

TBM Official Plan Issues

- **Growth Projections:** Grey County is currently completing studies to prepare 25-year growth projections and define how growth should be allocated among the County's nine municipalities. We'll have to look very carefully at how these projections are derived, how they will be handed down to us and what these allocations might look like in the real world, at the local level. This is particularly important for TBM, which will likely be expected to continue to manage a large share of regional growth.
- **Intensification:** We're going to hear a lot about intensification during the OP review, given the growth that the County will be asking us to absorb. The general idea, in theory, is that it's more efficient to accommodate growth by increasing densities in areas that are already well serviced than by allowing more low-density sprawl, which would require the installation of new infrastructure services. And the concept of increasing intensification will inevitably lead to discussion of maximum allowable building height, which will be one of the key issues that must be addressed in the review.
- **Environment:** The OP review must address the all-important issue of preserving – and enhancing – our natural environment. We're fortunate to have a rare combination of escarpment lands, wetlands, woodlands, rivers and shorelines, and it's our responsibility to make sure these vital ecosystems are protected. They play a central role in everything from climate change mitigation and species preservation to defining the unique natural beauty of our area. For years, and through numerous venues and documents, TBM residents have demanded effective environmental stewardship. A strong OP is needed to translate goals and aspirations into real, measurable environmental improvements.
- **Best Practices:** TBM is not alone in launching an OP update this year. Most of our neighbouring municipalities in both Grey and Simcoe Counties will also be reviewing their OPs, and it will be important to stay in touch, learn from each other and identify best practices. We're also not alone as a municipality that is attracting growing numbers of permanent and seasonal residents, vacationers and tourists. We should identify and learn what we can from peers across Ontario and Canada who have succeeded in managing growth while preserving the very qualities that make their areas attractive.
- **Design:** One of the ways municipalities can ensure a high *quality* of development is to establish comprehensive architectural and design standards and guidelines. The Town's existing Design Guidelines are due for an update, and there's a need to address requirements such as green building techniques as well as compatibility with the character of our established communities. These standards and guidelines are implemented through the Official Plan.
- **Attainable Housing:** The proposed Gateway project in Thornbury is just one of many options available to address our chronic need for a broader range of affordable housing options. We need a comprehensive, fully integrated strategy to support diversity in our housing stock, backed by effective OP policies.