



Report 2020-019

Council Recommend Report

To: Warden and Council

From: Kelly Pender, Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: Megan Rueckwald, Manager of Community Planning

Date of meeting: February 19, 2020

Re: **Planning and Economic Development – Population, Housing and Employment Projection Study**

Recommendation

Resolved That the Council of the County of Frontenac receive and endorse the Population, Housing and Employment Projections Study dated January 20, 2020;

And Further That the Council of the County of Frontenac direct staff to:

- 1) Present an overview of the population, housing and employment forecasts and projections to each of the four Township Councils in the first quarter of 2020; and
- 2) To amend the County of Frontenac Official Plan to recognize the updated population allocation applied across the County as part of the forthcoming County Official Plan update to commence in 2021.

Background

County Council approved funding to update the County of Frontenac's population, housing and employment projections as part of the 2017 budget. The population, housing and employment projections assist with long-range planning for a variety of departments and organizations including the review underway of lower-tier township official plans, regional studies, and inform economic development decisions. The last iterations of the County-wide projections were completed in 2011 and 2014. The purpose of the update is to revise the County's long-term growth forecasts based on recent demographic and economic trends using the 2016 Census and other relevant data sources.

Watson and Associates Economics Limited was retained to complete a study that contained the population, housing and employment statistics for Frontenac County, by Township, both historical and projected population growth, including detailed analysis and trends of this information as well as a growth projection model for the County, by

Township, that allows for low, medium and high growth projections. The scope of the study is to forecast to 2046, which is a 30 year projection from the 2016 Census. An additional population and housing growth scenario was requested for Frontenac Islands to consider the impacts based on the Ministry of Transportation announcement of a new ferry with increased capacity to service Wolfe Island.

The Population, Housing and Employment Projections Study (January 20, 2020) is attached.

Comment

The revised forecasts project that Frontenac County's permanent population base forecast to increase over the next 30 years, from approximately 27,300 in 2016 to 33,200 in 2046. This represents an annual growth rate of approximately 0.7% annually. Comparatively, this represents a slightly higher forecast annual population growth rate to the City of Kingston Base Scenario, but lower than the Province as a whole. Including the County's seasonal population base, the total permanent and seasonal population for Frontenac County is forecast to reach a total of 62,900 persons by 2046. This represents a total increase of approximately 8,200 people from 2016 to 2046.

The County-wide population forecast is based upon the cohort-survival methodology, which is a provincially accepted approach used to assess annual population by age and sex. To this, an estimated rate of net migration is added. In addition, Watson considered regional and provincial historical and forecast population trends to Frontenac County in accordance with historical census data and approved municipal, regional and provincial forecasts.

The 2014 population projections, forecast that the County's permanent population base was to increase to 33,200 in 2036. The revised work (2019/2020) forecasts that this population increase will not be achieved now until 2046. The annual growth rate of 0.7% is consistent with the previous work. This reason for the delay in growth is attributed to:

- In 2011, the mandatory long-form census was discontinued and replaced with a voluntary survey. As such, the consultants had to extrapolate data from alternative sources for the 2014 study to obtain information typically acquired through the long-form census.
- The County's population is aging more rapidly than had previously been projected, with net migration contributing to this. The 2014 study projected that by 2036 the 55+ age cohort will account for 36% of the population. The 2016 forecasts that by 2036 the 55+ age cohort will account for 47% of the population.

It is anticipated that these projections will be used for informing many studies and long-range planning including updates to planning policy, but also growth management, development charges, as well as transportation and infrastructure planning. It can also be expected that this work will be used for economic development and benefit the private sector in making investment decisions.

The following is a summary of the key findings and projections from this study:

Aging Population – The County’s population is older and aging slightly more rapidly than the Province of Ontario as a whole. From 2016 to 2046, the percentage of Frontenac County population aged 65+ will increase from 21% to 35%. This trend poses implications regarding future housing needs across the County.

Permanent Population Allocation – Over the long-term planning horizon, approximately 80% of forecast permanent population growth is anticipated to occur within the Township of South Frontenac. The South Frontenac will continue to attract a large portion of the County-wide permanent population growth due to its proximity to the City of Kingston. The allocations of permanent population growth for Frontenac Islands is 11%, Central Frontenac 5% and North Frontenac 3%.

Seasonal Population Allocation – Over the long-term planning horizon, approximately 37% of forecast seasonal population growth is anticipated to occur within the Township of Central Frontenac, while North Frontenac is 35%, South Frontenac projects 31% and Frontenac Islands 3%. As a whole, seasonal housing accounts for a significant component of the County’s total population base. The County’s seasonal housing and population base is forecast to increase modestly over the next 30 years due to the net conversion of existing seasonal housing units to permanent structures.

Permanent and Seasonal Population – Including the County’s seasonal population base, the total permanent + seasonal population is forecast to reach a total of 62,900 persons by 2046. This represents a total increase of approximately 8,200 persons from 2016 to 2046.

Employment – Over the 2016 to 2046 period, the County’s employment base is forecast to increase from approximately 5,400 in 2016 to 7,000 by 2046. The number of residents within the County who work from home or have no fixed place of work is expected to steadily increase.

Regular updates to the projections ensure that County and Township policy and operational decisions are based on technical projections for population, housing and employment. Future updates to the study will capture changes in policy and infrastructure that may result in alterations to the forecast. For instance, should there be a significant uptake in developments on communal services, there may be an increase in medium and high density developments; although this potential is considered within the current study updates to the study will reflect build out conditions. Further, should a local municipality establish a serviced business park or employment lands, there may be an increase in employment. Regular updates to the study also inform Council on changing demographics and economic conditions at the provincial and regional scale.

County of Frontenac Strategic Priority Implications

Priority 1: Build community vitality and resilience.

This priority includes refining and investing in efforts to accelerate economic development – to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base. The completion of this study will have implications for future planning and development including informing decisions about seniors housing, new forms of servicing and the potential for higher density residential development.

Priority 3: Champion and coordinate collaborative efforts with partners to resolve complex problems.

This priority identifies working with the townships, other municipalities and levels of government on broad infrastructure issues – ranging from environmental concerns to regional transportation strategies for residential, social and economic purposes and access to funding. By completing the study at a regional level, this allows each municipality to build upon the study in terms of local growth management and future policy and operational decisions.

Financial Implications

None at this time.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Frontenac County Planning and Economic Development Department
Township of South Frontenac
Township of North Frontenac
Township of Central Frontenac
Township of Frontenac Islands

Attachments

Population, Housing and Employment Projections Study, December 2019