



# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	July 9, 2020
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	Update to the County's Growth Management Strategy / PDR-CW-28-20
<b>Title:</b>	Update to Growth Management Strategy
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Grey County Staff
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Kim Wingrove
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	All Municipalities within Grey County
<b>Status:</b>	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented; Endorsed by County Council July 23, 2020

## Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-28-20 regarding the need to update the County's Growth Management Strategy based on the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) be received;
2. That a Request for Proposals be issued to select a consultant to update the County's Growth Management Strategy, for a value not to exceed \$25,000.00 with these monies to be drawn from the Planning – ArcGIS Reserve;
3. That following the completion of the updated Growth Management Study staff be directed to prepare a County Official Plan Amendment to update the growth projections and allocations in the County Plan, in addition to any additional housekeeping matters; and
4. That the Report be shared with member municipalities in Grey County.

## Executive Summary

The Province released a new Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) which took effect May 1, 2020. Under the new PPS, municipalities can now plan for a 25-year growth horizon, whereas previously that was limited to a 20-year horizon. Based on this PPS update, staff are seeking to update the County's 2018 Growth Management Strategy (GMS), and subsequently the County Official Plan's growth projections and allocations to extend both to a 25-year horizon. Recolour Grey, the County Official Plan, currently has a horizon of 2038. By updating the County Plan this would allow the County's member municipalities to consider a 25-year planning horizon as they undertake their 5-year reviews or municipal official plan updates. The GMS update would

involve data collection and input from the municipalities within Grey and is expected to cost approximately \$25,000.00 which is proposed to be funded from reserves.

## Background and Discussion

The new 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) came into effect May 1, 2020. On May 28, 2020 staff presented Report PDR-CW-23-20 to Committee of the Whole outlining the changes in the new PPS. A copy of that staff report can be found [here](#).

The new PPS is generally considered an 'update' rather than a complete 're-write'. However, one key change to section 1.1.2 has been the ability for municipalities to plan for a 25-year planning horizon, rather than the past limitation of a 20-year horizon. When the Province approved Recolour Grey in 2019, the 20-year limitation was still in place, as such the County Plan currently has a lifespan until 2038. The growth projections and allocations in Recolour Grey were done through a 2018 update to the Growth Management Strategy (GMS). A link to the 2018 GMS can be found [here](#). County staff are recommending an update to the 2018 GMS and a subsequent update to the County Official Plan for the following reasons;

1. to ensure the County is accurately planning for growth and land needs with the most up-to-date information, and
2. to allow our member municipalities access to this information such that they can plan for their own communities accordingly and extend their own official plans to a 25-year horizon.

The second point above requires some further explanation as to its importance. Under section 1.2.4 of the PPS upper-tier municipalities are required to;

- a) *"identify and allocate population, housing and employment projections for lower-tier municipalities. Allocations and projections by upper-tier municipalities shall be based on and reflect provincial plans where these exist and informed by provincial guidelines;*
- b) *identify areas where growth or development will be directed, including the identification of nodes and the corridors linking these nodes;*
- c) *identify targets for intensification and redevelopment within all or any of the lower-tier municipalities, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of settlement areas is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8;*
- d) *where major transit corridors exist or are to be developed, identify density targets for areas adjacent or in proximity to these corridors and stations, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of settlement areas is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8; and*
- e) *provide policy direction for the lower-tier municipalities on matters that cross municipal boundaries."*

With Recolour Grey recently being approved, and a new PPS also in effect, a number of the County's member municipalities are now looking at doing official plan updates in order to conform and be consistent with these documents. As it stands currently, a municipality would be limited to a planning horizon of 2038 in their municipal official plans, even though the new PPS permits a 25-year horizon. This limitation stems from the County Official Plan having a current horizon of 2038. In order to allow municipalities the ability to plan for 25 years, the County needs to update our Official Plan with revised growth projections and allocations. In order to

update these numbers, the County first needs to update the GMS.

Based on the current 2018 GMS being relatively recent, staff do not see this as being a major update. County staff will require both input and data from each of Grey's member municipalities in order to update this document. This data will include information on building permits, municipal planning applications, servicing, and any trends being observed locally.

County staff would note that based on recent growth achieved across the County, and with now being able to plan for a 25-year horizon, there could be the need for expansions to some individual settlement areas. However, the County is not proposing to amend settlement boundaries at this time and will simply be updating the GMS and Tables 1 – 4 in section 2 of the Official Plan. Undertaking boundary adjustments simultaneous to the GMS update would be a lengthy process and could significantly delay the update to the County Plan. Delaying this update could have the effect of 'penalizing' those municipalities who are not looking for a boundary adjustment, and simply seek to update their own planning documents. Staff would also note that the financial and staff resources required to undertake such comprehensive reviews on a County-wide basis, would be beyond the current budgeted capacity and County staff resources at this time.

Once the GMS and County Plan are updated, it may trigger the need for some municipalities to complete comprehensive reviews, should they seek to expand these settlement areas. As municipalities undertake their own official plan reviews, County staff are happy to assist and facilitate boundary adjustments as justified through those municipal comprehensive reviews. Although further updates would be required to the County Official Plan at that time, County staff would note that the proposed changes to the County's Fees and Services By-law are recommending no fees for municipally initiated County Official Plan Amendments. These County amendments could be processed concurrently with municipal plan updates.

The County's initial GMS was completed in 2008, with the next GMS being done in 2015. The 2008 and 2015 versions were done by different consultants. When the update was done in 2018, the work was single-sourced to Hemson Consulting Ltd., based on their completion of the 2015 study and the County's 2016 Development Charges Background Study. County staff are recommending that the County 'go out to market' for this 2020 update through a request for proposals (RFP) process. County staff have been satisfied with both the GMS consultants to date, and would be happy to work with either again, or with a new successful bidder. Staff are aware that some of our member municipalities have retained similar consulting services recently to complete development charges background studies, or similar growth driven reports. In this regard staff believe there are a number of firms capable of completing this GMS update.

Should the request for the GMS update be approved, staff will build a presentation to Council of the draft GMS into the project workplan.

## Legal and Legislated Requirements

The new 2020 Provincial Policy Statement came into effect on May 1, 2020. Regardless of whether the County updates Recolour Grey to meet the 25-year planning horizon, all planning decisions in the County shall be consistent with the new PPS. County staff are recommending an update to the County Plan and to the Growth Management Strategy to ensure that decisions are being made with the most up-to-date information and to ensure that municipal official plan

reviews are able to take advantage of the 25-year planning horizon.

## Financial and Resource Implications

Staff are requesting that \$25,000.00 be allocated towards a Growth Management Strategy update. This money is currently an unbudgeted expense and it is recommended that the funds be used from the Planning – ArcGIS Reserve which is a legacy reserve that existed when Planning was responsible for corporate GIS matters that is no longer required. Should the requested GMS update be approved, staff do not anticipate that any further unbudgeted financial or staff resources will be needed to undertake the GMS update or the associated official plan amendment to follow. As noted in the report, this process does not involve settlement area boundary adjustments at this time, rather it would be limited to updating the GMS and the growth projections and allocations in the County Plan. Minor housekeeping matters would also be considered as part of the County Plan update.

## Relevant Consultation

- Internal: Planning, Economic Development, Finance
- External: Member municipalities within Grey, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

## Appendices and Attachments

[Provincial Policy Statement 2020](#)

[Growth Management Strategy 2018](#)

[PDR-CW-23-20 Provincial Policy Statement Update](#)