



Correspondence Items Presented for Information February 10, 2025

- 1) Correspondence from the County of Grey Re: Grey County Forest Management Plan.
- 2) Correspondence from City Clerk, City of Peterborough Re: Bill 242, Safer Municipalities Act, 2024.
- 3) Correspondence from the Mayor, Town of Halton Hills Re: Sovereignty of Canada.
- 4) Correspondence from the Deputy Clerk/Manager, Legislative Services, Town of Cobourg Re: Municipal restructuring study.
- 5) Correspondence from Walker Aggregates Re: Grey Bruce Update.



Committee Report

To:	Warden Milne and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	July 27, 2023
Subject / Report No:	Forest Management Options / PDR-CW-31-23
Title:	Forest Management Options Report
Prepared by:	Natalie Mechalko
Reviewed by:	Scott Taylor
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Township of Chatsworth, Township of Georgian Bluffs, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Municipality of Meaford, Township of Southgate, Town of The Blue Mountains and Municipality of West Grey
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW114-23; Endorsed by County Council August 10, 2023, per Resolution CC57-23.

Recommendation

1. That report PDR-CW-31-23 regarding Forest Management Options be received, and
2. That the report be shared with member municipalities within Grey County for their review; and
3. That staff be directed to proceed with amending the harvest schedule in the Forest Management Plan to 25 years and reduce the total basal area to 16 – 18 metres squared per hectare; and
4. That staff be directed to prepare a further report for Council's consideration exploring potential for revenue from carbon offset projects, based on the amended harvest schedule, identifying select forests where harvesting may not be feasible from an ecological, recreational, or access perspective, and provide for public consultation on the County's forest management approaches.

Executive Summary

The County owns and manages 45 separate forest properties, comprising 3,198.1

hectares (7,899.3 acres) of forest. These forests are managed in accordance with the Forest Management Plan that was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2021. The Forest Management Plan update was completed by Grey Sauble Conservation Authority staff in consultation with the Forest Management Plan Advisory Committee made up of industry stakeholders. In light of recent public feedback on harvest operations, heightened risk of forest fires, Grey County's recent Climate Change Action Plan (Going Green in Grey), and Council's declaration of a climate emergency, County staff are seeking direction to re-examine forest management in the County-owned forests. This report does not apply to privately owned forests or other publicly owned forests not under Grey County ownership. Additionally, recent inventories have indicated that forests are not regenerating as quickly as anticipated due to various reasons. The options for consideration are as follows:

- a) Amend the harvest schedule in the Forest Management Plan and continue with harvesting as per the plan,
- b) Harvest in select County forests only, and cease harvesting in other County Forests,
- c) Explore carbon offset projects for County forests,
- d) Discontinue harvesting in County forests.

Staff recommend proceeding with options A, B and C at this time. Staff also recommend investigating carbon offset projects and identifying County forests where harvesting may not be as feasible for ecological or access reasons. Staff are not recommending proceeding with option D for the reasons outlined in the report.

Background and Discussion

What is Forest Management?

Forest management contributes to healthy, productive forests for present and future use. Sustainable use of the forest means forests can be harvested at the rate it can regenerate. Healthy, productive forests contain a variety of plant species, in addition to different sizes and age classes of trees that provide a wide range of ecosystem services. Forest Management Plans ensure that forestry operations and related activities are carried out in ways that support the sustainable use of all forest resources for generations to come.

Most County forest properties are former "Agreement Forest" properties purchased by the County as part of a provincial reforestation program. Even though that program was discontinued in the 1990's, Section 2 of the Forestry Act mandates that the County only use those properties for forestry purposes, and prohibits the County from selling, leasing or otherwise disposing of them unless the Province has given specific approval.

Selective Harvesting

Selective harvesting in accordance with Good Forestry Practices is the selective removal of trees based on certain criteria, such as tree maturity, height, age and whether the tree is diseased. Good Forestry Practices is defined within the *Forestry Act* as, “the proper implementation of harvest, renewal and maintenance activities known to be appropriate for the forest and environmental conditions under which they are being applied and that minimize detriments to forest values including significant ecosystems, important fish and wildlife habitat, soil and water quality and quantity, forest productivity and health and the aesthetics and recreational opportunities of the landscape”.

Selective harvesting can create a diversity of age classes or stand structures to reduce the availability of preferred hosts for pests and pathogens and increasing diversity of tree species within forest stands. It can also reduce tree density in fire-prone ecosystems and alter the forest structure to reduce the severity or extent of wind and ice damage.

Negative impacts of selective harvesting includes the removal of genetically superior trees which contribute to forest health. The leftover tree debris can alter the microclimate in the forest and have mixed effects on seedling establishment. Harvesting machines and associated equipment can damage standing trees, cause soil compaction, and other ground disturbance which negatively affects forest microclimates and soil ecosystem dynamics. Good forestry practices minimizes these negative impacts. Grey County Forests are selectively harvested in accordance with Good Forestry Practices. Harvested wood is generally consumed locally for fuelwood and lumber. During an active harvest, or leading up to a harvest, members of the public often express concern about the destruction of the forest as a result of harvest operations. The forest immediately following a harvest may look different to forest users, as per Figures 1 and 2 below. However, Figure 3 below shows the regeneration that happens in a forest a few years after the harvest.



Figure 1: Topcliff North 2023 Harvest Logging Trail



Figure 2: Topcliff North 2023 Harvest Preserved Wildlife Tree



Figure 3: Copper Kettle 2020 Harvest Regeneration

Grey County's Forest Management Plan

The County's forests are managed in accordance with the Forest Management Plan (FMP) that was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2021. The Forest Management Plan update was completed by Grey Sauble Conservation Authority staff in consultation with the Forest Management Plan Advisory Committee made up of industry stakeholders. An approved FMP is a requirement for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification through the Eastern Ontario Model Forest's Forest Certification Program. [FSC's Forest Management Certification](#) is voluntary for forestry organizations who want to demonstrate responsible forest management by having their forest management planning and practices independently evaluated against FSC's forest management standards. Grey County's forests have been FSC certified since 2011. The maintenance of the FSC certification provides a third-party review that ensures that Grey County strives to protect the plant and animal communities that depend on the forests, as well as to respect the land rights of local Indigenous Peoples. There is a program cost to maintaining the FSC certification of approximately \$7,300 per year.

Updates to the FMP included policies that promote biodiversity protection and enhancement, including species at risk surveys to mitigate and protect during harvests, invasive species management and other opportunities to enhance natural features. A key component of the updated FMP is that the forests can be managed sustainably considering the need to both adapt to and mitigate climate change. Additional amendments included: renaming of some of the County Forests; whether sap collection or beehive activities should be considered within County Forests; as well as discussion regarding First Nations and Metis traditional land acknowledgements. These amendments were based on feedback received as part of the public consultation.

The FMP outlines how Grey County Forests are managed within a 22-year period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2042. The forests are on a 15-year harvest schedule with a designated number of acres per year and hardwoods being harvested down to 20 metres squared per hectares (m^2/ha). $20m^2/ha$ refers to the total surface area of stumps if every tree if one hectare was removed at 1.3 metres above the ground. $20m^2/ha$ is the target basal area for hardwoods as indicated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to maintain the necessary stand density and allow for forest regeneration.

Mitigation measures are implemented for harvests to minimize adverse environmental impacts while striving to achieve the ideal basal area distribution. These measures include:

- Harvesting through late August to March to avoid bird nesting season from April to early August, and
- Prioritizing harvests during the winter months when the ground is frozen to minimize ground disturbance and impacts to forest soils (with the exception of plantations, as it is best to harvest these forests when the ground is not frozen to increase seed germination).

As part of the FSC certification, Grey County is required to protect areas of high conservation values (HCVs). These HCV areas include portions of the forests that may contain significant concentrations of rare, threatened, or endangered plants and/or animals, rare or significant ecosystems, or areas which represent rare or outstanding biological, ecological, or social values. Such areas include Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), and habitats of Species At Risk (SAR). There are some forest groups that are excluded from the harvest schedule due to issues with access due to water levels and the number of HCVs present in these forest groups.

The FMP also outlines how harvesting can reduce the spread of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) through reducing ash populations. Ash is typically represented by 20-30 percent of the forest and harvesting efforts target the medium and large ash for removal over any other species.

Grey County's Recreational Trails Master Plan (RTMP)

The County Forests also serve as recreational amenities across the County. Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions during 2020 and 2021, the County saw increased users in a number of our County Forests. In 2019 the County completed the [Recreational Trails Master Plan](#) which guides the recreational uses in our County Forests. Typically, the County's Forests are open year-round to recreational users, though most trails are not maintained in the winter, except for those maintained by agreement with snowmobile, cross-country skiing, or snowshoe clubs. When there is an active harvest occurring in a County Forest, all or a portion of the forest is closed to public access. In recent years, County staff have experienced more 'push-back' when temporarily closing access due to forest harvests. In considering forest harvest options moving forward, the impact on recreational users of the County Forests is also one criterion for consideration. Not all County forests have improved trails or heavy recreational use, so this criterion would not impact all forests equally.

Grey County's Climate Change Action Plan

Grey County's Climate Change Action Plan, *Going Green in Grey*, indicates that 40-45 percent of Grey County is forested and these areas provide significant ecosystem services and carbon sequestration. Of the County's total forested area, 66 percent is under private ownership and 34 percent is public ownership. Grey County Forests account for 34 percent of the publicly owned forested area. *Going Green in Grey* highlights the importance of afforestation and recommends a study to analyze land use change and forest cover over time. A further study of forest and tree canopy sequestration potential could also be undertaken to acquire local data that includes detailed analysis of the influence of weather, soil characteristics, tree age and species. The plan also notes that forestry and its associated practices produces greenhouse gas emissions. Action 1: Afforestation, Habitat and Biodiversity Protection highlights the importance of reforestation, planting trees where they once stood and afforestation, adding additional trees, to capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and convert it into biomass. Sequestering carbon dioxide will support the County's efforts to meet emission reduction targets in 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. The recommendation out of Action 1 is to develop a multi-faceted approach to advance the protection of natural assets, throughout Grey County. The strategy considers the critical importance of the forests owned by the County and protection of these County-owned forests which act as a source for carbon sequestration.

Forest Carbon

Forests help maintain Earth's carbon balance and moderate climate change by absorbing about one-quarter of the carbon emitted by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels and changes in land uses. Carbon uptake by forests reduces the

rate of carbon accumulation in the atmosphere, reducing the rate at which climate change occurs. Forests' ability to remove the proportion of carbon emitted by human activities will affect the future rate of carbon increase in the atmosphere.

Natural Resources Canada indicates that forests can act as either carbon sources or carbon sinks. A forest is considered a carbon source if it releases more carbon than it absorbs through burning trees, decay after dying or debris decay from harvesting activities. A forest is considered a carbon sink if it absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere than it releases. Carbon sequestration is the process of carbon absorption from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and the subsequent deposition in forest biomass, dead organic matter and in soils. The net balance of all these carbon exchanges determines whether a forest is a carbon source or sink. For the past century, Canada's managed forests have been a significant carbon sink, steadily adding carbon to that already stored. As a result of forest fires and insect infestations over the last 15 years, Canada's forests as a whole have become carbon sources, releasing more carbon into the atmosphere than they are accumulating in any given year.

Factors such as the increase in the annual total area burned by wildland fires and unprecedented insect outbreaks have resulted in forests shifting to carbon sources. The annual harvest rates have shifted dramatically in response to economic demand, increasing in the 1990's and decreasing sharply with the global economic recession from 2007 to 2009. The combination of these events and activities has resulted in Canada's managed forest acting as a net carbon source in years when large areas are burned.

Older forests store more carbon than younger forests, but they sequester carbon at a slower rate. Young trees are more efficient carbon absorbers as the new trees grow quickly. Age diversity within a forest and across the landscape is the best way to maximize both carbon storage and sequestration. Age diversity also contributes to climate resilience and forest health.

Changing Climate Impacts on Forests

Climate influences the structure and function of forest ecosystems and plays an essential role in forest health. A changing climate affects the growth and productivity of forests and could alter the frequency and intensity of forest disturbances such as insect outbreaks, invasive species, wildfires and storms, human development and drought. Increases in temperature, changes in precipitation and increases in CO₂ caused by climate change are likely to affect forest growth and productivity.

Warming temperatures can increase the length of the growing season and shift the geographic ranges of some tree species. Certain tree species' habitats will likely shift north or to higher altitudes. Other species will be at risk regionally if conditions in their current geographic ranges are no longer suitable. Increased temperatures may also

enable harmful insect species to develop faster, alter their seasonal life cycles and expand their ranges northward. A lack of predators, pathogens or inadequate defenses in trees can allow insects to spread rapidly. Climate change could result in greater insect outbreaks that defoliate, weaken and kill trees. Climate change may also benefit invasive plants because they are more tolerant to the environmental conditions resulting from climate change than native plants. Invasive plant species can displace important native vegetation because the invasive species often lack natural predators.

Changes in precipitation increase the risk of drought in some areas and the risk of extreme precipitation and flooding in others. Increased temperatures alter the timing of snowmelt, affecting the seasonal availability of water. Although many trees are resilient to some degree of drought, increases in temperature could make future droughts more damaging than those experienced in the past. Drought dries out vegetation and increases its susceptibility to wildfire, and it also reduces trees' ability to produce sap, which protects them from destructive insects.

Increases in atmospheric CO₂ in conjunction with sufficient water and nutrients may enable trees to be more productive, which may change the distribution of tree species. Growth will be highest in nutrient-rich soils with no water limitation and will decrease with decreasing fertility and water supply.

Forest disturbances can reduce forest productivity and change the distribution of tree species. Forests may recover from a disturbance or existing species may shift their range or die out. When existing species die out, the new species of vegetation that colonize the area create a new type of forest. Disturbances can interact with one another, or with changes in temperature and precipitation, to increase risks to forests. For example, drought can weaken trees and make a forest more susceptible to wildfire or insect outbreaks. Similarly, wildfire can make a forest more vulnerable to pests.

The extent, intensity, and frequency of wildfires are expected to increase with climate change in certain areas of the country. Warmer spring and summer temperatures, coupled with decreases in water availability, dry out woody materials in forests and increase the risk of wildfire. Fires can also contribute to climate change, since they can cause rapid, large releases of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change can damage forests and result in additional forest loss.

Forests and Climate Change Mitigation

The research on the importance of unmanaged forests for climate change mitigation compared to managed forests is inconclusive. Studies on unmanaged or old-growth forests indicate that these forests are critical for carbon sequestration, the mitigation of climate change, and protecting biodiversity. Other studies focusing on forest management indicate that improved forest management practices boost forest growth

and help mitigate climate change. These studies indicate that improved forest management practices help mitigate climate change by increasing the forest carbon stock through storing carbon in forest products and by generating wood-based materials, substituting fossil carbon-based materials or other CO₂-emission-intensive materials. Some research assumes a trade-off between the timber harvested from existing forests and the stock of carbon in those forest ecosystems, asserting that both cannot increase simultaneously.

Researchers often rely on CO₂ flux measurements in addition to external impacts on growth, such as nitrogen emissions, increasing temperatures, CO₂ enrichment and changed precipitation patterns in effort to determine the relative importance of forests for climate change mitigation. Recent studies have indicated that CO₂ flux measurements alone do not allow conclusions on a superiority of unmanaged to managed forests for mitigation goals due to critical consideration of uncertainties and the application of system boundaries. Some studies argue that the consideration of wood products for material and energetic substitution overrules the mitigation potential of unmanaged forests. Moreover, studies show that impacts of nitrogen emissions, CO₂ enrichment of the atmosphere, increasing temperatures and changed precipitation patterns lead to a meaningful increase in growth, even in forests of higher age. These findings are important because they outline how further research on cause-and-effect relationships between management practices and carbon stocks in different compartments of forest ecosystems in order to account for human-induced changes. Forests should continue to be monitored and management should be adaptive and follow current best practices.

How are other public authorities managing their forests?

County staff have investigated forest management practices in Bruce, Dufferin and Simcoe counties, as well as the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), and the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA). These authorities all manage their forests in accordance with their respective forest management plans which aim to keep forests productive, healthy and enhance diversity over time. Some of these authorities have investigated options such as carbon credits, but none of the above have a current forest carbon project at this time.

County Forest Options

Option A – Continue with Harvesting and Amend Harvest Schedule in Forest Management Plan

If Council were to support continuing with harvesting in County forests, the current harvest schedule in the FMP would need to be amended. Most of the prescriptions written for the hardwood stands identify targets of 20 m²/ha. However, recent

inventories identify that these stands either did not respond well to the previous thinning or that these stands were harvested beyond the ideal retention limit. There are several possible reasons for the lower yields in the current inventory, including:

- Failure to follow tree-marking prescriptions in historic harvests,
- More trees removed during past harvest operations than permitted,
- Insects or disease killing trees during the 15-year cycle,
- Specific growing conditions during the previous 15 to 20-year cycle did not produce the anticipated volumes, or
- Any combination of the above factors.

Lower yields in the current inventory pose an issue for future management. Achieving the ideal class distribution at a total basal area of 20 m² /ha will require either a reduction in harvest volumes from the stands or an extension of the cutting cycle to 25 years, resulting in fewer acres harvested each year. The recommendation of this report is that a 25-year harvest schedule is the preferred option.

The 2003 plan calculated the Maximum Annual Depletion (MAD) at 360.6 hectares (ha) in the tolerant hardwoods for the first five years, equivalent to 72 ha per year. MAD includes events such as harvesting, fire damage or loss, insect damage, disease, and natural depletion of forested land. The 2003 plan's harvest schedule targeted 81 ha per year to be harvested for the hardwoods. The MAD was never recalculated after the first five years and the harvest schedule continued targeting the same total area each year. This resulted in an overharvesting of eight ha per year. Over a 15-year cycle, the overharvesting of eight ha per year equates to 120 hectares, or almost two years of the original MAD calculation. The MAD represents a maximum limit. To ensure sustainability, annual harvest volumes need to be maintained below this limit.

Due to the new acquisitions of property, and disposition of one property, a new 15-year cycle MAD has been calculated in the 2021 FMP for the upland deciduous/mixed to $1259.2 / 15 = 83.9$ ha per year or 419.7 hectares in the first five-year operating plan. The MAD will be recalculated at the end of the first five years to determine if any alterations are required to the harvest schedules.

Due to historic overharvesting, the next cycle of harvests will mostly be improvement cuts rather than commercial sawlog harvests in effort to swing the structure of the stands back towards ideal size class distribution. Only a small number of stands have a sawlog potential in the next harvest.

Based on a review of historic harvest information, the average distribution for Grey County hardwood harvests equals 20 percent sawlog to 80 percent fuelwood. Based on this factor, Grey County could normally expect approximately \$70,000 per year from the annual hardwood harvest. Due to lower available volumes made up of smaller, less valuable sawlogs, it is more realistic to estimate that most years in the next 15-year

cycle will result in an annual income closer to \$50,000, subject to any price fluctuation changes.

The FMP stipulates a current harvest cycle of 10 years for plantations and 15 years for hardwoods. All of the hardwood forests are at the total basal area of 20 m²/ha. The Grey County Forest Manager is proposing to extend the harvest schedule to 25 years and reduce the total basal area to 16–18 m² /ha. The result would be fewer hectares harvested per year, allowing for continued hardwood harvest in the forests provided the forests will increase to the anticipated growth of 26 m² /ha in 25 years. Revenue is anticipated to fluctuate depending on the market price for hard maple and ash.

Option B – Harvest in Select County Forests Only

Option B would consist of selective harvesting in accordance with Good Forestry Practices in select County Forests only. There may be some forests that are more suitable for harvesting than others. The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science indicates that areas with exceptionally high densities of carbon may warrant protection through the establishment of reserves, which are defined as natural areas with little to no harvest activity that do not exclude management of fire or other natural disturbance processes. However, the impacts of climate change on forest carbon dynamics may necessitate an adjustment of the use and definition of reserves, such that it may be valuable to retain flexibility in the use of management practices that support the maintenance of high carbon stocks. Limiting harvests in some County forests would also promote old forest conditions, which play a large role in carbon sequestration and the mitigation of climate change.

There may be some County forests not suitable for harvesting because forest access is difficult or the forest can only be accessed via non-County property. For example, Dromore County Forest can only be accessed from a private landowner's driveway. An agreement was established between the landowner and the County to allow contractors and forestry staff to access the County forest. Through this agreement, the County is permitted to use this driveway provided the County restores the driveway to its previous condition following each harvest. Additional County forests less suitable for harvest due to access may include Kolapore Uplands, Osprey Wetlands and Lueck Mill.

If Council were to support harvesting in select forests and cease harvesting in others, the MAD would need to be recalculated for those forests. Forests that are determined to be less suitable for harvest can be monitored each year for disease and insect infestation.

Option C – Carbon Offset Project

Option C would allow the County to explore carbon offset projects and determine whether County forests would be eligible for such projects. Forest carbon markets allow

for businesses, municipalities, and other organizations to purchase carbon credits to offset their CO₂ and other GHG emissions. A forest carbon credit is created when a landowner undertakes a specific project to increase their forests' ability to absorb CO₂ and store carbon. The projects are then verified and monetized in the marketplace for forest carbon. Reducing emissions of CO₂ and other GHG's can be difficult and expensive, so forest carbon offset markets provides entities with an alternative to reduce their impacts on climate change. The increased CO₂ intake by forests is used to offset CO₂ emissions by another entity. There are three main types of carbon offset projects:

1. Avoided conversion: protecting the forest from future development to keep the carbon in the forest's trees and soils. These projects usually include the establishment of a conservation easement or the transfer of private land to public ownership. In order to qualify, easements cannot be too restrictive on the timber and its management. For most carbon projects, eligible activities should be either future activities, or activities that started recently to respect the principle of additionality. Properties acquired and designated for protection after the year 2000 may be considered under a crediting program.
2. Afforestation, reforestation, or revegetation: growing new trees to remove CO₂ from the air and store carbon. For these projects, trees are planted and/or conditions are created that will encourage the growth of trees in an area previously absent of trees.
3. Improved Forest Management (IFM): using practices that increase the amount of CO₂ removed from the air and carbon stored in an existing forest. Strategies to do this might include setting aside a reserve area, harvesting less frequently to grow larger trees, thinning to allow remaining trees more room to grow, and/or increasing the diversity of species and age classes (i.e., forest structure).

Improved forest management is the most common forest carbon offset type and the most applicable project type for County forests, as all County forests undergo scheduled management by way of selective harvesting.

County staff have consulted with one carbon offset project organization to date, Bluesource. Bluesource indicates that eligible projects require land ownership in Fee Simple title and a minimum forest area of approximately 5,000 acres to be economically viable as a single project. In the 'business as usual' forest management, all merchantable timber is harvested whereas forest management for a carbon offset project requires harvesting to be within forest growth limits. Carbon credits allow for an additional revenue source, where revenue would be made on harvested wood in addition to carbon credits. Bluesource provides a cost scenario for a forest managed carbon project of \$2 million paid for 400,000 m³ of wood and \$4.2 million paid for 100,000 carbon credits (at \$42 per credit), a total of \$6.2 million for this option

compared to an intensive harvest at \$4 million paid for 800,000 m³ of wood and \$0 paid for 0 carbon credits.

Grey Sauble Conservation engaged Carbonzero to complete a project feasibility assessment to investigate the viability of a Forest Carbon Offset project for their land. Carbonzero suggested GSCA could have a carbon offset project that would bring in revenue between \$32,500 and \$98,000 per year. This range does not include any costs associated with a project or carbon broker fees. Based on the low revenue and high project development costs, GSCA determined that the associated expenses would likely be greater than revenue. The report highlighted the main reasons for the low revenue projections:

- 47% of GSCA's land base has not had Forest Management and through the "Principle of Additionality" it cannot qualify for Carbon Credits. Most of GSCA's land was acquired and designated as "protected" prior to 2000. In order to receive credits from these lands, there needs to be a changed use.
- Leakage occurring as a result of net increases in GHG emissions outside an area as a result of that area's activity. Activity shifting leakage occurs when harvesting stops at one location, which results in an increase in harvesting at another location. Market leakage is a commodity shift that occurs when harvesting stops at one location and the demand shifts somewhere else due to lost supply. For example, people who rely on wood to heat their homes still need the product, so it increases demand from another supplier. Carbonzero estimates leakage to be between 40% and 70%.

Bruce County has signed up for development of a forest carbon offset project, but is currently waiting on the federal protocols for the compliance market to be released prior to proceeding with a project.

Option D – Discontinue Harvesting

The County has the option to discontinue harvesting. This option would have several impacts:

1. Forest growth would slow and eventually decline as a result of a lack of harvesting. A decline in forest growth could result in the forests becoming carbon sources.
2. Leakage occurring as a result of net increases in GHG emissions outside an area as a result of that area's activity. Market leakage is highly dependent of the type of wood product to be harvested. As fuelwood is often consumed locally and is a commodity that can be sourced somewhat easily in the region, leakage is anticipated to be high. Some assessments for carbon offset projects consider the risk of leakage of fuelwood harvesting to be so high that projects areas where fuelwood removal represents more than 5% of annual harvest level are not

eligible. Other assessments indicate leakage to be established at least at 40% but likely at 70% which is much higher compared to other Canadian projects.

3. GSCA contract as 40% of the Grey County Forest Manager/By-Law Officer's job is forest management and 30-40% of the Ecological Lands Technician job is Species At Risk (SAR) inventories on Grey County Forests. SAR inventories are completed on Grey County Forests to determine areas whether certain areas should be avoided during harvest due to presence of SAR. These inventories would not be needed if harvesting were to discontinue. The approximate cost savings would be \$72,487.
4. Tree marking would not be required, and neither would FSC program costs, which would result in cost savings.
5. Loss of revenue, projected between \$50,000 to \$70,000 based on the current FMP.

County staff have considered the best management option for County forests not just from a financial perspective, but from a forest health and overall climate change perspective. For these reasons, County staff are not recommending Option D at this time.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

As discussed above, with respect to Section 2 of the Forestry Act prohibiting the County from using any County Forest property that is a former provincial "Agreement Forest" for any purpose other than forestry, and from selling, leasing or otherwise disposing of them, unless specific approval is granted by the province.

Financial and Resource Implications

If the County were to cease harvesting in select or all forests, there would be revenue loss between \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually from harvests offset by cost savings. This number is subject to fluctuation based on the market for wood and the number of hectares harvested. For example, annual revenue from County forest harvests from 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2018 was \$75,370, \$95,280, \$135,150, \$70,992 and \$70,388, respectively, averaging at \$75,358 annual revenue over the past five years. If the County were to cease harvesting in all forests, cost savings would come from tree marking, FSC program costs and costs toward contract staff completing forest management and SAR inventories, approximately estimated between \$85,000 and \$100,000 annually. If the County were to harvest in select County forests, cost savings would come from less tree marking. The loss of revenue from harvesting may be able to be partially recouped from carbon credits. Staff would need to complete a financial analysis or feasibility assessment with a carbon credit broker to determine the County's potential revenue from an Improved Forest Management project. If Council were to support Option A, the revenue is anticipated to be closer to or below \$50,000 annually

given fewer hectares will be harvested per year to allow the forests to increase to the anticipated growth of 26 m²/ha in 25 years.

Relevant Consultation

- ☒ Internal: Climate Change staff, Planning staff, and Grey County Forest Manager/By-law Enforcement Officer
- ☒ External: Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and other Forest Manager Authorities

Appendices and Attachments

[Forest Management Plan](#)

[Recreational Trails Master Plan](#)

[Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Staff Report: Carbon Credit Update and Project Feasibility Assessment: Forest Carbon Offset Project for Grey Sauble Conservation Authority](#)



City of Peterborough

500 George Street North, Peterborough Ontario, K9H 3R9

January 21, 2025

Peterborough - Kawartha MPP Dave Smith;
Honourable Doug Ford, Premier;
Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing;
Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General;
Association of Municipalities of Ontario; and
Councils of each of Ontario's municipalities.

Subject: Bill 242, Safer Municipalities Act, 2024

The following resolution, adopted by City Council at its meeting held on January 13, 2025, is forwarded for your consideration.

Whereas:

1. A municipality's parks and open spaces are critical infrastructure that support a strong community, and the public's shared and safe use of the municipality's parks and open spaces is integral to ensuring that support.
2. Ontario's municipalities are struggling to maintain their parks and open spaces for their shared and safe use by the public as a result of the increasing proliferation of encampments and illicit activities related thereto.
3. Municipalities that enforce their standards regulating or prohibiting encampments in their parks and open spaces must have regard to the availability of shelter space for those who need shelter.
4. On January 27, 2023, Justice Valente of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice rendered his judgment in *Waterloo (Regional Municipality) v. Persons Unknown and to be Ascertained* (2023), [2023] O.J. No. 417 (Waterloo Decision) which declared that the municipality's by-law violated section 7 of the *Charter* and was therefore inoperative insofar as it applied to prevent encampment residents from erecting temporary shelters on a site when the number of homeless individuals in the region exceeded the number of accessible shelter beds.
5. The Waterloo Decision's analysis of the adequacy of shelter beds suggests an unworkable and unclear standard that goes beyond the number of shelter

spaces and that includes the requirement to provide shelter spaces that must accommodate illicit drug use and other activities that could put shelter residents, workers and volunteers at risk. The result is that municipalities are impaired in their enforcement of their standards and have lost or are losing control of their parks and open spaces.

- 6. On December 12, 2024, the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, introduced Bill 242, Safer Municipalities Act, 2024. Among its various initiatives, Bill 242 proposes to amend section 2 of the Trespass to Property Act by adding aggravating factors that must be considered in the court's determination of a penalty under that section. However, the key challenge is that a municipality's exercise of its rights at common law and under section 9 of the Trespass to Property Act to remove encampments from the municipality's parks and open spaces remains potentially subject to the unworkable and unclear standard for the adequacy of shelter space suggested by the Waterloo Decision.**
- 7. In these circumstances, municipalities need provincial legislation that clearly defines a workable standard for shelter space for the purposes of a municipality's jurisdiction to enforce its standards regulating or prohibiting encampments in its parks and open spaces.**

Now therefore, be it resolved:

- 1. That the provincial government be respectfully requested to amend Bill 242 to clearly define a workable standard for shelter space for the purposes of a municipality's jurisdiction to enforce its standards regulating or prohibiting encampments in its parks and open spaces.**
- 2. That, without limitation, Bill 242 provides that a municipality will have met the standard for shelter space for the purposes of the municipality's jurisdiction to enforce its standards regulating or prohibiting encampments in its parks and open spaces:**
 - a) despite the establishment and enforcement of shelter rules including rules that prohibit drug use and other activities that could put shelter residents, workers and volunteers at risk; and**
 - b) if an official designated by the municipality is satisfied that the number of available shelter spaces is at least equal to the aggregate of the number of individuals actually seeking shelter and the number of individuals against whom the municipality is planning to enforce its standards regulating or prohibiting encampments in its parks and open spaces.**
- 3. That a copy of this resolution be sent to:**

- a) Peterborough - Kawartha MPP Dave Smith;
- b) Honourable Doug Ford, Premier;
- c) Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing;
- d) Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General;
- e) Association of Municipalities of Ontario; and to
- f) Councils of each of Ontario's municipalities.

Sincerely,



John Kennedy
City Clerk

cc:
City of Peterborough Council
City of Peterborough Staff



1 Halton Hills Drive, Halton Hills, L7G 5G2
905-873-2600 | 1-877-712-2205
haltonhills.ca

January 29, 2025

All Municipalities in Ontario
Via Email

Re: Sovereignty of Canada

Please be advised that Council of the Town of Halton Hills at its meeting of Monday, January 20, 2025, adopted Resolution No. 2025-0010 regarding Sovereignty of Canada.

Attached for your information is a copy of Resolution No. 2025-0010.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Lawr'.

Melissa Lawr, AMP
Deputy Clerk – Legislation



THE CORPORATION
OF
THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

Resolution No.: 2025-0010

Title: Sovereignty of Canada

Date: January 20, 2025

Moved by: Councillor D. Keene

Seconded by: Councillor J. Brass

Item No. 12.2

WHEREAS incoming President Trump has suggested that with the use of "economic force" such as tariffs, Canada should become the 51st state of the United States, and further he suggests that many Canadians would agree;

AND WHEREAS residents of our community, known as Canada's Most Patriotic Town, have demonstrated passion for and loyalty to our nation by opposing past "Buy America" trade measures; by celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary by simultaneously flying over 57,000 Canadian flags and along with other activities, by annually hosting popular Canada Day festivities throughout our municipality; and

AND WHEREAS Canada is a sovereign nation with a peaceful history of self-governance dating to its Confederation in 1867; and

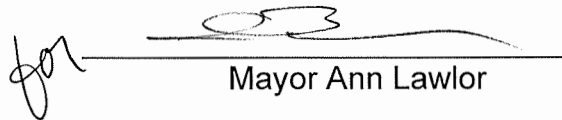
AND WHEREAS the Canadian identity is marked by a deep-rooted pride in its heritage and culture founded by French and British settlement, enriched by Indigenous culture and traditions and by more than a century and a half of multi-cultural immigration;

AND WHEREAS Canada has significant global standing, consistently supporting its allies, including the United States, in global conflicts such as two world wars, and wars in Korea and Afghanistan; and in international coalitions and in being consistently recognized as among the top countries in the world for quality of life;

AND WHEREAS the shared history of the United States and Canada has been one of friendship, respect and neighbourly relations;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Town of Halton Hills categorically rejects any efforts by incoming President Trump or any others to undermine the sovereignty of Canada. We stand united with our Ontario Premier Doug Ford and our Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for a Canada that remains strong, free, independent, and characterized by peace, order, and good government.

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor prepare correspondence containing this resolution for circulation to the office of the American president through our Canadian diplomatic channels with copies to The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister, The Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, MP Michael Chong, Premier Doug Ford, The Honourable Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade of Ontario, MPP Ted Arnott, Leaders of the Opposition Parties, AMO, FCM, and all municipalities in Ontario.


Mayor Ann Lawlor



The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

Resolution

Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Town of Cobourg
55 King Street West,
Cobourg, ON, K9A 2M2
clerk@cobourg.ca

Delivered via email

Doug.fordco@pc.ola.org
premier@ontario.ca

January 31, 2025

RE: Correspondence received from Northumberland County regarding the Municipal Restructuring Study

Please be advised that the Town of Cobourg Council, at its meeting held on January 29, 2025, passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS Cobourg Council understands that the Northumberland tax base is having difficulties with the constant increase in municipal taxes from both the upper and lower tier municipalities; and

WHEREAS the Council acknowledges the need to explore service rationalization, restructuring, and potential amalgamation within Northumberland County to enhance efficiency and service delivery; and

WHEREAS any study undertaken must provide a comprehensive and balanced approach to ensure that all viable options are fairly considered in determining the best governance and financial structure for all of our communities; and

WHEREAS the town of Cobourg tax base makes up 23% of the Northumberland County tax levy and the town of Cramahe contributes just 6% while both having a single vote at the County of Northumberland Council table unless it is a recorded vote; and

WHEREAS in addition to the options of restructuring and amalgamation, a third alternative must be evaluated, namely the potential dilution of the upper-tier government that could allow for the direct allocation of provincial funding to lower-tier municipalities enhancing the local decision-making process and allowing for fiscal autonomy of the various communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Cobourg Council expresses its support and significant interest in the pursuing a study on service rationalization, restructuring, and amalgamation of Northumberland County; and that a third option, be included in the study and that the third option look at the possible dissolution of the



The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

Resolution

upper tier government; and

FURTHER THAT this letter be forwarded to Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, Honourable, David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and Northumberland - Peterborough South MPP, and Honourable, Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Markham-Stouffville MPP along with all other lower tier municipalities asking for their support in ensuring this much needed study explores all potential options that may better serve the resident of Cobourg and Northumberland County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kristina Lepik'.

Kristina Lepik
Deputy Clerk/Manager, Legislative Services

Enclosure.

cc. Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Northumberland – Peterborough South MPP;
Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and
All lower tier Ontario Municipalities

January 22, 2025

Delivered via email

Dear Northumberland County Clerks,

Re: Municipal Restructuring Study

I am writing to share a report and accompanying Council Resolution approved by Northumberland County Council on December 18, 2024. The report entitled 'Budget 2025 – Municipal Restructuring Study', was requested by County Council on November 20, 2024 for the purposes of investigating the cost of a restructuring study as part of 2025 budget deliberations.

As per Council's request, this letter is being sent to Member Municipalities to determine interest in pursuing a study of service rationalization, restructuring and/or amalgamation. The support required would include staff time to gather and share information, as well as meetings with the consultant. The study would be informative, and participation would not be seen as an agreement to move forward with any recommendations resulting from the study. If a majority of Member Municipalities wish to participate in the study, we will take the results back to County Council for next steps on moving forward.

Please note the response deadline of March 3, 2025.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Moore
CAO, Northumberland County

c.c. Northumberland County CAOs
Maddison Mather, Clerk, Northumberland County

Council Resolution

Moved By: J. Logel

Seconded By: R. Crate

Agenda
Item 17.c
(2.i)

Resolution Number
2024-12-18- 926

"That County Council direct staff to send a letter to each of Northumberland County's 7 Member Municipalities to determine interest in pursuing a municipal restructuring study, with a response deadline of March 3, 2025."

Recorded Vote
Requested by _____
Councillor's Name

Deferred _____
Warden's Signature

Carried _____
Warden's Signature

Defeated _____
Warden's Signature

If you require this information in an alternate format, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at accessibility@northumberland.ca or 1-800-354-7050 ext. 2327



Report 2024-167

Report Title: Budget 2025 – Municipal Restructuring Study

Prepared by: Jennifer Moore
Chief Administrative Officer
Office of the CAO

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: December 18, 2024

Report Not Considered by

Standing Committee Because:

- ☐ Time-sensitive Issue (information received too late for Committee consideration)
- ☐ Urgent Matter (issue arose after this month's Committee meeting)
- ☒ Other

Strategic Plan Priorities: ☐ Innovate for Service Excellence
☐ Ignite Economic Opportunity
☐ Foster a Thriving Community
☐ Propel Sustainable Growth
☒ Champion a Vibrant Future

Recommendation

"That County Council, having considered Report 2024-167 'Budget 2025 - Municipal Restructuring Study', direct staff to request input from member municipalities to determine interest in pursuing a municipal restructuring study."

Purpose

At their November 20, 2024 meeting, County Council discussed budget considerations for 2025. As a result of the discussions, staff were directed to report back on the cost of an amalgamation study in the draft budget.

Background

The idea of restructuring is not new to Northumberland County. Northumberland has been restructured several times in its 232-year history. Northumberland was initially formed in 1792. It joined with Durham County to form the Newcastle District in 1802, as part of Upper Canada. In 1850 it became the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham. It remained as the United Counties until 1973. On January 1, 1974, the majority of Durham County joined Ontario County to form Durham Region, except for the Town of Port Hope and Hope Township. Hope and Port Hope joined Northumberland County to form a standalone County named Northumberland. Over the years there have been various changes to the boundaries and names of lower tiers, as those organizations have been restructured, as well with population growth and Provincial direction.

In the late 1990's there was significant restructuring across the province and the number of municipalities was reduced by almost half. Northumberland's boundaries were changed once again when Murray Township left Northumberland and joined the newly formed City of Quinte West. Northumberland's boundaries have otherwise remained unchanged, but there were several amalgamations of lower-tiers. By 2001, Northumberland was comprised of seven lower-tiers and looks as it does today.

Current	Formerly
Town of Cobourg	Town of Cobourg
Municipality of Port Hope	Town of Port Hope Hope Township
Municipality of Trent Hills	Town of Campbellford Village of Hastings Seymour Township Percy Township
Municipality of Brighton	Town of Brighton Brighton Township
Hamilton Township	Hamilton Township
Township of Alnwick/Haldimand	Alnwick Township Haldimand Township
Township of Cramahe	Village of Colborne Cramahe Township

Around the time of the municipal restructuring in 2001, there were also significant changes in the responsibilities of each level of government. While services such as road and bridges had been the County's responsibility since the days of horse and buggy, the County assumed responsibility for many additional services from the province, including Housing and Paramedics.

The table below summarizes key municipal services, and which level of municipal government delivers the service within Northumberland County. It should be noted that the responsibilities of each level of government have changed over time. The manner in which services are delivered varies dramatically across the province. Every municipality has a unique combination of service responsibilities and service levels. The range of services seems to be most diverse in the two-tier municipal structures where a County is the upper tier. Regional governments tend to have more similarities in the distribution of services between the upper and lower tiers.

Service		Upper Tier	Lower Tier
Infrastructure			
	Roads	*	*
	Bridges	*	*
	Water		*
	Wastewater/Sewage		*
	Solid Waste	*	
Community Services			
	Social Services/Service Manager	*	
	Housing	*	
	Parks & Recreation		*
	Forest	*	
	Libraries		*
	Transit		*
	Cemeteries		*
Protection Services			
	Police		*
	Fire		*
	Fire – Communications tower/Dispatch shared service	*	
	Provincial Offences	*	
	Court Security		*
	By Law Enforcement	*	*
	Emergency Planning	*	*
Health Care			
	Paramedics	*	
	Community Paramedicine	*	
	Long Term Care	*	
	Health Unit (funding only)	*	
	Walk-in Clinic	*	

Service		Upper Tier	Lower Tier
Community Development			
	Economic Development	*	*
	Tourism	*	*
	Land Use Planning	*	*
	Conservation Authority (funding only)		*
	Inspections		*
	Inspections – Shared Service	*	
Legislative Services			
	Clerk/Governance	*	*
	Licensing		*
	Archives (existing shared service)	*	*
	MPAC (funding only)	*	
Corporate Services			
	HR/Payroll	*	*
	Finance/Treasury	*	*
	Legal	*	
	IT/GIS (existing shared service)	*	*
	Health & Safety	*	*
	Facilities/Property Management	*	*
	Communications	*	*

Notes

*Some services may be a lower tier responsibility, but are not necessarily delivered by every member municipality.

** Some services may be delivered by another entity, while remaining the responsibility of the municipality.

There are several services where there are existing formal, or informal, shared services arrangements. Selected services have been consolidated, or partially consolidated, at the upper tier to achieve efficiencies and economies of scale such as IT, road surface treatment, GIS, etc. There have been other shared services agreements on an ad hoc basis in recent years such as HR. In addition to the more formal arrangements, municipalities across the County frequently collaborate on service delivery and projects. For example, joint training exercises, road construction with underground works, and purchasing.

Consultations

The County and member municipalities have explored opportunities for shared services over the past couple of decades, with some new opportunities advancing and others being abandoned after hitting barriers. Staff have consistently approached this work with the intention of maintaining (or improving) service levels for the same or less cost. However, it is inherently difficult to voluntarily merge the work of eight separate legal entities with independent governance structures. Every organization has their own identified priorities, in addition to busy day-to-day operating demands.

Anecdotally, there are mixed opinions about the success of previous amalgamations. The key difference is that most previous amalgamations were initiated through a Provincial directive, or a very strong suggestion from the Province that municipalities look to merge with one or more neighbouring municipalities. Small municipalities speak to the potential benefits of economies of scale across their operations, although many municipal services cannot achieve significant savings even at their present size and scale due to labour intensive services, large geographic areas, and other limitations. Municipalities that underwent large amalgamations, such as moving to a single tier, often acknowledge long-term benefits but reference many challenges, including governance structure and service rationalization, that need to be overcome in the early days. In many cases, there were increased costs during the initial years of an amalgamation, as common service levels and expectations were settled. For many communities, particularly in rural Ontario, there are strong ties to existing features of the community; there is a reluctance to accept the changes that could lead to more significant savings.

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

The Municipal Act 2001 Part V, Municipal Reorganization specifically permits restructuring of municipalities. This section of the Act outlines the process and authorities for various aspects of restructuring the governance of a municipality or municipalities. The purpose of this section is as follows:

171 (1) The purposes of section 172 to 179 are,

- (a) To provide for a process which allows municipal Restructuring to proceed in a timely and efficient manner;*
- (b) To facilitate municipal restructuring over large geographic areas; and*
- (c) To facilitate municipal restructuring of a significant nature which may include elimination of a level of municipal government, transfer of municipal powers and responsibilities and responsibilities and changes to municipal representation systems. 2001, c.25 s. 171(a)*

Discussion / Options

Any study on municipal restructuring will require participation from all seven member municipalities, and most likely the County, depending on the services being considered. It is critical that there is an interest in the study, and a commitment of support from the participants. The support required would include staff time to gather and share information, as well as meetings with the consultant. The study would be informative, and participation would not be seen as an agreement to move forward with any recommendations resulting from the study.

Staff propose an initial step by County Council to request input from member municipalities to determine interest in pursuing a study of service rationalization, restructuring and/or amalgamation. Further, a resolution should be requested from each member municipality to express their level of interest in the information learned through such as study. This resolution would only be a commitment to participate and receive the final report, but would NOT obligate any municipality to proceed with implementation of the report recommendations.

Further, if a majority of member municipalities wish to participate in the study, then the County should proceed with the procurement of a consultant to conduct the necessary research and analysis, and make recommendations for consideration. Given the anticipated size and scope of the study, it would be a competitive RFP process.

Staff propose two options should there be sufficient interest from member municipalities:

- a) Study the benefits and challenges of a full amalgamation to a single government across Northumberland County for all services. This would include costs and resourcing required through a transition period, projected ongoing savings or increases, high level review of staffing implications, proposed governance model, etc.
- b) Select 1-2 services to evaluate and develop an assessment of options for restructuring. Restructuring could result in an upload to the County, or consolidation with one of the seven member municipalities for all or part of a service, based on the analysis. The review would include transitional and ongoing operational impacts to governance, staffing, service levels, and financial implications, as well as an initial plan for implementation.

Staff recommend option B, and recommend that it be referred to the CAOs' Committee to determine the services to be reviewed. The CAOs should provide input into developing common goals for a study, including financial objectives, service level equalization, staffing and asset impacts, as well as qualitative impacts of service restructuring.

Financial Impact

The cost would be dependent on the scope of the review. Given the complexity of the assessment and number of municipalities, consulting costs would likely be \$150,000 - \$250,000 for the initial reviews, depending on number and complexity of departments included in the study, and the number of municipalities currently offering the service. The work required would be unique to Northumberland County, and could require extensive planning if the direction is to conduct a review of a full amalgamation, with costs likely exceeding the top end of the estimate for a full implementation plan. Given the time required for member municipal consideration as well as the RFP process, it is expected that only a portion of costs would be incurred in 2025 with the balance incurred in 2026.

Member Municipality Impacts

Depending on the extent of the review, there could be a significant impact to member municipal operations and governance.

Conclusion / Outcomes

Staff recommend this report be received for information, and considered as part of the 2025 budget deliberations.

Attachments

N/A



GREY-BRUCE UPDATE



End of Year Greetings

As we wrap up the year, we want to recognize the great work of our employees, not just operationally but also in the communities where we work and live in. We are proud of our team's accomplishments this year, from giving back to the

community to successful project completions, and welcoming many new team members who have come onboard at Walker. Thank you for your tireless efforts and ongoing commitment to making Walker a safe and great place to work.

We also want to thank our neighbours, customers, and community partners for your ongoing support. We recognize the importance of contributing to the growth and well-being of our communities and remain committed to being an active community member for over 136 years. We wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season and look forward to all we can accomplish together in 2025!

-Robert Mantha, General Manager – Aggregates, Grey-Bruce

Spot us in the Community

Georgian Bay Community School Donation

Walker Grey Bruce made a meaningful contribution to a local school by donating essential school supplies. Special thanks to Heather Di Francesco for coordinating this initiative which not only provided students with necessary materials for their education but also demonstrated our commitment to supporting the community and investing in the future of local children.



Hanover Splash Pad Fundraising

Walker made a donation of \$2500 towards the community splashpad that will provide children and families with a safe space to cool off and enjoy in the summer.

Hanover Public School Sandbox

In August, members from Walker volunteered to build a sandbox for the students at Hanover Heights Community School.

Food Bank Donations

Walker proudly donates to local food banks in our operating areas. Food banks that received Walker support in 2024 include:

- Ontario Student Nutrition Program - Bluewater District School Board
- Salvation Army of Hanover Food Bank
- Salvation Army Warton Food Bank
- Salvation Army Owen Sound Food Bank
- OSHARE (Owen Sound Hunger and Relief Effort)

Thanks for Attending our Annual Community BBQ!

Each year, Walker hosts Community BBQ's for near neighbours to show our appreciation for their continued support in the communities we operate in. In Grey Bruce we held our annual BBQ at the Alvanley Ready Mix site, Sutherland Quarry, and the Cedarwell Hanover location.

Guests enjoyed family friendly activities, explored heavy equipment in a touch-a-truck setup, and learned about our operations. The touch-a-truck equipment is always a big hit with the kids!

We want to thank everyone who came out to enjoy the day, and all the Walker volunteers for planning and organizing this event for the community.



Celebrating one year with the team in Hanover!

Building a sustainable future, together.

These five words outline our company's vision, guiding our path forward for the next 20 years, and beyond. Walker remains committed to doing the right thing for employees, customers, the environment and the communities we are proud to call home.

Highlights from our 2023 Sustainability Report:



3,700 hours volunteered by our team



117K tonnes asphalt and concrete recycled



113B kWh exported to electricity grid

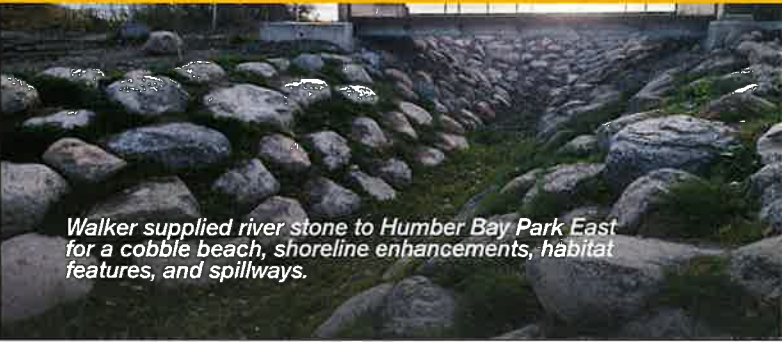
Learn more at walkerind.com/sustainability

Ready to go digital?

SCAN ME



If you want to stay in the loop but prefer to go paperless, visit our website or scan the QR code to sign up for our digital newsletter.



Walker supplied river stone to Humber Bay Park East for a cobble beach, shoreline enhancements, habitat features, and spillways.



Safety Initiatives and Improvements

Asphalt Plant Supervisor, Al Fortune (left), and Asphalt Plant Loader, Brent Johnson (right), were recognized for their safety initiatives at the plant.

This included improvements like replacing a caged vertical ladder with stairs to the feed bins catwalk, extending the backs of the feed bins to prevent any material from spilling over, mounting a convex mirror on the guardrail to improve the visibility of loaded trucks leaving the silo and truck scale, and finally, a guard at the front of one of the feed bin ramps was extended. Keep up the great work, team!



**work safe
at walker**

Celebrating our Employees

Danielle Allen was promoted to Quality Control & Assurance Manager for Simcoe and Grey Bruce. Danielle joined Walker over five years ago, and her drive and attention to detail made her an ideal candidate for this role.

Please welcome Alex Thaiyil, Operations Coordinator for the Grey Bruce Aggregates & Ready Mix Team. Alex was a member of our finance department and we are excited to utilize his knowledge in this new role.



Caitlin Winkels (left), Alex Thaiyil (centre), Sarah Nicoll-Lawler (right)

How we Foster a Superior Safety Culture

Safety is critical to our operations - it affects everything we do every day. We recognize our responsibility to protect our employees, environment, communities, and customers.

- We invest in building & fostering the health, wellness, and safety of our employees.
- All of our operations require a unique set of health and safety protocols.
- We encourage employees to "see something, say something, do something".
- Through safety protocols, training, and maintaining a safe work environment, we reduce the likelihood of incidents, injuries, or exposure to unsafe environments.
- Each year we recognize an employee who leads by example and positively influences others by staying committed to a safe and healthy workplace.



Congratulations to the Aggregates and Construction teams for successfully completing this round's WSIB Health & Safety Excellence Program!

Walker at Work

Meaford Haven Subdivision

Cedarwell Excavating construction crew installed 16, 20-tonne concrete box culverts at their Meaford Haven subdivision job. A Field Level Hazard Assessment (FLHA) and inspection of equipment was completed, as well as ensuring proper personal protective equipment (PPE) compliance. After installation, water proofing of the culvert joints was done and then backfilling of the culverts began.



20-tonne concrete box culvert installation

Grey Road 16 Overlay & Reconstruction

This project includes 5,110 meters of asphalt overlay along with an isolated reconstruction area. To improve stormwater drainage, existing centerline culverts were replaced. At the west limit intersection, road platform reconstruction included grade adjustments, complete granular base replacement, topsoil removal, and earth excavation, all conducted under full road closure. In total, 6,200 metric tonnes of hot mix asphalt was placed.



Grey Road 13 Crossing Culvert Removal

Grey Road 13 Rehabilitation

This project involved pulverizing 4,400 meters of the existing road, grading and compacting a new base, and applying asphalt paving. Stormwater drainage was enhanced by replacing centerline culverts. The existing guide rail was upgraded and a total of 10,800 metric tonnes of hot mix asphalt was placed, followed by surface finishes including landscape stone from our Duntroon Quarry, hydroseeding, granular 'A' shouldering, and line painting.

Northport Meadows in Port Elgin

Construction from this year's Northport Meadows apartment building is made up of 100% Walker materials. The foundation and floors were constructed from our Ready-Mix plant, and precast structure built by an aggregate customer using Walker sand and stone.



Northport Meadows subdivision foundation

CONTACT US

AGGREGATE PIT & QUARRY OPERATIONS

Robert Mantha

General Manager – Aggregates, Grey-Bruce

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✉ rmantha@walkerind.com

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Building a sustainable future, **together.**

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