

Committee of the Whole

Agenda

November 27, 2025

Following Council

Council Chambers - Grey County Administration Building

Pages

1. Call to Order
2. Declaration of Interest
3. Business Arising from Minutes
4. Delegations
5. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion
6. Consent Agenda

That the following Consent Agenda items be received; and

That staff be authorized to take the actions necessary to give effect to the recommendations in the staff reports; and

That the correspondence be supported or received for information as recommended in the consent agenda.

- 6.a OSM - Support Town of Whitby re: Extended Producer Responsibility for Blue Box Recycling Collection and Impacts to Small Businesses located in Mixed-Use Properties

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That the correspondence received from the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan supporting the Town of Whitby regarding Extended Producer Responsibility for Blue Box Recycling Collection and Impacts to Small Businesses located in Mixed-Use Properties be received for information.

- 6.b PDR-CW-66-25 42T-2025-06 West Grey Police Station Subdivision Information Report

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That report PDR-CW-66-25 regarding a proposed plan of subdivision application (County file number 42T-2025-06), known as the West Grey 'Police Station Subdivision,' on lands legally described as Plan 500, Part Park Lots 4 to 7; Plan 513 Lots 16 to 18; Unnamed Street Part Lots 6 to 8; Durham Street Part Lots 11 to 15; Durham Road Unnamed Street RP, in the geographic Town of Durham, now in the Municipality of West Grey, be received for information.

6.c	CCR-CW-11-25 Inaugural 2025-2026 Council Year	14
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**That Report CCR-CW-11-25 regarding inaugural considerations be received; and
That Section 3.1 - Date of Inaugural Session of Grey County's Procedural By-law 5134-22 be waived for the purposes of the election of the 2026 Warden and that the meeting be held at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, December 2, 2025.**

6.d	PDR-CW-67-25 Tilman Martin Minor Exemption	16
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**That report PDR-CW-67-25 be received; and
That the application for minor exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part Lot 31, Concession 5, geographic Township of Artemesia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 213159 30 Sideroad, be approved.**

7. Items For Direction and Discussion

7.a	Planning and Economic Development Committee minutes dated November 6, 2025	19
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That the Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting minutes dated November 6, 2026, be adopted as presented and the following resolutions contained therein be endorsed:

- i. That report EDTC-PEDAC-13-25 regarding Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Strategic Progress Report – November 2025 be received for information.**

7.b	PDR-CW-64-25 Housing Action Plan - 2025 Status Update	24
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**That report PDR-CW-64-25 is received; and
That a copy of this report be shared to the member municipalities within Grey County, and with MPs and MPPs for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and Simcoe-Grey, for information purposes.**

8. Closed Meeting Matters

That the Committee of the Whole does now go into closed session pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, to discuss:

- i. Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (staffing/succession planning)**
- ii. a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board (Georgian College)**

9. Other Business

9.a	Warden's Closing Address
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10. Notice of Motion

11. Adjournment

12. Delegations



The Corporation of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan

November 7, 2025

The Honorable Todd McCarthy, MPP
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Via email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

**Re: Extended Producer Responsibility for Blue Box Recycling Collection and Impacts
to Small Businesses located in Mixed-Use Properties**

Please be advised that the Council of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan at its meeting on November 3, 2025, passed the following resolution:

R329-2025

Moved by Deputy-Mayor Bonnie Clark
Seconded by Councillor Terry Holmes

That Council hereby supports Resolution #191-25 from the Town of Whitby regarding extended producer responsibility for blue box recycling collection and impacts to small businesses located in mixed-use properties; and

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, all Ontario Municipalities, Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA), the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC), and the County of Peterborough for support.

CARRIED

Please find attached the originating correspondence for your reference.

Yours truly,

Liz Ross
Deputy Clerk
Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan

Encls.

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Cc: Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) – info@obcm.ca
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – resolutions@amo.on.ca
Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) – info@obiaa.com
Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC) – info@eowc.org
County of Peterborough – info@ptbocounty.ca
All Ontario Municipalities



Elizabeth Roy
Mayor

T 905.430.4300 x2203
mayor@whitby.ca



October 17, 2025

The Honorable Todd McCarthy, MPP (Durham)
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Via email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Re: Extended Producer Responsibility for Blue Box Recycling Collection and Impacts to
Small Businesses located in Mixed-Use Properties

Dear Minister McCarthy,

Please be advised that at its meeting held on October 6, 2025, the Council of the Town of
Whitby adopted the following as Resolution # 191-25:

Whereas in 2016 the Waste-Free Ontario Act was enacted, which also enacted the
Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act (RRCEA) and the Waste Diversion
Transition Act; and,

Whereas the RRCEA and its associated regulations focus on strengthening Extended
Producer Responsibility for materials like used tires and blue box recycling; and,

Whereas on November 23, 2020, Town Staff submitted comments to the Environmental
Registry of Ontario on the proposed blue box regulation, which highlighted concerns
about the lack of a requirement for blue box recycling collection for certain “non-eligible”
sources like small businesses located in mixed-use properties which are prevalent in
Business Improvement Areas; and,

Whereas in the Town of Whitby there are approximately 200 small businesses in mixed-
use properties who currently receive blue box collection and are impacted by the blue
box regulation and will potentially lose blue box collection services; and,

Whereas in June 2021 the Province of Ontario released Blue Box Regulation O. Reg.
391/21, under the RRCEA which transitions the financial and operational responsibility of
recycling from municipalities to the producers of packaging and paper products; and,

Whereas Circular Materials Ontario (CM) was named the Producer Responsibility
Organization taking on all blue box recycling responsibilities in Ontario over a three-year
transition period; and,

Whereas the Region of Durham has indicated that the estimated costs to continue to
provide blue box recycling for small businesses after the 2026 transition date to CM was
exorbitant and no longer a core responsibility of the Region pursuant to Provincial
legislation; and,

Whereas on July 1, 2024, the Town of Whitby and all local area municipalities in Durham Region transitioned from the Regional blue box program to the CM blue box program; and,

Whereas the Region of Durham and CM negotiated a temporary agreement to continue providing blue box collection services to small businesses in mixed-use properties during the blue box transition period from June 30, 2024 to December 31, 2025, however, CM will not service these small businesses or any non-residential properties effective January 1, 2026, as they are not included as “eligible sources” under Blue Box Regulation 391/21; and,

Whereas on October 17, 2024, Mayor Roy sent a letter to the Honourable Andrea Khanjin, who was at that time the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, advocating for changes to the blue box regulation as it related to blue box collection for small businesses; and,

Whereas on June 4, 2025, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks proposed amendments to the RRCEA through the Environmental Registry of Ontario and staff comments were submitted jointly to the Municipal Waste Association and Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario on June 13, 2025 highlighting concerns with the blue box regulation and impacts to small businesses located in mixed-use properties; and,

Whereas on August 15, 2025, CM hosted a municipal engagement session with members of a Municipal Working Group, reviewing a proposal for blue box recycling for non-eligible sources; and,

Whereas it is not clear how the recycling collector will differentiate commercial recycling from residential recycling at mixed-residential locations as they are typically set out together; and,

Whereas the proposal submitted by CM must be agreed to by all three Producer Organizations before it will be considered by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks; and,

Whereas on October 1, 2025, all three Producer Organizations, which includes CM, Ryse Solutions, and Landbell Canada, provided a letter to Mayor Roy outlining their decision to not proceed with blue box collections for small IC&I locations, citing, “system capacity limitations, current regulatory obligations, and time constraints that make it impractical for CCS to provide (blue box) collections from IC&I locations”; and,

Whereas on October 1, 2025, the Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks provided a letter to the Town of Whitby advising that the Producers will not voluntarily continue to offer blue box services to municipalities for small business locations.

Now therefore, be it resolved:

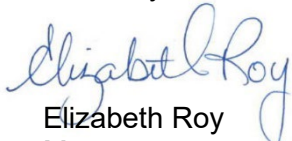
1. That the Council of the Town of Whitby requests that the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks amend Blue Box Regulation 391/21 to require Producers to provide blue box collection services to businesses located in mixed-use properties;

and,

2. That the Mayor be requested to author a letter to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks advocating for changes to Blue Box Regulation 391/21, and that a copy of this letter be forwarded to all Ontario Municipalities, Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA).

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact mayor@whitby.ca.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Roy
Mayor

Town of Whitby
Office of the Mayor
575 Rossland Road East
Whitby, ON L1N 2M8
whitby.ca

cc Mayor Marianne Meed Ward, Chair Ontario's Big City Mayors - chair@obcm.ca
Ontario's Big City Mayors – info@obcm.ca
Ontario Business Improvement Area Association - info@obiaa.com
Association of Municipalities of Ontario - resolutions@amo.on.ca
All Ontario Municipalities
Karey Anne Large, CEO, Whitby Chamber of Commerce – Karey@whitbychamber.org
info@whitbychamber.org
Downtown Whitby BIA – info@whitbybia.org
Lorne Coe, MPP, Whitby - lorne.coe@pc.ola.org
Matthew Gaskell, CAO, Town of Whitby – gaskellm@whitby.ca

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 27, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-66-25
Title:	42T-2025-06 - West Grey 'Police Station Subdivision' Information Report
Prepared by:	Becky Hillyer, Senior Planner
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of West Grey

Recommendation

1. That report PDR-CW-66-25 regarding a proposed plan of subdivision application (County file number 42T-2025-06), known as the West Grey 'Police Station Subdivision,' on lands legally described as Plan 500, Part Park Lots 4 to 7; Plan 513 Lots 16 to 18; Unnamed Street Part Lots 6 to 8; Durham Street Part Lots 11 to 15; Durham Road Unnamed Street RP, in the geographic Town of Durham, now in the Municipality of West Grey, be received for information.

Executive Summary

The County has received an application for a draft plan of subdivision (County file number 42T-2025-06), known as the 'Police Station Subdivision,' in the Primary Settlement Area of Durham, in the Municipality of West Grey. The Municipality of West Grey is the owner of the subject lands and the applicant for the draft plan of subdivision. The development would facilitate the creation of 14 semi-detached residential lots, 13 townhouse residential lots, one block of multi-unit residential development, an institutional lot to situate a new police station, stormwater management blocks, and two new public streets (Streets A and B). The development will be serviced by full municipal servicing. A concurrent zoning by-law amendment is also being processed by West Grey, to support the proposed development.

Following the public and agency review process, a thorough planning analysis and recommendation will be provided. A public meeting for the applications has been scheduled for December 16, 2025. Staff are recommending that this report be received for information purposes at this time.

Background and Discussion

The subject property consists of a single parcel of land approximately 3.4 hectares in size. The subject lands previously contained a single detached dwelling. The property has frontage on Grey Road 4, (locally known as Durham Road West) to the north; Bruce Street North to the east; and Chester Street West to the south. The lands are situated adjacent to the new Durham paramedic base, recently constructed by Grey County. The Municipality of West Grey is the owner of the subject lands and the applicant for the development.

The proposed subdivision would consist of a total of 14 semi-detached residential lots, 13 townhouse residential lots, one block of multi-unit residential development, an institutional block to situate a new police station, stormwater management blocks, and two new public streets (Streets A and B). The precise unit count for the multi-unit block is not yet confirmed, but the development would be required to meet a minimum density of 25 units per net hectare, per the direction of the Grey County official plan. The development will be serviced by full municipal water and sewer services.

The subject lands have already been partially developed; including partial site grading, construction of new roadways, and installation of the stormwater management pond and servicing stubs. Construction of the West Grey police station began in 2024 and is nearing completion. 'Street A' runs north-south across the site, with access on Grey Road 4 and Chester Street West; while 'Street B' connects internally to 'Street A' and ends in a cul-de-sac to the east of the site.

The subject lands are designated 'Primary Settlement Area' on Schedule A of the Grey County official plan. There are 'Significant Woodlands' located approximately 100 metres north-east of the subject lands and 'other wetlands' approximately 50 metres to the south. Appendix A also indicates a previous landfill site, on lands to the north, across Durham Road West.

The Municipality of West Grey has initiated a concurrent zoning by-law amendment (ZA29.2025) that would re-zone the lands from 'Institutional,' 'Natural Environment' and 'High Density Residential' (with a holding provision) to 'Institutional,' 'OS566 - Open Space with Exception,' 'High Density Residential,' and 'Medium Density Residential' in order to facilitate the proposed development. The lands are designated 'Residential' within the West Grey official plan.

Surrounding land uses include primarily low-density residential uses in all directions, in addition to the new paramedic base abutting to the north, a restaurant to the east, and the Durham hospital to the west.

Various studies have been submitted in support of the development, and copies of all background reports and plans can be found on the [County of Grey website](#).

Pre-submission consultation between the County and Municipality identified the submission requirements for the applications.

Map 1 below shows the subject lands and surrounding area, while Map 2 shows the proposed plan of subdivision. It is noted that the image below is dated from 2020 and does not include the new paramedic base or the police station, new roads, etc.

Map 1 – Subject Lands



Map 2 – Draft Plan of Subdivision



Analysis of Planning Issues

When rendering a land use planning decision, planning authorities must have regard to matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act*, be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024, and conform to any provincial plans or County/Municipal official plans that govern the subject lands. In this case, the County of Grey official plan and the Municipality of West Grey official plan have jurisdiction over the subject property.

A detailed planning analysis has yet to be undertaken for this development. A public meeting for the zoning by-law amendment and subdivision application has been scheduled for December 16, 2025, at the West Grey Municipal office. Following the public and agency review process, a thorough analysis and staff recommendation will be provided. Key provincial and County policies have been flagged below for consideration.

Provincial Policy and Legislation

The *Planning Act* speaks to the need to have regard for the suitability of land for growth and development; the adequate provision of a full range of housing options; protection of ecological systems; the adequate provision of utilities and municipal services, the orderly development of safe and healthy communities; the appropriate location of growth and development; and the adequate provision and distribution of key community facilities.

The PPS notes that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and land use patterns shall efficiently make use of land and infrastructure. The subject lands are designated as a settlement area in both the County and West Grey official plans.

The PPS stipulates that full municipal services are the preferred form of servicing for any new development. Municipal water and sewer services are proposed for this development.

Other sections of the PPS and the *Planning Act* include the protection of archaeological and heritage resources and avoiding development in significant natural heritage areas.

County of Grey Official Plan

The subject lands are designated 'Primary Settlement Area' on Schedule A of the County's official plan. Like the PPS, the County's official plan directs most growth to fully serviced settlement areas.

Furthermore, the County plan promotes a full range of housing types within settlement areas. The proposed development would offer several 'missing middle' housing options, including townhouses and semi-detached units, as well as a multi-unit residential block.

The County's official plan indicates that a minimum development density of 25 units per net hectare shall be achieved for new residential development within all Primary Settlement Areas. Development within built-up areas may be of a higher density to achieve the policy directive of the official plan, and development is encouraged to exemplify compact design which can have the effect of promoting walking, along with other forms of active and public transportation. While the total number of units for the proposed multi-unit residential block has not yet been fully established, the overall density for the development shall meet a minimum density threshold of 25 units per net hectare.

Section 7 of the County's official plan provides policies related to the protection of natural heritage resources. Grey County planning ecology staff provided early review of the proposed development and confirmed that an environmental impact study (EIS) would not be required.

Section 8 of the County's official plan provides policies on roads and transportation. The proposed development would have access onto Grey Road 4. Grey Country Transportation Services staff have confirmed that they would not be seeking a traffic impact study to support the proposed development.

A Stage 1-2 Archaeological Assessment has been submitted. This study, along with the rest of the application materials, has been circulated to the Saugeen Ojibway Nation and other Indigenous partners for their review.

Municipality of West Grey Official Plan

As noted earlier, the subject lands are designated as 'Residential' in the West Grey official plan. Many of the other policy themes in the West Grey Plan mimic those discussed above in the County official plan and Provincial Legislation and Policy sections of the report.

Following the public and agency processes, a more thorough analysis of the *Planning Act*, PPS, County and Municipal official plans will be undertaken with a staff recommendation.

Legislated Requirements

These applications will be processed in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no anticipated financial or resource considerations associated with the proposed subdivision, beyond those normally encountered in processing such applications. Subdivision application fees have been waived in accordance with the current Fees and Charges By-Law, as the applicant for this development is a municipality.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: Transportation Services, Planning Ecology
 - ☒ AODA Compliance – to be reviewed as part of final staff report.
 - ☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets - to be reviewed as part of final staff report.
- ☒ External: The Public, Municipality of West Grey, and agencies / bodies to be circulated under the *Planning Act*

Appendices and Attachments

None

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 27, 2025
Subject / Report No:	CCR-CW-11-25
Title:	Inaugural 2025-2026 Council Year
Prepared by:	Tara Warder, Clerk
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. That Report CCR-CW-11-25 regarding inaugural considerations be received; and
2. That Section 3.1 - Date of Inaugural Session of Grey County's Procedural By-law 5134-22 be waived for the purposes of the election of the 2026 Warden and that the meeting be held at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

Executive Summary

Grey County's procedural by-law governs the calling, place and proceedings of meetings, including the inaugural meeting for the purpose of electing the Warden each year. The report proposes a change to the time of this year's inaugural meeting from the time that is embedded into the procedural by-law.

Background and Discussion

Section 3.1 of the County's Procedural By-law states that "Council will, in accordance with the By-law, hold its first meeting on the first Tuesday of December at 7:30 p.m." The Warden is elected annually at this meeting. The inaugural meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Grey County Administration Building.

Similar to last year, staff are recommending the inaugural session be held at 5:30 p.m. in 2025. This change requires a two-thirds vote from Council to waive the subject section of the procedural by-law. This report is a procedural report only, needed to comply with the procedural by-law. The suggested time change will be incorporated into an updated procedural by-law in 2026.

Legislated Requirements

The vote requires two-thirds support from Council in order to waive the relevant section of the Procedural By-law.

Legal Considerations

There are none.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no additional costs associated with the recommended change to the inaugural meeting. Any expenses related to the inaugural meeting are budgeted annually in the Council operating budget.

Relevant Consultation

- ☐ Internal
 - ☐ AODA Compliance
 - ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets
- ☐ External

Appendices and Attachments

None.

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 27, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-67-25
Title:	Tilman Martin Minor Exemption
Prepared by:	Sarah Johnson, Trails and Forestry Coordinator
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Grey Highlands

Recommendation

1. That report PDR-CW-67-25 be received; and
2. That the application for minor exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part Lot 31, Concession 5, geographic Township of Artemesia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 213159 30 Sideroad, be approved.

Executive Summary

The County received a minor exemption application under the County's Forest Management By-law in September 2025 to clear woodlands consisting of approximately 4 hectares (9.9 acres) of white pine, red pine, and spruce. The purpose of the clearing is for agricultural purposes. County staff are recommending approval of this minor exemption application.

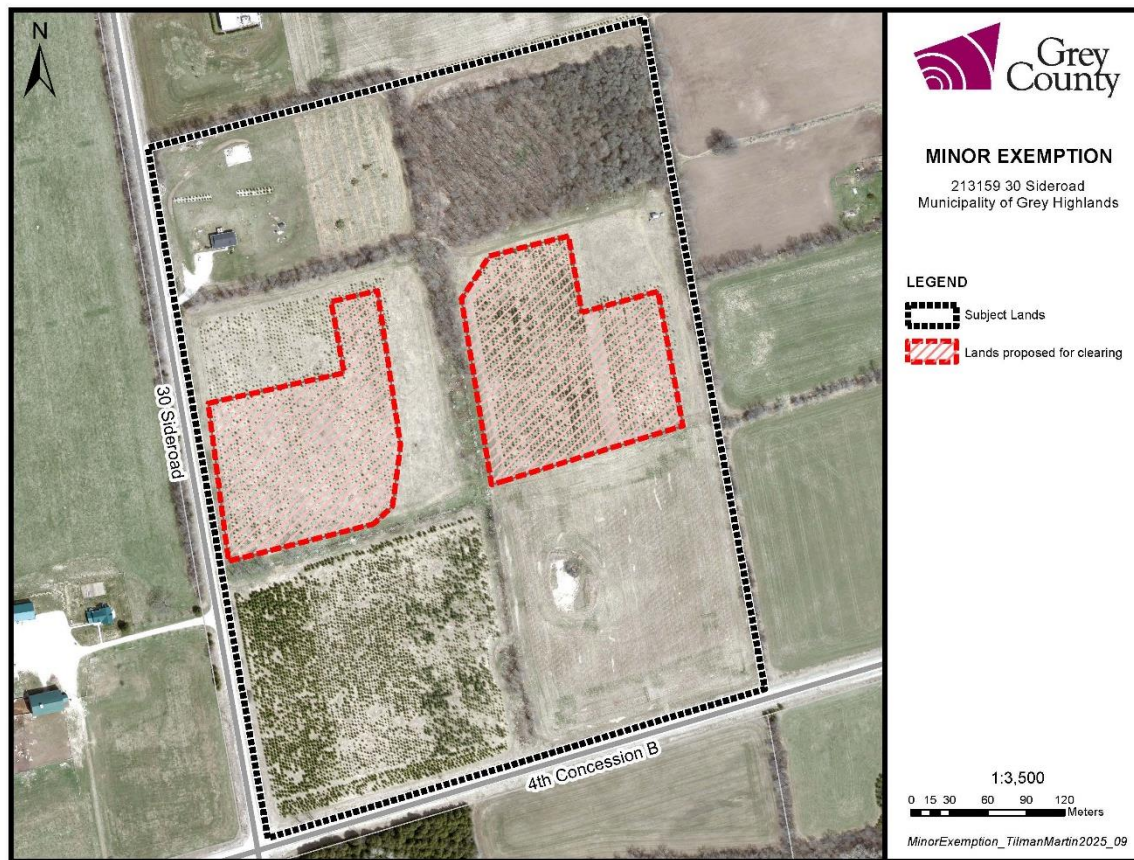
Background and Discussion

An application for a minor exemption was received for clear-cutting in a woodland under the County's Forest Management By-law. The application is seeking approval to clear approximately 4 hectares (9.9 acres) of white pine, red pine, and spruce. Map 1 below shows the subject lands, and those lands proposed for clearing.

The subject lands are located at Part Lot 31, Concession 5, geographic Township of Artemesia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 213159 30 Sideroad. More than two thirds of the property is woodland, and the total size of the property is 21.7 hectares (53.6 acres). The cleared portion of the property is currently farmed. As noted above, this application seeks to clear approximately 4 hectares.

Surrounding the subject lands are mainly farmed and forested lands.

In the County official plan, this property is designated as 'Agricultural' on Schedule A.



Map 1 – Proposed area for tree removal

The County's climate change action plan, Going Green in Grey, promotes tree planting across the County, including setting tree planting targets. The County's current Forest Management By-law predates Going Green in Grey. The County's by-law is currently under review. One of the objectives of this review is to consider the by-law's relationship to other County plans and strategies such as Recolour Grey, the County official plan, and Going Green in Grey, the climate change action plan. Strictly speaking this minor exemption application is being tested against the current forest management by-law. Staff are however cognizant that the future updated by-law may consider woodland clearing differently, including possibly considering replanting plans or offsetting approaches.

Agency and Public Comments Received

Under the County Forest Management By-law, adjacent landowners, conservation authorities, and municipalities are to be notified and/or consulted when a minor exemption application is received.

Public Comments

No public comments were received during the processing of this application.

Agency Comments

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), Municipality of Grey Highlands, and the County's Forestry By-law Enforcement Officer provided comments on this application. A summary of each of their comments is as follows:

- GSCA advises that there are no areas regulated by GSCA and Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits, nor are there any natural hazards identified on the subject property. They have no further comments.
- Municipality of Grey Highlands has requested that the applicant is to be advised that load restrictions will be in effect March 1 to May 1 each year for municipal roads. No staging of equipment and/or material in the municipal right of way.
- The County's By-law Enforcement Officer does not have concerns with the removal of the trees. There would be minimal impact to the loss of the forested habitat given the plantation is still early in its transition from meadow to forest.

The County's Planning Ecologist provided the following comment:

- The area proposed for clearing consists of very young plantations and not considered significant woodlands. Ecology staff have no objections to the proposal.

Based on the above, staff are recommending approval of the minor exemption application.

Financial and Resource Implications

None.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: Grey County By-law Enforcement Officer, Planning Ecology
 - ☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets: see commentary in the report regarding the relationship between Going Green in Grey and the County's current forest management by-law review.
- ☒ External: Municipality of Grey Highlands, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the public

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Minutes

Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee

November 6, 2025

Present: Dave Shorey, Emily Rosen, Roger Mooking, Grace Morin, Councillor Dickert, Councillor McKay, Councillor Neilson, Councillor Milne, Councillor Keaveney, Councillor Boddy, Warden Matrosovs, Councillor Carleton

Regrets: Councillor Hutchinson, Sandy Gott

Staff Present: Randy Scherzer, CAO, Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, Jill Paterson, Manager of Museum and Archives, Steve Furness, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Manager, Linnea Catalan, Business Enterprise Coordinator, Kaleena Sanford, Economic Development Officer, Kimberly Trombley, Administrative Assistant, Scott Taylor, Director of Planning, Brittany Rier, Deputy Clerk, Taylor Eckenswiller, Campus Manager, Liz Buckton, Senior Policy Planner

Call to Order

The Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee met at the Grey County Administration Building on the above date. Chair Keaveney called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

Councillor Tom Hutchinson and Member Sandy Gott sent regrets.

Other Members Participating: Vivica Gravel and Rebecca Ellerdien of the City of Owen Sound, Brenna Carroll of the Township of Southgate and April Marshall of the Town of Hanover.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Delegations

Items For Direction or Discussion

EDTC-PEDAC-13-25 Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Strategic Progress Report - November 2025

Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture, Savanna Myers, shared with the Committee the first team building development day for the department touring by bus through Grey County, and the success of the recent Economic Development Leadership Forum hosted last week at Cobble Beach.

She shared that the County is continuing to collaborate with Georgian College with continuous growth and increasing apprenticeships where students don't have to leave the region for further education.

At the Western Ontario Municipal Conference, the team focused on telling the story of Sydenham campus, what it means for the region, and the success it has had within our community.

She discussed tariff uncertainty and the ripple effect across Grey County posing a challenge within economic development.

Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Manager, shared the trends being seen at the Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) including an increase in hard-skills training, Quickbooks training, human resources support, and digital support. The centre offers coaching and mentorship as well as 1-on-1 support to businesses.

She noted the increase in activity in bricks-and-mortar businesses.

Councillor Carleton joined the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

The Committee discussed training within the agriculture sector. It was noted the Campus assists with succession planning and support where needed.

The Committee discussed a central place for small businesses to see businesses that are for sale in the area. Staff noted a goal to become the connector for business succession, and plans to create this in the future.

The Committee discussed work with the local school boards, and determining what student entrepreneurship programming is necessary at the BEC. Staff noted that the BEC works with both the Catholic and Bluewater school boards and that engagement starts with teachers in civics, entrepreneurship, accounting, guidance and career classes.

Savanna emphasized the success of the campus and expert advice offered through the BEC. Over 4000 people have come through the doors in September.

Kaleena Sanford, Economic Development Officer, reviewed the department's regional marketing KPI reporting and strategic focus. She noted the importance of staying agile as a response to our marketing strategy. The department looks at indicators like website engagement, brand awareness, visitor and business support and storytelling impact which has shown growth over the last quarter.

She noted the changes in social media including visitor reach and follower growth which has seen an increase in quarter 3. The department is focusing on a curated look on Instagram as part of the digital strategy which creates a deeper connection with our audience through content interaction and increase on the average time on Grey County's page.

The Committee discussed the response to the decline in website traffic where it was noted by the department the new website being created with a full launch coming in January 2026.

The Committee discussed tracking metrics and links to getting people through the doors of small businesses across the County. Kaleena noted the department's geofencing tool where if the person is spending more than 30 minutes in a store, it's assumed that that person is spending money. She noted that the new website will help with relationship building with local businesses to get access to further metrics on customer growth with the tools being used.

Roger noted many businesses are partnering with small businesses across Grey County rather than larger businesses. He shared the collaboration with Lovebird Brewing Co. in Meaford with Pearson International Airport and the hopes to see more collaborations like this in the future.

Jill Paterson, Manager of Museum and Archives, noted the team formally launched the Grey County Gallery receiving more than \$350,000 in Federal funds getting more artifacts out of collections and onto display for all to see.

Councillor Milne left the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

She also shared that Grey Roots launched its first staff event for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Councillor Milne returned to the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

She noted changes to the Moreston Heritage Village through the summer making better use of volunteers, summer students and staff, and changing the operations of the Village with new exhibits including the Summerfolk highlight, getting vehicles out of storage, and the Memorial Railway, all supported by volunteer work. Between July and August, over 1000 volunteer hours were logged with 9000 visitors through the village.

PED-10-25

Moved by: Councillor Milne

Seconded by: Councillor McKay

That report EDTC-PEDAC-13-25 regarding Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Strategic Progress Report – November 2025 be received for information.

Carried

2026 Priorities (Director Myers)

Director Myers noted that 2025 was a year of study meant to spend time understanding clients, trends, and data. Heading into 2026 or year three of the plan, bringing the findings to market, the team is prepared to have a more focused tourism and culture role shifting where needed and maintaining what is working.

Bill 60 Overview (Director Taylor)

Director Scott Taylor provided a summary on Bill 60: the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, to the Committee. The Bill was introduced on October 23rd with a quick window for commenting. All comments are to be submitted by November 22nd to the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

He reviewed the introduction of the bill and its effects on sectors including Planning and Development, Transportation, and Housing.

The Committee discussed wastewater systems and the risk for a municipality when the systems aren't built to a municipal standard. The importance of having protections in place for residents was discussed, while taking into consideration the cost for developers.

Roundtable Discussion

Sector Trends and Challenges

Councillor Boddy left the meeting at 10:11 a.m. and returned at 10:13 a.m.

Dave Shorey, Executive Director at Georgian College, shared some exciting events entering into the fall term at the College including take your kid to work day at Bruce Power with virtual reality experiences for the students, and Built to Lead held at the Nuclear Innovation Institute campus in Tiverton introducing young women and girls to the trades. He noted that a similar event will be offered in Owen Sound in April with the Sydenham Campus.

Roger Mooking shared that he was recently a guest editor for the recent issue of the Best Side magazine. The magazine features a cover that was shot in Grey County featuring local business and gath[er] campaign photos.

Chair Keaveney shared the many ribbon cuttings in Meaford over the past couple months noting the growth the town is seeing. She also shared that TC Energy is currently undergoing an environmental assessment process proposing a pumped storage project in Meaford.

She noted upcoming events in Meaford including the Christmas on the Bay European style Christmas market held in the Market Square from December 4th to 7th and the Meaford Dragons event on November 13th at 7:30 p.m. at Meaford Hall.

Dave Storey left the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

Roger Mooking shared an upcoming campaign called the Shirt Off My Back Campaign in partnership with Donovan Bailey and community organizations including the Toronto

Caribbean Newspaper and the Pearson International Airport, to support Jamaica's recovery after Hurricane Melissa.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Date

Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Adjournment

The Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:31 a.m. to the call of the Chair.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 27, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-64-25
Title:	Housing Action Plan – 2025 Status Update
Prepared by:	Liz Buckton, Senior Policy Planner
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All Member Municipalities in Grey County

Recommendation

1. That report PDR-CW-64-25 is received; and
2. That a copy of this report be shared to the member municipalities within Grey County, and with MPs and MPPs for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and Simcoe-Grey, for information purposes.

Executive Summary

This report offers updates regarding various actions pursued under the County's Housing Action Plan since last reporting to County Council in late 2024. It also describes emerging progress relating to some of the more abstract innovation and community-development-related actions described within the plan and offers some suggested next steps regarding plan implementation and future updates. Staff are recommending the report be received and shared as an update on the County's Housing Action Plan progress.

Background and Discussion

Further to the housing initiatives of the County's Community Services department, an Updated Grey County Housing Action Plan (HAP) was endorsed by Council in August 2023. The HAP was developed in collaboration with municipal staff from across the County, identifying a variety of actions that may be undertaken to support the creation of affordable and below-market rate rental units, as well as affordable home ownership units, which are often referred to as 'attainable'.

Work on the identified actions within the HAP has continued since that time, with overarching update reports having been offered in October 2024 (Appendix 1- 3) and action-specific reporting on Surplus Lands initiatives in September 2025 (Appendix 4). Staff encourage a review of these prior reports to give the most fulsome picture of the various elements of work underway.

This report is offered as further information relating to HAP progress, focusing on several distinct elements of the plan, rather than offering a global summary. It is structured in two parts:

- 1) **Update & Advance:** This section includes a short list of ongoing items where a status update is offered, alongside commentary relating to next steps; and,
- 2) **Innovate & Educate:** This section offers commentary relating to several of the more 'abstract' actions included within the plan, offering some preliminary strategic consideration and recommendation relating to how the County may orient to participate and advance action on these unique elements of the Plan.

1. Update & Advance

	Housing Action Item	Description
1.1	Surplus Lands	This action relates to inventory, assessment and potential future offering of County-owned (surplus) lands for housing creation purposes.
1.2	Enhanced Data Collection & Sharing	This action focuses on addressing data needs to support housing creation, needs/gap identification, creation of targets, and, for progress monitoring.
1.3	Grey County Housing Fund	This action affirms the County's intent to maintain a levy-based funding contribution towards future affordable housing projects to serve the County's most vulnerable populations.
1.4	Community Improvement Plans (CIP)	This action speaks to the County's support of CIPs as a useful tool for municipalities to incent affordable and attainable housing creation.
1.5	Planning Documents and Processes	These actions propose updates to the County and municipal official plans and zoning by-laws to incorporate affordable/housing-supportive policies. The importance of coordinated land and infrastructure planning for growth and streamlined municipal processes are also highlighted.

1.1 Surplus Lands

This element of the Housing Action Plan remains in progress. Report PDR-CW-57-25 '*Surplus Lands for Housing – Site Preparation & Derisking Activities*' (Appendix 4) was recently presented to Council in September of 2025. This report outlined next steps for site investigation and de-risking activities for two pilot properties located in Markdale and in Durham. Funds requested to support this work will be further considered via the 2026 budget process.

1.2 Enhanced Data Collection & Sharing

Staff note that data related work has been ongoing and is an important underpinning element of the HAP. As described in detail within report PDR-CW-57-24 '*Housing Planning Data Needs & Regional Housing Strategy*' (Appendix 3), several specific data tasks have been included on staff workplans for 2025, as will further extend into 2026.

These tasks include the completion of an updated Growth Management Strategy (GMS) for the County, as well as subsequent preparation of a County-wide Housing Need Assessment (HNA). In turn, this updated data will inform further strategic thinking, writing, and a future update to the Housing Action Plan.

Growth Management Strategy (GMS)

The GMS is now well underway and expected to conclude in late 2025 or very early 2026. The County retained Hemson Consulting Ltd. to complete this work, as has been informed by outreach to local municipal staff for both planning data and narrative/ observational input. As part of this process, staff have also been consulting with other public sector partners, such as school boards, the health care sector, and public health.

The GMS forecast approach is in-keeping with the proposed updated methodology released by the province earlier this year. Data outputs will include updated population, household, and employment forecasts for the County to the year 2051. These County-wide forecasts will be further broken down into local municipal growth allocations for the member municipalities over this same planning horizon. As is typical, once completed and endorsed, the growth forecasts will be embedded into the County's official plan, via a future amendment.

Housing Need Assessment (HNA)

Data gathering has begun to inform the planned Housing Need Assessment (HNA), which is intended to follow the GMS work. The HNA will provide a better understanding of the built resources (i.e., housing amounts, types, locations) required to support or facilitate the population and employment growth forecasted via the GMS.

Presently, municipalities of 30,000 population or more are required to submit a formal HNA in support of applications for federal infrastructure funding. While this mandatory requirement does not currently apply to smaller municipalities, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada have recently begun issuing pre-populated HNA templates for smaller municipalities to support completion of such assessments.

In addition to supporting housing planning by local government, completed HNAs are quite useful to inform individual applications within the community. For example, a HNA may be used where:

- a) a local non-profit may be required to demonstrate community need, in relation to an affordable housing project they are seeking federal construction funding for, or,
- b) where a for-profit developer may be looking to access preferred Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) mortgage insurances for their new rental building.

The federally pre-populated HNA template documents have now been obtained for each of the member municipalities. Housing demand figures will be an additional output of the GMS work and will further help to inform the HNA. Additionally, Rural Housing Information System (RHIS) data will continue to be a useful resource for this work. Staff intend to document the data sources underpinning the final HNA for feedback/sharing to Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) as may support curation of relevant data within the RHIS to support future HNA work by the County and others.

Housing Targets & Monitoring Metrics

Staff would finally note that housing related data, targets, and monitoring metrics remain an ongoing item of discussion around the municipal staff-level Affordable Housing Community of Practice table. Updated affordable/attainable housing targets and monitoring metrics could perhaps be explored in greater detail as a component of the future HNA and embedded via future updates to the HAP and/or the Grey County Official Plan.

1.3 Grey County Housing Fund

As the system Service Manager, Grey County is responsible for overseeing the delivery of housing and homelessness services for our most vulnerable population. The County develops and maintains a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan, reviewed every five years, aligned with provincial policy statements. The next revision of Grey County's housing and homelessness plan is due May 2026.

The current Housing and Homelessness Plan consists of four strategies:

- Create more affordable housing
- Preserve existing stock
- Initiate a by name list
- Increase supportive housing

In December 2020 the Affordable Housing Committee proposed a 1% levy contribution towards an affordable housing development fund be created. The fund would be used to fund affordable housing builds, buy surplus lands or properties and support rent supplements to support our lowest income families and singles.

The County also made the decision to sell off older single detached homes to add to the affordable housing fund. The houses are sold as they become vacant, to date seven houses have been sold.

In the last four years the affordable housing build fund has provided \$5,845,000 in funding for the following projects:

- a) Lutheran Social Services Owen Sound towards a 40-unit seniors' apartment building;
- b) 12 units of supportive housing with 24-hour supports on site;
- c) Purchase of a 22-unit motel to provide transitional housing and supports to those experiencing homelessness;
- d) Acquisition of land for affordable housing in partnership with the City of Owen Sound;
- e) Committed funds for a 40 unit build in Dundalk by Grey County housing starting in 2026.

Currently, all funds are committed, and the fund will continue to support affordable housing projects with non-profits and Grey County housing as more funds become available. There are currently three future projects waiting for funding from the County and other levels of government to move forward.

1.4 Community Improvement Planning (CIPs)

Under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) enables municipalities to support community improvement through tools such as grants and loans. These plans can address a range of priorities, including affordable housing, infrastructure, intensification, environmental standards, energy efficiency, mixed-use and transit-oriented development, accessibility, and employment.

In Grey County, most member municipalities have a CIP program in place, though these plans vary in their scope and resourcing. Staff note that several municipalities have CIP updates currently in process, or intentions to update their plans in the near term. Staff-to-staff discussion and information sharing is ongoing in this regard. County staff would generally encourage inclusion of affordable/housing-specific programs within the local CIP's as may be tooled or targeted to respond to identified needs or gaps in the local housing supply.

County CIPs

As noted in report PDR-CW-56-24 '*Housing Action Plan – Emerging Understandings*' (Appendix 2) Staff identify that a CIP at the County level, could be a further useful tool to facilitate support for strategically important housing creation across the County.

For example, a County CIP could support offering of incentives for those housing types and pricings that the market may not be well positioned to achieve or perhaps could support community acquisition of lands or existing at-risk affordable housing. A County CIP may further offer flexibility relating to the nature of future disposals of surplus lands for housing purposes (i.e., at reduced cost; subject to specific desired housing outcomes). Importantly, this tool could also facilitate incenting of affordable units by social purposes and/or traditional market-developers. This is challenging to do outside of the CIP framework, often resulting in time-limited affordability via capital facilities agreements, rather than offering any affordability in perpetuity.

Generally, an upper-tier CIP could create opportunity for incentives to be offered more nimbly by the County to support uptake of emerging public/private/non-profit partnership models for affordable and attainable ownership, over the long term. This could perhaps be aligned alongside the existing Grey County Housing Fund as is alternately targeted towards deepest affordability projects, supportive of the County's most vulnerable populations.

Pursuing a County CIP

Currently, only eight *upper-tier* municipalities in Ontario are permitted to prepare CIPs as listed in Ontario Regulation 221/07. There are no parameters identified in the *Planning Act* regarding how upper-tier municipalities may seek to be prescribed for CIP purposes. As such, County staff pursued preliminary discussion with Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff in this regard. At that time, it was suggested that a letter of request be submitted to the Minister.

Subsequently, the province has introduced Bill 60 the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025. Bill 60 proposes changes to the *Planning Act*, as would allow an upper-tier municipality to designate a community improvement project area and administer a CIP.

At the time of writing this report, Bill 60 had not yet received third reading or royal assent. Staff intend to monitor the progress of this element of Bill 60. Should this element of the Bill be approved, no further request to the province would be required to establish such a tool in Grey County. Should the County wish to prepare a CIP at a future time, a further staff report would be prepared to outline the process and associated financial and resource implications for Council's consideration.

1.5 Planning Documents & Processes

The County and member municipalities have been making progress on these elements of the HAP, with various amendments completed or underway to update local planning documents to incorporate recent legislative and policy changes, and to embed affordable/housing-supportive policies and permissions. This work has included the following:

- additional residential unit (ARU) policies and zoning permissions,
- approaches regarding Short-term Accommodations and how they are permitted and regulated locally,
- the inclusion of housing-related goals, objectives and targets to guide future efforts, and
- height, density, and intensification policies, as may support affordability and a fulsome housing mix.

Some municipalities have taken the further step of preparing local project charters (e.g., Meaford) or housing-specific workplans (e.g., The Blue Mountains), to build upon the direction offered within the County's HAP and outline how related work will occur at the local level. There has also been some action locally around land acquisition for future housing use/partnership (e.g., Owen Sound) as may tangibly support affordable/housing creation in future.

2. Innovate & Educate

As noted above, this second section of the report will offer commentary relating to several of the more 'abstract' actions included within the Housing Action Plan (HAP). It also includes some preliminary strategic consideration relating to how the County may participate and advance action on these unique elements of the plan.

	Housing Action Item	Description
2.1	Work with non-profits to create affordable housing and build local capacity for affordable housing creation	This action relates to an ongoing expressed intent by the County to work together with the not-for-profit sector on the creation and delivery of affordable housing and to explore opportunities to further support and build non-profit sector capacity in Grey.
2.2	Explore funding models and tools to build affordable	This action speaks to the desire of the County to learn and explore the potential of alternative and emerging

	housing (e.g., community bonds, social finance tools)	financing tools, approaches and models for affordable housing creation. This action places the County in a ‘learning stance’ in this regard, and the Housing Action Plan notes that <i>‘innovative ideas may flow from this...stance. Opportunities to ‘workshop’, refine and advance innovative local solutions and transfer of knowledge should be explored as they may arise.’</i>
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2.1 Non-Profit Housing Creation & Capacity:

In addition to the direct project and partnership work of the County’s Housing Services Manager with local non-profits in the creation and maintenance of deeply affordable housing, the HAP also targets exploration of broader support and capacity building actions for this sector in Grey County.

As described within, the HAP orients Grey County as a lead organization regarding actions falling within its spheres of influence and control. However, the HAP relies on local municipalities, local charitable, non-profit and community partner agencies, and the development community, to participate in these actions. Each local partner/sector is encouraged to consider further actions that may fall within their respective spheres of influence and control which could be pursued towards the collective goal of addressing the housing affordability crisis in Grey County.

Ongoing co-learning and networking

As noted in report PDR-CW-55-2024 – ‘*Housing Action Plan – Status Update (2024)*’ (Appendix 1), staff have engaged in ongoing networking and co-learning with community partners, such as the [Institute of Southern Georgian Bay](#) (‘the Institute’) in this regard. The work and focus of the Institute’s Housing and Social Finance Learning Circle has aligned well with the above-noted actions of the County’s HAP. This work represents a great example of a local community partner taking action to explore how they may further support achievement of collective housing goals, locally and regionally.

Staff note that there are several ways local government may engage around non-profit sector capacity building for housing purposes (e.g., funding, data-sharing, skills incubation, partnership, etc.). However, there are some things that the County and/or member municipalities are not ideally positioned, resourced, or otherwise able to do. The work of the Institute builds upon this understanding, proposing a ‘whole community’ approach as it seeks to align municipal and community efforts across the region to drive affordable housing creation at greater scale.

A whole community approach

This proposed collaborative approach would suggest a local government focus on the following items:

- The targeting of policy, permissions and implementation tools towards affordability, for example, offering clear definitions, data resources, and targeted incentives to support affordable housing and non-market housing.
- Establishing and maintaining good regional communication to facilitate community buy-in and collaboration across sectors, as may additionally include a regional ‘table’ or oversight/coordination committee, in future.
- Municipal engagement around community wealth and social finance approaches, as are being explored by community partners for local implementation.
- Development of a cohesive regional perspective on workforce housing and associated needs and approaches.

Community focus would be oriented around these items:

- Building the local ‘systems architecture’ (i.e., organizations and functions) to support affordable and non-market housing at a greater scale, as may include a land trust organization and regional community development organization.
- Linking of non-market housing creators, such as non-profits, cooperatives, and social service agencies through a community of practice.
- Support for local citizens groups, relating to advocacy, education and skills development to encourage affordable housing creation and related municipal efforts.
- Preparation of a regional community wealth/social finance strategy, as would explore how our communities can lend, spend / invest for community benefit, and help to inform the development of supportive social finance tools for local housing creation.

At the time of future update to the HAP, it may be appropriate to embed some of these ideas formally within the plan, further detailing those items recommended for local government focus. As the community-based work continues, staff suggest ongoing engagement and support by the County at a staff level. This support would be through data and information sharing, and active consideration/exploration of how the County may support or align together with the community elements of this work.

Community incubation of system components

Staff are pleased to further highlight a partnership, building off the work of the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay’s Housing and Social Finance Learning Circle, and Community Foundation Grey Bruce’s (CFGB) Vital Focus on Housing Report (2023). The CFGB will be incubating a new ‘Grey Bruce Community Development Corporation’ (CDC) beginning this fall.

CDCs operate throughout the world in various forms, being non-profit organizations with primary emphasis on growing economic and community well-being projects. The intent is that the new CDC will be initially focused on affordable housing throughout the two counties. The Community Foundation envisions that the CDC will:

- offer mentorship and technical support for community housing projects,
- explore social finance tools (like community bonds) to unlock new local investment,
- initiate the development and/or protection of affordable housing in Grey Bruce, and
- create space for collaboration between governments, developers, and non-profit partners.

To guide the CDC, Ryan Deska joins Community Foundation Grey Bruce as a Strategic Initiatives Consultant on Housing. Mr. Deska brings deep experience in rural housing and community development, including his work with Habitat for Humanity Guelph Wellington in the design and implementation of its community bonds program.

Staff see great potential associated with such a community-based development organization to help coordinate, facilitate, and resource affordable and attainable housing creation across the County, partnering together with the government sector, non-profits, or traditional developers. Such an organization may support the local curation of niche skills and capacities to support affordable housing creation, as they differ from market-based residential development generally. This could include, for example, skills and expertise relating to multi-partner partnership models to support affordable unit creation.

Sector-based skills building

Other resources are also emerging as may support skill building within the non-profit/non-market sector. For example, the United Way has recently begun offering [Community Real Estate Capacity Building](#) training/courses.

Staff expect that similar skills building within the municipal sector would be advantageous to facilitate County and/or local municipal participation in such future partnerships, as well. This may be particularly useful, for example, in relation to surplus lands offerings and related partnership opportunities. The province, or perhaps municipally focused organizations such as Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) could be well positioned to curate and deliver such educational material on a broad basis for the municipal sector.

Achieving scale for affordable and non-market housing creation

Staff would additionally note that with the early stages of the roll out of the [Federal Build Canada Homes](#) initiative now underway, there has been early signaling towards future federal support and prioritization for non-market affordable housing creation, at scale. There is much detail yet to come around the program and the future funding and financing approaches that will support it. Staff are cognizant of language within early documents, such as *the 2025 Build Canada Homes - Market Sounding Guide* (Appendix 5), that speak to an intent to grow the stock of affordable housing in Canada through “*substantial individual projects (e.g. 300+ units)*” or “*as a collection of smaller projects grouped within a broader portfolio*”.

It appears that the federal [Affordable Housing Fund](#), as has supported individual builds and community housing upgrades, will continue until enhanced funds are exhausted. Beyond that, staff do not know if/how smaller-scale or standalone projects may continue to be funded or financed via future program iterations under the Build Canada Homes umbrella. Staff wonder if there may be some future aggregation of projects needed (e.g., regionally) to access future financial tools/federal investment for housing creation of this nature. If this were to be the case, the County or perhaps a community-based development corporation (or both working in concert) may be supportive in such aggregation role.

Staff would note that there are also several existing provincial and partnered federal/provincial funding programs in place that support housing delivery in Grey County. These include, though are not limited to:

- Direct-transfer programs to the Housing Service Manager, for example, under the National Housing Strategy (NHS), the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) are offered to help protect and renew existing social housing stock, and to support expansion of community housing supply over time;
- Application-based housing-enabling infrastructure funding or financing programs, as may apply to both core infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges, culverts) and water systems (e.g. drinking, wastewater and stormwater); and,
- The Building Faster Fund offers funding to municipalities that meet provincially assigned housing targets. This fund also contains a small/rural communities funding carve out intended for those municipalities not assigned provincial targets.

While these programs are important and the support for community housing and housing-enabling infrastructure is appreciated, staff recommend that additional funding and greater certainty around its availability will be necessary to achieve a larger scale of affordable housing development in Grey County.

With respect to the Building Faster Fund specifically, staff note that despite the small/rural communities funding carve out, eligibility criteria for communities without provincial targets are quite stringent and have excluded most Grey County member municipalities. Summary data compiled by the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus for the first year of the fund, found that 3 of 117 municipalities in rural Western Ontario had received such funding for a total of just 2.7% of the total funding envelope, while representing 26% of municipalities in the province. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has recently [offered advice to the Ministry](#) around the Building Faster Fund for 2026, as would recommend retooling of the program to tackle systemic barriers to housing development, rather than an explicit focus on housing start targets.

Staff will continue to monitor roll out of the federal Build Canada homes program, as well as the evolution of provincially offered funding/financing for housing purposes. Until further details emerge, ongoing advocacy by the County is likely appropriate to both federal and provincial governments requesting maintained and enhanced access to funding and financing for affordable and community housing creation in small urban and rural communities like here in Grey County.

2.2 Finance Innovation for Affordable Housing

The social purposes financial sector, comprised of distributed actors across Canada, have offered pre-election and pre-budget advocacy in 2025 to help to further grow and shape social and community investment related financial tools tailored to non-profit and non-market housing applications. Staff would highlight organizations like [Catalyst Community Finance](#), and [Tapestry Community Capital](#), as emerging leaders in this sector, and the [Canadian Coalition for Community Capital](#) as an example of such ongoing collective advocacy work.

This work is pursued in recognition that non-profits and even mid-sized local governments may lack access to the adequate capital or the preferred rate financing necessary to deliver affordable community housing on an appropriate scale to meet local needs. In Grey County, the addition of mechanisms to facilitate local investment into local projects could enhance the viability of affordable housing creation, reduce reliance on external granting and investment, and perhaps be employed for other types of non-housing community development work as well.

Community bonds, represent one such tool gaining traction across Canada. Staff offer the following links as examples of active community bond campaigns, showing how such offerings can be structured to support local housing creation and acquisition: [Housing Forever Bonds](#) (Ottawa Community Land Trust); and, [Redwood Community Housing Bonds](#) (Redwood Park Communities, Simcoe County).

Emerging partnered impact fund models

In addition to the development of small-scale local investment tools and associated advocacy relating to the applicable regulatory environment, there are also emerging examples of larger scale partnered funds being established together with local government and other investors, for targeted housing intervention.

As an example, staff would highlight the Canadian Alliance for Transit-Connected Housing or '[CATCH](#)' fund, which is a new blended capital fund designed to support the acquisition, development, and preservation of community housing near transit lines. This blended capital fund model combines public investment from government and municipal sources; catalytic philanthropy to absorb risk and attract private partners, and institutional capital seeking impact with stable returns. The CATCH fund offers the following:

- Flexible, mission-aligned financing for community housing providers, especially in high-demand areas near transit.
- Support for land and building acquisition, enabling providers to act before affordability is lost.
- Low-cost financing to advance development projects.
- Bridge and cash flow financing during construction phases.

This work builds on an earlier funding prototype/affordable housing innovation lab in Hamilton. It offers an example of bold investment and municipal funding innovation that could perhaps be replicated to support targeted housing creation on a regional basis in rural Ontario also.

Based on direction within the HAP, staff recommend that ongoing learning around these emerging tools and models should continue. As noted in the HAP '*Opportunities to 'workshop', refine and advance innovative local solutions and transfer of knowledge should be explored as they may arise.*'

Conclusion

This report has been provided to offer an update on the Housing Action Plan and related implementation activities. A further update to the plan itself is targeted to occur following completion of the planned Housing Need Assessment and the related drafting of strategic approaches to address housing supply gaps identified through this work.

Staff suggest such strategy writing, with regional scope, would build from the GMS and HNA data and understandings of where certain housing types and pricing are needed, and where broader population and economic growth opportunities are likely to exist. This work will consider how municipal structures and capacities can be best positioned, used, or applied, to facilitate these targeted housing creation opportunities and would be further translated into discrete actions for inclusion in the HAP. As noted herein, future HAP updates could also embed the 'whole community' approach and related distributed actions for both local government and

community partners. Staff Report *PDR-CW-57-24 Planning Data Needs & Regional Housing Strategy* (Appendix 3) further describes the anticipated interplay between the ongoing data work, and such future intended HAP update.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal – Community Services, CAO's Office, Communications
- ☒ External – The Institute of Southern Georgian Bay (including participation by various local municipal staff and councilors, Grey Bruce Community Foundation staff, various local non-profit housing organizations, front line social service providers & housing advocates, and various visiting speakers/experts etc.); Grey County/Municipal Staff Community of Practice members; Cross-county staff network (including staff from Bruce, Huron and Simcoe Counties).

Appendices and Attachments

Appendix 1: [PDR-CW-55-24 Housing Action Plan Update \(2024\)](#)

Appendix 2: [PDR-CW-56-24 HAP – Emerging Understandings \(2024\)](#)

Appendix 3: [PDR-CW-57-24 Housing Planning Data Needs & Regional Housing Strategy](#)

Appendix 4: [PDR-CW-57-25 Surplus Lands for Housing – Site Preparation & De-Risking Activities \(Sept. 2025\)](#)

Appendix 5: [Build Canada Homes – Market Sounding Guide](#)