and primary bedrock resources as derived from mapping completed by the Department of Mines and Northern Development and utilized by the Ministry of Natural Resources in its Aggregate Resources Inventory.

(2) With the exception of lands within settlement areas or the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreation Area land uses which would hinder the future extraction of the resource are directed away from mineral aggregate resources identified on Schedule C.

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- (3) Extraction of mineral aggregate and bedrock resources are subject to the Aggregate Resources Act.

5.8.1.6.2 Permitted Uses

(1) Within the Mineral Resource Areas shown on Schedule 'C', uses in accordance with the underlying land use designation on Schedule 'A' are permitted subject to the policies of this Plan.

(2) Land Uses, which would sterilize the mineral resource, are not permitted except within an existing settlement area or the Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area.

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- (3) When seeking an approval for a new pit or quarry or the expansion of an existing pit or quarry, the permitted uses associated with such pit or quarry are deemed to include sand and gravel pits, quarries, aggregate storage areas, crushing plants, concrete batching plants and saw houses as well as uses directly related and essential to the primary operation.

5.8.1.6.3 General Policies



- (1) The expansion of an existing licensed pit or quarry may proceed by way of an Amendment to the Local Zoning By-Law.
- (2) The establishment of a new pit or quarry within an identified Mineral Resource Area will require an Amendment to the Local Zoning By-Law.
- (3) Following a local Zoning approval to permit a new or expanded pit or quarry a County Schedule illustrating location of the pit or quarry will be updated to reflect the approval.
- (4) The establishment of a new pit or quarry outside of an identified Mineral Aggregate Resource area or within a 'Core' area of the Natural Heritage System will require an amendment to this plan.
- (5) Prior to making a decision on an Amendment to the Official Plan or Zoning By-Law to permit a new extractive use, or to allow for the expansion of an existing extractive use, the applicant must provide information in support of the application addressing the issues outlined below.
- (6) all applications to establish a pit or quarry must be accompanied by a justification report for a Class "A" license or Site Plan for a Class "B" license, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Aggregate Resources Act.
- (7) In addition to the requirements of the Aggregate Resources Act, the applicants must also prepare a report addressing the following issues:
 - (a) Impact on adjacent land uses and residents;
 - (b) Impact on the physical and natural environment, including ground water and surface water impacts, noise, vibration and dust impacts;
 - (c) Compatibility for agriculture and other land uses;
 - (d) Impact on the transportation system including planning for haul routes and road upgrades, if necessary;
 - (e) Impact on any existing or potential municipal water supply resource areas;
 - (f) The manner in which the operation will be carried out;

Deleted: .1 All existing licensed or approved pits and quarries are designated on Schedule 'A' by a symbol.

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(g) The nature of the rehabilitation work that is proposed, including opportunities to advance comprehensive rehabilitation planning in areas of with clusters of aggregate extraction operations;

(h) If the proposal is located outside of the Mineral Aggregate Resource Area on Schedule 'C', the applicant must demonstrate the quantity and quality of the resource on the proposed site;

(i) Any other matters deemed necessary by Council; and,

(j) When there is a proposal to extract below the water table an assessment of the impacts on the ground water will be required and the results will have to demonstrate no negative impact on quality, quantity and other uses of the resource.

(8) In considering these matters, the evaluation will be premised on the fact that, notwithstanding the need for mineral aggregate, it is essential to ensure that aggregate extraction is carried out with minimal social and environmental disruption.

5.8.1.6.4 Locational Criteria

(1) New pits or quarries and expansions of existing pits or quarries are subject to the following locational criteria:

(2) In order to preserve the scenic beauty and amenity of the area, extractive operations will be screened from public view.

(3) Gravel pits within 125 m and stone quarries within 215 m of any residential zone or structure used for human habitation shall not normally be permitted. Pits or quarries proposed within such areas will require an amendment to this Plan. Any proposed amendment to these setbacks must be supported by an impact study addressing noise, dust, groundwater and traffic impact on the neighbouring residential use or uses.

(4) No excavation or processing may be allowed within 15 metres from the boundary of the site, or 30 metres from any County highway or municipal road or residential structure, except where two licensed operations abut each other. Where appropriate, increased setbacks may be established in the local Zoning By-Law.

(5) Where two mineral aggregate extractive operations are separated by a Municipal

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road, and subject to provincial direction, the Council having jurisdiction may allow relief of compliance requirements to waive the required setbacks from the road, permit the road to be re-routed, permit the material under the road to be removed and provide for the replacement of the Municipal road at a lower elevation.

- (6) No aggregate extraction area is permitted within 50 metres of any body of water or watercourse, or Hazard Land Area;
- (7) In the Agricultural area, on prime agricultural land, extraction of mineral aggregates is permitted as an interim use provided that rehabilitation of the site will be carried out whereby substantially the same areas and same average soil quality for agriculture are restored where reasonably possible.
- (8) In the Agricultural area, on prime agricultural land, if extraction is proposed below the water table and complete agricultural rehabilitation is not required, only if it is demonstrated that:
 - (a) There is substantial quantity of mineral aggregate below the water table warranting extraction;
 - (b) Or the depth of planned extraction in a proposed quarry makes restoration of pre-extractive agricultural capabilities unfeasible;
 - (c) There will be minimal impacts on surrounding wells and ponds due to extraction below the water table;
 - (d) In those areas remaining above the water table following extraction, agricultural rehabilitation will be maximized; and

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5.8.1.7 Institutional Uses

Schools, places of worship and cemeteries, are permitted within the CountysideArea where such a use services the immediate rural community which relies on horse drawn vehicles as their primary means of transportation, subject to the following policies.

- (1) Institutional uses are permitted without an amendment to this Plan, and will be placed in a separate zoning category in the local municipality's comprehensive zoning by-law provided:
- (2) There is a demonstrated need for the additional use within the planning horizon of this Plan; and

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(3) Reasonable justification for the selected site has been provided. Information will be provided by the applicant to justify the location of the selected site to the satisfaction of the planning authority [subject to the following criteria, in order of priority:](#)

- (a) First Priority – Locating the proposed use on lands within a designated settlement area such as a Hamlet;
- (b) Second Priority – Co-locating the proposed use with an existing zoned institutional use or re-using an existing zoned institutional use in the vicinity of the community;
- (c) Third Priority – Locating the proposed use on lands designated Rural Area or [Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area](#);
- (d) Fourth Priority – Locating the proposed use within an existing farm building cluster; and
- (e) Fifth Priority – Locating the proposed use on lands of the lowest Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Land Capability Class.

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(4) A planning authority will only consider permitting the use in a lower priority location when it has been demonstrated the use cannot be located in a higher priority location.

(5) An amendment to the local municipality's Comprehensive Zoning By-law will be required to establish an institutional use excepting, however, when the proposed lands are currently zoned for such a use. In the case where a zoning by-law amendment is required, the rezoned area will be no larger than the minimum area of land needed to accommodate the proposed use/buildings(s), septic system, parking and any other related outdoor amenity (e.g. play area).

(6) Local municipal Councils should consider adopting Temporary Use By-laws for such institutional uses, where appropriate.

(7) Schools, places of worship and cemeteries are required to satisfy the minimum distance separation provisions of Minimum Distance Separation I. The minimum distance separation provisions of Minimum Distance Separation I are not applicable in regard to an existing livestock facility or existing manure or material storage where a school, place of worship, or cemetery is proposed to be located on the same lot as the livestock facility or manure or material storage.



(8) A new cemetery on a separate lot of record used to service a community, which relies on horse drawn transportation will be considered a "Type A" land use for the purpose of calculating MDS I and MDS II requirements.

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(9) In cases where local municipalities have a Site Plan Control By-law, the proposed school, place of worship and cemetery may be subject to Site Plan Control.

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(10) New lots for schools, places of worship and cemeteries for the rural community which rely on horse drawn vehicles as their primary means of transportation are discouraged but may be permitted provided:

(a) The need for the new lot has been justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority according to the priority of location set out in Section 5.8.1.7;

(b) The planning authority is satisfied long term leases of not more than 21 years is not a viable option;

(c) The size of the lot is kept to a minimum and will only be large enough to accommodate the proposed use/building(s), sewage disposal system, parking and any other related outdoor amenity (e.g. play area). All policies of Section 5.10 [Land Division Policies] and Section 5.10.3 [Consents to Sever Land in Agricultural Areas] also apply;

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(d) The local municipality's Comprehensive Zoning By-law is amended to limit the use of subject lands to the intended institutional uses; and

(e) At the time the approval is given for the creation of the new lot, the planning authority stipulates, pursuant to Subsection 50(12) of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990 (as amended) that Subsection 50(3) or 50(5) of the Act applies to any subsequent conveyance of, or transaction involving, the new lot.

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(11) Recognizing that the need for some institutional uses i.e., schools etc. in a given location may change over time, it is the intent of this Plan that when the institutional use is no longer required by the horse drawn carriage community that the institutional use be discontinued, and the land be returned to agricultural use.

5.8.2 Community Facilities

(1) New community facilities are intended to be multi-use in nature, functioning as focal points for the neighborhood or community.

(2) When a new community facility is established, compatibility with surrounding uses



will be addressed through setbacks, landscaping, fencing, site design and architectural design.

- (3) Sufficient site area will be provided for the proposed development and future expansions, including parking, and landscaping.
- (4) Where community facilities are co-located with other facilities or open space, shared parking may be considered, where appropriate.
- (5) Most community facilities will be located in Primary or Secondary Settlement Areas to support the development of complete communities. Smaller-scale Facilities serving local populations may be located in Hamlets.
- (6) Facilities supporting people with health vulnerabilities should always be located in proximity to emergency medical services and health care facilities consistent with the needs of their clientele.
- (7) Unless otherwise noted in local Official Plans, a new community facility can be established through a zoning by-law amendment.
- (8) A traffic study may be required to address increased traffic associated with a community facility use.
- (9) Community facilities will be located in accordance with the following:
 - (a) in proximity to, or adjacent to other community facilities or open space uses that function to support the facility or are supported by the facility.
 - (b) in proximity to arterial or collector roads with adequate vehicular and pedestrian access.
 - (c) located to minimize travel time for the existing and anticipated service area population, including consideration of pedestrian access.
- (10) Community Facilities may be subject to Site Plan Control.
- (11) Further community-specific or more detailed policies may be provided in local official plans.

5.8.3 Energy Generation and Storage Facilities

- (1) Bruce County plays a leading role in meeting Ontario's energy needs. Where Energy Generation and Storage facilities are subject to this plan, they are generally



expected to proceed by way of amendments to local zoning by-laws, with an amendment to this plan required only where a project would have land use policy impacts that apply to an adjacent municipality. Through a planning application process proponents are expected to address, to the satisfaction of the approval authority:

- (a) Rationale for the location in terms of proximity to energy sources and transmission / distribution infrastructure with sufficient capacity,
- (b) Separation/buffering from sensitive land uses,
- (c) Ability to address safety and emergency planning considerations for the technologies used,
- (d) Ability to avoid potential environmental impacts,
- (e) Alignment with provincial direction and broader land use planning objectives such as maintaining agricultural and natural heritage systems and accommodating settlement area growth when and where necessary.
- (f) Siting, design, and operational considerations including:
 - (i) Detailed fire safety and emergency plans,
 - (ii) Noise and light pollution,
 - (iii) traffic and site access,
 - (iv) impact on agricultural or environmentally significant lands,
 - (v) impacts to the natural environment, including monitoring,
 - (vi) end-of-life project decommissioning and site restoration

5.9 County-Approved Planning Applications

County Council or its delegate has the authority from the Province to approve various Planning Act applications, such as Plan of Subdivision, Plan of Condominium, Part Lot Control By-laws, and Consent for land severance. The following policies establish direction on the County's role in the planning and development application and approval process, [and when an amendment is required to this Plan.](#)



5.9.1 Applications to Amend the Bruce County Official Plan

- (1) The policies of this Plan can be changed through a County Official Plan Amendment in accordance with the Provincial direction and the policies of this Section. Changes may be required to:
 - (a) Modify the types of land uses allowed in this Plan.
 - (b) Redesignate specific lands.
 - (c) Amend policies if their interpretation or impact changes.
- (2) Applicants seeking to amend this Plan must address the following to the County's satisfaction:
 - (a) Compliance with provincial direction;
 - (b) Alignment with the intent of this Plan and other relevant County plans, guidelines, and by-laws;
 - (c) Sufficient infrastructure and community services as outlined in this Plan;
 - (d) Potential for financial impact on the County or local municipalities;
 - (e) The proposal's effect on the County's ability to meet density targets set in this Plan; and
 - (f) Any additional criteria set by the County in consultation with relevant authorities.
- (3) Applications to amend this Plan will be circulated as prescribed by provincial direction and in accordance with Section 5.1 and Section 5.2.
- (4) County Council or its delegate will also consider the cumulative impact of past amendments when evaluating new applications to ensure the policy objectives of this Plan are met.

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5.9.2 Development Applications

- (1) County Council or its delegate is responsible for approving Plans of Subdivision or Plans of Condominium as per the Planning Act. Applications are expected to conform with the policies of this Plan and any applicable Local Official Plan.



- (2) For any new major development proposal, the applicant must demonstrate to County Council or its delegate and the local municipality how the proposed development will impact the municipal servicing system. This includes having sufficient density to efficiently provide infrastructure and community services.
- (3) A Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium may be required when the application meets one or more of the following criteria as deemed applicable by the County:
 - (a) Requires new roads, extensions of existing roads, or municipal infrastructure/services;
 - (b) Creates four or more lots at once, or the retained land contains sufficient developable area for four or more lots in total to be created;
 - (c) Needs centralized services instead of on-site services for individual lots;
 - (d) Requires various studies, reports, and justifications to assess its suitability;
 - (e) Long-term monitoring and implementation of development conditions is required; and/or
 - (f) It is deemed in the public interest to require a plan of subdivision to ensure proper integration and compatibility with neighboring lands.
- (4) An application for Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium must address the following matters to the County's satisfaction:
 - (a) Matters of provincial interest according to Provincial direction including but not limited to the criteria for plans of Subdivision in the Planning Act;
 - (b) Meeting the form and density requirements for this plan including the following:
 - (i) Residential development on municipal or communal services must have a density of no less than 15 'dwelling units' per 'gross developable hectare' (6.1 dwelling units per acre). "Gross Developable hectare" shall mean the total area of the proposed development minus the area of any lands designated or zoned Hazard, Natural Environment, Natural Hazard, or similar constraint in the County of Bruce Official Plan, local Official Plan or Comprehensive Zoning By-law. Where justified and appropriate the County may consider a lower density. An applicant/developer requesting a



reduced density must provide a planning justification at the time of application. Local Official Plans may set a higher density requirement.

(ii) In areas serviced by municipal or communal services development sites that can accommodate 10 or more 'dwelling units' must include at least 30% of the proposed 'dwelling units' in a 'medium density' (or higher density where appropriate) form. The County may grant approval for developments with a reduced percentage of 'medium density' when appropriate and justified. An applicant/ proponent/developer requesting a reduced percentage must provide a planning justification at the time of application. Local Official Plans may require a higher percentage; and

(iii) Providing affordable and attainable housing to support this Plan's targets and/or in accordance with provincial direction.

(5) The physical layout of a Plan of Subdivision or Plan of Condominium must consider the following matters to the County's satisfaction:

- (a) Universal design principles, including accessibility needs;
- (b) Lot configuration, avoiding lots with direct access to roads under Provincial or County jurisdiction;
- (c) Provision of municipal servicing, utilities, and community facilities, including schools;
- (d) Dedication of land for public purposes like parks and trails;
- (e) Proximity and access to public and active transportation, including trails, where applicable;
- (f) Access to existing or planned transportation networks for safe and efficient movement of people and goods;
- (g) Energy conservation;
- (h) Physical layout of the draft plan, and without limitation including street patterns;
- (i) Low impact development and regard for climate change resilience;
- (j) Snow removal, refuse collection, and emergency vehicle maneuverability;

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Deleted: 30%

Deleted: 'dwelling units'



(k) Outside of fully serviced urban areas, lots that facilitate new residential development may only be created within 500 metres of the fill area of an open or closed landfill if it has been demonstrated that there is no adverse off-site impact from the landfill that would affect the development; and

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(l) All other relevant policies of this Plan, as may be applicable.

(6) Applicants for Plans of Subdivision and Plans of Condominium must undergo pre-submission consultation and provide necessary information and materials to complete the application as per this Plan's requirements.

(7) The draft approval of Plans of Subdivision or Plans of Condominium will be subject to conditions that must be met before final approval. These conditions may be modified before final approval in accordance with the Planning Act.

(8) A Local Municipality can pass a by-law under the Planning Act to exempt certain lands within a Plan of Subdivision from Part Lot Control. This allows the creation of lots within the plan, minor boundary adjustments, and establishment of easements, as applicable. County Council or its delegate is the approval authority for part lot control by-laws passed by the local municipality.

(9) A Draft approval will include conditions which must be met before final approval can begin. The County has the authority to specify a date by which conditions must be met for initial and subsequent phases, as provided by the Planning Act. If an applicant does not meet the conditions in time the draft approval will lapse. There may be circumstances where an extension to the draft approval lapsing date, or a deeming of a lapsed draft approval not to have lapsed is appropriate.

(10) County Council or its delegate may extend the expiry date, or deem a lapsed approval not to have lapsed at its discretion, provided:

(a) The applicant has made significant progress towards registering the Draft Plan of Subdivision or Draft Plan of Condominium; and

(b) Exceptional circumstances beyond the applicant's control prevent them from applying for Final Approval on time.

(11) Before deciding whether to approve or refuse a request to extend draft approval or deem draft approval not to have lapsed, County Council or its delegate will consult with the relevant local municipality. County Council or its delegate may also seek written support from the municipality for its decision.



5.10 Land Division Policies

5.10.1 General Land Division Policies

- (1) County Council or its delegate is responsible for approving consent applications, as per the Planning Act. The following policies apply to applications for dividing land or interest in land within the County. These policies provide overall direction for the land division process. For specific land use designations, refer to subsequent Sections in addition to these general policies.
- (2) An application for consent must address matters of provincial interest according to Provincial direction including but not limited to the criteria for plans of Subdivision in the Planning Act
- (3) Severed and retained lots must front on existing public or common element condominium roads that are open and maintained year round. These roads must be constructed to a standard of construction capable of handling the additional traffic from the proposed development.
- (4) Servicing for the severed and retained lots must comply with this Plan's policies.
- (5) Access to County Highways designated as Arterial Road or Collector Road on Schedule B will be restricted in accordance with the following:
 - (a) A Traffic Impact Assessment approved by the County is required for access to an Arterial Road.
 - (b) Only two lots per original Township lot, including the retained lot, may have direct access from an Arterial Road. Exceptions may apply for development within Primary or Secondary Urban Communities, at the County's discretion.
 - (c) Access to County Roads designated as Collector Road or Proposed Collector Road on Schedule B may be allowed if it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the County that the development doesn't create traffic hazards or impede traffic flow.
 - (d) Before creating a new lot with access to a Provincial Highway, the Province must approve access for both the severed and retained lots.



- (e) A consent will only be granted if it conforms to the land use designations and policies of this Plan, as well as local official plans and zoning by-laws, where applicable.
- (6) Creating lots in areas prone to flooding, erosion, or other environmental constraints is not permitted unless it is clear that the proposed use will not negatively impact these constraints or be negatively impacted by these constraints.
- (7) Lot creation in Core Areas of the Natural Environment overlay as identified on Schedule E is permitted in accordance with the underlying land use designation policies, however will be limited to one new parcel from an original crown lot and will require the identification of a suitable area for development.
- (8) Notwithstanding the policy above, additional lot creation may be permitted in the Core area for:
- (a) Conservation purposes and there are no resulting vacant lots for development;
 - (b) Infrastructure purposes, where it can be demonstrated that there is no alternative location for the use outside of the Core Area; or
 - (c) The severance of a lot containing a surplus farmhouse dwelling in accordance with the policies of Section 5.10.3 of this plan, provided no new dwellings are permitted on the remnant parcel regardless of whether the lands are in the 'Agriculture' or 'Rural' designation.
- (9) When a consent is granted, conditions may be imposed on the severed and retained lots to ensure proper development. This may include, without limitation, stormwater management plans, lot grading plans, tree management plans, parkland dedication, road widening dedication, archaeological assessment, and servicing requirements.
- (10) The application must represent an orderly and efficient use of land, not hindering development of the retained lands.
- (11) Recreating the original Township lot layout is allowed, provided both the severed and retained lots meet the minimum lot area requirements and have access to an open, maintained municipal road. A Township lot that has been the subject of a previous severance or other land division, generally comprises most of the original parcel, and meets lot area requirements of the appropriate designation in this plan, is considered an original Township lot.



(12) Land acquisitions or disposals by the Province, Conservation Authorities, the County, Indigenous organizations such as Saugeen Ojibway Nation, or non-profit corporations implementing this Plan's policies need not adhere to lot area requirements of this plan or maximum number of severances from a crown lot. Where such acquisitions are for conservation purposes access may be obtained over other public lands or by permanent registered easement over private lands. Such land acquisitions or disposals must conform to the applicable Zoning By-Law.

(13) Outside of a designated settlement area, a severance will not be permitted in or within 120 metres of lands identified as a Mineral Resource Area as shown on Schedule C, or and existing licensed site for mineral extraction or within 210 metres of a licensed quarry, except as follows:

(a) Lots 40 hectares or more in the Agriculture or Mineral Resource designations;

(b) Lots 20 hectares or more in the Rural designation;

(c) A residence surplus to a farming operation per Section 5.10.3;

(d) A severance that does not result in new lot creation such as for a lot boundary adjustment or re-creation of merged lots;

(e) An agricultural related, commercial, or industrial use; or

(f) A severance for an existing agriculture related, commercial or industrial use.

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(14) Outside of fully serviced urban areas, a severance will not be permitted to facilitate the establishment of a new residential use within 500 metres of the fill area of an open or closed landfill unless it has been demonstrated that there is no adverse off-site impact from the landfill that would affect the development.

5.10.1.2 Merged and Undersized Lots

(1) County Council acknowledges that some types of lots can merge on title if they have the same owner and may not meet current planning criteria for severance. County Council wishes to provide opportunities for lots to be re-created or to have boundary adjustments in certain circumstances. The policies of this Section apply to consent applications that propose:

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(a) To re-create lots merged on title; or



- (b) To provide lot additions to or between existing undersized lots.

5.10.1.3 Merged Lots

- (1) Merged lots may be re-created by consent if the lots conform to Land Division Policies of the Plan;
- (2) Further to Policy 5.10.1.2, the re-creation of one or more original Township lots by consent is not considered to be creating new lots. Such consents are not intended to be subject to information requirements and/or conditions of approval related to future uses unless such uses are proposed as part of the application.
- (3) Where more than one dwelling or use exists on the same lot, lots may be re-created for the additional dwelling or use despite policies to the contrary so long as the following criteria are met:
 - (a) The owner/applicant/agent must satisfy the zoning administrator that each and every lot to be severed or retained has existing development that was legally established; this policy does not permit the creation of vacant lots;
 - (b) The additional dwelling/use on the lot must have occurred as a result of lots merging on title, and not as a result of additional uses being constructed on a lot in accordance with the zoning by-law (for example a detached accessory dwelling on a commercial lot or a dwelling on a lot for farm help);
 - (c) The Chief Building Official of the Municipality confirms that the dwelling or use is habitable / usable at the time of application;
 - (d) Where a connection to municipal or communal sewage disposal systems is not available, each and every proposed lot must be able to accommodate its ownsewage disposal system within the property. Although not preferred, existing shared wells may be permitted, and easements may be established for existing shared wells;
 - (e) When re-creating merged, developed lots in accordance with this policy, the approval authority may approve consent(s) with different boundaries than the original lots where such boundaries better accommodate buildings, structures, services, access, or a more even distribution of land between lots; and
 - (f) Where the resulting lots are [privately serviced and are](#) smaller than 4000 square metres, a zoning “holding” provision or development agreement must be registered on title of the undersized lots to prevent further intensification of the



use by way of enlargement or increase of total plumbing fixtures [that would require a septic system performance review](#), unless the lot is connected to a municipal or communal sewer system with capacity or the proposed development is supported by a nitrate study as outlined in Section 5.7.3 of this Plan.

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5.10.1.4 Adjustments and Additions

- (1) Lot adjustments and additions within the Agricultural designation are allowed per Section 5.1
- (2) In all other designations, lot adjustments are permitted for legal and technical reasons. These adjustments are limited to purposes like easements, correcting deeds, quit claims, and minor boundary adjustments. This policy does not allow for new lots to be created.
- (3) Regardless of servicing or lot area policies, boundary adjustments and lot additions from lots with private sewage disposal systems smaller than 4,000 square meters (or the minimum lot area for their designation) are allowed. However, the lot addition cannot make the enlarged parcel significantly larger than the one becoming smaller except where necessary to correct an encroachment. Lot additions together with easements may be used to minimize the land that is fully transferred.
- (4) If two or more independently transferable lots consolidate into fewer total lots, the resulting lots may be certified even if they remain undersized.
- (5) Boundary adjustments and lot additions cannot add lands from outside a settlement area to lands within a settlement area.

5.10.2 Consents to Sever Land in Urban and Hamlet Communities

- (1) Consents to sever land in Urban and Hamlet Communities will only be allowed when the development potential of the site does not require a full plan of subdivision to ensure efficient and orderly development.
- (2) If major service extensions are necessary to support the development, then the application may be required to proceed as a plan of subdivision.
- (3) Development by consent will be subject to the servicing policies of Section 3.8 [Services And Utilities] of this plan.



5.10.3 Consents to Sever Land in Agricultural Areas

- (1) An original Crown surveyed lot can only be divided into two parcels, including the retained portion. However, the following cases are not counted in the two-parcel limit:
 - (a) When a residence is severed from a farm due to farm consolidation;
 - (b) Minor adjustments for access and servicing purposes that don't create new lots or increase development potential;
 - (c) Reconfiguration of lot lines for parcels meeting minimum lot area requirements; and
 - (d) When a road divides a Crown surveyed lot:
 - (i) A lot entirely zoned hazard is not considered a new lot.
 - (ii) Developable parcels created by roads will be considered new lots.
- (2) A severance along an original Township lot line that meets the requirements of Section 5.10.1
- (3) Lands designated as Agricultural should generally have a minimum lot area of 40 hectares to support farming operations and minimize impacts on the farming community.
- (4) Notwithstanding the 40 hectare lot area minimum, smaller farm parcel sizes may be allowed if the owner can prove:
 - (a) Both the proposed severed and retained lots will primarily be used for agriculture, and similar-sized lots within a 25- kilometer radius are unavailable for the intended use;
 - (b) The size of both severed and retained parcels suits the type of agriculture proposed for each; and
 - (c) The proposed lots are suitable for common agricultural uses in the area and flexible enough for future changes in farming operations.
- (5) Within the Agricultural designation, one non-farm lot may be severed from an Original Crown lot if it's for an agriculture-related use as defined by Provincial direction, subject to the following policies:



- (a) The use is not able to locate in a settlement area;
 - (b) The new non-farm lot should generally not exceed 4 hectares in area. If the proposed lot is over 0.81 hectares in area, a planning report to justify the proposed area will be required. The minimum lot area will generally be 0.4 hectares;
 - (c) The severed and retained parcels must comply with all other applicable policies of this Plan and Provincial direction;
 - (d) Both the severed and retained parcels must be viable for their proposed future use;
 - (e) The width-to-depth or depth-to-width ratio of the new lot will not generally exceed a maximum of 1:3, and will conform to the appropriate zoning requirements for lot frontage, which may be achieved by variance where appropriate;
 - (f) For uses that generate a high human activity or public visitation, Minimum Distance Separation (MDS I) must be met for the severed lot.
- (6) One non-farm lot may be severed for existing residences surplus to a farming operation due to farm consolidation, provided the following policies are met:
- (a) The owner of the lands to be severed is a 'bona fide farmer'. For the purposes of this policy, the 'bona fide farmer' must:
 - (i) Own and farm the lands on which the surplus dwelling is proposed to be severed from;
 - (ii) Own and farm other lands; and
 - (iii) Own a residence elsewhere, or reside as a tenant elsewhere, therefore rendering the residence on the subject farm surplus to their needs.
 - (b) In situations where the agricultural portion of the subject lands is rented in whole or in part to others, the owner of the subject lands will not qualify as a 'bona fide farmer'. A 'bona fide farmer' will be defined as to include a limited company, sole proprietorship, incorporated company, numbered company, partnership, non-profit and other similar ownership forms;



- (c) The lot proposed for the residence and buildings surplus to the farming operation will be limited in area and will only be of sufficient size to accommodate the residence surplus to the farming operation, accessory buildings (where including accessory buildings does not render the lot excessively large), a well and a sewage disposal system, while ensuring that as little land as possible is removed from the agricultural lands;
 - (d) The remnant agricultural lands will be rezoned to prohibit the future erection of a residential dwelling of any type on the agricultural lands provided that a residential dwelling does not exist at the time of severance.
 - (e) If, at a later time, a portion of the remnant agricultural lands is determined to not have been part of the subject parcel due to a natural severance, then the prohibition for a residence may be removed through a local zoning by-law amendment if the parcel resulting from the natural severance is buildable for a residence accessory to agriculture;
 - (f) MDS I Formula requirements are to be met for the proposed severed lot if livestock facilities or anaerobic digesters exist on the retained farmlands. MDS I does not apply to existing barns on separately titled lots;
 - (g) Setback requirements to Mineral Resource Area, Aggregate/Quarry Operation or sanitary landfill site will not apply to the severed or retained lands; and
 - (h) The existing surplus dwelling/residence must be habitable at the time of application.
- (7) Consents for lot adjustments for easements, deed corrections, or minor boundary changes are allowed, as long as no new lot is created.
- (8) Lot enlargements may be permitted in the Agriculture designation subject to the following:
- (a) No new lot is created;
 - (b) If lands designated Hazard are to be included in the lot enlargement, there must be sufficient developable area outside of the Hazard designation, including applicable environmental setbacks, for the proposed development;
 - (c) lot enlargements to expand a non-farm use will be limited in area and will only be of sufficient size to accommodate the residence, accessory buildings (where



including accessory buildings does not render the lot excessively large), a well and a sewage disposal system, while ensuring that as little acreage as possible is removed from the agricultural lands. The enlarged lot size will generally not exceed 0.81 hectares.

(d) A lot enlargement for the purpose of enlarging an agriculture use as a smaller specialized farm lot is permitted subject to the policies of Section 5.10.3.4, for enlargements of the expansion of an existing agricultural-related use as per Section 5.8.1.1, or existing institutional uses as per Section 5.8.1.7. Such lot enlargements will be limited in area and will only be of sufficient size to accommodate the agriculture use, agricultural-related use, or institutional use, accessory buildings (where including accessory buildings does not render the lot excessively large), a well and a sewage disposal system, while ensuring that as little acreage as possible is removed from the agricultural lands.

(9) When reviewing consent applications, the requirements of the MDS Formulae will apply.

5.10.4 Consents to Sever Land in Rural Areas

(1) The policies of Section 5.10.3 [Consents to Sever Land in Agricultural Areas] apply to lands designated Rural with the exception that an additional parcel from an original crown lot is permitted for a total of three parcels.

(2) Consent for Agricultural uses is permitted in accordance with Section 5.10.3, however the minimum area will be generally 20 hectares.

(3) Consent for Non-farm Lots and Non-Farm Residential Lots in the Rural Area will be allowed in accordance with the following:

(a) New non-farm lots can have a maximum area of 4 hectares and a minimum area of 0.4 hectares;

(b) A Planning Justification Report is required for lots larger than 0.8 hectares;

(c) The severed and retained parcels must be viable for their proposed uses;

(d) Parcels will not generally exceed a width-to-depth or depth to-width ratio of 1:3 and should conform to zoning requirements for lot frontage, which may be achieved by variance where appropriate;

(e) New lots must be located on year-round maintained Municipal roads; and

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.vi There must be a minimum of 100% of the original Crown surveyed lot within the 'R – Rural' designation; ...



- (f) All new non-farm lots must comply with MDS I.
- (4) Lot Adjustments and Enlargements are permitted in the Rural Area, subject to the following:
 - (a) Lot adjustments for legal or technical reasons are permitted but cannot create new lots;
 - (b) Enlargements for existing non-farm lots or non-farm residential lots are limited to a maximum lot size of 4.0 hectares. A planning justification report is required for a lot enlargement that creates a greater than 0.81 hectare enlarged lot;
 - (c) Lands to be severed and merged with an existing lot of record must be designated Rural excepting however when the existing lot of record is smaller than 0.4 hectares in size, lands designated Agricultural may be added to a maximum total lot area of 0.81 hectares;
 - (d) In determining the designation of a lot of record for compliance with clause c) above, the designation(s) underlying the Hazard designation, if present on a lot, will also be used.
 - (e) If lands designated Hazard are to be included in the lot enlargement, there must be sufficient developable area outside of the Hazard designation, including applicable environmental setbacks, for the proposed development;
 - (f) The retained parcel must be viable for the proposed use;
 - (g) Parcels will not generally have a width-to-depth or depth-to-width ratio exceeding 1:3 and should conform to zoning requirements for lot frontage, which may be achieved by variance where appropriate; and
 - (h) The enlarged lot must comply with MDS I.

5.10.5 Consents to Sever Land in Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area

The severance of land within Shoreline and Seasonal Recreational Area may be considered subject to the following:

- (1) To ensure appropriate area for servicing the minimum lot area will 4,000 square metres, unless a local official plan has specified a different lot size, municipal or communal wastewater treatment services are available, or a groundwater quality

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impact assessment has been completed in accordance with Section 5.7.3. Areas below the Ordinary High Water Mark will not be included in the calculation of minimum lot area.

- (2) Waterfront lots should generally have a width-to-depth ratio not exceeding 1:3 to avoid narrow, linear parcels. Any deviation from this ratio requires a Planning Justification Report submitted as part of a complete application. The lot must also comply with zoning bylaw requirements for minimum lot frontage, which may be achieved by variance where appropriate.
- (3) The Land Division Committee may request information and technical studies similar to those for a plan of subdivision when reviewing lot approvals;
- (4) New Non-waterfront lots must be within 1 kilometre of a shoreline access point;
- (5) New lots must provide for a minimum setback of 30 metres from the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), except for minor infilling or rounding out in the existing built-up area for the creation of a maximum of two additional building lots. The minimum setback to the OHWM should not be less than 10 metres in any case;
- (6) Natural vegetation between the lake and any building or structure will be preserved, where possible; and
- (7) Minimum Distance Separation (MDS I) Formulae apply.

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5.10.6 Consents to Sever Land in Open Space Areas

Lot creation within the Major Open Space Area designation other than for public authority acquisitions such as those outlined in Section 5.10.1 must have a minimum lot area of 20 hectares.

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5.10.7 Consents to Sever Land in the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area

- (1) The Niagara Escarpment Plan contains specific policies for creating new lots in the Escarpment Natural, Escarpment Protection, and Escarpment Rural Area designations. Consent applications must comply with the Permitted Uses and Development Criteria outlined in the Niagara Escarpment Plan for all designations and the general consent policies of this Plan.
- (2) Before applying for consent, the applicant must first apply for a development permit from the Niagara Escarpment Commission for lands within their jurisdiction.



- (3) County staff will review Development Permit Applications and provide feedback on their adherence to the Official Plan and applicable development standards.
- (4) Consent will not be granted until a development permit is granted by the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

5.11 Pre-Submission Consultations

The pre-submission consultation process aims to provide clarity and certainty to both the County and applicants for certain Planning Act applications. Early consultation with the County and local municipalities helps identify and resolve issues, streamlines the planning approvals process, and supports better land use planning decisions.

- (1) Pre-submission consultation is strongly encouraged.
- (2) Local municipal staff are encouraged to participate in pre-submission consultation. Other affected agencies, like Conservation Authorities, may participate in the pre-submission consultation at the County's discretion. Rights holding groups such as Saugeen Ojibway Nation may join or require separate engagement to address their rights and interests.
- (3) Information and materials that may be required for an application are specified in Section 5.12 and are subject to refinement during pre-submission consultation.
- (4) The County may waive or modify required information based on the application's complexity, as determined through pre-submission consultation.
- (5) The County may refuse to deem an application complete where supporting materials are not prepared in accordance with County standards.
- (6) An application will only be deemed complete pursuant to the Planning Act when all of the following have been provided to the satisfaction of the County:
 - (a) A complete application package which contains all of the specified information, material and documents identified through the pre-submission consultation process, the prescribed application fees, and any additional or supporting information that was identified by the County, a local municipality or agency that participated in the pre-submission consultation process, which may be required to be submitted electronically in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards; and



(b) Peer review of any or all studies has been completed, if required by the County.

(7) The County may set an expiration date for the pre-submission consultation and complete application requirements, which will not be sooner than one year from that date that formal pre-submission consultation meeting minutes are issued, except where there is a significant change to the proposal, provincial direction, or County or Municipal plans or zoning that would impact the proposal. If the complete requirements expire, the County may request another meeting.

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(8) If an amendment to a local official plan also affects this Plan, applicants are encouraged to request a joint pre-submission consultation meeting with the County and the local municipality.

5.12 Additional Information and Studies

(1) As per Section 22(5) (Other Information) and/or Section 34(10.2) (Other Information) and/or Section 51(18) (Other Information) and/or Section 53(3) (Other Information) of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990, c.p.13, as amended to March 30, 2007 a person, public body or applicant must provide together with an amendment or application, in addition to the information prescribed by the Planning Act, or Regulations thereto, any or all of the following Assessments, Evaluations, Reports, Statements, Studies or Plans as requested by the Province of Ontario, County of Bruce, any lower tier municipality or any agency at the sole discretion of the County of Bruce:

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(a) Adjacent Land Compatibility Study

(b) Agricultural Impact Assessment

(c) Aggregate Studies (As related to/and in compliance with the requirements of the Aggregate Resources Act including rehabilitation for new and expansions to existing pits and quarries)

(d) Aggregate Licence Compatibility Assessment

(e) Aggregate Potential Assessment

(f) Air Quality/Dust/Odour Study

(g) Airport Impact Study



- (h) Arborist Report
- (i) Archaeological Assessment
- (j) Blasting Impact Study
- (k) Completed Application Form
- (l) Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report
- (m) Endangered Species Assessment
- (n) Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Study
- (o) Environmental Site Assessment (Phase 1 and Phase 2, Record of Site Condition)
- (p) Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan
- (q) Fisheries Impact Assessment
- (r) Floodplain and Erosion Hazard Study
- (s) Groundwater Impact Study / Well Interference Study
- (t) Heritage Impact Study
- (u) Housing Affordability/Issues Report
- (v) Hydrogeological Study/Hydrology Study
- (w) Karst assessment
- (x) Landscape Character Assessment
- (y) Landscaping Plan
- (z) Lot Grading and/or Drainage Plan
- (aa) Market Impact Assessment/Retail Impact Study
- (bb) Master Drainage Plan
- (cc) Master Road Network Plan



(dd) Minimum Distance Separation I or II (MDS I or MDS II) Calculations

(ee) Natural Heritage Study:

(ff) Nitrate Study

(gg) Ornithological Impact Assessment/Avian/Bird/Study

(hh) Parking and/or Loading Study

(ii) Planning Justification Report

(jj) Sanitary and/or Storm Sewer Study

(kk) Septic System Impact Assessment

(ll) Servicing Capacity Report

(mm) Servicing Options Statement

(nn) Significant Woodlands Study

(oo) Site Plan Application

(pp) Soils/Geotechnical Assessment (Slope Stability Study)

(qq) Stormwater Management (Quality & Quantity) Report

(rr) Structural Engineering Analysis (Existing Buildings and Structures)

(ss) Surface Water Impact Assessment

(tt) Terrestrial Wildlife Environment Assessment

(uu) Tree Preservation/Retention Plan

(vv) Traffic Impact Study

(ww) Urban Design Study

(xx) Vibration and/or Noise Impact Report

(yy) Wetland Evaluation

(2) As per Section 41 (3.4) (Other Information) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as



amended April 14, 2022, a person, public body or applicant **must** provide to the local municipality any information or materials that may be required by the municipality to ensure that matters within the scope of Site Plan Control are addressed to the satisfaction of the Municipality. Such information may include any information outlined in Section 5.12 that relates to site plan control, and may further include but is not limited to:

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(a) A completed application;

(b) A survey, plans, drawings, and/or checklists in sufficient detail to demonstrate conformity with the zoning by-law and any applicable development standards established by the Municipality;

(c) Assessments, reports, or other information necessary for the Municipality to identify and establish conditions related to any elements outlined in **provincial direction**, including to identify required easements, agreements, and/or securities related to fulfillment of conditions of site plan approval; and

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(d) Details that may be required by the upper-tier municipality where the land abuts a highway under the jurisdiction of the upper-tier municipality to address road widenings, access, or other matters outlined in Section **provincial direction**.

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(3) The specific submission requirements for any given application will be determined depending on the phase and/or scale of the proposal, its location, its location in relation to other land uses, and whether the proposal implements other planning approvals that may have been previously obtained, prior to consideration of the specific application.

(4) All Assessments, Evaluations, Reports, Statements, Studies or Plans **must** be prepared/conducted by an individual(s) qualified in the subject under study by their respective governing body or an individual(s) who is competent by virtue of training and experience to engage in practices that would also constitute professional practice. Such qualifications **must** be submitted with the Assessments, Evaluations, Reports, Statements, Studies or Plans.

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(5) The Terms of Reference for an Assessment, Evaluation, Report, Statement, Study or Plan **must**:

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(a) Be determined through consultation and direction from the County of Bruce and/or the local municipality and/or any relevant agency and/or the Province of Ontario; or

(b) Be prepared in accordance with applicable industry standards, norms, practices and/or government guidelines/regulations. All Terms of Reference must be approved by the County of Bruce or the local Municipality in its role as approval authority.

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(6) Peer reviews of an Assessment, Evaluation, Report, Statement, Study or Plan or any other study required to support a development application or proposal may be required by the County of Bruce or the local Municipality, at the cost of the proponent.

(7) Notwithstanding the required studies and assessments listed above, the approval authority (County or local municipality) may ask for any additional information that is considered reasonable and necessary in order to make a decision on a planning application.

5.13 Interpretation

(1) The aim of these policies is to guide the interpretation and ongoing administration of this Plan. It's crucial for the long-term success of the Plan to review, update, and consolidate it regularly to keep it relevant and useful.

(2) The County will annually incorporate Plan amendments through Office Consolidations, making it more convenient for all users of the Plan.

(3) Applications will be reviewed in accordance with the policies in effect when the complete application was submitted.

(4) The text, tables, schedules, and a glossary of terms contained in this Plan constitute the Bruce County Official Plan.

(5) All County public works and by-laws must comply with this Plan.

(6) Major deviations from the text and schedules require an Amendment to this Plan, unless specified otherwise within this Plan.

(7) Schedules X show the extent and boundaries of land use designations established by this Plan; accordingly:



- (a) The boundaries on all schedules are not intended to be rigid, except where they coincide with physical features such as roads, rights-of-way, lot line, concession lines and watercourses, a departure from such boundaries will require an amendment to this Plan; and
 - (b) Where boundaries do not coincide with physical features the exact determination of the boundary will be provided by the County and the County may permit minor departures through interpretation, provided the intent of the Plan is maintained and the departure is advisable and reasonable.
- (8) Minor adjustments to settlement area boundaries can be allowed without an amendment to the Plan to create one lot that meets the minimum lot area requirements of this Plan or a local Official Plan.
- (9) Where a parcel of land is subject to one or more land use designations, development proposals must follow all relevant policies, with more restrictive policies taking precedence in case of conflicts.
- (10) Permitted uses identified in this Plan provide guidance for local official plans and zoning by-laws, and do not represent a comprehensive list of conforming land uses.
- (11) The following technical revisions will not require an amendment to this plan, provided the intent remains unchanged:
- (a) Changing the number, cross-referencing and arrangement of the text, tables, and Schedules;
 - (b) Altering punctuation or language for consistency;
 - (c) Correcting grammatical, dimensional and boundary, mathematical or typographical errors that do not affect the intent of policies or Schedules;
 - (d) Adding technical information to Schedules;
 - (e) Changing format or presentation; and vi) Consolidation of approved Official Plan Amendments in a new document without altering any approved policies or Schedules.
- (12) Certain elements like margin notes and illustrations are for reference only and can be added, modified or removed without amendment to the Plan.
- (13) Conflicts between this Plan, Provincial legislation, or local official plans will be



resolved by applying the more restrictive requirement, except where such restriction would conflict with provincial direction.

- (14) The County may provide supplementary guidance material in line with this Plan's policies to aid in its implementation and interpretation.
- (15) Guidance material issued by the Province or other jurisdictions will be used to support implementing this Plan's policies.
- (16) If this Plan references any guideline or manual, it includes future versions that may amend or replace the referenced document.
- (17) References to outdated legislation or agencies will transfer to new ones without needing an amendment to this Plan.

5.14 Guideline Documents

- (1) Provincial direction will be used, as applicable, for implementing this Plan or a local official plan.
- (2) (2) County Council or its delegate or Local Municipalities may develop guideline documents to support this Plan's implementation or the implementation of a Local Official Plan in accordance with the following:
 - (a) Guidelines address regulatory issues and may contain policies, standards, and performance criteria in greater detail than is typically covered in an official plan;
 - (b) Guidelines may guide the preparation and review of development proposals, specific studies required for proposals, conditions for development approval, or infrastructure and community services improvements;
 - (c) Guidelines may be prepared to further clarify expectations for Indigenous consultation and engagement;
 - (d) Guidelines may be prepared to support community design and enhance local community character, history, community safety and wellbeing and sense of place;
 - (e) Guidelines may address matters such as mitigation of vehicular noise adjacent to residential development through appropriate noise mitigation, planning and

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design, and by ensuring the provision of noise attenuation measures at the time of development;

- (f) Development proposals will be assessed for conformity with applicable guidelines and Provincial direction, and conditions may be imposed where authorized by the Planning Act;
- (g) [An approval authority](#) may allow deviations from guideline document provisions if they maintain the general intent of this Plan or a local official plan;
- (h) Input from interested agencies, associations, and individuals is encouraged during the preparation of guideline documents;
- (i) Guideline documents can only be adopted by Council resolution;
- (j) Council may hold public meetings to gather input before adopting a guideline document; and
- (k) Approved guidelines will be listed under an appendix to this plan [which may](#) be updated without amendment to this plan.

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5.15 Public Works

In the interest of providing high-quality community services, the following policies apply to Capital and Public Works within the County:

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- (1) In accordance with [provincial direction](#), public works, extensions, or developments will comply with the policies of this Plan.
- (2) Long-term infrastructure asset management studies may be prepared and adopted by County Council or its delegate or local municipalities to identify new or improved infrastructure needed to implement this Plan.
- (3) To ensure fair distribution of public improvement costs, County Council or its delegate or local municipalities may levy charges on benefiting properties for public infrastructure, services, and facilities and may establish agreements accordingly.

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5.16 Municipal Finance

- (1) This Section, along with the other policies in this Plan, aims to ensure the long-term financial and environmental well-being of the County and local Municipalities in



their role as approval authorities for development.

- (2) The Approval Authority will avoid actions that pose significant financial risks to the County and Local municipalities.
- (3) The County and Local municipalities will responsibly manage financial resources and handle growth and development thoughtfully to maintain fiscal sustainability.
- (4) The Approval Authority may use its financial authority, as allowed by relevant legislation like the Planning Act, Development Charges Act, and Municipal Act, to support the Plan's implementation.
- (5) Budgets will be regularly prepared, considering forecasts, to invest in necessary infrastructure and community services for expected growth
- (6) If a proposed development requires infrastructure and community services that are financially unfeasible, it may be refused.
- (7) When reviewing a development application, the Approval Authority will assess its financial impact by considering:
 - (a) Scale of development relative to its infrastructure requirements;
 - (b) ability of property tax values to support life cycle costs of infrastructure associated with the project;
 - (c) How it affects the tax levy;
 - (d) Its potential to generate revenue; and
 - (e) Any other financial factors deemed necessary by the approval authority.
- (8) The approval authority commits to ensuring efficient service delivery and implementing this Plan effectively.

5.17 Review of the Plan

- (1) This Plan is required to be consistent with Provincial direction. To maintain consistency, the County will regularly review and monitor the Plan to address legislative changes or emerging community needs. The purpose is to ensure that it continues to comply with Provincial direction, stays relevant to the County's changing land use priorities, and is being implemented as intended.



- (2) During the review, the following aspects will be considered:
- (a) Changes in legislation and policies, including Provincial direction;
 - (b) Relevance of the assumptions and strategic directions of this Plan;
 - (c) Effectiveness in achieving strategic directions and objectives;
 - (d) Whether development aligns with the Plan's guiding principles;
 - (e) Availability of different types of housing, including attainable and affordable options;
 - (f) Availability of employment land to match job creation forecasts; and
 - (g) Changes in demographics, economy, employment, social factors, environment, and technology.
- (3) The County may prepare a monitoring report with key indicators and measures related to the Plan's policies to aid in the review.

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Part 6 Special Policy Areas and Site Specific Amendments

To be completed.

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