

CUR'S GTHA Urban Digest

"Promoting Better Urban Policy through Economic Understanding"

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Time to Transition Municipal Employment Surveys into an Annual GGH-Wide Employment Survey with Growth Secretariat Funding

I just read Hemson's latest forecasts for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ("GGH"); **Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051**, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, June 16, 2020. One passage caught my attention, I guess, since we have said the same thing in three reports CUR has released. **Hemson made the following observation on municipal employment surveys conducted in the GGH:**

"A final complication is that because municipal employment surveys are not coordinated across the GGH, their scope, content and quality varies considerably." (p.8)

In other words, the methodology and processes individual municipalities use to collect data on employment needs to be coordinated and improved to make the data more reliable and comparable across municipalities and time.

CUR Response (Frank Clayton)

We agree 100% with Hemson's observation.

In CUR's most recent report on employment surveys conducted around the GGH (**Time to Transition Municipal Employment Surveys into an Annual GGH-Wide Employment Survey**), we made the following recommendation for overcoming the shortcomings of the existing municipal surveys:

"The Growth Secretariat provides funding for the annual employment surveys while delegating the overall responsibility for the collection, processing and release of annual employment and business count data to the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario ("RPCO") or its working group, the Regional Information Systems Working Group ("RISWG"). The RPCO in turn subcontracts with the municipalities to conduct the annual surveys under its supervision."

In short, the GGH needs a better, more coordinated and structured process for collecting data on employment by municipality so that the data can be compared across regions and time. The Province should step up to help coordinate, develop and fund that process.

This publication provides a commentary on what we are reading in regards to the performance of economies and real estate markets, as well as land-use policy issues across the GGH. Feel free to pass this issue to your colleagues and let us know your reactions to our observations.