



Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	May 28, 2020
Subject / Report No:	Addendum to PDR-CW-11-20
Title:	Subdivision Guidelines Student Project
Prepared by:	Stephanie Lacey-Avon
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All Municipalities in Grey County
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW96-20;

Recommendation

1. That Addendum to Report PDR-CW-11-20 be received; and
2. That the University of Guelph report titled 'Recolour Grey: Healthy Community & Residential Subdivision Guidelines' be received; and
3. That staff utilize the guideline document created by the University of Guelph student report, and make it available to developers, members of the public, and other government officials to serve as a resource for development considerations across the County.

Executive Summary

The County partnered with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to undertake the creation of a guideline document for new subdivision development in Grey County. Now complete, the document is titled 'Recolour Grey: Healthy Community & Residential Subdivision Guidelines'. This study was completed as part of the students' course work for their master's in planning and benefits the County and member municipalities. Staff intend to use this document as a resource, and make available to developers, members of the public, and other government officials to serve as a resource for development considerations across the County. Because of the current pandemic situation, we were unfortunately unable to accommodate the students at the County for an in-person council meeting to present their findings.

Background and Discussion

Within Recolour Grey, and associated municipal official plans, there are policies that apply to new residential development across the County. These policies provide high-level guidance on; lot density, preservation of environmental features, types of residential development, and transportation issues.

County Planning staff partnered with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to study this issue further. Gillian Smith, Sean Jeffrey, Laura Biancolin and Vanessa Lightle worked to create a subdivision guideline document titled – ‘Recolour Grey: Healthy Community & Residential Subdivision Guidelines’. The process for developing this document included:

- a jurisdictional scan of other county and municipal approaches to subdivision and condominium design,
- a review of any Federal/Provincial legislation or policy to be adhered to, and
- stakeholder interviews with Grey County / member municipal staff, as well as developers, planning consultants, engineers, and Health Unit staff, obtaining their opinions on what needed to be considered for this guideline.

From the onset of this project, the intended use of this document was made clear. Staff felt there was room to create a subdivision guideline document at the County level, providing a consolidation of best practices and desired types of development in the County. This document has been written with the caveat that it is simply offered to help planning and development stakeholders. It will not be used or applied as a means of approving or rejecting development proposals, but rather it will be used as a set of informative guidelines that provide direction throughout the planning and development process. These guidelines do not supersede the Niagara Escarpment Plan, any County or Municipal Official Plans, Zoning By-laws, engineering standards or any other Provincial policy. Where a conflict may exist between the legislated planning documents and these guidelines, the former shall prevail.

The guideline document included 7 main community elements that should be considered when developing healthy, vibrant, and supportive communities in Grey County.

1. **Inclusive Design** (Safety, Age & Family Friendly Design)
2. **Design for Sustainability** (Health & Wellbeing, Design for Climate Change, Preservation of Natural Features, Areas of Avoidance)
3. **Street Design** (Intersection Design, Roadway Best Practices, Parking & Access, Sidewalks)
4. **Parks & Open Spaces** (Access & Location, Connectivity, Design)
5. **Compatibility** (Scale & Transition, Cultural Heritage)
6. **Building & Lot Design** (Infill/Redevelopment, Secondary Suites, Mixed-uses)
7. **Site Design** (Setbacks, Snow Storage, Stormwater Management, Servicing & Utilities)

Included under each section and subject are detailed recommendations and key considerations that will help inform the development process. Some of the recommendations have an associated infographic that further explains what is meant by the provision(s) stated. The

following is an example of how parking lots may be designed to better incorporate shade, while reducing congestion and improving movement.



Next Steps

Staff are extremely impressed with the quality of the document created by the students and believe this will serve as a helpful resource for the development community (planners, engineers, government officials) in the County. Typically, as a professional practice, cities and larger urban centres have detailed urban design guidelines used to facilitate planning and development through a comprehensive lens. It could be argued that these documents are less common in rural areas as there are fewer, less complex urban matters vying for space and development. Staff would agree with the notion that the planning environment and climate is quite different in Grey County, as we have various pockets of rural and agricultural lands, Niagara Escarpment lands, smaller urban centres, and recreational resorts areas. It is believed that having a guideline document informing best practices unique to Grey County will be invaluable for the development community, planners, and other relevant professionals.

With the completion of the guideline document, staff will make it available as a resource on the County's website, and share a copy with all of the relevant agencies who provided input to help create the document, and those that may find it useful in their practice.

The County has been lucky enough to partner with the University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program on five occasions, and in all instances received high quality results. This time, there was no exception. The results from the studies have helped - inform Recolour Grey policies, special projects led by the County's planning department, and serve as a resource for the development community.

County staff would like to thank the student team for their work on this project, as well as the municipal staff, developers, planning consultants, engineers, and Health Unit staff who provided input into this project.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislative considerations currently.

Financial and Resource Implications

The work completed by the student consulting team was without cost to the County and was 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 guideline would likely cost between \$25,000 - \$35,000.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: Planning, Transportation Services, Housing, and Economic Development staff were consulted as part of this study.
- External: Municipal staff, Developers, Planning Consultants and Health Unit staff were consulted as part of this study.

Appendices and Attachments

[Report - Recolour Grey: Healthy Community & Residential Subdivision Guidelines](#)