Committee of the Whole
Agenda

November 12, 2026

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 Correspondence regarding the amended beaver by-laws, forms, and compensation — 5

   That the correspondence received regarding the amended beaver by-laws, forms, and compensation be received for information.

   6.b PDR-CW-45-26 Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendment PS-229-25 Walker Duntroon Quarry — 8

   That report PDR-CW-45-26 be received; and
   That staff be directed to send report PDR-CW-45-26 to the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) as County Comments for Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendment (NEPA) PS-229-25 Walker Duntroon Quarry; and
   That staff be authorized to proceed with providing comments to the NEC prior to County Council approval as per Section 26.6(b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22, given the preferred commenting deadline of the NEC.

   6.c CCR-CW-19-26 Waiving of Portions of Procedural By-law for Inaugural and Warden Nominations — 12

That Report CCR-CW-19-26 regarding waiving portions of the procedural by-law for the purposes of the inaugural meeting and facilitating warden nominations be received; and
That Sections *3.1 – Date of Inaugural Session* and *5.3 – Nominations* of Grey County's Procedural By-law 5134-22 be waived for the purposes of the election of the 2027 Warden and that the meeting be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1, 2026 and further that nominations for Warden be accepted by the Clerk until noon on Monday, November 30, 2026.

6.d FR-CW-25-26 Quarterly Purchasing Report Q3 14

That Report FR-CW-25-26 regarding the quarterly purchasing report for Quarter 3, 2026 be received for information.

6.e PDR-CW-46-26 Wilton Sanitation - Official Plan Amendment 32 17

That report PDR-CW-46-26 be received; and
That all written and oral submissions on Official Plan Amendment Number 32 were considered and helped to make an informed recommendation and decision; and
That proposed County Official Plan Amendment Number 32 on lands legally described as Lot 21 to 22, Concession 3 NDR, geographic Township of Artemesia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands be approved to redesignate a portion of the subject lands from the 'Agricultural' designation to an 'Agricultural with Exceptions' designation; and
That a by-law to adopt the County Official Plan Amendment be prepared for consideration by County Council.

6.f LTCR-CW-22-26 Nurse Call Replacement System – Grey Gables and Lee Manor: RFP Results and Award Recommendation 31

That report LTCR-CW-22-26, Nurse Call Replacement System for Grey Gables and Lee Manor RFP Results and Award Recommendation be received; and
That the award of RFP-LTC-02-26, Nurse Call and Real Time Location System (RTLS) at Two Locations, to Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc., for the supply and installation of replacement nurse call systems at Grey Gables and Lee Manor be approved, in the amount of $864,648.98 excluding HST and that staff be authorized to execute the necessary agreement(s); and
That action be taken prior to Council approval as per Section 26.6 (b) of Procedural by-law 5134-22.

6.g CAOR-CW-30-26 Development Charge Reduction Program - Funding Approval Update 34

That report CAOR-CW-30-26 regarding a Funding Approval Update in respect of the County Development Charge Reduction Program submission, be received for information.

7. Items For Direction and Discussion

7.a TR-CW-33-26 Storm Drain Transfer Considerations – Neustadt and Proposed Intersection – Durham, West Grey 39

That staff be directed to work with the Municipality of West Grey to advance the transfer of all storm sewer infrastructure located within County road rights-of-way in the settlement area of Neustadt to the Municipality of West Grey prior to the scheduled road transfer date of June 1, 2027; and
That staff be directed to work with the Municipality of West Grey on an agreement regarding the proposed intersection between the Saugeen River and College Street North on Grey Road 4, in the settlement area of Durham to allow for design work to take place on the proposed intersection from the Roseate and Khanani subdivisions; and
That staff be authorized to negotiate any agreements outlining the terms and conditions associated with these matters, and that the Warden and Clerk be authorized to execute the agreements provided the agreements are to the satisfaction of the County Solicitor and CAO; and
That action be taken prior to Council approval as per Section 26.6 (b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22.

7.b PDR-CW-47-26 Blue Mountains Official Plan Update 45

That Report PDR-CW-47-26 regarding the approval of the Town of The Blue Mountain's Official Plan Update be received; and,

That the Committee of the Whole hereby approves the Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan Update as adopted by By-law 2026-59, subject to those modifications attached to report PDR-CW-47-26, as Appendix 1.

7.c CAOR-CW-29-26 Conservation Authority Act Regulatory Amendments - Grey County Comments 53

That report CAOR-CW-29-26 be received;
That County staff be directed to submit report CAOR-CW-29-26 as the County of Grey comments on Environmental Registry Postings 026-1067, 026-1070, 026-1071, 026-1075, and Ontario Regulatory Registry Posting 26-MECP017; and
That report CAOR-CW-29-26 be shared with Grey County's respective Members of Provincial Parliament, as well as member municipalities, and conservation authorities having jurisdiction in Grey County; and
That staff be authorized to carry out the above prior to County Council approval as per Section 26.6(b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22.

8. Closed Meeting Matters

9. Other Business

9.a ROMA Delegations

10. Notice of Motion

11. Presentation of Pins - Years of Service
12. Warden's Closing Address
13. Adjournment

18 September 2026

Re: Amended Beaver By-laws, Forms and Compensation

Attention: Grey County Staff

Although the increase in compensation for controlling flooding, damming and tree cutting caused by nuisance beavers is welcomed, we believe several aspects of the recent changes require further consideration. Some of the undersigned attended the information session hosted by Grey County; however, the session was viewed more as a presentation than a forum in which meaningful input from experienced trappers was sought. None of the undersigned felt they had an adequate opportunity to contribute to the development of these changes.

Collectively, we represent multiple decades of practical experience working with Grey County Roads, municipal road departments and private landowners. Trappers provide a genuine and valuable service to municipal governments by helping keep drainage systems and culverts flowing, reducing the risk of flooded or damaged roads, addressing nuisance-beaver activity and assisting in the protection of both public infrastructure and private property. This work is often performed in difficult conditions, on short notice and in locations where timely action can prevent more significant damage and expense.

Trappers responding to municipal calls for service have historically been undercompensated. They should be recognized as contractors and skilled service providers, comparable to other individuals who supply specialized training, equipment, vehicles, fuel and labour to municipal governments. The work is time-consuming and carries real operating costs. With the value of pelts no longer providing a reliable source of income, fair compensation for the actual service provided is increasingly important. In our view, the recent change preventing County beaver claims for animals taken on public land or road allowances moves compensation in the opposite direction, particularly when this work directly benefits municipal infrastructure.

The revised administrative process is also a concern. While an online option may be convenient and is welcomed by some, not every trapper or landowner has the ability or resources to scan, electronically sign and email documents. Historically, a one-page form could be signed by the landowner when the trapper arrived to undertake the work. The new five-page form and pre-approval process can require an additional trip simply to obtain a signature before work begins. This results in additional travel, fuel expense and lost time.

We are also concerned by any suggestion that trappers receiving both municipal compensation and the County beaver payment are "double dipping." Municipal payments have historically not been sufficient, on their own, to make many road-related calls financially viable. Many municipalities do not reimburse mileage, and the County payment helped offset travel and operating costs. Receiving compensation from more than one municipal source for different portions of the cost should not be characterized as inappropriate when the combined amount is intended to compensate a legitimate service and the expenses associated with providing it.

With respect to proposals involving the live trapping and relocation of beavers or coyotes, our collective field experience leads us to view these options as impractical for routine nuisance-wildlife response.

We respectfully ask Grey County to reconsider these changes in consultation with the trappers who routinely provide this service. A workable program should recognize trappers as experienced service providers, fairly compensate them for their time and expenses, minimize unnecessary administrative requirements and draw upon both sound evidence and local field experience. Our shared objective is straightforward: to keep municipal drainage systems functioning, roads safe and open, and public and private property protected in a practical and cost-effective manner, while properly compensating those providing the service.

Key Concerns

• Meaningful consultation: Experienced trappers should have had a genuine opportunity to provide input before program and by-law changes were finalized.

• Fair compensation: Compensation should reflect specialized skills, equipment, vehicles, fuel, travel time and labour, particularly as pelt values no longer provide reliable income.

• Public land and road allowances: County claims should recognize work performed on public land when that work directly protects municipal roads and infrastructure.

• Administrative burden: The five-page form and pre-approval requirement create additional travel, paperwork, time and expense compared with the former one-page process. Going from a one page form to five pages needs to be revisited.

• "Double dipping" characterization: Combined municipal and County payments should be viewed in the context of the total cost of providing the service, rather than characterized as improper duplicate compensation.

• Evidence-based policy: Policy decisions should rely on credible, transparent evidence and incorporate local field experience. The data relied upon (specifically for beaver) appears to be single sourced and dated. Beaver do not produce more offspring when facing trapping pressure.

Respectfully submitted,

Byron Schwass Brian Aitken Tom Eastman

Dave McAleese Bob Kranenburg

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Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-45-26
Title:	Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendment PS-229-25 Walker Duntroon Quarry
Prepared by:	Becky Hillyer, Senior Planner
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-CW-45-26 be received; and**
2. **That staff be directed to send report PDR-CW-45-26 to the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) as County Comments for Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendment (NEPA) PS-229-25 Walker Duntroon Quarry; and**
3. **That staff be authorized to proceed with providing comments to the NEC prior to County Council approval as per Section 26.6(b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22, given the preferred commenting deadline of the NEC.**

Executive Summary

Walker Aggregates has applied to the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) to amend the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) for its Duntroon Quarry operations in Clearview Township, Simcoe County. The proposed amendment seeks permission to continue using the existing aggregate processing facilities located in the south quarry for the entire life of both the south quarry and the north quarry expansion. Currently, the site-specific NEP policies limit the duration of aggregate processing in the south quarry until such time that Township Road 91, owned by Clearview and formerly Simcoe County Road 91, is closed and conveyed to Walker Aggregates in order to process aggregate material below the roadway.

Clearview Township has determined it is no longer viable to close Township Road 91. As a result, several amendments are now required to the site plan, as registered under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, as well as the site-specific policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Grey County had previously raised concerns with the closure of Township Road 91 and staff support the direction of the Township to keep the road open.

There is no annual tonnage increase proposed through the Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendment (NEPA), although a related site plan amendment under the *Aggregate Resources Act* does propose to lower the quarry floor. As Township Road 91 will remain open, staff do not

anticipate any further impacts on nearby Grey County Road 31 and therefore have no further comments or concerns with the NEPA as proposed.

Background and Discussion

The Walker Duntroon Quarries 'North' and 'South' are located along Township Road 91, approximately 4km west of Duntroon, in the Township of Clearview. Township Road 91 (owned by Clearview Township and formerly Simcoe County Road 91) intersects with Grey Road 31, immediately west of the subject lands. The site includes the original Duntroon Quarry on the south side of the road, and the Duntroon Quarry Expansion to the north.

The two sites function as a single integrated operation. Materials extracted from both quarries are processed at the south quarry, with a tunnel beneath the road providing access between the properties.

When the north quarry expansion was approved through NEPA 161, permission was granted for processing to occur at the south quarry only on a temporary basis. The expectation was that a processing facility would eventually be relocated to the north quarry once sufficient space became available.

The original approval was linked to a broader transportation plan involving:

- Closure of the portion of Township Road 91 between the quarries.
- Transfer of that road section to Walker Aggregates.
- Upgrading of Nottawasaga Sideroad 26/27 to provide an alternative public traffic route.

Grey County (and other agencies) raised concerns with the proposal to close Township Road 91 at the time of the north quarry expansion. The NEC initially refused the application, and subsequent environmental review processes identified additional impacts to natural heritage and hydrologic features. The application proceeded to a Joint Board hearing, consisting of members of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and the Environmental Review Tribunal (ERT) at that time. After a complex legal process, it was decided that Township Road 91 would eventually be closed to permit Walker to extract aggregate beneath the roadway. Ownership of that portion of the road was also transferred from Simcoe County to the Township of Clearview.

In 2023, Clearview Township decided that it was no longer feasible to close Township Road 91. The Township also withdrew their development permit application to the NEC to upgrade Sideroad 26 and 27. These actions have since triggered a number of amendments to the registered quarry site plans under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, as well as the site-specific Niagara Escarpment Plan policies. The Niagara Escarpment Plan (as was previously amended by NEPA 161) currently contains the following site-specific policy language:

> *"Notwithstanding any other provision of this Plan, uses accessory to the extraction of aggregate from Lot 25, Concession 12 (associated with Amendment 161 to the Niagara Escarpment Plan) shall be permitted on Lot 24, Concession 12, Township of Clearview, ARA Licence No. 3514, including all processing facilities, <u>but only for such a period of time as is necessary to: (i) create an area of 18 hectares on the quarry floor in Phase 1 of the ARA Licence on Lot 25, Concession 12 (associated with Amendment 161 to the Niagara Escarpment Plan) and (ii) to discontinue or relocate the accessory uses</u>. An asphalt plant, concrete plant, brick manufacturing plant and any other similar manufacturing use shall*

not be permitted as an accessory use on Lot 24, Concession 12, Township of Clearview, ARA Licence No. 3514."

Given that Township Road 91 will no longer be closed, the quarry operators have suggested that it is no longer feasible to change the location of the quarry processing site. The north quarry cannot practically operate independently and relocating processing operations to the north quarry would create safety concerns associated with truck access to Township Road 91.

Therefore, the currently proposed NEPA would simply remove the text underlined in the site-specific policy above to recognize and permit the existing location of the processing facilities throughout the lifespan of the quarry.

A related site plan amendment application under the *Aggregate Resources Act* proposes to lower the quarry floor and make several small adjustments related to the location of processing material. Numerous studies and letters of opinion have been completed to support the application(s), including:

- Planning Justification Report
- Hydrogeology Study
- Natural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Review
- Noise Review
- Haul Tunnel Geotechnical Assessment
- Blasting Review
- Revised Quarry Site Plans.

County staff would generally defer to the Township of Clearview, County of Simcoe, and the Niagara Escarpment Commission for a detailed review of these documents and subsequent planning analysis. Grey County Planning Ecology staff have not reviewed the application with regard to matters of natural heritage. Grey County Transportation Services have reviewed the file at a high level and indicated no concerns.

In summary, given that Township Road 91 is now proposed to remain intact, and no additional annual tonnage is proposed to be extracted from the site, County staff would suggest that the application is unlikely to further impact Grey County lands or road infrastructure and staff have no further comments. It is recommended that this report be shared with the Niagara Escarpment Commission for their records on this file.

Legislated Requirements

This application is being processed by the Niagara Escarpment Commission in keeping with the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The application is open for public and agency comment at this time.

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial and Resource Implications

None.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Transportation Services, Planning Ecology

☒ External: Niagara Escarpment Commission

Appendices and Attachments

Initial NEC Staff Report NEPA PS-229-25: Walker Duntroon Quarry NEPA

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	CCR-CW-19-26
Title:	Waiving Portions of the Procedural By-law for Inaugural and Warden Nominations purposes
Prepared by:	Tara Warder, Clerk
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That Report CCR-CW-19-26 regarding waiving portions of the procedural by-law for the purposes of the inaugural meeting and facilitating warden nominations be received; and**

2. **That Sections *3.1 – Date of Inaugural Session* and *5.3 – Nominations* of Grey County's Procedural By-law 5134-22 be waived for the purposes of the election of the 2027 Warden and that the meeting be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1, 2026 and further that nominations for Warden be accepted by the Clerk until noon on Monday, November 30, 2026.**

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, as has been done in past years. Further, it proposes to change the deadline for Warden nominations to Monday, November 30, 2026 to better facilitate appropriate communications on this topic for the incoming Council.

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 in December at 7:30 p.m." The Warden is elected annually at this meeting. The inaugural meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grey County Administration Building.

Similar to past years, staff are recommending the inaugural session be held at 5:30 p.m. This change requires two thirds vote from Council to waive the subject section of the procedural by-law. This portion is procedural in nature, needed to comply with the procedural by-law.

Section 5.3 speaks to the deadline for nominations for Warden, noting that in both a regular and election year, nominations will be received until noon in writing seven days prior to the Inaugural session. Staff's recommendation is to waive this portion of the by-law and change the 2026 deadline for nominations to Monday, November 30, 2026 in order to communicate Warden nomination deadlines to the incoming Council. Outside of an election year, it is still preferable to have an earlier deadline for ease of planning.

Staff plan to incorporate the message about the Warden nomination deadline during the Joint Councillor Orientation in November. This will give extra time for nominations to be submitted.

Legislated Requirements

The vote on the recommendation requires two thirds support from Council to waive the relevant sections 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 (list)

- ☐ AODA Compliance (describe)
- ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)

☐ External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	FR-CW-25-26
Title:	Quarterly Purchasing Report Quarter 3, 2026
Prepared by:	Mike Alguire, Purchasing Manager Sherri Adams, Buyer
Reviewed by:	Sue Murray, Acting Director of Finance
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	N/A

Recommendation

1. **That Report FR-CW-25-26 regarding the quarterly purchasing report for Quarter 3, 2026 be received for information.**

Executive Summary

Grey County's purchasing policy 7-9, as endorsed by County Council on December 12, 2024, through By-law 5209-24, gives Directors the authority to award items and services up to $500,000 that have prior budget approval. This policy requires Directors to provide a summary of all purchases between $75,000 and $500,000 quarterly.

Background and Discussion

The attached chart summarizes all purchases made between $75,000 and $500,000 by departments between July 1, 2026, and September 30, 2026.

Transportation Services

Contract	Description	# of Bids	Awarded Bid(s)	Budget Amount	Awarded Amount (excl. HST)
RFT-TS-21-26	Winter Sand	4	Walker Aggregates, Arnill Construction, JT Excavating, Robinson Haulage	$591,523	$478,710

Economic Development, Tourism and Culture

Contract	Description	# of Bids	Awarded Bid	Budget Amount	Awarded Amount (excl. HST)
RFT-EDTC-05-26	HVAC at Sydenham	2	Maurice Mechanical	$231,400	$223,872

Housing

Contract	Description	# of Bids	Awarded Bid	Budget Amount	Awarded Amount (excl. HST)
RFT-HOU-11-26	Exterior Doors at Twin Pines OS	9	Murphy Construction	$120,000	$124,980

Legislated Requirements

There are no legislated requirements.

Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations.

Financial and Resource Implications

Deficit for RFT-HOU-11-26 to be offset by any realized surplus, or through Housing Capital reserve funds at year end.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal

- ☒ AODA Compliance
- ☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets

☐ External

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-46-26
Title:	Grey County Official Plan Amendment 32 – Wilton Sanitation – Final Report
Prepared by:	Cassondra Dillman, Intermediate Planner
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Grey Highlands

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-CW-46-26 be received; and**
2. **That all written and oral submissions on Official Plan Amendment Number 32 were considered and helped to make an informed recommendation and decision; and**
3. **That proposed County Official Plan Amendment Number 32 on lands legally described as Lot 21 to 22, Concession 3 NDR, geographic Township of Artemesia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands be approved to redesignate a portion of the subject lands from the 'Agricultural' designation to an 'Agricultural with Exceptions' designation; and**
4. **That a by-law to adopt the County Official Plan Amendment be prepared for consideration by County Council.**

Executive Summary

This report provides a recommendation on County official plan amendment 32 (OPA 32), submitted by Wilton Sanitation. The application seeks a site-specific policy to permit the expansion of an on-farm diversified use (OFDU) on lands municipally known as 405549 Grey Road 4.

Wilton Sanitation is seeking to formally recognize the existing on-farm business and expand the operation to occupy a larger portion of the property. The amendment would redesignate a portion of the lands from 'Agricultural' to 'Agricultural with Exceptions' to permit the OFDU to occupy 8,630 m², or 2.62% of the 33-hectare property. The proposed holding tank location is adjacent to the existing gravel yard, which minimizes the removal of agricultural land, and is more than 500 metres from the nearest off-site residence.

Grey Highlands Council has adopted the related local official plan amendment and approved the implementing zoning amendment, subject to the County official plan amendment coming into force and effect.

County staff reviewed the application against the *Planning Act*, Provincial Planning Statement, County official plan, and Municipality of Grey Highlands official plan. Staff conclude that OPA 32 has regard for provincial interests, is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, and meets the goals and objectives of the County official plan. Approval is recommended, together with preparation of the adopting by-law.

Background and Discussion

Grey County has received a County official plan amendment application (OPA 32) to add a site-specific exception to the subject lands to recognize the existing on-farm business and permit an expansion for the construction of a proposed septage holding tank and associated buffer area.

A copy of the draft OPA 32 is included in the Attachments section of the report.

Location

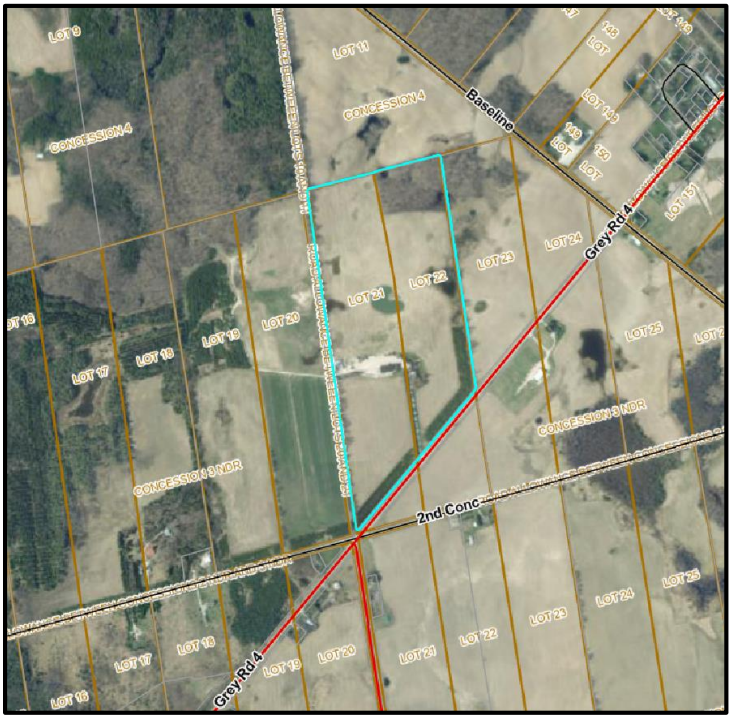
The subject lands are legally described as Lot 21 to 22, Concession 3 NDR, geographic Township of Artemesia, Municipality of Grey Highlands and have a civic address of 405549 Grey Road 4.

The lands are located on the north side of Grey Road 4, approximately 650 metres west of Ceylon. The property is approximately 33 hectares in size and has approximately 536 metres of frontage on Grey Road 4.

The applicant's residence and detached garage are located on the property, along with a workshop and outdoor storage area associated with Wilton Sanitation. The workshop and outdoor storage area are located approximately 250 metres from Grey Road 4. A mature, forested area, approximately 35 metres deep, extends along the full frontage of the subject property and along approximately 180 metres of the easterly boundary. Rows of trees also line both sides of the driveway leading to the residence and business area.

Surrounding land uses include agricultural and residential uses. Grey County owns a property across Grey Road 4 where a public works depot is being constructed. The applicant also owns the property to the west of the subject lands, including the former road allowance between Lots 21 and 20. Staff understand that the road allowance was acquired in the late 1960s when it was closed by the Township and merged on title with the abutting property; the western property is 43.3 hectares (107.1 acres). The legal description for the farm parcel to the west also includes reference to the road allowance (RDAL): Lt. 19-20 Con. 3 NDR Artemesia; RDAL BTN Lt. 20 and Lt. 21 Artemesia Con. 3 except R419249; Grey Highlands. Map 1 below shows the subject lands in blue and surrounding land uses.

Map 1: Location of Subject Lands



Proposal

The applicant, Wilton Sanitation, is seeking approval to expand the existing on-farm business. The proposed OPA would facilitate construction of a holding tank for hauled sewage, specifically septage pumped from septic system holding tanks, and would recognize the existing on-farm business. The tank would accommodate 1,932,150 litres (425,000 Imperial gallons) of septage and occupy an area of 730 m^2. The tank and its 5-metre buffer would occupy 1,490 m^2 of land. Approximately 710 m^2 of land would be removed from agricultural production as a result of the development.

The applicants have indicated that the proposed tank location was selected based on site topography, accessibility, and separation distances from neighbouring uses. The tank would be located along the existing gravel area to minimize impacts to surrounding agricultural fields. The proposed tank location is more than 500 metres from the nearest off-site residence.

The tank will be constructed of concrete and finished with a liner. The proposed concrete tank will be approximately 30.5 m (100 ft) in diameter with 3.05 m (10 ft) high sidewalls, of which no more than 1.2 m (4 ft) will be visible above ground. As a safety measure, a 1.5 metre high wire fence would be installed at the top of the tank and the tank area will be entirely enclosed by lockable post and wire fencing to prevent unauthorized access. Engineering drawings for the tank would be required at the building permit stage.

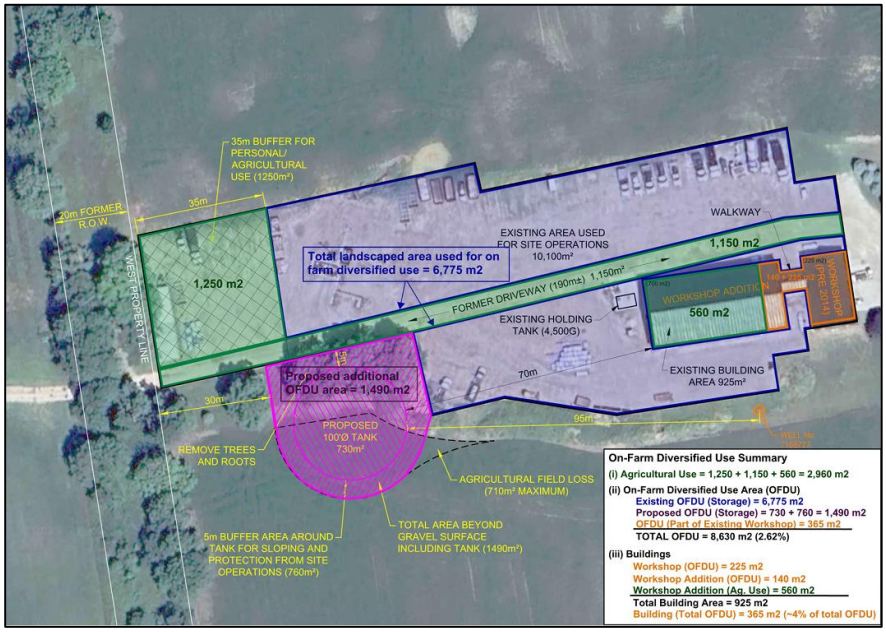
The amendment would redesignate a portion of the property from ‘Agricultural’ to ‘Agricultural with Exceptions’ so that the OFDU may occupy up to 2.62% of the property, or approximately 8,630 m². Under the County official plan, an OFDU is generally limited to 2% of the total lot

area, which is approximately 6,600 m² on this property. The OPA would recognize the existing on-farm business and permit the construction of a new holding tank and associated buffer area.

Map 2 below shows the areas occupied by the following uses:

- agricultural uses (indoor / outdoor farm equipment storage) in green – 2,960 m^2,
- the existing parking and outdoor storage area occupied by the business in blue, the existing office, workshop and indoor storage area in orange – 7,140 m^2 (combined total of the blue and orange), and
- the proposed holding tank and buffer area in pink – 1,490 m^2.

Map 2: Site Plan



Staff note that while the size of the existing gravel parking area is indicated as 10,100 m^2 above, any shared areas also used by the farm (i.e., shared laneway, farm buildings, landscapes areas) are not included in the total use size calculation for an OFDU, per 5.2.2.16) in the County official plan.

Wilton Sanitation was established in 1969 and provides services including septic system holding tank pumping, portable toilet rentals, and large garbage bin rentals. As part of its operations, the business has approval from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) to spread septage pumped from septic system holding tanks on licensed fields, including the subject lands and the property to the west, between April 1 and November 30. During the winter months, this sewage is taken directly to municipal sewage treatment plants, including facilities in Markdale and Flesherton. Waste from portable toilets cannot be land-applied and must be treated at a municipal treatment plant year-round. There is an existing storage tank on site for waste collected from portable toilets, with Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) to store up to 4,500 imperial gallons. For clarity, waste from portable toilets would not be permitted in the proposed new tank.

Wilton Sanitation has indicated that municipal sewage treatment facilities in Grey Highlands and surrounding areas may not always be available to service rural areas as the population grows and plant capacity becomes more constrained. Septage stored in the tank would be spread on approved land application sites during the period specified in the site's ECA, as conditions permit. Staff understand that the tank and increased storage capacity would also aid stewardship of the land by providing flexibility for when spreading can occur and the business would require fewer transfers at a wastewater treatment facility.

Pre-submission consultation occurred between Grey Highlands, the County, and the applicant.

The draft County OPA is included in the Appendices section of this report. Copies of all background reports and plans can be found on the County of Grey website.

Public Engagement and Comments Received

A joint public planning hearing was held on August 24, 2026. A link to the public meeting minutes can be found in Attachments section below.

No members of the public spoke at the public meeting. One written comment was received from a member of the public.

A summary of the comments received is summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Agency	Comment Summary
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA)	All proposed development in this application is located outside the aforementioned regulated areas, and therefore, a permit under Ontario Regulation 41/24 will not be required prior to commencement of development. GSCA has no objections to the proposal for the described zoning by-law and official plan amendment applications.
Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA)	Given the majority of this property and the site plan is within the GSCA watershed, SVCA will not be providing formal comment.
Bruce Telecom	Bruce Telecom has no conflict with the scope of work.
Canada Post	Canada Post does not have any comments for this application.
Hydro One	No comments.
Historic Saugeen Metis	The Historic Saugeen Métis (HSM) Lands, Waters and Consultation Department has reviewed the relevant documents and has no objections to the proposed official plan amendment / zoning by-law amendments as presented.
Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces	No comments or concerns at this time.

Grey Highlands Environmental Services	No comments or concerns at this time.
Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands	Resolution Number 2026-600 That Council receive report PL.26.214, OP02.2026 & Z24.2026 Wilton Sanitation for information; That By-law 2026-093 being a by-law to approve the Official Plan Amendment be approved; That By-law 2026-094 being a by-law to approve the Zoning By-law Amendment be approved; and That Council recommend approval of the County Official Plan Amendment to County Council. CARRIED.

Table 1: Agency Comments Received

Public Comment (summarized by theme)	**Response**
Environmental Impact	The use of the proposed concrete storage tank as a Hauled Sewage Transfer Site is regulated through the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) process for a waste transfer/storage site under Section 27 of the *Environmental Protection Act* (EPA). The applicant will need to obtain an ECA prior to a building permit. The proposed development is outside identified natural heritage and hazard areas, and no concerns were received from the GSCA / SVCA or County Planning Ecology staff. Staff note that preliminary geotechnical investigations have also occurred and five test pits and monitoring wells were excavated in the area of the proposed tank location to determine the soil and groundwater conditions and support the proposed design and location.
Nuisance concerns, such as odour, truck traffic, noise, dust	The proposed tank is centrally located on the property and is buffered by existing dense vegetation along most property boundaries, which is expected to help mitigate potential odour impacts. The area to be rezoned is also located more than 450 metres from the nearest dwelling. Truck traffic is currently limited to approximately 12 to 15

	return trips per day and is not expected to increase with the operation of the proposed septage holding tank. The applicant also has advised that no complaints related to noise, odour, dust, traffic, or visual appearance have been received during the site's 57 years of operation. Staff understand that the ECA will include a complaint response procedure.
Technical Review and Required Studies	As part of the ECA application, technical studies such as a Soil Characterization report, Design and Operations Report (which includes monitoring and reporting plans, and contingency plans), Financial Assurance Evaluation, and details related to the tank design and construction drawings would be required. For example, with regards to monitoring plan, staff understand that the following procedures would be recommended; fully emptying the tank once a year for visual inspection, minimum monthly tank inspections, and measuring the tank volume before and after each withdrawal. Annual reporting to the MECP could include details such as detailed monthly summary of all waste to and from the site (including date, quantity, source, and disposal location), inspection details, and a statement of compliance with the conditions of approval. Staff note that there is also a public engagement process for an ECA application, regulated by MECP under *the Environmental Protection Act* and *Environmental Bill of Rights*, which involves formal public notice by mail, comment periods and posting on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO).
Safety	The use of concrete storage tanks for agricultural (i.e., manure) and non-agricultural source materials (i.e., food processing waste) is a well-established practice across Ontario. Staff understand that the proposed concrete storage tank is engineered with containment measures to prevent leakage. As part of the ECA process, a contingency plan will be required to address potential issues such as spills, emergencies, and tank leakage. Financial assurance will also be required to ensure sufficient funds are available for waste analysis, transportation, site cleanup, monitoring, disposal, and/or decommissioning, if required. An employee training program can also form part of the ECA approval.

Table 2: Public Comments Received

Analysis of Planning Issues

When making a land use planning decision, planning authorities must have regard for matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act*, be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and conform to applicable provincial plans and County and municipal official plans. In this case, the County of Grey official plan and the Municipality of Grey Highlands official plan apply to the subject property. There are no provincial plans in effect for this area of the County.

Provincial Policy and Legislation

Planning Act

The *Planning Act* requires planning authorities to have regard for matters of provincial interest, including the appropriate location of growth and development, the protection of agricultural resources and ecological systems, and the protection of public health and safety.

Staff comments on matters of provincial interest (*in italics*) related to the proposed development are provided below.

(a) the protection of ecological systems including natural areas, features and functions;

The proposed development would be located within a previously disturbed area, and outside of the lands containing natural heritage features. The proposal has also been reviewed by GSCA / SVCA and County Planning Ecology staff and no concerns were identified.

(b) the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province;

The lands subject to the OPA are designated ‘Agricultural’ and zoned ‘restricted agriculture – A2’. The storage tank is proposed to be located with the farm cluster, on lands adjacent to the existing yard used for both agricultural purposes and the on-farm business. While approximately 710 m^2 of land would be removed from agricultural production as a result of the development, this represents approximately 0.3% of the 23 hectares of tillable lands on site and the primary use of the property would remain agricultural, with a secondary on-farm diversified use.

(o) the protection of public health and safety

The proposed storage tank is also subject to an ECA under Section 27 of the EPA. The ECA process focuses on the technical design and operational aspects of a facility to ensure compliance with applicable environmental standards. Staff understand that pre-submission consultation occurred with the MECP and the work required to support the ECA application, including site investigations, design drawings, and supporting documentation were provided to the Ministry’s technical support section for comment. A site visit also occurred. No surface water or hydrogeological related concerns were identified.

The Planning Justification Report submitted with the application notes that OFDUs are typically considered to be a Class 1 Industrial Facility for the purposes of applying the MECP’s D-6 Guidelines. The intent of these guidelines is to prevent or minimize the encroachment of sensitive land use upon industrial land use and vice versa, as these two types of land uses are

normally incompatible, due to possible adverse effects on sensitive land use created by industrial operations. The potential area of influence from Class 1 facility is considered to be within 70 metres. The area to be rezoned is situated approximately 450 metres from the closest neighbouring dwelling (405507 Grey Road 4) and the storage tank itself would be more than 500 metres from the dwelling, thus maintaining an adequate buffer between sensitive land uses.

(p) the appropriate location of growth and development;

The subject lands are designated as 'Agricultural' in the County official plan, which permits OFDUs.

The County's recent Growth Management Strategy update (2026) identifies Grey Highlands as experiencing a moderate rate of population growth, with the Municipality's population projected to increase by nearly 20% over the next 25 years. While most of this growth is anticipated to occur within settlement areas, a portion can be expected in the rural area. Staff note that Markdale is the Municipality's only fully serviced Primary Settlement Area. The existing wastewater treatment facility in Markdale currently has limited capacity to accommodate future growth, and upgrades are being planned through an ongoing Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

As noted above, Wilton Sanitation's operations include the collection and transportation of sewage from private septic systems. Regular septic system maintenance typically involves pumping the septic tank every two to five years, depending on factors such as household size, water usage, and system capacity. The collected sewage is transported by approved haulers and may be managed through land application in accordance with an ECA or treated at a wastewater treatment facility which can receive hauled sewage and is subject to an ECA. In this context, the proposed storage tank would be located on agricultural land as part of an OFDU and in proximity to both the primary source of the sewage, rural properties, and agricultural lands where approved land application may occur.

Planning Act Summary

Given the above, County Planning staff suggest that the proposal has regard for matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act.*

Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024

The PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development.

Chapter 2.5.1 of the PPS states that healthy, integrated, and viable rural areas should be supported by building upon rural character, leveraging rural amenities and assets, promoting diversification of the economic base and employment opportunities, and providing opportunities for economic activities in prime agricultural areas.

On-farm diversified uses (OFDUs), in accordance with provincial standards, are permitted in prime agricultural areas under chapter 4.3.2.1 of the PPS.

The PPS defines OFDUs as:

"Uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, uses that produce value-added agricultural products, and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems, and energy storage systems."

Proposed OFDUs shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria for these uses may be based on provincial guidance or municipal approaches, as set out in municipal planning documents, which achieve the same objectives (chapter 4.3.2.1).

The *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas* (Publication 851) are intended to complement the PPS and assist with interpreting provincial policies and definitions related to agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses. These guidelines are the most current provincial standards/criteria for OFDUs and recommend that an OFDU can occupy up to 2% of a farm parcel, to a maximum of 1 hectare (10,000 m^2).

The guidelines also provide a list of criteria that must be met to qualify as an OFDU. The criteria are summarized with staff comments below:

1. **Located on a farm.** OFDUs must be located on a farm property that is actively in agricultural use, to ensure that the farm operation remains the primary use.

There are approximately 23 hectares of active tillable land on the subject lands. No change to the farming operation is proposed. Staff note that while the adjacent lands remain a separate, legally conveyable parcel, they form part of the existing farm operation and contain an additional ~26 ha. of tillable lands.

2. **Secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property.** Agricultural uses must remain the dominant use of the property. The Guidelines allow this criterion to be measured in spatial and temporal terms. Spatially, the use must be secondary relative to the agricultural use of the property, while temporal considerations apply to uses that are temporary or intermittent, such as events.

This intent is that the use is compatible with and able to coexist with surrounding agricultural operations and that little-to-no agricultural land is permanently displaced (within the limits discussed below). The storage tank is proposed within the existing farm cluster, adjacent to the gravel yard area used for both agricultural operations and the on-farm business, occupying 1,490 m² (includes a 5 m buffer). The proposed development would remove approximately 710 m² of land from agricultural production, which represents about 0.3% of the 23 hectares of tillable land on the property. Staff also understand that alternate locations were considered (such as to the north of the gravel yard), and the proposed location represents the least impact to existing operations, minimizes the amount of land taken out of agricultural production, considers topography, and maintains setbacks required by MECP.

3. **Limited in Area.** The preferred approach is to base "limited in area" on the total footprint of the uses, on a lot coverage ratio basis (relative to the size of the farm property). The guidelines recommend that the standard for the acceptable area occupied by an OFDU use is up to 2% of a farm parcel to a maximum of 1 hectare (10,000 m^2). Should the area of an OFDU exceed the recommended area

thresholds, consideration should be given to the non-agricultural use policies in the PPS.

The subject lands are approximately 33.1 hectares (81.7 acres). The total area occupied by the OFDU would be 8,630 m^2 which represents approximately 2.62% of the total lot area. While the proposal is within the recommended 10,000 m^2 maximum size, it does exceed the 2% lot coverage ratio recommendation. As such, the non-agricultural use policies in the PPS are considered below.

Chapter 4.3.5 of the PPS speaks to non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas. Limited non-residential uses on agricultural lands can be permitted when the following criteria are met:

1. *the land does not comprise a specialty crop area;*
2. *the proposed use complies with the minimum distance separation (MDS) formulae;*
3. *there is an identified need within the planning horizon identified in the official plan as provided for in policy 2.1.3 for additional land to accommodate the proposed use; and*
4. *alternative locations have been evaluated, and*
    - *i. there are no reasonable alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas; and*
    - *ii. there are no reasonable alternative locations in prime agricultural areas with lower priority agricultural lands.*

The lands do not comprise of specialty crop area. The submitted Planning Justification Report indicates that there are no livestock facilities within 750 metres of the site, as such compliance with MDS has been demonstrated. While there is no specific identified need for additional lands to accommodate the proposed use, the County official plan and PPS encourage economic diversification in rural areas and permit OFDUs. Staff understand that alternative locations on the property were evaluated and the applicants indicated that the proposed tank location was selected based on site topography, accessibility, and separation distances from neighbouring uses. The applicants have also operated the family business for over 50 years, and it may be impractical to relocate their business and home to another property.

4. **Includes, but is not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses and uses that produce value-added agricultural products.** The PPS definition provides several examples of OFDUs. Beyond these examples, other uses may also be suitable, subject to meeting all PPS criteria.

The examples provided within the PPS, the Guidelines and Table 7 in the County official plan are not meant to be exhaustive. Provided the criteria can be met, other uses can be contemplated as OFDUs.

Staff understand that the existing on-farm business began in 1969 and it would appear to have legal non-conforming status due to it's ongoing and continued operations that predates the enactment of the zoning by-law. The *Planning Act* recognizes legal non-conforming uses and the ability to enlarge or to alter a non-conforming use. Regarding

this proposal, however, staff recommended a formal zoning by-law amendment and official plan amendment application during pre-submission consultation.

As a result, the purpose of this application is two-fold: to recognize the existing operations as an OFDU (being the temporary storage of portable toilet waste and hauled sewage, rentals of portable toilets and garbage bins) and to permit the expansion of this use through the addition of a septage holding tank.

5. **Shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.** Compatibility considerations include, not hindering surrounding agricultural operations, appropriate to available rural services and infrastructure, and maintains the rural character of the area.

As noted above, the proposed development would occur largely in a previously disturbed area at the edge of the gravel yard and farm field and is screened from the public realm by a landscaped buffer. The subject property is located within a broader agricultural area where farming remains the dominant land use. The agricultural character of the lands will be maintained, and the primary agricultural nature of the property will not be impacted. No changes to the existing services are proposed. The applicant has advised that there would be no changes to the number of employees, hours of operation, and no expected changes in truck traffic (being 12-15 return trips per day).

Other chapters of the PPS outline policies for the wise use and management of resources (chapter 4), which includes protecting natural heritage features and agriculture, and protecting public health and safety (chapter 5), including avoiding development in hazardous areas. The proposed development will be located outside of natural heritage features and areas designated as Hazard Lands.

Chapter 4.6 outlines policy direction for the protection and management of archaeological resources, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes. While no formal comments were received from Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) Environment Office during the circulation of this proposal, staff note that the subject lands are not identified as an area requiring review with the SON Sector Mapping (Map 5, 2026). These maps identify areas within SON Territory that may require review to determine the appropriate level and type of assessment based on a project's location and potential impact on areas of importance to SON (such as historical passage routes, or important ecosystems). The maps outline areas that require review, may require review, and areas of no comment/do not require review.

Provincial Planning Statement Summary

County Planning staff suggest that the proposal is consistent with the PPS.

County of Grey Official Plan

The subject lands (+/-33 ha) are identified as the following in the County official plan:

- Schedule A: Land Use Types – Agricultural
- Schedule B: High Potential Mineral Aggregate Resources - Aggregate Resource Area
- Appendix B: Constraint Mapping – Other wetlands, lakes/rivers
- Appendix D: Functional Road Classification – Frontage on Grey Road 4

Please note that in some instances an abbreviated analysis has been provided below, as many of the policies in the County official plan mimic those in the provincial legislation and policy covered above.

Schedule A of the County official plan designates the subject lands as 'Agricultural', which permits OFDUs. Section 3.2.5.1 of the County Plan identifies OFDUs as a rural employment generator, and Section 5.2.2(1) supports on-farm diversification as a means of protecting and improving economic development in agriculture.

Table 8 of the County official plan provides size criteria for OFDUs based on land use type and property size. For parcels greater than 20 hectares in the Agricultural designation, the maximum OFDU area is 2% of the total property area, to a maximum combined area of 8,000 m^2. As the subject lands are approximately 33 hectares, the County official plan would permit the OFDU to occupy up to 6,600 m^2. Section 5.2.2(19) provides criteria to consider when establishing a new OFDU.

Staff have illustrated the proposal in Table 3 below for ease of reference.

OFDU Criteria Agricultural, 33 ha in size	**Permitted**	**Proposed**
Maximum Size (including all buildings, servicing, parking, outdoor storage areas, etc.)	The lessor of: - 2% of 33 ha (6,600 m^2); or - a max of 8,000 m^2	8630 m^2 - which is 2.62% of 33 ha
Maximum Gross Floor Area (of all buildings)	Up to 20% of 6,600 m^2 (being 1,320 m^2)	365 m^2

Table 3: Permitted vs. Proposed On-Farm Diversified Use Criteria

Schedule B of the County official plan indicates that the subject lands are within the Aggregate Resource Area. Section 5.6.2(1) states that where the Aggregate Resource Area overlaps with an Agricultural land use type, the policies and permitted uses of the underlying land use type apply until the site is licensed for sand or gravel extraction. The expansion of the OFDU is not anticipated to have any impact on the aggregate resource on-site.

Appendix B of the County official plan indicates that the subject lands contain other wetlands and ponds. No development is proposed adjacent (within 120 metres) to these areas. County Planning Ecology staff identified no concerns with the proposal.

Appendix D indicates that the subject lands have frontage on County Road 4. County Transportation Services staff had no concerns with the proposal.

County Official Plan Summary

In summary, County staff believe that the proposal meets the goals and objectives of the County official plan.

Municipality of Grey Highlands Official Plan

The subject lands are designated as ‘Agricultural’ in the Grey Highlands official plan, which permits OFDUs.

Grey Highlands staff prepared a staff report, dated August 24, 2026, regarding the related local official plan amendment (amendment No. 52, file OP02.2026) and zoning by-law amendment (file Z24.2026), and County OPA 32. The report provided a Municipal planning analysis. County staff would generally defer to their report and draft OPA document as it relates to conformity with the intent of local Official Plan. A link the Grey Highlands staff report can be found in the attachments section of this report.

Staff note that the Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands adopted OPA 52 and approved the implementing zoning by-law amendment on September 16, 2026. These approvals, however, are not yet in effect as the County OPA must first be approved and come into force and effect. Once that occurs, approval may be granted for the local OPA. After which, the implementing zoning by-law amendment would then come into force and effect.

Legislated Requirements

The application has been processed in accordance with the *Planning Act.*

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no anticipated financial, staffing, or other resource considerations associated with the proposed County official plan amendment, beyond those normally encountered in processing such applications. The County has collected the requisite application fee and peer review deposit for this application.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Planning, Planning Ecology, Transportation Services

☒ External: The public, Municipality of Grey Highlands, and other prescribed agencies/bodies under the *Planning Act*

Appendices and Attachments

Draft Official Plan Amendment and By-law

Schedule A

Public Meeting Minutes – August 24, 2026

Staff report PDR-CW-29-26 – July 23, 2026

Grey Highland Staff report 2026-53

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	LTCR-CW-22-26
Title:	Nurse Call Replacement System – Grey Gables and Lee Manor: RFP Results and Award Recommendation
Prepared by:	Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long-Term Care & Senior Services
Reviewed by:	Niall Lobley, Deputy CAO and Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That report LTCR-CW-22-26, Nurse Call Replacement System for Grey Gables and Lee Manor RFP Results and Award Recommendation be received; and**
2. **That the award of RFP-LTC-02-26, Nurse Call and Real Time Location System (RTLS) at Two Locations, to Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc., for the supply and installation of replacement nurse call systems at Grey Gables and Lee Manor be approved, in the amount of $864,648.98 excluding HST and that staff be authorized to execute the necessary agreement(s); and**
3. **That action be taken prior to Council approval as per Section 26.6 (b) of Procedural by-law 5134-22.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee of the Whole with the results of the competitive Request for Proposal process for the replacement of the nurse call systems at Grey Gables and Lee Manor and to seek approval prior to County Council approval to award the contract to Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc., the highest-ranked respondent. The proposed system meets the operational, clinical, technical, and regulatory requirements identified through the procurement process and represents the best overall value based on the evaluation criteria established in the RFP.

Background and Discussion

On March 19, 2026, the Committee of Management received Report LTCR-CM-07-26 regarding the planned replacement of the nurse call systems at Grey Gables and Lee Manor. As preliminary vendor pricing exceeded the approved capital budget, staff were directed to undertake a competitive Request for Proposal process to evaluate available solutions, confirm

project costs, and identify the option that best met operational, regulatory, and financial requirements.

Request for Proposal Process

RFP-LTC-02-26, Nurse Call at Two Locations, was issued to the open market on June 11, 2026, and closed on July 16, 2026. Four submissions were received and are listed below.

Bidder Name
GMS Sécurité Inc.
KR Communications
Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc (Advance Care)
Media Multi-Com Communications Inc.

The evaluation committee included representatives from Long-Term Care, Information Technology, Facilities, and Purchasing. Committee members independently evaluated submissions prior to a consensus review in accordance with the County's Purchasing Policy and the evaluation methodology established in the RFP.

Criteria Topic	**Weighting %**
System Architecture & Compliance	12
Functional Performance	15
Device & Equipment Capability	10
System Integration	10
Wander Management/RTLS Performance	10
Reporting & Analytics	8
Installation, Commissioning & Training	5
Vendor Qualifications & Support	5
Overall Cost	25

Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc. achieved the highest overall evaluation score and was identified as the highest-ranked respondent. The proposed solution demonstrated strong alignment with the functional, operational, regulatory, and technical requirements outlined in the RFP and will support resident safety, staff response requirements, and long-term reliability at both Grey Gables and Lee Manor. Staff observed a demonstration, engaged in follow-up discussions, and verified positive past performance through reference checks. Staff also had an opportunity to visit a home in Stayner, Ontario, to observe the nurse call and RTLS systems in use. Staff therefore recommend awarding the contract to Wireless Resident Nurse Alert Technology Inc. as the highest-ranked respondent.

Legislated Requirements

The County's Nurse Call System Policy (V-C-30.30), together with Ontario Regulation 246/22 under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, requires that long-term care homes maintain a reliable, accessible, and continuously operational communication and response system that allows residents to summon assistance safely.

Financial and Resource Implications

The 2026 capital budget includes funding of $150,000 for each of Grey Gables and Lee Manor for nurse call replacement, as identified through the Building Condition Assessment and included in the County's approved 10-Year Capital Plan since 2022. In addition, Lee Manor has an approved capital budget of $55,000 for Wander Guard replacement, resulting in a total available allocation of $355,000 across both homes.

Based on preliminary vendor pricing, the estimated cost of the nurse call replacement exceeds the available funding, resulting in an estimated funding shortfall of approximately $540,000.

On March 19, 2026, Staff brought forward LTCR-CM-07-26 for an increase to the upset limit for tendering for Grey Gables and Lee Manor to $300,000 and $595,000 respectively. Increased upset limit was offset by the deferral of two projects GGG-019 Parking lot Replacement and LLL-041 Air make up system to offset the reserve draw created by an increased budget cost. Award amounts are $302,346.64 at Grey Gables, and $562,302.34 at Lee Manor. Budget surplus considering both locations is $30,351.02.

Long-Term Care capital reserves are managed on a consolidated basis and are currently sufficient to support the approved 10-Year Capital Plan. A reserve fund review is scheduled for later this year to assess reserve adequacy and to determine whether adjustments to annual contributions are required to support sustainable asset management.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal – Executive Directors, Directors of Care, Manager of Finance, Purchasing Manager, Building Maintenance Managers, Resident Care Coordinators

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	CAOR-CW-30-26
Title:	Development Charge Reduction Program – Funding Approval Update
Prepared by:	Niall Lobley, DCAO
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All municipalities

Recommendation

1. **That report CAOR-CW-30-26 regarding a Funding Approval Update in respect of the County Development Charge Reduction Program submission, be received for information.**

Executive Summary

This report presents Committee of the Whole with an update in respect of the County's application to the Development Charge Reduction Program (DCRP) in June 2026. The Province has started to provide further details and announcements to municipalities in respect of their applications, and Grey County has been informed of being partially successful in its application.

As per direction received from Council at the meeting on June 11, 2026, to submit a DCRP application, County staff submitted an application that requested a total of approximately $25.2 million of DCRP funding for three capital projects with a combined total estimated cost of approximately $32.7 million.

The Province has conditionally approved partial funding for one of the capital projects put forward. Acceptance of the funding would require the County to enter into a transfer payment agreement with the Province and to implement a 50% reduction in residential development charges, applied retroactively from March 30, 2026 through March 30, 2029.

Background and Discussion

In June 2026, through report PDR-CW-24-26, staff provided Council with an overview of the Development Charge Reduction Program (DCRP). The program allows municipalities to seek capital funding from the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada for development-related infrastructure projects. In exchange, participating municipalities must reduce residential

development charges by at least 50% for a minimum of three years, from March 30, 2026, to March 30, 2029. Projects must be completed within five years of application, and municipalities were asked to identify the anticipated residential growth associated with each project. Municipalities could submit up to three projects and request funding equivalent to the development charge revenue that would otherwise support those works.

Report PDR-CW-24-26 was originally put forward as an information report and following further discussion, the Committee of the Whole passed the following resolution, directing staff to apply to the program:

> "That staff be directed to apply to the Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program for a 50% reduction to the County's residential development charges with the County covering 10% of the eligible program costs; and
>
> That staff be authorized to proceed prior to County Council approval as per Section 26.6(b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22."

Staff subsequently submitted an application for the following three projects:

- Grey Road 5 Urban 4-lane with Storm Sewer, Grey Road 5 and 16th Ave E Intersection Upgrades, and Grey Road 5 and 20th Ave E Roundabout
- Grey Road 19 and Grey Road 21 Roundabout and Grey Road 19, Blue Mountains, 4 Lane Rural Reconstruction with Paved Shoulders
- Grey Road 4 East end of Hanover - Urban 4-Lane with Storm Sewer

Grey County's total application requested $25,228,554.87 of DCRP funding toward three projects with a combined estimated capital cost of $32,737,833.52. The balance would be funded through other funding sources as per the County's 10-year capital budget.

The Province has recently confirmed that Grey County has been approved for partial funding, substantially supporting one of the above projects. Acceptance of the funding would require the County to enter into a transfer payment agreement with the Province and to implement a 50% reduction in residential development charges, applied retroactively from March 2026 through March 2029.

The County's current 2026 residential development charges are as follows:

- $10,537 for a single and semi-detached units,
- $7,276 for row housing and other multiple residential units, and
- $6,058 for apartment units.

The County's non-residential development charges would not be reduced through the DCRP.

The Province and Federal Government have both identified increased housing supply as a priority. In Ontario, the Province has established a target of 1.5 million new homes. The updated Growth Management Study projects that population, housing and employment projections will continue to increase and therefore more housing will be required in order to support the anticipated growth.

Through successive terms, the Province has expressed concern that municipal approval processes and municipal fees are barriers to housing growth. In response, legislative changes have shortened approval timelines, narrowed areas of municipal oversight and engagement,

reduced the planning role of other agencies, including Conservation Authorities, and constrained some costs eligible to be covered via development charges.

These changes have challenged the long-standing principle that growth should pay for growth. Costs previously supported through development charges are increasingly shifted to other sources, including the existing property tax base and future debt. At the same time, the Province is exploring alternative service delivery models, including municipal service corporations for water, wastewater, and potentially other municipal services. The policy direction appears to be that growth should contribute to growth, with some costs also supported by future residential users and the broader property tax base.

The DCRP is a three-level-of-government framework intended to reduce development-related costs for residential development by shifting a portion of those costs to federal, provincial, and municipal funding sources. The underlying premise is that lower upfront costs can support increased development activity and improved housing affordability. The program provides provincial and federal funding to offset some of the revenue lost through a 50% residential development charge reduction over three years.

As noted, the DCRP application included three projects with a total estimated capital cost of $32,737,833.52 and requested $25,228,554.87 from the Province.

The Province has offered support toward one of the three projects applied for. The project is anticipated to be funded by DCRP Funding, DC Reserves and other funding sources including potential use of OCIF, CCBF and transportation service reserves. The DCRP funding towards projects cannot exceed 90% of project costs, excluding soft costs. Soft costs include those related to design, engineering, legal fees and permitting and insurance.

Staff note that revenue from the DCRP program may be less than could have been achieved from maintaining DC rates and funding may not fully offset the revenue loss associated with a 50% residential development charge reduction.

As part of the application process, staff reviewed historical residential growth patterns. Based on that review, staff estimate that a 50% residential development charge reduction from March 2026 to March 2029 could reduce development charge revenue by approximately $10,167,736.

Based on earlier Council direction, staff have indicated to the Province that Council is supportive of accepting the Province's offer of DCRP funding toward the project and implementing a 50% DC reduction effective between March 2026 and March 2029.

The County is currently preparing a new development charges background study and by-laws, which are estimated to be completed in 2027. The DCRP would have the effect of 'freezing' the County's residential development charges over the three-year period between March 2026 and March 2029. Although the County can still update its by-laws, those residential DC rates will be frozen at 50% of the County's 2026 development charge rates. After March 2029, the County's residential new development charges rates, established by the forthcoming 2027 by-laws, could take effect.

Next Steps:

Staff anticipate receiving a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) in coming weeks and acting under earlier directions anticipate signing this and returning it to the Province.

Staff anticipate bringing a revision to the DC Bylaw to County Council in January 2027 to implement a rate reduction to be effective at the time of the bylaw passing, through to March 2029.

Under a separate process, staff anticipate issuing refunds of collected DC's from March 2026 through to the passing of the revised DC Bylaw. After signing the TPA, staff will work with member municipalities who collect development charges on the County's behalf, to coordinate issuing those refunds.

The Province has indicated a desire that the County pass an amended DC Bylaw prior to the Province's signing of the TPA releasing funds.

Staff are already working on the required detailed planning for the improvements as included within the DCRP application.

Financial and Resource Implications

In June, staff submitted a DCRP application seeking $25,228,554.87 in grant support for three projects with a combined estimated capital cost of $32,737,833.52.

On August 13, the Province offered partial funding toward the County's application for projects. Due to the ongoing work by the province to finalize funding arrangements, the amount of DCRP funding and specifics of the work to be undertaken by Grey County under the application is not yet publicly available. It is anticipated that the Province will lead a public announcement once further details have been confirmed.

Acceptance of the funding requires the County to implement a 50% reduction in residential development charges from March 30, 2026, to March 30, 2029.

The funding offer is significantly lower than requested as it provides substantial support for one project, but no funding support for the other two.

The project the Province has indicated support for through funding is already included in the County's current Development Charge Background Study and 10-year capital plan, with funding anticipated from development charges, levy-supported capital, reserves and CCBF.

Staff have confirmed that any project-specific shortfall between the Province's offered DCRP funding and the capital costs of the project, can be funded by existing DC reserves, as well as other municipal funding sources. Staff anticipate this can be accommodated within the existing 10-year capital plan through adjustments to development charge reserve funding and the redistribution of CCBF, levy and reserve funding across projects.

Development Charge Revenue Impacts

The County's Growth Management Strategy forecasts an average of 618 new residential units annually between 2026 and 2029. Assuming a development mix consistent with recent trends (80% single detached, 15% row housing and 5% apartments), residential development charges are estimated to generate approximately **$20,335,472** during this period.

A mandatory 50% reduction in residential development charges would reduce this revenue to approximately **$10,167,736**.

Future development charge revenues remain inherently uncertain and will be influenced by economic conditions, provincial policy changes, housing market activity and actual growth patterns.

- If growth exceeds current forecasts, overall development charge revenue would increase; however, the proportional loss associated with the 50% reduction would also increase, creating additional pressure on development charge-funded infrastructure projects.
- If growth falls below forecasts, overall development charge revenue would decrease, but the gap between the fixed DCRP funding and development charge revenue would narrow, reducing the financial impact of participation in the program.

As noted earlier in the report, the impact of Grey's new DC background study and by-laws, with potential rate changes in 2027 is also unknown. Unlike development charges, the DCRP grant is fixed and not tied to actual growth. As a result, accepting the funding shifts a portion of future growth-related infrastructure funding risk from development to the County.

The County has collected $832,000 in residential development charges since April 1 2026 and on passing of a revised Development Charge background study, 50% of this will be returned to developers who have remitted payments.

Broader Financial Considerations

Residential growth also expands the property tax base, generating assessment growth that helps offset increasing service costs at both the upper- and lower-tier municipal levels. If the Province's objective is realized and reduced development charges accelerate residential development, a portion of the foregone development charge revenue may be offset through growth-related assessment increases.

However, forecasting the timing and magnitude of these impacts is highly speculative and cannot be estimated with confidence.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal (list)

- ☐ AODA Compliance (describe)
- ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)

☐ External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	TR-CW-33-26
Title:	Storm Drain Transfer Considerations – Neustadt and Proposed Intersection – Durham, West Grey
Prepared by:	Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation Randy Scherzer, CAO
Reviewed by:	Niall Lobley, Deputy CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of West Grey
Status:	

Recommendation

1. **That staff be directed to work with the Municipality of West Grey to advance the transfer of all storm sewer infrastructure located within County road rights-of-way in the settlement area of Neustadt to the Municipality of West Grey prior to the scheduled road transfer date of June 1, 2027; and**

2. **That staff be directed to work with the Municipality of West Grey on an agreement regarding the proposed intersection between the Saugeen River and College Street North on Grey Road 4, in the settlement area of Durham to allow for design work to take place on the proposed intersection from the Roseate and Khanani subdivisions; and**

3. **That staff be authorized to negotiate any agreements outlining the terms and conditions associated with these matters, and that the Warden and Clerk be authorized to execute the agreements provided the agreements are to the satisfaction of the County Solicitor and CAO; and**

4. **That action be taken prior to Council approval as per Section 26.6 (b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with information regarding storm sewer infrastructure located within County road rights-of-way (ROW) in the settlement area of Neustadt, as well as a proposed signalized intersection on Grey Road 4, settlement area of

Durham. The intent is to seek direction regarding the potential advancement of the transfer of these storm sewer assets in Neustadt to the Municipality of West Grey and to authorize entering into an agreement regarding the proposed signalized intersection in Durham, in advance of the scheduled road transfers.

Background and Discussion

Grey County currently owns and maintains portions of the storm sewer system located within County ROWs in the settlement area of Neustadt. The remainder of the stormwater system within the community is owned and maintained by the Municipality of West Grey.

As part of the previously approved road transfer of County roads within urban areas, ownership of the storm sewer infrastructure located within the County ROWs is scheduled to transfer to the municipalities effective June 1, 2027.

As a result, the existing arrangement represents a temporary ownership situation whereby the Municipality owns and operates the majority of the storm sewer network while the County retains ownership of relatively small sections located within County ROWs.

Intersections on County roads are owned and maintained by the County. As part of the scheduled road transfers of County roads within urban areas, intersections and the associated infrastructure will be transferred to the municipalities on June 1, 2027.

As part of the review and approval of two subdivision developments on either side of Grey Road 4, West Grey wants to explore alternative intersection treatments with the anticipation that the developer be requested to design and construct an alternative intersection to that considered under the draft subdivision approval to connect the two projects.

West Grey is seeking to advance approval of these matters as soon as possible to support developers on the projects and enable them to advance works through the balance of the year. With County Council support, staff anticipate that required agreements could be in place before the end of 2026.

Stormwater Infrastructure Proposal

Proposed Development - Neustadt

A development proposal has been provisionally approved in Neustadt which includes the installation of a catch basin on the development lands that would connect and discharge into an existing storm sewer located beneath County Road 9 (Queen Street). The storm sewer ultimately connects into the broader municipal stormwater system operated by the Municipality of West Grey.

During the County's review of the proposed stormwater design, questions were raised regarding the capacity of the existing storm sewer infrastructure and potential risks and liabilities associated with accepting additional flows. The County's concerns relate primarily to ensuring that the infrastructure currently under County ownership is capable of accommodating the anticipated flows from the proposed development and that any future deficiencies are appropriately addressed given that the County is partially responsible and liable for portions of the storm drain. Additional information was requested in order to ensure that there would be no

impacts to the storm drain section currently owned by the County as well as the County road itself.

Municipal Review - Neustadt

The Municipality of West Grey and its consulting engineers have reviewed the proposed stormwater design and have advised that they are satisfied that the municipal storm sewer system can accommodate the additional stormwater generated by the development.

The Municipality owns and maintains the majority of the overall storm sewer system and will ultimately assume ownership of the remaining County-owned sections as of June 1, 2027, pursuant to the proposed road exchanges. As such, County staff recognize that allowing the Municipality to determine the servicing requirements associated with the proposed development and any future system improvements that may be required will streamline the approval process.

The developer has indicated a desire to proceed with the project as soon as possible, making timely resolution of ownership and approval considerations important.

Potential Early Transfer of Storm Sewer Assets - Neustadt

With the scheduled transfer of County roads and associated storm sewer infrastructure less than a year away, staff have considered whether it would be appropriate to advance the transfer of the storm sewer infrastructure only, prior to the June 1, 2027 road transfer date.

Advancing the transfer would provide several benefits:

- Consolidate ownership of the entire Neustadt storm sewer system under a single authority (right infrastructure, right owner approach);
- Allow the Municipality of West Grey to work directly with the developer on final stormwater servicing requirements;
- Reduce potential risk and liability exposure to Grey County associated with stormwater capacity and future system performance;
- Eliminate uncertainty regarding responsibility for future improvements required to support development; and
- Align ownership responsibility with operational responsibility for the broader stormwater network.

Should Council support this approach, staff would work with the Municipality of West Grey to develop an agreement outlining the terms of the transfer.

The agreement could include provisions that:

- Transfer ownership of all storm sewer infrastructure located within County road rights-of-way in Neustadt to the Municipality of West Grey;
- Indemnify Grey County from future claims or liabilities associated with the transferred infrastructure;
- Confirm that any upgrades or improvements required to support development prior to June 1, 2027 would be the responsibility of the Municipality of West Grey; and

- Address planned Transportation Services improvements to portions of the storm sewer system that were anticipated prior to the scheduled road transfer date.

Intersection Proposal

Proposed Developments – Durham

Two subdivision developments on the west side of Durham are being proposed, one on the north side of Grey Road 4 (known as the 'Khanani Subdivision') and one on the south side of Grey Road 4 (known as the 'Roseate Subdivision'), both of which have been draft approved.

Development of these subdivisions will result in the need for construction of an intersection in the area of Grey Road 4 to connect the two projects.

Grey County Transportation staff reviewed the traffic studies submitted as part of the subdivision process. These studies indicated that the addition of turning lanes at the newly formed intersection would be required to support the proposed developments. County staff support the findings of the traffic impact studies, do not believe that the road warrants an alternative approach to the intersection to be considered and, that the proposed turning lanes meet county policy. The draft approved plan conditions contain conditions to this effect.

West Grey staff and their engineering consultant have noted that the proposed intersection design may not meet West Grey's desire to support pedestrian movements through the intersection and between the developments in the future and have proposed alternative intersection treatments that could address this concern. However, these approaches are not supported by County staff and policy.

Alternative Intersection Considerations - Durham

Given that this road section is scheduled to be transferred to the Municipality of West Grey on June 1, 2027, any planned or proposed intersections, including any required infrastructure, which could include traffic signal infrastructure, would also be transferred to West Grey at that time.

In light of the pending road transfer, West Grey has requested that the County permit West Grey to proceed with requiring the developer to design an alternative intersection. In an effort to permit West Grey to move forward with implementing its preferred traffic approach for this area of Durham, it is recommended that County staff be authorized to enter into an agreement with West Grey (and possibly the developer(s)), that would allow an alternative intersection to be considered as part of the conditions of draft approval and potentially allow the advancement of the design prior to June 1, 2027 so as not to delay the future construction of the intersection and the related subdivision development(s).

The agreement could include provisions that:

- West Grey would assume all ownership of the intersection, including (if installed) any traffic signal infrastructure, and that the County would not be responsible for any costs associated with the design, construction, maintenance, and liability of the intersection. For clarity, this is intended to continue to apply in the event that the road exchanges are delayed or otherwise do not proceed.

- Indemnify Grey County from any future claims or liabilities associated with the design, construction, and maintenance of the intersection.
- If the installation of the proposed intersection is required to proceed ahead of the proposed road transfers then the developer(s) would be required to apply to Grey County for a Work-in-Right-of-Way Permit prior to proceeding with construction.

If the timing of the developments and the installation of the proposed intersection ends up being after the road transfers, then this matter would end up being the responsibility of West Grey to work with the developer(s) to finalize the design and construction as well as take on any future maintenance and liability of the intersection.

Staff would report back to Council if any matters arise during discussions that require additional direction regarding these two matters.

Legal Considerations

Should Council support advancing the transfer of storm drains and the agreement regarding the proposed intersection, legal documentation would be required to formalize the transfer of assets and establish responsibilities between the parties.

Any agreement would be reviewed by the County Solicitor, in consultation with the CAO, to ensure that appropriate indemnification, liability, ownership, and maintenance provisions are included and that the County's interests are protected. Note that there will still be risk to the County particularly while the County remains owner of the land where the infrastructure is located as it is likely that the County will be named if any issues arise; but the intention of the agreements are to protect the County to the fullest extent.

Financial and Resource Implications

Staff in County Transportation and Legal Services are currently working with member municipal staff to advance the Road Transfer agreements as previously directed. Developing additional agreements to advance portions of this work on a shorter timeline was not contemplated during the Road Transfers discussions and requires additional efforts by both Legal Services team members and Transportation staff.

As such, in order to meet West Grey’s timelines, external legal counsel will be engaged to develop the required agreements and provide advice. The County is in the process of seeking costs associated with this work and anticipate that as this work is being undertaken at the request of West Grey, that all costs associated with the early transfer will be met by West Grey.

Advancing the transfer may reduce future County expenditures associated with the maintenance, repair, and replacement of the affected storm sewer infrastructure prior to the scheduled road transfer date.

Discussions with the Municipality of West Grey will be required to determine how any planned County improvements to the infrastructure will be addressed as part of the transfer agreement.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal: County Solicitor, Clerks, Planning

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

☐ External: Municipality of West Grey

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-47-26
Title:	Approval of Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan Update
Prepared by:	Liz Buckton, Senior Policy Planner
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Town of The Blue Mountains

Recommendation

1. **That Report PDR-CW-47-26 regarding the approval of the Town of The Blue Mountain's Official Plan Update be received; and,**
2. **That the Committee of the Whole hereby approves the Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan Update as adopted by By-law 2026-59, subject to those modifications attached to report PDR-CW-47-26, as Appendix 1.**

Executive Summary

In September 2026, the Town of The Blue Mountains (TBM) readopted a comprehensive update to its official plan. The amendment considers many recent changes to the *Planning Act*, the Provincial Planning Statement, the Grey County official plan, as well as input from members of the public and agencies. County staff are recommending approval of the official plan amendment, subject to modifications as described within this report, and outlined in detail at Appendix 1. The proposed modifications have been shared with the Town in advance of this report. When readopting the amendment, Town Council endorsed its staff's recommendation to support County approval of the Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan 5-Year Review. This endorsement was subject to any final modifications recommended by County staff to ensure conformity with the County official plan, consistency with provincial policy, and completion of related technical, mapping, legislative, and administrative updates.

Background and Discussion

The Town of The Blue Mountains adopted updates to their official plan (OP) on September 28, 2026. Links to the as-adopted updated plan and schedules have been included at Appendix 3 and 4 of this report.

The official plan amendment (OPA) had previously been adopted by Town Council in June 2025. However, due to a legislative change to the *Planning Act* occurring around the same date

and being applied retroactively to a date prior to the local adoption of the OPA, the OP was deemed not to have been adopted per the provisions of Section 17 (21.1 & 21.2) of the Act. These new provisions required Minister's approval to be obtained prior to adoption, in relation to any proposed changes to the other information and complete application requirements of the official plan.

Town, County, and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff worked together to prepare a submission to the Minster and to obtain the required Minister's approval, as was granted August 18, 2026. Four minor modifications to the wording of the amendment have been woven into the final adopted version in September 2026.

Concurrently, County staff have reviewed the OPA to discern any required modifications, and also to evaluate several individual/site-specific requests that were submitted to the County as approval authority. Some of these requests address new matters, while others request reconsideration. For example, reconsideration included instances where requested changes may not have been actioned within the original OPA, but where site owners/agents continued to feel the changes may be appropriate to be addressed through this comprehensive update exercise. Readoption of the OPA by Town Council in September 2026 reflects adoption of the same amendment as June 2025 (subject only to those few Minister's changes). Any further changes are to be addressed via County modification, as part of the County's approval process of the comprehensive plan amendment.

As part of the update process for the OP, the Town hosted public consultation sessions and circulated draft amendments to the required agencies. The OP was changed between the initial drafts and the adopted version to reflect feedback received, where warranted. The final OPA incorporates much of the feedback received, as was detailed within the TBM staff/recommendation reports at Appendix 5 of this report.

Grey County is the delegated authority for approving comprehensive updates and new local municipal official plans. Since adoption, County and Town staff have been working together to explore certain modifications to the adopted plan. Proposed modifications to the plan are being recommended to ensure conformity and consistency with planning legislation and policy.

The proposed modifications have been shared with Town staff in advance of this report, with the Town staff's recommendation being:

> "*That Council support Grey County Council's approval of the Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan 5-Year Review, subject to any final modifications recommended by Grey County staff to ensure conformity with the Grey County Official Plan, consistency with provincial land use planning policy, and completion of related technical, mapping, legislative, and administrative updates.*"

This recommendation was endorsed by TBM Council.

Should the County approve TBM's OPA, notice would be given to agencies and the public who requested notice, and there would be a 20-day appeal period, per the provisions of the *Planning Act*.

Public and Agency Comments

There were several public and agency comments submitted as part of the development of the new OP review process. These comments are discussed within TBM staff report PDS-24-141 and detailed within the local Comment & Response Matrix, both included at Appendix 5 to this report.

Staff note that much of the input received appears to have directly informed the content of the adopted OPA, where Town staff and Council found the input to be appropriate and changes warranted. Comments offered through the consultation process by County staff, were largely addressed prior to adoption. County modifications have been proposed to address conformity with the County official plan, for example in relation to the updated provincial agricultural, agricultural-related, and on-farm diversified use framework applicable to the rural areas, and the related permissions and development criteria of the plan.

Analysis of Planning Issues – Legislation & Provincial Policy

Planning authorities must have regard for matters of provincial interest, as set out under the *Planning Act*, and must be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024. Decisions must also conform to the County of Grey OP and any provincial plans that are in force and effect.

The adopted OPA revises the TBM OP to reflect recent changes to the PPS, the *Planning Act* and other related legislation, among other pertinent housekeeping matters. Proposed County modifications have been drafted to address further legislative changes occurring during the finalization of the local plan update, and during the period where the Town was pursuing Minister's approval, prior to readoption in September. No major changes are proposed with respect to areas of the Town within the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). The Town's OP generally directs readers to the NEP for the land use designations and policies applicable to these areas and requires development to conform to the NEP. Where the NEP and the Town's official plan may conflict, NEP policies generally prevail, unless the local policies are more restrictive, in which case the more restrictive policies prevail.

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* sets out the matters of provincial interest which all land use decisions shall have regard for. The matters under this section of the Act cover a broad spectrum of interests, which will not be explored in detail in this report but form the basis for many of the policies within the TBM official plan.

Chapter 2.1 of the PPS speaks to planning for people and homes, directing that appropriate growth management be undertaken to ensure sufficient land supply is available to accommodate anticipated growth over a time horizon of at least 20 years, and to ensure appropriate designated lands for residential development. The Town's OP includes population and growth expectations through 2046, with minor modifications proposed by County Staff to align the figures within the local plan with those presently included in the County official plan. A clause is also recommended for insertion by modification, which supports future update of the growth forecasts within the local plan without amendment, at such time that the forecasts within the County's official plan are updated in this regard. Growth management is an upper-tier municipal responsibility. A recent growth management update has been undertaken by the County extending growth forecasts and allocations to 2051 and assessing land needs to

accommodate this growth. The updated growth forecasts and allocations arising from the recent Growth Management Strategy update will be embedded into the Grey County official plan through a future amendment process. TBM was found through this recent exercise to have sufficient designated lands to meet growth expectations over the extended planning horizon.

Chapter 2.3 of the PPS speaks to the provision of housing, directing planning authorities to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet project needs of the community, now and over time. The updated TBM OP includes a substantially revised Section D7.4 'Affordable and Attainable Housing', which adds description around the required 'Affordable/Attainable Housing Report' to be offered in support of new development proposals of more than 10 dwelling units. Within this report, an applicant will be required to demonstrate how affordable housing units may be provided within the proposal, offering specific commentary around how they have considered the potential for:

i. a contribution to the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to increase the funding available for offsite housing; or
ii. a commitment to construct homes that can be easily converted to accommodate future Additional Residential Units (ARUs), such as basement rough-ins for plumbing and/or appropriate ingress and egress for basement units; or
iii. the development of affordable housing units; or
iv. any other option to the satisfaction of Town Council; or
v. a combination of the above options.

It's noted that such measures may be pursued by Council on a voluntary or negotiated basis, unless in relation to a development subject to the more formal 'community benefits' framework under the *Planning Act*. County Staff understand that the intent of these updated policies is to:

- encourage and require applicants to evaluate and demonstrate how their project may contribute to meeting the targets of the official plan relating to affordable housing, and
- demonstrate how policies and objectives regarding housing have been addressed.

Chapter 2.3 of the PPS promotes settlement areas as the focus of growth and development. Thornbury/Clarksburg is designated as Primary Settlement Area within the Grey County OP. Chapter 2.3 further promotes the efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure, public service facilities, and promotes intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities and the provision of a range and mix of housing options. The Town's updated plan contemplates a range of land uses and mix of housing types to support the community's needs as it continues to grow including updated and refined permissions for ARUs and converted dwellings. The OP also establishes policy requiring new development be serviced appropriately, at densities that provide for the efficient use of land and infrastructure. The Town's updated height and density framework considers a variety of planning contexts (e.g., greenfield development, infill development, residential conversions, etc.) and unit type scenarios (e.g., single detached, duplex, townhouse and multis/apartments) establishing applicable minimum densities that reflect these settings and typologies. These policies generally satisfy Section 3.5 (5)(a) of the County OP, which directs that municipalities achieve an overall minimum residential development density of 25 units per net hectare, for Primary Settlement Areas. Residential density provisions have also been updated via the OPA for the Blue Mountain Village Area, where maximum densities have been increased from 15 units/gross ha to 20 units/gross ha.

Chapter 2.8 of the PPS speaks to employment and economic development, and together with definitions of the *Planning Act*, was revised in PPS 2024. The new framework;

- establishes specific use prohibitions for employment areas (i.e., no residential uses, institutional uses, or non-ancillary retail and office uses are permitted), and
- ensures that development on lands within 300 metres avoids, minimizes or mitigates potential impacts on the long-term viability of those employment lands.

Updates with respect to the amended PPS and *Planning Act* considerations were included via the adopted OPA, with further elements proposed for addition via County modification. County staff have recommended additional wording in Section B3.2.3 of the Plan to maintain the 'Employment Area' status of the lands, notwithstanding any pre-existing non-conforming uses established prior to October 20, 2024. The proposed modification also embeds the provincial guidance relating to the avoidance or mitigation of impacts arising due to existing or planned uses within 300 m of Employment Areas.

Chapter 2.9 directs that planning authorities shall plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impact of a changing climate, through various recommended approaches. The Town's OP includes policy goals and strategic objectives relating to these matters. More specifically, within Section A3.3 'Climate Change Action' it outlines the intent to increase the community's climate resilience through energy conservation, innovation and nature-based solutions, and commitments to be adaptive in order to protect the community, economy, and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change.

Chapter 4.1 of the PPS provides for the protection of natural heritage features and areas. It directs development and site alteration away from certain sensitive features, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on those features or their ecological functions. The updated official plan contains policies to support implementing the PPS direction. County modifications are offered in several places to additionally reference applicable County OP mapping and/or natural heritage policies that are not directly reflected in the TBM plan. Modifications also revise section B5.5.5 'Threatened and Endangered Species' to reflect the changing provincial framework, with recent repeal of the *Endangered Species Act*, and ongoing implementation of the new *Species Conservation Act* that replaces it.

Chapter 4.6 of the PPS provides policy direction around cultural heritage and archaeology. The Town's OP includes policy regarding these resources and encourages consultation with Indigenous communities through the development process and to ensure their interests are considered when identifying, protecting and managing archaeological and cultural heritage resources. County modifications provide minor updates relating to naming of the responsible provincial ministries (i.e., now falling within the purview of Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism). Future iterations of the plan may seek to further expand or detail these policies, for example as may arise following the preparation of an Archaeological Management Plan, currently in process by Grey County.

Chapter 5.2 of the PPS speaks to directing land away from areas of natural hazard. The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) and Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) reviewed the proposed amended policies and mapping and have provided their comments to the Town, given their related mandate. As noted above, these comments have generally been incorporated within the OP.

County Planning Staff are satisfied that the updated official plan, with the proposed modifications in Appendix 1 to this report;

- has regard for matters of provincial interest under the *Planning Act*, and
- is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

Analysis of Planning Issues – County Official Plan

The TBM OP must conform to the County OP; however, the Town plan may provide more detailed or restrictive policies than may be provided for in the County plan.

The County plan provides a broad policy framework for Primary Settlement Areas but defers to municipalities to implement their own community specific vision within their municipal plan. In this regard, the Town's OP addresses and conforms to the designation-specific County policies applicable to Primary Settlement Areas. The County's official plan also designates extensive lands as Recreational Resort Settlement Area within TBM. To avoid policy duplication, County policies generally defer to municipal policies for these lands. The Town plan provides detailed policies for these recreational settlement area lands. Beyond these designation-specific policies, the plan also successfully implements many of the County plan's general policies. In some cases, the Town OP directly refers to expanded policy or more detailed mapping as found in the County plan, rather than duplicating within the local plan. This approach appears to align well with the provincial and County initiatives to streamline official plans and reduce duplication between plans.

The rural area/countryside policies of the County OP structure use permissions for lands designated Rural, Agricultural, and Special Agricultural across the County. These policies implement the provincial land use framework that permits agricultural, agricultural related, on-farm diversified and other Rural uses, subject to implementation guidance as offered within the 'Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas Publication 851' and as further detailed by County OP policy. This framework replaces the outdated 'small-scale commercial and industrial uses' framework as existed prior to the County's 2019 OP.

Staff note that several modifications are recommended with respect to the rural area/countryside policy framework within the local plan. The Town's adopted language and policy permissions often reflected the prior small-scale commercial/industrial uses approach, making conformity with the County OP challenging to confirm. Related changes are included within the proposed modifications at Appendix 1, that include, but are not limited to:

- Suggested Modification # 25 regarding Wineries, establishing as-of-right permissions on a small scale, and outlining expansion review considerations as may fall under 'agricultural-related' or 'on-farm diversified uses' policies of the plan.
- Suggested Modification # 27 regarding on-farm diversified uses, that clarifies and corrects sizing criteria for these uses, per the Grey County official plan and provincial guidance.
- Suggested Modifications # 46 & # 47, that update policies relating to resource based recreational uses and recreational tourist-based clusters, as well as residential farm cooperatives and agri-miniums, to align with revisions to the Grey County OP via County OPA # 23.

- Various clarifying modifications relating to consent provisions in the Rural, Agricultural, and Special Agricultural designations, for alignment with the County official plan, and for clarity.

Staff note that outside of these rural area changes, the majority of other modifications recommended in Appendix 1 to this report are;

- minor or correcting in nature;
- intended to offer greater clarity, or clearer conformity to the County's OP and PPS; or
- to reflect ongoing changes to legislation which occurred during the interim period between the initial adoption, and final readoption of the OPA by TBM.

Draft modifications and staff commentary/rationale were shared in advance with Town staff and discussed and refined together. Blue Mountain staff report PBS.26.074, recommended local Council support of the County's approval of the OP update, subject to final modifications recommended by Grey County staff.

Subject to the detailed modifications in Appendix 1, County staff consider the updated TBM OP to conform to the County OP.

Analysis of Individual/Site-Specific reconsideration requests

As noted, the County received several requests for reconsideration, e.g., where requested changes may not have been implemented in the original Town OPA, but where site owners/agents continued to feel they may be appropriate to be addressed through this comprehensive update exercise.

It is not the County's practice to seek to override decisions of local Council around a site-specific request. Separate letters have been submitted directly to the County acting as approval authority, and thus due diligence review is necessary, at a minimum. In this case, technical delays associated with the retroactive Minister's approval requirement created some added time and opportunity to review the individual requests in greater depth, in discussion with TBM staff and certain agencies, such as the GSCA. In this regard, modifications # 99 to # 106 are proposed to address site-specific requests and related matters. Not all changes requested have been suggested for modification. In several cases, it's instead recommended that such changes be best pursued via a site-specific amendment, or advanced through detailed consultation with Town or agency staff. Town staff are supportive of the site-specific changes through modifications # 99 to # 106.

These request items are described within Appendix 6 to this report, outlining the matters/changes requested; the prior responses offered by Town Staff within their Council reporting, and an updated recommendation as it pertains to the suggested modifications to the Town's plan, by the County.

Legislated Requirements

Sections 17(34) and 21(1) of the *Planning Act* requires that the County approve, modify, or refuse local official plans and plan amendments for which the County is the designated approval authority.

Following a decision by the County, a notice is to be issued per Section 17(35) of the *Planning Act*, beginning a 20 day appeal period.

Financial and Resource Implications

At this time there are no expected financial or staffing considerations beyond those normally encountered in processing an official plan update. While there is always the possibility that the OPA could be appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal, County staff are of the opinion that the Town has appropriately addressed the various comments that have been brought forward through public outreach and consultation and via circulation of notice within the scope of their discretion.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Planning Staff; Ecology Staff

☒ External: Town of the Blue Mountains; Grey Sauble Conservation Authority; Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority; Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing; Notices to public and agencies as required per the *Planning Act*.

Appendices and Attachments

Appendix 1 – Final Recommended Modifications to TBM Official Plan

Appendix 2 – Final Recommended Modified Schedules & Appendices

- Schedule A
- Schedule A-2
- Schedule A-4
- Appendix 1

Appendix 3 – As Adopted OPA #5 (Track Changes Text)

Appendix 4 – As Adopted OP – Schedules & Appendices

Appendix 5 – TBM Staff Reports re: Adoption

- PBS.24.141 – Recommendation Report – Official Plan 5 Year Review
- TBM Comment & Response Matrix
- PBS.26.023 – Update Report (Requirement for Minister's Approval)
- PBS.26.071 - Final Recommendation/Re-Adoption Report

Appendix 6 - Site-specific Reconsideration Requests Matrix

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 12, 2026
Subject / Report No:	CAOR-CW-29-26
Title:	Conservation Authorities Act Regulatory Amendments – County Comments
Prepared by:	Niall Lobley, DCAO
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All

Recommendation

1. **That report CAOR-CW-29-26 be received;**
2. **That County staff be directed to submit report CAOR-CW-29-26 as the County of Grey comments on Environmental Registry Postings 026-1067, 026-1070, 026-1071, 026-1075, and Ontario Regulatory Registry Posting 26-MECP017; and**
3. **That report CAOR-CW-29-26 be shared with Grey County's respective Members of Provincial Parliament, as well as member municipalities, and conservation authorities having jurisdiction in Grey County; and**
4. **That staff be authorized to carry out the above prior to County Council approval as per Section 26.6(b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22.**

Executive Summary

On February 1, 2027, it is anticipated that Ontario's 36 existing conservation authorities (CAs) will be amalgamated into nine regional conservation authorities (RCAs). The Conservation Authorities Act has been amended in a number of places to facilitate this amalgamation, and the Province has issued subsequent regulatory amendments and new regulations to further facilitate these changes. Further legislative and regulatory changes are being consulted on, with comments due between November 21 and December 6, 2026.

Governance of RCAs will be through boards of directors appointed by single- and upper-tier municipalities. Grey County's nine member municipalities, which have traditionally both funded and appointed board members to conservation authorities, will see this role uploaded to Grey County. Grey County will hold seats on two boards, with the Lake Huron RCA having the largest footprint across Grey and the Eastern Lake Erie RCA also including parts of Grey County. The draft regulations propose that Grey County appoint two members to the Lake Huron RCA and one member to the Eastern Lake Erie RCA.

Staff have prepared a summary of these changes and comments in response to the consultations and are seeking County Council's review, input and support prior to submission.

Background and Discussion

Conservation authorities are formed by municipalities under the legislative framework of the Conservation Authorities Act and also play a key role in delivering programs under other legislation. The Province is consulting on changes to the Conservation Authorities Act, the Clean Water Act and the Lake Simcoe Protection Act to align them with the new RCA framework. The following background outlines the roles of CAs and municipalities under the latter two Acts.

Clean Water Act, 2006

The purpose of the Clean Water Act, 2006 is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water. It takes a preventative, watershed-based approach: identify where municipal drinking water comes from, determine where it is vulnerable, identify activities that could pose significant threats, and establish policies to manage those risks.

It forms part of Ontario's broader "multi-barrier" drinking-water framework, addressing risks before water enters a municipal treatment system rather than relying solely on treatment after withdrawal.

Conservation authorities have had a significant statutory and technical role in drinking water source protection. Their watershed jurisdictions became the basis for most of Ontario's source protection authorities, grouped into source protection areas and regions.

Their responsibilities have included:

- supporting source protection committees;
- providing scientific, technical and administrative support;
- undertaking the watershed science necessary to identify vulnerable areas and drinking-water threats;
- supporting the preparation and updating of source protection plans;
- implementing policies assigned to them;
- monitoring implementation and preparing annual progress reports; and
- supporting planning for new or changing municipal drinking-water systems.

Municipalities are equally important because many of the actual land-use and operational tools needed to protect drinking-water sources sit with municipalities.

The Act specifically addresses conformity of official plans and zoning by-laws, implementation of source protection plan policies, and municipal enforcement of drinking-water threat provisions.

Grey County's own source protection material describes municipalities as implementing bodies for policies dealing with such matters as land-use planning, education and outreach, septic-system inspections and restricted land uses.

Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008

The Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008 applies specifically to Lake Simcoe and its watershed, with the purpose of protecting and restoring the watershed's ecological health.

The legislation establishes the framework for the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, which took effect in 2009 and is a comprehensive, watershed-based plan addressing the ecological health of the lake and its watershed.

Its scope goes considerably beyond drinking water. The legislation recognizes pressures including:

- population growth and development;
- climate change;
- invasive species; and
- the cumulative effects of land and water uses on the watershed.

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority has historically provided the watershed-scale technical and implementation capacity needed to support the Act and Plan.

For example, its planning function works with municipalities and other stakeholders to ensure municipal planning documents, development plans and projects conform with the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, while also addressing natural hazards and watershed health.

The authority brings together expertise in water science, ecology, engineering, planning and forestry to support this work.

Municipalities translate much of that watershed-level framework into local land-use decisions and municipal policy.

The Act expressly addresses official plan conformity, prescribed instruments and implementation of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

In other words, protecting the lake is not exclusively a conservation authority responsibility. It relies on coordinated provincial policy, watershed science and municipal decisions.

While these two pieces of legislation address different priorities, there are key similarities in that they seek to:

- protect public health;
- protect people and property;
- protect ecological systems; and
- support growth while managing risk.

These overlap considerably with the traditional role of CAs in establishing environmental conditions that have to be understood and addressed as communities grow. Recent amendments to the Clean Water Act framework, for example, were explicitly intended to accelerate use of new municipal water sources while maintaining environmental and public-health safeguards.

As conservation authorities are amalgamated, the Conservation Authorities Act, the Clean Water Act and the Lake Simcoe Protection Act must also be updated to reflect the new regional conservation authority model.

For Grey County, this introduces a new governance consideration: the Lake Huron RCA, to which the County will appoint members, will assume responsibilities under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, although Grey County lies outside that Act's geographic scope.

Changes Being Proposed

Many proposed changes update references to predecessor CAs to reflect the new RCA structure. Others address governance, funding and program delivery, as outlined below. The Province's overview bulletin brings together the related legislative and regulatory proposals.

Legislative Updates to the Conservation Authorities Act

A number of changes are proposed to the Conservation Authorities Act. These include:

- Updated provisions to enable the Ministry and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to update jurisdictional boundaries of RCAs under a clearer process, including determinations of participating municipalities.
- Providing authority to OPCA to identify the first chief administrative officers (CAOs) of RCAs and to direct boards to employ them, including authority to determine the terms of their employment contracts. This authority is specific to the initial CAO appointments, and it is anticipated that OPCA's Project Executives will be the initially appointed CAOs.
- Clarity around OPCA's direction-setting powers, including areas in which it does not have authority over RCAs.
- The ability to waive, by regulation, the requirement that all participating municipalities have a seat on an RCA board, and to allow more than one participating municipality to collaborate in appointing a shared member.
- Removal of the requirement that 70% of municipal appointees to a CA be members of municipal councils. This change is being cited specifically to address the gap between the October 26, 2026 elections and the formation of new RCA boards in early 2027, enabling existing CA boards to continue to operate regardless of whether municipal members sought or were re-elected.

Legislative Changes to the Clean Water Act

A series of administrative updates are being proposed to align references to CAs with the new RCAs. Further changes include:

- Maintaining 38 source protection plans and 38 source protection areas.
- Maintaining 19 source protection committees to oversee these plans and areas until the new RCAs appoint watershed councils under the Conservation Authorities Act.
- Transferring some roles from source protection committees to source protection authorities once watershed councils are established.
- Providing regulatory authority to the Minister to identify which source protection committees report to which RCAs.
- Providing the Minister with authority to require a source protection authority outside a CA watershed area to enter into an agreement with a source protection authority that is an RCA, involving its watershed council, to define the assistance that the RCA will provide to the non-RCA source protection authority. This has local relevance for the Lake Huron RCA, as it addresses Northern Bruce Peninsula, which is currently not part of the RCA

or a predecessor CA but has both a source protection authority and a source protection plan.
- Directing that each new RCA become the responsible source protection authority for the source protection areas within its predecessor CAs' boundaries and, as above, assume certain additional roles from source protection committees once watershed councils are appointed.

Legislative Changes to the Lake Simcoe Protection Act

Administrative changes would update names to reflect the new RCA structure. Further changes include enabling the Minister to make changes to certain parts of the Act by regulation without consultation. The examples provided indicate that these would be limited to minor changes, such as updating RCA or predecessor CA names within the Act. The related regulatory proposal is set out in ERO Posting 026-1071.

Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) Funding

The Province established OPCA as a board-governed agency to oversee RCAs, which also remain under the purview of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. OPCA is initially provincially funded, with the stated intent that RCAs fund it over time. A proposed regulation would apportion OPCA's annual, board-approved budget among the nine RCAs in proportion to their approved budgets. Each RCA's contribution would therefore vary with OPCA's costs and the relative budgets of all RCAs. These contributions would be a new RCA operating cost and would likely create levy pressure for participating municipalities.

Administrative Amendments to Budget Setting Regulations

Two regulatory amendments update language to reflect that RCA budgets will no longer be presented to lower-tier municipalities, but only to single- and upper-tier municipalities. These amendments maintain the current weighting process for budget allocations and the requirement that new RCAs develop a board-approved budget and present it to participating municipalities and OPCA no later than December 31 of the year preceding the budget year.

Administrative and Technical Updates to O. Reg. 41/24

Traditionally, each of Ontario's 36 CAs controlled activities in its watershed through its own regulations. In 2024, the Province introduced a single regulation that promoted consistency in how CAs protect their watersheds and guide development.

A series of technical and administrative updates are being proposed to this regulation to promote further consistency and standardization across RCAs.

Administrative Updates to Mandatory Programs and Services

Delivery of programs and services under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act is currently a mandatory responsibility of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. The regulation is being updated to assign this responsibility to the Lake Huron RCA, one of Grey County's two RCAs.

Regulatory Changes under the Clean Water Act

The proposed regulatory changes reflect the proposed legislative amendments to the Act. In essence, they will replace references to the 36 CAs with references to the nine RCAs, identify the source protection areas for which each RCA will be the authority, and clarify that participating municipalities in each source protection area will align with those of the RCA and therefore include only single- and upper-tier municipalities. See ERO Posting 026-1070.

Watershed Councils

Under a separate consultation, the Province is seeking feedback on the formation and role of watershed councils, posing specific questions to consultees on their potential role and function.

Grey County Impacts

While most proposed legislative and regulatory changes are administrative in nature, there are issues of local relevance that staff wish to highlight for Council's awareness.

The Lake Huron RCA will become a key agency in delivering on the Lake Simcoe Protection Act and its regulations. This is defined as a mandatory responsibility for the new Lake Huron RCA, in which Grey County will be a participating municipality. The new board will determine how to implement this responsibility and its financial and governance implications.

The proposed funding model would create a new cost pressure for RCAs and potentially their participating municipalities. Each RCA's share would vary with OPCA's approved budget and the relative budgets of all RCAs. Grey County is concerned that municipalities could be required to fund these costs without a direct role in approving OPCA's budget. The County had previously raised concerns about municipal levies funding the OPCA, through its initial comments on CA amalgamations via report PDR-CW-70-25 (linked to in the Attachments section of this report).

Grey County's participation in two RCAs will include oversight of four source protection committees:

- Lake Huron RCA will be the authority for:
    - Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Committee
    - South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Committee
    - Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Committee
- Eastern Lake Erie RCA will be the authority for:
    - Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee

Northern Bruce Peninsula also presents a local consideration because its source protection area lies beyond an existing CA boundary. Grey Sauble and Saugeen Conservation Authorities currently support this work through a regional agreement. The proposals would enable agreements between RCAs and non-RCA source protection authorities for continued support beyond RCA boundaries. Such an agreement would not, in itself, extend the RCA's jurisdiction.

The future RCA board will determine, through agreement with the source protection authority, how support is provided and the financial and governance implications.

The proposals also indicate a potential future role for watershed councils in source protection. Introduced following early feedback on CA consolidation, watershed councils could maintain more local input within the larger RCAs. Each RCA is legislatively required to appoint at least

one watershed council, and the current proposals suggest that councils could be formed around existing source protection areas.

The Province is seeking early comments on the potential future role of watershed councils.

Financial and Resource Implications

Most proposed changes are administrative. However, the proposals could create future costs for RCAs and participating municipalities, including OPCA funding, initial CAO employment commitments and watershed council administration. These costs cannot yet be quantified.

Staff continue to seek clarity on future apportionment of RCA budgets and understand that Grey County will receive its first levy requests from the Lake Huron and Eastern Lake Erie RCAs for the 2028 budget year. As noted during budget discussions, Grey County staff have included a placeholder budget request of $2.8 million in the 2028 budget, based on the collective member municipal levies to existing conservation authorities.

The principal potential cost pressures are outlined below.

1) **The new provincial agency, OPCA, is proposed to be funded by the new RCAs.** Costs associated with OPCA are unknown at this time, as it is funded provincially and is administering both one-time transition funds and operating funds. OPCA has an initial budget of $3 million; future budgets may be higher or lower and will need to be met by the RCAs. RCA contributions to OPCA's 2028 budget will not be clear until all RCAs and OPCA have developed budgets; the proposed regulatory changes indicate that this process should be completed no later than December 31, 2027. Staff understand that the assumption by RCA's of OPCAs costs will be phased in over several years. The approach of proportionally funding OPCA based on total RCA budget is a concern as RCA Budgets are based on both mandatory and Category 1 services and Category 2 and 3 services and other non-mandatory elements. While all RCAs must deliver Category 1 services and it is this mandate that OPCA oversees, individual RCAs are able to enter into local agreements for Category 2 and 3 services as well as other service delivery agreements that influence their budget. If OPCA costs are to be downloaded to RCAs, it is suggested that these cost be proportional to only the Category 1 and mandatoryu service elements of their budgets.
2) **Appointment of new CAOs**. OPCA currently funds Project Executives through provincial transition funding and determines their employment terms. The proposals would authorize OPCA to appoint initial RCA CAOs and set their employment terms; it is anticipated that the Project Executives would fill these roles. The RCAs and their participating municipalities would then bear the costs of commitments established by OPCA rather than by the RCA boards.
3) **Operation of watershed councils**. The Province has shared a general intent to establish one or more watershed councils within each RCA in the future and, through the proposals under consultation, has potentially linked these with source protection work. The Province is seeking input into the role and function of watershed councils, suggesting that they could have a broader remit than source protection. While there is no clarity around their number, size or role, they will create an additional governance and administrative function for RCAs to manage and will have some budgetary impact.

Some additional costs could be offset by efficiencies. For example, each RCA will have one board in place of the multiple boards serving its predecessor CAs. However, neither the additional costs nor potential savings can be quantified until RCA budgets are developed.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal (list)

- ☐ AODA Compliance (describe)
- ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)

☒ External (list)

- ☒ Area CAOs
- ☒ Area Conservation Authorities

Appendices and Attachments

Past Reports:

December 11, 2025 — PDR-CW-70-25: Proposed Changes to Conservation Authorities in Ontario. Initial review of the consolidation proposal and Grey County's proposed comments to the Province, including concerns about local representation, service delivery and funding.

June 25, 2026 — CAOR-CW-19-26: Regional Conservation Authorities – June 2026 Update. Update on the revised regional framework, transition arrangements and financial implications, including the proposed $2.8 million allowance in the draft 2028 budget. Report included in the June 25, 2026 Committee of the Whole agenda package, pages 73–76.

September 10, 2026 — CAOR-CW-23-26: Comments on Proposed Regulation under the Conservation Authorities Act; ERO Posting #026-0740. Review of proposed RCA board representation and OPCA board eligibility requirements, with draft County comments.

Webinar Presentation from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks – Received November 5, 2026, in respect to proposals

Appendix 1: Draft Comments

Draft Grey County Comments

Based on staff analysis of the proposals, staff are recommending the following comments be submitted:

To ERO Posting 026-1067 (due December 6th)

Regulatory Proposal under the Conservation Authorities Act to support the implementation of the Regional Conservation Authority Framework

Grey County Council has reviewed ERO Posting 026-1067 respecting proposed regulatory amendments under the Conservation Authorities Act and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments.

Grey County asks that the Province reconsider cost apportionment of OPCA to RCAs.

Since the mid-1990s, Ontario's conservation authority funding model has progressively shifted away from provincial funding toward municipal levies and self-generated revenues. At the same time, inflationary, capital infrastructure, growth and development pressures have risen, and an increasingly complex and heavy legislative burden has been placed on conservation authorities. Today, provincial funding typically accounts for approximately 4% of conservation authority budgets. The balance is left to CAs to fund through municipal levies and user fees, some of which the Province has prevented CAs from increasing over successive years.

This trend has seen an ever-increasing burden placed on the property tax base to support implementation of the Conservation Authorities Act and associated legislation delivered by conservation authorities.

The amalgamation of conservation authorities and the creation of OPCA as a new provincial agency were undertaken under provincial direction. Municipal comments showed general support for modernization, shared services and greater consistency, but general opposition or concern about the scale, governance and implementation of the proposed consolidation model. Many municipalities, including larger urban centres, stated clear opposition to consolidation.

The costs of a new provincial agency should be addressed provincially, and not downloaded onto the property tax base as part of the amalgamation of conservation authorities.

If OPCA costs are to be met by RCAs (and therefore participating municipalities via levy) the proposed formula appears to penalize RCAs that are active in delivering non-mandatory and Category 2 and 3 services in partnership with participating municipalities. These RCAs may carry higher overall budgets as a result of active partnerships and local service delivery. This would, under the current proposal, see these RCAs carrying a higher proportion of OPCA costs.

OPCAs primary role is overseeing the delivery by RCAs of mandatory and Category 1 programs and services and so proportionally allocating OPCA costs to the portions of RCA budgets that are established for mandatory and Category 1 programs and services would be a more reasonable approach.

Grey County appreciates clarity around budget timelines and processes to be applied to new RCAs.

Grey County urges RCAs to provide proposed budgets well before December 31 of the preceding year, recognizing that municipal budgets may already be substantially complete.

As an upper-tier municipality, Grey County has not traditionally participated in CA budget processes. The County seeks provincial guidance well in advance of December 31, 2027 on weighted voting and budget apportionment within the new RCA jurisdictions, including how mandatory and non-mandatory programs and services will be levied in 2028.

To Proposal MECP017 (due November 21st)

Planned legislative amendments under the Conservation Authorities Act, Clean Water Act and Lake Simcoe Protection Act

Grey County Council has reviewed Proposal MECP017 respecting proposed amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act, Clean Water Act and Lake Simcoe Protection Act and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments.

Grey County recommends that any authority provided to OPCA to adjust boundaries of RCAs at a future date respect the traditional role of participating municipalities to seek boundary reviews through their Board participation.

Grey County supports streamlined decision-making, but recommends that future boundary changes be informed by watershed science, RCA expertise and the participating municipalities. As principal funders with responsibility for RCA governance, municipalities should retain a meaningful role in initiating and considering jurisdictional changes.

This approach would support local governance and the continued delivery of services responsive to community needs.

Grey County supports the ability of OPCA to appoint initial CAOs.

To support transition, Grey County generally supports OPCA's authority to determine the initial CAO for each RCA and, for consistency, the employment contracts for those CAOs. However, Grey County recommends that OPCA engage in discussions with each RCA board before contracts are concluded so that contract length and termination liabilities are collaboratively agreed upon. This would ensure incoming RCAs are not unduly liable for long-term commitments that may no longer reflect the needs of the RCA, its board or participating communities.

Grey County seeks confirmation that OPCA's role in CAO hiring and employment conditions is restricted to the initial appointment and that subsequent CAO hiring is a decision of the RCA board alone.

Grey County supports limiting OPCA's direction-setting powers.

Grey County understands that RCAs are formed, principally funded and governed by participating municipalities under provincial legislation administered by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. The valuable role of provincial agencies in providing oversight, guidance and support to provincial programs is recognized. However, this role should largely avoid direction-setting, which should fall either to the Province through its ministries or to local RCA governance through participating municipalities.

Grey County acknowledges the proposed amendments that provide flexibility in municipal appointments and recognize the interim status of existing CA boards between the municipal elections held on October 26, 2026 and the establishment of the new RCAs on February 1, 2027.

Grey County acknowledges and supports the continuity of source protection through the transition to RCAs.

Source protection remains critically important to the communities we serve, and a seamless transition to the new RCAs is vital.

Grey County notes that the consultation indicates a potential future role for watershed councils in source protection and is keen to understand more about this role.

Grey County acknowledges the need to update the Lake Simcoe Protection Act and provides additional comments in response to ERO Posting 026-1071.

To ERO Posting 026-1071 (due December 6th)

Proposed regulatory amendments under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act to align with regional conservation authorities

Grey County Council has reviewed ERO Posting 026-1071 respecting proposed regulatory amendments under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments.

Generally speaking, Grey County supports what it understands to be largely administrative updates to the regulations under the Act to align language with the consolidation of conservation authorities.

Grey County understands that, although it will be a participating municipality in the Lake Huron RCA, its territory does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Act. However, Grey County notes that, through its representation on the Lake Huron RCA board, it will now hold a collective role on the RCA as a consultee on changes and proposals made under the Act.

To ERO Posting 026-1070 (due December 6th)

Proposed regulatory changes under the Clean Water Act, 2006, to align with new regional structure of conservation authorities

Grey County Council has reviewed ERO Posting 026-1070 respecting proposed regulatory amendments under the Clean Water Act and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments.

Grey County supports the proposed regulatory amendments under the Clean Water Act to align its framework with the consolidation of conservation authorities.

Grey County appreciates that the future RCAs, as source protection authorities, will oversee varying numbers of source protection areas and committees. The County acknowledges that strong partnerships with source protection authorities and committees serving areas partly or fully beyond RCA jurisdictions are important and supported by the proposed regulatory amendments.

Funding for source protection work that RCAs provide outside their jurisdictions needs to be clarified to ensure that participating municipal levies are not used to offset source protection costs outside the RCA's jurisdictional boundary.

To ERO Posting 026-1075 (due December 6th)

Discussion questions to seek early input for the development of a future regulation governing watershed councils under the Conservation Authorities Act

Grey County welcomes further opportunities to engage on the role of watershed councils.

As part of the consultation on watershed councils, the Province has provided questions to which Grey County offers initial responses. Further opportunities to engage on the role of these councils are encouraged.

Questions about watershed council functions and activities

1) Which CA programs and services would benefit from locally focused watershed council input, and which programs and services should watershed councils not be involved in?

Grey County has shared concerns about a loss of local governance and representation through the consolidation of conservation authorities and sees watershed councils as a potential means of reintroducing this within the RCA model.

Locally provided services that would benefit from sustained local involvement include recreation, land stewardship, environmental education, forest management and planting programs, and continued support for locally based foundations and charitable work frequently supported by residents. These programs respond directly to community needs and are ideally managed and delivered on a local watershed basis, with local representation to help guide and direct them.

The larger RCAs will contain multiple watersheds and sub-watersheds, each with local planning and management priorities. Watershed plans identify these priorities, from planning and development control to stewardship. Watershed councils could champion local plans, advise the RCA board and seek resources for local initiatives.

As highlighted in other ongoing consultations, the role of conservation authorities in source protection and planning is key and demands a local focus. Development of risk management plans, implementation of those plans and monitoring of their effectiveness are local issues responsive to land use, topography, soil and bedrock conditions. Grey County supports watershed councils providing oversight and governance of source protection planning.

2) What specific roles should watershed councils play in a regional CA's watershed-based planning (e.g., identifying and prioritizing issues, proposing actions, collecting data, developing reports, leading public education and awareness, etc.)?

Watershed councils could operate similarly to standing committees in a municipal context, with each council responsible for oversight of a specific area and providing a tangible connection to the larger RCA board. The councils would have the most direct contact with communities and support local staff teams in delivering services. Their role would be to advocate for local priorities to the RCA board, seeking support and resources to deliver on those priorities.

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) introduced new requirements under chapter 4.2 which require watershed planning by large and fast-growing municipalities (a defined list under the PPS). Smaller municipalities are encouraged to undertake such planning, but it's not required. This work is to be done by municipalities, but they are encouraged to collaborate with CAs. A watershed council could be an appropriate body for the municipal-specific watershed planning required by the PPS. For example, fast-growing municipality 'A' in the RCA undertakes watershed planning and this work is funneled back through the local watershed council vs. needing to go through the full RCA board (given that it may only directly serve one municipality).

3) In what circumstances, if any, should watershed councils provide formal advice, recommendations or reports to the CA in relation to the CA's watershed-based planning?

Grey County would support watershed councils maintaining a governance role that is more local than that of the RCA board, rather than an operational role. They would provide guidance and direction to local staff, aligned with their mandate within the broader RCA, receive staff reports as necessary and support staff in escalating issues to the RCA board and regional level as needed.

The councils would provide advice through staff on planning applications, development files and other matters within their mandate, such as effects on watershed planning or drinking-water sources.

4) Which functions would make sense for watershed councils to carry out to best support local drinking water source protection priorities?

As noted by the Province, leveraging watershed councils as source protection committees would appear to be an efficient use of this governance resource.

<u>Questions about number and composition for watershed councils</u>

5) Under what circumstances should a regional CA establish more than one watershed council? What criteria or factors would inform this?

Grey County would defer to existing conservation authority staff to help determine the scale and number of watershed councils. Even if transitional in nature, watershed councils could initially be based on existing conservation authority watersheds to support consolidation. This would support continuity of source protection committees and governance during transition. Over time, fewer or more watershed councils could be established as needed.

6) What interests and expertise should be represented on watershed councils to ensure local perspectives and knowledge are reflected,
    a. for the purposes of CA watershed-based planning?
    b. for the functions and duties of SPCs under the CWA?

Watershed councils could maintain local community voices within RCA governance. Grey County recommends a focus on governance and policy, informed by CA staff's technical expertise, rather than on technical or operational delivery.

Grey County encourages participation by local municipal councils and elected officials, alongside community representatives nominated and appointed by local councils. Key municipal staff, potentially including senior management, could also participate as a resource.

The work of conservation authorities traditionally, and the evolving work of RCA's include work on lands and waters that are intrinsically linked to First Nation communities. Representation from local First Nations on watershed councils could be a meaningful way of building relationship and seeking engagement in land stewardship and management. Further, this would be an avenue through which, over time, traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) could be incorporated into RCA practices, applied on a local basis through watershed councils.

A further valuable voice on watershed councils would be representation from foundations and charities that have traditionally supported the work of local conservation authorities.

Watershed councils could also bring sector perspectives into RCA governance. Agricultural representation could reflect both livestock and crop production. Other locally important sectors could include industry, tourism, hunting, fishing and other recreational groups.

7) How should members of the watershed council be selected?

Each RCA should establish an appointment process defining how representatives are identified and selected for its watershed councils.

8) How many members should watershed councils have?

Membership should reflect local needs and the scope of each watershed council's governance role, with balanced representation across sectors. Grey County anticipates that councils would need at least 8–10 members, but recommends fewer than 20 to maintain effective and streamlined governance.

Questions about "procedures" for watershed councils

9) What should the ministry consider for the governance and operating procedures of watershed councils?

Grey County supports a governance role for watershed councils, with procedures similar to those of source protection committees and municipal boards. Within their mandate, councils should have scope to guide local RCA activities while making recommendations to, collaborating with and remaining accountable to the RCA board. Watershed councils have the potential to guide local service delivery input, but could become administratively burdensome on RCA staff, if too many such councils were established.

10) What length of time should members serve for?

Grey County suggests a minimum two-year term. Aligning members' terms with the RCA board's term may have merit, while staggering terms relative to the board could support continuity.