Committee of the Whole

Agenda

December 11, 2025

Following Council

Council Chambers - Grey County Administration Building

		Pages
1.	**Call to Order**	
2.	**Declaration of Interest**	
3.	**Business Arising from Minutes**	
3.a	Notice provided by Councillor Greig at the November 27, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting **That the evaluation of County wide library services be considered by the Joint Municipal Services Committee.**	
4.	**Delegations**	
4.a	Saugeen Hospice Maurice Voisin, Board Member Chuck Boulianne, Business Manager Ken Brown, Vice Chair	6
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	Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee minutes dated November 20, 2025 **That the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes dated November 20, 2025, be adopted as presented.**	21
6.b	The City of Owen Sound Resolution regarding the State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness, and Addictions	24

That the resolution received from the City of Owen Sound regarding the State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness, and Addictions be supported by Grey County Council.

That the correspondence from the City of Owen Sound regarding support for the Town of the Blue Mountains resolution on Non Eligible Blue Box Recycling, be supported by the County of Grey.

That the resolution received from the Town of Ajax regarding Solve the Crisis and Winter Homelessness Program Support be supported by Grey County Council.

That Report FR-CW-23-25 regarding the annual indexing of development charges for 2026 be received for information.

That report ITR-CW-03-25 be received; and

That County Council endorse the Grey County cloud strategy.

That report PDR-CW-68-25 be received; and

That the application for Minor Exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part Lot 19, Concession 6, geographic Township of Euphrasia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 686101 Sideroad 19, be approved.

That Report PDR-CW-69-25 be received; and

That the application for a Minor Exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part of Lot 21, Concession 2 WGR; Div 2 and 3; Parts 3 to 5, RP 16R12083, and Parts 1, 6 and 7 RP16R12083; 235773 Concession 2B, geographic Township of Sullivan, Township of Chatworth, be approved.

That Staff Report HRR-CW-30-25 regarding the Ontario Nurses Association Collective Bargaining Arbitrated Award be received for information.

- Conservation Authority Regional Authorities

That the resolution from the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry regarding concern over the proposed regional structure of Conservation Authorities be supported by the County of Grey.

That the resolution and letter from the Grand River Conservation Authority regarding the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities by the Province, be received for information.

7. Items For Direction and Discussion

That the Budget and Finance Committee meeting minutes dated November 26, 2025,
be adopted as presented and the following resolutions contained therein be endorsed:

- i. **That report FR-BFC-22-25 regarding Corporate Financial Update as of September 30, 2025, be received for information; and**
- ii. **That the $30,000 expenditure for Social Pinpoint be referred to County Council for further discussion during the 2026 budget discussions.**
- iii. **That the matter regarding the proposed increase to Asset Management Reserve contributions for 2026 be referred to County Council during 2026 budget discussions.**
- iv. **That the matter regarding the possibility for GTR fare increases be referred to County Council's 2026 budget discussions.**
- v. **That report FR-BFC-24-25 regarding the 2026 draft budget be received; and**
- vi. **That the 2026 draft budget as presented, be forwarded to County Council for consideration.**

That report PDR-CW-70-25 be received;

That County staff be directed to submit report PDR-CW-70-25 as the County of Grey comments on Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257; and

That the County of Grey requests assurance from the Province that the establishment of the new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency will not be funded by the municipal portion of Conservation Authority levies and that it will not be funded from current

Conservation Authority budgets; and

That Grey County requests the Province pause on passing any further changes to Conservation Authority structure until further analysis has been conducted and additional details are released on new proposed models; and

That report PDR-CW-70-25 be shared with Members of Provincial Parliament Paul Vickers and Brian Saunderson, as well as member municipalities, AMO 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.

7.c PDR-CW-71-25 Status Update on the Growth Management Strategy 111

That report PDR-CW-71-25 regarding a status update on the County's Growth Management Strategy be received for information; and

That a final draft of the Growth Management Strategy be prepared early in 2026 for County Council's consideration.

7.d CAOR-CW-20-25 Hanover West Grey Proposed Boundary Adjustment 152

That Report CAOR-CW-20-25 regarding the Boundary Adjustment Proposal between Hanover and West Grey be received; and

That the County of Grey supports the restructuring proposal between the Municipality of West Grey and the Town of Hanover, subject to the restructuring agreement being approved by the respective councils, that would see lands transferred from the Municipality of West Grey to the Town of Hanover; and

That correspondence be provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town of Hanover, and the Municipality of West Grey expressing such support; and

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

7.e EDTC-CW-17-25 Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding 158

That report EDTC-CW-17-25 regarding the Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding be received;

That Grey County Council endorse the Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding as presented to support regional economic development and investment readiness;

That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to sign the Team Grey

MOU; and

That this report including the Team Grey MOU be circulated to all Grey County Member Municipalities for consideration and signing.

7.f CCR-CW-12-25 Committee Appointments 172

That CCR-CW-12-25 regarding Committee appointments for 2026 be received; and
That the Warden's appointment to the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) and the Clean Energy Frontier Program be endorsed; and
That all appointments noted in this report be endorsed and elections be held where required.

8. Closed Meeting Matters

9. Other Business

10. Notice of Motion

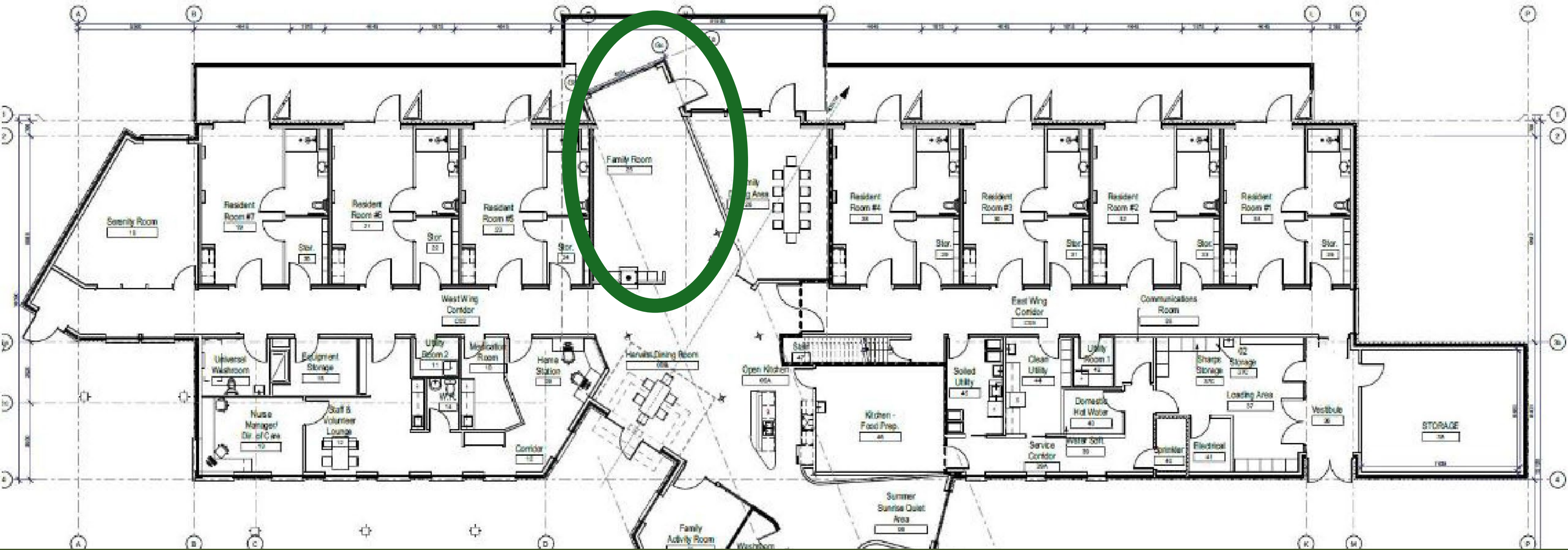
11. Adjournment

Agenda

- A Once in a Generation Opportunity
- The Need for Saugeen Hospice
- Community Benefits
- Community Leadership – Benefits to the Grey County Council
- Call to Action

“A Once-in-a-Generation Opportunity” - exclusivity for 15 years - renewable

“The Family Reflection Room — a place of comfort, respite, and regional pride.”



Construction & Timeline

From Vision to Groundbreaking

Build Begins 2026

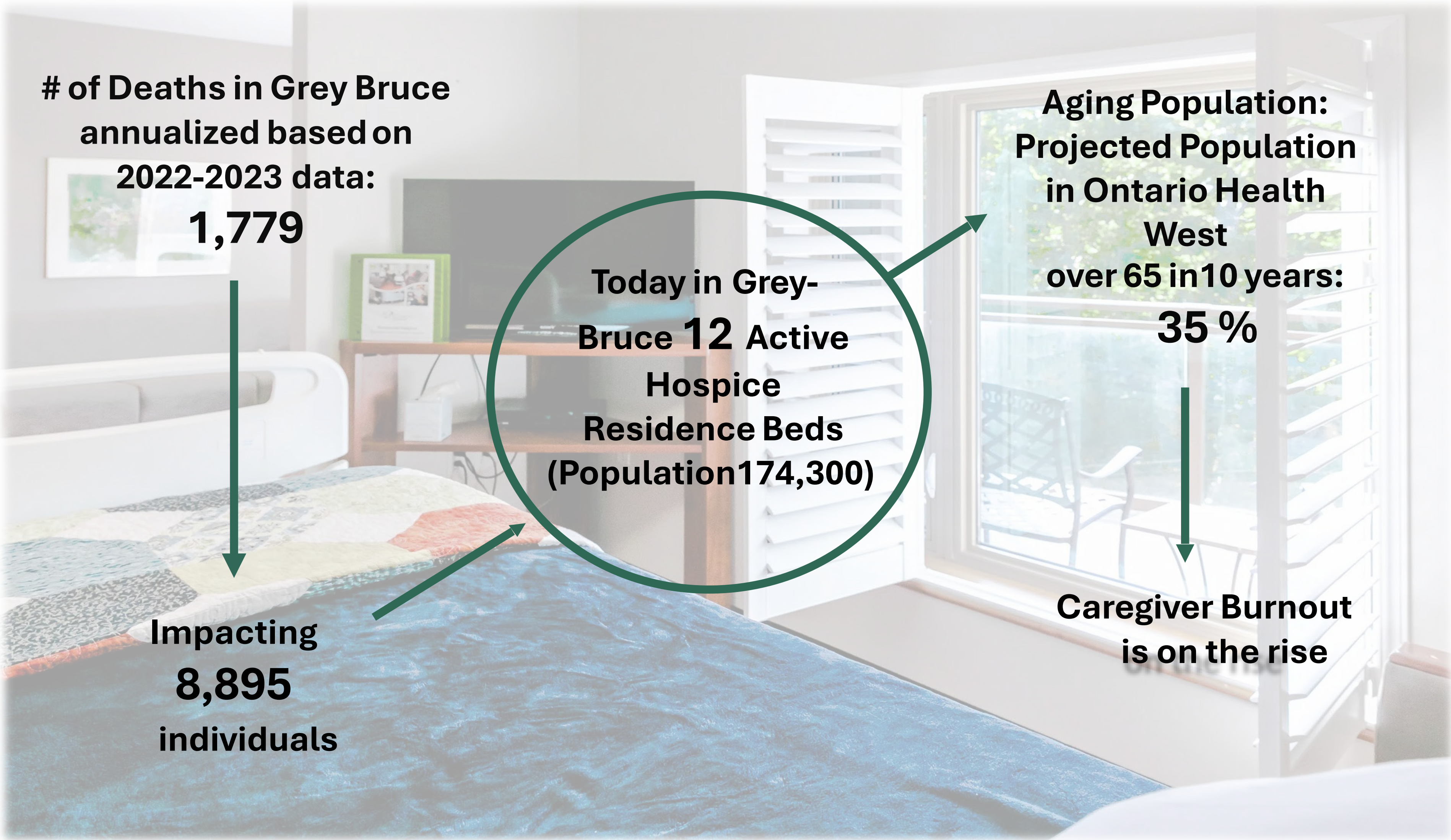
Grant Diemert

Architect

GM Diemert Architect Inc.

Your sponsorship becomes the face of compassionate end-of-life care in our region

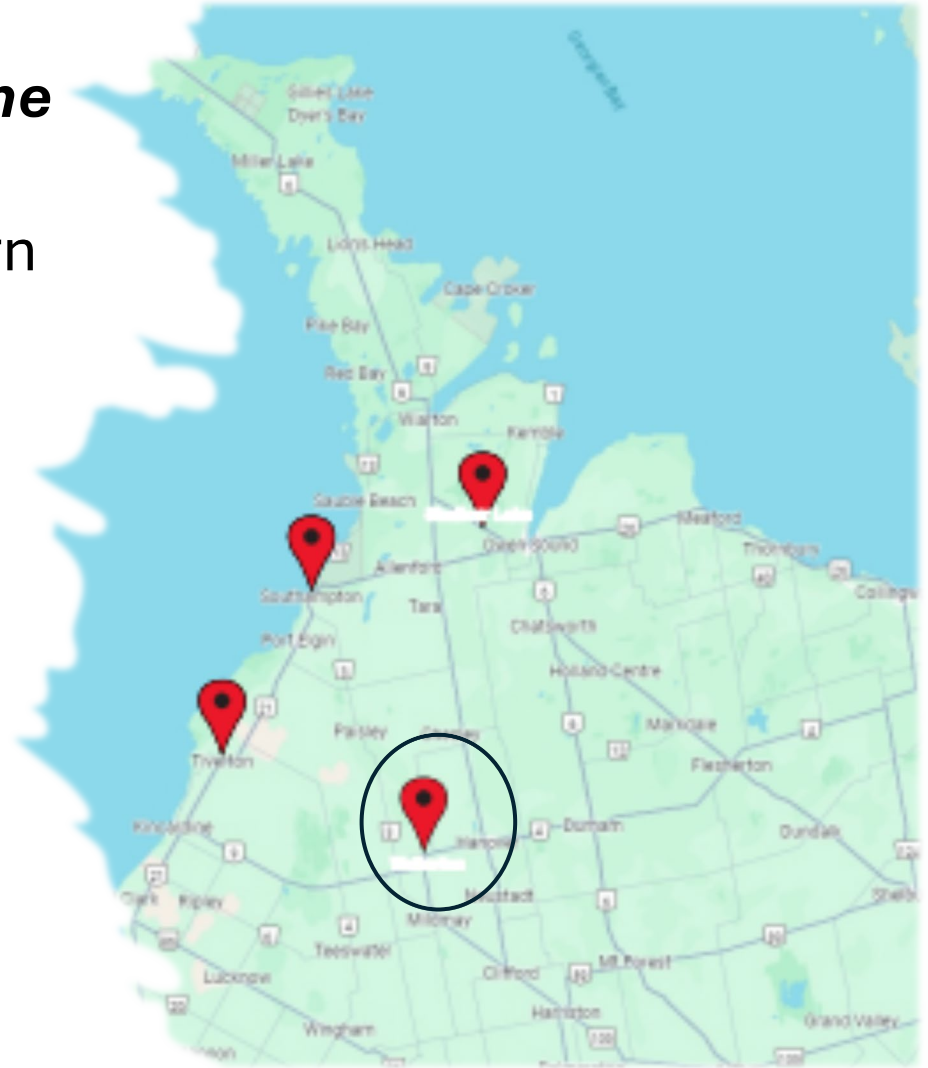
75% of Canadians want to die at home, ONLY 15% DO.



*Based on a 2024 Ontario Health West needs analysis: Grey Bruce needs 18 Hospice Residence Beds

Closer to Home

Saugeen Hospice - Closer to home fills the critical gap of 6 hospice residence beds needed in southern Grey-Bruce



Closer to family - more time together

Less travel means families can visit more often and stay longer without the strain of lengthy commutes.

Closer to local community support - stronger emotional support

Residents and their families can remain connected to friends, faith groups, and local counsellors while accessing Saugeen Hospice's planned, dedicated grief and bereavement services.

Future Home of Saugeen Hospice

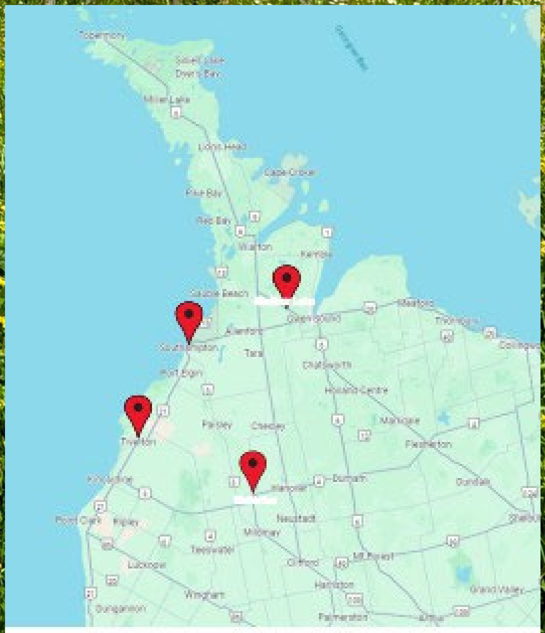
Not-for-profit community corporation, incorporated in 2021

Building a free-standing 6 bed hospice residence in southern Bruce County in Eastridge Park, Walkerton, Ontario.

Serving South Bruce, Brockton, southern Arran-Elderslie, Hanover, southwestern West Grey, Minto, and surrounding areas.

The Municipality of Brockton generously donated this land to Saugeen Hospice Inc.

Saugeen Hospice is anticipating welcoming their first resident, Summer 2028.



The Municipality of Brockton generously donated this land to Saugeen Hospice Inc.

Every family deserves dignity, comfort, and compassionate end-of-life care, closer to home.

The Opportunity

$ 350,000 investment secures **exclusive naming rights** for the Family Reflection Room in Saugeen Hospice for **15 years**.

Visibility:

Signage, media coverage, newsletters, donor walls, and community events.

"The Family Reflection Room — a place of comfort, respite, and regional pride."

“Local artwork, familiar landscapes, a home-like atmosphere.”

The Family Reflection Room

A place of comfort, respite, and regional pride

Elements to be included in the Family Reflection Room:

Local artwork:
Paintings or photographs of familiar landscapes (farms, rivers, forests, town landmarks).

Comfortable seating:
Armchairs, couches, and soft lighting to evoke "home.

Inclusive touches:
Bookshelves, quilts, and a coffee/tea nook.

Recognition wall:
A tasteful plaque or framed inscription noting "Supported by the County Councils of Grey-Bruce."

A Shared Sponsorship
A Legacy of Leadership

Leadership in Compassionate Care

The Counties of Grey and Bruce are recognized as proactive champions of dignity and compassionate end-of-life support.

Support for Local Families

The Counties of Grey and Bruce are seen as responding to real, local needs - making hospice residence care accessible - closer to home, closer to family.

Visible Community Recognition

Their sponsorship is acknowledged through plaques, donor materials, and family gratitude.

Legacy of Regional Stewardship

Your sponsorship will build pride across the counties of Grey and Bruce and will lay the groundwork for future collaboration.

Call to Action

The Saugeen Hospice Board respectfully requests that Grey County Council consider directing its Treasurer to work collaboratively with the Treasurer of Bruce County. The joint effort would aim to develop a feasibility report detailing the financial and operational considerations of a $350,000 Shared Sponsorship for the Family Reflection Room in the planned Saugeen Hospice.

Note:
The proposed funding model may involve equal annual contributions from each County, spread over a term of one to five years, beginning in 2026.

Once the joint report is complete, it will be presented to both Grey and Bruce County Councils for review and a formal vote by their respective Councillors.

Minutes

Grey County Joint Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee

November 20, 2025

Present:	Catherine Sholtz, Andrew Edgcumbe, Brooke Sillaby, Councillor Greig
Regrets:	Christina Schnell, Claudia Strelocke, Pamela Matheson, Ray Whitfield
Staff Present:	Kathie Nunno, Accessibility Coordinator, Olivia Yale, Digital Communications Specialist, Brittany Rier, Deputy Clerk

Call to Order

After fifteen minutes after the scheduled commencement time for the meeting, quorum was not present. The Committee heard the presentations from the agenda for information and reference only and no business was otherwise conducted.

All members were in attendance with the exception of Members Pamela Matheson, Ray Whitfield, Claudia Strelocke and Christina Schnell.

Other Municipal Representatives participating: Brittany Drury, Township of Georgian Bluffs; Pruthvi Desai and Jennifer Patton, Town of The Blue Mountains; Alex Ploughman, EGIS Group; Michele Harris, Municipality of West Grey; Pam Coulter, City of Owen Sound; Margaret Nicholson, City of St. Catharines; Jackie Groves of the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Items For Direction or Discussion

Township of Georgian Bluffs - Kemble and Sarawak Playground Design Concepts

Brittany Drury, Deputy CAO for Georgian Bluffs, shared plans for two new playgrounds at both the Sarawak and Kemble parks. She noted that the playground being installed at the Kemble park is being repurposed from the previous Sarawak Family Park to prioritize environmental sustainability as it is still in good condition.

Town of The Blue Mountains - Highway 26 and Grey Road 2 Improvements and Georgian Trail Realignment

Alex Ploughman of Egis Group shared site plans for the Highway 26 and Grey Road 2 improvements with new traffic signals being installed as well as the Georgian Trail Realignment.

The Committee sought clarification on if there would be a dedicated left lane on both Highway 26 and Grey County Road 2. The Committee noted higher speeds in a rural area, and a concern for safety for pedestrian's crossing. The Committee wanted to ensure all safety mechanisms were in place for the intersection. Mr. Ploughman noted there is a proposed left turning lane on both roads and that there would be concrete barriers and rest areas for pedestrians to set themselves back further away from the road.

The Committee discussed the location of the running slope of 5% and if it would be on the new or existing portion of the trail along Lakeshore Road. Mr. Ploughman noted that the running slope is a 30 metre portion on the proposed trail.

CCR-JAAC-19-25 Municipal Accessibility Legislation, Grey County

Kathie Nunno, Accessibility and Contracts Specialist for Grey County, summarized the accessibility requirements and responsibilities for municipalities under the Municipal Accessibility Legislation.

West Grey Front Counter Renovations

Michele Harris, CAO for West Grey, presented a draft layout for the front counter area renovation at the administration building due to an aggressive member of the public entering the building. She noted that the encounter highlighted safety concerns for staff, and the goal of the renovation is to ensure security for staff in case of potential dangers.

The new proposed layout would include moving the current accessible customer service window from the east side to the west side of the counter, creating a new accessible counter, the addition of glass partitions, and the installation of keypads on the doors to the administration area.

Correspondence

City of Owen Sound Site Plan Approvals

Pam Coulter noted the items were included in the agenda for the Committee's information as approvals are delegated to staff.

CEMC Collaborative - Call for Comments

The CRTC (Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission) are making improvements to the National Public Alerting System and have asked for comments to identify barriers for persons with disabilities. The alerts and warnings include alerts sent to mobile devices for an emergency, threat of emergency, weather warnings and amber alerts are part of this alerting system.

The Committee was encouraged to provide comments to the CRTC to improve the alerting system.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, January 12, 2026

Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk
City of Owen Sound
808 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4

owen sound
where you *want* to live

Telephone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1235
Facsimile: 519-371-0511
Email: slandry@owensound.ca
Website: www.owensound.ca

November 13, 2025

Via Email

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
premier@ontario.ca

Dear Honourable Doug Ford:

Re: Support for Niagara Region's Resolution respecting a State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness, and Addictions

City Council, at its meeting held on November 10, 2025, considered the above-noted matter, and passed Resolution No. R-251110-005 as follows:

> "**THAT in consideration of correspondence received on the November 10, 2025 Consent Agenda respecting a State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness, and Addictions, City Council:**
>
> 1. **Supports the resolution passed by Niagara Region to advocate for:**
>   a. **The province to support a coordinated approach between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to address ongoing challenges related to mental health, homelessness, and opioid addiction; and**
>   b. **Provincial funding to address identified gaps in programs and services contributing to the state of emergency including affordable housing, supportive housing, addictions treatment, and mental health supports for vulnerable populations; and**
> 2. **Directs staff to send this resolution to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health, the Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Michael**

Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Paul Vickers, MPP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Grey County Council, Niagara Region, the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario."

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Staci Landry

Staci Landry
Deputy Clerk

Encl: Niagara Regional Council Resolution of September 30, 2025

cc: Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Hon. Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Paul Vickers, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
Grey County Council
Niagara Region
Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee
Association of Municipalities of Ontario

Administration
Office of the Regional Clerk
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042, Thorold, ON L2V 4T7
Telephone: 905-980-6000 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215 Fax: 905-687-4977
www.niagararegion.ca

September 30, 2025

CL 14-2025, September 25, 2025

DISTRIBUTION LIST

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

Motion Respecting State of Emergency on Mental Health, Homelessness and Addictions

Regional Council, at its meeting held on September 25, 2025, passed the following motion:

WHEREAS Niagara Region issued three separate declarations of emergency in the areas of homelessness, mental health and opioid addiction on February 23, 2023, recognizing that the scope and scale of the crisis surpasses the Region's capacity to respond effectively; and

WHEREAS following the submission of the three declarations of emergency, the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) has engaged with the Region's Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC); and

WHEREAS these issues have continued to intensify and add further strain to the social support system in Niagara over the past two years; and

WHEREAS municipalities across Ontario are continuing to experience similar challenges; and

WHEREAS a coordinated, province-wide approach and associated funding support is required to address the growing emergency of mental health, homelessness and opioid addiction, the scale of which falls well beyond the scope of what a municipality can address.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That Niagara Region **ADVOCATES** that the Province support a coordinated approach between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to address ongoing challenges related to mental health, homelessness and opioid addiction;

2. That Niagara Region **FORMALLY ADVOCATES** for Provincial funding to address identified gaps in programs and services contributing to the state of emergency including affordable housing, supportive housing, addictions treatment, and mental health supports for vulnerable populations; and

3. That this motion **BE SENT** to the Provincial and Federal Governments, FCM, AMO and all municipalities in Ontario.

Yours truly,

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk
:kl
CLK-C 2025-109

Distribution List

Premier of Ontario
Prime Minister of Canada
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
All Ontario Municipalities

Christina McLean, Committee and Executive Coordinator
City of Owen Sound
808 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4

owen sound
where you *want* to live

Telephone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1208
Facsimile: 519-371-0511
Email: cmclean@owensound.ca
Website: www.owensound.ca

November 27, 2025

Via Email

Grey County Council
c/o Tara Warder, County Clerk
tara.warder@grey.ca

Re: Support for Resolution Respecting Blue Box Recycling

Owen Sound City Council, at its meeting held on November 24, 2025, adopted Resolution No. R-251124-010 to approve the minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on November 20, 2025, including Resolution No. OP-251120-004 pertaining to the above noted matter as follows:

"THAT in consideration of correspondence received on November 20, 2025 from the Town of Blue Mountains respecting changes to Blue Box recycling for non-eligible sources, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. **Support the resolution passed by the Town of Blue Mountains to encourage Grey County municipalities with vested interests in Blue Box recycling to consider working together for their Blue Box materials for the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) locations; and**
2. **Direct staff to forward this motion of support to Grey County."**

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

C. McLean

Christina McLean
Committee and Executive Support Coordinator

Encl: November 10, 2025 – Town of Blue Mountains Resolution Re Blue Box Recycling

The Town of The Blue Mountains
Council Meeting

Title: Councillor Ardiel Notice of Motion Re: Blue Box Recycling

Date: Monday, November 10, 2025

Time: 8:41 PM

Moved by: Councillor Ardiel

Seconded by: Councillor Porter

WHEREAS Blue Box recycling in The Blue Mountains will change, on January 1st, 2026, a new province-wide Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will take over Ontario's Blue Box residential recycling collection and shifting responsibility from municipalities to the producers of plastic and packaging. The Blue Mountains need to focus on hiring the not-for- profit group called Circular Materials Ontario that take will over the handling of our Blue Bin recycling;

WHEREAS the County of Simcoe has engaged the not-for-profit group called Circular Materials Ontario who run the program with Emterra handing pickup;

WHEREAS Council should be involved in discussions now on how these changes will affect small businesses, not-for-profit businesses, and institutions such as our churches;

WHEREAS Grey County should be involving all nine municipalities to speak about the broader picture in waste management and look towards consolidating waste in the bigger picture involving all nine municipalities in Grey County;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains directs staff to forward this resolution to the eight other municipalities in Grey County and encourages the other eight municipalities with vested interests in Blue Box recycling to consider working together with all Grey County municipalities for their Blue Box materials for the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) locations

YES: 6 **NO: 0** **ABSENT: 1**

The motion is Carried

YES: 6

Deputy Mayor Bordignon, Councillor Ardiel, Councillor Hope, Councillor Maxwell, Councillor McKinlay, Councillor Porter

NO: 0

ABSENT: 1

Mayor Matrosovs

TOWN OF AJAX
65 Harwood Avenue South
Ajax ON L1S 3S9
www.ajax.ca

The Honorable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1
premier@ontario.ca

Sent by E-Mail

November 19, 2025

Re: Solve the Crisis and Winter Homelessness Program Support

The following resolution was passed by Ajax Town Council at its meeting held on November 17, 2025:

> Whereas, we are approaching the cold winter months and the number of people experiencing homelessness in Ajax and Durham Region continues to rise drastically, with more than 1,000 people on Durham Region's by-name list as of August, including specifically 200 people in Ajax seeking support to change their housing status[1]; and
>
> Whereas, in September 2024, Ajax Council passed a motion to support Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) SolvetheCrisis.ca[2] campaign requesting that the provincial and federal governments take immediate action to solve the homelessness and mental health crisis gripping our communities; and
>
> Whereas, while the provincial government has provided support for new programs such as Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hubs (HART Hubs), it does not adequately address the growing crisis and the financial and social impact on municipalities and regions; and
>
> Whereas, according to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, municipalities are providing 51.5% of the total reported homelessness program funding across all three levels of government, making a significant financial impact on municipal budgets[3]; and

Whereas, OBCM recently passed a motion at their October Meeting re-iterating the need for provincial support in addressing this crisis by allocating more funding to programs that address chronic homelessness; and

Therefore, be it resolved:

1. That Ajax Council reconfirms their support of the Solve the Crisis Campaign and calls on Ajax residents to join us in appealing to the provincial and federal governments for support by visiting SolveTheCrisis.ca; and

2. That Ajax Council asks that the provincial government to take action on the requests of the Solve the Crisis Campaign that have not been fully addressed including:

    a. Appoint a responsible ministry and Minister with the appropriate funding and powers as a single point of contact to address the full spectrum of housing needs as well as mental health, addictions and wrap around supports.

    b. This single Minister must strike a task force with sector representatives including municipalities, health care leaders, first responders, community services, the business community, and the tourism industry to develop an Ontario Action Plan.

    c. Provide municipalities with the tools and resources to transition those in encampments to more appropriate supports, when deemed necessary.

    d. Commit to funding the services our unhoused population needs, community by community, to fill in gaps in the system.

    e. Invest in 24/7 community hubs or crisis centres to relieve pressure on emergency departments and first responders; and

3. That Ajax Council asks that the provincial government prepares a 2025/2026 winter homelessness response plan to help municipalities ensure that we can keep our unsheltered residents who are sleeping outdoors with the services they need to keep them safe in colder weather; and

4. That a copy of this resolution be sent to Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, Rob Cerjanec, MPP for Ajax, local MPPs across the Region of Durham, Durham Regional Council, all Ontario Municipalities, Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM).

CARRIED

If you require further information please contact me at 365-885-6983 or Thomas.street@ajax.ca

Sincerely,

Thomas Street
Manager of Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk

Copy: Councillor L. Bower
Councillor R. Tyler Morin
Rob Cerjanec, Ajax MPP
Region of Durham Local MPPs
Durham Regional Council
All Ontario Municipalities
Ontario's Big City Mayors

Grey County

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	FR-CW-23-25
Title:	Annual Indexing of Development Charges - 2026
Prepared by:	Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That Report FR-CW-23-25 regarding the annual indexing of development charges for 2026 be received for information.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to outline the annual indexing of development charges for 2025. The County of Grey's Development Charge By-Laws 5127-22 and 5128-22 provide for the automatic indexing of development charges. Section 14.0 of each By-Law states *"The development charges set out in Schedule B and Schedules C1 to C5 as applicable hereto shall be adjusted without amendment to this By-law annually on January 1st in each year, commencing on January 1st, 2023, in accordance with the Statistics Canada Non-residential Building Construction Price Index for Toronto based on the preceding twelve-month period ending September 30th."* For 2026, this results in a 4.2% increase, or a $426.00 increase to development charges on single and semi-detached units. Development charges for non-residential development were new for 2023. Council approved a phase-in over a four-year period with 25% of the charge beginning in 2023. In 2026, 100% of the non-residential development charge will be included, subject to annual indexing.

Background and Discussion

Each year the County's development charges are indexed as set out in each by-law to reflect the change in the Non-Residential Building Construction Price Index (NRBCPI). The change in the NRBCPI over the preceding twelve-month period ending September 30, 2025, results in a 4.2% increase to the 2026 development charge that is effective January 1, 2026.

The Development Charges Background Study was prepared and presented by Hemson in 2021. For the first time, the By-Laws included a charge for non-residential development with Council approving a phase-in over a four-year period with 25% of the charge beginning in 2023.

In 2026, 100% of the non-residential development charge will be included, subject to annual indexing.

Table 1 provides the charge for residential units and Table 2 is for Non-Residential development.

Residential Charge by Unit Type

Service	Singles and Semis	Rows and Other Multiples	Apartments
Land Ambulance	$313.00	$216.00	$180.00
Social Housing	0.00	0.00	0.00
Children's Services	11.00	7.00	7.00
Provincial Offences	7.00	4.00	4.00
Trails	50.00	34.00	29.00
Health Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00
Long Term Care	1,728.00	1,194.00	993.00
Development Related Studies	4.00	3.00	1.00
Public Works	69.00	48.00	40.00
Roads and Related	8,355.00	5,770.00	4,804.00
Total Charge per Unit	**$10,537.00**	**$7,276.00**	**$6,058.00**

Non-Residential Development Charges (per square metre) – 100% of the eligible charge as per the 4 year phase-in

Land Ambulance	$1.68
Social Housing	0.00
Children's Services	0.00
Provincial Offences	0.04
Trails	0.00
Health Unit	0.00
Long Term Care	0.00
Development Related Studies	0.25

Public Works	0.61
Roads and Related	38.90
Total Charge per Square Metre	**$41.48**

Legal Considerations

None

Financial and Resource Implications

The Development Charges Act gives authority to municipalities to impose development charges against land to pay for increased capital costs required because of increased needs for services arising from development of the area to which the by-law applies.

The County's Development Charges by-law(s) provide for the automatic indexing of development charges on January 1 of each year.

The rates imposed under the development charges by-law(s) are utilized to pay for the increased capital costs related to the provision of land ambulance, children's services, provincial offences, trails, long-term care, development-related studies, public works and roads and related projects. Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act,* 2022 removed Social Housing as an eligible service. Annual indexing of development charges captures the increases in construction costs to ensure there is appropriate capital funding available when projects are undertaken.

For 2026, rates are indexed by 4.2% in the charts shown above; in comparison, the increase in 2025 was 3.3% and 6.6% in 2024. The non residential charge is being phased in over four years with 2026 the final year, this results in 100% of the charge plus indexing payable in 2026.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal (list)

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

☐ External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

None, Development Charge by-laws, background studies, 2025 and prior year DC brochures are available on the Grey County website: https://www.grey.ca/government/development-charges

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	ITR-CW-03-25
Title:	Grey County Cloud Strategy and Infrastructure Replacement
Prepared by:	Jody MacEachern, Director of Information Technology
Reviewed by:	Niall Lobley, Deputy CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	None.

Recommendation

1. **That report ITR-CW-03-25 be received; and**
2. **That County Council endorse the Grey County cloud strategy.**

Executive Summary

Grey County's server infrastructure is due for replacement in 2026. Until recently, the cost of replacing the County's hardware with similar technology running on premises has been consistently cheaper than comparable cloud-hosted or managed options. However, the cost of on-premise systems has increased dramatically over recent years to the point where on-premise hardware is comparable in price to cloud-hosted options.

As cloud-hosted infrastructure has become a financially viable alternative to on-premise hardware, and vendors increasingly favour cloud-hosted software over on-premise installations, the County developed a cloud strategy to guide decision making around and adoption of cloud hosted technologies.

Cloud-hosted technology offers the benefit of having a dedicated company manage the hardware, including installation, configuration, and upgrades. The principles outlined in this strategy include choosing software as a service first, using services with Canadian data residency, choosing hardware providers that offer better reliability than the County can achieve on it's own, and choosing fixed pricing models to allow for predicable budgeting.

Background and Discussion

Why a Cloud Strategy?

Grey County's server infrastructure is due for replacement. The current hardware (VxRail) was purchased in 2018 on a five-year license agreement. Dell extended the licensing for two years in 2023. Although County staff follow technology trends and regularly re-assess IT plans and capital projects, staff had intended to replace on-premise infrastructure with similar hardware at the end of its lifespan.

Traditionally, cloud-hosted infrastructure, or Infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS), has been more expensive than on-premise hardware. Moving to IaaS required justification of the benefits that cloud-providers can offer. Those benefits are, broadly:

- Having a vendor install, upgrade, maintain, and configure hardware rather than in-house IT;
- Reduction in after-hours and on-call support related to hardware issues;
- Usually increased stability and reliability;
- Often cybersecurity is improved;
- The ability to respond rapidly to both changes in technology, markets, and demand for services.

In recent years the cost of on-premise hardware has increased to the point where it is generally comparable to cloud-hosted infrastructure. The County is using an infrastructure product called VxRail. This product is a partnership between Dell, which supplies the hardware, and VMWare which provides the virtualization environment. In late 2023 Broadcom acquired VMWare, and imposed steep price increases on their customers, including the County. With other vendors increasing their prices for on-premise hardware, the cost of cloud-hosted and on-premise solutions are comparable, and can be assessed purely on technical merits.

With IaaS now a viable option from a financial perspective, County staff wished to first establish goals, principles, and criteria to evaluate traditional hardware versus IaaS, and to help with the selection of future cloud providers.

What's in the County's Cloud Strategy?

Benefits of Cloud Technology

There are numerous benefits of cloud technology and couple draw backs.

1. Offloading hardware maintenance. With cloud services, the requirement to setup and install, configure, maintain, and upgrade becomes the vendors responsibility. Similarly, hardware failures that might otherwise require on-call or after-hours support from in-house IT staff are handled by the vendor. While clients might lose the ability to assign their own staff and make small hardware problems their top priority, vendors of any appreciable size will have more dedicated staff, with better alignment of skills, and rigorous service level agreements such that in virtually all cases hardware failures will be resolved faster by an IaaS provider than they would be by County staff.
2. Improved uptime and availability for hosted services, including faster resolution of outages. Companies offering cloud-hosted infrastructure will have more redundancy, and better back up and disaster recovery capability than an organization, such as the County, that runs a smaller data center.
3. Using Software as a service (SaaS) removes public-facing applications from the County's infrastructure, whether it is hosted or on-premise. This improves the County's cyber security in a couple of ways: vendors can control patching and vulnerability

management on their own systems better than clients can, and it is far less likely that a technology disruption or incident affected by a SaaS application will impact other County resources.

Some of the draw backs, which can be mitigated, include:

- Loss of control. Scenarios could occur in which a vendor upgrades their hardware or operating systems which in turn is not compatible with an application in use by the County. This would force the County to upgrade those applications or seek alternatives. The risk of this happening is small, and more likely with older applications that haven't been kept up to date. While there are occasionally reasons why updates are held back, it is generally poor practice and should be avoided anyway.
- Cost overrun or unpredictable. Some IaaS models allow scaling of resources, pay-as-you go use, and apply fees that aren't clear from their initial estimates. These scenarios can be avoided by choosing fixed-price financial models.
- Vendor lock-in. Some vendors make it difficult to move your business to a competitor, either through contractual terms, resources purchased on agreements that expire in different terms, or data-egress fees. These can be avoided by careful selection of vendor, and diligent reviews and negotiation of contracts.

Principles

Based on the benefits that cloud hosted technologies provide, and considering the County's data center requirements, the following principles have been established to guide decision making and selection of cloud technologies:

- Choose SaaS models over software that is hosted on the County's own servers. This reduces the burden on IT staff of managing servers and operating systems, installing, configuring and upgrading software, and reduces vulnerabilities on the County's network. Exceptions can be made where cost is prohibitive or the cloud offering is simply third-party management of public cloud hosting.
- Websites should always use cloud hosting, on dedicated web hosting services, and never the County's network. Professional web hosting services can provide better uptime than the County's network, and moving the websites off the County's network reduces vulnerabilities.
- Choose Canadian data residency options.
- If the County uses Infrastructure as a Service:
    - That service should offer improved reliability and availability with less internal staff resources than on-premise infrastructure.
    - There should be no compromise in cyber security controls. The vendor must offer the same or better level of cyber security as the County has achieved on its own network.
    - The financial model should be predictable. Avoid services that have hidden costs, extra fees, pay-as-you-go contracts, and data egress fees.
    - The County should maintain control of its resources, no matter where they are hosted. Contracts and terms must be diligently reviewed to ensure the County is not locked into unfavourable contracts, or agreements that would be difficult or expensive to terminate even after the term expires.

Implications for Grey County

This report is not specifically seeking financial commitments from council. The Cloud Strategy provides guidance to staff in development of new technology projects and technology selection. While the technology landscape continues to move toward cloud services and traditional on-premise hardware has increased in cost, the strategy itself is not likely to have direct impact on County finances.

The strategy has, however, been used in the County's assessment of options to replace its on-premise infrastructure. Over the past 18 months, County staff have researched several cloud-hosted, on-premise, and hybrid (a mix of cloud and smaller on-premise) solutions to replace VxRail. These options include public cloud (Azure)[1], three private cloud vendors[2], and four on premise solutions. County staff have proposed using infrastructure as a service with a private cloud provider in the 2026 budget.

Should the County adopt infrastructure-as-a-service in the 2026 budget, the costs of the County's server infrastructure will transition from a capital project to annual operating costs. Through the County's research, the annual cost of IaaS (assuming three-year contract terms and inflationary increases on renewal) is comparable to the cost of replacing on-premise hardware with a seven-year life span. Historically, reserve contributions for the server infrastructure capital project were distributed across all departments via the Information Services (IS) budget "interfunctional charge". The IS budget as a whole is distributed across all departments, so moving these costs from capital to the IS budget is not anticipated to have significant financial impacts.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal (list)

Appendices and Attachments

[Grey County Cloud Strategy]

[Approval of Over Budget IT Capital Project ITR-CW-01-25]

[1] Public Cloud (Microsoft, Google, Amazon) are provide pay-as-you-go, self-service access to environments running on shared underlying hardware.
[2] Private cloud refers to hosted services on dedicated infrastructure.

1. Executive Summary

Increasingly, Information Technology services are being offered not in the traditional model of software running on company-owned on-premise hardware, but instead as internet hosted services (software- or hardware- as a services). This model provides benefit for both the vendor and client alike. For the County, this typically means less overhead for IT teams managing hardware, patching and updating, configuring, and fixing both hardware and software. Further, while there are more applications (more variation equates to more vulnerabilities), the technology disruptions and incidents are more limited in scope.

This strategy outlines the County's current use of cloud technologies, establishes principles to guide the adoption of new cloud technologies. Furthermore, it presents a framework to evaluate key technology decisions regarding on-premise versus cloudhosted infrastructure.

The main tenants of this strategy are:

- Choose software-as-a-service over on-premise applications;
- Carefully weigh the costs and benefits of cloud-hosted infrastructure versus on-premise solutions;
- Assess pricing models and contracts for predictable, containable costs and avoidance of vendor lock in;
- Select cloud services that provide Canadian data residency.

2. Baselines / Definitions

Cloud Technology – refers to any technology, whether it is hardware or software, that is hosted in a third-party data center as opposed to a company's own on-premise hardware.

Public Cloud – sharing of hardware to provide on-demand, pay-as-you-go services to clients.

Private Cloud – an arrangement whereby a client has dedicated hardware under their contract, but the hardware is fully managed by a vendor. When the managed hardware sits at the client's premises, this is referred to as "local cloud."

Software as a Service (SaaS) – When a client licenses software that is entirely hosted by third party. In this arrangement the client does not license nor gain any control of the underlying hardware, nor do they have to maintain their own on premise.

Platform as a Service (PaaS) – a variation of SaaS referring to a product that is highly configurable, allowing the client to design their own use cases. Examples might include web applications that allow for customizable forms for data collection.

Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) – (also Hardware as a Service) – a service model in which infrastructure resources are provided via the internet, rather than in a client's local data center (e.g. storage, compute, firewalls, etc). The client is free to use those infrastructure resources as they would if they were their own, including security configuration, install and configuration of applications, etc.

Multi-Cloud – a multi-cloud solution is one that uses different cloud providers for different tasks or workloads.

Cross-Cloud – is a type of multi-cloud solution which focuses on the ability to integrate different services that are spread across different cloud providers.

3. Cloud Computing Baseline

3.1. SaaS

The County has made extensive use of SaaS vendors and has adopted SaaS-first principles for new applications. Major applications currently provided via SaaS include:

- Microsoft 365 (email, SharePoint, Teams)
- HRIS/HCM (Dayforce)
- Paramedics suite of software (Prehos and Premergency)
- ArcGIS Online

3.2. IaaS

The County’s disaster recovery infrastructure is hosted in MS Azure. In early 2025 the County configured an Azure landing zone to properly establish resource groups and security rules such that the County’s MS tenant would be ready for production workloads, and have Azure available to host new or migrated applications. A few workloads have been deployed in Azure, including the County’s web application firewall.

4. Business Baseline

The business needs of departments in Grey County have direct implications on technology choice and design decisions. In general, County business units require technology services that are secure and reliable. In government operations, stability and financial responsibility is typically more important than speed deploying new solutions. Furthermore, the County has numerous SaaS solutions in critical business areas which often provide improved uptime and reliability, and spread risk so it is less like that several critical business services would be lost to a single technology disruption or incident.

Potential Benefits to migrate to cloud services include:

- Improved reliability and uptime for hosted services, including faster response time for infrastructure outages.
- Potentially reducing the workload for maintenance through leveraging service models (e.g. SQL as a service).
- Reduce infrastructure maintenance overhead, freeing staff time for other tasks.

- Improved availability for remote and hybrid staff.
- Potential reduction in on-call and after-hours work as major hardware tasks are shifted to the vendor.

There are potential risks with adopting infrastructure as a service, many of which can be mitigated:

Issue	Mitigation
Loss of control to resolve issues.	Seek vendors with strong SLAs, multiple data centers. Review their DR plans including testing.
Variability, unpredictability, overrun on budget	Avoid pay-as-you go budget models or piecemeal pricing in favour of fixed-price contracts. Apply oversight of resource utilization and additions. Right-size server specs.
Vendor lock-in	Use services with common technologies that can be ported to other providers. Example is using Zerto to backup production servers to a new hosting environment. More proprietary complex / models such as Azure modern app framework would require much more project work to move to a new environment.
Data privacy issues	Ensure vendors provide strict Canadian data residency. Assess cybersecurity controls ahead of contract / implementation.
Network latency	Use services with primary data centers in southern Ontario. Don’t split related services (e.g. application server and SQL server) across different hosting environments. Ensure county locations have adequate bandwidth to run cloudbased services.
Reduction of options for new systems	Ensure that during the procurement process, solutions must either be cloud based or have no reliance on County managed server hardware. E.g. vendor installs own server and maintains themselves).

5. Services Strategy

The County should seek SaaS services for most enterprise applications, alleviating the need to manage these applications in house.

Given the cost and complexity of managing multiple data centers, and the small team size of Grey County IT, the County should avoid hybrid solutions. Exceptions may exist for small-scale hardware on premise (e.g. storage for security footage), but not a separate data center. Similarly, maintaining multiple cloud environments, while providing some advantages, must be carefully rationalized in terms of cost, complexity and actual benefits.

If the County chooses to continue maintaining its primary data center on premise, then a cloud environment can continue to provide value as DR location. Further the County can leverage this familiarity and experience to explore cloud services, utilizing temporary resources, or other cloud use cases should the primary data center be on premise.

6. Financial Models

There are various financial models available from cloud providers. These include pay-as-you-go, subscription-based, and reserved instances.

Generally speaking, pay-as-you-go has the highest costs and should only be used by the County in limited circumstances. When a project is of short duration or run on a proof-of-concept basis, pay-as-you-go might be appropriate. Some businesses have benefitted from the ability to scale resources up and down to meet periods of changing demands; however, there are few use cases currently on the County's on-premise hardware that would benefit from scaled resourcing.

The preferred financial structure for procuring cloud services is fixed contracts on reserved instances. The County would enter a multi-year agreement with a fixed rate for the hardware footprint it is using, with the ability to adjust resources and fees within the term of the agreement. Pay-as-you-go or reserved instances with added costs (e.g. data egress) are the least preferred financial model as it is difficult to accurately predict the true cost of ownership with variable and hidden costs.

7. Principles

7.1. Cloud-first for software (SaaS / PaaS preference).

When sourcing new applications, the County should first seek SaaS or PaaS solutions, especially for applications that are considered critical for operations. SaaS models are generally able to provide better uptime statistics and a faster response time to outages.

While there is some tradeoff of not being 'in control' during an outage, providers have teams dedicated to a smaller suite of products and respond quickly to their own issues.

There are several situations in which the County can consider on-premise hosting:

- When a provider's cloud-hosted solution is merely a managed instance in a public cloud, and the added cost of the cloud option doesn't provide enough benefit in offloaded work to justify itself.
- When cloud options are cost prohibitive or the increased cost is not justified by actual business value.
- Hosting the County's own custom software, or open-source software. As stated elsewhere, custom software should only be considered when commercial options are not available, or for middleware and integration between the County's solutions.

- If an application is managing local hardware, or storing data from local appliances such as security camera footage. In these cases, cloud-hosted software should still be considered if available.

7.2. Website Hosting

The County should not host websites on their own servers, whether the County's primary data center is on premise, public, or private cloud. Third-party web hosting provides easier web server management, increased uptime, and improved cybersecurity by separating public-facing websites from the County's network.

7.3. Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

7.3.1. IaaS Adoption and Selection

Before selecting to move from maintaining an on-premise data center to IaaS model, or before choosing a particular IaaS vendor, the County should carefully consider the proposed value in moving to that vendor, the risk, and the financial implications involved. In particular, the IaaS should improve operations across a couple of key areas:

- An IaaS model should offer improved reliability and availability with less internal staff requirements compared with on-premise hardware. A vendor providing hosted infrastructure should have rigorous uptime SLAs, and 24/7 staffing complement to ensure those SLAs are maintained;
- There should be no compromise in the cybersecurity controls that the County has been able implement in its own data center. Cybersecurity should be as good or better than the County has traditionally used;
- The financial model should be predictable. If the cloud-hosted option is significantly more expensive than the on-premise model, than cost difference should be justifiable in terms of quantifiable benefits, whether those are reduced staff requirements for maintenance, improved security, or reduction in associated costs (e.g. power) that aren't traditionally captured in IT operating budget.

7.3.2. IaaS Independence

Services and contracts that increase the likelihood of vendor lock-in should be avoided. Such terms might include high or unknown costs for data-egress (charging a fee for data transfer outside the cloud ecosystem), proprietary frameworks that increase the complexity of migrating to other providers, and reservation models with non-termed expiration dates for resource groups.

One option for maintaining independence in IaaS contracts is to continue to use the County's current backup structure to replicate network resources to Microsoft Azure if another provider is chosen for IaaS. This way a full copy of the County's servers will exist outside the vendor's data center, decreasing the likelihood of "vendor lock in". Alternatively, using common technologies that would allow the migration of production servers to a new hosting environment with the same backup applications that are in use to replicate from production to disaster recovery environments could alleviate the risk of vendor lock in.

8. Inventory: Current State Assessment

8.1. Software as a Service (SaaS) / Platform as a Service (PaaS)

The County is using numerous SaaS products. Some with the largest footprint or most significant impact are:

Product	Service Importance	Description
Prehos & Premergency	Critical	Patient charting, training, and operational forms.
PointClickCare	Critical	Patient records in Long Term Care
Dayforce	Critical	HR Information system, payroll, hiring, etc.
Microsoft 365	Critical	Extensive set of tools from Microsoft, including; SharePoint, Email, Device Management, User Management, security, efficiency tools.
Geotab	Important	Vehicle AVL and driver compliance. Record keeping for maintenance standards.
FreshService	Medium	IT Service Management software.
ArcGIS Online	Medium	Online web mapping, analytics, data management software for GIS applications.

8.2. Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

The County is using several IaaS products:

Product	Description
Microsoft Azure	MS cloud hosting environment. Currently used for DR and hosting the County's web application firewall
Digital Ocean	Website hosting platform
AWS	Backup for webhosting platform through third party service.

9. Alignment:

9.1. Security, Governance, Compliance

Cloud technologies can support a few key objectives of Grey County strategy, both at the corporate and departmental level. Notably, the Grey County strategic plan identifies *Internal Operations and Service Delivery* as a key priority, noting Reduction in risk and liability, and cost containment as two of the tenants in that objective.

Choosing the right cloud technology can support these objectives. IaaS vendors should be able to offer more reliable data centers than the County can manage on its own. Whereas the County maintains a single data center with multiple points of failure, such as electrical and limitations on generator backup, as well as staff availability and expertise to recover from an outage, providers can achieve efficiencies of scale with larger data centers, multiple geographically separated locations for backup, more redundancy, and critically, a large complement of staff to resolve issues and respond to after-hours emergencies.

Cost containment must be carefully considered. On-premise hardware has become significantly more expensive over the past couple of years. Unless the County was willing to entertain a complete change in virtualization technology, IaaS is the only option to compare financially to on-premise infrastructure.

IaaS offers a few options that can help control costs, such as scaling of resource requirements and using only the server specifications that are required for an application (e.g. not over-provisioning on-premise hardware). However, IaaS options need to be selected and configured carefully to realize any potential financial benefit. Conversely, compared with the risk of over-provisioning an on-premise solution, IaaS can see cost overruns through per-use pricing models, scope creep, and poorly managed resource use. Achieving cost containment in an IaaS product requires that the product is chosen and configured carefully, and likely requires multi-year commitment to achieve favorable rates. The contracts must be diligently assessed for terms that heavily favour the vendor and limit the County’s ability to adjust resource use while within term. It may also require quantifying associated costs such as energy use, peripheral hardware, and staff time.

IaaS can also directly support the County’s climate action plan. IaaS uses less power and has a more efficient use of IT infrastructure compared with on-premise hardware. In an early assessment of our current on-premise hardware use, Microsoft estimated the County would save approximately 6959 kg of carbon emissions over a 5-years of using cloud resources instead of on-premise infrastructure.

9.2. Other Support Elements

10. Exit Strategy

There are numerous scenarios that could precipitate the need to leave a cloud provider and seek alternative solutions. These could include:

- Changes in technology that provide business value and justify assessing or moving to new solutions;

- A solution might become prohibitively expensive or a competitor might provide considerable cost benefits to move.
- A vendor may become unreliable through failed SLAs, or frequent or prolonged outages, which challenge the argument of improved reliability.

The County's exit strategy will depend both on the reason for moving, and the scope of the systems affected. The following are potential options:

Moving from a single software-as-a-service offering would be the same as any other software replacement. Contracts should be structured at the beginning of any such procurement to ensure that, should the agreement terminate, the County's data will be returned in a machine-readable format, thereby ensuring the County can migrate between one application and another.

The County currently has a relatively small IaaS footprint. The more this grows, the more difficult it becomes to simply switch vendors. Nonetheless, the County needs to consider the possibility that circumstances could arise forcing the County to move to another solution. An exit strategy for IaaS with a large footprint might involve:

1. Estimate data egress costs from current provider.

2. Assess available options:
    a. On-premise infrastructure
    b. Cloud-competitors in public and private clouds
    c. Fully managed service providers.
3. Assess whether individual services currently in the IaaS can move to SaaS or PaaS models.
4. The new solution might require moving not just virtual machines and applications from one environment to a similar environment with another provider, but could also involve moving services to a completely different virtualization environment or from hosting models to service models (e.g. SQL) That would require a significant amount of effort rebuilding applications and servers in the new environment.

Depending on the nature of move, the County's relationship with the vendor, and the new solution, the County would likely incur higher costs while transitioning to the new solution and while migrating data from the existing provider. Costs would likely be high enough to necessitate council approval of one-time funding to maintain operations and migrate to a new provider.

If the County has followed the independence principles laid out in this strategy, the cost and difficulty of exiting an IaaS provider will be mitigated.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-68-25
Title:	Elias Bauman Minor Exemption
Prepared by:	Sarah Johnson, Trails and Forestry Coordinator
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Grey Highlands

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-CW-68-25 be received; and**
2. **That the application for Minor Exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part Lot 19, Concession 6, geographic Township of Euphrasia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 686101 Sideroad 19, be approved.**

Executive Summary

The County received a minor exemption application under the County's Forest Management By-law in September 2025 to clear approximately 6.1 hectares (15 acres) of woodlands consisting of mainly White Pine, White Cedar, Tamarack and Spruce. The purpose of the clearing is for agriculture. County staff are recommending approval of this minor exemption application.

Background and Discussion

An application for a minor exemption was received for clear-cutting in a woodland under the County's Forest Management By-law. The application is seeking approval to clear approximately 6.1 hectares (15 acres) of mainly White Pine, White Cedar, Tamarack and Spruce. The proposed clearing would facilitate use of the land for agricultural purposes. Figure 1 below shows the subject lands, and those lands proposed for clearing.

The subject lands are located at Part Lot 19, Concession 6, geographic Township of Euphrasia, now in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, municipally known as 686101 Sideroad 19. More than half of the property is woodlands, and the total size of the property is 40.13 hectares (99.16 acres). The remainder of the cleared portion of the property is currently farmed.

Surrounding the subject lands are a mixture of farmed and forested lands, with some non-farm residential lots.

In the County official plan, this property is designated as ‘Niagara Escarpment Plan Area’ and ‘Wetlands’ on Schedule A. On Appendix B a large portion of the property falls within the ‘Significant Woodlands’ mapping, however the area proposed for clearing is not mapped as Significant Woodlands. In addition to this, an Environmental Impact Study was undertaken for the proposed clearing.

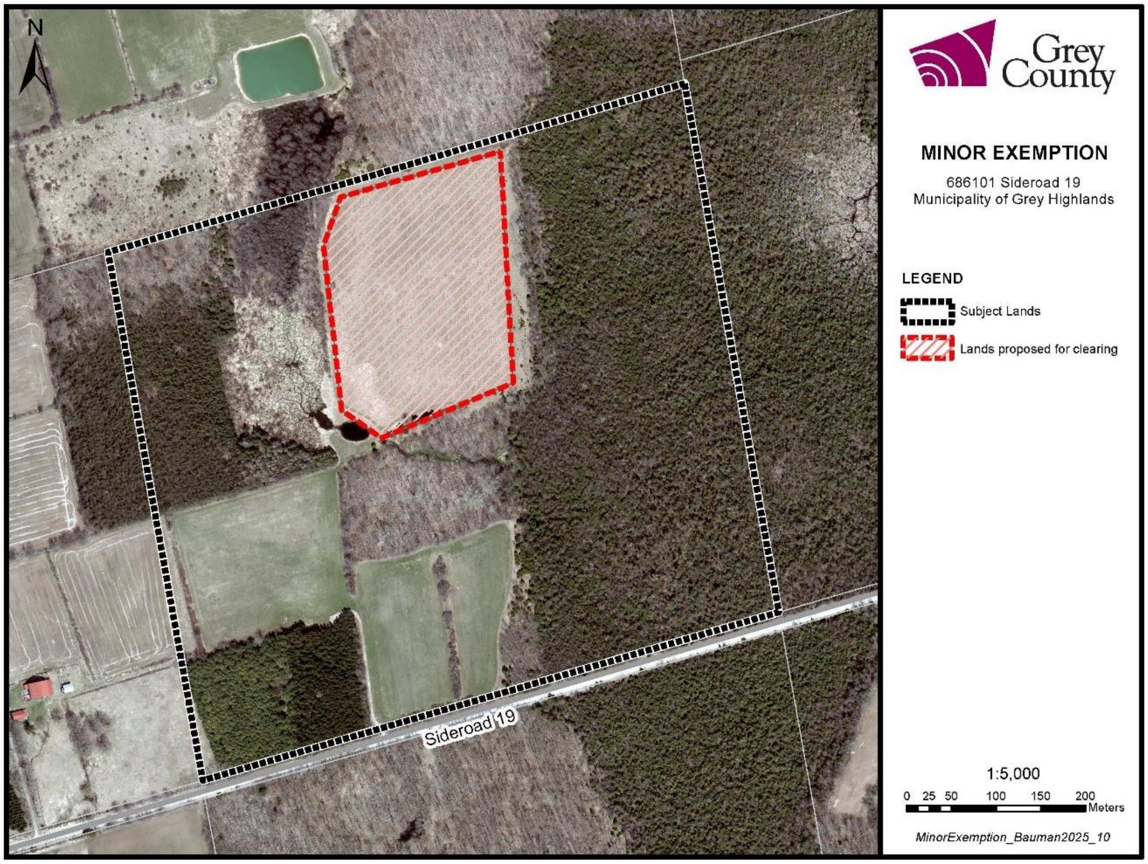


Figure 1 – Proposed area for tree removal

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

Agency and Public Comments Received

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

Public Comments

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

Agency Comments

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

- GSCA advises that they have no comments on the application.
- Municipality of Grey Highlands has requested that the applicant be advised that load restrictions will be in effect March 1 to May 1 each year for municipal roads. No staging of equipment and/or material is permitted in the municipal right of way.
- NEC does not have any concerns with this application.
- The County's By-law Enforcement Officer does not support the clearing. He raised concerns including removal at the growth stage of the trees and the potential that they would contribute to the surrounding woodlands if they remained. He also noted that there was recent damage from grazing livestock in this area.

The County's Planning Ecologist also provided the following comments:

- County Ecology Staff have reviewed the EIS and find it acceptable, and support the recommendations provided within Section 8.2 of the EIS including the following:
    - 'To protect breeding migratory birds, the initial vegetation clearing should not occur between April 5 and August 28 of given year unless otherwise directed by a qualified biologist at the time of site works.
    - To protect breeding monarch, the initial vegetation clearing should not occur between June 1 to September 30 of any given year unless otherwise directed by a qualified biologist at the time of site works.'

In response to the concerns raised by the By-law Officer, Planning staff reviewed the EIS with both the By-law Enforcement Officer and Ecology staff and concluded that the ecological implications of the tree removal have been justified sufficiently and could be supported in this circumstance.

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

Financial and Resource Implications

None.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Grey County By-law Enforcement Officer, Planning Ecology

☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets: see commentary in the report regarding the relationship between Going Green in Grey and the County's current Forest Management By-law review.

☒ External: Niagara Escarpment Commission, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, and the public

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-69-25
Title:	Toby Yoder Minor Exemption
Prepared by:	Sarah Johnson, Trails and Forestry Coordinator
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Township of Chatsworth

Recommendation

1. **That Report PDR-CW-69-25 be received; and**
2. **That the application for a Minor Exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Part of Lot 21, Concession 2 WGR; Div 2 and 3; Parts 3 to 5, RP 16R12083, and Parts 1, 6 and 7 RP16R12083; 235773 Concession 2B, geographic Township of Sullivan, Township of Chatworth, be approved.**

Executive Summary

The County received an amended minor exemption application under the County's Forest Management By-law in April 2024 to clear woodlands consisting of approximately 9.5 hectares (23.5 acres) of mainly Jack Pine, Cedar and some hardwoods. The purpose of the clearing is for agricultural use. County staff are recommending approval of this modified minor exemption application.

Background and Discussion

An application for a minor exemption was received for clear-cutting in a woodland under the County's Forest Management By-law. The purpose of the proposed clearing is for agriculture and mainly consists of Jack Pine, Cedar and some hardwoods. The approximate area proposed for clearing is 9.5 hectares (23.5 acres).

The subject lands are located at Part of Lot 21, Concession 2 WGR; Div 2 and 3; Parts 3 to 5, RP 16R12083, and Parts 1, 6 and 7 RP16R12083; 235773 Concession 2B, geographic Township of Sullivan, Township of Chatworth. Approximately two-thirds of the property is woodlands, and the total size of the property is 40 hectares.

Surrounding the lands are a mixture of farmed and forested lands, with some non-farm residential lots as well as a motocross use across the road.

The property is designated ‘Rural’ on Schedule A of the County official plan. On Schedule B the property is designated as ‘Aggregate Resource Area’, however the clearing will not affect this designation from future extraction. Appendix B identifies ‘Significant Woodlands’ on portions of the property, however none of the proposed clearing is proposed in these areas and Ecology staff have no concerns.

The lands have also been subject to recent *Planning Act* applications including two consent applications as well as an implementing rezoning. All applications were approved, and the schedules are shown below in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

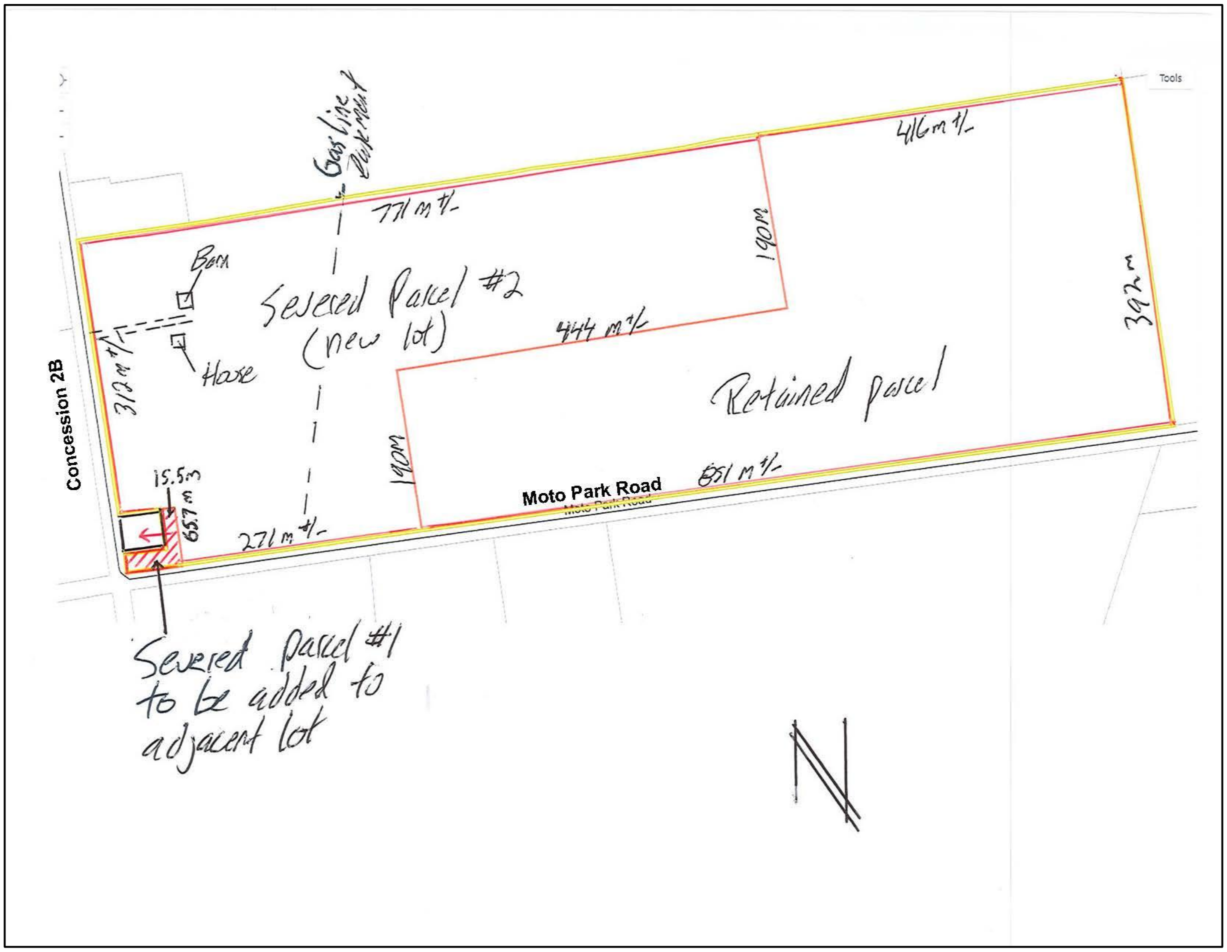


Figure 1 – Approved Consent Schedule B01.2024 & B02.2024

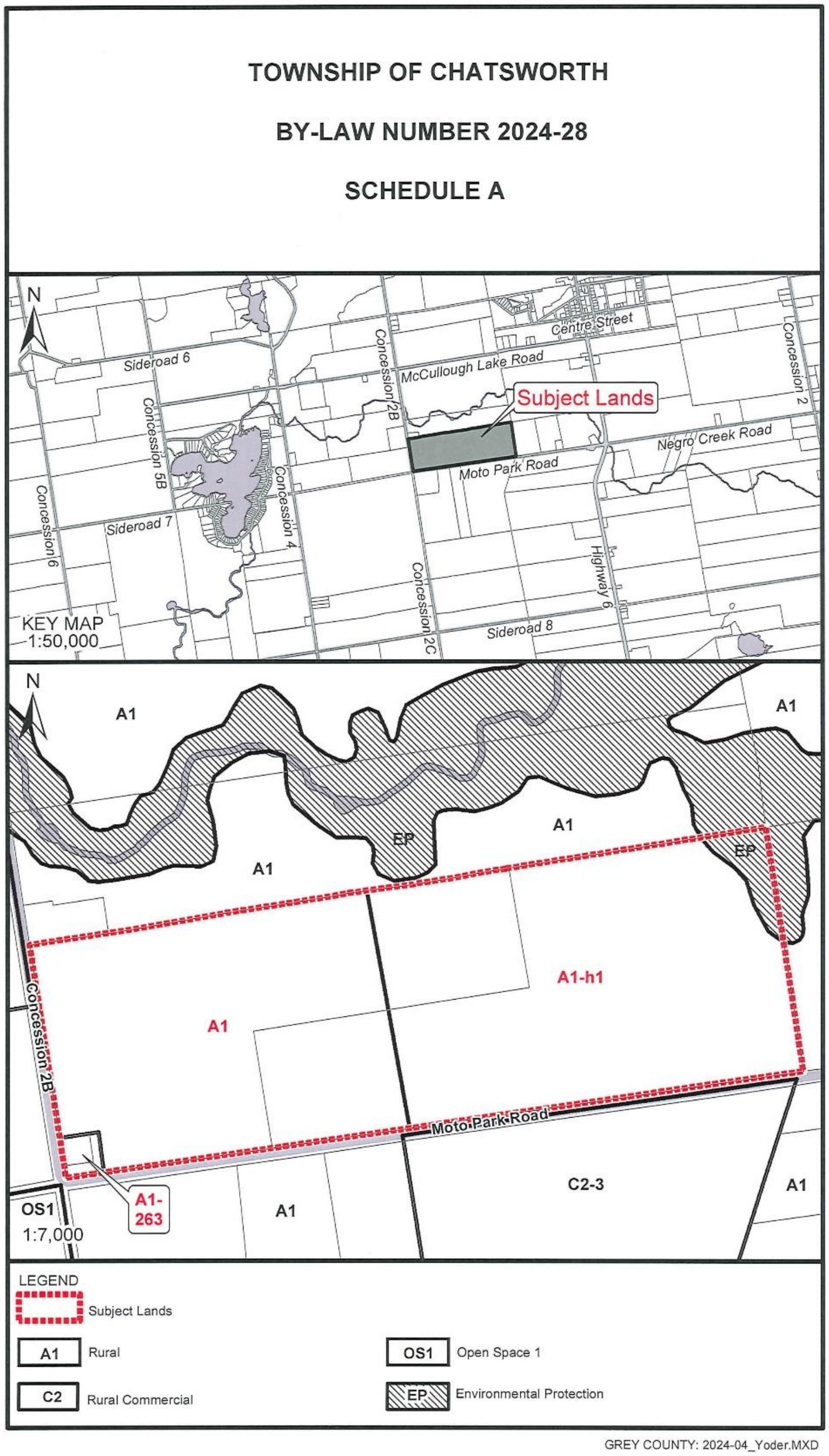


Figure 2- Approved Zoning Schedule Z04-2024

The eastern portion of the property has been rezoned with a holding. That holding stipulates that further environmental work is required to be completed, addressing the environmental features, including the trees, on that portion of the property prior to any further development.

The application for minor exemption that was originally submitted included areas that were in that holding portion, see Figure 3 below. This total area was comprised of 14.9 ha (36.8 ac). The applicants have since modified the application to remove the areas under the holding provision, reducing it to 9.5 ha (23.5 acres) as per Figure 4 below.

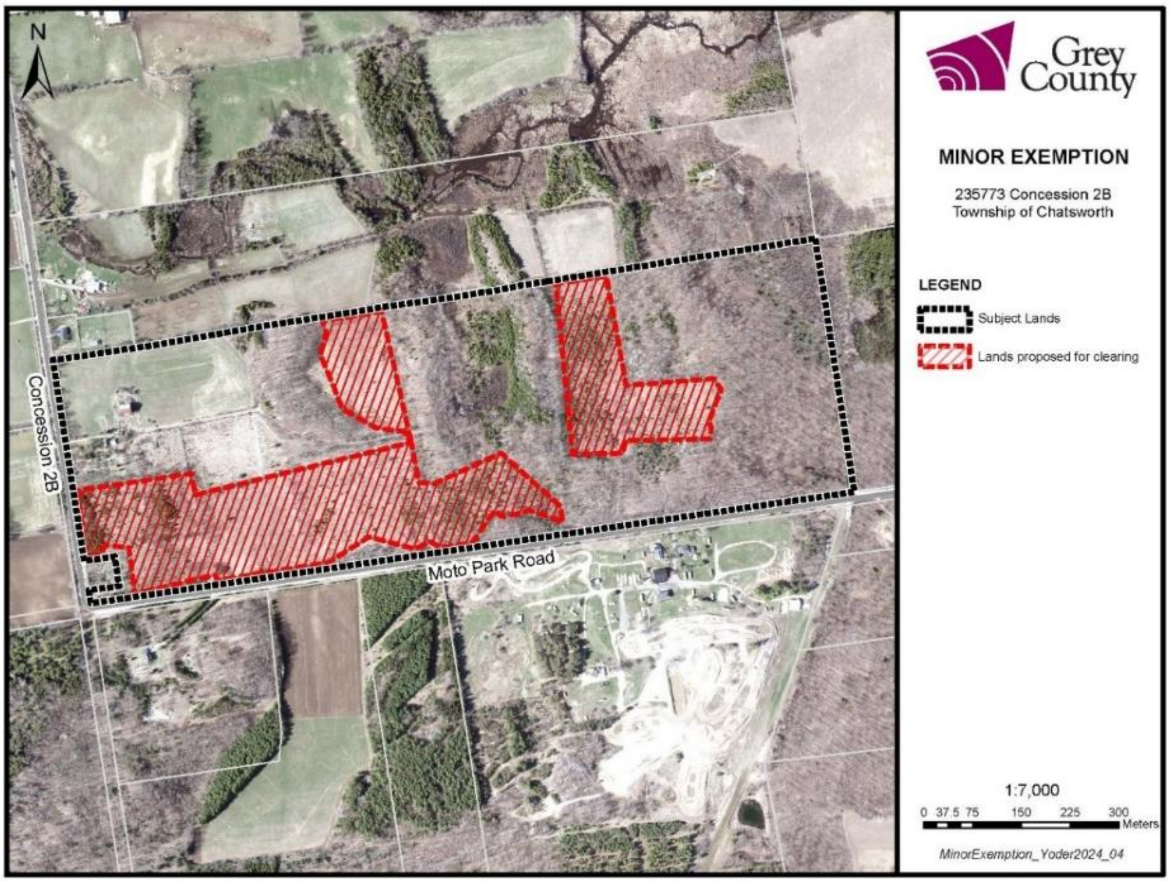


Figure 3 – Original Proposed Tree Clearing

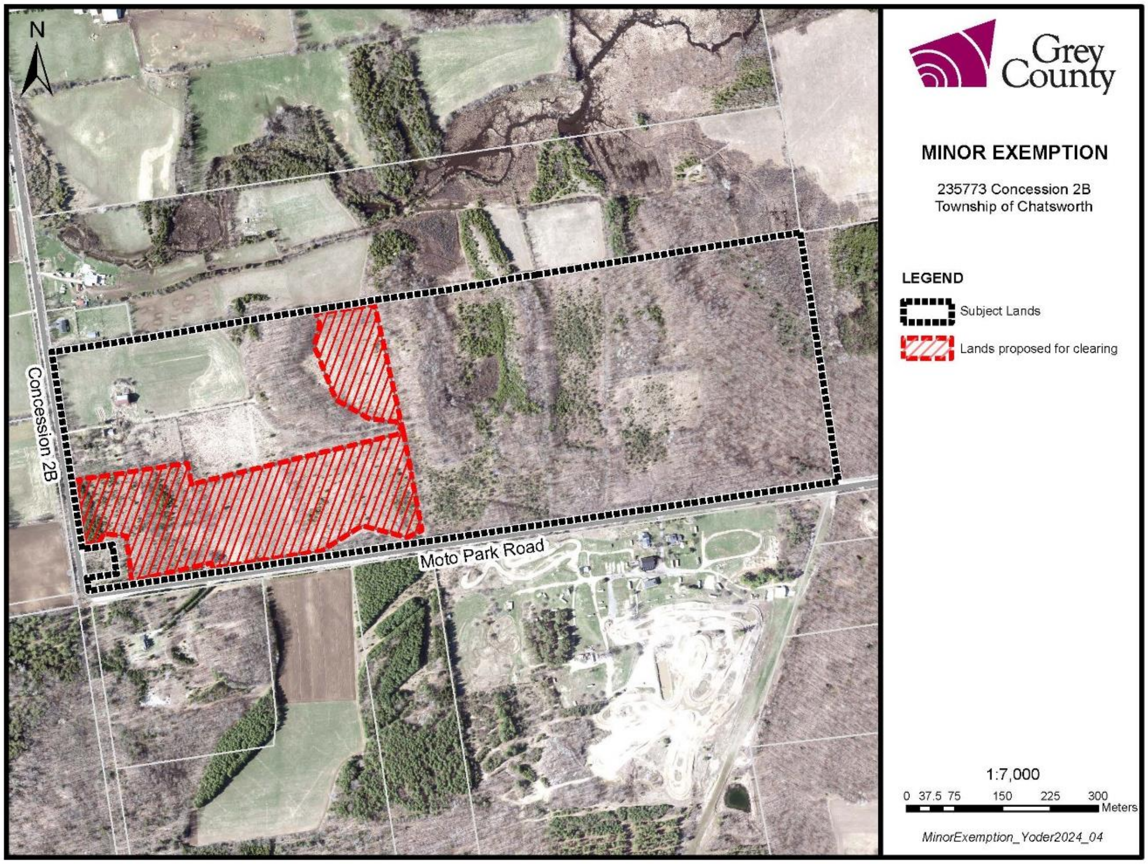


Figure 4 – Modified Proposed Tree Clearing

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

This particular minor exemption application has been scaled back to remove approximately 9.5 hectares of trees and any further removal would require an environmental study.

Agency and Public Comments Received

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

Public Comments

One neighbour provided comments in which they voiced concerns about older trees being cut down, as well as habitat reduction.

Agency Comments

The Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA), the Township of Chatsworth, and the County's Forestry By-law Enforcement Officer provided comments on this application. SVCA have no objection to the application.

The Township of Chatsworth has offered comments. The Township's Roads department noted they have no concerns, as long as there is no damage to ditches and the roadway. Chatsworth Planning noted that a portion of the forested lands are identified as 'Significant Woodlands' on Appendix B of the County official plan. As a result of the recent zoning by-law amendment, which fulfilled a condition of consent, a portion of the woodlands now have a 'h' (holding) symbol, and so the 'h' must be removed by Council prior to any site disturbance.

In response to the Township's comments, County staff recommended that the areas that are within the 'h' (holding) zoning be removed from the proposed tree removal area. The modified proposal only permits areas outside this holding zone for tree removal. This modification has been completed through the revisions to the original minor exemption application.

The County's By-law Enforcement Officer supports the modified proposal (Figure 4).

The County's Planning Ecologist indicated that if the clearing remains outside the area that is zoned with the holding, that they have no concerns with the application. There is no observed significant habitat or identified species at risk on the site.

With regard to the consent applications, they have been finalized and as a result the proposed cleared area now falls on two separate properties with two separate owners (severed parcel 2 and the retained parcel in Figure 1). Both owners have requested and consented to keep the application in process as revised (Figure 4).

Based on the above, County staff are recommending approval of the minor exemption application, as modified, to permit the areas outside of the holding zone as shown in Figure 4.

Financial and Resource Implications

At this time, there are no expected financial or resource considerations beyond those normally encountered in processing a Minor Exemption application. The County received the requisite application fee with the file.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal (Grey County By-law Enforcement Officer, Planning Ecology)

 ☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (see comments above)

☒ External (Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, Township of Chatsworth and the public)

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	HRR-CW-30-25
Title:	Ontario Nurses Association Collective Bargaining Arbitrated Award
Prepared by:	Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, Chief Administrative Officer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That Staff Report HRR-CW-30-25 regarding the Ontario Nurses Association Collective Bargaining Arbitrated Award be received for information.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with the results of the Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) interest arbitration award with Lee Manor, Grey Gables and Rockwood Terrace, received November 12, 2025.

Background and Discussion

The three (3) collective agreements representing Registered Nurses (RN) at Grey Gables, Lee Manor and Rockwood Terrace expired on March 31, 2023. Grey County has 29 nurses working across our three (3) Long Term Care Homes.

Under the direction and support of the Director of Care (DOC) and the Associate Director of Care (ADOC), Registered Nurses provide professional nursing care to residents and supervise care given by Registered Practical Nurses (RPN) and Personal Support Workers (PSW). Primary functions include assessment and planning of resident care needs, delivery of skilled procedures according to the College of Nurses of Ontario Standards of Practice, medication administration, and documentation.

Our ONA collective agreements have what is known as a “Me Too” clause in their collective agreements that keeps our Registered Nurses at wage parity with the hospitals.

The “Me Too” in this round of bargaining for wage parity to the Ontario Hospital RN’s include two arbitrated decisions. The first was a wage reopener when the Province’s Bill 124 was not upheld in various court proceedings. Arbitrator Gedalof awarded an increase of 2% effective

April 1, 2022. Arbitrator Kaplan awarded new annual rates and changes to the grid progression including the removal of the 25 Year rate and amending the 8 Year rate to the previous 25 Year rate and an additional 3.5% effective April 1, 2023, following the implementation of the new grid and 3.0% effective April 1, 2024

Staff received our bargaining mandate in closed session to begin bargaining with ONA on September 14, 2023. We met in person at the bargaining table with ONA on four dates. We were unable to reach an agreement at the table as the proposals put forward at the table by our union partners exceeded our bargaining mandate upset limit and were not considered normative within the long-term care municipal environment. We utilized the services of a provincially appointed conciliation officer however management staff could not agree to terms that were beyond our mandate.

On August 17, 2025, both union and management met before a board of arbitration to seek a decision before Arbitrator Gedalof. On November 12, 2025, we received his award. He awarded all previously agreed items that the parties had signed off in agreement. In addition, he awarded increases to premiums, benefits and language that is now becoming standard regarding remuneration for isolation for mandatory quarantine for infectious diseases. The award binds a new Collective Agreement for the term April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2025.

Legislated Requirements

- Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act (HLDAA)
- Labour Relations Act 1995

Financial and Resource Implications

Council had previously approved an upset limit for general wage increases of $246,645 and $20,000 for benefit enhancements. Because we have a “Me-Too” for wages, the wages had been agreed to and match our budgeted upset limit. The award provides for additional benefits than we had agreed to at the table. Staff are working with Sun Life Financial to determine costing and future impact to budget. The previous quotes received for the agreed items are now two years old and will be adjusted to current-day pricing. Benefit enhancements are not retroactive and are implemented within thirty days of the award as per Arbitrator Gedalof’s direction.

Staff will provide a detailed report of variance to budget at the next scheduled Long-Term Care Committee of Management meeting.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal (list)

Teri Fischer – Executive Director, Rockwood Terrace

Shannon Cox - Executive Director, Grey Gables

Tolleen Parkin – Executive Director, Lee Manor

Jennifer Cornell – Director LTC and Senior Services

Geraldine Cole – Labour Relations Manager

☐ External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

- Agreed to Items – Day 1, December 13, 2023
- Agreed to Items – Day 2, January 10, 2024
- Agreed to Items – Day 4, June 17, 2025
- ONA and County of Grey Homes for the Aged – HLDAA Award – November 12, 2025

In the Matter of an Interest Arbitration
Under the *Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act*

BETWEEN:

THE COUNTY OF GREY HOMES FOR THE AGED
(LEE MANOR, GREY GABLES, ROCKWOOD TERRACE)

(the "Employer")

AND

ONTARIO NURSES' ASSOCIATION

(the "Association")

BEFORE: Eli A. Gedalof, Chair
Irv Kleiner, Employer Nominee
Marcelle Goldenberg, Association Nominee

APPEARANCES

For the Employer

Dan Mcpherson, Bass Associates PC
Jennifer Moreau, Grey County HR Director
Jennifer Cornell, Grey County Director of Long Term Care
Geraldine Cole, Grey County Labour Relations Officer
Karen Kraus, Executive Director Rockwood Terrace
Shannon Cox, Executive Director Grey Gables
Tolleen Parkin, Executive Director Lee Manor

For the Association

Brandon Walker, HLDAA Specialist
Mikaela Cheslock, HLDAA Specialist
Michelle Brown, Bargaining Unit President
Danielle White, Bargaining Team Member
Chantel Rogers, Bargaining Team Member
Nikki Grozelle, Labour Relations Officer

AWARD

1. This interest arbitration was duly referred to this board under the terms of the *Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act* ("*HLDAA*") to settle the terms of renewal for the parties' collective agreements that expired on March 31, 2023. The parties have agreed to a term of two years, and the collective agreements arising from this award shall therefore have a term of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025.

2. The Employer operates three municipal homes for the aged. Grey Gables is a 66-bed home located in Markdale, Lee Manor is a 151-bed home in Owen Sound and Rockwood Terrace is a 102-bed home in Durham. The Association represents approximately 29 full-time and part-time Registered Nurses at these homes under three separate but virtually identical collective agreements. The terms of this award apply to all three collective agreements.

3. The parties have a lengthy history of freely negotiating collective agreements dating back to 2008. This will be the fourth time the parties have proceeded to interest arbitration. In this round, the parties met in bargaining on December 13, 2023 and January 10, 2024, with conciliation on May 22, 2024, and were able to reach agreement on several provisions. These agreed items include, but are not limited to, a new wage grid merging the 25-year rate into the step 9 rate, 3.5% and 3% general wage increases and a mental health benefit. There are however, several outstanding Association proposals and one outstanding Employer proposal. These include Association proposals for a new isolation pay benefit, benefit improvements to hearing aid, vision, chiropractic, massage therapist, per visit maximums and dental fee lag, and increases to in *lieu*, evening, night and weekend premiums, as well as charge pay. The Employer proposes to introduce a co-pay for extended health benefits, as exists in the hospital sector.

4. In assessing the parties' proposals, we are guided by the criteria set out at s.9(1.1) of the *HLDAA* and the established principles of interest arbitration. These include, first and foremost, the principle of replication; in arriving at an award, we seek to replicate the outcome that these parties would most likely have arrived at had they been able to reach an agreement in free collective bargaining. Closely related to the principle of replication is the principle of comparability, which is to say that we look to how comparable parties have settled their collective agreements as objective evidence of how these parties

would have resolved their own agreement had they been able to do so. Also important is the principle of total compensation. In this case, the parties have already agreed to substantial monetary improvements and these must be accounted for in assessing the outstanding monetary proposals.

5. Having regard to all of these considerations, we find that additional improvements in the area of benefits and premiums are warranted. The Association's isolation pay proposal has been widely agreed-to or ordered across the sector and should be awarded here. Incremental improvements in premiums and benefits are also highly normative in this round of bargaining, and there are areas where these parties lag their comparators. In addition to modest increases to hearing and vision benefits, and a significant reduction in the ODA dental fee lag under the dental benefit, we are granting the removal of per cap visits on paramedical benefits. This last change is a significant improvement to the benefit plant that must be accounted for from a total compensation perspective. We must also account for the agreed to $3000 mental health benefit and, of course, substantial wage increases maintaining hospital parity in accordance with the parties' "me too" agreement.

6. We have not granted the Employer's proposal to introduce a co-pay for extended health benefits. Benefits in this home are 100% paid. This is common in the sector thought not universal. We agree with the Employer that this distinction should be considered when comparing benefits at this home to benefits at the hospital comparators relied upon by the Association. But from a replication/comparator perspective, we see no basis for introducing a co-pay at this time.

7. For all of these reasons we award that the renewal collective agreement shall consist of the expired terms as amended by those items previously agreed to by the parties, and the following terms:

Add New Isolation Pay Provision:

10.03(II) Employees who are absent from work due to a communicable disease and required to quarantine or isolate due to:

i) the employer's policy, and/or

ii) Operation of law and/or

iii) Direction of public health officials, shall be entitled to salary continuation for the duration.

Benefits

Effective the first full month following date of award:

- Delete per visit maximums for all paramedical services
- Increase vision by $50
- Increase hearing aid by $50
- Reduce ODA lag from 3 years to 1 year.

  *to be implemented within 30 days

Premiums

Effective date of award:

- Evening—Increase by $0.15
- Night—Increase by $0.25
- Weekend—Increase by $0.25

8. Any proposals not specifically addressed are deemed dismissed. We remain seized in accordance with ss.9(2) of *HLDAA*.

Dated at Toronto, Ontario, this 12th day of November 2025.

"*Eli Gedalof*"

____

Eli A. Gedalof, Chair

"*I dissent in part*"

____

Irv Kleiner, Employer Nominee

"*I dissent in part*"

____

Marcelle Goldenberg, Association Nominee

Agreed to Items

The County of Grey (GG/LM/RT) and ONA (Ontario Nurses Association)

(from Day 1 of Negotiations)

Housekeeping

- **Renew all Letters of Understanding**
    - Minimum Staffing
    - 12 Hour Shifts
    - **Scheduling*** ***(*add this LOU to the Grey Gables Collective Agreement)***
    - Violence in the Workplace
    - Early Retirement
    - Drug Formulary
    - Harmonization of Benefits
    - Posted Work Schedules
    - Shared Full Time

- Generalize the gender pronoun through the Collective Agreement to be gender neutral.

Article 10 Professional Committees

10.02 Professional Responsibility

(a) and (b) current wording

ADD NEW (c)

(c) The parties agree to meet to discuss the following Independent Assessment Committee Chairpersons. The parties agree to revise and update the list to ensure that an adequate number of Chairpersons are available.

Article 13 Leaves of Absence

13.01 <u>ONA Staff Leave</u>

REMOVE current wording and replace with:

Upon application in writing by the Union on behalf of an employee to the Employer, an unpaid leave of absence may be granted to such employee selected for a secondment or a temporary staff position with the Ontario Nurses' Association. Such leave shall not be unreasonably denied or extended beyond eighteen (18) months. Notwithstanding Article 12.14, there shall be no loss of service or seniority for an employee during such leave of absence. For a temporary staff position, it is understood that during such leave the employee shall be deemed to be an employee of the Ontario Nurses' Association.

The employee agrees to notify the Employer of their intention to return to work at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of such return. The employee shall be reinstated to their former position, unless that position has been discontinued, in which case the employee shall be given a comparable job.

Article 15 Vacations

15.05 In order to schedule vacations at the Home, request for vacation time will be submitted electronically, with timelines as per the chart below.

Employee Vacation Period	Final Date for Employee Vacation Submission	Response by Employer
January 1 – March 31	October 15	November 15
April 1 – June 30	January 15	February 15
July 1 – Sept. 30	April 15	May 15
October 1 – December 31	~~July 15~~ **August 15**	~~August 15~~ **September 15**

Article 16 Benefits

16.02 (g) Benefits Age 65 and Older

(g) REMOVE current wording and replace with:

The extended health care benefits plan shall provide for the continuation at age 65 onward of the hospital care, extended health, dental, vision, one-time life benefit and out of country coverage for active full-time employees until age seventy (70) or until retirement, whichever occurs first, on the same cost sharing basis as applies up to the age of sixty-five (65).

16.02 (i)

~~**Effective July 1st, 2019**~~, the Employer agrees to provide coverage for mental health services by a Psychologist, Registered Psychotherapist or Social Worker (MSW) for a total of eight hundred dollars ($800.00) annually.

Article 23 Duration

23.01 This Agreement shall be effective from ~~April 1st, 2020~~ **April 1, 2023** for Lee Manor , Grey Gables, and Rockwood Terrace and shall continue in full force and effect up to and including the 31st day of March ~~2023~~ **2025**. If either party desire to modify or amend this Agreement, it shall give the other party notice in writing not earlier than ninety (90) days before expiry date of its election to do so.

Article 26 Employees' Staff Association

26.01 ~~Full-time and part time nurses after the probationary period shall become members in the "Staff Association" to accommodate the organization of staff social events, to discuss general concerns, to keep in touch with those who are sick and to offer condolences to bereaved staff members. Dues as determined by the "Staff Association" shall be deducted from salary.~~

Letters of Understanding and Agreements

RENEW ALL

Grey Gables

- Minimum Staffing
- Extended Tours
- **ADD Scheduling***
- Violence in the Workplace
- Early Retirement
- Drug Reformulary
- Harmonization of Benefits between Homes
- Posted Work Schedules
- Shared Full-time Position – Twelve (12) Month Trial (LM, GG, RT)

RENEW ALL

Rockwood Terrace

- Minimum Staffing
- Extended Tours
- Scheduling
- Violence in the Workplace
- Early Retirement
- Drug Reformulary
- Harmonization of Benefits between Homes
- Posted Work Schedules
- Shared Full-time Position – Twelve (12) Month Trial (LM, GG, RT)

RENEW ALL

Lee Manor

- Minimum Staffing
- Extended Tours
- Scheduling
- Violence in the Workplace
- Early Retirement
- Drug Reformulary
- Harmonization of Benefits between Homes
- Posted Work Schedules
- Shared Full-time Position – Twelve (12) Month Trial (LM, GG, RT)

Grey County

ONA
Ontario Nurses' Association

Appendix A – Salary Schedule

Inservice And Staff Development

Step	April 1, 2023	April 1, 2024
Start	$35.97	$37.05
Level 1	$36.50	$37.59
Level 2	$37.11	$38.22
Level 3	$38.92	$40.08
Level 4	$40.78	$42.00
Level 5	$43.07	$44.36
Level 6	$45.37	$46.73
Level 7	$47.70	$49.13
Level 8	$51.97	$53.53

Registered Nurse

Step	Step 1 April 1, 2023 New Grid	Step 2 April 1, 2023 3.5%	Step 3 April 1, 2024 3.0%
Start	$36.65	$37.93	$39.07
Level 1	$37.57	$38.88	$40.05
Level 2	$38.51	$39.86	$41.06
Level 3	$40.24	$41.65	$42.90
Level 4	$42.05	$43.52	$44.83
Level 5	$44.15	$45.70	$47.07
Level 6	$46.36	$47.98	$49.42
Level 7	$48.68	$50.38	$51.89
Level 8	$52.53	$54.37	$56.00

NEW: Removal of the 25-year rate; merge the 25-year rate into the Step 9 rate, applicable to all classifications and wage grids.

***For final Collective Agreement composition, update all existing wage grids accordingly.**

Removal of Registered Nurse- Part time- redundant all FT/RPT are on the same grid. RPT are covered under Article 24.01 for percentage in lieu.

Dated this **13th** day of **December, 2023** in the City of Owen Sound, Ontario.

FOR ONA

Lisa Long-Ransome (Dec 13, 2023 15:42 EST)

Michelle Brown (Dec 13, 2023 15:46 EST)

Deborah Baird
Deborah Baird (Dec 13, 2023 15:49 EST)

FOR THE EMPLOYER

Jennifer Cornell

Jennifer Moreau (Dec 13, 2023 15:53 EST)

Karen Kraus
Karen Kraus (Dec 13, 2023 16:14 EST)

Stacey Goldie (Dec 13, 2023 21:32 EST)

Kim Mustard
Kim Mustard (Dec 14, 2023 14:09 EST)

Geraldine Cole

Grey County

ONA

Agreed to Items

The County of Grey (GG/LM/RT) and ONA (Ontario Nurses Association)

(from Day 2 Negotiations – January 10, 2024)

Housekeeping

- Update and Revise title page of ONA Collective Agreement and all relevant sections of the collective agreement as follows:

THE COUNTY OF GREY~~, OPERATING AS THE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE~~
For LEE MANOR HOME FOR THE AGED **LONG TERM CARE HOME**
(hereinafter referred to as the "Employer")

THE COUNTY OF GREY~~, OPERATING AS THE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE~~
For GREY GABLES HOME FOR THE AGED **LONG TERM CARE HOME**
(hereinafter referred to as the "Employer")

THE COUNTY OF GREY~~, OPERATING AS THE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE~~
For ROCKWOOD TERRACE HOME FOR THE AGED **LONG TERM CARE HOME**
(hereinafter referred to as the "Employer")

And:
ONTARIO NURSES' ASSOCIATION
(hereinafter referred to as the "Association")

Article 2.01

2.01 PROPOSED REVISION
The Employer recognizes the Ontario Nurses' Association as the exclusive bargaining agent for all registered and graduate nurses employed in a nursing capacity by the County of Grey at its Lee Manor Home for the Aged in the City of Owen Sound, **Rockwood Terrace in the Town of Durham, and Grey Gables in the Town of Markdale** save and except Director of Care, **Associate Director of Care**, and persons above the rank of Director of Care.

Dated this **10th** day of **January, 2024** in the City of Owen Sound, Ontario.

FOR ONA	**FOR THE EMPLOYER**
B.Gao RN, SLP	Jennifer Cornell
Lisa Long-Ransome RN BUP Lisa Long-Ransome RN BUP (Jan 12, 2024 15:34 EST)	Jennifer Moreau (Jan 17, 2024 10:24 EST)
Michelle Brown RN (Site Rep) Michelle Brown RN (Site Rep) (Jan 15, 2024 00:00 EST)	Karen Kraus Karen Kraus (Jan 17, 2024 10:26 EST)
Deborah Baird Deborah Baird (Jan 15, 2024 15:10 EST)	Kim Mustard Kim Mustard (Jan 17, 2024 12:18 EST)
	Geraldine Cole

Agreed to Items

The County of Grey (GG/LM/RT) and ONA (Ontario Nurses Association)

(from Day 4 of Negotiations – June 17, 2025)

Article 15 VACATION

REVISED

15.02 All full-time nurses shall be granted vacation without loss of pay as follows:

(a) After one (1) year of service, three (3) weeks of vacation.

(b) After three (3) years of service, four (4) weeks of vacation.

(c) After twelve (12) years of service, five (5) weeks of vacation.

(d) After **twenty (20)** years of service, six (6) weeks of vacation.

(e) After twenty-five (25) years of service, seven (7) weeks of vacation.

(f) Nurses with less than one (1) year of service shall be entitled to a pro-rata vacation calculated at the rate of six per cent (6%) of gross earnings to June 30th.

(g) Any change in a nurse's vacation entitlement in accordance with this Article shall accrue to the nurse in the vacation year in which it is earned.

Article 16

REVISED

Update Benefit Contract: The employer agrees to pay a full-time employee mental health coverage for Psychologist, Registered Psychotherapist or Social Worker (MSW) up to a maximum of $3,000 per year.

Dated this **17th** day of **June 2025** in the City of Owen Sound, Ontario.

FOR ONA

Michelle Brown (Jun 17, 2025 13:07 EDT)

Chantel Rogers (Jun 18, 2025 15:57 EDT)

FOR THE EMPLOYER

Geraldine Cole

Jennifer Cornell

Jennifer Moreau (Jun 17, 2025 13:21 EDT)

Danielle White	Karen Kraus
	(Jun 19, 2025 07:16 EDT)

7a)

United Counties of
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

RESOLUTION

MOVED BY Councillor Densham

RESOLUTION NO 2025- 159

SECONDED BY

DATE November 17, 2025

WHEREAS the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses;

AND WHEREAS the municipalities within Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) established South Nation Conservation (SNC) in 1947 and the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA) in 1963;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities currently provide between 25% and 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 3%;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of acres of land, much of which was donated by local residents and entrusted to conservation authorities as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities;

AND WHEREAS Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown corporation that would assume governance responsibilities and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities, with municipal cost apportionment yet to be defined;

AND WHEREAS the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, and standards through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND FURTHER THAT while the United Counties of SDG supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

AND FURTHER THAT the United Counties of SDG supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and requests that the Province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks, to the local MP and MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, and all municipalities and Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

☑ CARRIED ☐ DEFEATED ☐ DEFERRED

WARDEN

Recorded Vote:	
Councillor Bergeron	___
Councillor Broad	___
Councillor Densham	___
Councillor Fraser	___
Councillor Guindon	___
Councillor Landry	___
Councillor MacDonald	___
Councillor McDonald	___
Councillor McGillis	___
Councillor St. Pierre	___
Councillor Williams	___
Warden Lang	___

Administration Centre: 400 Clyde Road, P.O. Box 729 Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

Phone: 519-621-2761 Toll free: 1-866-900-4722 Fax: 519-621-4844 www.grandriver.ca

December 2, 2025

Re: Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)* and the Proposed consolidating the 36 Conservation Authorities

Dear Grand River watershed Municipal Councils,

On October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario announced its intention to create a new provincial agency, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to provide leadership and coordination across Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. These changes have now been enacted through Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)*, which has received Royal Assent. As a result, the Conservation Authorities Act has been amended to formally establish the OPCA. Under this new framework, the OPCA will oversee governance, strategic planning, performance standards, and centralized permitting for all Conservation Authorities, led by a provincially appointed board.

On November 7, the Province also proposed consolidating the 36 Conservation Authorities into seven large regional authorities. While this proposal aims to address capacity gaps and improve consistency, it also poses several risks, including the potential loss of local priorities, watershed-specific expertise, and meaningful municipal input. Larger regional structures will distance decision-making from the local context, partnerships, and on-the-ground knowledge that have long supported effective watershed management. Their scale also raises concerns that diverse watershed needs may be overshadowed, local priorities diluted, and long-standing municipal relationships weakened. The GRCA encourages municipalities to submit comments to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) before the December 22, 2025 deadline.

The Province has indicated that these reforms aim to address long-standing challenges in the current system, including inconsistent capacity, outdated processes, and variability in permitting and service delivery. The GRCA acknowledges these challenges and supports efforts to improve consistency, efficiency, and technical capacity across Ontario.

On Friday, November 28, the GRCA Board of Directors met to formalize the organization's comments to the Province regarding both the creation of the new provincial agency and the proposed consolidation of the 36 Conservation Authorities into regional bodies. These comments reflect the GRCA's key concerns and recommended path forward.

The GRCA has identified several critical considerations to support a successful transition:

1. **Scale of the Proposed Regional Model**
   The proposed regions are significantly larger than current watershed-based frameworks. This expansion of the proposed size could create new challenges, such as distance from local issues, slower decision-making, and difficulty maintaining local relationships; therefore, finding a balanced approach is essential. Smaller, regionally focused watershed models, such as the current Source Protection Regions, are proven regional models that demonstrate how a balanced governance structure can achieve consistency

and efficiency without sacrificing local responsiveness. By operating within manageable geographic areas, such as the Source Protection Regions, CAs can ensure that services are tailored to the unique environmental, social and economic characteristics of each watershed, while still benefiting from shared resources and standardized processes

2. **Protection of Local Knowledge, Assets, and Investments**
   The GRCA maintains significant watershed-specific infrastructure, reserves, and land assets built through decades of watershed investment. Key concerns include the potential redistribution of well-developed GRCA reserves to support capital needs in other watersheds that have not made comparable investments, and the risk that the GRCA's mature and efficient infrastructure maintenance program could be weakened if resources become centralized or redirected. Clear assurances are required to ensure these resources remain dedicated to the watershed communities they were intended to serve.

3. **Governance, Accountability, and Municipal Representation**
   The GRCA Board has significant concerns about the governance structure of the OPCA. The agency will report to a provincial ministry and be governed entirely by provincially appointed board members. At the same time, conservation authorities, and therefore municipalities, will be required to fund all or a portion of the agency's operations through the existing levy/apportionment process. This means that municipalities may ultimately contribute all or a significant share of OPCA's budget without having any meaningful role in shaping its governance, priorities, or strategic direction.

   Additional clarity is also needed regarding the governance responsibilities of the new Regional Conservation Authority Boards. A strong Regional Conservation Authority Board must balance local accountability, fair representation, and operational efficiencies.

The GRCA supports modernization of the Conservation Authorities system but recommends a right-sized regional model more closely aligned with existing Source Protection Regions. This approach would advance provincial objectives for consistency and efficiency while preserving the strengths of watershed-based decision-making, municipal collaboration, and local responsiveness.

The GRCA Board has requested that this background information be shared with watershed municipalities along with a request for your support for the GRCA's concerns and proposed alternate model. A sample resolution for your consideration for submission is as follows:

> *"WHEREAS the Government of Ontario recently approved Bill 68, which establishes the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency;*
>
> *AND WHEREAS the Government of Ontario is proposing the consolidation of the province's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities, including the Grand River Conservation Authority(GRCA), which will be amalgamated amongst eight current authorities to become part of the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority (LERCA);*
>
> *AND WHEREAS the 38 municipalities within the GRCA watershed boundaries today and the 81 municipalities that are proposed to make up the LERCA in 2027 will be levied to fund both the regional conservation authority as well as the provincial conservation agency;*
>
> *AND WHEREAS the new organizations will result in the degradation of local governance, local fiscal accountability, local service delivery, local environmental focus*

and unprecedented funding by local municipalities of both a large regional authority and a provincial agency;

AND WHEREAS the GRCA Board of Directors has responded to Bill 68 and the proposal for Conservation Authorities consolidation with a constructive and thoughtful alternative that retains local governance, local service delivery, local environmental focus and local fiscal accountability while responding constructively to the Government of Ontario's concerns about accountability, planning and responsiveness;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Chief Conservation Executive meet GRCA representatives to review the GRCA alternative proposal to Conservation Authorities consolidation;

AND THAT the Minister and the Chief Conservation Executive seriously consider the GRCA proposal for conservation authorities as it enunciates a path forward that will address the Government's concerns most democratically and productively;

AND THAT this motion be circulated to the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Environment, Conservation & Parks, Chief Conservation Executive and local Members of Provincial Parliament for their information and action, where appropriate."

The GRCA will continue to monitor the implementation of Bill 68 and the ERO proposal and will keep municipalities informed as additional details become available. The GRCA has already submitted its formal comments to the Province based on the Board-approved positions summarized above. A copy of the GRCA's comprehensive response to the ERO posting is attached for your reference.

If you have questions or would like a presentation to Council, please reach out to Samantha Lawson, CAO, at any time.

Sincerely,

John Challinor II, Chair
Grand River Conservation Authority

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-11-25-104

Date: November 28, 2025

To: Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-11-25-104 Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities be received as information.

Summary:

On October 31, 2025, Ontario announced its intent to modernize the Conservation Authorities system, including the introduction of Bill 68 to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA), a new provincial body intended to strengthen coordination and oversight. Shortly afterward, the Province released a proposal to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven larger regional bodies. Under this proposal, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) would become part of the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, an area covering approximately 25,000 km² and 81 municipalities. The Environmental Registry posting invites feedback on proposed boundaries, governance structures, transition processes, and approaches to maintaining strong municipal and community relationships throughout the transition.

The GRCA Board recognizes the value in modernizing the current system and supports efforts to enhance consistency, improve permitting, modernize technical standards, and strengthen coordination across Ontario. A more cohesive framework has the potential to address long-standing capacity gaps and provide clearer expectations for municipalities, the development sector, and the public. However, the Board remains concerned that the scale of the proposed regional consolidation may be too large to preserve the strengths that have historically made watershed management successful in Ontario. Effective watershed governance relies on strong connections to local needs, priorities, and knowledge, which in turn guide natural hazard management, shape infrastructure decisions, and strengthen watershed health, stewardship programs, and community partnerships. A region spanning 81 municipalities risks weakening local accountability, distancing decision-making from watershed-specific realities, and diluting the local focus that is foundational to effective watershed management. Moreover, if municipalities are expected to continue funding conservation authority operations, including the new regional structures and potentially the OPCA, municipalities will require a strong governance model that ensures meaningful municipal input, influence, and direction on watershed issues.

The GRCA further notes that consolidation at this scale could impact long-standing watershed investments, including approximately $1 billion in flood management infrastructure and 50,000 acres of conservation lands that have been managed in alignment with watershed priorities for decades. Maintaining the direct link between funding, local decision-making, and watershed needs is essential to sustaining this work.

The Board believes the Province's modernization goals can still be achieved more effectively through a refined, right-sized regional model aligned with the scale of existing Source Protection

Regions. Such an approach would strengthen province-wide consistency and capacity while preserving meaningful municipal involvement and ensuring that watershed management continues to be guided by the local priorities, expertise, and partnerships that have long supported effective conservation across Ontario.

Report:

On October 31, 2025, the Province of Ontario issued a news release announcing its intent to create a new provincial agency to provide leadership and coordination for Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. The stated aim of the agency is to improve consistency, accountability, and efficiency across the conservation authorities system, particularly in the areas of permitting, planning, and watershed management.

On November 6, the Province introduced Bill 68: *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)*. Schedule 3 of the Bill proposes amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* that would enable the establishment of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA). Under the proposed framework, the OPCA would oversee the governance framework of the new regional conservation authorities, exercise authority over their operations, and recover costs and expenses through apportionment to those authorities. The agency would also be responsible for assessing, reporting on, and providing direction regarding regional finances, strategic planning, performance standards, and centralized permitting, as well as advising the provincial government on the progress of regional authorities. Governance of the OPCA would rest with a provincially appointed board of 5 to 12 members. Bill 68 has passed First Reading and is currently in its Second Reading, with Royal Assent anticipated in short order.

On November 7, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) posted a proposal on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) seeking feedback on proposed boundaries and criteria to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into seven regional conservation authorities, organized primarily along watershed boundaries. The Grand River Conservation Authority(GRCA) is proposed to be included in the Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority. This Regional Conservation Authority will consolidate the following conservation authorities: Essex Region, Lower Thames, St.Clair Region, Upper Thames River, Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Long Point Region, and the Grand River. The area of this Regional Conservation Authority is approximately 25,000km^2 and includes 81 municipalities; no upper-tier municipalities are listed. The posting also contains five consultation questions relating to the transition into regional conservation authorities, governance considerations, and approaches to ensure strong relationships with municipalities and communities within the new structure. The ERO posting is open for public comment until December 22, 2025.

The Chair and the CAO have attended meetings with provincial staff and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) to discuss the proposed OPCA and the associated ERO posting. The Chair and the CAO also participated in a recent special meeting of the Conservation Ontario Council on Schedule 3 of Bill 68 and the ERO posting to gain a clearer understanding of the perspectives and approaches of other conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario. The Province hosted a webinar for Conservation Authorities to highlight key components of the ERO proposal and answer questions. In addition, the GRCA's Conservation Authorities Act Ad-hoc Committee met to review the proposed legislative amendments and the ERO posting and provided direction to staff in preparing the comments outlined below.

ERO Questions and Responses

1. What do you see as Key Factors to support a successful transition and outcome of the regional conservation authorities consolidation?

A new regional conservation authority must be grounded in the fundamentals that ensure effective watershed management, which include:

- protecting life and reducing property damage from flooding and erosion;
- supporting municipal partners, the development community, and landowners with timely, reliable service;
- enhancing the economic, environmental, and community health of the watershed;
- providing meaningful opportunities for people to connect with nature; and,
- continually evolving as an organization to meet the demands of a rapidly growing region

Maintaining this clear, locally informed focus will be essential for the success of any new regional conservation authority. The following suggestions are some considerations to support a successful transition:

I. Development of a Transition Plan: There needs to be a clear, phased transition plan to help avoid any service disruptions during the transition process. This plan must provide a detailed roadmap that clearly outlines timelines, milestones, and phasing. During this transition phase, the province will need to clearly identify roles and responsibilities during the "in-between" period when multiple similar but distinct organizations are merging. Communication of this plan must also be shared with regional watershed municipalities and other interest holders, such as the development/homebuilders' sectors, the agricultural sector, and other groups that require approvals or receive deliverables from various programs and services. This level of planning is essential because the proposed boundaries represent major watershed restructuring and the merging of multiple complex organizations, which requires coordinated efforts that cannot be rushed. A longer implementation timeline would ensure that these issues are fully considered and addressed. In addition, phasing in the required standards, guidelines, and directives across all conservation authorities before consolidation could provide greater stability. This phased approach would avoid multiple significant changes occurring at the same time, reduce the risk of disruptions to program delivery, and create conditions for a more effective and successful consolidation process.

II. Retention of Local Knowledge and Staff Expertise: Retaining staff and preserving local watershed knowledge is critical to the success of the new regional conservation authorities. This knowledge is rooted in a deep understanding of historic and current land uses, cultural connections to watersheds, and the community values, needs, and stewardship priorities that shape local decision-making. Effective watershed management depends on integrated expertise in hydrology/hydraulics, natural hazards, ecology, creating connections to the watershed features and planning, as well as familiarity with the unique conditions of each sub-watershed. Conservation authorities depend on strong, established partnerships with a wide range of local groups and interest holders, including municipalities, community and stewardship organizations, private landowners, farmers, and the development industry, to deliver their programs and services effectively and address new or emerging watershed challenges. These partnerships are crucial for navigating complex regulatory frameworks, accessing funding programs, and advancing projects that provide both environmental and economic benefits. Preserving this network, and the staff who hold this knowledge, is vital during consolidation, as experienced personnel carry the institutional memory and trust that communities depend on. Staff retention ensures continuity, protects decades of cultivated relationships, and supports a smooth transition that maintains both service quality and community confidence in the new regional authority.

III. Comprehensive Communication Strategy: A clear and well-coordinated communication strategy will be essential to support the transition from individual watershed-based authorities to larger regional conservation authorities. This strategy must provide timely and accessible information on the new regional boundaries, updated points of contact, any changes to permitting or operational processes, and how municipal relationships and responsibilities will function throughout the transition period. Its success will depend on province-wide, consistent messaging that reinforces shared objectives while also incorporating region-specific details and local implementation examples to maintain familiarity and trust. Early outreach to municipalities, Indigenous communities, landowners, agricultural groups, developers, and other key interest holders will help set expectations and reduce uncertainty. A variety of communication tools, such as dedicated transition webpages, FAQs, newsletters, continued access to the province's interactive boundary maps, direct email briefings, and social media updates, can ensure information is accessible and tailored to different audiences. Personalized engagement, including town halls, small-group stakeholder meetings, and one-on-one conversations with municipal representatives, will provide opportunities to address region-specific questions and reinforce local connections. Establishing clear escalation pathways, contact lists, and creating a transition-specific regional service desk will further support clarity. Together, these measures will help create a consistent, transparent, and responsive communication approach that builds confidence and supports a smooth transition to the new regional watershed model.

Another key factor to consider during the transition to amalgamation is protecting watershed reserves, infrastructure, and land assets. Many watershed municipalities and the GRCA are concerned about how their locally funded reserves, land assets, and long-term capital programs will be treated within an amalgamated structure. Strong assurances are needed to ensure that assets built over decades through local investment are not diverted to support unrelated regional priorities.

The GRCA owns approximately $1 billion in floodplain infrastructure, supported by an efficient maintenance and capital renewal program and healthy reserves intentionally built to support lifecycle and risk-management needs. In addition, the GRCA owns approximately 50,000 acres of land, including conservation areas, ecological lands, water management properties, and other lands, each acquired and managed in accordance with long-standing watershed-specific priorities.

In an amalgamation or consolidation into a larger regional entity, strong protective measures are required to ensure that the GRCA’s resources and assets are maintained in ways that continue to support long-standing watershed priorities. Key concerns include the potential redistribution of well-developed GRCA reserves to support capital needs in other watersheds that have not made comparable investments, and the risk that the GRCA’s mature and efficient infrastructure maintenance program could be weakened if resources become centralized or redirected. GRCA watershed municipalities have emphasized that the GRCA’s 50,000 acres of land must receive the same level of stewardship attention as existing infrastructure and financial reserves, including the protection of passive recreation trails that hold significant local value. Long-standing conservation and land management priorities, along with the community benefits provided by these local trails, must remain stable under any regional model. Protective measures must also ensure that resources for flood protection, capital renewal, and land management remain dedicated to the watershed where they originated, and that high-performing programs are not required to subsidize deferred maintenance in less-resourced areas. Additional concerns relate to the possibility that reduced local decision-making authority could limit the ability of municipalities and the GRCA to safeguard the intent and priorities attached to these important assets. These concerns can be mitigated by establishing clear financial and reserve-protection policies, maintaining watershed-level tracking of revenues and expenditures, creating transparent and equitable capital prioritization frameworks, preserving local advisory roles through watershed-based committees, and ensuring that land, infrastructure, and reserve management practices respect existing infrastructure needs, stewardship commitments, and long-standing community investments.

A further consideration is the amalgamation of organizations with separate supporting foundations; in such cases, ensuring the integrity of fundraising is critical. Donors often prefer to support initiatives at the watershed or community scale, where the impacts of their contributions are visible and tied to local priorities. A regionalized model risks diluting this connection, potentially affecting donor engagement and revenue. To maintain donor confidence, an amalgamated structure must include mechanisms to preserve watershed-based fundraising and reporting, and publicly acknowledge donors in ways that reflect the specific locations/projects they choose to support rather than treating all contributions as part of a single regional fund.

2. What opportunities or benefits may come from a regional conservation authority framework?

Consolidating conservation authorities into a regional framework can create more consistent permitting practices, technical standards, and service levels across municipalities, reducing the variation that currently exists between the 36 agencies. A unified structure also supports stronger alignment with provincial expectations through shared permitting systems, common GIS platforms, and standardized public portals that modernize service delivery and improve accessibility.

Consolidation can also lead to a more equitable distribution of resources, giving smaller or rural municipalities access to specialized expertise that may have been limited by local budgets or staffing. Larger organizations are generally better positioned to secure federal or provincial funding for broader, high-impact projects.

The administrative framework in place at larger organizations also provides an opportunity for efficiency, as they have subject matter experts who perform dedicated internal service roles. These roles can be leveraged in consolidation to provide dedicated attention to organizational compliance, such as health and safety legislation, and risk management.

The size of each regional unit is a very important consideration. Consolidating too many areas into one very large authority can create new challenges, such as distance from local issues, slower decision-making, and difficulty maintaining community relationships; therefore, finding a balanced approach is essential. A regional model can still support strong local representation and responsiveness when designed thoughtfully. Municipal priorities can be maintained through governance structures that include voices from all participating municipalities, supported by sub-regional offices and advisory committees that keep decision-making connected to local needs. Harmonizing policies and fee structures can be done collaboratively, providing opportunities for municipalities and interest-holder groups to help shape fair and consistent standards for the region. Setting clear service expectations, such as defined response times, local points of contact, and accessible public information, helps to ensure that a larger agency remains responsive and reliable.

Greater consistency across policies, standards, and processes also creates a more stable operating environment for municipalities, developers, and the public. When expectations are predictable (clear permitting requirements, uniform fees, and consistent timelines), people can plan with more confidence. By using its (proposed) authority to create directives that support these elements, the OPCA can further reinforce this predictability and clarity. This stability strengthens customer service because staff use the same tools and guidance across the region, reducing confusion and delays. Ultimately, consistent service delivery helps ensure that watershed communities receive the same level of support regardless of their size or location, provided the regional units are scaled in a way that supports both efficiency and meaningful local engagement.

3. Do you have suggestions for how governance could be structured at the regional conservation authority level, including suggestions around board size, make-up and the municipal representative appointment process?

A successful governance model for the new regional conservation authorities must balance local accountability, fair representation, and operational efficiency. In regions with very large numbers of municipalities, such as the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, which would include at least 81 municipalities, a one-member-per-municipality board is unrealistic and would make strategic decision-making extremely difficult. A streamlined, revised Board of Directors is therefore essential.

A revised Board structure should be small enough to function strategically while still representing the diversity of the watershed. A board of approximately 25–30 members, similar to the Board of Directors for the GRCA, could achieve this balance if seats are allocated proportionally by population and geography and with regard to financial contribution. To avoid concentration of influence, no single municipality should be able to dominate board decisions. The new Board should contain elected officials only. Shorter board terms could be introduced to promote shared leadership, especially in cases where several municipalities are represented through a single grouped seat. At the regional level, the Board would retain independent responsibility for the budget, hearings, staffing decisions, policy approval, and overall governance authority.

To maintain strong local accountability while keeping the main board streamlined, the governance model should incorporate a clear subcommittee and advisory structure. Local Watershed Advisory Committees could be established for each major watershed or sub-basin (e.g., Grand, Thames, St.Clair, etc), composed of municipal councillors and/or citizen appointees. These committees would provide advice for local context on program policy, advise on watershed-level programs and services, and offer input on budget priorities. Additional advisory committees at either regional or watershed scale could be created based on local needs, such as agricultural advisory groups or home-builder liaison committees. Given the presence of approximately seven First Nations within the proposed regional area, an Indigenous Advisory Circle would support meaningful engagement and ensure that Indigenous perspectives are incorporated respectfully and consistently into decision-making.

Under a consolidated Conservation Authority framework, the governance model should:

- Maintain a small, strategic, and efficient board.
- Ensure strong local and watershed-specific input through subcommittees and grouped representation.
- Provide fair, transparent representation across the jurisdiction.
- Protect the voices of rural, agricultural, and small municipalities.
- Ensure that local program priorities (e.g., Wastewater Optimization, Rural Water Quality Programs, etc.) continue to be addressed.
- Deliver consistent, predictable, and accountable decision-making across the jurisdiction.

This structure supports efficiency and coordination while preserving meaningful local input. It helps ensure that the new conservation authority can operate effectively at a larger scale without compromising its responsiveness to the communities it serves.

The relationship between the Regional Conservation Authority Board and the OPCA is not clearly defined in the proposed model, and this lack of clarity may have significant implications for governance effectiveness. If the OPCA operates as a highly centralized umbrella board with substantial authority over regional conservation authorities, the independence and responsibility traditionally held by regional boards could be greatly reduced. A diminished governance role would make it far less likely that qualified individuals (both municipal representatives and, if permitted, citizen appointees) would be willing to serve on regional boards, as the scope for meaningful decision-making and local accountability would be substantially constrained. Clear articulation of roles and authorities will be essential to avoid undermining board capacity, local engagement, and accountability.

4. Do you have suggestions on how to maintain a transparent and consultative budgeting process across member municipalities within a regional conservation authority?

A transparent and consultative budgeting process for a larger regional conservation authority requires a clear, consistent, and accessible approach that supports all participating municipalities, regardless of size or capacity. Establishing a standardized multi-year budget framework can improve predictability and help municipalities plan their own budgets effectively.

A transparent apportionment formula based on criteria such as assessment value, population, and portion of watershed area located within municipalities is currently used and could be used moving forward. Where portions of municipalities are in different conservation authority jurisdictions, consideration could be given to geo-referencing property tax assessment roll numbers so that the apportionment calculation is based on current value assessment (CVA) in a watershed rather than the percentage of geographical area applied to the municipality's total CVA.

To maintain meaningful local input within a large region, a Municipal Budget Advisory Committee could be established as a sub-committee of the Regional Board, and could include membership from the local watershed advisory committees, including both rural and urban municipality representation. Additionally, sub-regional or watershed-based consultation meetings could be held to ensure that local priorities and capital needs are considered in budgeting decisions. Budget documents should be publicly available, written in clear language, and shared/consulted on early enough to align with municipal budget cycles. Offering multiple engagement opportunities, for example, presenting at councils when requested, providing virtual workshop sessions, soliciting written feedback, and conducting one-on-one briefings, ensures that any municipality, regardless of size and location, can participate fairly in the process. Finally, reporting back on municipal input, producing accessible annual financial reports, and clearly and consistently distinguishing between Category 1, 2, and 3 program and service costs, revenues, and grant funding all reinforce transparency and accountability.

5. How can regional conservation authorities maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and stakeholders?

Regional conservation authorities can maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and interest-holders by staying deeply connected at the local municipal level, even as they operate on a broader scale. The size of each regional authority is critical: if the conservation authority becomes too large, municipalities risk being under-represented, and their specialized watershed needs, such as agricultural programs/issues, drinking water management, localized flooding concerns, or unique outdoor experiences and priorities, can become diluted within a large administrative structure. Municipalities want assurance that scaling up will not cause their distinct issues to be overshadowed by larger population centres or to become a lesser priority due to the increased diversity of issues and competing interests that will inevitably exist within a much larger jurisdiction. A balanced, right-sized regional framework preserves this visibility and ensures that local concerns remain central to decision-making.

Maintaining watershed offices, expertise in local issues and knowledge, ability to maintain on the ground presence, and consistent points of contact ensures that residents, businesses, farmers, and municipalities can easily access staff who understand their watershed's specific conditions and community priorities. With the proposed size of regional conservation authorities, establishing local watershed-specific advisory committees ensures that decisions are grounded in local knowledge and that specialized concerns are effectively addressed.

Finally, ensuring service delivery remains responsive, through timely permitting, accessible staff, and clear pathways for raising concerns, helps communities feel heard and supported during and after the transition to a regional model. A thoughtfully sized regional authority can achieve the benefits of consolidation while still preserving the visibility, voice, and specialized needs of every watershed and municipality.

Additional Comments

The GRCA is providing additional comments on the proposed OPCA and offering an alternative regional consolidation model that we believe will effectively address the Province's concerns while preserving strong local engagement and watershed-focused decision-making.

Modernizing Conservation Authorities While Preserving Local Responsiveness

The Board recognizes and respects the Province's concerns regarding the current state of Conservation Authorities. Over time, the conservation authority system has become fragmented, with varying levels of capacity, outdated processes, and inconsistencies in service delivery. Individual conservation authorities also face significant disparities in size and resources, with some lacking access to modern tools, technology, and technical expertise needed to deliver certain programs and services effectively, as well as the capacity to support evidence-based decision-making. We acknowledge that these capacity gaps mean some conservation authorities face challenges in sustainably delivering the full range of programs and services expected of them. Modernization is needed, and there is clear value in creating a permitting system that is further streamlined, more transparent and predictable, and better able to support economic growth, reduce delays, and protect watershed communities. Likewise, reducing duplication, adopting consistent standards, and leveraging shared technology and internal services are sensible and necessary steps toward strengthening Ontario's overall watershed management framework. From this perspective, consolidation can help address real issues by improving coordination, enhancing efficiency, and enabling more reliable service delivery across the province.

At the same time, the GRCA Board has significant concerns that the proposed regional model is too large in scale to be effective. While consolidation can help address capacity challenges, overly expansive regions risk weakening the very principles that have made watershed-based management successful. The Grand River watershed is a notable example. Established in 1934, the Grand River Conservation Commission, one of the founding organizations of today's GRCA, has long demonstrated that effective watershed management relies on strong collaboration with municipal partners and on programs designed to meet watershed-specific needs and issues. This locally grounded approach has allowed decisions to be informed by practical, locally based knowledge and supported by strong, responsive relationships with the municipalities and communities most directly affected. For example, the Grand River watershed has a network of flood-management infrastructure, including multipurpose reservoirs, dikes, and flood-control berms. These structures form an integrated system operated and maintained through close collaboration between the GRCA and watershed municipalities. Sustaining this partnership is essential to ensuring the effective operation and upkeep of flood-management infrastructure, as well as protecting lives and reducing property damage caused by flooding and erosion. A regional structure that is too broad may unintentionally distance decision-making from this essential local context. It can also reduce meaningful municipal participation, which is vital to maintaining public trust and effective environmental stewardship across Ontario.

Smaller, regionally focused watershed models, such as the current Source Protection Regions, are a proven regional watershed model and demonstrate how a balanced governance structure can achieve consistency and efficiency without sacrificing local responsiveness. This scale aligns well with having one effective governance board over multiple organizations, science-based watershed boundaries, and support for coordinated planning among municipalities. It also helps maintain decision-making at a scale where local knowledge and community involvement remain strong and effective, while accounting for the need for grouped CAs to share and manage technical resources. The current number of Source Protection Regions in Ontario is 19. By operating within manageable geographic areas, they ensure that services are tailored to the unique environmental, social, and economic characteristics of each watershed, while still benefiting from shared resources and standardized processes.

In summary, the GRCA Board agrees that modernization is needed and that consolidation, when appropriately scaled, can address real capacity and consistency issues. However, a balanced approach that enhances efficiency without eroding local engagement is essential. A refined model aligned with the scale and logic of existing source water protection regions would better meet provincial objectives while preserving the strengths of Ontario's long-standing watershed-based planning and management system. Consideration could also be given at this stage to whether a Provincial Agency would be required to support and implement this model.

Assessing the OPCA: Benefits, Risks, and the Importance of Local Oversight

The GRCA Board recognizes the Province's intention in establishing the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to modernize the conservation authority system in a way that supports timely development and local infrastructure projects, while strengthening the essential role conservation authorities play in managing watersheds and protecting communities from floods and other natural hazards. These goals are both important and necessary. A system that delivers services more consistently, transparently, and predictably will benefit municipalities, developers, and communities alike, particularly as Ontario continues to grow and climate-related risks intensify. The GRCA Board agrees that modernization is needed and supports efforts to enhance both efficiency and environmental protection across the province.

The creation of the OPCA aims to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, and strategic direction for all conservation authorities. In principle, this offers several clear advantages: a coordinated provincial body can help ensure faster, more consistent permitting and provide the oversight needed to align conservation authorities with modern standards and best practices. By strengthening core watershed management functions and focusing on natural hazard protection, the OPCA has the potential to reinforce the foundational mandate of conservation authorities. This direction is appropriate, as communities across Ontario depend on timely, science-based decisions to address increasing flood risks, aging infrastructure, and complex development pressures.

The OPCA will also lead several key modernization initiatives, including developing a single digital permitting platform, standardizing service delivery through province-wide performance expectations, and supporting updated floodplain mapping to ensure decisions are grounded in the best available data. These initiatives have the potential to significantly improve customer service, reduce delays, and enhance consistency across the province. Likewise, centralized data systems and modern tools can help staff make better, evidence-based decisions. Streamlining processes and reducing duplication are logical steps toward a more efficient and reliable permitting system.

The agency will also oversee the implementation of a regional, watershed-based consolidation of conservation authorities. The GRCA Board understands the rationale for consolidation, addressing disparities in size and capacity, modernizing outdated processes, and ensuring that all conservation authorities can meet provincial expectations. With stronger tools, shared technology, and enhanced technical resources, many of the conservation authorities will indeed be better positioned to deliver high-quality services. Ensuring that updated maps, hydrologic modelling, and modern data platforms are available across Ontario is essential support to help provide consistent natural hazard management.

The GRCA Board is concerned about the proposed governance structure of the OPCA. As currently designed, the agency will report to a provincial ministry and be governed entirely by provincially appointed board members. At the same time, conservation authorities, and therefore municipalities, will be required to fund all or a portion of the agency's operations through existing levy/apportionment processes. This means that municipalities may ultimately contribute all or a significant share of the OPCA's budget without having any meaningful role in shaping its governance, its priorities, or its strategic direction. For municipalities that rely heavily on conservation authority guidance for land-use planning, hazard management, infrastructure development, and emergency response, this creates a disconnect between financial responsibility and decision-making influence.

Not only would this be a precedent-setting method for funding a provincial agency, it also establishes a system in which municipalities help fund a provincial agency but have no formal avenue to participate in its oversight, which raises significant concerns about accountability, responsiveness, and the long-term alignment of provincial direction with local needs. The scale of the proposed regional conservation authority consolidation model amplifies these concerns. Larger regional conservation authorities risk limiting opportunities for local input and reducing the nuanced, watershed-specific decision-making that has historically made conservation authorities effective.

The GRCA Board acknowledges the Province's desire for greater consistency, efficiency, and alignment across conservation authorities and supports these goals. This could be achieved under the current model through additional regulations and verifying compliance at all conservation authorities, or it could be achieved through the actions of the new agency. Regardless, modernization efforts must maintain a strong connection to local priorities, local expertise, and municipal perspectives. Achieving the right balance between centralized oversight and meaningful local involvement will be key to ensuring the OPCA strengthens watershed management across Ontario while preserving the collaborative principles that have long underpinned successful conservation work in the province.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the GRCA Board supports the Province's goal of modernizing Ontario's conservation authority system and acknowledges the value of enhancing consistency, efficiency, and technical capacity throughout the province. The Board has emphasized the importance of a thoughtful, well-planned transition, the preservation of local knowledge and municipal relationships, and the need for a governance model that ensures accountability to the municipalities that will both rely on and will continue to fund the new system. While consolidation offers meaningful opportunities, the scale of the proposed regional structure and the governance framework of the OPCA present risks that could weaken local responsiveness and watershed-based decision-making. A more balanced, right-sized regional model, grounded in strong municipal involvement and science-based watershed boundaries, would better achieve the Province's objectives while maintaining the strengths, partnerships, and community trust that have defined conservation authority work in Ontario for decades.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Minutes

Budget and Finance Committee

November 26, 2025

Call to Order

The Budget and Finance Committee met at the County Administration Building on the above date. Chair Brian Milne called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with the following members in attendance:

Councillors Scott Mackey, Sue Carleton, Dane Nielsen, Warren Dickert, Shirley Keaveney, Scott Greig, Kevin Eccles and Warden Matrosovs.

Staff present included Randy Scherzer, CAO; Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance; Scott Taylor, Director of Planning; Sue Murray, Deputy Treasurer; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources; Rob Hatten, Communications Manager; Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long Term Care; Jody MacEachern, Director of Information Technology; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services; Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation Services; Niall Lobley, Deputy CAO; Garrett Reed, Manager of Accounting; Markus Hawco, Manager, Long Term Care Finance; Tara Warder, Clerk and Brittany Rier, Deputy Clerk

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Items For Direction or Discussion

FR-BFC-22-25 Corporate Financial Update - September 30, 2025

Garrett Reed addressed the Committee on the corporate financial update.

He highlighted that staff benefit rates are renewed every year in April and often Grey County goes to market to ensure competitiveness. Grey County went to market in 2025 and benefits came in lower than anticipated. An estimated increase was built into the 2025 budget however.

Another item of note is that the winter months from January 2025 forward to spring were severe. Projections were made based on average costs.

Garrett Reed provided information on the status of both the operating and capital budgets for each section of the budget.

Questions were addressed regarding staffing surplus in Administration. It was noted that the surplus is primarily related to surplus from staffing vacancies and parental leaves and lower benefit costs. Further questions on the Brightshores contribution were addressed. Staff noted the annual contribution to Brightshores is in year three of a five year schedule.

Garrett Reed noted that once the 2025 year end is finalized, staff will provide a year end transfer report to the Budget and Finance Committee with recommendations on how the surplus and / or deficits will be funded. Corporately, an overall surplus of approximately $259,500 for 2025 is anticipated.

BFC28-25
Moved by: Councillor Nielsen
Seconded by: Warden Matrosovs

> **That report FR-BFC-22-25 regarding Corporate Financial Update as of September 30, 2025, be received for information.**

Carried

FR-BFC-24-25 2026 Draft Budget

Garrett Reed provided an Openbook budget software overview.

Randy Scherzer addressed the Committee and provided opening remarks and an outline of the meeting, noting that staff are looking for any recommendations on the comfort level of the Committee with this draft budget and any recommendations on net levy target or areas staff should explore for further budget reduction opportunities.

A request for information on one time funding reserves was requested. Staff indicated it can come back to the December 5th, 2025 meeting.

Sue Murray then addressed the Committee on the journey with the 2026 budget to today's date. She outlined assumptions and impacts on the 2026 budget, including estimates of future provincial and federal funding. Where increases are unknown, funding is assumed to continue at committed levels unless otherwise noted. Impacts were cited, including inflationary increases for supplies and capital projects, costs of living increases for non union and collective agreement increases for unionized staff, movement on grid for non union staff and those covered by collective agreements.

Staff reviewed the exclusions and inclusions in the draft budget, noting that staffing requests from September 24, 2025 and road exchange recommendations from the task force from March of 2025 have been included. Planning efficiencies and deferring the Ayton base have not been included.

Sue Murray provided information on where reductions had been made prior to the budget being presented, totalling $531,300 and the prior year initiatives that have been included in budget.

Questions were addressed regarding staff for the new Rockwood Terrace. Staff noted that transition costs related to the increased staffing need for RWT will be covered from one time funding so there is no levy impact. In 2027's budget, they are projecting a $400,000 increase.

2027 Projections were outlined across the organization.

The Committee recessed from 11:05-11:12 am.

Transportation Services

Pat Hoy presented the Transportation Services budget. Beginning with the budgets for facilities, depots and domes, he noted the operating portion of the budget has a net levy requirement of $323,200, being an increase of $71,600 over 2025. This is primarily the result of increased repair costs for salt storage buildings, specifically Clarksburg to ensure the building is usable until its replacement in 2027.

He outlined the projects scheduled for 2026.

Machinery and Equipment budgets were outlined, requiring an increase of $161,900 over 2025.

Pat Hoy continued to review Ordinary Maintenance and Supervision and Overhead budgets. The Winter Maintenance budget was outlined, totalling $6,271,200 with an increase of $596,800 over 2025.

Community Services

Anne Marie Shaw addressed the Committee on the Community Services budget, which includes Social Services, Housing, Ontario Works and Early Learning and Child Care. She spoke to an increase in case load for 2026 and the Early Learning and Child Care program.

The Housing Budget was overviewed. This portfolio is realizing an increase of $511,100 over 2025 for operating and capital.

Questions and comments were addressed regarding rent revenues and number of units. Grey County has almost 1000 units. Further questions were addressed regarding funding from the Province. Opportunities for savings for operational costs were highlighted.

Paramedic Services

Kevin McNab addressed Committee, noting an increase of $1,320,100 over 2025. He noted service enhancements, increases in professional and consulting fees to conduct the deployment review update, and increased need for repair and maintenance of an aging ambulance fleet and the delays being experienced in new vehicle delivery.

Planning

Scott Taylor noted the departmental requirements of both operating and capital, of $1,286,000 for 2026, an increase of $73,000 over 2025.

It was noted that Planning efficiencies anticipated costs are not included in the draft 2026 budget. Staff spoke to the agreement with GSCA and noted that the recommendation is to roll the agreement over for an additional year in order to see what the Province approves in terms of changes to Conservation Authorities. A report with further information will come forward on December 11th. At this time, a lot of the details are unknown.

Further questions and comments were addressed regarding increasing the value paid for beaver compensation. Scott Taylor noted that to increase the value paid per beaver tail collected, the bylaw would need to be amended. An updated by-law is currently in progress. Staff will be reviewing the matter further and anticipate coming back to Council in 2026. The draft budget has the current rates without any proposals to increase at this stage.

Agriculture, Forestry and Trails

The Agriculture budget includes an operating requirement of $191,200 over 2025, an increase of $5,100. The Forestry and Trails Budget includes a net operating and capital requirement of $471,900, an increase of $125,400 over 2025.

Scott Taylor noted the proposal to forgo from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification with savings of approximately $8,000. County forests will still be maintained and those principles still adhered to, but there isn't necessarily a need to have the designation.

Questions were addressed regarding spraying that occurs on the CP Trail Trail and in County forests. There is no specific line item for chervil. Further questions were addressed regarding in kind contributions of private organizations and people towards maintenance of the trail system.

Economic Development and Tourism and Culture

This budget includes a net departmental requirement of $3,896,200 for operating and capital, an increase of $303,000 over 2025. Savanna Myers noted that the budget prioritizes access to Environics data, investment readiness and targeted regional marketing and the continued production of the Gather campaign.

Questions were addressed regarding advertising budgets vs actual expenses, professional and consulting.

Savanna Myers spoke to the Environics data and how local municipalities use the data as well. It was noted that promotions and public relations have been driven by reductions in other budget lines.

Staff noted that work will be done on the Fees and Services by-law looking at rental rates.

Sydenham Campus and Business Enterprise Centre

Further information was provided on the support for crucial workforce development, entrepreneurship and innovation in the region, as well as job creation.

Grey Roots Museum and Archives

The Grey Roots budget includes a net departmental requirement of $1,916,300 which is an increase of $97,600 over 2025.

Community Transportation

The operation of the GTR and GOST transit are extended until August 31, 2026 ensuring continued transit access while a study is being completed for a potential new regional system.

A question was addressed regarding the fare for rides. Staff confirmed that the $5 fare is no longer required as part of the grant and has since lapsed. Staff were not going to make any changes until the study is completed and the results are seen, however council could direct otherwise.

Committee recessed at 1:05 until 1:41 pm.

Long Term Care

The Long Term Care proposed budget contains operating and capital expenses of $11,500,600, an increase of $674,200 over 2025. Questions were addressed regarding level of care funding and resident payments. Staff outlined the assumptions that have been made throughout.

Corporate Services

Mary Lou Spicer spoke to the Corporate Services budget and reviewed the Administration budget. Staff spoke to reserve balances and how surplus' are handled.

Jennifer Moreau spoke to the enhanced shift assignment and acceptance scheduling software upgrades to 24/7 staffing, noting that funds are proposed to come from reserves.

The Social Pinpoint software was highlighted.

Mary Lou Spicer spoke to the increase in court security costs and the need and hope for the province to increase funding for municipalities. Staff noted that the costs include both prisoner transport and court security.

Information on the Assessment budget was provided. Grey County pays for the costs of the services for the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) on behalf of all local municipalities.

Further highlights were provided on Tax and Other, the Health Unit budget, Health Care and Education.

Climate Change

Niall Lobley noted that Climate Change is proposed to see a reduction of $31,400 in operating.

Questions and comments were addressed regarding the direction to review Going Green in Grey and the new position proposed in the department. Staff noted that the County would see the staff member starting around April. Comments were expressed regarding minimizing costs associated with onboarding staff.

Council

Tara Warder spoke to the Council budget, noting the budget is seeing an increase of $47,600 over 2025. Council compensation includes a cost of living adjustment of 2.87% and additional per diems being paid in 2026. Based on current spending and other inflationary increases related to conferences and travel, the Conference, travel and meal expenses are proposed to increase by $39,600.

Staff noted that a two day orientation is proposed for all elected officials across Grey County in November of 2026 with parliamentary procedure training, legislative, governance and team building elements. New technology is also proposed for Council members. Costs of the technology and orientation are proposed to be covered from reserves.

Information Services

Jody MacEachern spoke to the above noted budget, reflecting the costs to keep the network running, as well as costs of licensing and security.

Property

Anne Marie Shaw noted that the County property budget includes an increase of $28,500 over 2025. This is the budget for maintenance of the Admin building and the building next door that is leased to CMHA.

POA

Amanda Kokas addressed the Committee on the POA budget, noting ticket revenue is expected to increase as more fines are being paid.

WSIB

Jennifer Moreau noted that WSIB and Weekly Indemnity are self insured. Premiums are charged to each department and fund the actual cost of claims and the admin fee of WSIB.

Mary Lou Spicer provided a recap of what has been covered to date and next steps were reviewed. It was noted that the estimated 1% increase in the residential rate is $854,400.

Randy Scherzer noted that if there is any direction to be provided for staff to further explore, it can be indicated at this time.

BFC29-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That the $30,000 expenditure for Social Pinpoint be referred to County Council for further discussion during the 2026 budget discussions.

Carried

BFC30-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

That the matter of reducing Council Conference attendance to one conference per year, be referred to County Council for discussion during the December budget discussions.

Lost

BFC31-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

That Grey County's membership in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) be referred to County Council for further discussion during 2026 budget discussions.

Lost

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen
Seconded by: Councillor Greig

That the matter of road exchanges be referred to Council for further discussion during 2026 budget discussions, specifically around phasing in half the asset management increase and costs of the road exchanges in 2026 and 2027.

After further clarification, the above motion was withdrawn

BFC32-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

That the matter regarding the proposed increase to Asset Management reserve contributions for 2026 be referred to County Council during 2026 budget discussions.

Carried

BFC33-25
Moved by: Councillor Nielsen
Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

That the matters regarding starting staff 50% of the way through the 2026 year for all new proposed staffing positions (with the exception of summer students) be referred to the 2026 Council budget discussions.

Lost

BFC34-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

That the matter of investigating opportunities for professional development and staff training reductions and related ancillary costs be referred to Council for discussion during 2026 budget.

Lost

BFC35-25
Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

That the matter regarding the possibility for GTR Fare increases be referred to County Council's 2026 budget discussions.

Carried

BFC36-25
Moved by: Councillor Nielsen
Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That report FR-BFC-24-25 regarding the 2026 Draft Budget be received; and

That the 2026 Draft Budget as presented, be forwarded to County Council for consideration.

Carried

Closed Meeting Matters

No closed meeting was required.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillor Mackey and Warden Matrosovs, the Budget and Finance Committee adjourned at 4:34 p.m. to the call of the Chair.

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-70-25
Title:	Proposed Changes to Conservation Authorities in Ontario
Prepared by:	Niall Lobley, Deputy CAO and Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All member municipalities in Grey County

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-CW-70-25 be received;**
2. **That County staff be directed to submit report PDR-CW-70-25 as the County of Grey comments on Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257; and**
3. **That the County of Grey requests assurance from the Province that the establishment of the new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency will not be funded by the municipal portion of Conservation Authority levies and that it will not be funded from current Conservation Authority budgets; and**
4. **That Grey County requests the Province pause on passing any further changes to Conservation Authority structure until further analysis has been conducted and additional details are released on new proposed models; and**
5. **That report PDR-CW-70-25 be shared with Members of Provincial Parliament Paul Vickers and Brian Saunderson, as well as member municipalities, AMO and conservation authorities having jurisdiction in Grey County; and**
6. **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 October 31, 2025, the province announced changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* which would:

a) create a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, and
b) consolidate Ontario's current thirty-six conservation authorities into seven new regional conservation authorities.

The stated goals of these changes are to *"reduce duplicative administrative costs, free-up resources for frontline conservation, and better align conservation authorities' services with provincial priorities on housing, the economy, infrastructure and climate resilience."*

On November 27, 2025, Bill 68, the *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)* received royal assent. Bill 68 creates the above-mentioned Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency.

County and municipal staff have questions and concerns about the proposed changes. The purpose of this report is to provide Council some background on the proposed changes, as well as outlining the County's questions and concerns, including recommending some additional ideas the province can consider on this topic. It is recommended that this report form the basis for the County's comments back to the province in response to Environmental Registry posting 025-1257.

Background and Discussion

The first *Conservation Authorities Act* in Ontario was passed in 1946. This legislation was passed in response to concerns 'that the renewable resources of Ontario were in an unhealthy state based on poor land use, water, and forestry practices'. A notable hallmark of Ontario's conservation authorities (CAs) legislation is that CAs are based on natural watershed boundaries, rather than political boundaries. Even in the original 1946 legislation, costs of projects were to be shared by municipalities and the provincial government. An important milestone in Ontario's conservation journey was the devastating impacts of Hurricane Hazel in 1954. After the hurricane, Ontario made further changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act "to enable Conservation Authorities to acquire lands for recreation and conservation purposes, and to regulate that land for the safety of the community.*" (Source: Conservation Ontario website)

The role of CAs has continued to evolve since the 1950's, and the *Conservation Authorities Act* has been amended many times since then, including several times in the last seven years. On October 31, 2025, the province announced further changes to the Act. Through the November 7, 2025 Environmental Registry posting (posting # 025-1257, see link in the Attachments section of this report) the province is now seeking feedback on these matters. The proposed changes, if passed, would primarily accomplish the following:

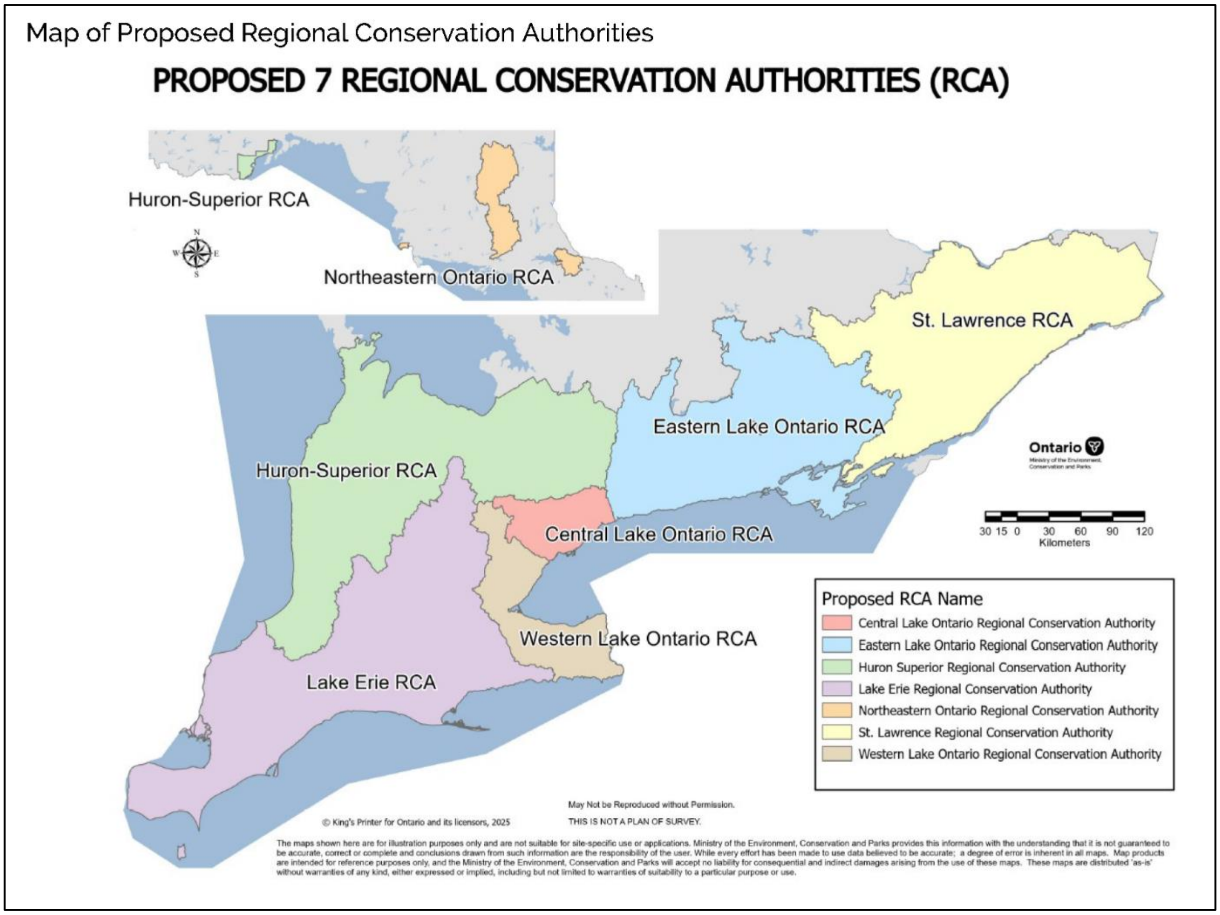
a) create a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, and
b) consolidate Ontario's current thirty-six conservation authorities into seven new regional conservation authorities.

With respect to item (b) above, map 1 below shows the seven new regional conservation authority (RCAs) boundaries, while maps 2 and 3 show the two RCAs with jurisdiction in Grey County, being the Lake Erie RCA and the Huron-Superior RCA.

On November 27, 2025, Bill 68, the *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No. 2)* received royal assent. As it pertains to the *Conservation Authorities Act* changes, Bill 68 establishes the new provincial agency as follows.

"The Schedule amends the Conservation Authorities Act. The Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency is established. Its objects include overseeing conservation authorities and the transition to a regional watershed-based framework for conservation authorities in Ontario."

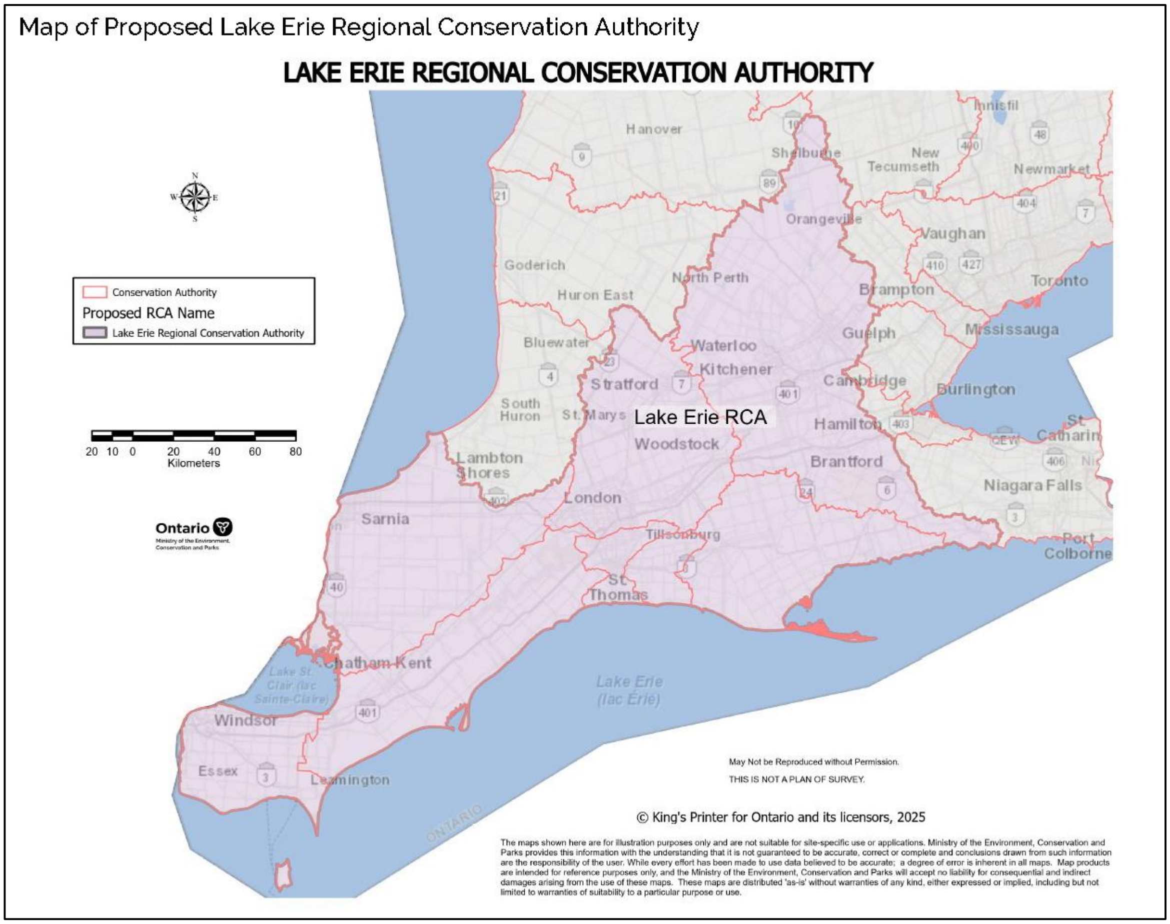
Map 1: Proposed Regional Conservation Authorities



The provincial government’s stated purpose for these changes is described as follows in the Environmental Registry posting:

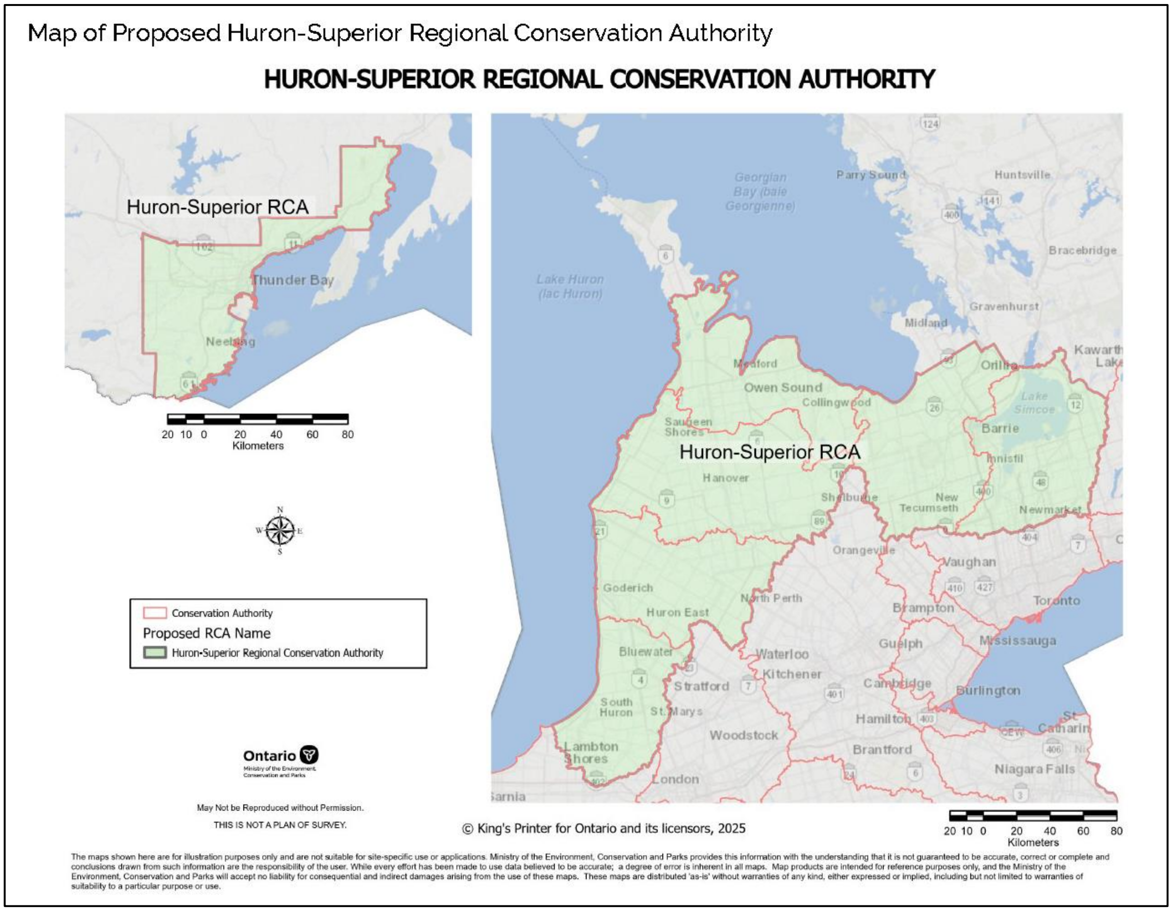
> *“The Government’s intention to introduce legislation which, if passed, would amend the Conservation Authorities Act to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency – a provincial board-governed agency – to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, strategic direction, and oversight of Ontario’s conservation authorities…*
>
> *These proposed improvements to the conservation authority system would reduce duplicative administrative costs, free-up resources for frontline conservation, and better align conservation authorities’ services with provincial priorities on housing, the economy, infrastructure and climate resilience.*
>
> *The regional conservation authorities would continue to focus on managing natural hazards and watershed health, drawing on decades of local knowledge and partnerships. With better tools and more resources for front-line staff, the regional conservation authorities would operate with greater consistency and transparency, deliver faster services to municipalities and permit applicants, while ensuring decisions continue to be based on sound science.”*

Map 2: Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority



The government has further shared that there would be no changes to the overall extent of CAs jurisdiction, and that the RCAs would remain independent organizations with municipal oversight. Furthermore, the RCAs would continue to be involved in mandated programs including drinking water source protection. RCAs would also still be involved in tree planting, data collection, and watershed management activities. The province has further indicated that there would be significant efficiencies through the move to RCA's and confirmed that there will be no job losses through the changes proposed, while noting some management positions would be redeployed to supporting front line conservation efforts.

Map 3: Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority



The province has stated that one of the reasons for consolidation of CA boundaries is to reduce the number of municipalities which are served by multiple CAs. If the changes are passed, the number of municipalities served by multiple CAs would be reduced by 63%. Grey County is currently served by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), and Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA). If passed, the County would be served by the Lake Erie and Huron Superior RCAs. The make-up of the two RCAs is outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1: Lake Erie and Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority Composition

	Lake Erie RCA	Huron-Superior RCA
Total # of former CAs being consolidated	8	7
Total # of lower-tier and single-tier municipalities served by the RCA	81	80

Potential Impacts and Questions regarding the Proposed Changes

Following the province's announcement, County staff have had the opportunity to talk to CA staff with jurisdiction in Grey, primarily, GSCA and SVCA staff, as they collectively serve most of Grey. County staff have also discussed the proposed changes with Planning, and some Building staff, from Grey's member municipalities. A summary (in no order of importance) of some of the questions and concerns stemming from these discussions is as follows. Staff welcome additional feedback from members of Council and member municipalities to further shape these questions, comments, concerns and opportunities that may be presented by the new model proposed. Staff are proposing on sharing these concerns with ministry staff alongside a response to the ERO posting as well as in delegations and discussions with MPP's and Ministers at ROMA if there is opportunity to do so.

Ultimately, Grey County staff believe that the proposed RCA model and the new Provincial Conservation Agency will weaken local representation, will see local services lost, and will drive up costs and red tape. Further, it will shift focus away from rural and agricultural communities and diminish local services such as recreation, stewardship and educational programs, services that communities cherish.

1) **Timelines and Pausing a Decision on Further Implementation** – Although Bill 68 has now been passed, the County recommends that the province consider pausing any further changes in favour of completing a cost-benefit analysis (including a workforce and geographical analysis) of the current system of 36 CAs, vs. the proposed regional system of seven RCAs. The County expresses significant concerns at the lack of local service delivery with the proposed seven RCAs and urges the province to taking evidence-based review of where and if amalgamations are of value. Regionalization should only proceed if there are known performance indicator (KPI) outcomes that will be improved by such a new system. Moving ahead now, with insufficient study, risks irreparable damage to working relationships fostered over decades, as well as potential damage to watersheds, properties, or waterways. If the province does decide to move forward with amalgamations, the County would recommend an approach of phased amalgamations, targeted to existing regions where KPIs are not being met, to better explore and understand potential challenges and opportunities before province wide role out.

2) **Local Service Delivery** – many CAs offer specific and tailored programs to local communities. Programs such as landowner stewardship incentives, tree planting, development of Managed Forest Plans, and engaging around land donation under the EcoGift program. These services are not guided by specific legislation but have been developed in partnership with communities specific to local needs. Further, many CAs undertake local initiatives such as Water Festivals and Forest Festivals or tree sales, which work well at a local level but would not be effective on regional levels. Under the proposed RCA model, how will these events, activities, programs, and services be retained at a local level?

3) **Vast Geography and Maintaining Local Relationships** – More details on the regional structure are needed to help inform an understanding of it. The Huron-Superior RCA

spans more than 800 kilometres (kms) of geography with a 1,600 kms road distance between its southern and northern communities. One of the benefits of the current model is the relative proximity of the CA staff to the municipalities they serve, and the relationships built between municipalities, the CAs, community organizations, and the development community. Having CA staff that can attend local meetings, or arrange joint site visits, with relatively short notice, is a 'must' in the current system, and needs to be maintained under any new model. The existing relationships between staff could take years to replace, resulting in a less expedient development process, if fractured by the new model. How will existing local offices and their staff continue to be supported? Will the existing local offices continue to provide local services and what assurances can the province give that local access to CA services will be retained? How will each of these sites be managed? Given the vast regional territories, what supervisory and management structures will be in place to support local service delivery? The County would reiterate the need to keep local staff across the watershed.

4) **Emergency Management** – Conservation Authorities have become trusted partners in emergency management, providing expertise and staffing to support emergency management. From flood forecasting and ice and waterway management, through to expertise in lands management and a unique understanding of how the local environment is responding to weather and climate change, CA's local proximity is critical to support municipal emergency management efforts. Regional offices would have difficulty in responding quickly and managing events linked to flooding, frazil ice, or blizzards, if they are not located locally.

5) **Municipal Representation** – Municipal representation for many CAs is driven by the lower-tier municipalities and, for large areas of the province, these are the only tier of municipal governance. There are 80 lower-tier and single municipalities (in addition to the upper-tiers) within the proposed Huron Superior RCA. There are 81 lower-tier and single municipalities (in addition to the upper-tiers) within the proposed Lake Erie RCA. How will a Board, that represents; communities under 10,000 people or over 100,000 people, urban and rural, coastal and inland, be effectively represented when servicing this many municipalities?

6) **Rural Lens vs. Urban Focus** – Existing levy funding models apportion costs based on assessment value with areas with higher assessment value contributing more. While not precise, this model generally ensures that funding is proportionate to community size, enabling funding influence on Conservation Authorities to be proportionate to the communities they serve. Further, Board composition is based on municipal representation; communities with higher populations have more members and votes on the Board, but the Board is represented by members from all municipalities within its jurisdiction. The new Huron Superior RCA, of which Grey County is part, includes urban communities such as Thunder Bay as well as Aurora, Newmarket, Orillia and Barrie, King Township, rapidly growing, urban centres reflective of typical GTA growth and pressures, a stark difference from Grey County. Together, these represent over 550,000 residents. These communities will likely dominate proportional funding for the new RCA and will likely command significant influence on the work and priorities of the RCA having a disproportionate impact on smaller, rural communities. Where will the needs of

smaller rural municipalities like some of the member municipalities within Grey County be met in such a model?

7) **Transitional Costs** – A transition of the scope and scale as proposed will come with high transitional costs. These could be associated with the release of existing facilities, the acquisition of new facilities, new branding, websites and application processes. These transitional costs could also include salary costs such as for equalization of wages across CAs. These costs should not be passed onto municipalities to bare.

8) **Municipal Funding Model** – CAs are supported and funded by member municipalities. Individual CAs set a budget based on meeting local needs. Under recent changes to the CA Act (Bill 108), it developed three classes of services; mandatory, self financed, and municipal service agreements. Some CAs worked with member municipalities to provide broader scopes of services than others. How will funding between disparate CAs be aligned? It is noted that for changes to be implemented after the municipal election in 2026, municipalities will need budget clarity on proposed changes by mid 2026.

9) **New Provincial Agency** – Through the passing of Bill 68 the province has created the Provincial Conservation Agency, to establish strategic leadership and centralized services. It has been indicated that this agency will be funded from provincial funding, fees for services and cost recovery from Conservation Authorities. As CAs rely on municipal funding for much of their mandatory work, it is possible that municipalities will find increased costs being born by them to fund their RCA’s commitment to the new provincial agency. Further, the new agency will be itself managed by a new Board of between 5 and 12 members; how will locally representative voices be reflected on this board?

10) **Equalization Funding between CAs** – Significant funding is likely to be required. There currently is a mix of larger and smaller CAs. In the larger CAs, there has often been the benefit of additional resources and partnerships to develop enhanced tools and resources to help manage areas. Larger CAs often have better detailed ecological mapping, up-to-date watershed mapping, up-to-date flood mapping, and detailed mapping layers in geographic information systems (GIS). These tools are used to ensure effective, data-based decision making. However, access to these tools is not equal to all CAs with some smaller, less flexibly resourced teams not having access to these tools or staffing expertise levels. The province's stated commitment was to equalize and standardize service levels. Who will be funding the required investment to ensure equitable access to resources and tools?

11) **Charitable Foundations and Volunteer Organizations** – Some CAs have offshoot charitable foundations and volunteer organizations (e.g., the Grey Sauble Conservation Foundation, Friends Of ‘X’ Conservation Area groups), which both fundraise (such as for educational programs) and perform some maintenance / management activities on specific properties. Some of these organizations may be small, whereas elsewhere in the province these foundations raise millions in funds to support local initiatives. How will the legal structures and on-going contributions (financial and in-kind) of such organizations be managed under the new RCA model?

12) **Lands Management** – CAs manage 100,000's acres of land across Ontario. A small fraction of these lands provides for recreation, and an even smaller number of these lands generate revenue to help offset recreational programs. Most of these lands are available informally for recreation, but their prime function is to support healthy watersheds, biodiversity and ecological integrity of systems. Within the new RCAs how will lands be managed, both those with intense use that generate revenue (but need careful management for risk and ecological damage) and those that hold no opportunity for revenue generation, but require essential stewardship and management?

13) **Agreements** – How will recreational agreements with hunting organizations, trail user groups, municipalities, and First Nations with recognized rights be managed across the RCAs? These have had, in some areas, decades of careful negotiation to develop. How will the use and management of the use of snowmobile and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on CA lands be adequately managed? Furthermore, some municipalities and counties, including the County of Grey, have agreements in place with local CAs to contract out forest management, trails, and by-law enforcement services to CA staff on a fee for service basis. Will such municipal agreements still be feasible and honoured under the new RCA model?

14) **Water Control Structures** – The basis for CAs was the protection and management of water. CAs manage thousands of water control structures. How will local staff needs be delivered through the RCA model?

15) **Climate Change Adaptation –** CAs play a critical role in protecting Ontario from loss of life and impacts to property as a result of flooding. With variations in weather due to climate change, the role of CAs across watersheds is only becoming more important. Updated mapping, green infrastructure, ongoing watershed management, and other climate adaptations will need to be adaptive to local conditions and responsive to emerging science. CAs need to retain their independence as a regulatory body to protect Ontario. While additional housing and a prospering economy are key provincial and municipal objectives, so too are the health and safety of our communities. As insurance costs continue to rise, CAs need to continue to safeguard our communities against future financial and physical losses.

16) **Drinking Water Source Protection** – Source Water Protection (SWP) became a priority following the Walkerton tragedy. Local boards, mirroring CA areas, were formed to assess risks and establish protocols for SWP. How will the SWP model, with CAs and local representation be impacted by these changes?

17) **Staffing –** The Minister repeatedly indicated that there would be no job losses. Municipalities have formed working relationships with staff employed locally who have also acquired, at times, many years of local experience. Support for maintaining local jobs to support local delivery are a priority. Not only are these jobs and roles key to delivery of local priorities, these roles provide important employment in local communities helping support families and the communities they live in.

Responses to the Environmental Registry Discussion Questions

In the Environmental Registry there are five discussion questions which the province is seeking feedback on. Responses to each of these questions has been provided below.

1. What do you see as key factors to support a successful transition and outcome of regional conservation authority consolidation?

If the province proceeds with a regional conservation authority approach, the following matters need to be considered.

a) Only proceeding with any changes if the cost-benefit analysis and KPI improvements demonstrate justification for such changes.
b) Maintaining local staff and staff relationships at CAs throughout the province. Successful transition will depend on clarity about what stays local and what becomes regional.
c) A sustainable governance model with municipal involvement and oversight.
d) A fair model for representation to ensure smaller communities within a larger RCA do not get overshadowed by the larger communities within the RCA.
e) The ability to recognize local and regional differences between CAs and adapt programming and staffing accordingly.
f) The ability to continue to offer local programs and service delivery beyond those that are provincially legislated.
g) Sustainable funding models both throughout the transition period and ongoing thereafter.
h) A transition period which recognizes suddenly merging eight CAs into one regional CA will take time. Processes, software, and staffing will all need time to adjust to this change.
i) Limited bureaucracy between the new provincial agency and the RCAs. The more RCAs can be empowered to act locally, without needing to seek approvals from a centralized provincial agency will benefit future response times and decision making.
j) Maintaining service levels in rural Ontario will be critical, as well as ensuring municipal agreements are protected.
k) The ability to maintain agreements with local clubs or volunteer organizations to help maintain both recreational and operational roles in partnership with CA staff.
l) The ability for municipalities to partner with the new RCAs on funding applications or joint projects which serve a local need.

With these points in mind, the province may wish to consider a possible phased in or transitionary approach to amalgamations assuming that these amalgamations can be justified. By implementing a KPI evaluation of existing CAs, it might be possible to identify where amalgamation and increased resource sharing would be most beneficial. These CAs might be an opportunity to amalgamate initially to explore service enhancements, challenges and opportunities through greater regionalisation. Assuming justified, these benefits could then be phased in through broader amalgamation. This would allow for an evidence-based approach to transition, without system wide risk and potential costly errors that would be difficult to reverse.

2. **What opportunities or benefits may come from a regional conservation authority framework?**

Some of the smaller or less funded CAs currently have difficulty maintaining up-to-date mapping and securing certain levels of staffing expertise. In a regional model, if appropriately funded, there could be some level of equalization which allows for the smaller CAs to have better access to resources and staffing levels beyond what they currently have now. Whereas currently some CAs may not be able to employ a hydrogeologist, under the new RCA model, the business case may support hiring such experts.

3. **Do you have suggestions for how governance could be structured at the regional conservation authority level, including suggestions around board size, make-up and the municipal representative appointment process?**

For the two RCAs which will be serving Grey County, there are 80 and 81 lower-tier or single-tier municipalities in each. Board sizes will not be able to accommodate representation from each municipality. That said, there needs to be fair representation to ensure that smaller communities do not get overshadowed by larger communities on the board. Perhaps there could be upper-tier and single-tier representation on the board, to ensure a more manageable board size. The municipal appointment process should remain local, and not require provincial appointments.

4. **Do you have suggestions on how to maintain a transparent and consultative budgeting process across member municipalities within a regional conservation authority?**

As per above, when some of the new RCAs contain 80+ lower-tier or single-tier municipalities, it will be difficult to coordinate an RCA budget process. Municipalities need input into the process, but there needs to be a finite process, such that timely budgets can still get passed. From an operational standpoint, it may be easier for the new RCAs to be entirely provincially funded, along with user fees, vs. relying on municipal property tax levies.

5. **How can regional conservation authorities maintain and strengthen relationships with local communities and stakeholders?**

As per the answer to discussion question one above, items (a), (c), (d), (e), (h), and (i) will be crucial to ensure local needs are met.

Additional Recommendations for Provincial Consideration

The County understands and supports the province in seeking to modernize, identify efficiencies and support consistent, effective, province wide service delivery that meets the needs of communities and delivers on provincial priorities. The County believes that these outcomes can be met through regulatory and policy changes that do not require disruptive system wide overhaul and that further exploration of these would be of value. For example:

- Technical Guidance – providing updated province wide technical guidance to CAs to support modern and consistent decision making and service delivery.
- Consistent Policy Framework at a regional level – build on the singular regulation already implemented to support consistent policies, perhaps on eco-district levels.
- Existing KPIs (permit approval in 90 days or less) are being met; implement further KPI's that seek to identify gaps in service provisions.
- Online Permitting System – many CAs already use digital platforms for permitting, some dovetail with municipal online permit systems. Work with CAs to implement similar or identical online permitting systems which dovetail with outcomes sought in Bill 60 for municipal planning permit systems. (Note: back ups to digital systems will be needed for residents without access to online systems or who may wish to submit by traditional means).
- Permit fees standardization – the province has frozen permit rates for several years and could, within existing authorities, implement regional or province wide standard permit fees. If the province wanted CAs to abolish permit fees, this could also be achieved providing an alternative source of funding could be identified. The County would note that for many 'development pays for development' has been a guiding principle and that permit costs are the costs associated with the review and approval of development applications, however, there are other means that could be explored here within the existing legislation.
- If there is evidence and data where existing CAs are unable to provide consistent, reliable and timely services, or where their founding municipalities are seeking change; then support amalgamation on a case-by-case basis. Such amalgamations should be on geographically appropriate scales to see if amalgamations provide the cost and efficiency benefits that the province is seeking to achieve, prior to any whole scale amalgamations across vast geographic regions. For example, the existing Source Protection Regions (of which there are 17) may be a basis for future regional CA's, or, smaller geographic areas, such as those CA's with watersheds draining to Georgian Bay, or Lake Simcoe, East and Central and West Lake Ontario, the North, Lake Huron North and South and Lake Erie, East and West. Regardless of where future amalgamations may be, these should be made based on evidence and data and be watershed relevant and of a scale that maintains the local basis of CAs.

Legislated Requirements

The province is proposing legislative changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Financial and Resource Implications

The financial and resource implications stemming from the proposed changes are not known at this time. Municipal tax levies provide funding for CAs currently, but it is not yet known how this could change, should the RCA model be implemented. Should the province proceed with these changes, a further report can be prepared outlining the financial impacts.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Climate Change, CAO/Deputy CAO, Legal Services, and Planning

☒ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets: See commentary in the report on climate adaptation and impacts

☒ External: Member municipalities, as well as conservation authorities having jurisdiction in Grey County

Appendices and Attachments

Link to Environmental Registry Posting 025-1257

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-71-25
Title:	Status Update on the County’s Growth Management Strategy
Prepared by:	Liz Buckton, Senior Policy Planner and Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All member municipalities in Grey County

Recommendation

1. **That report PDR-CW-71-25 regarding a status update on the County’s Growth Management Strategy be received for information; and**
2. **That a final draft of the Growth Management Strategy be prepared early in 2026 for County Council’s consideration.**

Executive Summary

Earlier this year, the County began updating its Growth Management Strategy (GMS) in alignment with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024. As an upper tier municipality, the County is required to forecast growth in accordance with the Ministry of Finance projections and allocate that growth out to the County’s member municipalities. These growth allocations are then used for planning purposes, including but not limited to updating County/Municipal official plans, infrastructure planning, development charges (DCs) background studies, etc.

This report is intended to provide Council with a first draft of the 2025 GMS update. Staff are happy to receive any feedback County Council may have, and are also seeking feedback from member municipalities, and other public sector stakeholders such as school boards, public health, and hospitals.

Background and Discussion

Earlier this year, following a request for proposals (RFP) process, the County retained Hemson Consulting to complete an update to the County’s Growth Management Strategy (GMS). The County’s GMS was last updated in 2021. Since the 2021 update, the province has passed the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS). The updated PPS made three significant changes as it relates to the County’s role in growth planning, as follows:

1. The County is required to base the population and employment growth forecasts on Ontario Population Projections published by the Ministry of Finance (MOF),
2. Official plans need to accommodate a range of land uses to meet the needs of at least a 20-year, and not to exceed a 30-year growth horizon, and
3. Greater coordination is required between municipal planning and other public sector bodies such as education and health care.

Under earlier versions of the PPS, the County was already required to forecast and allocate population and employment growth to its member municipalities. The new requirement of PPS 2024 is that the County now must base those allocations on the MOF numbers. The need for greater public sector coordination, as well as a planning horizon of up to 30 years, are also nuanced differences to the County's revised role under the 2024 PPS.

These growth allocations are then incorporated into County and municipal official plans (via official plan amendment, official plan reviews, or new official plans), and also used for infrastructure planning, development charges (DCs) background studies, etc.

Based on the above, County staff have been working closely with Hemson, and have been engaging with the County's member municipalities, and public sector entities such as Grey Bruce Public Health, the school boards, and local hospitals. Data supplied from these parties including information on infrastructure and servicing capacity, as well as their observations on current and future growth, and have helped to inform Hemson's draft forecasts (linked to in the Attachments section of this report). Although Hemson and the County are required to base their work on the MOF projections, the local data and growth outlook are still crucial to this process.

It is important to note the following items as it pertains to Hemson's draft forecasts and the GMS update.

1. The forecasts need to generally align with the MOF projections, as noted above.
2. The MOF projections published by the province only include population projections at the County level, and do not (a) include employment projections, or (b) 'break down' those projections to the individual municipal level (i.e., the County only gets an aggregate number for the entire County).
3. In addition to the MOF projections, the province also publishes a forecasting and land needs methodology, which is in the process of being updated. Hemson's work will be consistent with the province's current and updated methodology in this regard.
4. The MOF projections are issued either annually, or slightly more frequently. Grey County's MOF projections have seen a recent reduction over the past ~18 months, based on changes to federal immigration policies, and a host of other factors. This reduction is not unique to Grey County.
5. The County updates its GMS approximately every 4 – 5 years. As such, even though these growth numbers inform future planning and infrastructure work, they are regularly reviewed, and adjustments can be made at those review periods. The allocations do not serve as 'limits' on growth but rather serve to inform land and servicing needs.

Highlights of the Draft Growth Forecasts for Grey County

Grey County is continuing to grow and is projected to grow at a greater rate than the 2021 GMS forecasted. Based on Hemson's work, and the MOF projections, the County is expected to grow to ~147,000 people by the year 2051. Over that same time horizon, Grey is expected to grow to just under 60,000 jobs. Figures 1 and 2 below provide draft forecasts and allocations for population and employment growth. More details on these draft forecasts and allocations can be found in the presentation linked in the Attachments section of this report.

Grey County Population Allocations

Municipality	Population Growth, 2021-51	Share of County Growth
The Blue Mountains	11,830	28%
Chatsworth	1,460	3%
Georgian Bluffs	2,690	6%
Grey Highlands	2,790	7%
Hanover	4,850	12%
Meaford	2,570	6%
Southgate	6,340	15%
West Grey	3,000	7%
Owen Sound	6,410	15%

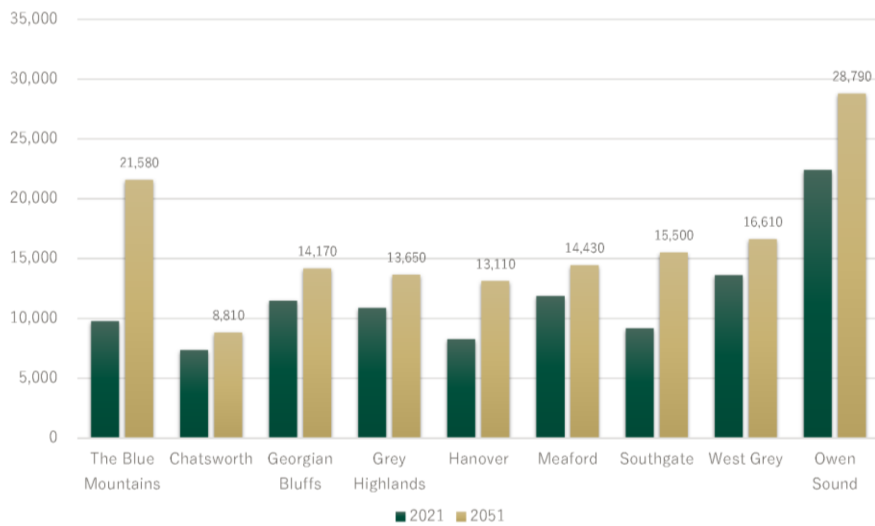


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Figure 1: Draft Population Growth Allocations (Source: Hemson)

Grey County Employment Allocations

Municipality	Employment Growth, 2021-51	Share of County Growth
The Blue Mountains	3,460	21%
Chatsworth	610	4%
Georgian Bluffs	1,360	8%
Grey Highlands	1,360	8%
Hanover	2,600	16%
Meaford	1,180	7%
Southgate	2,000	12%
West Grey	1,250	7%
Owen Sound	2,860	17%

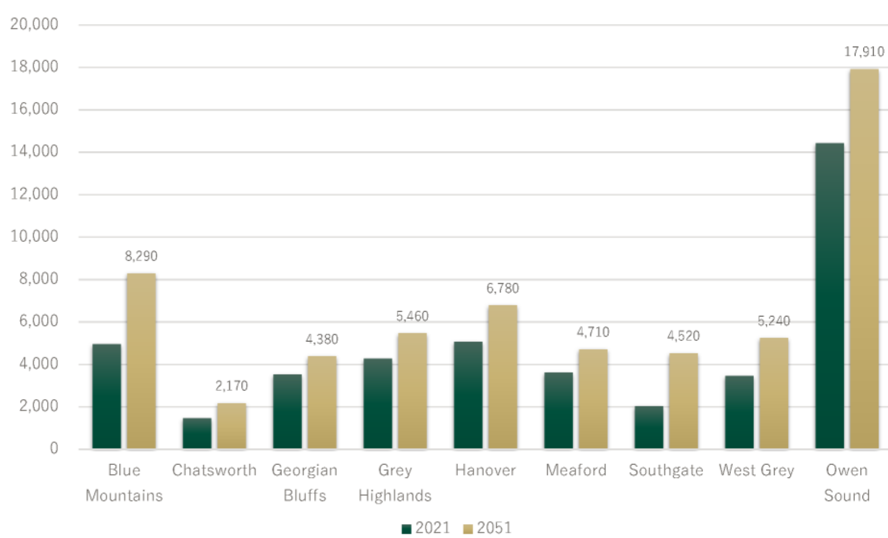

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Figure 2: Draft Employment Growth Allocations (Source: Hemson)

Next Steps

Staff have shared this information with municipalities and public sector entities and are seeking feedback on the draft. The goal is to collect this feedback, along with any comments from County Council, and share it with Hemson. From there Hemson will prepare a final draft early in 2026, which will then be presented to County Council for their final consideration.

In requesting such feedback, staff need to be clear that the overall growth numbers are not expected to change significantly from the draft, as these numbers need to be based on the MOF projections and the province's forecasting and land needs methodology. What may change slightly from the information received is the allocation to each member municipality. In more colloquial terms, the overall size of the 'pie' is generally determined by the MOF projections and provincial methodology, but what can change is the size of the 'slice of the pie' that each member municipality gets allocated.

The County needs to 'keep this project moving' as it has an impact on future County and municipal projects, including updating our respective official plans and development charges background studies / by-laws. The goal is to have the final GMS back before County Council in late January 2026, or very early February.

There is no direct public consultation on this project, but public consultation is to be completed on the ancillary projects, such as official plan updates or development charges updates.

Legislated Requirements

Section 3 of the *Planning Act* provides the province with the ability to issue policy statements. Municipal planning decisions are then required to be consistent with those policy statements. The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 requires Grey County to allocate population and employment growth to its member municipalities.

Financial and Resource Implications

The GMS Update project is being completed using budgeted monies from the 2025 budget. The GMS update is directly growth related and therefore is primarily financed by development charges reserves.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: CAO/Deputy, Economic Development Tourism and Culture, and Planning

☒ External: Member municipalities, school boards, hospitals, and public health

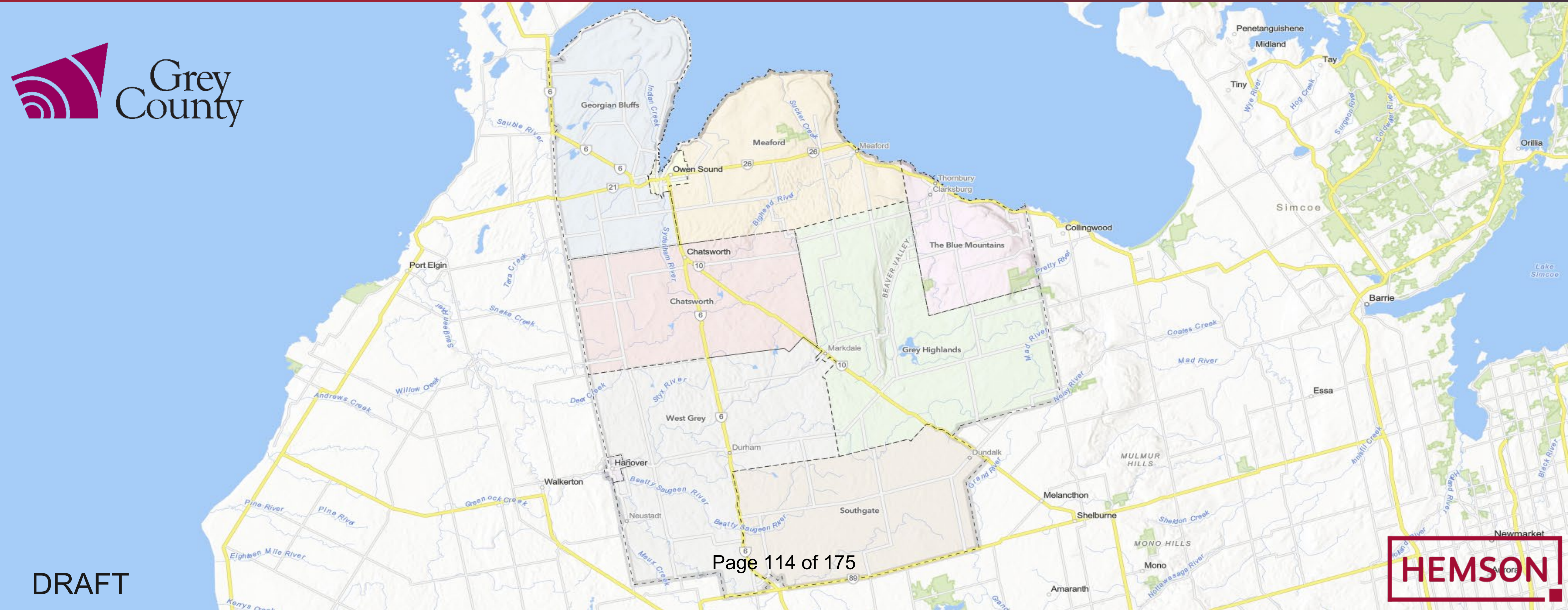
Appendices and Attachments

DRAFT Growth Management Strategy Update Presentation – December 3, 2025

DRAFT - COUNTY OF GREY:
Growth Management Plan Update

December 3, 2025

Grey County



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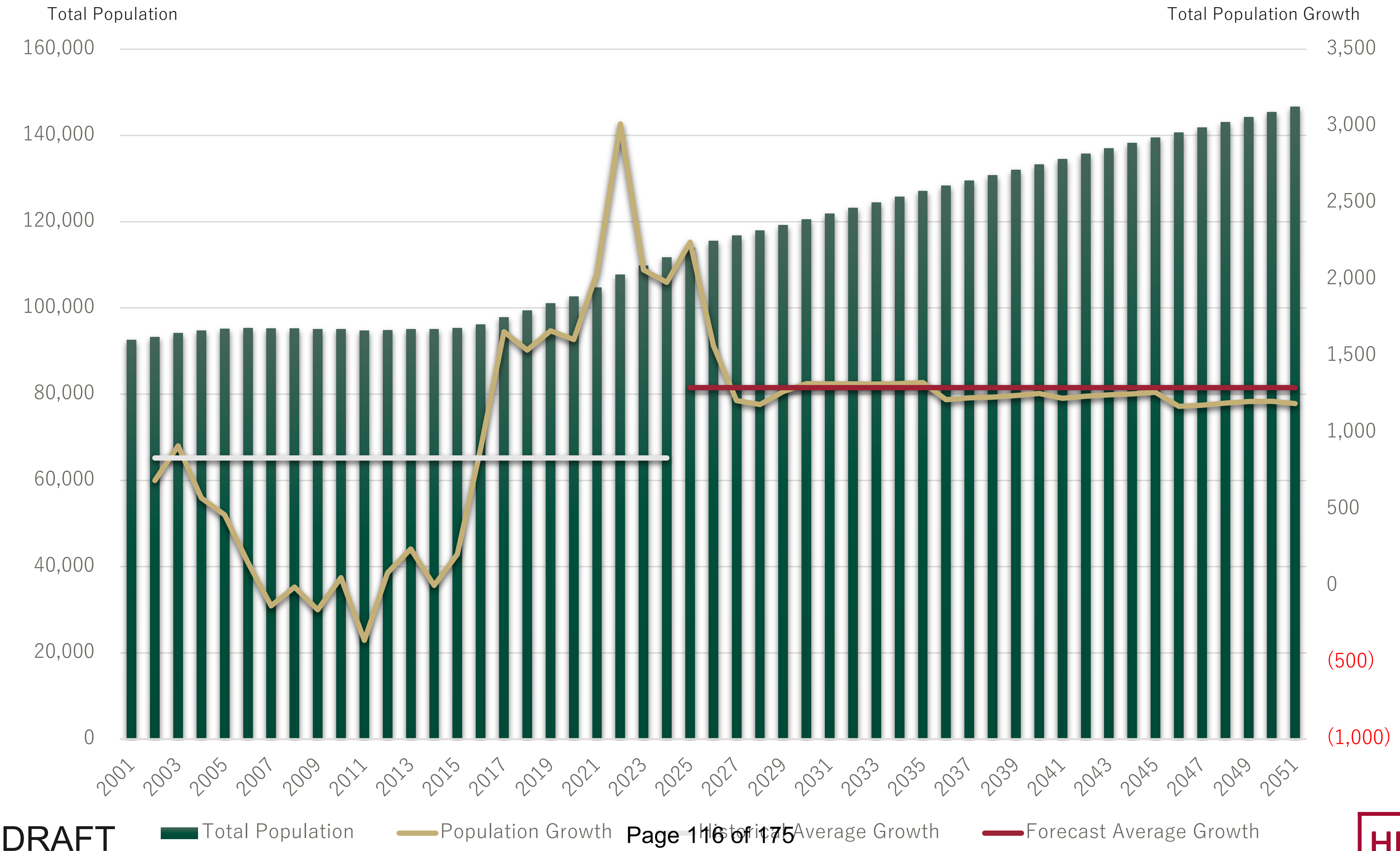
Our Focus Today Is...

- Recap
- Local forecasts to 2051
  - Population
  - Households and housing
  - Employment
- Residential and employment land needs
- Next steps

Recap: 2051 County-Wide Total Population = ~147,000



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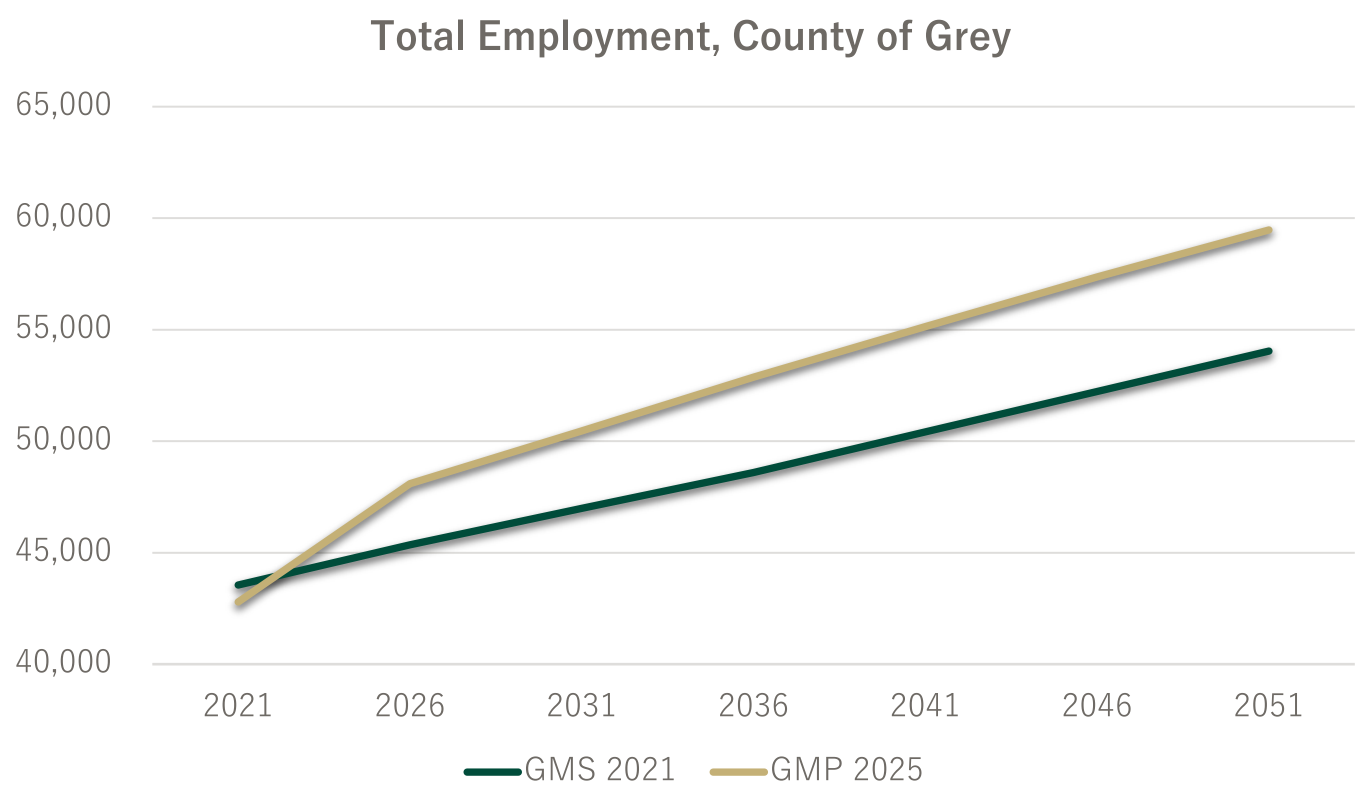
Recap: Employment – Current vs Prior Outlook

- 2021 employment count is unreliable
- 2026 represents accelerated growth, primarily population related
- 2051 total employment is ambitious but reflects County plans



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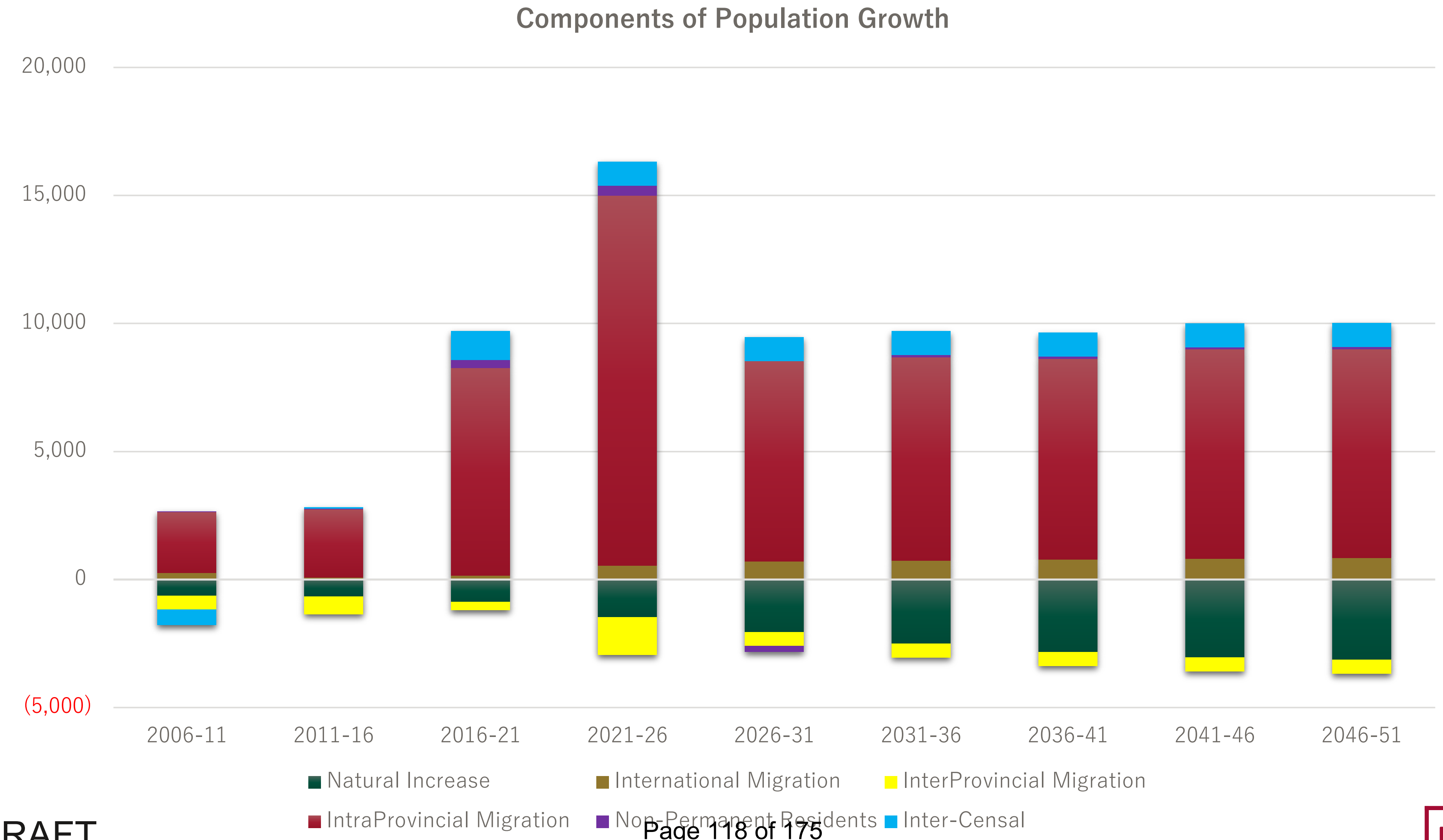
Recap: Components of Population Growth



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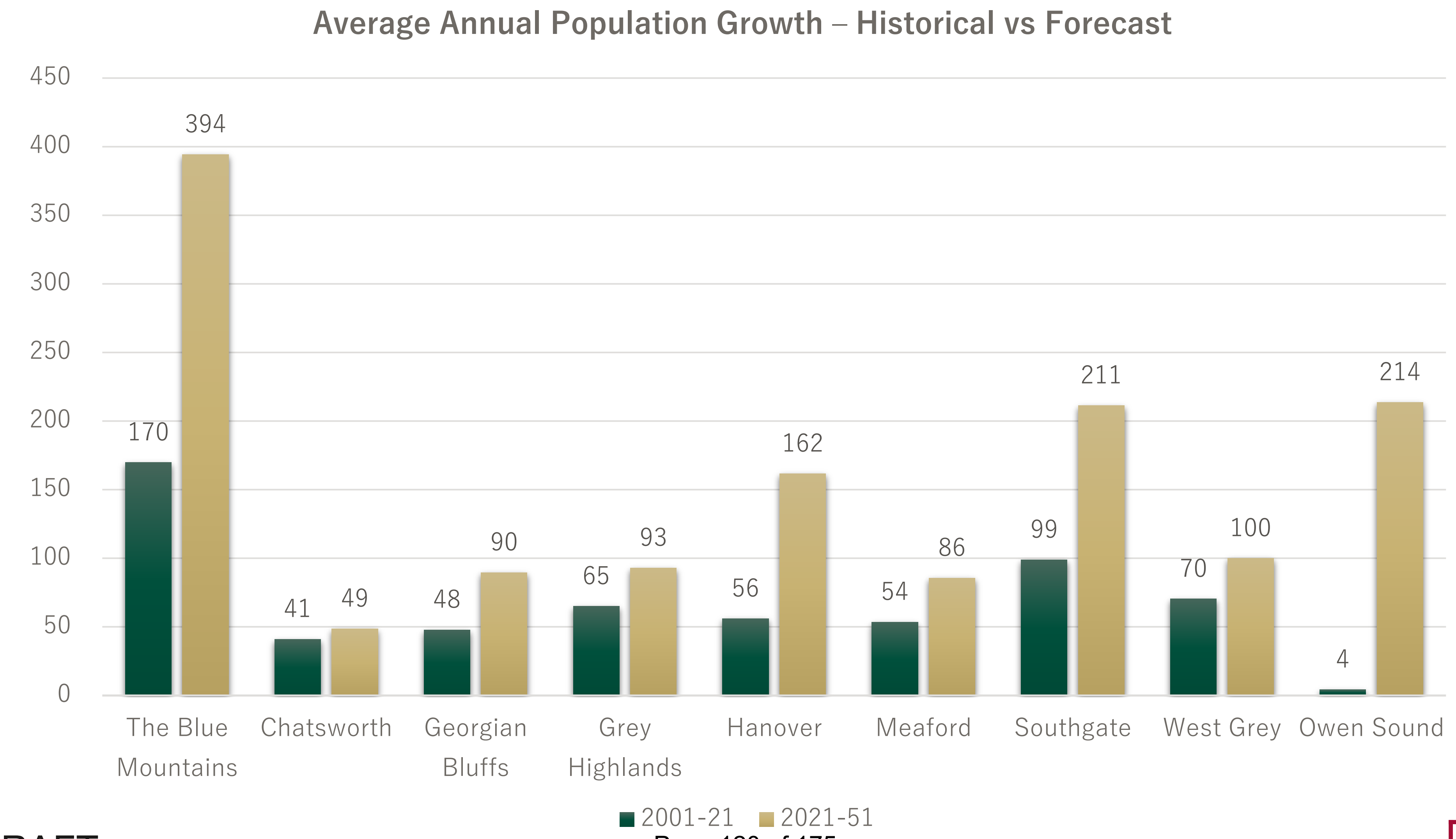
MUNICIPAL ALLOCATIONS

Grey County Population Growth



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Grey County Population Allocations

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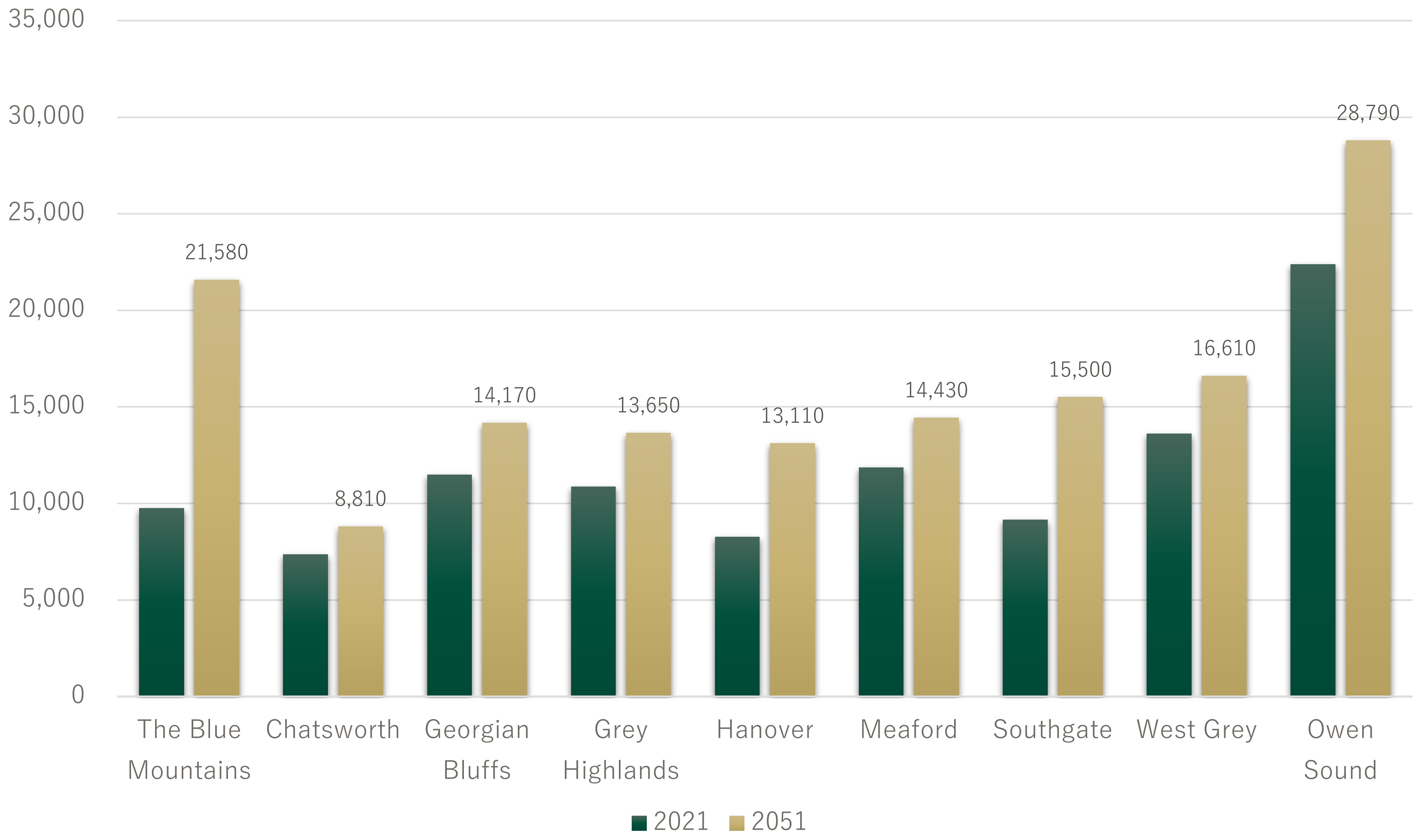

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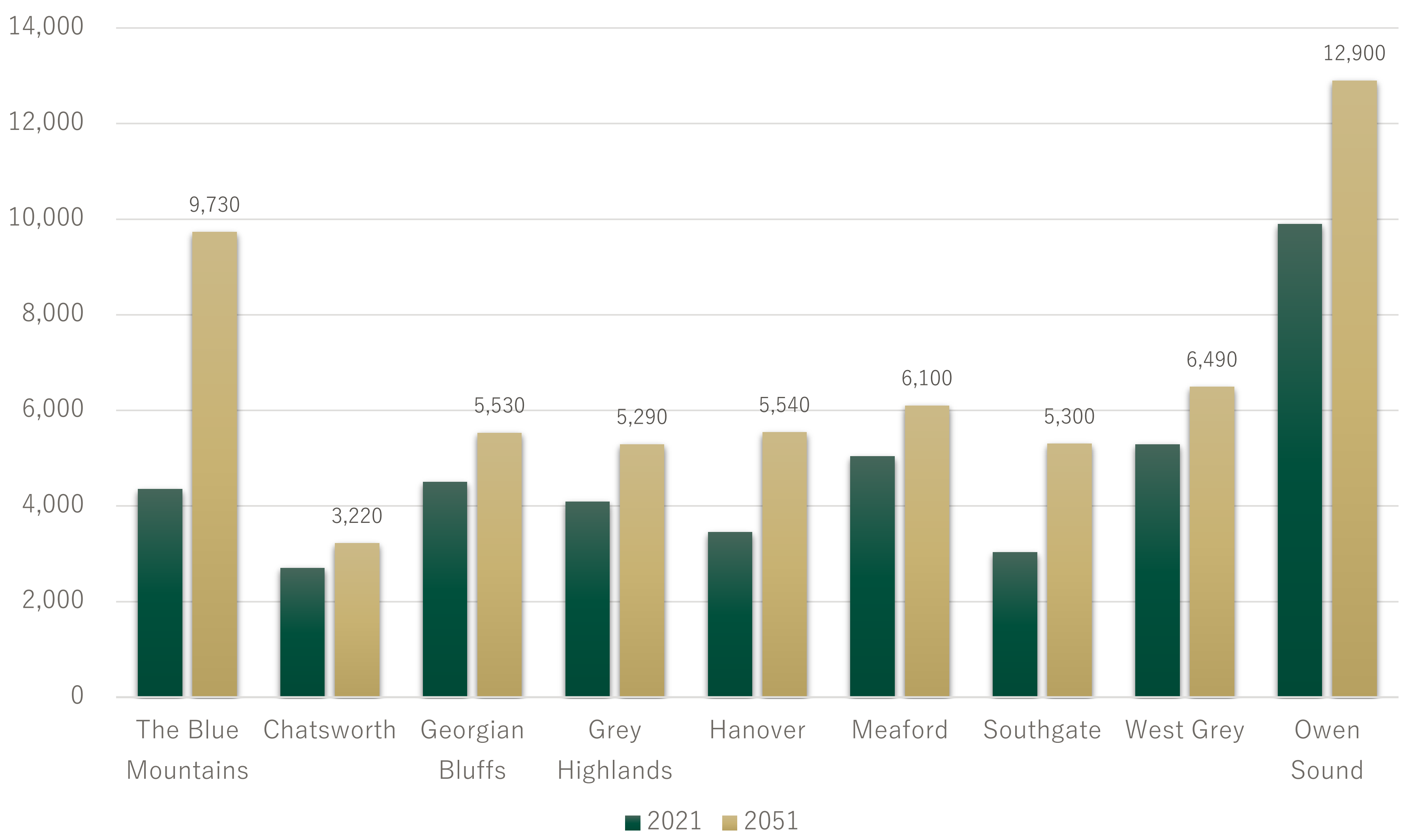
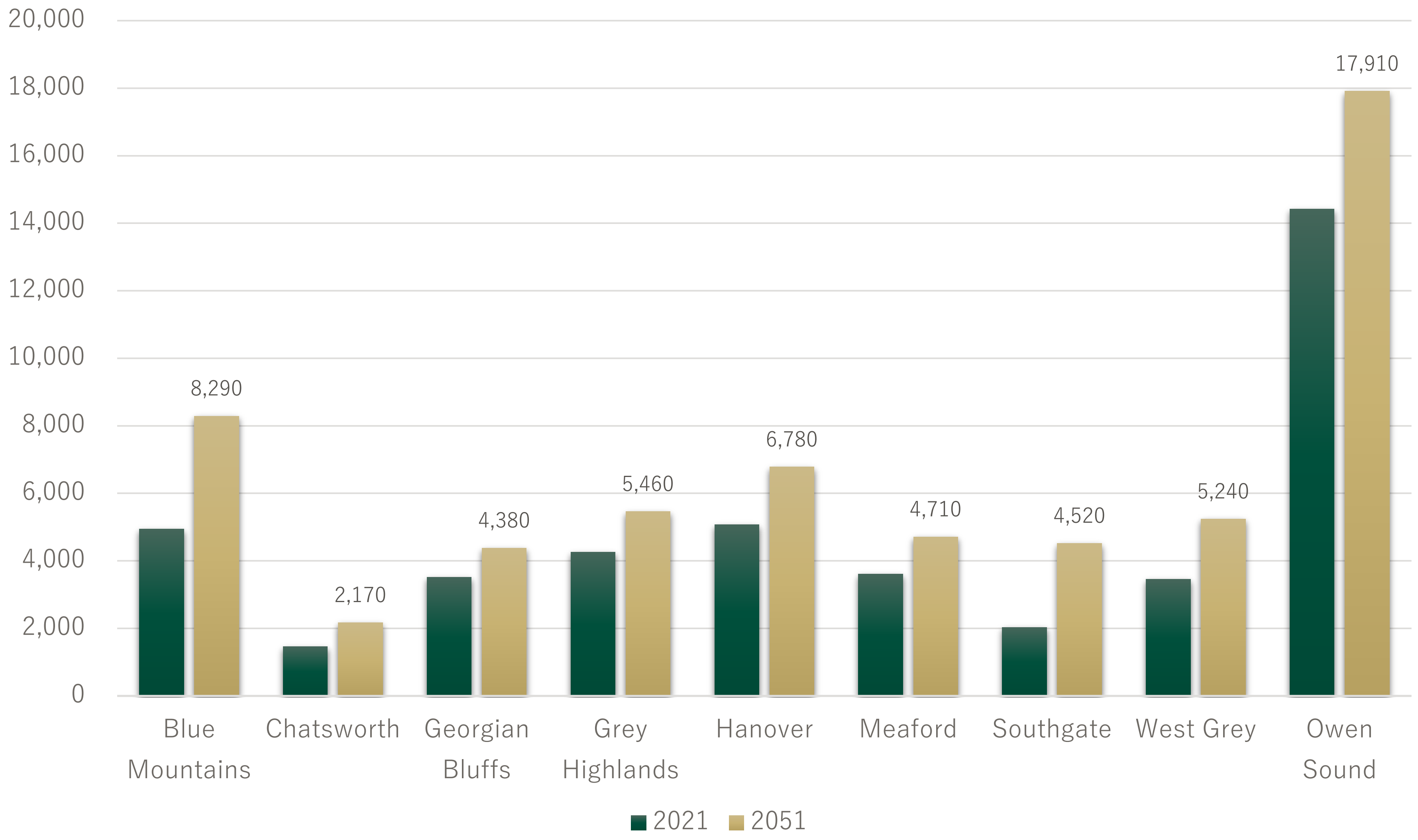
Grey County Household Allocations

Municipality	Household Growth, 2021-51	Share of County Growth
The Blue Mountains	5,380	30%
Chatsworth	520	3%
Georgian Bluffs	1,030	6%
Grey Highlands	1,200	7%
Hanover	2,090	12%
Meaford	1,060	6%
Southgate	2,270	13%
West Grey	1,200	7%
Owen Sound	3,000	17%



Grey County Employment Allocations

Municipality	Employment Growth, 2021-51	Share of County Growth
The Blue Mountains	3,460	21%
Chatsworth	610	4%
Georgian Bluffs	1,360	8%
Grey Highlands	1,360	8%
Hanover	2,600	16%
Meaford	1,180	7%
Southgate	2,000	12%
West Grey	1,250	7%
Owen Sound	2,860	17%



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Proposed Updates to the Projection Methodology Guideline

- Draft Guideline sets out two approaches for allocating a municipality's share of projected growth within its Census Division

  - **Method A** – allocation based on a municipality's current share of the Census Division population

  - **Method B** – allocation based on a municipality's share of population growth within the Census Division over the most recent 10-year period (ideally a consecutive five-year interval)

Recap: MOF Projections vs County Forecast

Projections and forecasts: A projection extrapolates present trends (e.g., fertility, mortality, and migration) to a future state (e.g., population) based on the assumption that the trends would continue. A projection is neutral and does not consider how changes in assumptions or potential uncertainty in the continuation of past trends would impact the future. By contrast, a forecast is a best estimate to predict a future state (e.g., population, employment) that builds on present trends and considers the potential impacts that changing variables and assumptions may have.

Pg. 5 of the Proposed Updates to the Projection Methodology Guideline

Residential Land Needs Assessment

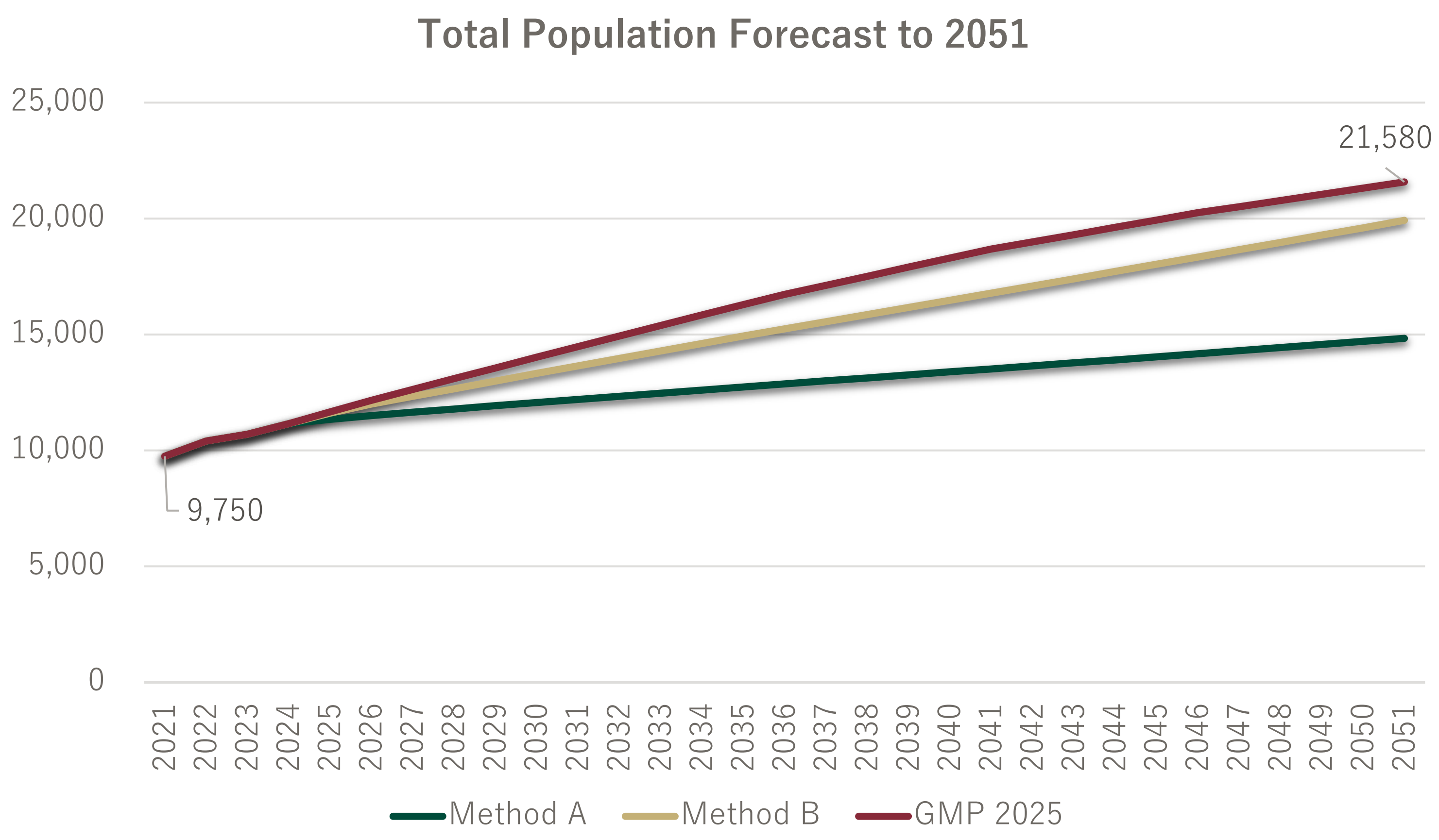
- Households translated to forecast of housing by type
- Housing forecast by type then allocated to:
  - Rural areas
  - Intensification in urban settlement areas
    - Primary (10%; 15% in Owen Sound and Hanover)
    - Secondary (5%)
  - Greenfield areas within settlement areas
- Year 1 of forecast is 2025
- Greenfield vacant land supply developed using County and Municipal data

MUNICIPAL ALLOCATIONS AND LAND NEEDS

Municipal Allocation: The Blue Mountains

<u>Between 2021 and 2051</u>
Blue Mountains will:

1. Add 11,830 net new residents
2. Develop 5,370 new residential units
3. Add 3,340 net new jobs



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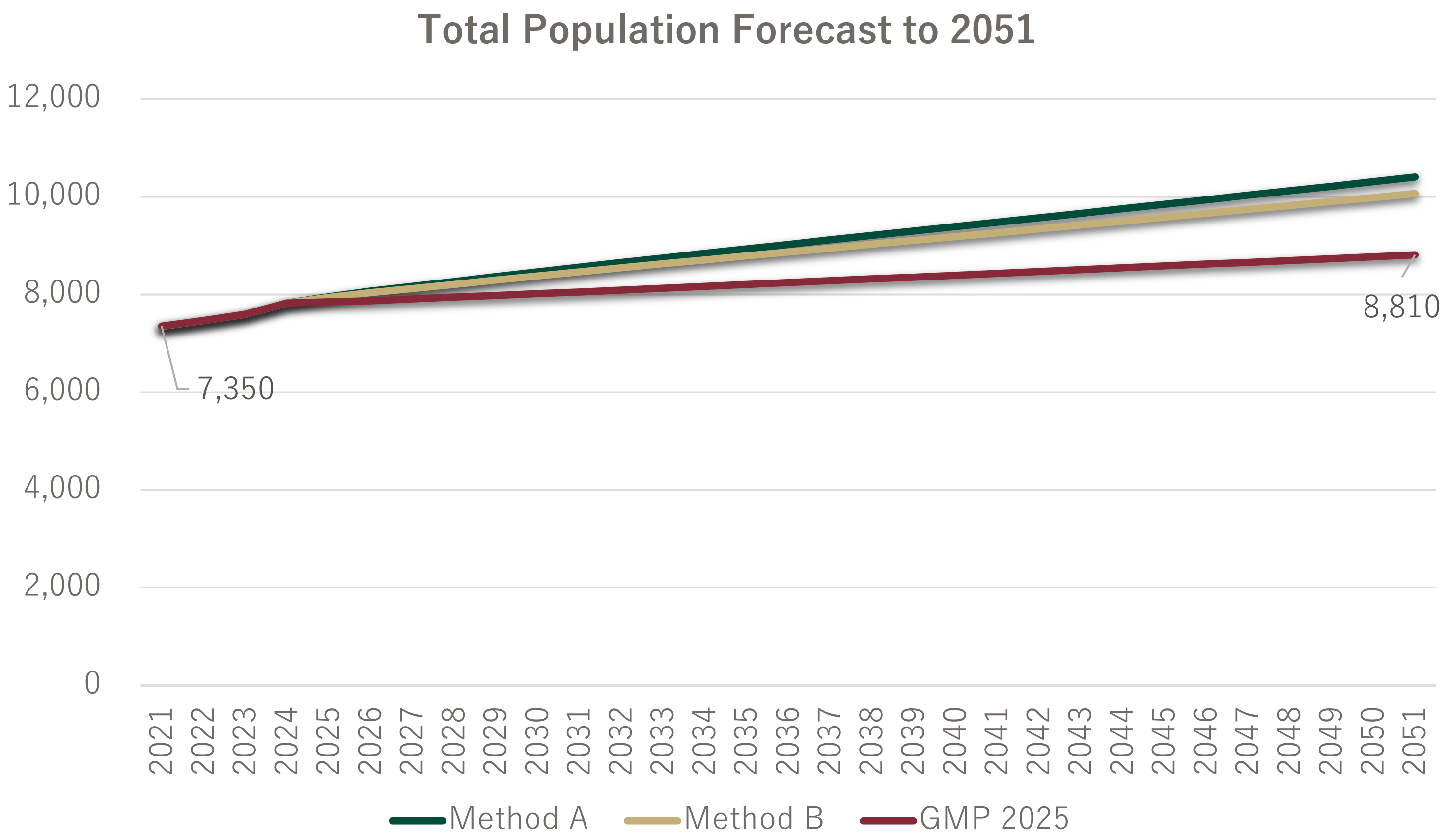
Residential Land Needs: The Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**2,659**	**1,372**	**403**	**4,434**
Rural	*968*	*108*	*0*	*1,076*
Urban - Intensification	*161*	*323*	*323*	*807*
Urban - Greenfield	*1,529*	*942*	*80*	*2,551*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**1,529**	**942**	**80**	**2,551**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**112.03**	**41.39**	**2.47**	**155.89**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**472.43**
Primary				83.28
Secondary				10.56
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				378.59
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				0.00
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**316.54**

Municipal Allocation: Chatsworth

Between 2021 and 2051 Chatsworth will:

1. Add 1,460 net new residents
2. Develop 520 new residential units
3. Add 730 net new jobs



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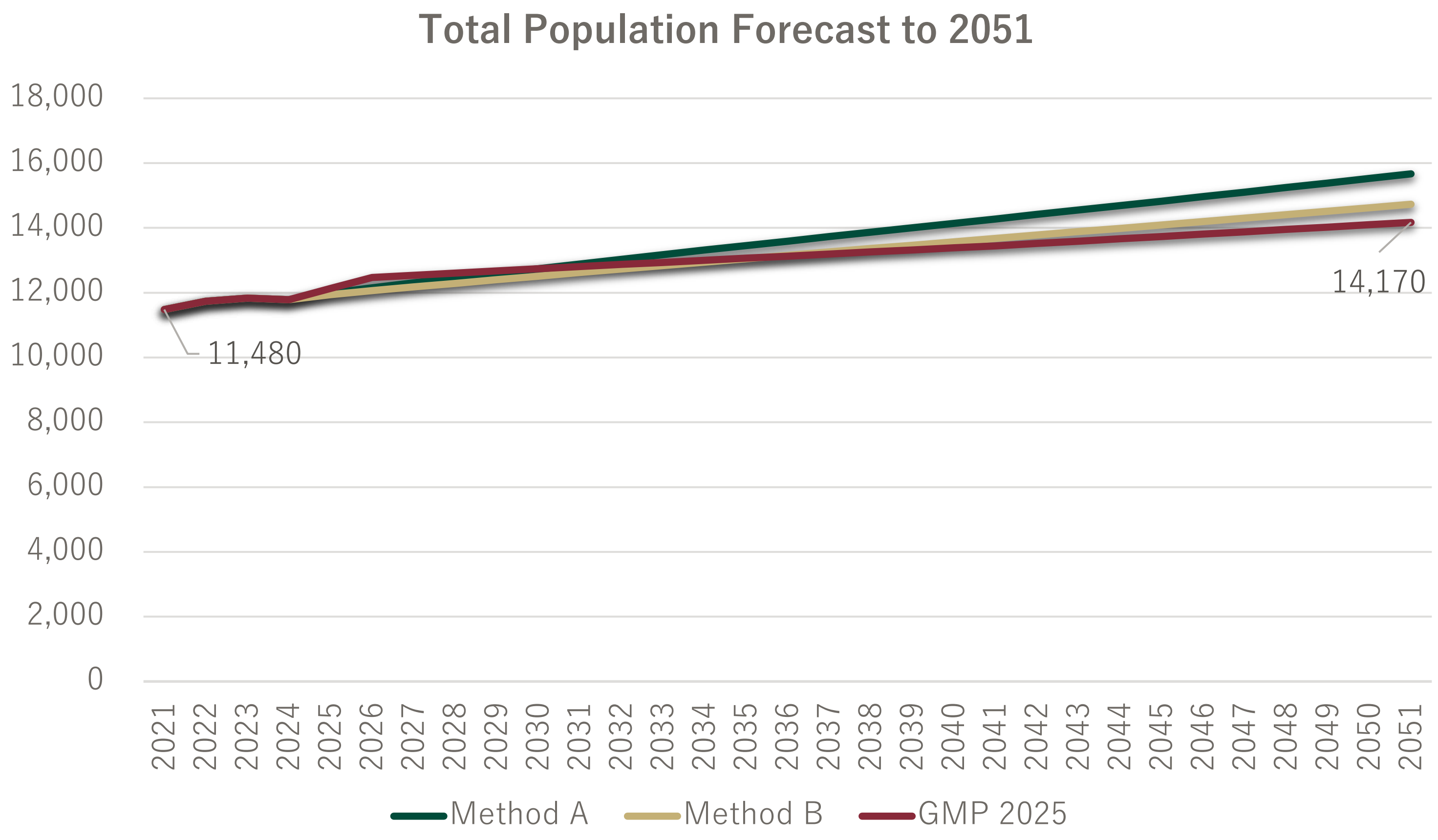
Residential Land Needs: Chatsworth

Chatsworth	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**406**	**0**	**0**	**406**
Rural	*52*	*0*	*0*	*52*
Urban - Intensification	*26*	*0*	*0*	*26*
Urban - Greenfield	*328*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*328*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**328**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**328**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**20.18**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**20.18**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**104.70**
Primary				0.00
Secondary				101.00
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				3.70
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**84.52**

Municipal Allocation: Georgian Bluffs

Between 2021 and 2051 Georgian Bluffs will:

1. Add 2,690 net new residents
2. Develop 1,020 new residential units
3. Add 860 net new jobs



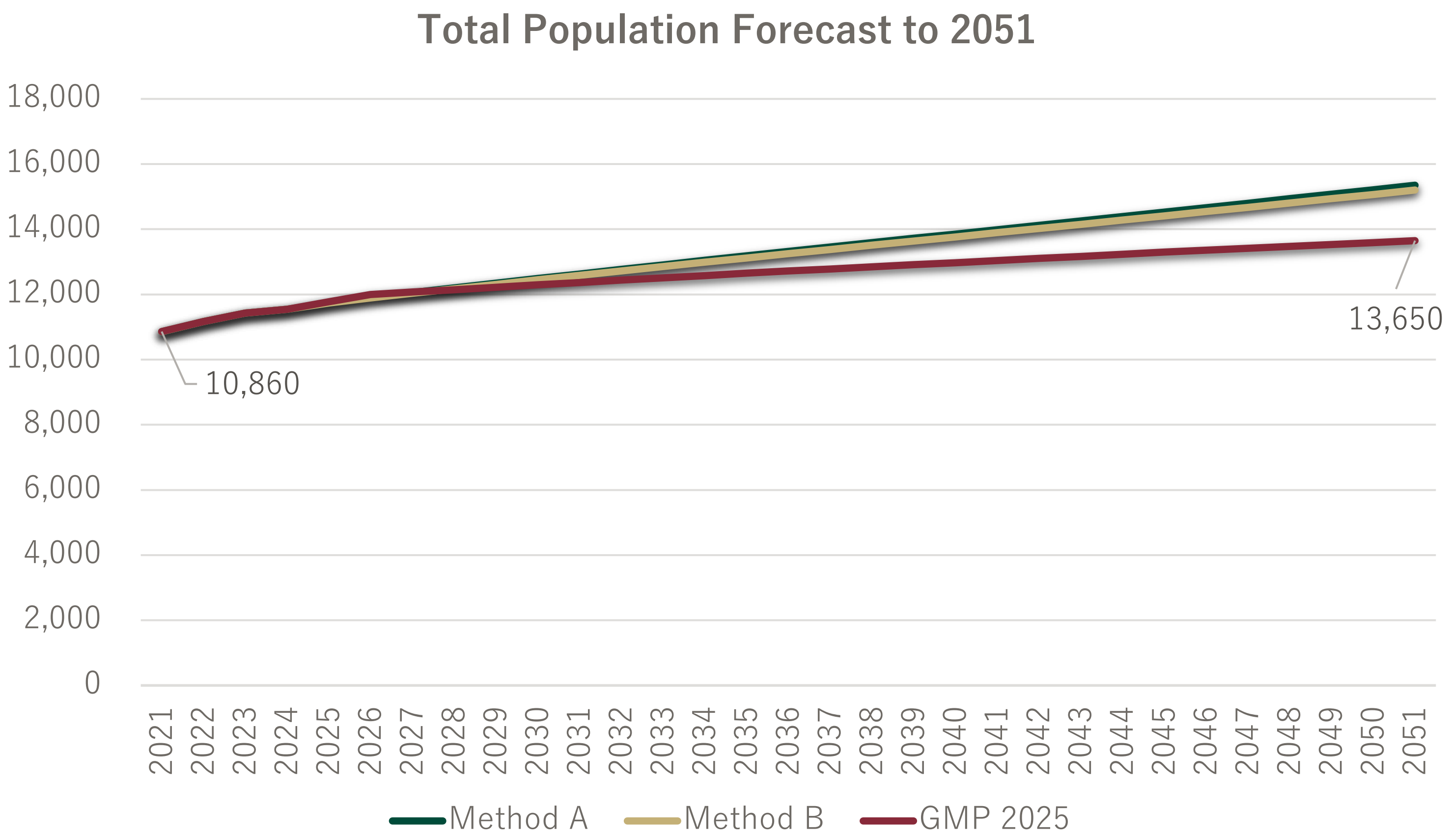
Residential Land Needs: Georgian Bluffs

Georgian Bluffs	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**552**	**85**	**73**	**710**
Rural	*88*	*15*	*0*	*103*
Urban - Intensification	*12*	*70*	*73*	*155*
Urban - Greenfield	*452*	*0*	*n/a*	*452*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**452**	**0**	**n/a**	**452**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**27.82**	**0.00**	**n/a**	**27.82**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**418.53**
Primary				2.75
Secondary				112.01
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				303.77
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**390.71**

Municipal Allocation: Grey Highlands

<u>Between 2021 and 2051</u>
Grey Highlands will:

1. Add 2,790 net new residents
2. Develop 1,200 new residential units
3. Add 1,270 net new jobs



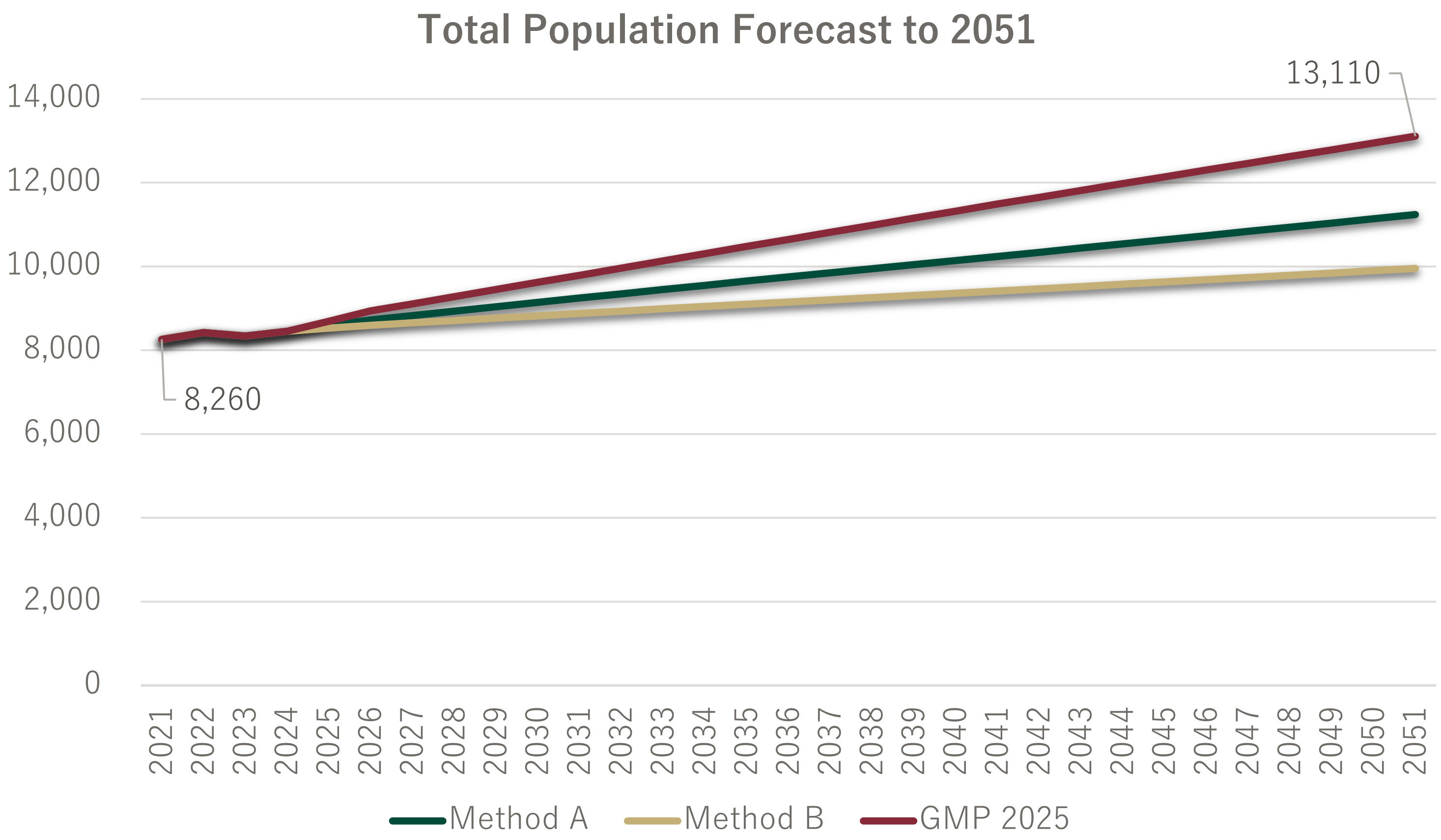
Residential Land Needs: Grey Highlands

Grey Highlands	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**637**	**157**	**5**	**799**
Rural	*102*	*18*	*0*	*120*
Urban - Intensification	*85*	*90*	*5*	*180*
Urban - Greenfield	*450*	*49*	*n/a*	*499*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**450**	**49**	**n/a**	**499**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**27.72**	**2.15**	**n/a**	**29.87**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**215.74**
Primary				64.65
Secondary				134.09
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				1.27
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				15.73
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**185.87**

Municipal Allocation: Hanover

Between 2021 and 2051 Hanover will:

1. Add 4,850 net new residents
2. Develop 2,090 new residential units
3. Add 1,660 net new jobs



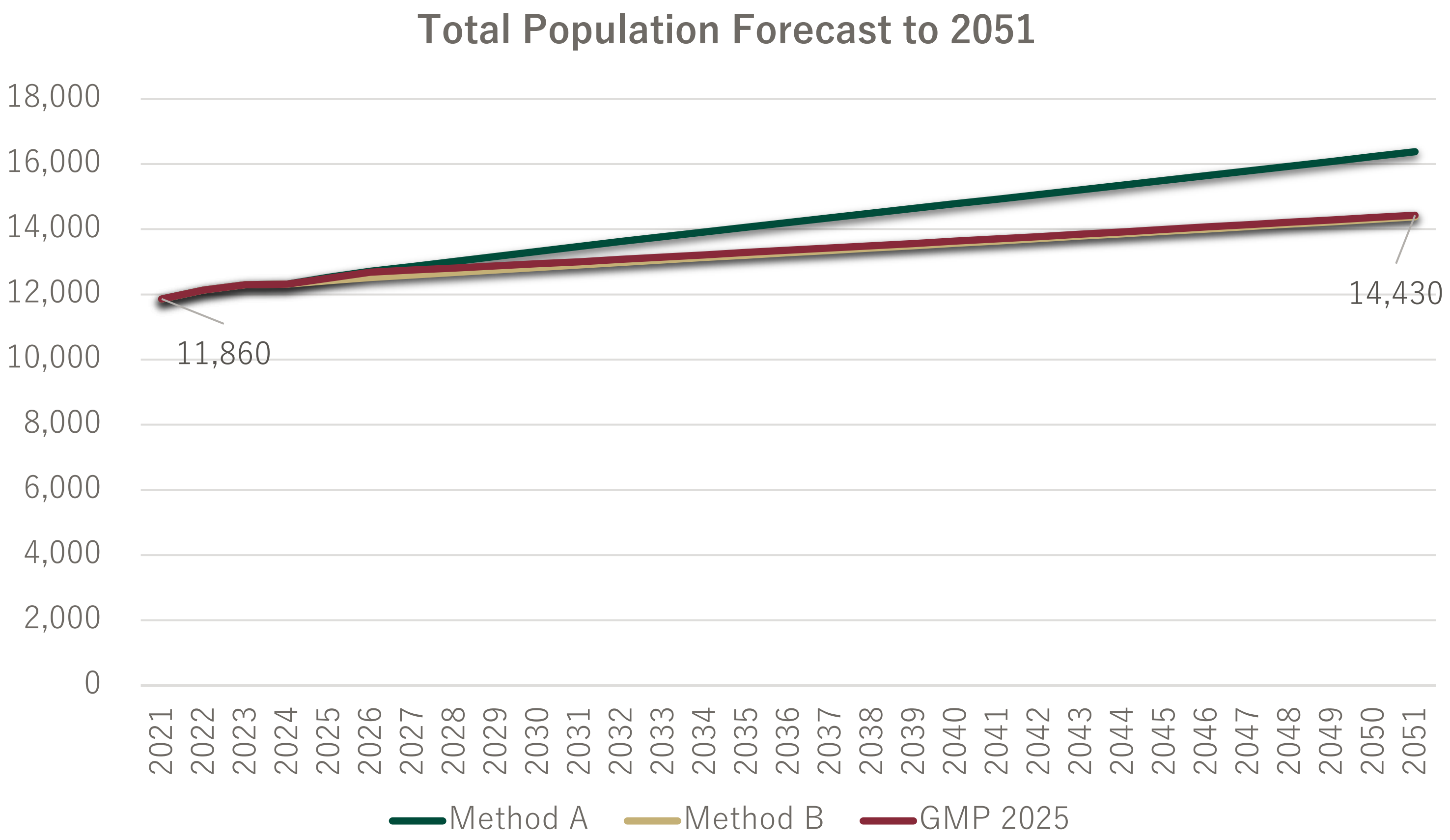
Residential Land Needs: Hanover

Hanover	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**1,041**	**350**	**400**	**1,791**
Rural	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Urban - Intensification	*31*	*63*	*219*	*314*
Urban - Greenfield	*1,010*	*287*	*181*	*1,478*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**1,010**	**287**	**181**	**1,478**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**70.60**	**13.00**	**5.56**	**89.16**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**47.08**
Primary				47.08
Secondary				0.00
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				0.00
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**(42.08)**

Municipal Allocation: Meaford

Between 2021 and 2051 Meaford will:

1. Add 2,570 net new residents
2. Develop 1,070 new residential units
3. Add 1,170 net new jobs



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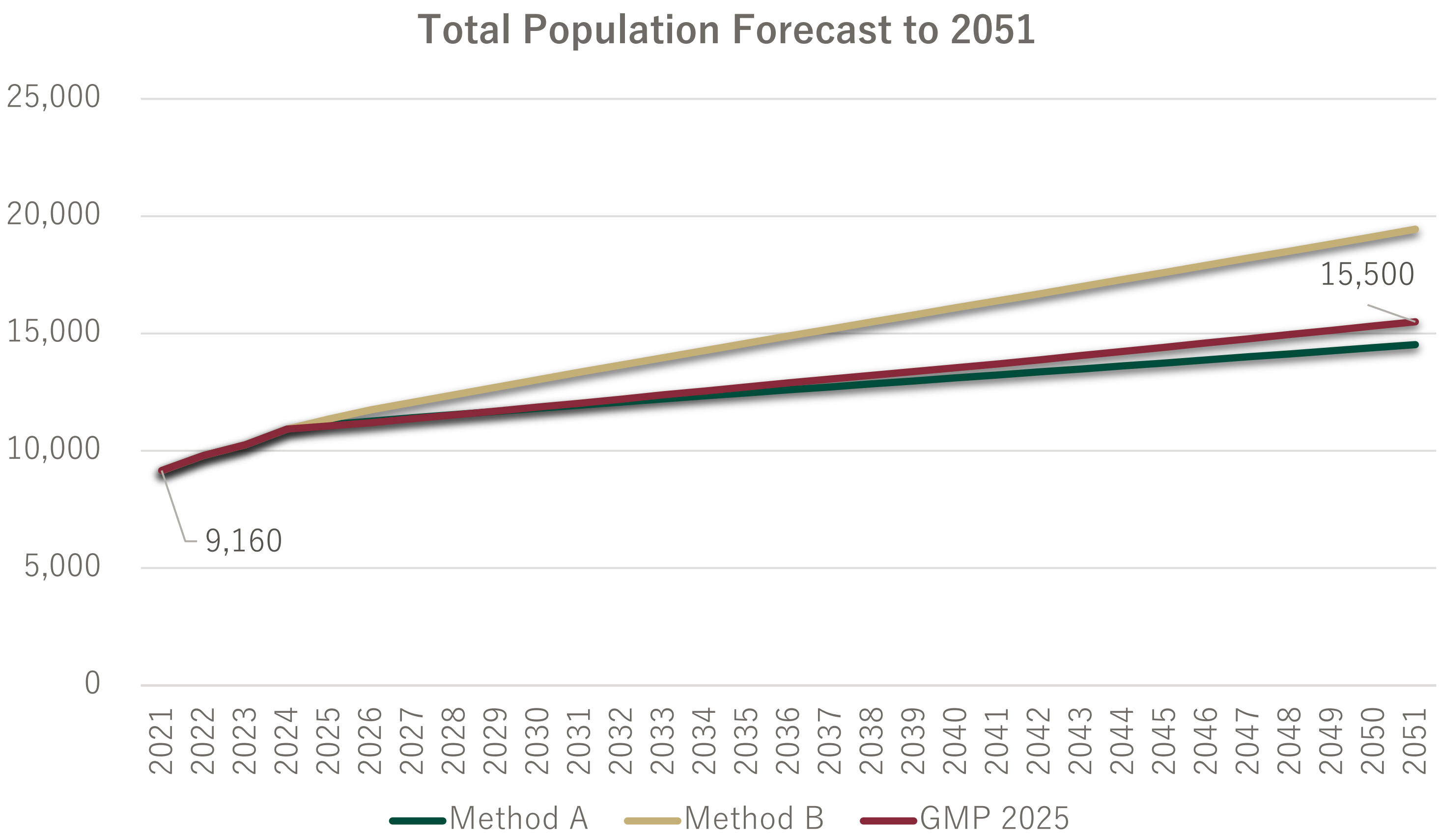
Residential Land Needs: Meaford

Meaford	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**496**	**271**	**56**	**823**
Rural	*90*	*16*	*0*	*106*
Urban - Intensification	*24*	*80*	*56*	*159*
Urban - Greenfield	*382*	*176*	*n/a*	*558*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**382**	**176**	**n/a**	**558**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**23.51**	**7.72**	**n/a**	**31.23**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**118.03**
Primary				44.26
Secondary				14.32
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				59.45
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**86.80**

Municipal Allocation: Southgate

Between 2021 and 2051 Southgate will:

1. Add 6,340 net new residents
2. Develop 2,260 new residential units
3. Add 2,420 net new jobs



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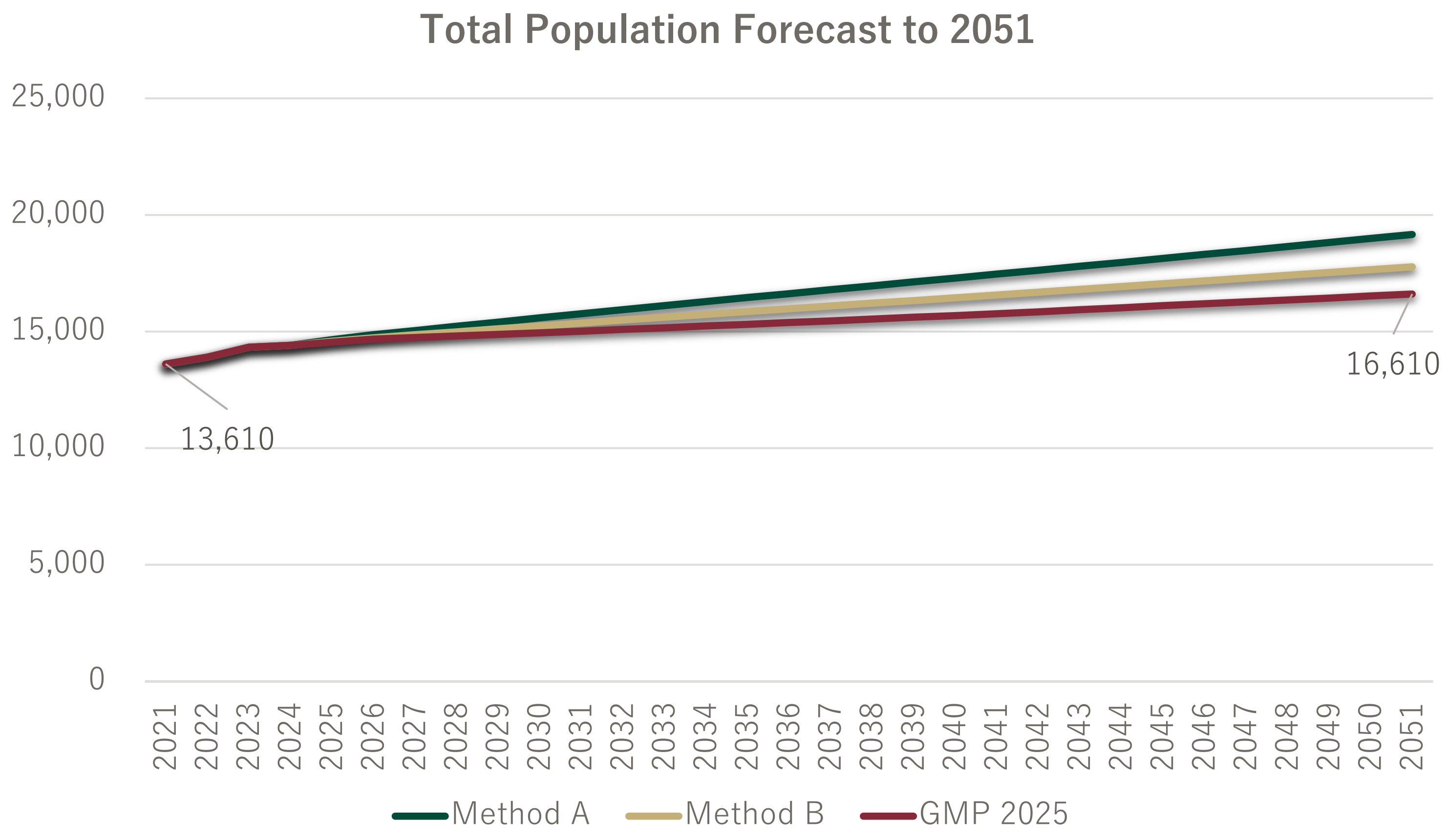
Residential Land Needs: Southgate

Southgate	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**1,277**	**319**	**81**	**1,677**
Rural	*136*	*91*	*0*	*227*
Urban - Intensification	*90*	*170*	*81*	*341*
Urban - Greenfield	*1,051*	*58*	*n/a*	*1,109*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**1,051**	**58**	**n/a**	**1,109**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**64.69**	**2.55**	**n/a**	**67.24**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**181.58**
Primary				108.96
Secondary				31.43
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				41.19
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**114.34**

Municipal Allocation: West Grey

Between 2021 and 2051 West Grey will:

1. Add 3,000 net new residents
2. Develop 1,200 new residential units
3. Add 1,930 net new jobs



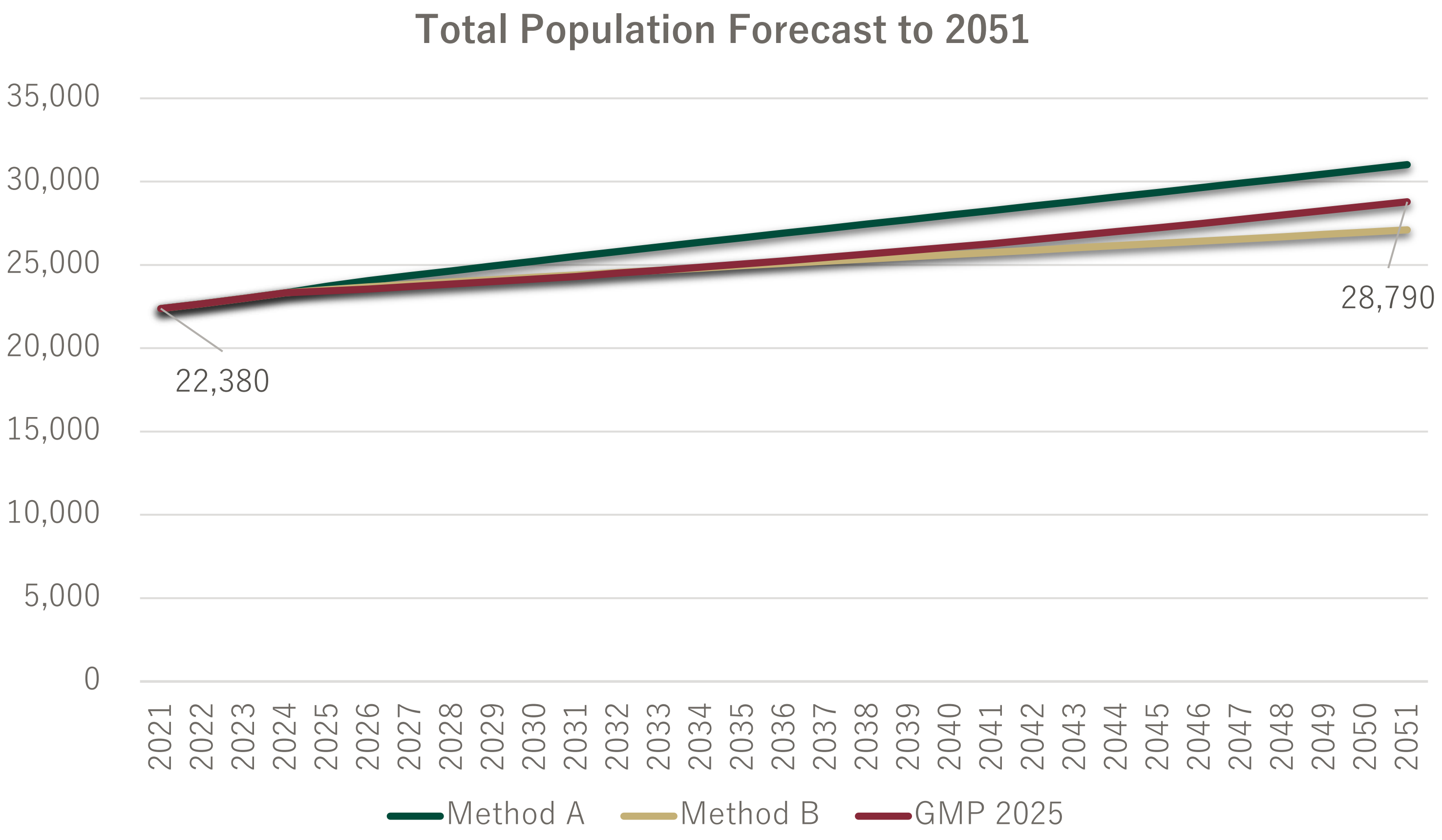
Residential Land Needs: West Grey

West Grey	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**584**	**255**	**0**	**839**
Rural	*72*	*48*	*0*	*120*
Urban - Intensification	*90*	*90*	*0*	*180*
Urban - Greenfield	*422*	*117*	*n/a*	*539*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**422**	**117**	**n/a**	**539**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**25.97**	**5.14**	**n/a**	**31.11**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**105.03**
Primary				77.39
Secondary				27.64
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				0.00
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**73.92**

Municipal Allocation: Owen Sound

Between 2021 and 2051
Owen Sound will:

1. Add 6,410 net new residents
2. Develop 3,000 new residential units
3. Add 3,310 net new jobs



Residential Land Needs: Owen Sound

Owen Sound	Singles and Semis	Rowhouses	Apartments	Total
Unit Demand (2025-2051)	**350**	**707**	**1,530**	**2,587**
Rural	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Urban - Intensification	*0*	*90*	*360*	*450*
Urban - Greenfield	*350*	*617*	*1,170*	*2,137*
Urban Greenfield Land Need (units)	**350**	**617**	**1,170**	**2,137**
Urban Greenfield Land Need (gross ha)	**21.54**	**27.12**	**36.00**	**84.66**
Current Urban Greenfield Land Supply (gross ha)				**260.40**
Primary				260.40
Secondary				0.00
Recreational Resort Settlement Area				0.00
Inland Lakes and Shoreline Settlement Area				0.00
Surplus/Deficit - Greenfield Supply				**175.74**

Residential Land Needs Assessment Summary

- With the exception of Hanover, all municipalities in the County have sufficient lands within the designated settlement areas to accommodate their growth allocation to 2051
- Hanover requires approximately 40 gross ha of residential land

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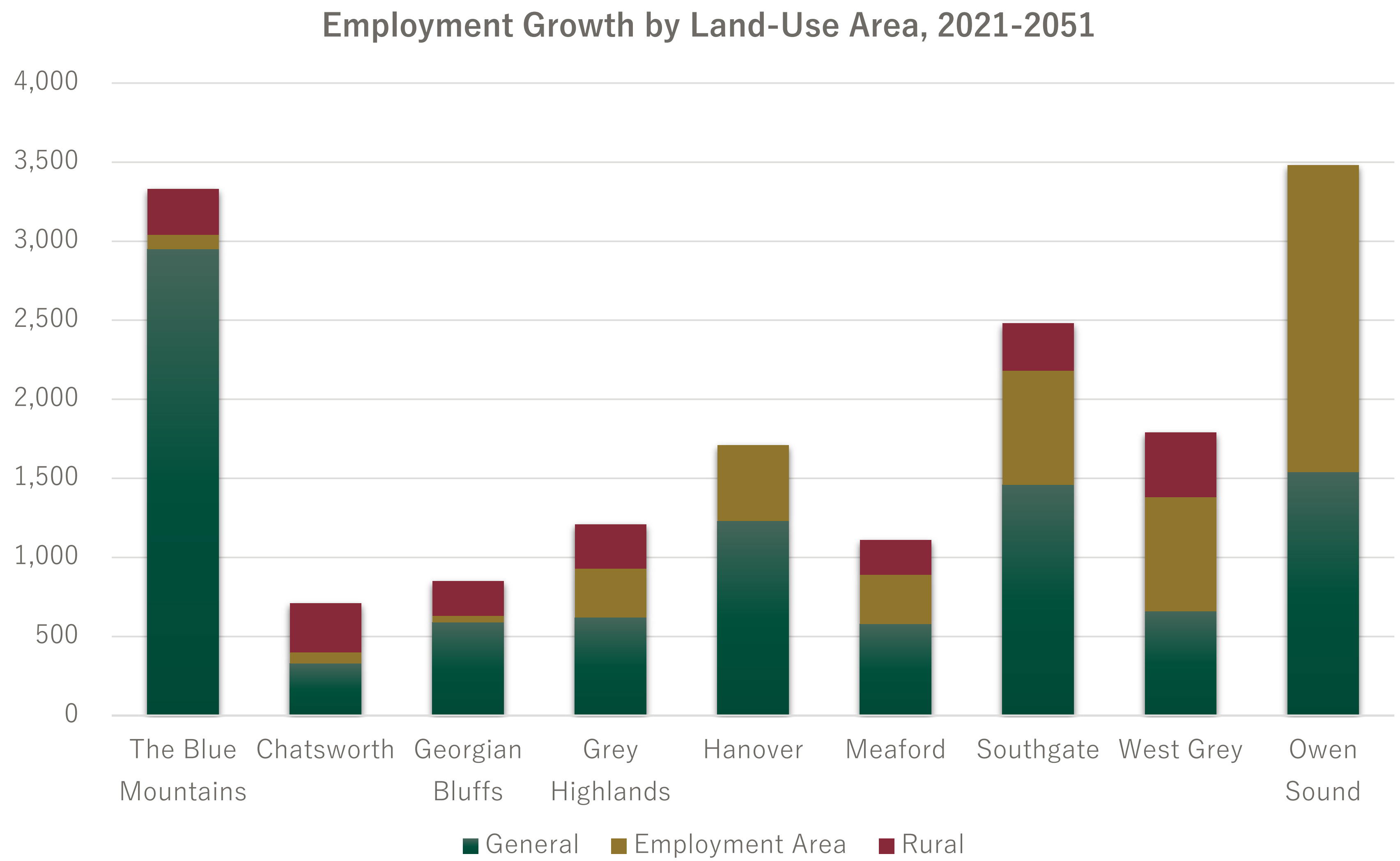
Employment Allocation



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Employment Land Needs

- All Grey County municipalities have sufficient designated employment lands to accommodate their growth allocation

Municipality	Employment Land Supply Required to Accommodate Growth Forecast (gross ha)	Employment Land Forecast* (jobs)
Blue Mountains	6.2	90
Chatsworth	5.0	70
Georgian Bluffs	2.9	40
Grey Highlands	20.4	310
Hanover	24.0	480
Meaford	20.7	310
Southgate	48.2	720
West Grey	48.3	720
Owen Sound	96.8	1,940

*figures are rounded

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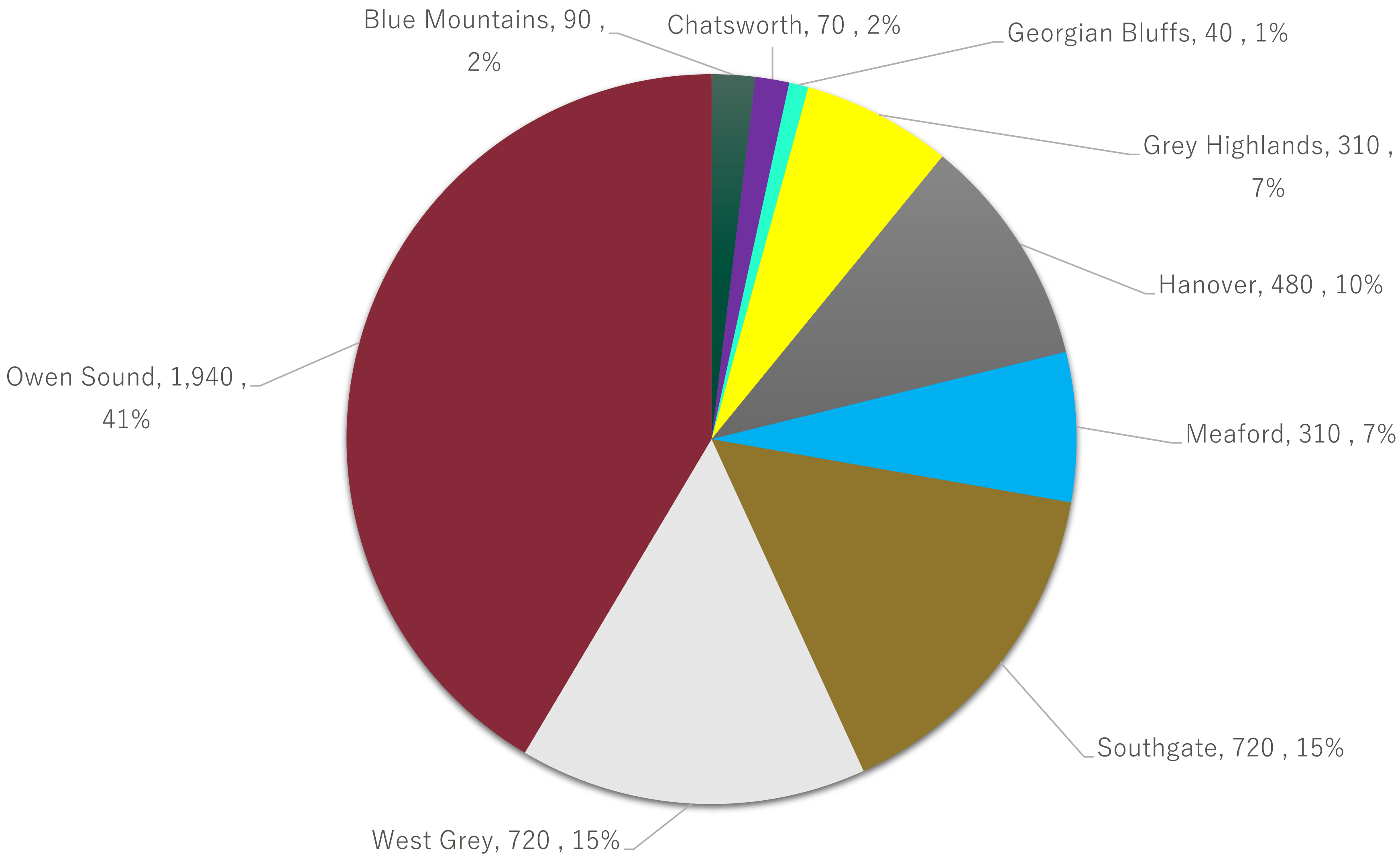
Employment Land Allocation



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Next Steps

- Distribute Municipal Allocations Presentation to Local Municipalities
- Receive Feedback from Local Municipalities
- Revise Municipal Allocations (if required)
- Prepare Report

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	CAOR-CW-20-25
Title:	Boundary Adjustment Proposal – West Grey and Hanover
Prepared by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO Scott Taylor, Director of Planning
Reviewed by:	
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	West Grey and Hanover

Recommendation

1. **That Report CAOR-CW-20-25 regarding the Boundary Adjustment Proposal between Hanover and West Grey be received; and**
2. **That the County of Grey supports the restructuring proposal between the Municipality of West Grey and the Town of Hanover, subject to the restructuring agreement being approved by the respective councils, that would see lands transferred from the Municipality of West Grey to the Town of Hanover; and**
3. **That correspondence be provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town of Hanover, and the Municipality of West Grey expressing such support; and**
4. **That action be taken prior to Council approval as per Section 26.6 (b) of Procedural By-law 5134-22.**

Executive Summary

This report updates County Council on the proposed municipal boundary adjustment (restructuring proposal) between the Town of Hanover and the Municipality of West Grey. The proposal seeks to transfer approximately 1,634 acres from West Grey to Hanover to support future growth, economic development, and infrastructure coordination. The Municipal Act requires support from the County for the Minister to consider approving a restructuring proposal between two member municipalities. It is recommended that support be provided for the restructuring proposal subject to final approval of the restructuring agreement by both West Grey Council and Hanover Council.

Background and Discussion

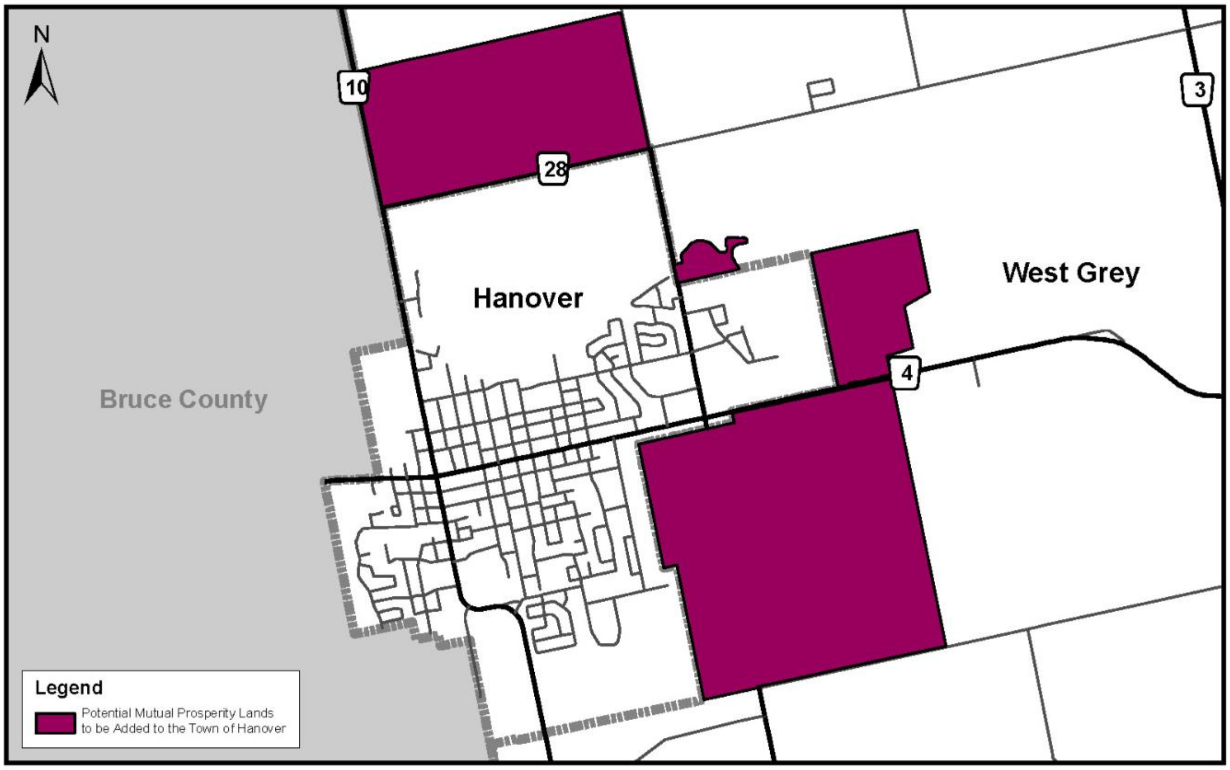
In 2021, Council directed staff to work with interested member municipalities on facilitating discussions on future growth and infrastructure needs where two or more municipal boundaries are involved. Hanover identified a shortage of development lands by 2046 through their Local Growth Management Strategy which was also confirmed through the Grey County Growth Management Study (2021). Based on this identified need, representatives from both municipalities and Grey County have engaged in ongoing discussions to consider options.

A Working Group was established including the Mayor and a council member from each municipality and has met regularly throughout this council term. The Working Group explored a number of options and in the end recommended a boundary adjustment that would see approximately 1,634 acres added to Hanover in exchange for financial compensation to West Grey in the total amount of $10 million that would be paid in equal installments of $500,000 over the next 20 years. This amount is based on financial modelling to offset the loss of future tax assessment for West Grey. The lands proposed to be added to Hanover go beyond the growth needs of the current planning horizon, and these additional lands will allow Hanover to plan for the long-term growth and infrastructure needs. This boundary adjustment will benefit both municipalities and the region as a whole.

The lands proposed for transfer include Lots 1 to 10, Concession 3 NDR, Part lots 11 to 13, Concession 2 NDR, Part lots 16 to 19, Concession 1 NDR, Part lots 8 to 11, Concession 1 SDR, Lots 12 to 17, Concession 1 SDR, Lots 9 to 17, Concession 2 SDR, Geographic Township of Bentinck, currently in the Municipality of West Grey. Figure 1 below show the lands that would be added to Hanover which are referred to as the “Mutual Prosperity Lands,” and are located to the north and east of Hanover’s current boundaries.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been executed between West Grey and Hanover to establish a framework for the restructuring proposal and to identify the proposed terms of the restructuring agreement. The agreement would transfer and adjust certain lands from West Grey to Hanover to support future municipal growth, infrastructure coordination, and economic development, while protecting the rights of existing landowners and respecting agricultural operations. The agreement specifies that landowners retain the right to farm, and that no landowner will be compelled to sell or develop their property except in accordance with voluntary sale or limited expropriation provisions for essential public works. The MOU also notes that Hanover is committed to phasing in the tax increase over 5 years to mitigate impacts on property owners based on their taxes increasing slightly as Hanover’s tax rates are currently higher than West Grey’s.

Figure 1 – Proposed Lands to be Added to the Town of Hanover



The following is a summary of the potential benefits of the restructuring proposal:

West Grey:

- Receives financial compensation for the loss of future tax assessment, which can be reinvested in infrastructure and service enhancements.
- Spin-off growth potential in residential and industrial sectors.
- New development opportunities in Hanover will provide new services and amenities benefiting both municipalities.

Hanover:

- Gains new lands for long-term commercial, industrial, and residential development.
- Development will result in new assessment and taxes, increased employment opportunities, and housing for the community and the region.

Grey County:

- New revenue through development (i.e. assessment growth).
- Future employment opportunities and housing for residents.
- Positions south Grey County as a vibrant economic zone with future shovel-ready lands available for development.

A joint public meeting was held on November 19, 2025, at Elmwood Community Centre, providing residents with details of the proposal and an opportunity to share comments prior to council decisions. Written comments were accepted until November 26, 2025. All submissions form part of the public record and will be considered by both councils. The meeting agenda included messages from both mayors, an overview of the proposal, and time for public comments. Council and staff remained available after the meeting to help answer any further questions including questions regarding estimated property tax increases and next steps.

The following identifies the comments and questions received:

- Requests for clarification on property impacts.
- Questions about tax implications and service changes.
- Concerns about increased taxes, traffic, subdivisions, and commercial development.
- Questions regarding whether hunting will still be permitted on the lands once the lands are added to Hanover'
- Suggestion that the proposal be re-evaluated, consider alternatives and ensure the tax base is not affected by the costs associated with this expansion. Requested that Hanover Council reconsider the requirement to connect to water and sewer services once extended in the area or a plan to assist with financial burden.
- Not interested in having urban development on their lands and opposed to the restructuring proposal.
- Clarification regarding the benefits of the restructuring proposal for both municipalities and the affected property owners.
- Questions regarding the financial modelling and assessment reports used to help determine financial compensation.
- Support from Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for responsible growth and recommendations for updating floodplain mapping and reviewing erosion hazards and wetlands.
- Questions about next steps and when the lands would be updated in future official plan and zoning update processes.

All comments and questions received were either answered during the public meeting or have been addressed as part of the Frequently Asked Questions sections on both Hanover and West Grey's websites which will be updated as more comments and questions are received.

In addition to the Public Meeting, engagement with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation has commenced by both municipalities, as well as engagement with Grey Federation of Agriculture and Grey Agricultural Services. This matter has also been included on the Grey County Agricultural Services Committee agenda scheduled for December 10, 2025 and staff will be able to verbally share any comments and feedback received by the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Both Mayors have also updated MPP Paul Vickers. Municipal and County staff are in active discussions with Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) staff to ensure that all the restructuring submission requirements as per the Municipal Act have been addressed.

Next Steps

The Councils of Hanover and West Grey will review all comments received during the consultation process and carefully consider the proposed Mutual Prosperity Boundary Adjustment Agreement. Staff reports for review and consideration of the agreement by both Hanover and West Grey Councils will occur the week of December 15. Should both councils approve the agreement, the next step will be to prepare and submit a formal restructuring proposal to the MMAH. This submission is anticipated by the end of 2025 or early 2026. The Minister will review the agreement and, through a Minister’s Order, may approve the restructuring. It is important to note that there is no appeal process for a Minister’s Order. The effective date of the boundary adjustment is projected to be early 2026, following the Minister’s approval.

After the Minister’s Order is issued, amendments to the County and Town Official Plans and Town and Municipal Comprehensive Zoning By-laws will be required to reflect the new municipal boundaries. These updates will guide future development, which is expected to include commercial, industrial, and residential uses. No specific development plans exist at this time, and further public consultation will occur when Hanover and Grey County update their planning documents. Development within the affected lands will be phased over a period of many years.

Farming operations will continue uninterrupted, and landowners will retain the right to farm as long as they choose. Expanding development lands around primary settlement areas is considered best practice to reduce sprawl and protect agricultural lands.

Regarding services, Hanover will provide most municipal services, including police, fire, by-law enforcement, and waste management. Road maintenance may involve shared arrangements with Grey County or West Grey and those details will be part of the implementation process following approval of the restructuring order. Water and sanitary services will be extended gradually over many years, and connection will be required once services are available, though costs are not yet determined.

Until Hanover updates its Official Plan and zoning by-law, West Grey’s zoning by-law and Grey County’s Official Plan will continue to apply to the affected lands.

Recommendation

Given that both municipal councils have supported this boundary adjustment in-principle, the potential benefits that will be achieved as a result of this restructuring proposal, and the commitment to mitigate any potential impacts to property owners within the mutual prosperity lands, it is recommended that County Council support this restructuring proposal subject to both municipal Councils approving the restructuring agreement.

Legislated Requirements

Sections 171 and 173 of the Municipal Act sets out the process and framework for municipal restructuring proposals along with accompanying regulations.

Financial and Resource Implications

Hanover will provide financial compensation of $10 million to West Grey, paid in equal installments of $500,000 over 20 years. This amount is based on financial modelling to offset the loss of future tax assessment for West Grey. The payment model is designed to be simple and predictable.

Properties moved into Hanover will pay taxes at Hanover’s rate, which is higher than West Grey’s. Hanover is committed to phasing in the tax increase over five years to mitigate impacts on property owners. For example, a residential property assessed at $250,000 would see a phased-in increase of $521.80 over five years, while farmland assessed at $1,000,000 would see a phased-in increase of $455.01 over the same period.

Hanover will provide most municipal services to the transferred properties, including police, fire, bylaw, library, parks, recreation, culture, and waste management. A 0.5% tax levy increase is proposed for Hanover residents over the next five years to support payments to West Grey.

Relevant Consultation

☒ Internal: Clerks, Communications, Finance, Legal Services, and Planning

☒ External: The Public, West Grey, Hanover, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Appendices and Attachments

None.

Economic Development

Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out a framework for collaboration between Grey County and its nine member municipalities as it relates to economic development and investment readiness, to signal mutual commitment, streamline cooperation and create a clearer, more attractive environment for investors.

Guiding Document

The Economic Development, Tourism & Culture (EDTC) Master Plan shall serve as the foundational document guiding all collaborative efforts outlined in this MOU. The County will establish a cohesive regional vision through the EDTC Master Plan by applying a systems-based approach to economic development and investment readiness. Workplans and associated actions will be developed in alignment with the priorities identified in the EDTC Master Plan, ensuring consistency, strategic focus, and measurable impact across the region.

Scope

To begin, the scope of this MOU will be limited to the first two priorities from the Economic Development, Tourism & Culture Master Plan:

- Priority 1: Leadership & Collaboration
- Priority 2: Investment Readiness

Guiding Principles

- Mutual Respect and Trust - Parties commit to working together in good faith, respecting each other's roles, expertise, and contributions.
- Shared Vision and Goals - The collaboration is grounded in a common understanding of desired outcomes, such as regional prosperity and sustainable growth.
- Transparency and Accountability - Open communication and clear responsibilities are maintained to ensure all parties are accountable for their commitments; this includes maintaining confidentiality as necessary.

- Collaboration and Coordination - Efforts are coordinated to avoid duplication, leveraging collective strengths and resources, to maximize impact across the County and its sectors.
- Equity and Inclusion - Activities and decisions will reflect a commitment to mutual benefit across all Grey County municipalities.
- Evidence-Based Decision Making - Planning and implementation will be informed by data, research, and best practices.
- Flexibility and Adaptability - The MOU allows for adjustments as priorities evolve or new opportunities arise.

Rationale

- Clarify Roles and Expectations - Establishes who is responsible for what, reducing ambiguity and potential conflict.
- Formalize Collaboration - Provides a documented commitment to work together, which can strengthen trust and legitimacy.
- Align Strategic Priorities - Ensures that all parties are working toward shared objectives, such as those outlined in the EDTC Master Plan; County and Municipal plans should speak to one another.
- Support Funding and Resource Allocation - Demonstrates coordinated planning, which can be critical for securing grants or investments.
- Enable Long-Term Planning - Creates a foundation for sustained collaboration beyond short-term projects or political cycles.
- Promote Regional Cohesion - Encourages a unified approach to economic development that transcends municipal boundaries and fosters regional identity.

Roles and Responsibilities

Grey County

- Position the region for long-term growth and sustainability through systems mapping and attention to local, provincial, national, and global trends and propose relevant projects to municipal partners for consideration.
- Develop tools and templates, including a shared data platform for use by municipalities and partners.
- Lead regional data collection and analysis, support analysis of local data.
- Lead investment attraction: first point of contact with Invest Ontario to facilitate site selectors and maintain inventory of marketable investment-ready sites.
- Lead investment attraction marketing, including a website and brand.
- Convene Quarterly Economic Development Roundtables with municipal partners, including shared professional development and training opportunities.
- Provide funding or in-kind Support for joint initiatives where feasible.

Member Municipalities

- Determine local community vision, clear determination of go/no go investments and preferred location of employment lands.
- Lead Community Economic Development efforts, including determination of individual, local priorities.
- Lead Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Activities that build relationships and knowledge with businesses and landowners; share relevant data with the County.
- Identify and maintain highest and best use land and buildings inventory, including up-to-date zoning and servicing information in a shared template database.
- Designate a Point Person for economic development coordination.

Shared

- Prioritize strategic, long-term thinking and where possible, pursue joint initiatives that can support investment readiness.
- Develop and update a County-Wide Economic Development, Tourism & Culture Master Plan every five years to ensure the County and Municipal strategies speak to one another; work from guiding document collectively and individually.
- Consistently use the shared data platforms, tools and resources developed.
- Participate in the Economic Development Leadership Series.
- Respect the value of relationships each party has built.
- Ensure consistency of investment ready messaging and branding across platforms and communications.
- Champion each other and speak with pride about ourselves and each other.
- Collaborate on funding applications for regional economic development and investment readiness programs.
- Work towards consistency across planning and development policies, templates, and processes.
- Share success through simple acknowledgements and shared platforms where applicable, such as press releases, dedicated webpages, events and delegations and engagements.

Project Specific Workplans

- To be determined annually where appropriate between the County and each Member Municipality (some projects may involve multiple municipalities).
- Information will remain confidential between parties when applicable related to investment opportunities or specific properties, to protect negotiating positions and trade secrets.
- The member municipality(ies) will maintain final decision on project acceptance.

- To include program and activity outlines, timeline, and commitment expectations, assign representatives, and map mutually agreed customized supports.

Decision Making & Governance

- Each party maintains their autonomy. The authority to approve investment readiness projects lives with the member municipality.
- A County-Municipal Economic Development Working Group will oversee the implementation of this MOU.
- Each municipality and the County shall appoint at least one staff representative; the County Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture shall chair.
- The Working Group will meet at least quarterly and operate on a consensus basis.
- Subject matter sub-groups may be recommended and actioned based on shared priorities and workplans.
- Annual report prepared for Local CAO Group and Councils.

Financial Arrangements

- Staff resources to be assigned by each party through annual workplan allocation as appropriate.
- Each party is responsible for its own costs unless otherwise agreed in writing and approved through annual budgets or Council direction.
- Joint initiatives may be cost-shared on a project-by-project basis, as approved by the Working Group. Examples include:
  - $1000-$1500 annual Municipal contribution and $20,000 to $30,000 County contribution to shared data platform, Environics.
  - $20,000 annual County contract with ThinkCompass to provide investment readiness training and project specific support to the County and its municipalities.
  - $50,000 annual County contribution towards regional investment readiness feasibility studies, tear sheets, concepts and/or site plans.

Term & Termination

- The term will begin January 1, 2026 and expire December 31, 2028, to align with the remainder of the EDTC Master Plan; subsequent five year terms proposed.
- The MOU will require annual review by the County-Municipal Economic Development Working Group.
- The MOU will remain a living document. With progression, alternations will be recommended as necessary to County and Municipal Councils for direction.

- This MOU is non-binding

Signatures

Grey County

Grey County Warden | Date

County Clerk | Date

Municipality x

Mayor, | Date

Clerk, | Date

Team Grey Workplan

Team Grey MOU Workplan Template.docx

Confidential: Yes No

Lead Municipality		
Partner Municipalities		
Priority		
Budget		
Anticipated Timeline	**Start Date:**	**Due Date:**

Project Proposal:

Objectives	**Key Milestones**

Strategic Link	**EDTC Master Plan:**	**Municipal Strategic Plan:**

Task Description	**Staff Lead**	**Timeline**	**Status**

Collaborative Commitment

Signature:	______________________	______________________
Date:	______________________	______________________
	Grey County	Municipality

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	EDTC-CW-17-25
Title:	Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding
Prepared by:	Savanna Myers, Director EDTC
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All

Recommendation

1. **That report EDTC-CW-17-25 regarding the Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding be received;**
2. **That Grey County Council endorse the Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding as presented to support regional economic development and investment readiness;**
3. **That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to sign the Team Grey MOU; and**
4. **That this report including the Team Grey MOU be circulated to all Grey County Member Municipalities for consideration and signing.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to Council for consideration and endorsement. The Team Grey MOU is recommended through the Economic Development, Tourism & Culture Master Plan, which was developed with all member municipalities in 2023, to support cohesive regional economic development and investment readiness. The draft MOU was written based on input collected from economic development staff and CAOs from all nine member municipalities and the County, and was reviewed, and amended by the same.

Background and Discussion

The Team Grey MOU is recommended through the Economic Development, Tourism & Culture Master Plan, which was developed with all member municipalities in 2023. Under Priority 1: Leadership & Collaboration, the action item supports the goal, ‘build cohesion’:

> ***1.4*** *Develop and sign a* ***‘Team Grey’ Memorandum of Understanding*** *with member municipalities to clearly define roles, responsibilities, resources and expectations.*

While the Team Grey MOU could encompass a wide scope, the inaugural document is focused only on Priority 1 and Priority 2 of the EDTC Master Plan. This includes:

1.1	Host an **Annual Economic Development Leadership Forum** to build regional perspective, cohesion and pride among CAOs, senior leadership and elected officials.
1.2	Conduct regular environmental scans to assess trends and pursue strategic **advocacy** opportunities as Grey County, with the support of municipalities and partners.
1.3	Develop **municipal partnership and boundary adjustment case studies** to unleash mutually beneficial development and resource sharing opportunities; coordinate research; and site tours of best practice examples.
1.4	Develop and sign a **'Team Grey' Memorandum of Understanding** with member municipalities to clearly define roles, responsibilities, resources, and expectations.
2.1	Collate, research and prepare data reports to develop a **data sharing program** to serve member municipalities, partners, and businesses.
2.2	Engage in **systems mapping** to identify the most relevant municipal, provincial, federal and industry programs that strategically align with our core and emerging sectors.
2.3	Build **shared tools and templates** at the county level to support municipal and partner efforts, as collectively identified, from policy frameworks, such as the CIP Program, to digital marketing assets.
2.4	Explore options to create **municipally owned employment lands**, including three large-scale industrial parks strategically positioned across the Region.
2.5	Identify and resource **significant regional economic development projects** that will generate generational wealth, to positively impact Grey and its member municipalities.
2.6	Strengthen **welcoming communities' infrastructure** to meaningfully integrate and retain residents.

Why is an MOU needed?

The MOU sets out a framework for collaboration between Grey County and its nine member municipalities as it relates to economic development and investment readiness, to signal mutual commitment, streamline cooperation and create a clearer, more attractive environment for investors.

From an economic development standpoint, Grey County is fortunate to have strong, collaborative relationships between the County and its member municipalities. This MOU is designed to further strengthen those connections by clarifying roles and responsibilities, while improving continuity during staff transitions through a standardized, transferable framework. The accompanying annual workplans will serve as a mechanism for proposing, evaluating, and implementing projects tailored to individual municipalities.

To date, there has been some uncertainty around leadership, roles, and decision-making in economic development – particularly investment readiness. This lack of clarity can result in inefficiencies and wasted resources, which neither the County nor its municipalities can afford.

The Team Grey MOU is meant to operationalize the discussions and opportunities communicated through the Economic Development Leadership Series, while helping to clearly define roles, responsibilities, resources and expectations between Grey and its municipalities. As Team Grey hones its skills, the MOU can be evaluated and updated to reflect advancement.

Why Now?

Over the first two years of Master Plan implementation, foundational research and preparatory work were essential to reach the stage of a draft MOU. To position our teams for success, we introduced relevant tools, templates, and shared platforms, while deepening our understanding of the opportunities, processes, and perspectives needed to advance economic development across Grey County.

Staff have worked diligently over the past several years to understand the current situation, anticipate future trends, and identify innovative, strategic opportunities that can be started today, to support Grey County Council's long-term goal of building communities for the future. Through research, positioning, and strategic initiatives, staff and Council have aligned priorities and pursued actions that strengthen our collective impact and position the region for sustainable growth.

With this shared understanding and access to common tools, the time is right to formalize collaboration – avoiding duplication of effort and optimizing resources. We also seek commitment to collectively adopt and leverage the tools developed and acquired.

This is a Made in Grey approach to more formalized collaboration, which celebrates and holds on to who we are, both individually and collectively, while we plan and grow together. It's about deciding what we want the County to look like, and taking a proactive, collaborative approach to get there in a sustainable way.

Drafting Process

The 'Team Grey' MOU was formally drafted following three rounds of engagement with economic development staff and CAOs from all nine member municipalities. In October, it was circulated for review and comment by the same.

Annual Project Workplans

Annual project workplans will be jointly developed and shared between the participating municipality(ies) and the County, unless otherwise agreed by all parties. These plans will be project specific and outline program details, timelines, roles and commitments. They will also identify representatives and define mutually agreed supports.

While the MOU applies equally to the County and all member municipalities, annual workplans will only apply to those engaged in a given project. Some municipalities may opt out of projects in a particular year due to resource constraints; however, this does not affect our broader shared commitments and value under the MOU.

Definitions

Terms in economic development are typically subject to many interpretations. To ensure we are all speaking the same language, the following definitions have been agreed:

Economic Development (Ec Dev)	Economic development is the intentional practice of improving a community's economic well-being and quality of life. It involves activities to attract, create, and retain jobs, foster a resilient and pro-growth tax base, and build an inclusive economy. Economic development is a collaborative effort among industry, government, and community stakeholders, aiming for long-term prosperity and sustainability.
Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E)	Business Retention & Expansion is a proactive economic development strategy focused on supporting and growing existing businesses within a community. BR&E programs connect with local businesses to understand and respond to their needs, helping them overcome challenges and pursue new opportunities. This approach is typically less costly and more effective than recruiting new businesses and is responsible for up to 80% of net new jobs and capital investment in many communities. BR&E activities include regular check-ins, providing assistance, and developing strategies to improve the local business climate.
Investment Attraction (IA)	Investment attraction refers to efforts by local economic development organizations to encourage firms from outside their communities to locate operations within their region. It includes domestic relocation within the country and foreign direct investment from international firms. Communities support this by expediting permits, organizing job fairs, sourcing real estate, and facilitating grants. These efforts are essential for diversifying the economy, creating jobs, and growing the tax base.
Community Economic Development (CED)	Community Economic Development (CED) is a process by which communities work collaboratively to improve economic and social conditions. CED focuses on local empowerment, capacity building, and sustainable development, often involving partnerships among municipalities, businesses, and residents. The goal is to create vibrant, resilient communities that can adapt to changing economic circumstances and foster inclusive growth.
Investment Ready Lands	Investment Ready Lands are properties that have been prepared and positioned to attract investment. This includes ensuring up-to-date zoning and servicing information (serviced or serviceable), conducting servicing studies, and maintaining inventories of available sites. Investment ready lands are marketed to site selectors and investors, streamlining approvals, and reducing administrative burdens for municipalities and investors.
Investor	An investor is an individual or organization that provides capital to a business, project or property with the expectation of financial return. Investors may be local, domestic or foreign and include private individuals, corporations and government agencies. In economic development, they are key to funding new ventures, expanding businesses and driving regional growth.

Systems Based Approach	A holistic way of understanding complex problems/geographies by viewing them as interconnected systems rather than isolated pieces and emphasizes the relationships and interactions between them.

Mapping the Ecosystem

Economic Development is a collaborative effort. Each party maintains their autonomy and plays an important role in the broader ecosystem, which when aligned, carries great strength.

Roles & Responsibilities			
Federal & Provincial	Grey County	Member Municipality	Industry Associations/Chambers
Set national & provincial policies International & Interprovincial Trade Large-scale Innovation Investing in infrastructure Foreign Direct Investment Leads	Position region for long term growth & sustainability Data Collection & Analysis Investment Attraction Tools & Templates Workforce Development Entrepreneurship Support Industry & Municipal Support Regional Marketing Advocacy	Community Vision and Advocacy Community Economic Development Local Infrastructure Readiness to support economic development goals Business Retention & Expansion Business & Landowner Relationship Building Local Policies Maintain and Expand Lands and Building Inventory	Advocacy Information sharing, training & education. Networking

Grey County's 'Team Grey' Value Proposition to Municipalities

By signing the Team Grey MOU, municipalities gain access to direct supports, cost savings, and shared resources that strengthen local capacity while reducing duplication and, in some cases, saving expenses.

Financial Savings & Resource Efficiencies

- Cost-sharing opportunities for joint initiatives and strategic projects.
- Potential Seed funding to pilot collaborative projects across multiple municipalities.

Capacity Building & Staff Training

- Access to shared economic development staff and expertise, reducing the need for municipalities to hire specialized roles individually.
- Training programs for new and existing staff, including professional development, leadership training, and succession planning, to build stronger local teams.

Data, Research & Marketing Support

- Exclusive access to regional data tools, dashboards, and sector reports that would otherwise require costly local investment.
- Inclusion in County-wide marketing campaigns, with customized municipal branding and messaging; shared promotional efforts that give municipalities broader exposure without increasing their marketing budgets.
- County-led grant writing to improve funding success. (Ie. CECI Funding for investment strategy and feasibility study; RED for regional marketing programs, etc).

Investment Readiness and Advocacy

- Regional site selector services to ensure all municipalities are represented when investors are looking for opportunities.
- Standardized investment readiness tear sheets and marketing through Invest Ontario where appropriate.
- Stronger advocacy with senior levels of government on shared priorities.

Examples of Additional terms that could be added over time as Team Grey evolves:

- Access to a County-managed pre-approved vendor list with pre-negotiated rates, saving municipalities both time and money on procurement and service delivery.
- County-supported recruitment, internship and succession planning programs to help fill critical skill gaps.
- County-led servicing studies to help municipalities prepare employment lands at a lower cost.
- Standardized planning templates and processes to streamline approvals, reducing administrative burden and consultant costs.

Next Steps

Following Council endorsement, County staff will deliver presentations or delegations to each municipality, accompanied by a corresponding municipal staff report for consideration and endorsement. The start of the term will therefore differ by municipality based on the date of each signature.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no direct financial or resource implications related to the adoption of this report for the County or its municipalities. As per the MOU, each party is responsible for its own costs unless otherwise agreed in writing and approved through annual budgets or Council direction. Joint initiatives may be cost-shared on a project-by-project basis. Staff resources will be assigned through annual workplan allocations as appropriate.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal: CAO, EDTC Staff

  ☐ AODA Compliance (describe)

  ☐ Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)

☐ External: All member municipal CAOs, all member municipal economic development staff or designates.

Appendices and Attachments

Economic Development Tourism & Culture Master Plan

Team Grey Memorandum of Understanding

Workplan Template

Committee Report

To:	Warden Matrosovs and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	December 11, 2025
Subject / Report No:	CCR-CW-12-25
Title:	2026 Committee Appointments
Prepared by:	Tara Warder, Clerk
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	

Recommendation

1. **That CCR-CW-12-25 regarding Committee appointments for 2026 be received; and**
2. **That the Warden's appointment to the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) and the Clean Energy Frontier Program be endorsed; and**
3. **That all appointments noted in this report be endorsed and elections be held where required.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to facilitate appointments to the various committees and task forces that require Grey County Council membership, both internal and external. Based on their current Terms of Reference, there are four that do not require appointments at this time. The Urban Roads and Road Exchange Task Force, Joint Municipal Services Committee, and Long Term Care Redevelopment Task Force will maintain the same membership until their respective mandates have been met, or until the term ends. The membership for the Long Term Care Committee of Management will follow the term of County Council.

Background and Discussion

Each year in December, County Council appoints members to its own committees and task forces, and to other bodies that call for a county councillor appointment.

There is no requirement for members to be part of any committee, other than the Warden where the Terms of Reference specifically state. There is also no maximum number of committees a member may be appointed to.

The chart that follows outlines the committees and speaks to councillor membership, approximate meeting commitment and other relevant information. It also includes the names of members who have expressed interest in sitting on those committees and task forces as of the date the agenda was published.

Some bodies do not require an appointment at this time per the Terms of Reference and/or past resolutions:

- Urban Road and Road Exchange Task Force – members to remain the same until end of term of mandate has been met
- Long Term Care Redevelopment Task Force – members to remain the same until end of term or mandate has been met
- Long Term Care Committee of Management – term of office of Committee of Management will follow the term of Council.
- Joint Municipal Services Committee – this Committee was formed earlier in 2025 and the Terms of Reference note members shall remain appointed to the Committee until the end of the term due to it only having been formed in 2025.

The Warden will be appointed to the following by virtue of holding the Warden's position. These include the following:

- Long Term Care Committee of Management
- Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Budget and Finance Committee
- Community Services Committee
- Urban Road and Road Exchange Task Force
- Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)
- Long Term Care Redevelopment Planning Task Force
- Clean Energy Frontier Program

Board of Health appointments currently remain in effect until the end of term, as per the resolution CW132-24 from December 12, 2024 where appointments were made for two years.

For any appointments where more members are running than spots available, an election will be held and votes will be indicated by a show of hands. Voting by secret ballot is only permitted for elections of the Warden, as per the Municipal Act, 2001.

Committee	**Membership Required and Names of interested members**	**Commitment**	**Notes**
Agricultural Advisory Committee	Warden and 4 members of Council Councillor McQueen Councillor Keaveney Councillor Milne **1 Council member**	2 hour meetings, quarterly	Online meetings

Budget and Finance Committee	Warden and 8 members of Council Councillor Carleton Councillor Keaveney Councillor Dickert Councillor Eccles Councillor Nielsen **3 Council members**		In person meetings/hybrid meetings
Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy	2 Council members Councillor McKay Councillor Hutchinson Councillor Nielsen *Election required*	2 hour meetings, quarterly	
Community Services Committee	Warden and 6 members Councillor Kentner Councillor Dobreen Councillor McKay Councillor Dickert Councillor Nielsen **1 Council member**	2 hour meetings, 4-6 times per year	In person meetings
Grey County Federation of Agriculture	1 member and 1 Alternate Councillor McQueen Councillor Dobreen (as alternate)		
Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee	**1 Council member**	Meetings held 4-6 times per year	Virtual meetings
Planning and Economic Development Advisory Committee	Warden and 8 members of Council Councillor Carleton Councillor McKay	2 hour meetings, held quarterly	In person meetings Membership must reflect one member from each municipality

	Councillor Keaveney Councillor Hutchinson Councillor Dickert Councillor Boddy Councillor Milne Councillor Nielsen		
Stewardship Grey Bruce	1 Council member Councillor McQueen		

Legislated Requirements

Grey County is required by provincial legislation to have a Planning Advisory Committee, a Long Term Care Committee of Management, and an Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Grey County's committees and task forces adhere to the municipality's Code of Conduct and are governed by the Procedural By-law and Municipal Act, 2001.

The Board of Health membership is outlined in the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990 and its regulations.

Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations.

Financial and Resource Implications

Per diems for Grey County committees and task forces are paid by Grey County in accordance with current policies and mileage rates. These costs are contained within the proposed 2026 operating budget. Meeting formats vary per committee, whether they are in person, hybrid or fully electronic.

Current 2025 per diem rates are $222.33 for a full day per diem (6 hours or more) and $133.40 for a half day (less than 6 hours).

Mileage is paid per the CRA's established reasonable rates, currently $0.72 per kilometre up to 5000 km, and then reduces to $0.66 per kilometre.

Relevant Consultation

☐ Internal (list)

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

☐ External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

None.