



## The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

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### Staff Report

**Report Title: Legislative Update – August 2021**

**Prepared By: Emily Dance, Clerk**

**Department: Clerk**

**Date: Aug. 4, 2021**

**Report Number: CLK-2021-08-96**  
**Update**

**File Number: C11 Legislative**

**Attachments: AMCTO submission – Council Member Accountability, County of Bruce Staff Report June 17, 2021 (Conservation Authorities Act)**

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**Recommendation:**

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report No. CLK-2021-08-96 prepared by Emily Dance, Clerk

**Background:**

Legislative updates regarding Ontario Connects, and updates to the accountability for Council Members and Bill 229 related to the Conservation Authorities Act,

**Discussion:**

Ontario Connects – Broadband Announcement

On July 16, 2021, the Province announced a new innovative procurement process that would help connect every region to high-speed internet by the end of 2025. Infrastructure Ontario will lead the procurement process beginning this summer. The process will be transparent and competitive by enabling Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to bid for provincial support through a series of reverse auction events for defined geographic areas and based on requirements for high-speed internet infrastructure development.

Consultation on Strengthening Accountability for Members of Council (Update)

As reported to Council, in March 2021 the province launched its consultation on strengthening accountability for municipal council members. The Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Ontario (AMCTO) made a submission identifying five guiding principles – subsidiarity and accountability to the electorate, mature

municipal governments, clear link to municipal governance, practicality and respect for other legal processes. The submission in its entirety is attached for information. The consultation process closed on July 15, 2021. Further details will be provided when they become available.

Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020 (Update)

On December 8, 2020, Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020, received Royal Assent. Bill 229 made changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and the Planning Act.

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) is now proposing to move forward with the [first of two phases of regulatory changes](#). The changes would implement the legislative changes that were previously made to the Conservation Authorities Act and those recently made through Bill 229.

This first phase of the MECP's process is focused on proposed regulations related to: Mandatory programs and services that conservation authorities would be required to provide for:

- Risk of natural hazards.
- Conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by a conservation authority, including any interests in land registered on title (e.g., conservation easements).
- Conservation authority duties, functions, and responsibilities as a source protection authority under the Clean Water Act.
- Conservation authority duties, functions and responsibilities under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, the Building Code Act, or other acts (not applicable in Bruce County).
- Other programs or services prescribed by the regulation, including a Core Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy and Provincial Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring.

These programs and services may be funded by provincial grants and/or conservation authority self-generated revenue (e.g., user fees). Where such revenue sources cannot finance the entire costs of those programs, the costs must be raised through the municipal levy.

Agreements between conservation authorities and their participating municipalities for the use of municipal levies to fund non-mandatory programs and services an authority determines are advisable in its jurisdiction (e.g., a municipal service agreement to seek conservation authority input on municipal land use planning matters outside of natural hazard policies, such as natural heritage policies). Other funding mechanisms may also be used and would be set out in the agreements

Details of the transition plan conservation authorities must prepare, including an inventory of the authority's programs and services, the consultation process with participating municipalities on the inventory, and steps taken to enter into agreement(s) with participating municipalities for the use of municipal levies for non-

mandatory programs and services the authority determines are advisable in its jurisdiction.

The consolidation of each of the current individual conservation authority 'Conservation Areas' regulations made under Section 29 of the Conservation Authorities Act into one Minister's regulation.

Requirements for each conservation authority to establish a community advisory board to include members of the public, and the by-laws that would govern the board.

This is the first phase of the MECP's consultation process. The MECP will be consulting on a second phase of proposed regulations at a later date, which will include:

- Municipal levies governing the apportionment of conservation authority capital and operating expenses for mandatory programs and services and for non-mandatory programs and services under municipal agreement.
- Standards and requirements for the delivery of non-mandatory programs and services.

On June 17, 2021 a staff report was brought forward to County of Bruce Council outlining proposed comments on the MECP's proposal. It recommended that the timelines be extended by a year (i.e., January 1, 2024) to allow municipalities and conservation authorities time to have meaningful discussions and to allow newly elected councils the opportunity to immerse themselves in these matters so that they can make informed decisions. The County of Bruce Staff report is attached for the Committees information.

**Financial Impacts:**

There are no financial impacts related to this report.

**Strategic Alignment / Link:**

We are an accessible community by being open and transparent.

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

Emily Dance, Clerk

**Approved By:**

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer