



# Bluewater District School Board

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July 3, 2018

Randy Scherzer  
County of Grey  
Director of Planning & Development  
595 9<sup>th</sup> Ave East  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3

RE: Grey County Official Plan Response

Dear Mr. Scherzer:

Thank you for circulating the notice of the revised draft Grey County Official Plan for this office to review.

Education over the past 5 years has been continuously changing as the Ministry of Education's expanded role now incorporates child care, EarlyOn Centres, HUB planning and community partnerships. In addition, the Ministry continues to lower class sizes, increase supports for special education, as well as expand continuing education, alternative learning and virtual learning. These changing circumstances are reflected in the board's need for flexibility in facility program space.

Further to the facility challenges brought about by changing programming needs, the board's facility requirements are also impacted in certain areas of Grey County by intensification and infill within settlement areas which increases enrolment in local schools. We have noticed an increase in families moving to small communities and rural areas in the county, perhaps as a result of the rising housing costs elsewhere, which reinforces the importance of flexibility to provide space for student learning.

As such the Board requests policy considerations within the County of Grey Official Plan which support the ever changing needs of educational facilities. Many policies in the proposed plan such as active transportation, partnerships, and parking are directly related to the role schools play in supporting families and children in the community. We are pleased to see the emphasis on Active Transportation in the draft Official Plan as we encourage active school travel for the many environmental, physical, and mental health benefits.

We respectfully request the attached policy items be considered before the final approval of the Grey County Official Plan. Should you require additional information or wish to discuss further inclusion of these policies, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Cummings'.

Rob Cummings, CPA, CMA  
Superintendent of Business Services/Treasurer  
RC/js

	Topic	Policy Considerations	Comment/Rationale
1	Active Transportation	Identify and demarcating safe pedestrian and cycling routes to schools and other community destinations and promoting these routes.	Promoting student's ability to walk to school Environmental, health and well-being benefits Engaging students in the community and encouraging self-identification as citizens
2		Considering winter maintenance of multi-use trails particularly along routes that connect pedestrians to key destinations such as schools.	Limits need for busing by creating more walking routes within the 1.6 km in all seasons Encourages the culture of walking (see #1)
3		Council will consider the provision of crossing guards in school areas.	Crossing guards encourage walking to school by making the route safer and helping to alleviate fears about safety.
4		On all new local roads sidewalks will be required on one side of the street. Sidewalks on both sides of local roads may be required in the vicinity of schools to ensure the safety of students.	Require municipal sidewalks and multi-modal paths in new developments and retrofitting existing streets
5		Identify fragmented sidewalks and connectivity within existing residential areas and develop a plan for the construction of sidewalks or multi-use trails on at least one side of the road	See #1
6		Through the development approvals process active transportation amenities including bicycle parking and racks shall be required.	Provide bike parking requirements in Zoning Bylaw to encourage students to cycle to school
7	Parking	Where developments cannot provide adequate off-street parking on the site, the provision of parking on an alternative site within reasonable walking distance of the site could be considered provided that the alternative site is no more than 500-metres from the proposed development, the owner of the alternative site is willing to enter into an agreement with the developer and the municipality, and the alternative site can accommodate the parking of both users with respect to time of need.	On-site parking requirements limit the amount of greenspace and play area on school site. This has negative environmental, health and well-being impacts.  There are many users for which a synergistic relationship for off-site parking with a school can be effective to limit traffic congestion and vast expanses of impervious asphalt at schools such as churches, community centres, and parks.

8		School may provide a portion of the required parking as shared parking off-site with a compatible user and determined by the School Board in consultation with the municipality	The public does not differentiate between public schools and public parks; all parking areas are perceived as being available for public use See #7
9		Development of shared parking spaces between schools and municipal parks is encouraged where the facilities are within walking distance.	This will limit the requirement for an overabundance of parking at school sites. This may encourage parents to permit their children to walk a shorter distance from the park to the school.
10		The provision of drop off and pick up points within walking distance school sites	
11		Community bus pick up stops	
12	<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	To develop parkland and recreational facilities and services in consultation with the local residents and in cooperation with other providers such as school boards.	Schools provide an important source of green space and programmed outdoor space for the community. Sharing large field activities such as ball diamonds, soccer pitches, and running tracks makes efficient use of the available land resources and public funds.  Schools are using outdoor spaces for instructional purposes to connect students to their community and the natural environment both on and off-site.
13		To develop vehicular separated pedestrian and bicycle trails linking parklands, schools, and other leisure and cultural activity areas.	Safety for users and the promotion of healthy and active living (see #1)
14		Where possible parks shall be located adjacent to school sites	See #1 and #9
15		Designated school sites do not comprise part of the net developable area of a development with respect to parkland dedication or cash in lieu of parkland.  Redevelopment of designated school sites for non-school related purposes is subject to parkland dedication.	School sites provide a valuable open space amenity within a community, as such the construction or additions to new development by school boards are not subject to the requirement for parkland dedication under the Planning Act.
16	<b>Community Spaces</b>	To plan for a range of uses which promote community wellness, social cohesion, and well-being.	

17		Community uses, such as schools, should be designed and sited to promote active transportation.	
18		The function of community spaces is to provide a range of public service facilities and community spaces.	
19		Where lands have been designated as community space in the Official Plan or in a secondary plan the lands shall be reserved for that use for a specified period of time unless an alternative site is designated. The time period of reservation shall not be less than 10 years and shall be sets out in the implementing subdivision agreement. The time period will not begin until the first building permit is obtained within the phase of the plan of subdivision in which the community service block is located. In the case of school sites this reservation will be established in consultation with the school boards and such reservation shall expire upon confirmation in writing by each school board that the site is not required by the school boards.	
20		Shall consider partnerships with school boards for new community spaces	
21	<b>Designations</b>	Publicly funded schools are permitted in all designations without requiring an amendment to this plan	The provision of educational programming takes many forms and will continue to evolve into the future. Community hubs, experiential learning, outdoor education, and partnerships will shape the delivery and format of schools making the traditional site location and physical form only one option.
21		Infrastructure to support the development or expansion of publicly funded schools may be located within any designation without requiring an amendment to this plan	In rural areas it may be necessary to have larger sites to address the MOECC's Reasonable Use Guidelines for septic systems. The land intensive nature of septic systems reduces the available play area and space available for parking which may push parking to adjacent agricultural or rural lands If the policy is not picked up then a special policy for agricultural and rural is required

	<b>Implementation</b>		
22	Amendments to OP	Any amendment to the County Official Plan or local municipal Official Plans shall address the adequacy of publicly funded schools to support the development.	
23	Subdivision Control	When reviewing plans of subdivision and applications for consent confirmation of sufficiency of school accommodation is required	
24	Secondary Plans	When considering secondary plans or new area specific plans, a community facility needs assessment which addresses the capacity of existing facilities and the need for additional facilities including publicly funded schools must be completed. Written confirmation of how pupil accommodation is addressed by the plan is required from each school board.	
25	<b>Definitions</b>	Public Service Facility means land, buildings and structures for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by a government or other body, such as social assistance, recreation, police and fire protection, health and education programs, and cultural services.	PPS definition
26		Public Use includes local boards as defined by the Municipal Affairs Act	Must include schools