
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Memorandum FDS-M01-2023 BMA Municipal Study Results 2022

For Consideration by Council on May 29, 2023



To: Mayor Bentley and Members of Council

From: Mark Merritt, CPA, CA, General Manager, Financial & Data Services

The 2022 Municipal Study by BMA Management Consulting Inc. (BMA Study) provides comparative information about various socio-economic indicators to the 117 Ontario municipalities who opt to participate. Staff use these indicators and relevant trend analysis to evaluate:

- Changes in tax base and the community's ability to pay for public services
- Demographic changes that may shift public service priorities
- Changes in economic conditions that may require amending public policies

Overall, the financial and affordability indicators place Haldimand County above our municipal comparators in most categories and among the top in the Province for financial position per capita and property tax related reserve balances. This strong fiscal position has been consistent since 2016 when the County began its involvement in the annual study.

Key Messages:

- **Socio-economic Indicators**

- Largely external to the County's control
- Population growth for the County is higher than peer averages, and is expected to continue to grow. This growth will lead to increased demand for services and capital infrastructure.
- Haldimand has lower non-residential assessment base compared to peers and a high proportion of farmland. Recent construction activity is a good balance between residential and non-residential.

- **Financial Indicators**

- Sustainability, Vulnerability, Flexibility – the County's financial principles
- The County has some of the most positive financial indicators of the survey group, specifically with respect to financial positions and available reserve balances

- **Cost of Service and Affordability Indicators**

- Direct comparison to municipal comparators
- The County is consistently below peer averages for all of the affordability indicators: municipal levy per capital, water/wastewater costs, property tax burden and overall costs as a percentage of average household income

Study Background

Once the full BMA Study is released, it is circulated to the County's functional area managers and is posted to the County website. In addition, BMA provides participating municipal staff with access to their online database to analyze data available over a five year period.

The analysis is completed using the most recent information available, as provided by the participating municipalities, including, but not limited to:

- Current Value Assessment
- Tax Policies
- Tax Levy By-laws
- Development Charges
- Water/Sewer Rates
- Financial Information Returns (FIRs)
- User Fees
- Economic Development Programs

The attached Executive Summary focuses on Haldimand County performance and comparators for select indicators pertaining to: socio-economic factors; financial sustainability, vulnerability and flexibility indicators; assessment and levy per capita analysis; comparison of tax ratios and relative taxes; and impacts on ratepayers.

A presentation by BMA Management Consulting at the May 29th Council meeting will include additional data from the study as well as comparisons to the overall survey averages and a select comparator group. The comparator group includes nine Ontario municipalities that were selected based on geographical location or population size.

REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.haldimandcounty.ca/financials/>

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Executive Summary for Haldimand County Municipal Study from BMA Consulting Inc. 2022