

**Township of Southgate**  
**Administration Office**  
185667 Grey Road 9, RR 1  
Dundalk, ON N0C 1B0



**Phone:** 519-923-2110  
**Toll Free:** 1-888-560-6607  
**Fax:** 519-923-9262  
**Web:** www.southgate.ca

## **Staff Report CAO2023-005**

**Title of Report:** CAO2023-005- Natural Heritage Review Options  
**Department:** Administration  
**Council Date:** April 5, 2023

### **Recommendation:**

**Be it resolved that** Council receive Staff Report CAO2023-005 for information; and

**That** Council concur with the recommendation as determined by Grey County to hire a planning ecologist to support municipal application review funded by an increase to county planning application fees and other sources as established by Grey County.

### **Background:**

Bill 23 made some changes regarding Conservation Authorities' authorities. Included in these changes is that CA's can no longer provide natural heritage reviews on planning applications or policy matters. The Provincial Policy Statement and local and upper tier Official Plans still require this review, and therefore an alternate source to manage this service must be determined. Additional information on the legislative changes can be found in the appended Grey County report.

### **Staff Comments:**

The Grey County report lists recommendations that take local tier needs into consideration. Staff support option a) to hire County natural heritage review staff for county and Municipal applications review, for the reasons outlined in the report. The writer was present and voted in the County polling of options for hiring of staff and the funding options. Staff support the County increasing planning application fees to partially offset the cost of this new staff, along with other funding streams noted in the report recommendation.

### **Financial Implications:**

With the options supported, the Township may incur costs billed by the county for natural heritage review services. It is the intention that costs of this nature be passed on to the respective development for reimbursement.

### **Concluding Comments:**

It is recommended that council approve the County of Grey recommendation made in consultation with member municipalities to continue the required natural heritage reviews under provincial, upper and lower tier policies.

Respectfully Submitted,

**CAO Approval:** *Original Signed By*

Dina Lundy, CAO

**Attachments:**

Grey County Committee Report: Natural Heritage Review / PDR-CW-10-23