

To:	Warden Halliday and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	February 22, 2018
Subject / Report No:	PDR-CW-11-18
Title:	Affordable Housing Student Report
Prepared by:	Scott Taylor
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All Municipalities in Grey County
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW71-18; Endorsed by County Council March 8, 2018 per Resolution CC30-18;

Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-11-18 regarding the University of Guelph student project on Affordable Housing in Grey County be received for information.

Executive Summary

The County is partnering with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to undertake a study on affordable and attainable housing in Grey County. This study is being completed as part of the students' course work for their Masters in Planning, and will benefit the County and member municipalities. As part of the study, the students will provide recommendations and strategies for increasing the amount of affordable housing across the County. Outreach in the form of stakeholder interviews, and a public survey, in addition to background research, and a review of other municipal approaches, will be completed to inform this study. The students will complete and present their findings in April 2018.

Background and Discussion

The need for affordable and attainable housing continues to be one of the key concerns expressed throughout the Recolour Grey consultation process. Residents and employers alike have echoed this concern. County Planning staff are partnering with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to study this issue further. Emma Drake, Abby Heddle, Lucita Pronk, Mallory Smith, and Danielle Waters will be working on a report that makes recommendations to the County for increasing the amount of affordable housing with Grey's settlement areas.

The study process will include;

1. stakeholder interviews to determine barriers to the provision of affordable housing,
2. a web-based public survey,
3. examining trends such as tiny homes and life lease housing,
4. researching other municipal approaches to affordable housing, and
5. assessing tools such as inclusionary zoning, community improvement plans, development charge rebates, etc. as avenues to further encourage new affordable housing.

The recommendations of this study will go beyond just planning policy recommendations. The study will look at what the current barriers are to affordable housing, and provide strategies for increasing such housing in the future.

As part of this study, County staff will supply background resources to the students from the Housing, Economic Development, and Planning departments. Staff will also look to connect the students with municipal staff, and other key stakeholders including those in the development industry, not-for-profits, Georgian College, and interested community groups such as the Council on Aging.

The County has been lucky enough to partner with the University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program on two other occasions, and in both instances has got high quality results. The results of these other two studies are being incorporated into Recolour Grey.

The results of this study have been tentatively slated to be presented at the Mayors' Attainable Housing Forum on April 6, 2018. The Municipality of Meaford, the County of Grey, and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Lakeland District are organizing this forum.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislative considerations at this time.

Financial and Resource Implications

The work completed by the student consulting team is without cost to the County, and done as part of the coursework for their master's degree. County staff are grateful to the students' efforts in this regard, and would note that having to pay a consultant to complete a similar study would likely cost between \$25,000 - \$35,000.

Relevant Consultation

Internal: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development staff will be consulted as part of this study.

External: Provincial staff, Municipal staff, housing stakeholders, Georgian College, developers, employers, and the public will be consulted as part of this study.

Appendices and Attachments

None