

## Report PDR-PCD-29-15

**To:** Chair Wright and Members of the Planning and Community Development Committee

**From:** Scott Taylor, Senior Planner

**Meeting Date:** July 21, 2015

**Subject:** **Update to the County's Growth Management Strategy**

**Status:** Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution PCD99-15; Endorsed by County Council August 4, 2015 per Resolution CC113-15; See also Addendum to Report PDR-PCD-29-15 from December 10, 2015;

### Recommendation(s)

**THAT Report PDR-PCD-29-15 regarding the Draft Update to the County's Growth Management Strategy be received for information purposes,**

**AND FURTHER THAT the Draft Update to the County's Growth Management Strategy be circulated to member municipalities for their review and comment.**

### Background

In 2008 the County completed its first Growth Management Strategy (GMS), which assessed the County's projected residential, commercial, and industrial growth through to the year 2031. Growth allocations by municipality were also provided in the 2008 GMS. Copies of the 2008 GMS documents have been linked to in the Attachments section of this report. The results of the 2008 GMS were then incorporated into the County's Five Year Review Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 80, which was approved in 2012.

The 2008 GMS was completed as 'a snapshot in time', and the County recognized it as a strategy which would need to be updated on a regular basis. When the work on the 2008 GMS was being completed it was towards the end a 'boom time' for growth and development in the County. Almost immediately following the 2008 GMS the global recession hit, and Grey County was not immune to the effects. Furthermore there were some data constraints at this time, which resulted in the study being completed before the full results of the 2006 census were released. The 2008 GMS was an excellent

document for the time it was produced, although it now appears that the growth projections may be slightly inflated based on the development which has been realized to date.

In 2014 the County began an update to the GMS, and hired Hemson Consulting Ltd. to undertake the work. Hemson has familiarity with growth in the County, having completed our last two Development Charges Background Studies. Now with both the 2006 and 2011 census data, in addition to building permit data since 2008, we have excellent inputs for the GMS update. County staff and Hemson have been working closely with municipal staff and development industry stakeholders, to try to ensure we have as much local input as possible to complete the study. A memo on early projections for the County was released in September 2014 for review and comment. A more detailed outlook including draft population projections and allocations for each municipality was shared with the County in late-June 2015. Copies of both of these memos have been included in the Attachments section of this report.

### *Draft 2015 Growth Management Strategy Update Results and Next Steps*

The draft update to the GMS contains permanent residential and employment growth projections through to the year 2041. Seasonal residential growth projections have also been included in the draft update. As with the 2008 GMS, this updated study represents an educated ‘best-guess’, and will need to be re-examined on a regular basis (approximately every 5 – 7 years is recommended). Within the draft 2015 update the Consultant concludes that the County will continue to grow, but growth will be at a very modest pace. By the year 2041 the County’s total permanent population is projected to be approximately 107,000 – 109,000 people. Employment growth within this time period is also expected to be modest. Overall the Consultant notes that the County has enough designated development land to meet our growth needs within the planning horizon.

A number of themes have emerged within the draft update which are similar to many parts of rural Ontario. The declining manufacturing sector, availability of municipal servicing, youth out-migration, aging baby-boomers, and the ability to attract new Canadians are challenges faced by Grey County and most of rural Ontario. To date Grey County has fared better than some other rural municipalities, who are now in population decline. These same themes and challenges were also recognized in the County’s recent Economic Development Strategy.

The 2015 draft GMS will now be sent out to member municipalities and development industry stakeholders for their review and comments. We will be asking for comments back by mid-September 2015, so that the Consultant can then move forward with

incorporating the feedback into a final GMS document. At that time recommendations will also be provided for updates to the County Official Plan.

## Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

### Considerations

At this stage there are no additional financial, staffing, legal, or information technology considerations arising out of this report. The update to the GMS was a budgeted item, which went through the Request for Proposals process, and came in within the budgeted amount.

### Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

The very nature of strategic planning, and land use planning is looking forward. Through having accurate growth projections, County staff can better align our planning documents with the growth needs moving forward. Local feedback will be incorporated into this document before a finalized version is brought before Committee and Council.

### Attachments

[Grey County Growth Management Study Strategy Report, 2008](#)

[Grey County Growth Management Strategy Allocations & Issues Report, 2008](#)

[Grey County GMS County-wide Forecast Results Sept 2014](#)

[Grey GMS-DRAFT Local Growth Distribution and Seasonal Unit Outlook June 2015](#)

Respectfully submitted by,

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Senior Planner

Director Sign Off: *Randy Scherzer*