

MEDIA RELEASE
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Council endorses process to determine willingness to host NWMO Project

SOUTH BRUCE, ON – The Municipality of South Bruce Council has endorsed a process to determine the community’s willingness to host the Nuclear Waste Management Organization’s (NWMO) Project to store Canada’s used nuclear fuel.

Council directed staff to prepare for the submission of a question to voters by way of a by-election (referendum), after a draft hosting agreement has been negotiated with the NWMO, with community information sharing and engagement on the Project continuing in the interim.

This timeline will also allow for a variety of studies and peer reviews about the Project to be completed. This work has started and will be ongoing throughout 2022 and 2023. More than 40 studies are planned or underway that will address important topics such as health, safety, financial benefits, environmental, and socio-economic impacts and more.

A referendum after the next municipal election will give time for the community to fully understand the safety of the Project and potential impacts and benefits it would have, based on the study results. The Municipality also plans to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NWMO to put in writing how it will address the 36 Guiding Principles developed with the community. The MOU would then be the basis for a future draft hosting agreement, which would outline the NWMO’s responsibilities, and the benefits of the Project to the Municipality if it were to come to South Bruce.

The NWMO plans to identify a single, preferred site by the end of 2023 in a community that expresses willingness to host the Project.

“Council’s decision was informed by the feedback received during an extensive, community consultation process on how residents wanted to measure willingness,” said Mayor Robert Buckle.

The Municipality retained GHD Limited to conduct the independent consultation which included in-person and virtual sessions, an online survey, and printed workbooks to engage South Bruce residents and ratepayers in a way that they were comfortable.

After receiving GHD’s report on November 9, Council requested that staff prepare a report outlining the options to measure willingness based on the results in GHD’s report.

GHD’s report showed that most participants in the consultation favour a referendum as the method to determine willingness, however there were a variety of opinions on the

timing. Other themes that emerged in the report included the importance of having a process that is open and transparent, giving all of the community a voice, and ensuring that information and studies are widely available and communicated.

In choosing to continue with the studies and information sharing, followed by a referendum, Council has endorsed a process that will satisfy the factors that are important to the community in this major decision for the future of South Bruce.

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South Bruce is one of two remaining communities that the Nuclear Waste Management Organization is considering for the site of a deep geological repository for Canada's used nuclear fuel, a Centre of Expertise and many supporting facilities. The Municipality of South Bruce is working towards an informed decision for the community through the South Bruce Nuclear Exploration Project team, the Community Liaison Committee, and independent reviews to determine if the site is safe for people and the environment, offers positive benefits and if the community is willing to host the site.

Municipality of South Bruce

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