



# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden Milne and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	April 27, 2023
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	Student ARU Guide / Addendum to PDR-CW-11-23
<b>Title:</b>	Grey County Additional Residential Unit Resource Guide (Student Project)
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Scott Taylor
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Randy Scherzer
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	All Municipalities in Grey County
<b>Status:</b>	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW72-23; Endorsed by County Council on May 11, 2023, per Resolution CC36-23.

## Recommendation

- 1. That Addendum to Report PDR-CW-11-22 regarding the University of Guelph student project entitled 'Advancing Additional Residential Units in Grey County' be received for information; and**
- 2. That this report be shared with member municipalities within Grey for their information; and**
- 3. That staff be directed to continue to work on additional residential unit resources which will support Grey County residents and member municipalities.**

## Executive Summary

The County partnered with students Megan Myles, Rebecca Roibas, and Muhammad Haris Zahid from the University of Guelph's Masters in Rural Planning & Development program to study best planning practices and considerations for Additional Residential Units (ARUs) in urban and rural contexts. The Report, '*Advancing Additional Residential Units in Grey County*', was completed as part of the student's coursework for their Master's in Planning and will benefit the County and member municipalities. As part of the study, the three students researched and developed recommendations related to ARUs, including interviewing municipal staff (planners and building officials) as well as staff from outside of Grey County. This work is grounded in the context of the legislation, County and municipal official plans, as well as the County's Housing Action Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, and Age Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan. Subject to direction from Council, County staff will share the Student Report with municipal staff, and work to combine the findings with other County and municipal initiatives to

better support ARU policy and zoning provisions. These joint efforts will aid in promoting ARU development as a key component of the County's housing supply moving forward.

## Background and Discussion

Throughout the first quarter of 2023, County staff have been lucky to partner with students Megan Myles, Rebecca Roibas, and Muhammad Haris Zahid from the University of Guelph's Masters in Rural Planning & Development program to research Additional Residential Units (ARUs). With oversight from Becky Hillyer, the student team has created a report titled '*Advancing Additional Residential Units in Grey County*'. This report contains the following key components:

- An overview of the provincial legislative and policy framework for ARUs,
- A summary of local official plan policies and zoning by-law provisions regarding ARUs,
- A description of the different types of ARUs on the marketplace, and
- Recommendations to better support and promote ARU development across the County in both municipally serviced settlement areas, and privately serviced settlement areas as well as rural areas.

This work was informed by both local research as well as examples from across Canada and the United States on ARU policy and development. A key component to the research was interviewing planners and building officials from municipalities in Grey County, as well as some from outside of Grey.

Staff would note that this report was completed prior to the recent release of the draft Bill 97, the *Helping Homebuyer, Protecting Tenants Act*, and the new draft 2023 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).

Some of the key recommendations from *Advancing Additional Residential Units in Grey County* are as follows:

1. Streamline policies and processes as it pertains to landowners looking to develop an ARU, which could include the following:
  - a. Monitor and minimize the need for planning applications (i.e., permitting ARUs as-of-right is preferable to landowners and developers),
  - b. Develop public resources and toolkits, such as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) documents (note: the student team has shared a draft FAQ document as well as a sample infographic for homeowners in the report),
  - c. Provide additional pre-submission consultation resources to those looking to develop ARUs, such as process maps on how to develop an ARU,
  - d. Develop pre-approved ARU plans which allow for speedier approvals or permits for known ARU models (e.g., for modular detached ARUs),
  - e. Utilize an ARU GIS [geographic information systems] tool to allow the public to explore what is permitted on their property.

2. Develop additional public education and outreach materials, which could include the following:
  - a. Support new landlords to educate them on the processes and obligations related to becoming a landlord, including providing links to further information,
  - b. Engage builders to help clarify ARU requirements and how those may or may not be impacting their builds,
  - c. Partner with non-profits to help lower-income homeowners build ARUs.
3. Financial incentives, which could include the following:
  - a. County level grant, tax credit, or loan programs for ARU development,
  - b. Municipal level grant, tax credit, or loan programs for ARU development,
  - c. Create financial incentives for developers.

Grey County's Housing Action Plan identifies ARUs as an important piece of meeting the County's housing needs. County staff have recently been developing materials which may assist our member municipalities, alongside the student's report, to support ARU policy and zoning updates. Staff will work to synthesize the recommendations from *Advancing Additional Residential Units in Grey County* to determine where further supports, guides, and marketing materials may be needed. Additional public-facing materials could be developed to help further promote ARUs.

County staff would like to thank Megan, Rebecca, and Muhammad for all their work on this project, as well as the University of Guelph for allowing us this opportunity to partner. We would also like to thank Becky Hillyer and Hiba Hussain for leading this project on behalf of County staff.

## 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 was without cost to the County and done as part of the coursework for their Master's degree. County staff are grateful for the students' efforts in this regard and would note that having to pay a consultant to complete a similar guideline would likely cost between \$25,000 - \$35,000.

Any additional materials or guides generated by County staff will be completed within existing budgets.

## Relevant Consultation

Internal: Planning

External: Municipal staff, and private planning consultants will be consulted as part of this study.

## Appendices and Attachments

[Advancing Additional Residential Units on Grey County – Student Report](#)

[PDR-CW-11-23 Guelph Student Project ARU Guide](#)