



Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, Box 310
THORNBURY, ON N0H 2P0
www.thebluemountains.ca

OFFICE OF: Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer
Email: cao@thebluemountains.ca
Phone: 519-599-3131 Ext 234

Sent via E-mail Kim.Wingrove@grey.ca

February 1, 2024

RE: Regional Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy

Dear Warden Milne, CAO Wingrove, and Deputy CAO Scherzer,

Please accept this correspondence as a formal request from the Town of The Blue Mountains for the County of Grey to consider the opportunity to lead the development of a Regional Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy.

In 2023, Council of The Blue Mountains provided direction to staff via approval of staff report FAF.23.083 entitled "Recommended Next Steps to Complete a Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy" to proceed with the development of a Request-for-Proposal and the development of a Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy to be completed in 2024.

Town staff initiated the process as directed by Council by hiring a Project Manager who reported directly to me as Chief Administrative Officer. As part of the initiation of this project, I asked the project manager to focus on how best to proceed with a Comprehensive Housing Needs strategy to be the first step in moving this project forward.

The concept of considering a Regional Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy was also brought forward to the Grey County CAOs meeting in October 2023, where there was interest amongst those CAOs in attendance to consider the option of a regional strategy being considered rather than having each municipality completing their own independently over the coming years. This request and recommendation are based on the model followed to develop and support the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan completed and led jointly between Grey County, Bruce County, and approximately 18 lower-tier municipalities.

My suggestion is that this is a model that could be beneficial to support the development of a Regional Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy for all of Grey County. Using this model, the research could be completed collaboratively, with specific action plans developed, and for each municipality within the context of the overall Strategy. This would enable Grey County to lead and champion the Strategy through supportive policy development, which would be further

enhanced at the local level by each municipality through their respective Official Plans, Zoning By-laws, and related Policies.

After considerable review by staff, a follow-up staff report (FAF.24.009) was brought forward to Council on January 8, 2024, which included the following recommendations for Council consideration.

AND THAT Council defer the completion of the 2024 Comprehensive Housing Strategy Request For Proposal (RFP);

AND THAT Council authorize the CAO to submit to the Warden and the CAO of Grey County a formal request for consideration by the Grey County Council of the completion of a Regional Comprehensive Housing Strategy that would be led by the County of Grey that would consider the full spectrum of Housing needs within the County and the surrounding regions;

AND THAT Council direct staff to provide a status update report summarizing local and regional housing improvement initiatives that The Blue Mountains are leading or involved with at the September 16, 2024 Committee of the Whole;

AND THAT Council direct staff to include any new additional resources to support the implementation of affordable and attainable housing related initiatives through the annual budget process.

Council approved the staff recommendation by formal resolution at the January 29, 2024 meeting of Council.

Through this letter, the Town of The Blue Mountains formally requests that the County of Grey consider initiating discussions with member municipalities to determine the intent and possible collaboration within the County of Grey and proceed with developing a Regional Comprehensive Housing Needs Strategy. The focus would be to collaboratively develop a Strategy that provides the guidance, policies, tools, and long-term strategies, both regionally and also specific to the unique circumstances of each of the nine lower-tier municipalities within the County. The ultimate goal of this project is to increase and sustain a fulsome range of rental and ownership housing models and provide opportunities for current and future residents to thrive.

I look forward to having you consider this request and will make myself available to discuss further at your convenience.

Sincerely



Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer
Town of The Blue Mountains