



# Staff Report to Council - for Direction

**Title:** Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026-2030 - Final Plan

**From:** Adam Stanley, Director of Transportation and Environmental Services

**Date:** May 7, 2026

**Report Number:** TES-2026-010

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## Staff Recommendation:

That the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026-2030 be endorsed.

## Report Summary:

Following Council's initial review of the draft Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) in April, staff have incorporated feedback and finalized the Plan.

The ESAP is presented for Council endorsement as a coordinated, five-year framework to guide environmental sustainability, climate readiness, and stewardship across Bruce County.

## Background/Analysis:

On April 2, 2026, Council received the draft Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) 2026-2030.

The ESAP aims to align environmental priorities and supports decision-making that is evidence-based, transparent, and adaptable. It translates the Strategic Plan's environmental and climate priorities into coordinated actions across departments and with external partners.

The ESAP is built around four pillars that reflect the County's priorities and strengths:

1. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation;
2. Stewardship and Forest Conservation;
3. Waste Management; and
4. Sustainable Transportation and Mobility.

Each pillar includes specific goals, objectives, and actions that will guide County decisions and investments over the next five years. This ensures that actions are aligned to contribute to the County's broader strategic direction while allowing flexibility to adapt to new opportunities and challenges. The ESAP recognizes the importance of partnership with stakeholders and rights-holders and supports the County's commitment and pathways towards reconciliation.

Based on the feedback received from council, the language in the plan has been refined to better capture the County’s role in waste management under the Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) framework.

**Refinements to the ESAP:**

**Land Acknowledgement**

Bruce County’s Land Acknowledgement has been added to reflect Bruce County’s commitment to reconciliation and recognition of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation as a rights-holder.

**Waste Management (IPR Alignment)**

Language has been updated to reflect the province’s responsibility for recycling under the Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) framework. The ESAP clarifies that Bruce County’s role is focused on supporting awareness, monitoring local impacts, and facilitating coordination where appropriate, with a focus on broader waste diversion and circular economy opportunities.

The following tables summarize specific wording updates made in response to Council feedback. These refinements do not change the overall intent or direction of the ESAP.

**Table 1 - Updates to Waste Management Section (Page 18, Goal 3)**

Section	Previous Wording	Updated Wording
3.1.3	Collaborate with municipalities to navigate Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR) and future policy transitions affecting local recycling programs.	Support collaboration of municipalities to navigate Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR), including monitoring impacts, identifying gaps, and local adaptation to recycling system changes.
3.1.5	Engage Bruce Area Solid Waste Recycling (BASWR) and municipal partners to explore regional waste and recycling program opportunities.	Removed as duplicative; subsequent numbering adjusted.
Formerly 3.1.12	Work with member municipalities to apply the findings of the analysis, advancing long-term solutions for organics management, recycling expansion, and circular-economy innovation.	Work with member municipalities to apply the findings of the analysis, advancing long-term solutions for organics management, waste diversion, and circular-economy innovation.

**Table 2 - Updates to Implementation Roadmap (Page 25, Figure 3)**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Previous Wording</b>	<b>Updated Wording</b>
<b>3.1.3</b>	Collaborate with municipalities to navigate future recycling policy transitions.	Support collaboration of municipalities to navigate IPR, including monitoring impacts, identifying gaps, and local adaptation to recycling system changes.
<b>3.1.5</b>	Engage partners on regional waste and recycling program opportunities.	Removed as duplicative; subsequent numbering adjusted.
<b>Formerly 3.1.12</b>	Apply study findings to advance long-term organics, recycling solutions and circular-economy innovation.	Apply study findings to advance long-term organics, waste diversion solutions and circular-economy innovation.

**Implementation and Next Steps**

Subject to Council endorsement, implementation of the ESAP will begin in 2026 and be integrated into departmental work plans through the annual budget process.

Implementation will be coordinated by the Transportation and Environmental Services Department (TES) and follow a phased approach:

**Phase 1 - Foundation (2026)**

Establish baselines, develop key plans, and initiate priority actions.

**Phase 2 - Implementation (2027-2029)**

Scale up initiatives and integrate them into County operations.

**Phase 3 - Evaluation and Renewal (2030)**

Measure results and update priorities to inform the next planning cycle.

Progress will be tracked through established corporate reporting processes, with annual updates provided to Council.

**Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

Implementation of the ESAP is intended to occur primarily within existing organizational resources. Where appropriate, staff will also pursue external funding opportunities, partnerships, and cost-sharing arrangements to support implementation.

Any future resource or budget requirements associated with Council-approved initiatives would be brought forward through the County's annual budget process.

There are no legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

**Interdepartmental Consultation:**

Interdepartmental consultation has occurred through the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan Cross-Functional Team and the Senior Leadership Team.

The Office of the CAO was engaged in the review of the final ESAP.

**Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:**

Community and Partnerships - Enhance and grow partnerships

Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Environment and Climate Change - Build capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change

**Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:**

Transit Demand and Feasibility Study

Long-Range Waste Management Plan

Forest Management Plan

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**Departmental Approval:**

Adam Stanley, Director of Transportation and Environmental Services

**Approved for Submission:**

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

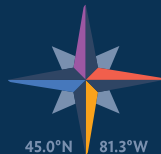
**Attachments:**

Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026-2030.pdf

BRUCE COUNTY



# Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026-2030



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**BRUCE**  
county



*Aki Ogichidaa – Protectors of the Land*  
by Kennedy Cameron-Nashkewa, Saugeen First Nation

## Land Acknowledgement

*We acknowledge the Traditional Territory of the Anishinaabek Nation:  
The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations.  
And further give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash,  
now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land.*

For more information about Bruce County's commitment to reconciliation,  
visit [www.brucecounty.on.ca/reconciliation](http://www.brucecounty.on.ca/reconciliation).

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# Introduction

Located on the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, Bruce County is home to approximately 73,000 people and a diverse range of communities connected by a shared relationship with the land and water. From rolling farmland and scenic coastlines to rich forests and wetlands, the County's natural environment is central to its identity, economy, and quality of life. Protecting these assets and preparing for the impacts of climate change are essential to ensuring a healthy, prosperous, and resilient future for all who live, work, and visit here.

The *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) 2026–2030* is a five-year roadmap to advance sustainability, climate readiness, and environmental leadership across Bruce County. It brings together the voices of residents, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, local municipalities, and other community organizations to chart a shared path toward a more sustainable future.

This plan transforms research, engagement, and operational experience into coordinated action. It aligns environmental priorities, strengthens partnerships, and supports decision-making that is evidence-based, transparent, and adaptable.

## The ESAP is built around four environmental pillars that reflect the County’s priorities and strengths:

### Climate Adaptation and Mitigation:

Building resilience and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through adaptation, mitigation, and local action.

### Stewardship and Forest Conservation:

Promoting responsible land use and management across forests, shorelines, water systems, and natural areas, while enhancing biodiversity.

### Waste Management:

Reducing waste, improving diversion, and fostering a circular economy through collaboration and education.

### Sustainable Transportation and Mobility:

Advancing accessible, low-carbon transportation options to connect people and reduce emissions.

Each pillar includes specific goals, objectives, and actions that will guide County decisions and investments over the next five years. Together, they provide a clear and coordinated approach to protecting the environment and enhancing community resilience.

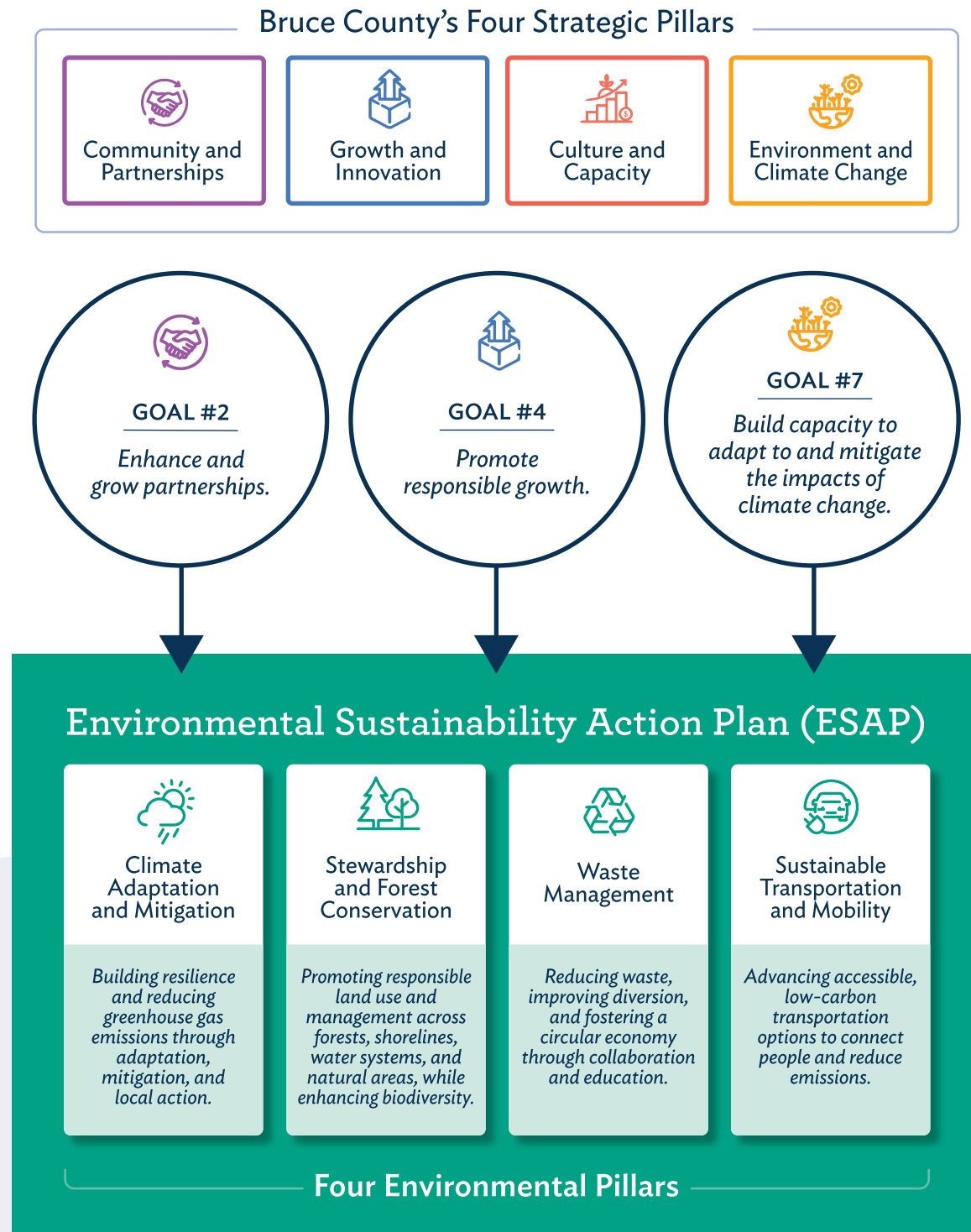
The ESAP builds directly on the foundation established in *Bruce County’s Strategic Plan 2023–2026*. The Strategic Plan set out a clear vision, mission, and values that recognize “Environment and Climate Change” as one of the County’s four key pillars. From this pillar — “Increasing our capacity to lead in sustainable environmental practices” — emerged “Goal 7: Build capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change”, which provides the strategic direction for developing the ESAP.

The ESAP also advances Goal 2 (Partnerships) and Goal 4 (Responsible Growth) by fostering collaboration with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation as a rights-holder, local municipalities, and community organizations (see *Figure 1*).

It reflects the County’s value of “Environmental Stewardship — to protect, preserve, and celebrate our natural environment” — ensuring that sustainability is woven into the County’s everyday decisions and actions.

By aligning departmental initiatives with these corporate priorities, the ESAP ensures that environmental sustainability remains a shared responsibility across all County programs, investments, and services.

Figure 1 - ESAP Alignment with Strategic Plan



# Connecting Strategy to Action

The ESAP builds directly on the foundation established in the *Bruce County Strategic Plan 2023–2026* and translates its corporate goals into measurable environmental action.

Where the Strategic Plan defines what Bruce County aims to achieve, the ESAP defines how the County will get there — through coordinated initiatives, collaborative partnerships, and evidence-based decision-making.

It also serves as a bridge between corporate direction and departmental implementation, providing a structured framework that:

- Aligns environmental actions with County priorities and service delivery.
- Guides long-term planning and budgeting through measurable objectives.
- Establishes specific tasks and timelines to support regular reporting with measurable objectives.
- Encourages collaboration across departments and with external partners.

Together, these elements ensure that sustainability is embedded into everyday operations — not as a standalone initiative, but as a guiding principle for how Bruce County serves its communities.

## How to Use This Plan

The ESAP is organized around four environmental pillars — Climate Adaptation and Mitigation, Stewardship and Forest Conservation, Waste Management, and Sustainable Transportation and Mobility.

Each pillar includes:

- **Goals** – Broad, long-term outcomes that define success.
- **Objectives** – Specific, measurable steps to achieve those goals.
- **Actions** – Short-, medium-, and long-term initiatives that translate strategy into results.

This structure ensures that actions are aligned to contribute to the County’s broader strategic direction while allowing flexibility to adapt to new opportunities and challenges.

## Continuous Learning and Adaptation

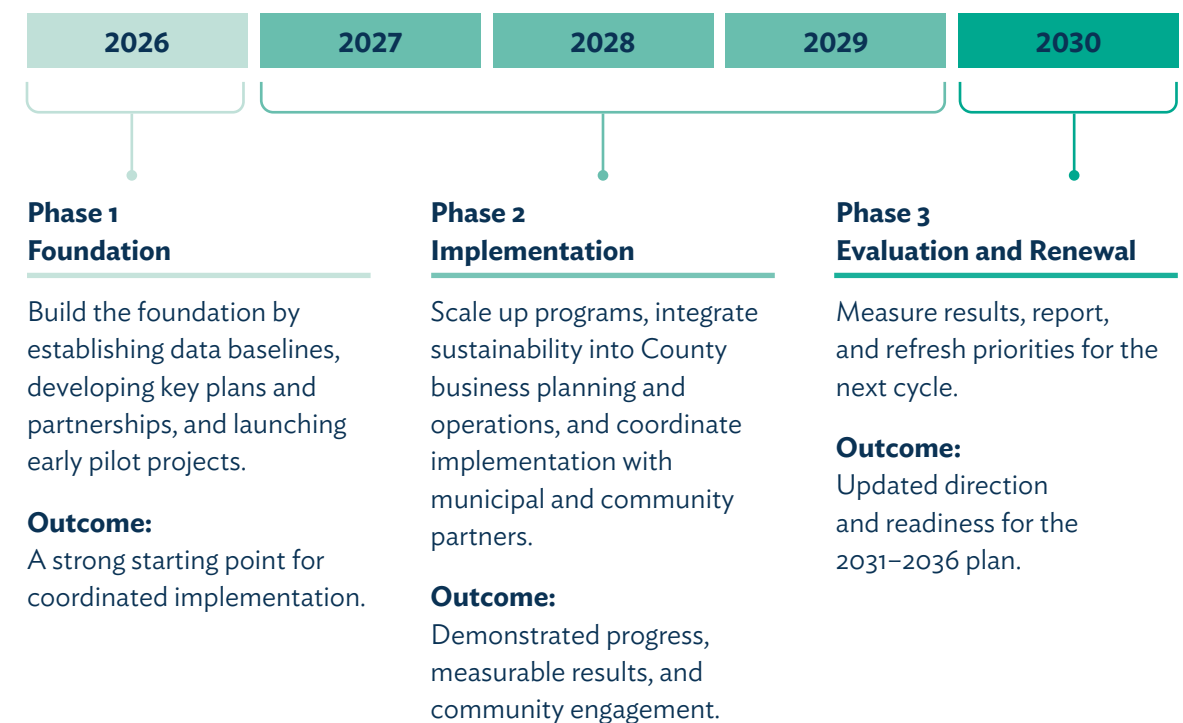
The ESAP will be implemented through a five-year cycle (2026–2030), supported by annual progress reporting, data tracking, and regular review.

This phased approach outlined in *Figure 2* ensures that Bruce County remains responsive to emerging trends, funding opportunities, and community needs — building a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

This plan recognizes that success requires collaboration across all County departments and service areas. The County’s success can be further enhanced where actions can align with actions being undertaken by local municipalities, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, Conservation Authorities and other community organizations.

By working together, Bruce County can make steady, measurable progress toward a more sustainable and climate-ready future.

Figure 2 - Phased Approach to Implementation and Renewal (2026–2030)





# Our Vision and Guiding Principles

Bruce County’s Environmental Sustainability Action Plan is guided by a clear vision and shared principles that reflect our commitment to long-term sustainability, collaboration, and continuous learning.

These statements define how we work, how we make decisions, and how we measure success across all areas of environmental action.

## Our Vision

*A resilient and sustainable Bruce County where environmental protection and responsible economic growth strengthen communities for future generations.*



## Our Guiding Principles

Six guiding principles shape how the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan is developed, implemented, and measured. These principles reflect Bruce County’s commitment to collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.

### Collaboration and Co-Stewardship

Work alongside municipalities, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, Conservation Authorities, and other community organizations to achieve shared outcomes.

### Evidence-Based Decisions

Use data, monitoring and reporting tools to guide priorities and measure impact.

### Accountability and Transparency

Report progress annually and adjust based on evidence, engagement, and results.

### Equity and Accessibility

Ensure programs and benefits are inclusive and accessible for everyone, especially those in rural areas, low-income households, and equity-deserving communities.

### Education, Engagement, and Partnerships

Build environmental literacy, foster adaptation, and empower community participation.

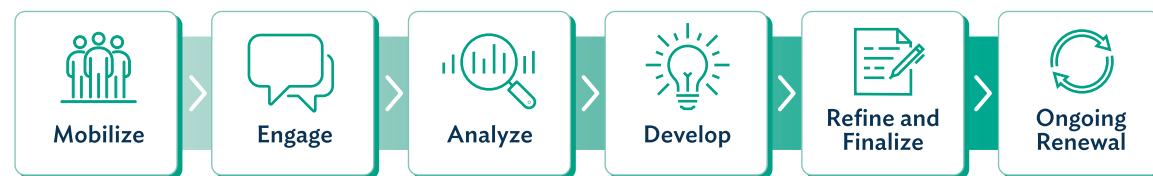
### Adaptability and Responsiveness

Remain agile and proactive in pursuing funding, partnerships, and innovation opportunities that accelerate implementation and amplify community impact.

# How We Developed This Plan

Bruce County's *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) 2026–2030* was developed through a structured, inclusive process that combined research, data analysis, and meaningful engagement with the public and community partners.

Public input, along with contributions from community partners, helped shape this plan. Opportunities for engagement were extended to local municipalities, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation as a rights-holder, the Conservation Authorities, and other important contributors to environmental stewardship who share a common goal: building a more sustainable, resilient, and climate-ready Bruce County. The ESAP supports continued and strengthened collaboration with these partners and rights-holders throughout implementation.



## 1. Mobilize

A cross-functional project team representing County departments guided the ESAP's development.

## 2. Engage

Nearly 800 participants contributed ideas through surveys, interviews, and discussions. This broad input confirmed strong public support for sustainability and helped identify local challenges and opportunities.

## 3. Analyze

Research, engagement results, and municipal comparators were analyzed to assess Bruce County's current capacity and identify strategic areas for improvement.

## 4. Develop

Clear goals, objectives, and phased actions were defined to guide implementation over a five-year cycle. The ESAP emphasizes collaboration, capacity building, and measurable progress toward achieving the County's strategic environmental goals.

## 5. Refine and Finalize

Draft content was reviewed to confirm accuracy, feasibility, and alignment with County priorities. Feedback from staff, partners, and the public strengthened the Plan's clarity, inclusiveness, and practicality. The finalized ESAP establishes a framework for implementation, monitoring, and reporting — beginning in 2026 — with flexibility to adapt to emerging needs, funding opportunities, and innovation.

## 6. Ongoing Renewal

The ESAP will be reviewed and renewed on a five-year cycle to remain responsive to new data and evolving priorities. Progress will be tracked and reported through regular updates. Connecting Environmental Pillars to Goals, *Bruce County's Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (2026–2030)* is built on four interconnected environmental pillars. Each pillar represents a key focus area where the County can lead through evidence-based action, collaboration, and community partnership.



### Climate Adaptation and Mitigation

Build resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through adaptation, mitigation, and local action.

**GOAL:**  
Prepare for and reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people, infrastructure, and the environment.



### Stewardship and Forest Conservation

Promote responsible land use and management across forests, shorelines, water systems, and natural areas, while enhancing biodiversity.

**GOAL:**  
Promote healthy ecosystems that strengthen the environment, economy, and community well-being.



### Waste Management

Reduce waste, improve diversion, and foster a circular economy through collaboration and education.

**GOAL:**  
Be a leader by promoting collaboration towards a more efficient and sustainable waste management system that minimizes environmental impact.

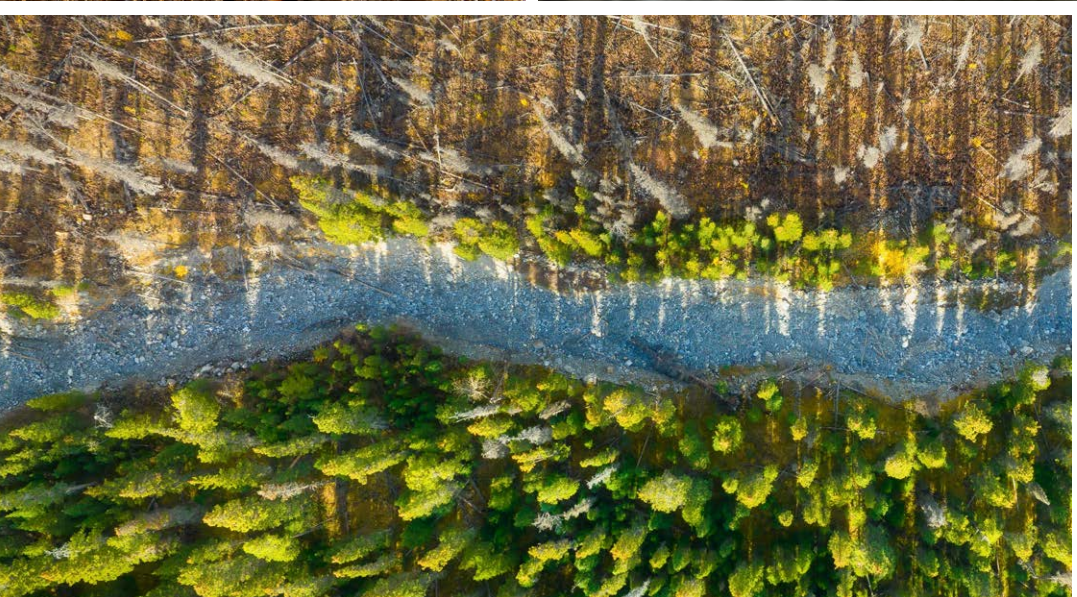
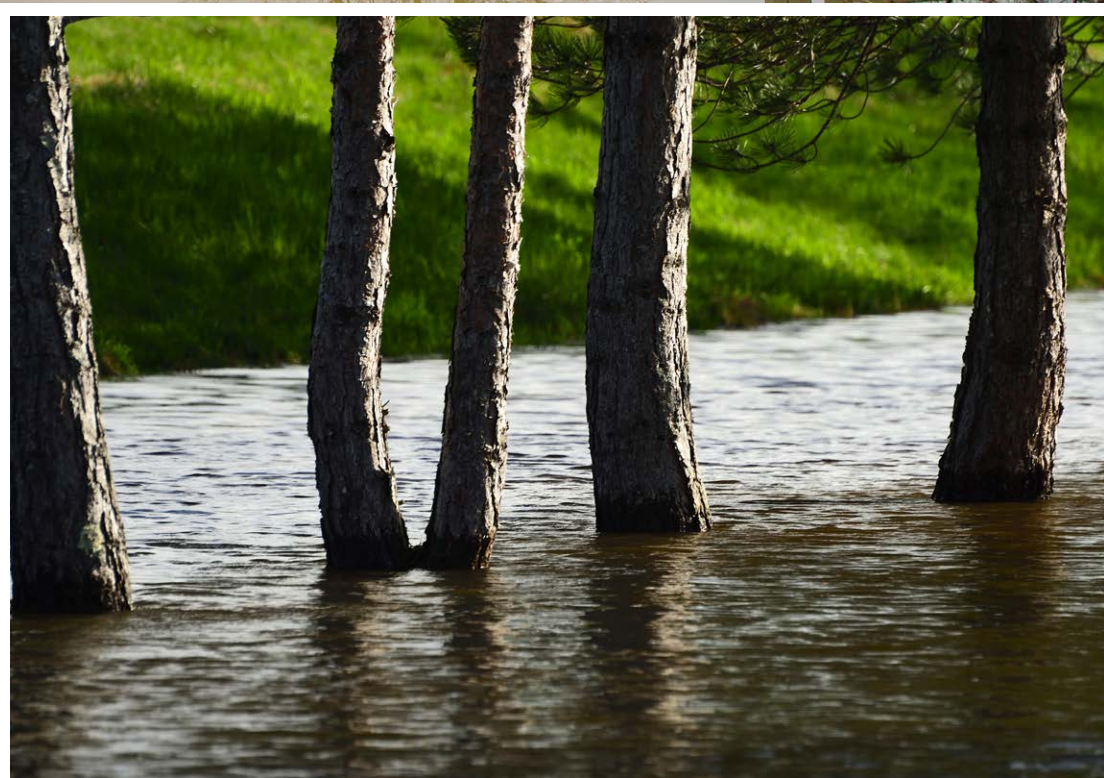
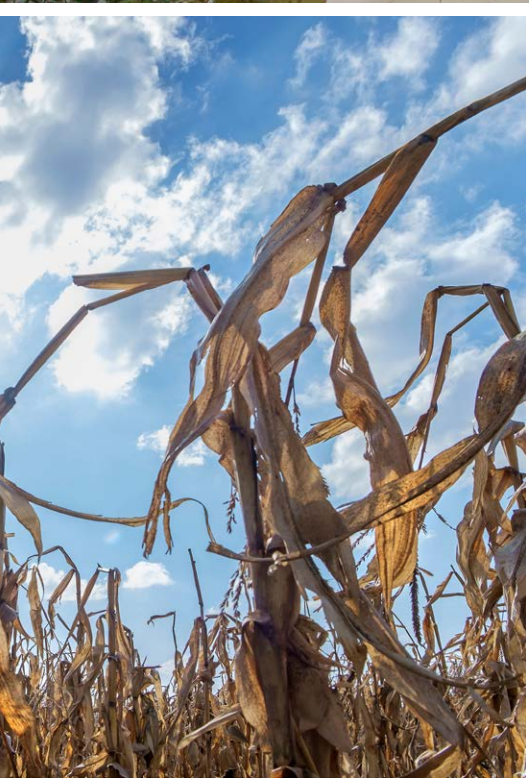


### Sustainable Transportation and Mobility

Expand accessible, low-carbon transportation options to connect people and reduce emissions.

**GOAL:**  
Enable connected, affordable, and low-carbon transportation systems across Bruce County.

Together, these pillars provide the framework for Bruce County to strengthen climate resilience and mitigation efforts, protect natural systems, reduce waste, and advance accessible, low-carbon transportation and mobility — building a sustainable foundation for generations to come.



# Climate Adaptation and Mitigation

Build resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through adaptation, mitigation, and local action.

**Goal 1** Prepare for and reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people, infrastructure, and the environment.

Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>1.1.</b> <b>Plan for Climate Resilience (Adaptation)</b>	<b>1.1.1</b> Complete a Climate Adaptation Plan to identify local vulnerabilities, risks, and practical measures that protect people, infrastructure, and services.	<b>1.1.3</b> Begin implementing priority, low-cost adaptation measures within existing programs and budgets, while pursuing external funding opportunities to support broader climate resilience initiatives.	<b>1.1.4</b> Incorporate climate-resilience considerations into County planning and capital projects.
	<b>1.1.2</b> Integrate findings of the Climate Adaptation Plan into relevant County plans, programs, and decision-making frameworks.		<b>1.1.5</b> Reporting on and update the Adaptation Plan for the next ESAP cycle.
<b>1.2.</b> <b>Manage Emissions Responsibly (Mitigation)</b>	<b>1.2.1</b> Collect baseline data on corporate energy use and emissions in coordination with the Energy Conservation and Demand Management (ECDM) Plan.	<b>1.2.3</b> Develop a Climate Mitigation Plan, aligned with the completion of the current ECDM Plan (2024-2028), to inform the next planning cycle and guide achievable emission-reduction efforts.	<b>1.2.5</b> Sustain measurable emission reductions through continuous improvement and technology renewal.
	<b>1.2.2</b> Identify opportunities for operational efficiencies and cost savings (e.g., energy retrofits, fleet improvements).	<b>1.2.4</b> Implement feasible energy-saving and efficiency projects, and track progress through annual reporting.	<b>1.2.6</b> Review and refresh the Climate Mitigation Plan for the 2029-2033 cycle, aligned with the ECDM Plan.



# Stewardship and Forest Conservation

Promote responsible land use and management across forests, shorelines, water systems, and natural areas, while enhancing biodiversity.



**Goal 2** Promote healthy ecosystems that strengthen the environment, economy, and community well-being.

Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>2.1.</b> Strengthen Sustainable Forest Management	<b>2.1.1</b> Develop the 2027–2046 Forest Management Plan (FMP) in collaboration with partners, user groups, and stakeholders.	<b>2.1.5</b> Begin implementation of the FMP, focusing on high-priority actions for forest health, invasive species management, and climate adaptation.	<b>2.1.8</b> Conduct the first five-year review of the FMP and update operational priorities.
	<b>2.1.2</b> Maintain Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and update High Conservation Value reporting.	<b>2.1.6</b> Prepare tools and frameworks to support implementation, monitoring, and five-year reviews under the FMP.	<b>2.1.9</b> Continue implementing restoration and connectivity projects that enhance ecosystem resilience.
	<b>2.1.3</b> Identify and prioritize actions that strengthen forest health, biodiversity, and climate resilience.	<b>2.1.7</b> Seek external funding (e.g., FCM, provincial/federal conservation programs) to support restoration and management projects.	
	<b>2.1.4</b> Establish baseline data for forest health, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.		

Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>2.2.</b> Promote Stewardship Across Bruce County	<b>2.2.1</b> Identify opportunities to align forest, land, and natural heritage management practices through cross-departmental coordination.	<b>2.2.4</b> Establish a Bruce County Stewardship Committee to coordinate land use and land management stewardship initiatives, support funding opportunities, and foster partnerships across forest conservation, natural heritage, and water stewardship.	<b>2.2.7</b> Integrate natural asset management and ecosystem service valuation into long-term planning and policy frameworks.
	<b>2.2.2</b> Explore partnerships to promote soil health, water protection, and regenerative land stewardship practices.	<b>2.2.5</b> Pilot collaborative programs (e.g., cost-share or incentive-based restoration) and promote education on practical environmental solutions.	<b>2.2.8</b> Support ongoing stewardship partnerships that balance economic viability with ecological health.
	<b>2.2.3</b> Develop a shared framework for tracking stewardship and restoration projects.	<b>2.2.6</b> Strengthen and grow relationships with stewardship networks to promote responsible land use and management.	

# Waste Management

Reduce waste, improve diversion, and foster a circular economy through collaboration and education.

**Goal 3** Be a leader by promoting collaboration towards a more efficient and sustainable waste management system that minimizes environmental impact.

Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>3.1.</b> Advance Sustainable Waste Management Through Long-Range Planning and Collaboration	<b>3.1.1</b> Finalize the Long-Range Waste Management Plan (LRWMP).	<b>3.1.6</b> Update and formalize the Waste Sub-Committee to guide LRWMP implementation and strengthen coordination with partners.	<b>3.1.12</b> Conduct the first five-year review of the LRWMP and refresh implementation priorities.
	<b>3.1.2</b> Investigate opportunities for multi-municipal collaboration to improve waste diversion and shared service delivery.	<b>3.1.7</b> Review and modernize County and local waste-related bylaws to support consistent regional approaches to diversion and service delivery.	<b>3.1.13</b> Continue advancing coordinated regional waste-diversion programs and partnerships.
	<b>3.1.3</b> Support collaboration of municipalities to navigate Individual Producer Responsibility (IPR), including monitoring impacts, identifying gaps, and local adaptation to recycling system changes.	<b>3.1.8</b> Begin phased implementation of priority LRWMP recommendations, focusing on achievable waste reduction and diversion initiatives within available resources.	
	<b>3.1.4</b> Conduct high-level financial and technical analysis to assess feasible Source Separated Organics (SSO) options and other waste diversion approaches.	<b>3.1.9</b> Establish clear monitoring indicators and data-sharing protocols across municipalities.	
		<b>3.1.10</b> Identify and support potential regional pilot projects for SSO or other circular-economy initiatives.	
	<b>3.1.5</b> Explore funding opportunities (e.g., provincial waste-diversion programs, Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Green Municipal Fund (GMF), or regional cost-sharing models).	<b>3.1.11</b> Work with member municipalities to apply the findings of the analysis, advancing long-term solutions for organics management, waste diversion, and circular-economy innovation.	



Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>3.2.</b> Strengthen Education, Awareness, and Collaboration to Promote Responsible Waste Practices	<b>3.2.1</b> Develop a consistent waste education and outreach framework to promote waste reduction and proper sorting.	<b>3.2.4</b> Launch joint education campaigns with partners to increase diversion rates and public participation.	<b>3.2.6</b> Maintain ongoing collaboration to advance waste literacy, innovation, and continuous improvement.
	<b>3.2.2</b> Support local campaigns that encourage reuse, repair, and recycling initiatives.	<b>3.2.5</b> Integrate waste education into broader sustainability and circular-economy outreach under the ESAP.	
	<b>3.2.3</b> Identify opportunities to share resources and tools across municipalities to improve public awareness.		



# Sustainable Transportation and Mobility

Expand accessible, low-carbon transportation options to connect people and reduce emissions.

**Goal 4** Enable connected, affordable, and low-carbon transportation systems across Bruce County.

Objectives	Actions		
	Short-term (1-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-4 yrs)	Long-term (+5 yrs)
<b>4.1.</b> Advance Sustainable Transportation Through Regional Collaboration and Long-Term Transportation Planning	<b>4.1.1</b> Continue delivering on the Transportation Demand and Feasibility Study recommendations.	<b>4.1.4</b> Advance Council approved actions from the Transportation Demand and Feasibility Study and Bruce-Dufferin-Grey-Wellington Regional Transit Study results.	<b>4.1.6</b> Evaluate long-term transit and mobility outcomes and determine future regional service models based on funding and Council direction.
	<b>4.1.2</b> Support completion of the Bruce-Dufferin-Grey-Wellington Regional Transit Study and assess next steps following Council direction.	<b>4.1.5</b> Explore opportunities to enhance sustainable mobility and active transportation services through County and municipal planning documents.	<b>4.1.7</b> Explore emerging low-carbon mobility options suitable for Bruce County's rural geography and dispersed communities.
	<b>4.1.3</b> Promote sustainable mobility choices through Smart Commute ride-sharing program growth and coordinated education and awareness campaigns.		

# Implementation Framework

The ESAP 2026–2030 will be implemented through a coordinated, evidence-based approach led by the Transportation and Environmental Services Department (TES) on behalf of the County.

Implementation will focus on achievable, incremental progress within current capacity while positioning Bruce County to leverage partnerships, innovation, and funding opportunities that may increase the County's capacity to implement initiatives over time.

- **TES:** Will coordinate implementation across departments and with external partners to ensure alignment and shared accountability. TES will lead delivery of actions under all four environmental pillars, integrate sustainability into operations, and coordinate progress tracking.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** TES will prepare an annual progress update and outline priority workplan items for the following year for SLT review prior to budget preparation, helping to align upcoming work plans and resource needs with ESAP priorities. SLT provides strategic alignment of initiatives across departments.
- **Council:** Will set the overall direction for the ESAP, approve funding allocations through the annual budget process, and receive annual progress reports to support ongoing decision-making.

The plan will follow the phased approach outlined in *Figure 2* (page 9).

Funding and resourcing will come primarily through existing TES budgets and programs, supplemented by annual budget requests for new or expanded initiatives, as well as strategic partnerships and external funding.

*Figure 3* (on the following pages) provides a consolidated implementation roadmap for the ESAP, showing how goals, objectives, and actions across all four environmental pillars are phased over the 2026–2030 period. The roadmap illustrates sequencing and overlap of actions rather than fixed timelines, recognizing that implementation will remain responsive to Council direction, resourcing, partnerships, and funding opportunities.

Figure 3 - ESAP Implementation Roadmap (2026–2030)

Goals	Objectives	Environmental Pillars				Actions	Timeline				
		Climate Adaptation and Mitigation	Stewardship and Forest Conservation	Waste Management	Sustainable Transportation and Mobility		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
<b>Goal 1</b> Prepare for and reduce the impacts of climate change on people, infrastructure, and the environment.	<b>1.1.</b> Plan for Climate Resilience (Adaptation)	●				1.1.1 Complete a Climate Adaptation Plan (CAP).	●	●			
		●				1.1.2 Integrate CAP priorities into relevant County plans, programs and decision-making.	●	●			
		●				1.1.3 Implement CAP priorities and pursue external funding.			●	●	
		●				1.1.4 Incorporate climate-resilience considerations into County planning and capital projects.					●
		●				1.1.5 Monitor and update the CAP for the next Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) cycle.					●
	<b>1.2.</b> Manage Emissions Responsibly (Mitigation)	●				1.2.1 Establish corporate energy and emissions baselines aligned with the Energy Conservation and Demand Management (ECDM) Plan.	●	●			
		●				1.2.2 Identify operational efficiency opportunities.	●	●			
		●				1.2.3 Develop Climate Mitigation Plan (CMP).			●		
		●				1.2.4 Implement energy-efficiency projects and track progress.			●	●	
		●				1.2.5 Sustain emission reductions through continuous improvement and technology.					●
		●				1.2.6 Review and refresh the CMP with the ECDM Plan.					●
<b>Goal 2</b> Promote healthy ecosystems that strengthen the environment, economy, and community well-being.	<b>2.1.</b> Strengthen Sustainable Forest Management		●			2.1.1 Develop Forest Management Plan (FMP).	●	●			
			●			2.1.2 Maintain forest certification and update High Conservation Value reporting.	●	●			
			●			2.1.3 Identify and prioritize forest health, biodiversity and climate resilience actions.	●	●			
			●			2.1.4 Establish baseline data for forest health, biodiversity and ecosystem services.	●	●			
			●			2.1.5 Implement priority actions under the FMP.			●	●	
			●			2.1.6 Develop tools to support FMP monitoring and review.			●	●	
			●			2.1.7 Pursue external funding for restoration and management projects.			●	●	
			●			2.1.8 Conduct five-year FMP reviews and update priorities.					●
			●			2.1.9 Continue restoration and connectivity projects.					●
	<b>2.2.</b> Promote Stewardship Across Bruce County	●				2.2.1 Strengthen coordination of forest, land, and natural heritage management.	●	●			
		●				2.2.2 Explore partnerships to support soil health, water protection, and regenerative land stewardship.	●	●			
		●				2.2.3 Develop a stewardship and restoration tracking framework.	●	●			
		●				2.2.4 Establish a Bruce County Stewardship Committee.			●	●	
		●				2.2.5 Pilot collaborative stewardship programs and promote education incentives.			●	●	
		●				2.2.6 Strengthen partnerships with stewardship networks.			●	●	
									●		
					2.2.7 Integrate natural asset management into long-term planning.					●	
					2.2.8 Support stewardship partnerships that balance economic viability with ecological health.					●	

Figure 3 continued - ESAP Implementation Roadmap (2026-2030)

Goals	Objectives	Environmental Pillars				Actions	Timeline						
		Climate Adaptation and Mitigation	Stewardship and Forest Conservation	Waste Management	Sustainable Transportation and Mobility		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030		
<b>Goal 3</b> Be a leader by promoting collaboration towards a more efficient and sustainable waste management system that minimizes environmental impact.	<b>3.1.</b> Advance Sustainable Waste Management Through Long-Range Planning and Collaboration			●		3.1.1 Finalize the Long-Range Waste Management Plan (LRWMP).	●						
				●		3.1.2 Investigate opportunities for regional waste diversion and shared service delivery.	●	●					
						3.1.3 Support collaboration of municipalities to navigate IPR, including monitoring impacts, identifying gaps, and local adaptation to recycling system changes.	●	●					
						3.1.4 Assess organic and waste diversion options and opportunities.	●	●					
						3.1.5 Explore external funding and regional cost-sharing opportunities.	●	●					
						3.1.6 Update and formalize the Waste Sub-Committee.			●	●			
						3.1.7 Review and modernize waste-related bylaws.			●	●			
						3.1.8 Begin phased implementation of priority LRWMP recommendations.			●	●			
						3.1.9 Establish monitoring indicators and data-sharing protocols.			●	●			
						3.1.10 Identify and support regional Source Separated Organics (SSO) projects and circular-economy initiatives.			●	●			
						3.1.11 Apply study findings to advance long-term organics, waste diversion solutions and circular-economy innovation.			●	●			
						3.1.12 Conduct five-year LRWMP reviews and update priorities.							●
						3.1.13 Continue advancing regional waste diversion programs and partnerships.							●
		<b>3.2.</b> Strengthen Education, Awareness, and Collaboration to Promote Responsible Waste Practices			●		3.2.1 Develop a regional waste education framework.	●	●				
					●		3.2.2 Support local waste reduction and diversion campaigns.	●	●				
						●		3.2.3 Share education tools and resources across municipalities.	●	●			
						●		3.2.4 Launch joint education initiatives with partners.			●	●	
						●		3.2.5 Integrate waste education into ESAP outreach.			●	●	
						●		3.2.6 Maintain collaboration to advance waste literacy, innovation and continuous improvement.					●
<b>Goal 4</b> Enable connected, affordable, and low-carbon transportation systems across Bruce County.	<b>4.1.</b> Advance Sustainable Transportation Through Regional Collaboration and Long-Term Transportation Planning			●		4.1.1 Implement Transportation Demand and Feasibility Study recommendations.	●	●					
				●		4.1.2 Complete the Regional Transit Study and assess next steps.	●	●					
				●		4.1.3 Expand Smart Commute programming and promotion.	●	●					
				●		4.1.4 Advance Council-approved transit actions.			●	●			
				●		4.1.5 Explore opportunities to enhance sustainable mobility and active transportation service.			●	●			
				●		4.1.6 Evaluate long-term transit and mobility options.						●	
				●		4.1.7 Explore low-carbon mobility solutions suited to rural communities.						●	



### Bruce County will:

- Align TES budget and work plan with ESAP priorities, and support integration across other departments as opportunities and resources allow.
- Pursue external funding and partnership opportunities to advance implementation.
- Explore options to strengthen internal capacity over time, including potential dedicated roles where justified.
- Continue collaborating with partners to share expertise, costs, and benefits regionally.

Progress will be tracked and reported regularly through established corporate reporting systems, departmental updates, and annual updates to Council.

### Bruce County will:

- Measure outcomes using indicators and milestones under each pillar.
- Report annually to Council and the community on progress and lessons learned.
- Integrate ESAP results into TES business planning and corporate reporting.
- Review and renew the ESAP every five years to remain evidence-based, achievable, and aligned with County priorities.

Through coordinated leadership, accountability, and collaboration, Bruce County will continue to make steady, measurable progress toward a sustainable and climate-ready future.

## Resources and Capacity

The *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030* is intended to be implemented primarily within existing organizational resources, while recognizing that additional capacity may be required over time to support Council-approved initiatives.

Implementation will be guided by the phased roadmap outlined in *Figure 3*, with timing and resourcing refined through annual work planning, budgeting, and Council direction.

Where additional staffing and resource capacity is required, Bruce County will explore external funding, partnerships, cost-sharing, and temporary staffing opportunities to support implementation and reduce reliance on permanent resources, where possible. Any new resources will be determined through the annual budget process, and be phased in according to approved scope, funding, and timing.

The future development of a Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Plan will help to position the County to access external funding programs that require approved climate action plans or readiness frameworks as a condition of eligibility. An example of an external funding source is the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Green Municipal Fund (GMF).



# Partnerships and Collaborative Implementation

Partnerships are an important enabler of Bruce County's *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) 2026–2030*. Many environmental challenges and opportunities extend beyond municipal boundaries and benefit from coordination, shared learning, and collaboration.

The ESAP is designed to be implemented in a flexible and adaptive manner, recognizing that partnerships may evolve over time in response to changing priorities, capacity, and opportunities. This section outlines how collaboration supports implementation of the actions identified throughout the plan.

## Indigenous Relationships and Engagement

Bruce County recognizes the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) as a rights-holder and is committed to respectful, ongoing, and distinctions-based engagement throughout ESAP implementation.

Indigenous relationships and engagement under the ESAP will be guided by Bruce County's Indigenous Reconciliation Framework and the Saugeen Anishnaabek Reconciliation Pathway and Action Plan, which guide how the County works with Indigenous rights-holders and Indigenous peoples and organizations.

Engagement with SON will continue in recognition of its role as a rights-holder, consistent with established protocols and County practices. Bruce County is committed to pursuing reconciliation pathways with Indigenous peoples and organizations that appropriately reflect the distinct rights, cultures, histories, and experiences of Indigenous peoples, and that are undertaken in ways that are respectful, inclusive, and appropriate to each initiative.

## Collaborative Partnerships

Implementation of the ESAP will be supported through collaboration with partners who contribute expertise, capacity, and local knowledge relevant to environmental sustainability. Where appropriate, collaboration may include other orders of government, regional and sector organizations, institutions, and community groups.

The partnerships described here support implementation of the actions identified throughout this plan.

### Collaboration supports ESAP implementation by:

- Strengthening outcomes and delivery capacity
- Improving coordination and implementation efficiency
- Aligning actions with County priorities and available resources
- Enhancing access to external funding, cost-sharing, and grant opportunities
- Delivering added value beyond what the County could achieve independently

Progress related to partnership-supported initiatives will be reflected through annual ESAP reporting, with a focus on outcomes achieved and lessons learned.



# Conclusion

Bruce County's *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (2026–2030)* sets a practical, collaborative path toward a more resilient and sustainable future.

Grounded in local priorities and shaped by community voices, the ESAP turns vision into action — protecting natural assets, supporting residents, and advancing practical initiatives across climate, conservation, waste, and mobility.

The Plan's success depends on partnership, persistence, and adaptability. By working together — across departments, with municipalities, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, Conservation Authorities, and other community partners — Bruce County can make meaningful, steady progress toward sustainability.

As the ESAP is implemented and renewed, regular reporting will track progress and inform continuous improvement.

Through this effort, Bruce County will advance actions to work toward achieving the vision of a resilient and sustainable Bruce County where environmental protection and responsible economic growth strengthen communities for future generations.





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