

## Report CAOR-PCD-05-15

**To:** Chair Wright and Members of Planning & Community Development Committee  
**From:** Sharon Vokes, Acting CAO  
**Meeting Date:** September 15, 2015  
**Subject:** **Staffing Considerations for Economic Development and Tourism**  
**Status:** Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution PCD111-15; Endorsed by County Council October 6, 2015 per Resolution CC138-15;

### Recommendation(s)

**WHEREAS Economic Development, including tourism, is an important priority for Grey County;**

**AND WHEREAS Grey County Council has completed an economic development strategy to guide its efforts for the next three to five years;**

**AND WHEREAS adequate staff resources are required to achieve the objectives of the economic development strategy;**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report CAOR-PCD-05-15 be received;**

**AND THAT the addition of a staff resource be included in the draft 2016 budget for economic development and tourism for consideration.**

### Background

With the completion of the Made in Grey Economic Development Strategy and its implementing Action Plan, Council and staff now have a clear direction and set of tasks over the next three to five years. Tourism is about to update its Destination Development Plan, which will focus on the County's role and how it engages with tourism businesses, stakeholders and member municipalities to increase sustainable tourism revenues through managing and marketing Grey County as a tourism destination,

Economic development is a top priority for County Council. The Economic Development Action Plan supports this direction but current staffing levels may not be sufficient to achieve all of the recommendations contained in the plan. Future staffing levels within the economic development and tourism portfolio will be need to be included as part of the 2016 budget deliberation process. This report looks at current staff allocations, and some options for moving forward with a sustainable resourcing plan.

### *Current Staff Allocations*

The table below provides an overview of current staff allocations and tasks in economic development and tourism. Over the past two years, the Manager of Economic Development and Tourism has supervised both the economic development and tourism portfolios, while spending some time on economic development projects (primarily the strategy) but more time on tourism projects, notably cycling development, signage, data aggregation and representing Grey County in regional partnerships (RTMP, RTO7 and Georgian Bay). While this has worked as Grey County started up its efforts in supporting economic development, it is not seen as sustainable, or at least the quality of work is at risk by spreading out over too many bases.

### **Existing Staff Allocations & Tasks – Economic Development and Tourism**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Primary Tasks (Lead for each task)</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	
Economic Development Officer	Investment Readiness actions Business Friendly Environment actions Developing Grey's Workforce actions Support on Communicating and Marketing Grey's Greatness
Economic Development Officer Local Food	Local Food actions Agriculture and Farm actions Support on Communicating and Marketing Grey's Greatness Local food content and listings on website, social media, blogs
Manager of Economic Development and Tourism (.25 o 1.25 days/week)	Tourism actions Support on Communicating and Marketing Grey's Greatness Management of staff, budget, support Economic Development Advisory Committee
Administrative Assistant to the Manager (PT - .6 or 3 days/week)	Support in administration, financial tracking, scheduling, communications, Advisory Committee support
<b>Tourism</b>	
Tourism Specialist	Off-Line Marketing (Print, brochures/maps, radio) Media Relations/Familiarization tours Industry relations, database, website and digital assets Industry events (regional fall conference, workshops)
Tourism Specialist	On-line Marketing (digital advertising, social media) Consumer Website – updates, events, content Distribution & inquiries (mail-outs, downloads) Supervise summer students (events, brochure distribution)
Manager of Economic Development & Tourism (.75 or 3.75 days/week)	Product Development projects – cycling, signage Market research and tracking

Position	Primary Tasks (Lead for each task)
	Representative on regional groups (Georgian Bay, formerly RTMP, RTO7) Management of staff, budget, support Tourism Advisory Committee
Administrative Assistant to the Manager (PT- .2 or 1 day/week)	Project support – Signage Support in administration, financial tracking, mailouts/shipping, scheduling, communications, Advisory Committee support

### *Staffing Options*

The existing workload for the Tourism Manager is not considered sustainable. One option is to look at a new position which would take on the project work in tourism and provide research and data management capabilities to support both departments. Data management and updating is a core function in both departments, and one that could also benefit member municipalities through regular sharing of data.

Tourism project work is considered essential to Grey County’s goal of managing the County for sustainable tourism revenues. This includes the recent focus on cycling and signage, Grey County’s waterfall tour, and a need to better package and promote trails across Grey County. Recommendations on county resources for tourism are part of the deliverables contemplated in Grey County’s update of its Destination Development Action Plan (DDAP). The request to consider an additional staff resource in tourism and economic development is being made to fit in with the 2016 budget process, and would benefit from the staffing outcomes of the DDAP.

For consideration in the 2016 budget process, this position is proposed at Salary Grid 8, which is consistent with both Economic Development Officers, and would be split 75% to tourism and 25% to Economic Development. Offloading tourism project work from the Manager would allow more time to be devoted to economic development, and would see that function split 50% to each of economic development and tourism, up from the current 25% Economic Development. Finally, the split for administrative support would also be brought to 50% to each function, down from current 75% economic development, and this would be more realistic on an ongoing basis.

The benefit of this approach is to allow the manager to focus more on strategic direction and relationships in economic development and tourism, including partners within Grey County, and also outside in regional partnerships, and to provide better management and support of staff in their roles. Tourism project work would receive more focus from a dedicated staff person, and research and data management would be more consistent and available to support both county and municipal work.

Maintaining existing staffing or status quo is another option. This would require some prioritization in workload and reduction in some tasks for the Manager in 2016, either cutting out some of the tourism project work or reducing time spent on economic development tasks. The work on the economic development strategy would likely need to be scaled back as the two economic development officers will have difficulty maintaining the pace that has been set since the launch of the Economic Development Action Plan.

### *Economic Development at Other Counties*

The Western Ontario Warden's Caucus has started some initial discussions regarding regional economic development. As part of that process a survey of the participating counties is currently being undertaken regarding each county's participation in economic development. Initial results indicate that most counties are not only involved in economic development, but are also increasing their staff complements. Examples of some neighbouring counties are as follows:

Huron County has had an economic development department in the County for about seven years, currently with a staff of eight.

Bruce County is in the process of revising its economic development and tourism portfolios and staffing and will be making its realignment public shortly.

Simcoe County has expanded its Economic Development department over the past year to a total of five EDO's and a Manager, with three of these EDO's being hired before year end. One of the new EDO's will be focused on marketing / promotions / outreach activities and the intention is for the other four EDO's to become sector specialists and manage strategic initiatives such as labour market partnerships. Tourism Simcoe County includes five full-time staff, including a Manager, Administration Coordinator, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Tourism Culture Development and Tourism Outdoor Recreation Development.

## Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

### Considerations

Adding a new position at Salary Grid 8 with benefits is projected at \$78,800 for 2016 (including a projected 2% salary increase.) This position is proposed to be split 75% to Tourism and 25% to Economic Development. There will also be some costs associated with setting up an employee for such things as desk space, a lap top and cell phone as well as some travel.

As noted previously, the Tourism Destination Development Action Plan will be updated later this year and one of the items to be reviewed in that consultation is the resource allocation to support County tourism. It is the intention that staff not proceed with the requested staff resource in this report until that study is complete to ensure that the staffing being proposed aligns with the recommendations in the updated Tourism Destination Development Action Plan.

## Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Goal 1 “Expanding the Prosperity Base” and Goal 3 “Securing our place as Ontario’s Recreation Jewel” are the two areas of public service delivery served by the economic and tourism departments. Making choices in staffing and service delivery are consistent with Goal 6 “Achieving excellence in governance and service.”

## Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted by,

Sharon Vokes  
Acting CAO