

# Willingness: The Path Forward

Winter 2022

In December, Council decided that a public referendum should be held to determine the community's willingness to host the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) Project. Council also decided that the vote should be held after there was more information from the studies and the Municipality has negotiated a draft hosting agreement with the NWMO, giving people a fuller picture of what the Project will mean for the community.

This means that a proposed referendum question would be prepared after the next municipal election. This is the current Council's view of how South Bruce should decide willingness, informed by extensive consultation with the community that was independent of the NWMO.

Any municipal referendum in Ontario is guided by provincial legislation, which says results are binding if more than half the voters turn out and more than half the vote is in favour of the question.

## Making an Informed Decision

To make an informed decision, people need to know how the Project could affect the community and they need to understand what a future hosting agreement could include.

### ► Studies and Peer Reviews

There are approximately 40 studies planned or underway to better understand the potential social, economic, environmental and health effects of the Project. The Municipality is leading some of these studies and the NWMO is leading some of the others. The Municipality's consultants are independently reviewing all NWMO-led studies. These studies will be conducted and shared in 2022 and 2023.

It's important to note that borehole testing and analysis is well underway to ensure the local geology can safely and securely support a deep geological repository (DGR). If the site is not safe and suitable, the Project will not go forward.

## About the Project

Nuclear power is used in several provinces. In Ontario, it supplies about half of our electricity.

The used nuclear fuel from power plants is currently stored securely above-ground at seven sites across Canada. About half is located at the Bruce Power site.

The NWMO is tasked with finding a safe, permanent solution. Globally, storing the waste in a reinforced facility deep underground is considered the safest long-term option.

The proposed facility would be about 660-metres underground, with a Centre of Expertise and other facilities above ground.

## ➤ Addressing the Guiding Principles

The Municipality of South Bruce wants to ensure that the NWMO will address the 36 Guiding Principles. These principles were developed with community input to ensure that the Project:

- is safe for people and the environment;
- delivers meaningful benefit to the community; and,
- gives the municipality a voice in decision-making.

In the coming months, the Municipality will negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NWMO to ensure that they are committed to addressing the Guiding Principles. The studies address a number of these principles and will help inform the MOU. In short, the MOU will be a roadmap, explaining how the principles are, or will be addressed.

## ➤ Understanding what hosting will mean for the community

The community also needs to understand what a future hosting agreement could look like. With the MOU as a foundation, the Municipality will negotiate a draft hosting agreement with the NWMO. It will provide details on compensation and revenue, and how the NWMO will protect people's health and the environment and help manage growth over the long-term.

People will have the benefit of all the studies, as well as an understanding of what a hosting agreement would look like, before voting on whether South Bruce should leave or stay in the NWMO's site selection process.

## NWMO Site Selection and next steps

The NWMO will select a site based on whether the storage site is technically feasible, safe and secure, and if the community is an informed and willing host. It will look at South Bruce's willingness, as well as that of Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Once the NWMO chooses a preferred site, there will be a regulatory review and approval process. Before the NWMO can build the storage facility, it will have to show that the Project meets or exceeds strict regulatory criteria to protect health, safety and security of people and the environment.

Reach out anytime with your questions, comments, concerns, or if you are seeking more information. We would be happy to hear from you!

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