

# TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

## COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Watch via Live Stream on Township's YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdKRVOGAEuFaGbwHRPzoEXA>

4:00 p.m.

### 1. Welcome

### 2. Call to Order

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

Recommendation:

That the agenda for the May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council be adopted, as printed and circulated.

### 4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

### 5. Minutes

#### a. [May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Minutes of Council](#)

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council be adopted, as printed and circulated.

### 6. Business Arising from the Minutes

### 7. Public Meetings

None.

### 8. Delegations / Presentations

None.

### 9. Correspondence

#### a. Specific

##### i. [Township of Clearview, Council, re: Cemetery Transfer / Abandonment Administration & Management Support](#)

Recommendation:

Whereas under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed;

And Whereas over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of churches and local cemetery boards initiating processes to transfer ownership or abandonment of their owned and operated cemeteries to the local municipality due to operational issues;

And Whereas municipalities experience the same issues and pressures that churches and local boards experience with the operation and maintenance of cemeteries within its jurisdiction, and additional transfers of cemetery lands only compound the burden on municipal taxpayers;

And Whereas cemeteries are important infrastructure where the reasonable costs for interment rights, burials, monument foundations, corner stones and administration charges do not sufficiently support the general operation of cemeteries;

And Whereas the interest earned from the care and maintenance fund(s) of a cemetery do not provide adequate funding to maintain the cemetery with the rising costs maintenance;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim supports the Town of Bracebridge and requests that the Province through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) consider the following to assist municipalities in this growing concern of cemetery transfers:

- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries;
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

And that this resolution be circulated to the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, Jim Cassimatis, BAO CEO/Registrar, and MPP Ernie Hardeman.

ii. [Municipality of Huron Shores, Council, re: Urging the Government to Promptly Resume Assessment Cycle](#)

Recommendation:

Be it hereby resolved that Whereas the assessment cycle is an essential process for maintaining the fairness and predictability of property taxes in our province;

And Whereas the pause in the reassessment cycle has created uncertainty and instability in property taxation, impacting both residential and commercial property owners;

And Whereas the government has delayed an assessment update again in 2024, resulting in Ontario's municipalities continuing to calculate property taxes using 2016 property values;

And Whereas both current and outdated assessments are inaccurate, increase volatility, and are not transparent;

And Whereas frequent and accurate reassessments are necessary to stabilize property taxes and provide predictability for property owners, residents, and businesses alike;

And Whereas the Government has announced a review of the property assessment and taxation system with a focus on fairness, equity, and economic competitiveness, and therefore further deferring new property assessment;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Council of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim supports the Municipality of Huron Shores and hereby calls upon the Premier to promptly resume the assessment cycle to ensure the stability and predictability of property taxes while the Government conducts its review of the property assessment and taxation system, or respond with an alternative method for every municipality in Ontario to achieve fair taxation;

And That all Municipalities in Ontario and their constituents are encouraged to apply pressure to the Premier, daily, weekly, and monthly, to resolve the situation before it causes undo stress to everyone in the Municipality;

And That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier, the relevant provincial authorities, and the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, to make proper changes as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**b. General**

i. [Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, County of Oxford, Re: Initial Review of Bill 185 and Draft Provincial Planning Statement 2024; and,](#)

ii. [Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, County of Oxford, Re: Bill 185 and Provincial Planning Statement.](#)

Recommendation:

That the general correspondence items be received as information.

## **10. Staff Reports**

### **a. Drew Davidson – Director of Protective Services**

#### **i. [FC-24-09 – April Monthly Report](#)**

Recommendation:

That Report FC-24-09 be received as information.

### **b. Ray Belanger – Chief Building Official**

#### **i. [CBO-24-05 – April Monthly Report](#)**

Recommendation:

That Report CBO-24-05 be received as information.

### **c. Jim Borton – Director of Public Works**

#### **i. [PW-24-12 – Monthly Report](#)**

Recommendation:

That Report PW-24-12 be received as information.

### **d. Sarah Matheson – Clerk**

#### **i. [DC-24-01 – Council Conference/Training and Education Policy](#)**

Recommendation:

That Report DC-24-01 be received as information; and,

That the Council Conference, Education and Training Policy be adopted.

## **11. Reports from Council Members**

## **12. Unfinished Business**

## **13. Motions and Notices of Motion**

**14. New Business**

**15. Closed Session**

None.

**16. By-laws**

a. 2434-2024, Being a by-law to provide for the adoption of budgetary estimates and tax rates for 2024, and to further provide for penalty and interest in default of payment; and,

b. 2435-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

Recommendation:

That the following By-laws be now read a first and second time: 2434-2024, and 2435-2024.

Recommendation:

That the following By-laws be now given a third and final reading: 2434-2024, and 2435-2024.

**17. Other**

**18. Adjournment and Next Meeting**

Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

Recommendation:

Whereas business before Council has been completed at \_\_\_\_\_ pm;

Be it hereby resolved that Council adjourn to meet again on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

# MINUTES

Council met at 4:00 p.m. for their first Regular Meeting of the month.

Present: Mayor Peterson, Councillors Banbury, Demarest and Young.

Staff: Baer, Belanger, Borton, Brick, Degier, Krug, and Matheson.

Other: Robson, Planner.

Regrets: Councillor Barnes

Mayor Peterson in the Chair.

## 1. Welcome

## 2. Call to Order

## 3. Approval of the Agenda

### RESOLUTION #1

Moved by – Councillor Bambury  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the agenda for the May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council be adopted as printed and circulated.

.Carried

## 4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

## 5. Adoption of Minutes

### a. April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Minutes of Council

### RESOLUTION #2

Moved by – Councillor Banbury  
Seconded by – Councillor Demarest

Be it hereby resolved that the minutes of the April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting of Council be adopted, as printed and circulated.

.Carried

## 6. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

## 7. Public Meetings

### a. Public Meeting under the Development Charges Act

#### RESOLUTION #3

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that Council move into a Public Meeting under the Development Charges Act at 4:02 p.m.

.Carried

The Consultant, Stephen, presented the 2024 Development Charge and Background Study. The Chair made comment regarding Bill 185 to which the Stephen replied. There was no further question or comment from the Members. No one in attendance spoke regarding the study.

#### RESOLUTION #4

Moved by – Councillor Banbury  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the presentation from Sean-Michael Stephen be received as information;

And further, that Council authorize the Director of Finance to prepare a development charges by-law for the June 5, 2024 Meeting of Council based upon the Development Charges Background Study, as presented.

.Carried

#### RESOLUTION #5

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the Public Meeting be adjourned and that the Regular Meeting of Council reconvene at 4:20 p.m.

.Carried

### b. Public Meeting under the Planning Act, Committee of Adjustment

#### RESOLUTION #6

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that Council move into Committee of Adjustment at 4:20 p.m.

.Carried

The Minutes can be found on the May 1, 2024 Minutes of the Committee of Adjustment.

**RESOLUTION #7**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the Committee rise at 4:26 p.m. and that the Open Council meeting resumes.

.Carried

**c. Public Meeting under the Planning Act, Zone Change**

**RESOLUTION #8**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that Council rise and go into a Public Meeting under the Planning Act to consider applications for zone change:

ZN1-24-05 (Jay Clare);

And that Mayor Peterson Chair the Public Meeting.

.Carried

The Planner presented the Report, recommending approval. No Member made comment or had questions regarding the application. The applicant's solicitor was present. No one in the audience spoke for or against the application.

**RESOLUTION #9**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the Public Meeting be adjourned and that the Regular Meeting of Council reconvene.

.Carried

**RESOLUTION #10**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury



Be it hereby resolved that the Township of Blandford-Blenheim approve the Zone Change Application submitted by Jay David Clare, whereby lands described as Part Lot 19, Concession 5 (Blenheim), Township of Blandford-Blenheim, are to be rezoned from 'General Agricultural Zone (A2)' to 'Rural Residential Zone (RR).'

.Carried

## 8. Delegations / Presentations

- i. Ronda Stewart, Economic Development Director, Rural Oxford Economic Development, re: 2023 Year in Review

Ronda Stewart, Economic Development Director or ROEDC presented the 2023 Year in Review. Councillor Banbury commended Stewart on the ROEDC's accomplishments. Councillor Young commented on the benefit the ROEDC brings to the community. Councillor Demarest commented on her position on the Board for the last 6 years and how well the ROEDC functions and has grown throughout the years. Mayor Peterson thanked Stewart and her team for their efforts.

### RESOLUTION #11

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the presentation from Ronda Stewart regarding the 2023 Year in Review be received as information.

.Carried

## 9. Correspondence

- a. Specific

None.

- b. General

- i. Rural Oxford Economic Development Committee, re: February/March 2024 Economic Development Activity Report
- ii. Oxford County, Public Works Memorandum, re: Drumbo Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity Expansion Municipal Class Environment Assessment Study – Notice of Commencement, Village of Drumbo

### RESOLUTION #12

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the general correspondence items be received as information.

.Carried

## 10. Staff Reports

### a. Adam Degier – Drainage Superintendent

- i. DS-24-12 – Monthly Report

#### RESOLUTION #13

Moved by – Councillor Young  
Seconded by – Councillor Demarest

Be it hereby resolved that Report DS-24-12 be received as information.

.Carried

### b. Trevor Baer – Director of Community Services

- i. CS-24-05 – Monthly Report

#### RESOLUTION #14

Moved by – Councillor Young  
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that Report CS-24-05 be received as information.

.Carried

### c. Josh Brick – Chief Administrative Officer

- i. CAO-24-20 – 2023 Building Reserve Report

#### RESOLUTION #15

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that Report CAO-24-20 be received as information.

.Carried

## 11. Reports from Council Members

Councillor Young reported that she spoke to the staff at the Plattsville & District Public School regarding curbing vandalism in the Township parks, specifically the

importance of youth being leaders in, and champions of the community. Further, Member Young reported her attendance at the Communities Building Youth's Futures Oxford County, an event led by youth and community allies holding projects throughout the County. Member Banbury reported on his and Member Barnes's attendance at the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) Conference being successful. Member Banbury further reported a conversation with the staff at CN Rail while at OGRA, hoping for positive future relations with the company. Mayor Peterson reported on the importance of keeping youth occupied, stating that he would like to have youth involved in the community doing things such as volunteering their time in the Township parks, giving youth agency within the communities that they live and making them proud of their public spaces.

## **12. Unfinished Business**

None.

## **13. Motions and Notices of Motion**

None.

## **14. New Business**

None.

## **15. Closed Session**

d. Report CAO-24-19 - Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal employees [s. 239(2)(b)]

Re: Staff

e. Report CAO-24-21 – Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose [s. 239(2)(f)]

Re: Township Roads

### **RESOLUTION #16**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest

Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that Council move into Closed Session under the authority of Section 239 of the Municipal Act at 5:09 p.m. to discuss:

- a. Report CAO-24-19 - Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal employees [s. 239(2)(b)]

Re: Legal Update – Personal Matters

- b. Report CAO-24-21 – Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose [s. 239(2)(f)]

Re: Legal Update – Road Debris

.Carried

### **RESOLUTION #17**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest  
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that Council does now adjourn from Closed Session and resume into Open Session at 5:31 p.m. and reports the following:

- That Council gave direction to the CAO regarding Report CAO-24-19; and,
- That Council gave direction to the CAO regarding Report CAO-24-21.

.Carried

## **16. By-laws**

- a. 2431-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-04);
- b. 2432-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-05); and,
- c. 2433-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

### **RESOLUTION #18**

Moved by – Councillor Banbury  
Seconded by – Councillor Demarest

Be it hereby resolved that the following By-laws be now read a first and second time:

- a. 2431-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-04);

b. 2432-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-05); and,

c. 2433-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

.Carried

**RESOLUTION #19**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest

Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the following By-laws be now read a third and final time:

a. 2431-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-04);

b. 2432-2024, Being A By-law to amend Zoning By-Law Number 1360-2002, as amended (ZN1-24-05); and,

c. 2433-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

.Carried

**17. Other Business**

None.

**18. Adjournment and Next Meeting**

**RESOLUTION #20**

Moved by – Councillor Demarest

Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Whereas business before Council has been completed at 5:33 p.m.;

Be it hereby resolved that Council adjourn to meet again on Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

.Carried

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Mark Peterson, Mayor  
Township of Blandford-Blenheim

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Sarah Matheson, Clerk  
Township of Blandford-Blenheim



CLEARVIEW  
TOWNSHIP

**Clerk's Department**  
Township of Clearview  
Box 200, 217 Gideon Street  
Stayner, Ontario L0M 1S0  
[clerks@clearview.ca](mailto:clerks@clearview.ca) | [www.clearview.ca](http://www.clearview.ca)  
Phone: 705-428-6230

December 12, 2023

File: C00.2023

Hon. Todd McCarthy  
Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery  
777 Bay Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto ON M5B 2H7

Sent by Email

**RE: Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support**

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Please be advised that Council of the Township of Clearview, at its meeting held on December 11, 2023, passed a resolution regarding Cemetery Transfer/Abandonment Administration & Management Support as follows:

Moved by Councillor Walker, Seconded by Councillor Broderick, Whereas under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located, becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed;

And Whereas over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of churches and local cemetery boards initiating processes to transfer ownership or abandon their owned and operated cemeteries to the local municipality due to such issues as high maintenance costs, inaccuracy of records, lack of financial and human resources to effectively operate and maintain the cemetery, increased regulatory processes regarding training, selling of interment rights, financial operation of the care and maintenance fund, etc.;

And Whereas municipalities experience the same issues and pressures that churches and local boards experience with the operation and maintenance of cemeteries within its jurisdiction, and additional transfers of cemetery lands only compound the burden on municipal taxpayers;

And Whereas cemeteries are important infrastructure where the reasonable costs for interment rights, burials, monument foundations, corner stones and administration charges do not sufficiently support the general operation of cemeteries;

And Whereas the interest earned from the care and maintenance fund(s) of a cemetery do not provide adequate funding to maintain the cemetery with the rising costs of lawn and turf maintenance contracts and monument restoration;

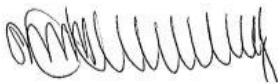
Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview requests that the Province through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) consider the following to assist municipalities in this growing concern of cemetery transfers:

- Amend the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), to have the Province, through the BAO, identified as the default owner and operator of a cemetery when it is abandoned;
- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries; Page 6 of 7
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

And that this resolution be circulated to the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, Jim Cassimatis, BAO Interim CEO/Registrar, MPP Brian Saunderson and all Ontario municipalities. Motion Carried.

For reference, please find attached the Staff Report LS-032-2023 that provides background for the above resolution. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Regards,



Sasha HelmKay-Playter, B.A., Dipl. M.A., AOMC  
Clerk/Director of Legislative Services

cc: Jim Cassimatis, BAO Interim CEO/Registrar  
MPP Simcoe Grey, Brian Saunderson  
Ontario Municipalities



**Municipality of Huron Shores**  
7 Bridge Street, PO Box 460  
Iron Bridge, ON P0R 1H0  
Tel: (705) 843-2033 Fax: (705) 843-2035

April 12, 2024

### **Resolution #24-12-02 – Urging the Government to Promptly Resume Assessment Cycle**

The Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Huron Shores passed Resolution #24-12-02 at the Regular Meeting held Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as follows:

“WHEREAS the assessment cycle is an essential process for maintaining the fairness and predictability of property taxes in our province;

AND WHEREAS the pause in the reassessment cycle has created uncertainty and instability in property taxation, impacting both residential and commercial property owners;

AND WHEREAS the government has delayed an assessment update again in 2024, resulting in Ontario’s municipalities continuing to calculate property taxes using 2016 property values;

AND WHEREAS both current and outdated assessments are inaccurate, increase volatility, and are not transparent;

AND WHEREAS frequent and accurate reassessments are necessary to stabilize property taxes and provide predictability for property owners, residents, and businesses alike;

AND WHEREAS the staff at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation would benefit from further skills enhancement and training in assessments, recognizing the importance of ensuring accurate evaluations for 100% of our municipality;

AND WHEREAS the Government has announced a review of the property assessment and taxation system with a focus on fairness, equity, and economic competitiveness, and therefore further deferring new property assessment;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Municipality of Huron Shores hereby calls upon the Premier to promptly resume the assessment cycle to ensure the stability and predictability of property taxes while the Government conducts its review of the property assessment and taxation system, or respond with an alternative method for every municipality in Ontario to achieve fair taxation;

AND THAT all Municipalities in Ontario and their constituents are encouraged to apply pressure to the Premier, daily, weekly, and monthly, to resolve the situation before it causes undo stress to everyone in the Municipality;



AND THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier, the relevant provincial authorities, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, and all municipalities in Ontario for their consideration, to make proper changes as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

Should you require anything further in order to address the above-noted resolution, please contact the undersigned

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Natashia Roberts

CAO/Clerk  
NR/KN

Cc: Premier of Ontario, the relevant provincial authorities, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, and all municipalities in Ontario

**Community Planning**

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# MEMO

**DATE:** April 25, 2024  
**TO:** All Area Municipal CAOs and Clerks  
**FROM:** Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, Community Planning  
**RE:** County Council Report CP 2024-133  
Initial Review of Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and  
Draft Provincial Planning Statement 2024

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On Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Community Planning report CP 2024-133 was presented to the Council of the County of Oxford, which contained the following recommendations:

1. “That the Director of Community Planning, in consultation with other County staff and stakeholders as required, prepare and submit preliminary comments and undertake early advocacy on key areas of concern in response to the Provincial consultations on Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and proposed Provincial Planning Statement, as generally outlined in Report CP 2024-133;
2. And further, that Report CP 2024-133 be circulated to the Area Municipalities for information.”

Oxford County Council then passed the following resolution:

“Moved By: Jim Palmer

Seconded By: Brian Petrie

Resolved that the recommendations contained in Report CP 2024-133, titled "Initial Review of Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and Draft Provincial Planning statement 2024", be adopted.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried”

As such, please find attached the report for your information.

Sincerely,

Paul Michiels  
Manager of Planning Policy  
Community Planning

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Initial Review of Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and Draft Provincial Planning Statement 2024

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Community Planning

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. That the Director of Community Planning, in consultation with other County staff and stakeholders as required, prepare and submit preliminary comments and undertake early advocacy on key areas of concern in response to the Provincial consultations on Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and proposed Provincial Planning Statement, as generally outlined in Report CP 2024-133;
2. And further, that Report CP 2024-133 be circulated to the Area Municipalities for information.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- On April 10, 2024 the Province released Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) which includes a number of legislative changes to the Planning Act and Development Charges Act, among others, as well as a revised 2024 draft 'Provincial Planning Statement'.
- The proposed changes being introduced through Bill 185 and the revised 'Provincial Planning Statement' are substantive and wide ranging. While many appear to be positive (e.g. Development Charge changes), others are of considerable concern (i.e. settlement expansion appeal rights and justification requirements, and some proposed agricultural policy changes).
- Staff are seeking Council's initial direction to submit preliminary comments and pursue opportunities for coordinated advocacy with various organizations (e.g. WOWC, OFA, AMO) on key areas of initial concern, as generally identified in this report.
- Staff intend to bring a subsequent report to the May 8, 2024 Council meeting to provide further details and comments on other proposed changes, once they have been more fully reviewed.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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The recommendations contained in this report will have no immediate impacts with respect to implementation. However, the uncertainty these proposed provincial changes introduce may further delay implementation of certain initiatives to address housing supply and other important planning objectives, in the short term.

Further, if implemented as proposed, a number of the proposed legislative, policy, and other changes could have significant implications for various ongoing County projects (i.e. secondary planning, Phase 1 Comprehensive Review study updates, Official Plan updates, etc.), as well as the existing Official Plan policies and related implementation tools and measures. As such, if approved, various County and Area Municipal land use related policies, processes and standards will likely require comprehensive review and updates to ensure consistency with the new Provincial direction.

### Financial Impact

If enacted, a number of the proposed provincial legislative and policy changes identified in this report could have significant financial impacts for the County and Area Municipalities, including the potential need for additional background and technical studies, staffing and other resources to address and/or implement the various changes.

### Communications

Communication is proposed through the inclusion of this report on the County Council agenda and related communications and circulation to the Area Municipalities.




## 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Oxford County Council approved the [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

| PILLAR 1   | PILLAR 2  | PILLAR 3  |
|--|---|---|
|   |    |    |
| <b>Promoting community vitality</b>  | <b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>   | <b>Fostering progressive government</b>   |
| <p>Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development</p> <p>Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being</p> <p>Goal 1.4 – Connected people and places</p> | <p>Goal 2.1 – Climate change mitigation and adaptation</p> <p>Goal 2.2 – Preserve and enhance our natural environment</p> | <p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p> <p>Goal 3.4 – Financial sustainability</p> <p>Goal 3.5 – Advocate for Oxford County</p> |

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

In April 2023, the Province released legislative and policy changes, including a proposed new draft ‘Provincial Planning Statement’ document, as part of an ongoing series of changes initiated to implement their annual Housing Supply Action Plans. Staff submitted comments to the Province on the related ERO posting on behalf of the County, as previously discussed in Reports [CP 2023-126](#), [CP 2023-144](#), [CP 2023-194](#).

It is noted that the last few years have been a period of unprecedented change in Provincial direction on matters of land use planning, development, and municipal regulatory powers, with the Province bringing forward at least 10 related bills since 2021, in addition to proposed land use policy and other changes. Given the pace of change and in some instances, unanticipated consequences, the Province has been compelled to reverse many of these decisions, which has created a period of significant uncertainty for municipalities, which has made planning at any level very difficult.

Most recently, on April 10, 2024, the Province released Bill 185, the ‘Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act’ ([ERO 019-8365](#)), which proposes a number of additional changes to the Planning Act, Municipal Act and Development Charges Act, among others. The Province also released a revised 2024 draft of the ‘Provincial Planning Statement’ ([ERO 019-8462](#)), which was originally introduced in 2023. The revised draft includes a broad range of proposed changes to current provincial land use policy direction, including changes made in response to the feedback received from consultation on the previous draft document. This document is intended to replace the current Provincial Policy Statement (PPS, 2020) and ‘A Place to Grow’– Growth Plan for the Greater Golden horseshoe (APTG).

The legislative and regulatory changes currently being proposed include, but are not limited to:

- Elimination of most third party appeal rights on Official Plan and Zoning amendments;
- New appeal rights for settlement expansion applications;
- New lapsing provisions for plans of subdivision and allocation of servicing capacity;
- Potential to limit local parking requirements through regulation;
- Broader regulations for additional residential units;
- Proposal to exempt community service facilities and post-secondary institutions from planning requirements; and
- Changes to Development Charges and Municipal anti-bonusing rules.

The various land use policy changes currently being proposed through the revised draft Provincial Planning Statement apply to a broad range of policy areas including, but not limited to, housing, settlement expansions, employment, land use compatibility, infrastructure, water, agriculture, and natural and man-made hazards.

Given that these legislative and policy changes were only released for consultation a few days prior to the preparation of this report, County staff have had very limited time to review and consider these changes to date. As such, this initial report is focused on a few proposed changes that staff have had an opportunity to review and certain key matters of initial concern. These are further detailed in the comments section of this report.

The remainder of the proposed legislative and regulatory changes in the various ERO postings in relation to Bill 185 and fulsome review and comment of the various land use policy changes proposed in the revised draft Provincial Planning Statement 2024 will be addressed in a subsequent report.

## **Comments**

Based on preliminary review, staff have identified the extremely short consultation period and a number of other key matters as being of particular concern. These matters have been highlighted in this initial report for Council's information and as focus areas for early and co-ordinated feedback and advocacy. Further, Corporate Services staff have completed an initial assessment of the proposed municipal finance related changes (i.e. various changes to the Development Charges Act and incentive provisions in the Municipal Act), and a summary of those changes and associated comments has also been included in this initial report. These matters are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### **a) Consultation Timeframe**

Given the number and extent of the legislative and policy changes being proposed, staff are of the opinion that the 30 day consultation period the Province has currently provided is wholly insufficient for fulsome consideration of all of the proposed changes and related impacts.

In comparison, the Province provided 60 days (later expanded to 90 days) to submit comments on the first draft of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement, when it was released for consultation early last year. In response to that consultation, the County requested that a minimum of 60 days be provided for municipal review and comment on any revised draft of that document, at such time as it was released. Instead, just 30 days are being provided to review and comment on the revised draft document and all of the proposed legislative and regulatory changes that were released with it.

As such, staff are planning to work closely with various municipal groups and organizations to advocate for an immediate extension to the commenting deadline (i.e. request at least 60 days), so that municipalities have sufficient time to meaningfully consider the proposed changes and provide meaningful feedback.

**b) Development Charges (DCs)**

As part of Bill 185, the province is proposing a number of changes to the Development Charges Act ([ERO 019-8371](#)) and related notice requirements ([ERO 019-8370](#)). These changes were reviewed by County Corporate Services staff, who provided the following comments:

i) Repeal the mandatory five-year phase-in of DC rates

The Bill proposes to repeal the requirement for the mandatory phase-in of Development Charges (DCs) over a 5-year period. As outlined in [Report CS 2024-09](#) the mandatory phase-in was estimated to result in a DC funding loss of \$22.4 million over 10 years, which would need to be made up through the levy and water and wastewater rates. County staff support the removal of the phase-in requirement as a means to ensuring that growth pays for growth.

Bill 185 also includes transition provisions for DC By-Laws implemented with the mandatory phase-in requirements after November 28, 2022, and before this subsection of Bill 185 comes into force. The transition provision would allow for the County to pass an amending by-law to remove the phase-in requirements within six months of Bill 185 coming into force without the need for an updated DC Background Study, provided the amendment is limited to this change.

County staff do not foresee any challenges with meeting the requirements of this proposed change, either through amending the by-law proposed to be passed on June 12, 2024 with removal of the phase-in provisions, should the Bill come into force prior to that date, or with the passing of an amending by-law within six months of the Bill coming into force. County staff would aim to bring forward the amending by-law as soon as possible to mitigate the amount of non-DC funding required for phase-in discounts granted while the by-law including those provisions is in force.

ii) Reinstate studies as an eligible capital cost for DCs

Bill 185 proposes to restore the following to capital costs that are eligible for inclusion in DC calculations, which had previously been removed through Bill 23 - The More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022:

- Costs to undertake studies in connection with any of the matters referred to in paragraphs 1 to 4 of section 5(3) of the DC Act (i.e. growth related studies)

- Costs of the development charge background study required under section 10 of the DC Act.

County staff are in support of such growth related studies being reinstated as an eligible cost. Report [CS 2022-49](#) estimated the costs associated with studies to be \$1.1 million for rates based services and \$1.3 million for levy based services.

Similar transition provisions would be followed, requiring an amending by-law within six months of Bill 185 coming into force, limiting the amendment to imposing development charges to pay for the costs of studies. Staff have already begun preparing a list of studies, including associated costs, and will continue to gather this information so that the transition provision timelines are achieved.

iii) Streamlined Process for Extending DC By-Laws

Bill 185 proposes an amendment to allow for a municipality to extend the effective date of a DC by-law without undertaking the Background Study process, provided the only change is in relation to the by-law expiry date. Municipalities seeking to update DC rates would be subject to following the regular DC by-law process. As the County is currently looking to update DC rates, this change has no impact on the process the County is currently undertaking, however, may be of value in the future.

iv) Reduce the time limit on the DC freeze

Through the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019, DCs were set (i.e., frozen/locked) when a site plan application (or zoning application if no site plan application was made) is submitted to the municipality. Once the application is approved, a time limit of two years applies to the frozen DCs.

Bill 185 proposes to reduce the time limit that DCs are frozen to 18 months (currently two years) following approval. This change would be applied to application approvals completed after Bill 185 comes into effect, with the two-year rate freeze period continuing to apply to approved developments prior to Bill 185 enactment.

Staff are in support of this change as it is anticipated to encourage developers to more quickly obtain building permits and helps to ensure that DC's collected are reflective of inflationary increases.

Notice provisions are also required with respect to the related amendments. Staff have no concerns regarding the ability to complete the new notice requirements.

In responding to the [ERO 019-8371](#) posting, County staff are proposing to indicate support for the changes being proposed, while also requesting that the province make provisions, in some manner, to ensure that the County is made whole, for any lost DC revenue. Staff suggest options to be made whole may include:

- Allowing the cost of studies that were required to be excluded as a result of Bill 23 to be wholly eligible for inclusion in the DC rate calculation;



- Allowing the municipality to retroactively collect from developers any of the DC discounts that had been applied between the period of Bill 23 enactment and the passing of an amending by-law removing the phase-in requirement; or
- Providing a grant to municipalities in the amount of the phase-in discounts that were provided to developers, given that the municipality passed an amending by-law removing the phase-in discounts within the transition period.

**c) Municipal Incentives**

Currently, the Municipal Act, 2001 and City of Toronto Act, 2006 prohibit municipalities from providing direct or indirect assistance to any manufacturing, industrial or commercial businesses. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is proposing legislative amendments to the Municipal Act, 2001 and City of Toronto Act, 2006 to streamline the province's process for granting exemptions to municipalities from this prohibition to support provincial investment attraction. These changes were also reviewed by County Corporate Services staff, who provided the following comments.

The proposal is to establish a targeted, streamlined exemption process that enables the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations to support provincial investment attraction to compete for investment, while still helping to ensure the province safeguards the fiscal health of municipalities. More specifically, if a municipality provides this assistance to a business, it could have any or all of the following potential impacts:

- The municipality may forego some revenue that may otherwise have been collected from the business; and, depending on the assistance provided, the municipality may be required to raise the foregone revenue from other sources.
- There could be benefits to the local community and the province including direct and indirect job creation.
- Businesses that receive assistance would benefit as it would help to lower their costs of establishing their business in the municipality, which could translate into more investments and job creation for the local community and province.
- There may be some increased administrative costs for municipalities to track the assistance that is provided.

Considering the foregoing summary provided through the Ontario Regulatory Registry for comment, County staff are of the opinion that Community Improvement Plans already provide a broad scope of incentive options for municipalities to employ with respect to attracting businesses to their communities. In the event that the province has an interest in a business locating in a particular municipality, the cost of incentivizing the business to choose a location in the province should be borne by the province so that the financial burden does not fall solely on tax bills of property owners within the hosting municipality, and should be subject to transparent, broader provincial scrutiny. Municipal budgets and administrative resources are already challenged with maintaining large property assessments assigned to many of these businesses. Therefore, the province should invest in revisions to establishing a fair and predictable property assessment valuation and tax system that municipalities and the province can rely on, and these provincially significant businesses can have confidence in using for financial planning.

In summary, the financial commitment for attracting and retaining provincially significant economic prospects should be collaborated and assessed on an individual basis, considering the ability of

the proposed host municipality to financially sustain the infrastructure development requirements in the short and long term, based on sound economic data.

**d) Settlement Area Expansions**

One of the many proposed changes to the Planning Act, is to allow for a private applicant to appeal the approval authority's refusal of a proposed settlement area expansion on any lands outside of the Provincial Greenbelt. This appeal right was removed from the Planning Act in 2004 and has since proven to be one of the most important and effective tools for ensuring municipalities are able to focus their efforts and resources on planning for community growth in a comprehensive and coordinated manner (logical extension of servicing, efficient use of land, encouraging increased densities, intensification, etc).

This proposed change in appeal rights is of particular concern, particularly in the context of considering the proposed lessening of the justification and review requirements for settlement area expansions that is being proposed in the current draft of the Provincial Planning Statement. These proposed policy changes were already a major area of concern identified in the County's previous comments on the proposed 2023 draft of Provincial Planning Statement and this concern is further compounded by these proposed new appeal rights.

It is noted that Oxford and number of other municipalities have previously requested that the Province provide some additional flexibility to facilitate settlement expansions in certain circumstances, where it is reasonably required to properly plan for and accommodate forecasted growth and increase housing supply. This included suggesting that the maximum planning horizon be increased from 25 to 30 years, which Planning staff are pleased to see the Province has now included in the revised draft. So, it is possible that some of the other proposed changes to these policies were also an attempt by the Province to address Oxford's previous comments. However, it is the opinion of Planning staff that the current proposed changes now go too far and do not provide sufficient direction and certainty for municipalities to be able to effectively plan for, coordinate, and direct growth, which may also serve to undermine other key provincial and local planning objectives, including but not limited to:

- ensuring the efficient use of land and infrastructure and avoiding the need for costly or unnecessary provision or expansions of infrastructure and public services;
- Protecting agricultural land for long term agriculture and limiting impacts on other natural resources; and
- encouraging increased density, intensification, range and mix of housing and other uses necessary to support complete, sustainable communities etc.

Comprehensive and coordinated municipal planning for settlement expansions is essential for ensuring certainty and consistency in planning for growth and infrastructure and other public services (i.e. schools and other public facilities) and for building complete communities (i.e. to achieve the necessary densities and mix of housing and other uses).

As such, it is critical that settlement expansions be either initiated or approved by a municipality, and that a municipal decision to not support privately initiated applications for settlement expansion continue to be protected from appeal (to the OLT). The alternative would lead to increased speculation on agricultural land and uncoordinated/inefficient settlement expansions, due to continuous pressure from development proponents to expand settlement boundaries and

infrastructure in multiple directions. This continuous pressure would distract municipalities from focusing their resources on completing the necessary growth and infrastructure planning that is essential to sustainably accommodate growth and build great communities.

The Province's stated outcome of this PPS review is to determine the best approach to enable municipalities to accelerate the development of housing and increase housing supply, including rural housing, through a more streamlined, province-wide land use planning policy framework. To achieve this objective, the Province would be better served by maintaining the current growth management policies from the existing PPS, 2020, that have worked well, while integrating the more detailed growth related policies and terminology from A Place to Grow (i.e. provincial growth plan for the greater golden horseshoe), where necessary and/or beneficial.

In summary, Planning staff are proposing that the Province again be requested to revise the proposed settlement expansion policies to address the above noted concerns, while continuing to ensure a level of flexibility for settlement expansions, as previously requested by Oxford. Staff also propose that the changes to the Planning Act proposed to allow for appeal of a municipal refusal of a privately initiated application for settlement expansion be rescinded.

### **c) Agricultural Policies**

The Province appears to have left the policies in the revised draft of the Provincial Planning Statement for permitted uses in Prime Agricultural Areas largely unchanged from the current PPS, 2020. The one notable exception appears to be a minor policy change to clarify that additional residential units are permitted in agricultural areas in accordance with certain development criteria, as the current PPS, 2020 is silent in that regard. Planning staff are generally supportive of this clarification, as the County and Area Municipalities have proactively amended the Official Plan policies to permit such units on farms to support farm families and increase rural housing options.

However, the concern is that, as part of this change, the Province is also proposing to clarify the wording of the current residential lot creation policies which it appears could, inadvertently or otherwise, significantly increase the potential for rural residential lot creation and the associated loss of agricultural land and negative impacts on agricultural operations.

It is not yet entirely clear what the Province intended with the proposed changes to the lot creation policy wording. However, this proposed change is of significant concern, particularly given the clear and consistent feedback that was provided by a broad range of municipal and agricultural organizations warning of the enormous and irreversible negative impacts on agricultural land and operations from the proposed rural residential lot creation policies that had been proposed in the 2023 draft of the Provincial Planning Statement. Further, it would appear to contradict the Province's written commitment to many of the agricultural and commodity groups in Ontario on May 29, 2023 in response to those concerns, which indicated the Province would "continue working with the agricultural sector to look at alternatives that would assist farm families in succession planning, but do not involve additional severances". As such, this is a change that Planning staff will be further reviewing and seeking additional clarity from the Province on, while also engaging with various municipal and agricultural organizations to identify mutual concerns and the need for early and collective advocacy.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The proposed legislative and regulatory changes being proposed through Bill 185, together with proposed policy changes being introduced through the revised Provincial Planning Statement, are substantial and wide ranging. While many of the proposed changes appear to be positive (i.e. development charges), others (i.e. the proposed changes to the wording of some of the agricultural policies and the requirements and rights of appeal for settlement area expansions) could potentially have a significant impact on the ability of municipalities to comprehensively and effectively plan for growth, infrastructure, and the protection of agricultural land and operations.

Given the extent of the various changes being proposed, together with the short review and commenting period provided by the Province, Planning staff are seeking County Council's initial direction to proceed with preparing and submitting preliminary comments to the Province and undertake early advocacy with respect to the key matters of concerns, as generally outlined in this report.

The intent is that a more fulsome overview the proposed Provincial legislative and policy changes, and associated staff comments, will be provided in a subsequent report to Council on May 8, 2024. In the interim, staff will continue to undertake a detailed analysis of the proposed legislative, regulatory and policy changes, including further consultation with provincial staff, municipal organizations and other key stakeholders, and participation in any upcoming information sessions, to identify potential matters of particular interest or concern to the County and/or Area Municipalities.

## SIGNATURES

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### Report author:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Michiels  
Manager of Planning Policy

### Departmental approval:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon K. Hough, RPP  
Director of Community Planning

### Approved for submission:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin R. Addley  
Chief Administrative Officer

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# MEMO

**DATE:** May 7, 2024  
**TO:** All Area Municipal CAOs and Clerks  
**FROM:** Gordon Hough, Director, Community Planning  
**RE:** Bill 185 and Provincial Planning Statement

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On Wednesday, May 8, 2024, Community Planning report CP 2024-147 was presented to the Council of the County of Oxford, which contained the following recommendations:

1. “That the Director of Community Planning submit comments on behalf of the County in response to the Provincial consultations on Bill 185 (Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and the updated Provincial Planning Statement, as generally outlined in Report CP 2024-147;
2. And further, that Report CP 2024-147 be circulated to the Area Municipalities for information.”

County Council adopted the above recommendations. The report is attached for your information and review.

**Due to the extremely short timeframe the Province has provided for consultation (submissions due by May 10), please provide any comments you wish to share to Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, **no later than noon, Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024.****

Sincerely,

Gordon K. Hough  
Director  
Community Planning

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Bill 185 and Provincial Planning Statement

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Community Planning

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. That the Director of Community Planning submit comments on behalf of the County in response to the Provincial consultations on Bill 185 (Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) and the updated Provincial Planning Statement, as generally outlined in Report CP 2024-147;
2. And further, that Report CP 2024-147 be circulated to the Area Municipalities for information.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- On April 10, 2024 the Province released Bill 185 (the Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act) which includes a number of legislative changes to the Planning Act and Development Charges Act, among others, as well as a revised 2024 draft 'Provincial Planning Statement'.
- The updated 2024 draft of the 'Provincial Planning Statement' makes further revisions in part based on feedback to comments on the 2023 draft. Once approved, this document is intended to replace the current Provincial Policy Statement (PPS, 2020) and 'A Place to Grow' – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden horseshoe (APTG).
- The proposed changes being introduced through Bill 185 and the revised 'Provincial Planning Statement' are substantive and wide ranging. While some appear positive (e.g. the roll-back of a number of previous problematic legislative and policy changes), others are of considerable concern (e.g. settlement expansion appeal rights and justification requirements, proposed changes to agricultural policies etc.), or are in need of clarification and/or correction to avoid unintended gaps and other potential implementation challenges.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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The recommendations contained in this report will have no immediate impacts with respect to implementation. However, they introduce uncertainty that may delay implementation of various initiatives that are in progress to address housing supply and other important planning objectives in the County.

Further, if implemented as proposed, several of the proposed legislative, policy, and other changes will have significant implications for various ongoing County projects (i.e. secondary planning, infrastructure master plans, Official Plan updates, etc.), as well as the existing Official Plan policies and related implementation tools and measures. As such, if approved, various County and Area Municipal land use related policies, processes and standards will likely need to be comprehensively reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with the new Provincial direction.

### Financial Impact

If enacted, a number of the proposed provincial policy and regulatory changes identified in this and previous reports could have significant financial impacts for the County and Area Municipalities, including the potential need for additional background and technical studies, staffing and other resources to address and/or implement the various changes.

### Communications

Communication is proposed through the inclusion of this report on the County Council agenda and related communications and circulation to the area municipalities. The report will also be shared with a number of municipal and agricultural organizations (e.g. AMO, WOWC, OFA) to assist with coordinated advocacy, where requested.




## 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Oxford County Council approved the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

| PILLAR 1   | PILLAR 2  | PILLAR 3  |
|--|---|---|
|   |    |    |
| <b>Promoting community vitality</b>  | <b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>   | <b>Fostering progressive government</b>   |
| <p>Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development</p> <p>Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being</p> <p>Goal 1.4 – Connected people and places</p> | <p>Goal 2.1 – Climate change mitigation and adaptation</p> <p>Goal 2.2 – Preserve and enhance our natural environment</p> | <p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p> <p>Goal 3.4 – Financial sustainability</p> <p>Goal 3.5 – Advocate for Oxford County</p> |

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

## DISCUSSION

### Background

In April of 2023, the Province released legislative and policy changes, including a proposed new draft Provincial Planning Statement document, as part of an ongoing series of changes initiated to implement their annual Housing Supply Action Plans. Staff submitted comments to the Province on the related ERO posting as discussed in Reports [CP 2023-126](#), [CP 2023-144](#), [CP 2023-194](#).

In April of 2024, the Province released Bill 185 and a revised draft Provincial Planning Statement which was discussed in an initial staff report [CP 2024-133](#) that was presented to Council on April 24, 2024. The focus of that report was to highlight the extremely short consultation period, proposed changes to Development Charges and municipal financial incentives, and key matters of concern identified through initial staff review of Bill 185 and the proposed draft Provincial Planning Statement. This follow up report provides a more fulsome overview of the other legislative and policy changes that staff were not able to review and assess in time for the initial report.

### Comments

#### Bill 185 (Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act)

Bill 185 contains a variety of changes to multiple pieces of legislation, many of which are focused on housing and planning related matters, which are discussed further below. For consultation purposes, the Province has split the content in Bill 185 into multiple postings to the Environmental



Registry of Ontario (ERO), so staff have generally attempted to connect the discussion below to the most relevant of the ERO postings. That said, there is considerable overlap between many of the ERO postings.

An overview of the proposed Bill 185 changes related to the Development Charges Act (ERO 019-8371) and incentive provisions in the Municipal Act (24-MMAH009) and changes to the Planning Act to allow appeals of privately initiated settlement expansions were addressed in the previous staff report CP 2024-133. The key proposed legislative changes not addressed in that previous staff report are outlined below.

It is noted that many of these proposed changes would be implemented through proposed future regulations. As such, one overarching comment that needs to be relayed to the Province is that further detail on the intent and purpose of these proposed changes is required for municipalities to be able to properly assess impacts and provide meaningful feedback and that there needs to be a commitment to further meaningful engagement with municipalities on any proposed draft implementing regulations, once they are available.

**a) Further Changes to Additional Residential Units (ERO 019-8366 and ERO 019-8369)**

Proposed changes to the Planning Act would continue to allow for the Minister to establish requirements and standards (through regulation) with respect to any ARUs in a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse, or in a building or structure ancillary to such a house and is now proposed to include 'a parcel of land where such residential units are located' and 'a building or structure within which such residential units are located'.

If passed, this change would broaden the Minister's ability to regulate not only any additional residential unit, but also the land on which such ARUs are located and the primary building or structure within which such ARUs are located. Further, there are other proposed Planning Act changes that would permit the Minister to make regulations to prescribe that ARUs and other residential dwelling forms, or certain aspects of the regulation of ARUs and other residential dwelling forms, would not be subject to certain planning requirements (i.e. zoning, site plan control, or a community planning permit system).

The Province is currently requesting input to better understand zoning by-law requirements and/or standards that are a 'barrier' to the development of ARUs. The results of this consultation may inform subsequent Provincial regulations to limit the application of municipal zoning by-laws to ARUs and the associated lot and primary dwelling.

In Oxford, significant effort has gone into the development of appropriate zoning approaches that would permit ARUs as broadly as possible, while still recognizing that certain by-law provisions are necessary to address availability of municipal services (i.e. water and wastewater), compatibility with existing development and other considerations. Certain matters that some may see as 'barriers', are often justified to ensure the proper function of the site and municipal infrastructure and protect public health and safety.

It is recognized that there may be zoning requirements that have been implemented by some municipalities that unduly restrict the establishment of such units. However, in trying to address those concerns, the Province should ensure it does not restrict municipalities from developing reasonable local zoning standards for ARUs for their particular local contexts (i.e. community size, level of servicing, transit availability etc.). There are also many other factors that have a limiting affect on the creation of ARUs (e.g. lack of owner interest, construction and servicing costs,

financing, landlord/tenant legislation, impacts on property taxes/capital gains etc.) that are likely as, or more, important to address if more such units are desired in the shorter term.

**b) Municipal Planning Data Reporting (ERO 019-8368)**

On April 6, 2023, Ontario Regulation 73/23: Municipal Planning Data Reporting, came into effect, which required 29 municipalities in Ontario (none in Oxford) to report information on planning matters to the Ministry on a quarterly and annual basis. The Province is now proposing changes to this regulation to expand the list of municipalities (i.e. to include the City of Woodstock) and add new/additional data that is to be reported.

If enacted, this proposed change would require the City to report to the Province on the applicable data on a quarterly basis. As the data required to meet these new Provincial reporting requirements is already being captured and maintained by the Community Planning Office, planning staff would be pleased to assist the City in that regard.

**c) Newspaper Notice Requirements (ERO 019-8370)**

The Province is proposing to update the newspaper notification requirements under the various Planning Act regulations, recognizing that there have been challenges with requiring notice by newspaper as more community papers have ceased print publication. As such, proposed regulatory changes would allow municipalities to provide notice on a municipal website, if there is no local print newspaper available.

Staff have recently found inconsistent distribution, readership, and availability of newspapers to be a challenge in many areas of Oxford. Further, lack of coordination and follow through from some newspapers has recently resulted in delays in applications and proposals moving forward in some cases (e.g. ads not being included on the requested dates). As such, staff would suggest that the current newspaper notice requirements be revised to permit municipalities to rely primarily on website notice, in combination with other locally determined measures, as set out in the Official Plan (i.e. through a public consultation policy). Newspapers could still be one of the various notice measures established by such policies, where applicable and effective. Further, notice of site specific planning applications would generally be expected to continue to be through posting of a sign on the subject property and mail notification to properties within a prescribed radius (e.g. 60 or 120 m), as permitted by the current regulations.

**d) Other Planning Act and Municipal Act Changes (ERO 019-8369 and ERO 019-8370)**

Parking

Proposed changes would limit the ability of municipalities to have/establish parking minimums. Although the primary focus seems to be on Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) and areas surrounding higher-order transit, where minimum densities are prescribed, such limitations could also be applied in 'other prescribed areas' (i.e. would be set out through regulation).

While limitations for parking minimums for MTSAs and higher order transit areas would not directly impact municipalities in Oxford, the expansion of these limitations to "other prescribed areas" (i.e. through future regulation) will need to be closely monitored, as that could have a significant impact on Area Municipal parking requirements (i.e. set out in zoning) and related concerns.

### Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CIHA)

The Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator (CIHA) was established by the Province in 2022 as an alternative tool/process to Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO). The CIHA and MZO allowed the Province to consider requests to supersede municipal planning requirements, including changes (added through Bill 23) that provided greater latitude to overlook matters of provincial interests and consistency with the PPS.

The Province is now proposing to repeal the CIHA process to "avoid unnecessary duplication and provide for a revised and transparent process for requesting and issuing minister's zoning orders", including providing updated guidance/requirements for MZO requests (e.g. must demonstrate why the normal municipal process cannot be used and provide additional information on Indigenous engagement and public consultation etc.)

In Oxford, the MZO process has been effectively utilized in the past, but only in very specific and limited circumstances. As such, staff are generally in support of reverting back to a singular MZO process in its previous more scoped form, including the provision of greater clarity on limitations and provincial expectations/requirements for an MZO request.

### New Lapsing and Servicing Capacity Allocation Tools

Proposed changes to the Planning Act include a new "use it or lose it" tool for municipalities which is intended to encourage approved development with servicing capacity allocation (i.e. water and sewage servicing) to proceed in a timely manner, and address instances where stalled development is tying up limited municipal servicing capacity allocation that would be better reallocated to other developments that are ready to move forward.

The proposed framework would expand the scope of development lapsing provisions, including:

- Requiring approval authorities to impose lapsing conditions on all draft plan of subdivision/condominium approvals (currently optional) under the Planning Act and automatically being imposed on older subdivision approvals (i.e. March 27, 1995);
- Allowing lapsing requirements to be applied to site plan approvals and retroactively applied to previous applications (i.e. subdivision/condo and site plan), subject to notice to the owner; and
- Allowing the Province to create regulations regarding the setting of timelines for lapsing provisions and to establish exemptions from lapsing provisions.

As lapsing provisions have been a standard requirement of draft plan of subdivision/condominium approvals in Oxford for many years, these new authorities are not expected to have a significant impact on that process. However, the new ability for municipalities to apply lapsing requirements to site plans could be of considerable benefit for ensuring timely development and effectively managing servicing capacity (e.g. for larger developments, particularly on smaller systems).

In addition to the Planning Act changes, Bill 185 is proposing to create new authorities under the Municipal Act to explicitly authorize municipalities to adopt policies, by by-law, to provide for the allocation of water supply and sewage capacity, which may include:

- A system for tracking the water supply and servicing capacity; and
- The criteria used to determine the circumstances for when water supply and sewage capacity is allocated to approved development, when such allocation is withdrawn, and when allocation can be re-allocated.

The County and Area Municipalities already track and manage the allocation of servicing capacity to the extent possible utilizing existing municipal and planning authorities and tools (e.g. approving development in phases in accordance with the County's Servicing Allocation Protocol, including the use of phasing conditions, holding zone provisions, and agreement requirements etc.). That said, the additional tools and clarity being proposed through Bill 185 to allow municipalities to impose lapsing provisions and manage servicing capacity should serve to further compliment and support the existing best practices already being employed by the County in that regard. As such, these proposed changes are generally supported by staff, but may benefit from some further clarification.

### Third party appeals

The Province is proposing changes to limit third-party appeals for official plans, official plan amendments, zoning by-laws, and zoning by-law amendments. As third party appeals on minor variances, plans of subdivision and consent applications had previously been eliminated through Bill 23, this would essentially mean all third part appeals of planning applications would now be eliminated.

The appeal rights proposed to be removed include third-party landowners, ratepayers, and other members of the public that are not the applicant, the Minister, an approval authority, a public body, or a 'specified person'. Specified persons, includes applicants, public bodies, Indigenous communities, and utilities providers.

Although the proposed limitations on third party appeals could potentially reduce uncertainty and potential delays in getting important new housing developments approved in some cases (i.e. by eliminating frivolous and/or vexatious appeals and those simply based on NIMBYism), it would also eliminate the opportunity for legitimate third-party challenges to poor planning decisions. While increasing housing supply is the stated focus of the Bill 185 changes, it is noted that this proposed change would eliminate third party appeals for all types of planning applications (i.e. commercial and industrial uses, aggregates etc.), not just those for new housing.

### Fee refunds

The Province is repealing previous changes to the Planning Act (i.e. through Bill 109 in 2022) that required municipalities to issue refunds for fees related to planning applications if specified timelines were not met for decisions on zoning by-law amendment and site plan control applications. As was cautioned by municipalities at the time, the Province has now recognized that these changes did not expedite development approvals as intended and, in some cases, resulted in further complexity and delays.

Although meeting the specific timelines was not generally an issue in Oxford, staff still support the repeal of these mandatory refund requirements for the above noted reasons.

### Pre-application process

The Province is proposing to remove the ability for municipalities to require 'mandatory' pre-application consultation and instead make the process voluntary (i.e. at the discretion of the applicant). That said, the 'complete application' requirements and the ability of an applicant to

appeal the municipality's determination that an application is 'incomplete' would remain, but the current time-limited window (i.e. 30 days from notice) for such appeals is to be eliminated.

It is unclear how these changes would speed up or otherwise improve the application review process and are more likely to have the opposite effect. Although complete application requirements have not been a particularly contentious issue in Oxford, this change is of considerable concern to many other municipalities. As such, staff are recommending that Oxford also request that the Province not proceed with this particular change.

### Standardized Housing Designs

Bill 185 proposes to add a new section to the Planning Act, which would authorize the Province to make regulations for the non-application of any provision of Part V of the Planning Act (i.e. zoning by-laws, minor variances, site plan control, community benefits charge, parkland conveyance) or a regulation under section 70.2 of the Planning Act (i.e. community planning permit system).

The Province has indicated that the intent of this proposal is to develop and establish criteria (i.e. through regulation) to streamline planning approvals for 'standardized housing', which may include principal units (detached, semi detached and townhouses) as well as ARUs. The ERO posting provides examples of how this proposed exemption may apply and suggests it will be limited to settlements within full municipal servicing and proposals that meet other zoning type criteria (e.g. on a lot of minimum size).

Staff believe this is likely the start of an approach to align with and support the development of the federal housing design catalogue and support modular home construction in Ontario. While staff generally support measures to facilitate a broad range of housing options, including modular and/or standardized designs, that should not necessitate exempting such units from local planning requirements, particularly if such requirements can be easily and reasonably met. Providing such exemptions without full and proper consideration of the various planning and other considerations could have a range of potential unintended, negative consequences. That said, without the any proposed draft regulations or other details being available, it is difficult to evaluate the potential implications of such an approach or provide useful feedback.

### Exemptions for Post-Secondary Institutions and Community Service Facilities

Proposed new sections of the Planning Act would exempt publicly assisted universities, and colleges and universities federated or affiliated with a publicly assisted university, from the provisions of the Planning Act and permit the establishment of regulations to exempt classes of community service facilities from (or restrict or limit the application of) any provision of the Planning Act.

The proposed Planning Act section pertaining to planning exemptions for universities and colleges does not currently appear to have any proposed regulations, although it would allow for the passing a regulation to further limit which institutions and types of undertakings are exempt. That said, these exemptions would not currently appear to be restricted to only the development of student housing, as suggested in the ERO posting. Further, it is unclear whether this exemption would apply to any lands owned by such an institution (i.e. beyond the main campus).

Similarly, the proposed new regulation-making power to provide a new expedited approval process (i.e. planning exemption) for certain community service facilities is also difficult to assess and comment on without further details (i.e. draft regulation). The community facilities currently being contemplated for exemption are schools (defined under the *Education Act*), hospitals (defined under the *Public Hospitals Act*), and long-term care homes (defined under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*).

Such institutional uses can have significant impacts on the broader community (e.g. traffic, parking, site design, etc.) and municipal services and infrastructure (e.g. emergency services, roads, water and wastewater etc.) and generally already planned for and permitted through the typical land use planning framework/designations and approved, where appropriate. As such, staff do not see the need or benefit of exempting such facilities from the municipal planning approval process, particularly given the considerable potential for off-site impacts. A better alternative would be to simply encourage improved coordination and streamlining of the municipal approval processes for such uses to the extent possible and the establishment of appropriate enabling land use designations and zoning that provide flexibility and opportunity for the reasonable future expansion of such uses on approved sites through an expedited process (i.e. site plan).

As such, these proposed changes should be identified as being of particular concern and request that, at a minimum, municipalities be provided further detail on these proposed changes and given an opportunity to review and comment on any proposed draft regulations before they are further considered by the Province.

## **Proposed Provincial Planning Statement**

### **a) General Comments**

The Province's stated outcome of the current PPS review is to determine the best approach to enable municipalities to accelerate the development of housing and increase housing supply, including rural housing, through a more streamlined, province-wide land use planning policy framework.

The 2024 draft of the 'Provincial Planning Statement' proposes various changes and revisions to the previously released 2023 draft PPS document to, in part, address various feedback and concerns expressed by various stakeholders. This new 'Provincial Planning Statement' is intended to replace the current PPS 2020 and various provincial growth plans (e.g. A Place to Grow, the growth plan for the GGH) once enacted.

The current PPS 2020 policies have had the benefit of being informed and improved by years of municipal input, practical application and experience, and OMB/OLT and legal decisions. As such, these current policies are, for the most part, concise, responsive, effective, and generally enable and support the achievement of local planning and community objectives in Oxford. As such, the proposed new 'Provincial Planning Statement' will require close review and scrutiny to ensure it will continue to provide the provincial policy direction necessary to support, and wherever possible improve, effective land use planning in Oxford.

## **b) Housing Policies**

The Province is proposing to update the overall policy framework and direction that applies to planning for a range and mix of housing options, including changes to key terminology and related requirements. Generally, the Province is directing municipalities to permit and facilitate all housing options to address current and future housing needs, including those that may arise from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and all types of residential intensification, including conversion of existing commercial and institutional buildings, development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas, and redevelopment which results in a net increase in residential units.

While the renewed emphasis on intensification is generally supported, the softening and generalization of some of the current growth management and settlement area expansion policy direction (as discussed further below) seems to contradict and/or undermine some of this direction and could make it more difficult for municipalities to achieve.

### **Definitions of ‘affordable’ and ‘low and moderate income households’**

The existing definition of ‘affordable’ has been reinstated in the current draft. This and the definition of ‘low and moderate income households’ are largely the same as the definitions in the current 2020 PPS, with the exception of prescribing purchase prices and income thresholds for the ‘municipality’ rather than the ‘regional market area’. This change is a concern for Oxford County, as the County is the designated ‘Service Manager’ for housing services, as prescribed by the *Housing Services Act*, 2011, and the housing and homelessness plan has been developed using prescribed housing targets for the entire ‘regional market area’ (i.e. County), not for each individual area municipality (i.e. for all eight lower-tier municipalities). Further, CMHC only collects rental market data for the three urban areas, which means that there is a lack of available/accurate data regarding the rental market for the five rural municipalities, which would limit the accuracy of determining affordable rental rates for each municipality.

As such, County staff are recommending that the reference to ‘municipality’ in the proposed definitions of ‘affordable’ and ‘low and moderate income households’ and ‘regional market area’ in other related PPS policies (i.e., 2.2.1 a.) - Providing a mix of housing options) be revised to ensure consistency and reflect the designated ‘Service Manager’ under the *Housing Services Act*, 2011 and/or ‘regional market area’, as applicable.

### **Definition of ‘housing options’**

The definition of ‘housing options’ is proposed to be expanded to include additional housing needs (long-term care homes, accessible housing, housing for persons with disabilities and older persons) and supportive, community and transitional housing, which more fulsomely captures the housing options on the left side of the housing continuum. However, even though ‘affordable housing’ is not included in the proposed definition of ‘housing options’, it is still referenced as a form of housing municipalities must plan for. As such, staff are recommending the term ‘affordable housing’ be included in the definition of ‘housing options’, so that term encompasses the full range of housing.

**c) Policies for Settlement Areas and Expansions**

In addition to the changes to the housing policies noted above, there are a number of other notable changes to the settlement policies in the PPS, which are generally summarized as follows:

- *Planning horizon* - the Province is proposing to change the standard growth planning horizon from a maximum of 25 years to a minimum of 20 years up to a maximum of 30 years. This particular change is very much supported by planning staff, as the increase to 30 years reflects previous requests to increase the maximum planning horizon to provide additional flexibility for municipalities to plan for logical settlement expansions and related infrastructure and public service facility needs, particularly in slower growing rural settlements.
- *Population forecasts* - The proposed policies now indicate that planning authorities shall base population and employment growth forecasts on Ministry of Finance 25-year projections and may modify projections as appropriate. Until such time as the referenced provincial guidance is issued in this regard, it is unclear to what extent municipalities would be able to modify the projections. That said, it is currently expected that the impacts of this proposed change will be fairly limited in Oxford.
- *Residential land supply* - The current requirements for municipalities to maintain a minimum 3 year supply of residential units with servicing capacity and 15 year supply of land 'designated and available' for residential development remain largely unchanged. The one noticeable exception is the removal of specific references to accommodating such units through 'intensification and redevelopment', which would appear to reduce the emphasis on promoting development within existing built-up areas, prior to settlement expansions.
- *Comprehensive review* – Proposed changes would eliminate the current requirement that a settlement expansion can only be considered through a 'comprehensive review'. This is a defined term in the PPS that sets out a range of specific planning matters that must be considered (i.e. growth forecasts and land need, alternative directions for growth, adequate of infrastructure and public services etc.) and also stipulates that such expansions must be undertaken and/or approved by a municipality (i.e. a privately initiated proposal would need to be supported by the municipality to be considered).

It is crucial that the PPS continue to provide clear justification requirements for settlement expansions to provide certainty and consistency in planning for growth, infrastructure and other public services (i.e. schools and other public facilities) and achieving complete communities. In that regard, it appears some matters that currently require consideration through the comprehensive review process, are now captured under the general settlement planning policies. Further, staff are pleased to see that the 2024 draft policies have reinstated more detail in the criteria for demonstrating that there is a need for additional lands to be added to a settlement area. That said, there are still a few existing PPS requirements for settlement expansion that staff feel should be restored and/or clarified in the current draft. In particular, restoring the requirement that a settlement expansion can only be initiated and/or approved by a municipality (i.e. no ability to appeal municipal refusal of a private application to expand a settlement) and changing the consideration of the settlement expansion criteria from the proposed 'shall consider' to 'shall demonstrate'.



- *Density Targets* - Planning authorities would now be encouraged, versus required, to 'establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas' and to 'establish density targets'. It is staff's opinion that clear provincial direction regarding minimum residential density expectations needs to be provided for all municipalities in order to support and be consistent with the other Provincial policy objectives related to achieving complete communities, providing adequate housing supply, using land and infrastructure efficiently, and conserving agricultural land.
- *Complete Communities* - Specific policies pertaining to the defined term 'complete communities' are proposed, which state that planning authorities should support the achievement of complete communities by, among other matters, accommodating an appropriate range and mix of land uses, housing and transportation options, employment, public services and other uses to meet long-term needs. Although the inclusion of this new definition and related policies and considerations is generally supported, the fact that the policy test is only a 'should' support may significantly limit its benefit (i.e. if municipal approaches to achieving complete communities were to be challenged), application and degree to which it is consistently implemented through local policy. With the proposed removal of various PPS policies that previously addressed specific aspects of complete communities, it is important that the overall achievement of 'complete communities', as now defined, be a key planning focus and given appropriate weight in Provincial policy (i.e. a 'shall vs. 'should').
- *Changes to functional policy language* – The wording of a number of key growth management policies is proposed to change from 'shall' to 'should' (e.g. setting targets for and supporting intensification; supporting the achievement of complete communities through the provision of a range and mix of uses, housing and transportation options and services; consideration of various settlement expansion criteria etc.). Changing the wording to 'should' would have the effect of softening the extent to which these policy requirements would need to be considered in making land use planning decisions. This may lead to inconsistent implementation across municipalities, disputes over interpretation, and increased appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) with associated costs and delays.
- *Policies from A Place to Grow (APTG)* – The province is proposing to incorporate a number of new policy approaches and/or terms from APTG into the PPS, including: Strategic Growth Areas, Major Transit Station Areas, Higher Order Transit Corridors, Major Trip Generators, Frequent Transit Service, etc. It appears that the incorporation of these terms and associated policies is largely intended to capture the provincial direction from APTG that is deemed necessary to maintain once that plan is repealed (as is being proposed).

Most of these terms and policies, either explicitly or by virtue of the definitions, would apply exclusively to the 29 'large and fast growing municipalities (LFGM)' identified by the Province on Schedule 1 of the draft document, most of which are currently subject to the policies of APTG. That said, the replacement of some of the current, more general, settlement policies with these APTG policies would appear to create some potential policy gaps when it comes to planning for smaller urban communities and rural settlement areas.

- *'Strategic Growth Areas' (SGAs)* – the proposed definition of SGAs has been expanded from the 2023 draft to include the following (2024 additions/revisions are underlined): "within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more

compact built form. Strategic growth areas include major transit station areas, existing and emerging downtowns, lands adjacent to publicly assisted post-secondary institutions and other areas where growth or development will be focused, that may include infill, redevelopment (e.g. underutilized shopping malls and plazas), brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.”

The proposed policies for ‘strategic growth areas’ now encourage all Planning authorities to identify and focus growth and development in such areas. The stated intent for these areas is to support the achievement of complete communities, a range and mix of housing options, and intensification and mixed use development. Identification of a strategic growth area would allow a municipality to identify minimum density targets and type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas.

It appears that the intent of these ‘strategic growth areas’ is to replace the more general requirements for the establishment of intensification targets and related policies for settlement areas, as required by the current PPS. Given the considerable flexibility with respect to which areas of settlements could be identified as a ‘strategic growth area’ (i.e. downtowns, major nodes and corridors etc.), it appears that these new policies could potentially assist in achieving some of Oxford’s intensification objectives. However, to be effective, these policies would need to continue to be supported by requiring appropriate justification for settlement expansions and minimum densities for new development.

- *‘Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs)’* - these areas are proposed to be defined as ‘the area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within a settlement area; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Major transit station areas are generally defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station’.

As there are no transit services in the County that likely qualify as ‘higher order transit’, (i.e. subways, light rail transit or buses in dedicated rights-of way), the only area where such policies may potentially apply, would be the bus depot/hub in downtown Woodstock. That said, it is not clear to what extent identifying that area as an MTSA would provide any advantages over identifying it as a ‘strategic growth area’.

- *Deleted policies* – Several existing PPS policies that Oxford has relied on to support various local planning objectives in the past are proposed to be deleted. These include, but are not limited to: avoiding land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of settlement areas, in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas; maintaining and where possible enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and main streets; encouraging a sense of place by promoting a well designed, built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help to define character etc.

In summary, some streamlining of the current process and policy requirements for settlement expansions could be beneficial in providing greater flexibility for settlement expansion in certain specific circumstances. However, it appears the extent to which the province is proposing to simplify the process and related review requirements could potentially undermine many other important PPS objectives (e.g. achieving the density and mix of housing and other uses necessary to support complete communities, protecting prime agricultural land etc.), particularly if combined

with the proposed changes through Bill 185 to allow for appeal of a municipal refusal of a privately initiated settlement expansion application (as discussed in Report [CP 2024-133](#)).

Further, the proposed replacement of some of the current, more general, settlement policies with these APTG policies may create some potential policy gaps when it comes to planning for smaller urban communities and rural settlement areas. For instance, there may now be limited policies beyond those for 'strategic growth areas' and 'major transit station areas' that could be directly relied upon to require increased density and intensification within existing built-up areas.

If approved, it is anticipated that the various proposed changes to the PPS growth management policies will require careful and detailed consideration as part of reviewing and updating growth related official plan policies and zoning provisions in the future.

#### **d) Rural Areas and Rural Lands**

Some minor wording changes to the policies for 'rural areas' and 'rural lands' are being proposed, most of which appear to be an attempt to simplify and reduce duplication. In Oxford, all lands located outside of the Large Urban Centres are considered 'rural areas' from a PPS perspective. However, the County does not contain any 'rural lands', as all lands located outside of designated settlements are considered to be a 'prime agricultural area'.

The Province appears to have made a number of revisions from the 2023 draft policies to address various concerns expressed by stakeholders. For example, the policy stating that 'rural settlement areas shall be the focus for growth and development' has been reinstated and the previously proposed policies that would have allowed for 'multi-lot residential development' on certain 'rural lands' have been removed. The revisions to these policies are all considered positive and supported by planning staff.

#### **e) Employment**

The province is proposing several changes to the employment policies in the PPS, including an amended definition of 'employment area(s)' to reflect the current definition of 'area of employment' in the Planning Act.

The proposed policy changes for 'employment areas' would require planning authorities to designate, protect and plan for 'employment areas' in settlement areas by:

- prohibiting residential uses, commercial uses, public service facilities and other institutional uses, as well as retail, office and other sensitive land uses not associated with or ancillary to the primary employment use; and
- including appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment uses to ensure land use compatibility.

Further, Planning authorities may only remove lands from 'employment areas' if certain criteria (i.e. need, compatibility etc.) are met, but such removal would no longer require a 'comprehensive review' to be considered.

Other proposed new and/or updated employment policies include, but are not limited to:

- Encourage the intensification of employment uses and compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of complete communities.
- On lands for employment outside of identified 'employment areas' a diverse mix of compatible land uses, including residential, employment, public service facilities and other institutional uses shall be permitted to support the development of complete communities.
- Encourage industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that could be located without adverse effects in 'strategic growth areas' and other mixed use areas where frequent transit service is available, outside of 'employment areas'.

Overall, the revised policies would appear to allow municipalities to identify 'employment areas' that would be focused on accommodating more intensive industrial type uses and provided greater protection from the development of 'incompatible' uses (i.e. residential, commercial, institutional, etc.). However, the policies would also appear to require municipalities to permit a more diverse mixture of uses, including residential and institutional, on lands for employment outside of identified 'employment areas', such as downtowns and other commercial areas.

Although many of these changes are positive, some could also potentially have the effect of overly limiting the potential employment uses that could be in an 'employment area' or overly prescribing the mix of uses that municipalities are required to permit on other employment lands. Therefore, further clarification on the overall intent and application of these policies, along with potential clarifications to the policy wording, is likely required to ensure they will provide the necessary flexibility for municipalities (particularly smaller urban and rural municipalities) to achieve their local planning and economic development objectives.

#### **f) Servicing – sewage, water and stormwater**

Greater direction is being proposed in the 2024 draft with respect to the re-allocation of servicing, if necessary to meet current and projected needs for increased housing supply. This appears to complement some of the proposed changes in Bill 185 in that regard and is generally supported.

The continued direction with respect to municipal services being the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health, is fully supported. However, the 2024 draft contains some proposed policy changes that would provide greater flexibility to accommodate growth on partial services, in certain circumstances. This is a potential area of concern, given the inefficient use of prime agricultural land and potential risks associated with development on partial servicing and, in particular, the potential cumulative environmental impacts over the longer term. As such, staff are proposing to raise that concern and seek additional clarity with respect to that proposed change.

#### **g) Energy Supply**

The proposed energy policies continue to encourage municipalities to provide opportunities for the development of energy supply. However, there is effectively little implementation direction remaining in the PPS with respect to energy supply, beyond generally encouraging energy efficiency. To this end, it would be beneficial for the Province to clarify how land use planning processes are intended to apply to undertakings for new energy generation, particularly given that

the Province, through the Independent Electricity Services Operator, is currently looking to add additional long term energy generation in the Province, including forms of renewable energy.

**e) Agriculture**

Overall, the agricultural policies continue to largely reflect the 2020, PPS with the notable inclusion of improved language regarding ARUs. Staff will be providing comments regarding ARUs and in relation to surplus farm dwelling severances as indicated in Report [CP 2024-133](#). Staff also support the increased emphasis on utilizing an agricultural systems-based approach and use of agricultural impact assessments as a key tool to reduce, avoid and mitigate the impacts of land use changes on agriculture.

**f) Policy Areas with Limited Change**

The PPS policies pertaining to Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, Natural Heritage and Water, and Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change do not appear to have substantially changed from the 2023 draft. As such, planning staff intend to repeat previous comments to the Province on those matters as previous outlined in [Report CP 2023-144](#).

**g) Implementation and Interpretation**

The County is generally supportive of the proposed retention of many of the long-standing statements that clarify the purpose and interpretation of the PPS, as well as the added policies regarding how strategic growth areas and designated growth areas are to be implemented through the Official Plan, and that the density requirements in the PPS represent minimum standards and should be revisited at the time of each Official Plan review to provide clarification of the related policies.

However, there are proposed changes that appear to give even greater latitude to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to make decisions that are inconsistent with the PPS 'to take into account other government priorities'. The additional discretion provided to the Province through these proposed policies, and other recent legislative changes, could continue to disrupt normal and efficient planning processes, diminish the role of municipal planning decisions, and encourage proponents to seek other avenues (e.g. MZO) to advance their developments. As such, the Province should be directed to, instead, focus its efforts on providing greater stability for local planning processes and assisting municipalities with advancing their various planning and housing initiatives, including expediting outstanding Provincial approvals of municipal Official Plan updates.

It is also noted that the Province is removing the policy recognizing that official plans are 'the most important vehicle for implementing the PPS' and instead providing detailed clarification with respect to keeping Official Plans and zoning by-laws up to date with the PPS. While this is both appreciated and understood, the current and perpetual review of provincial policies and legislation, and delays in Provincial decisions on Official Plan updates and release of provincial guidance documents necessary to support implementation, continue to cause the greatest barriers and delays to implementing provincial policy direction.

## h) Coordination

The coordination policies remain largely unchanged from the 2023 draft, except for the addition of policies related to collaboration with post-secondary institutions. These policies appear to place an expectation on Planning authorities to facilitate early and integrated planning for student housing and development of a strategy with post-secondary institutions.

Planning staff agree that such coordination is ideal and may assist in managing conflicts that could arise through the proposed exemptions to the requirements of the Planning Act for post-secondary institutions. However, given that this is discretionary, staff have concerns that the proposed planning exemptions for post-secondary institutions through Bill 185 would serve as a disincentive for these institutions to engage in such collaboration.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The proposed legislative and regulatory changes being proposed through Bill 185, together with proposed policy changes being introduced through the revised Provincial Planning Statement, are substantial and wide ranging. While many of the proposed changes appear to be positive (i.e. the roll-back of a number of previous problematic legislative and policy changes), others are of considerable concern (e.g. settlement expansion appeal rights and justification requirements, proposed changes to agricultural policies, etc.). If not carefully considered and addressed, these areas of concern could have a negative impact on the ability of municipalities to comprehensively and effectively plan for the sustainable growth of their communities and ensure the protection of agricultural land and other natural resources over the long term.

That said, the extremely short timeframe (i.e. 30 days) the Province has provided for consultation on these various changes provides wholly insufficient time for municipalities to fully consider the potential implications and provide meaningful feedback, including potential improved policy wording and alternative approaches that could better achieve Provincial interests, while also addressing municipal concerns. As such, it is still hoped the Province will extend the current consultation timeframe (i.e. to provide a minimum of 60 days) and otherwise provide for meaningful consultation with municipalities, as requested by the County and many others.

With Council's direction, staff would proceed with preparing and submitting comments to the Province on the proposed changes on behalf of the County, as generally outlined in this report and the previous report [CP 2024-133](#). Further, staff will continue to monitor the progress of the policy and other changes being proposed and advise County Council of any relevant changes and/or opportunities for comment on matters that may be of particular interest or concern to the County or Area Municipalities moving forward.

As indicated in previous reports, at such time as the proposed legislative and policy changes are enacted by the Province, the County and Area Municipalities will need to undertake updates to various policies, documents, processes, standards and review related staffing and other resource impacts to ensure the changes can be effectively addressed and implemented in the Oxford context.

## SIGNATURES

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### Report author:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Michiels  
Manager of Planning Policy

### Departmental approval:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon K. Hough  
Director of Community

### Approved for submission:

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin R. Addley  
Chief Administrative Officer



# TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

## Agenda Item

|                     |                      |                                  |   |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>To:</b>          | Members of Council   | <b>From:</b>                     | Drew Davidson<br>Director of Protective<br>Services |
| <b>Reviewed By:</b> | Josh Brick, CAO      | <b>Date:</b>                     | May 4 <sup>th</sup> 2024                            |
| <b>Subject:</b>     | April Monthly Report | <b>Council<br/>Meeting Date:</b> | May 15 <sup>th</sup> 2024                           |
| <b>Report #:</b>    | FC-24-09             |                                  |   |

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### Recommendation:

That Report FC-24-09 is received as information.

### Background:

To provide Council with an update regarding the activities of the Protective Services Department, for the month of April 2024.

### Analysis/Discussion:

#### Meetings, Courses and Training Attended:

- With the completion of courses at the Plattsville station for the beginning of the year, we started the gear room renovation in the station. Throughout the month, the room has been transformed into a self-contained separate area for bunker gear complete with fresh air intake and exhaust. Existing stalls were removed from the apparatus bay wall, modified and reinstalled in the new room, firefighters are very excited to see the township invest in their health and safety. Gear was moved into the room at the end of the month.
- Staff ensured that all township employees received safety guidelines and a pair of glasses for the solar eclipse that happened on April 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Over the past month staff has been collecting information on a peer support and mental health program, this was presented at our month RFSOC Chiefs meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup> which was well received with great interest. Staff has arranged a zoom meeting with the TEMA Foundation to be held in May with all of the Oxford County Chiefs to better explain the program and explain how such a program can be utilized by all firefighters.
- April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> saw Blandford-Blenheim welcome the recruit class of 2024 to the Bright station for forcible entry and auto extrication training. Cathcart Auto Wreckers once again generously dropped off and picked up, free of charge, twelve vehicles for the recruits to train on. Our firefighters have a passion for instructing this discipline and that was evident over the weekend with twelve instructors from our township making the weekend a huge success.

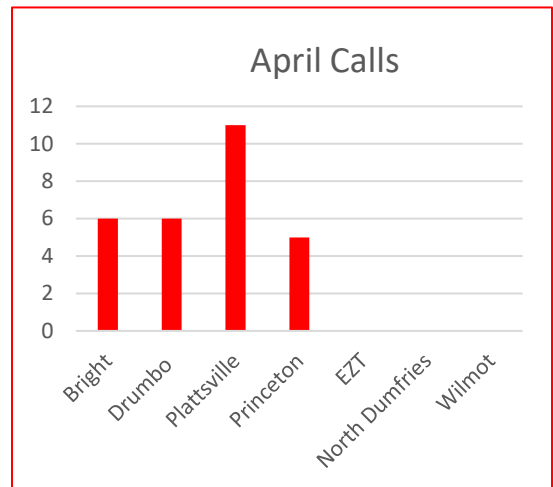
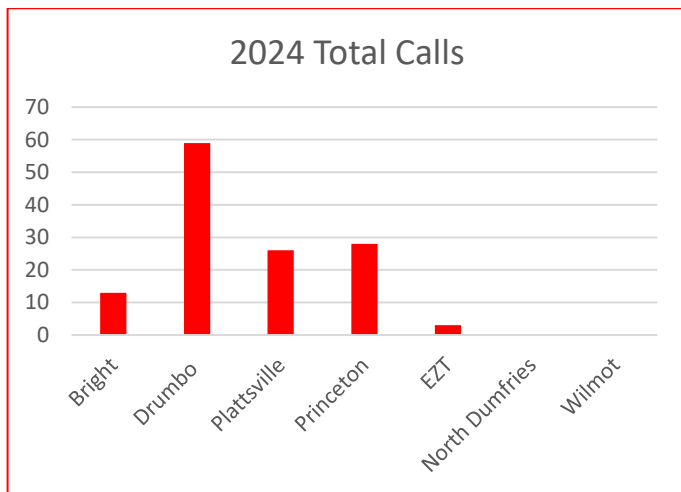


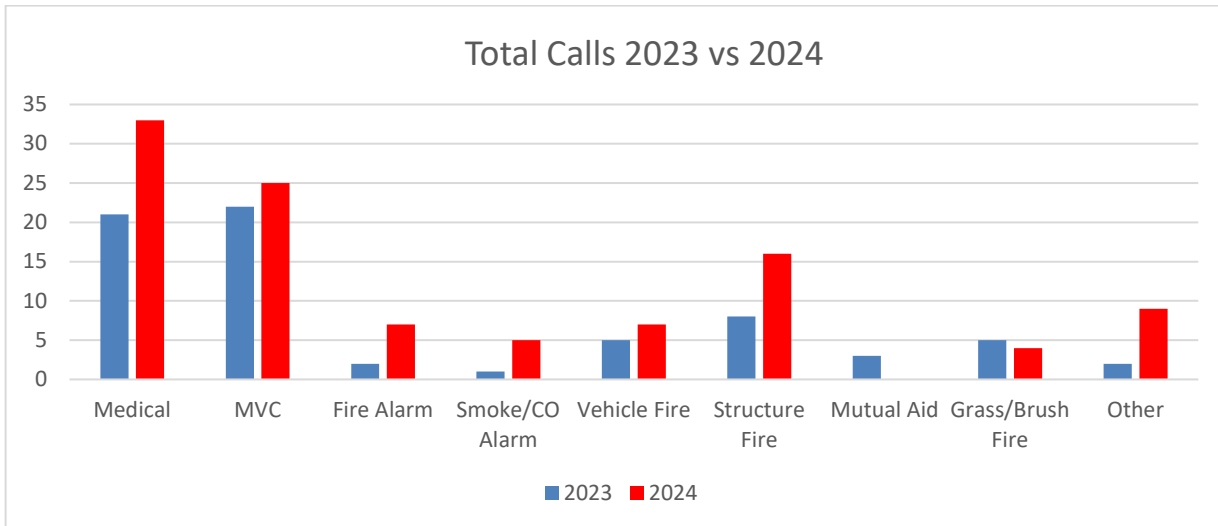
- On April 21<sup>st</sup> we were able to have our last two recruits from last year successfully obtain their DZ licenses. Coming this fall we will have four of our 2024 recruits attending the same training with one recruit already holding a valid DZ license.
- Staff held our Township Chiefs meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup>. A lot of great discussion was had in regards to a busy May with training, and annual testing of the departments air cylinders and air packs. Our township trainers attended for a portion of the meeting to give an update on the training matrix and how it will be rolled out to the firefighters. All Chiefs were impressed with the time and energy our trainers have put forth to enhance our department.
- Staff participated in a Municipal511 refresher webinar. Municipal511 is used by both Emergency Services and Public Works. This site is used to input all our burn permits and thus notify the appropriate station of a burn in their area. It is also used for emergency road closures, road issues and updated detour routes.
- Staff attended Enbridge Compressor Station as part of Earth Week to assist with tree planting along the Horner Creek water shed. Enbridge and the fire department continue to work together to make our Township a great place to enjoy.

**Fire:**

- 56 burn permits were issued in April 2024
- April 2024 monthly fire calls with annual comparisons (included)

**April Fire Reports:**





**CEMC – April 2024**

- Attended 3<sup>rd</sup> Teams Meeting regarding Solar Eclipse
- Handed out information and solar eclipse glasses to all Township employees
- Monitored Teams meeting and social meeting posts during the Solar Eclipse
- Attended closing out Teams Meeting regarding Solar Eclipse
- Attended Municipal511 refresher zoom meeting
- 

**By-Law Enforcement – April 2024**

Land and clear...4  
Work orders issued...2  
Barking Dog...1  
Disclosure preparation/submission...1  
Zoning follow up re commercial vehicle parking...1  
Kennel Inspections...3

**Fire Prevention – April 2024**

Commercial...1  
Assembly...3  
Institutional...1  
Fireworks delivery  
Commercial Inspections for fireworks...3  
OFM Pub Ed

Respectfully submitted by:

Drew Davidson  
Director of Protective Services



# TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

## Agenda Item

|                     |                           |                              |                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>To:</b>          | Members of Council        | <b>From:</b>                 | Ray Belanger, CBO |
| <b>Reviewed By:</b> | Josh Brick, CAO           | <b>Date:</b>                 | May 2, 2024       |
| <b>Subject:</b>     | Monthly Report to Council | <b>Council Meeting Date:</b> | May 15, 2024      |
| <b>Report #:</b>    | CBO-24-5                  |                              |                   |

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### Recommendation:

That report CBO-24-4 be received as information.

### Background:

To provide Council with an update regarding the monthly building activities for the period ending on March 31, 2024.

### Building Department Updates:

- The building department issued 19 permits for the month of April 2024.

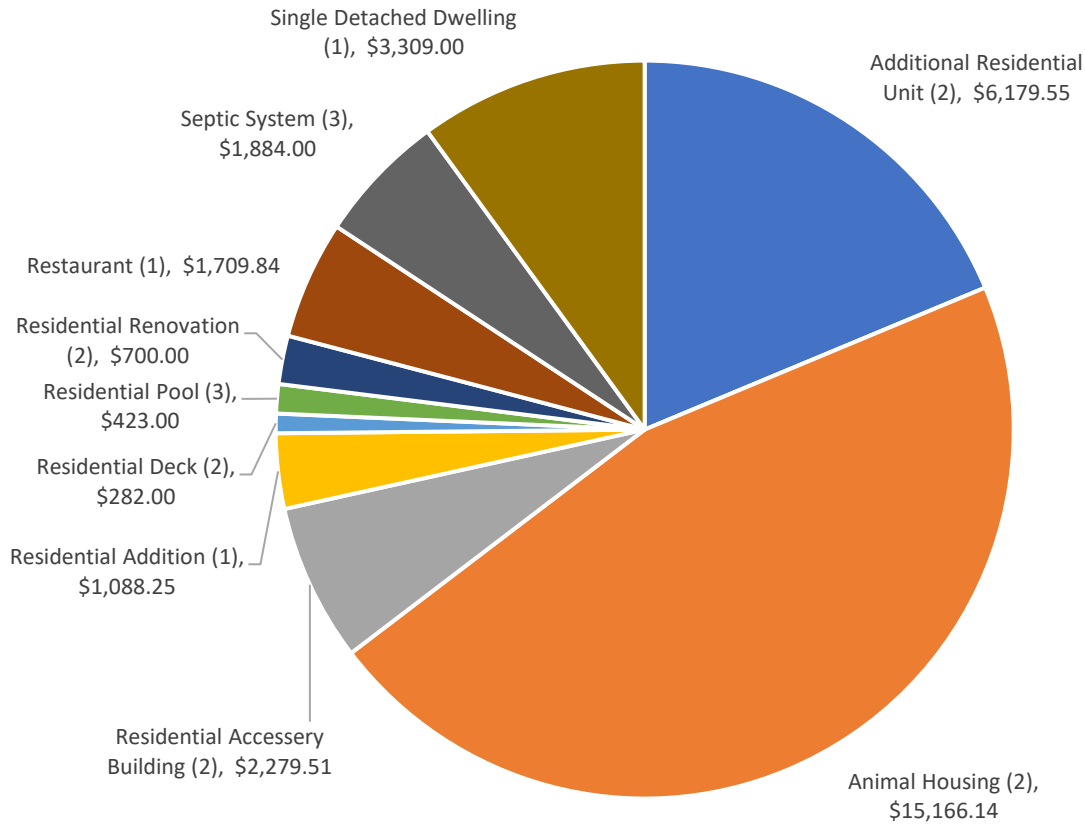
### Legislative Updates:

- April 10, 2024 - Release and filing of the 2024 Ontario Building Code
- January 1, 2025 – 2024 Ontario Building Code in effect
- March 31, 2025 – Deadline for permit applications under the 2012 Code

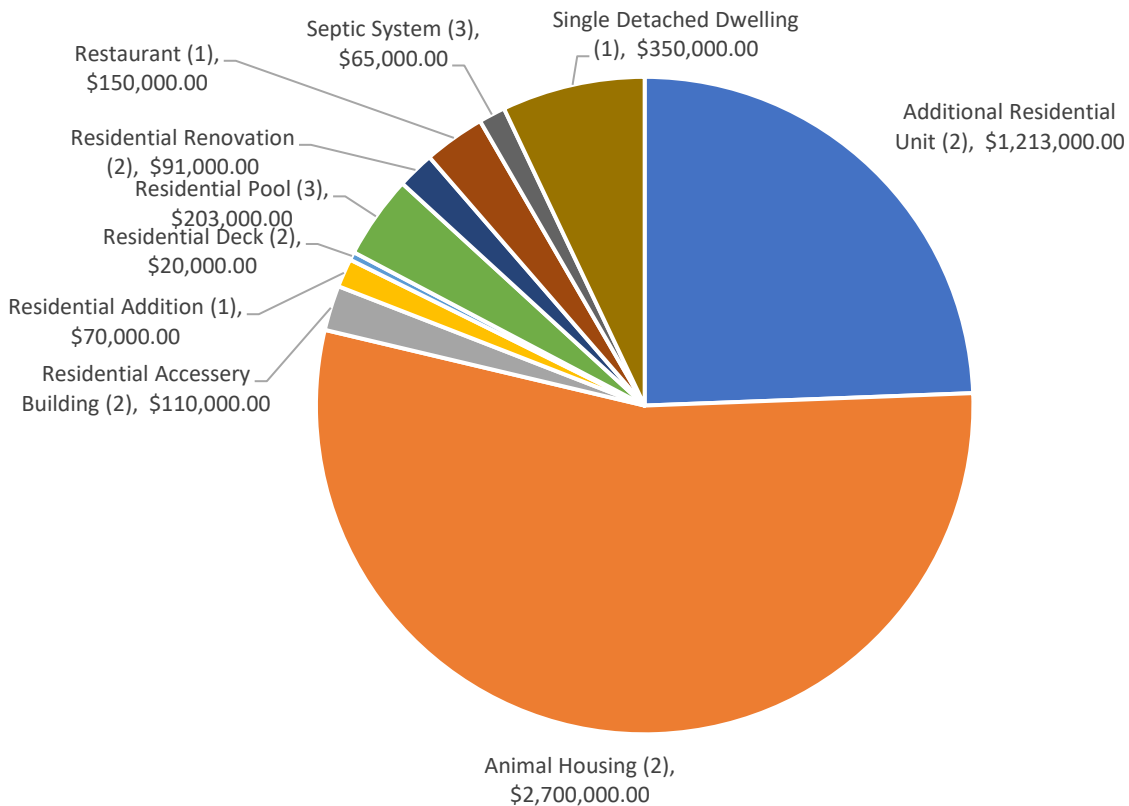
Respectfully submitted by:

Ray Belanger  
Chief Building Official

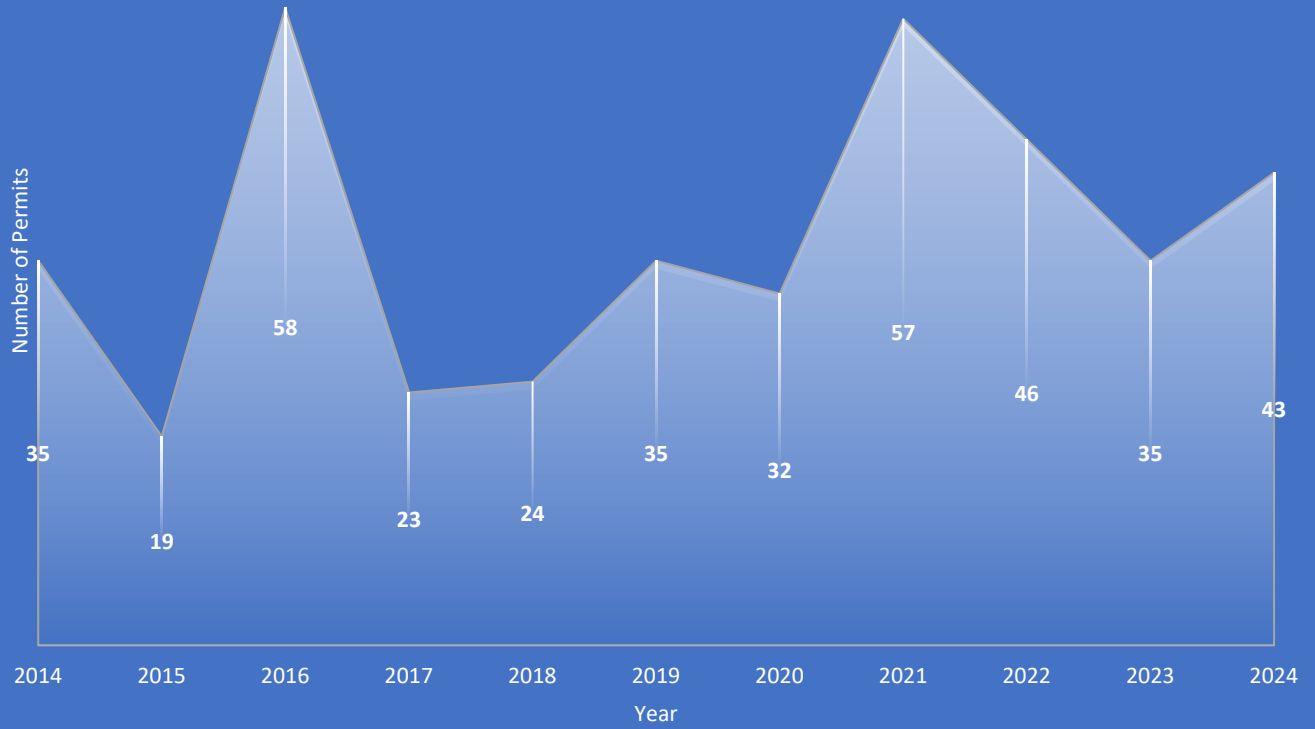
### April 2024 - Permit Fees



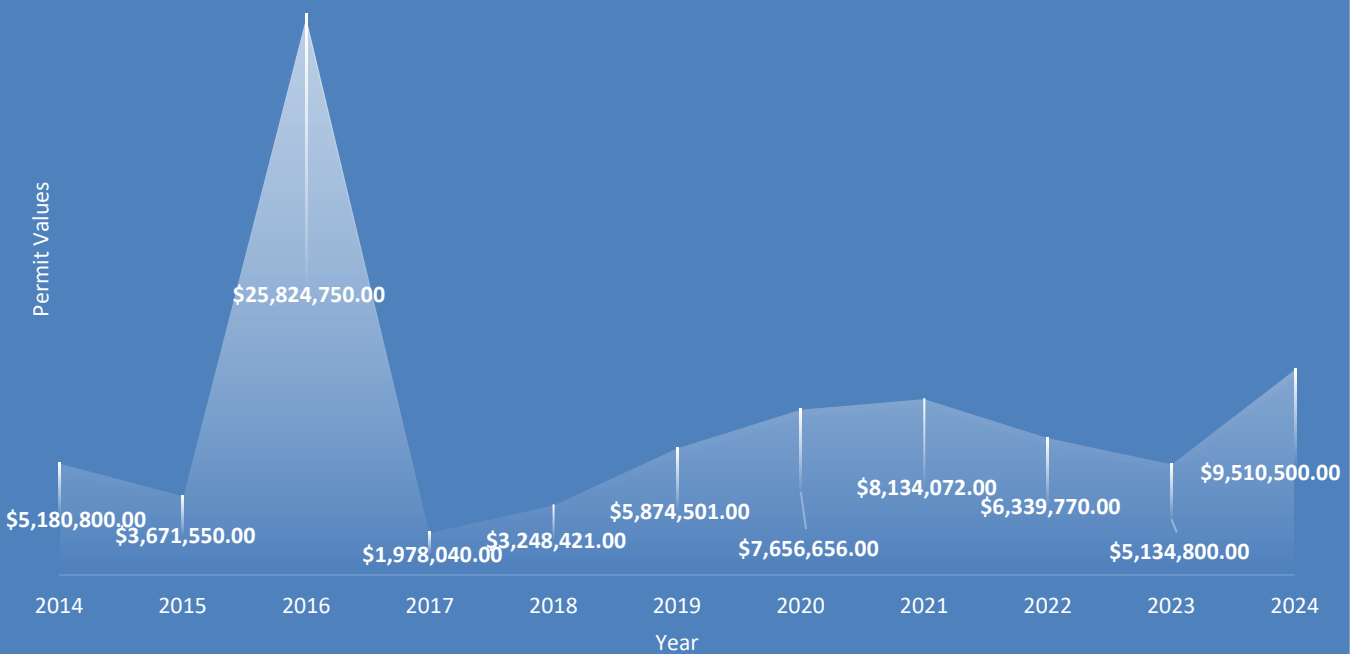
### April 2024 - Permit Values



### YEAR TO DATE PERMIT NUMBERS



### YEAR TO DATE PERMIT VALUES





# TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

## Agenda Item

|                     |                    |                              |  |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>To:</b>          | Members of Council | <b>From:</b>                 | Jim Borton<br>Director of Public Works |
| <b>Reviewed By:</b> | Josh Brick         | <b>Date:</b>                 | May 8, 2024                            |
| <b>Subject:</b>     | Monthly Report     | <b>Council Meeting Date:</b> | May 15, 2024                           |
| <b>Report #:</b>    | PW-24-12           |                              |  |

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### **Recommendation:**

That Report PW-24-12 be received as information.

### **Capital**

- Gobles CN Bridge – The Township received the schedule from CN for the replacement. Construction will start May 6 and be completed by June 28. We have been working with Dagmar, CN, Oxford County and Viewcon for the detour route when the bridge is closed.
- Princeton Pond Expansion project – Construction has started on the Van Wees Pond. The outlet structure along Highway 2 is completed and the excavation work on the pond has started.
- Princeton phase 3 (North section) – We have secured all the required contract paperwork from Viewcon. During our preconstruction meeting it was discussed about keeping Oxford Rd 3 (Main St) open as long as possible. Viewcon will be mobilizing its equipment into the village the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>. They will work on McQueen St. (main trunk) then work on Gissing and Cowen streets before moving to Main St. This is expected to be near the end of June. This time table also allows Dagmar & CN to get Gobles Rd completed so that it can be used as the detour route.
- Bridge 24 EA – The EA reports have been sent out to the agencies for comments. Currently no comments have been made. KSmart are working on the engineering of the structure.

### **County Shared Service/Road Association/Training**

- Shared Services meeting – The service sharing committee met in Blandford-Blenheim. We discussed the possibility of aligning the load restriction dates across the county. Discussed training options, chain saw, load securement, etc.

- Road Association – The OCRSA met March 14 in Springford. The meeting was attended well and AORS provided an update on available training and the Trade Show committee gave an update on the preparations for the 2025 show. Next meeting is in September.
- AORS – The Board of directors (BOD) met during the Good Roads Conference. The AORS annual AGM was also held during Good Roads, we had the largest crowd on record attend. We also had David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, and Skills Development announce that AORS has received the funding to move forward with The Municipal Equipment Operator course.

### Other

- In April we started to prepare for the gravel and Dust suppressant season. Staff where grading, pulling in high shoulders, fill pot holes. Snoe equipment was removed from equipment checked over and put away till the fall.
- Reviewing EA documents for Bridge 24
- Met with Summit Aggregates, toured the property, inspected the A gravel pile, reviewed testing and planned where to start. Summit has a product that has a 25% recycled asphalt (RAP) content mixed in it. We are going to try it on some heavily travelled agricultural roads that in the past have broken up and not lasted. As this is a new product Summit has agreed to the tender price. Map of locations is attached.
- Working on approving road permits that would allow Xplorenet to use the Township right of way to run fibreoptic cable in the Township.
- Work with supplier on future equipment purchases.
- Working with MESH and the Drainage Superintendent to add asset management programs to our road patrol and winter patrol program.
- Working with the Drainage Superintendent on finding suitable dump sites for the excess soil from the Princeton Drain project.
- Working with KSmart and Drainage Superintendent on the next phases of the Princeton project.
- Staff is continuing to meet with land owners at outdoor sites to discuss ditch or road issues.

**Attachments** April service sharing minutes, Map of gravel locations.

Respectfully submitted by:



Jim Borton CRS-S  
Director of Public Works

# Service Rationalization

**MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 18, 2024

**LOCATION:** Blandford Blenheim

**PRESENT:** Jim Borton, Shawn Vanacker, Doug Wituik, Tom Lightfoot, Steve Oliver, Adam Prouse

**REGRETS:** Richard Sparham, Daniel Locke, Ken Farkas

**COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN:** Jim Borton

**SECRETARY:** Tom Lightfoot

| ITEM                               | ACTION   | ASSIGNED TO |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| <b>1. Meeting called to order</b>  | 10:06 AM   |             |
| <b>2. Minutes of Last Meeting:</b> | Reviewed- Moved by Shawn.<br>Seconded by Doug.   |             |
| <b>3. Correspondence/ Speaker</b>  | None   |             |
| <b>4. Old Business</b>             | Adam- golf, more municipal members are needed. Send registration to Adam.<br>Backhoe training discussion.<br>Jim- Reduced load restrictions discussion, possibility of changing dates so everyone is the same. Changing bylaws to allow staff to remove restrictions early or implement them early. Will carry forward for future discussions.   |             |
| <b>5. New Business</b>             | Salt, dust suppressant discussion.   |             |
| <b>6. Round Table</b>              | Shawn- June 20 <sup>th</sup> Oxford County doing book 7 training, some spots are available. Let Shawn know if you are interested.<br>Tom- illegal dumping and encroachment discussion<br>Doug- sign thefts<br>Adam- Fiber installation discussion. Some are taking deposits and now charging for road occupancy permits.<br>Jim- BB has purchased a new trackless with a sidewalk grinder attachment, they are willing to lend it out.<br>Grader discussion on different types was held.<br>Canoe purchasing discussion.<br>Oxford County is meeting with a company to look at plow routing and sweeping routes. Shawn will share the company's contact. |             |
| <b>7. Health &amp; Safety</b>      | Chainsaw training- Tom will look at setting up a course this summer or fall.<br>Load securement, possibly in the fall.   |             |
| <b>8. Next Meeting</b>             | <b>June 13, 2024 - 10:00 am SWOX</b>   |             |
| <b>9. Adjourned</b>                | 11:35AM  |             |



## Service Sharing Meeting Dates 2024

January 11 EZT

February 8 Zorra

March 13 Oxford County

April 11 Blandford Blenheim

May 9 Norwich

June 13 SWOX

September 12 Tillsonburg

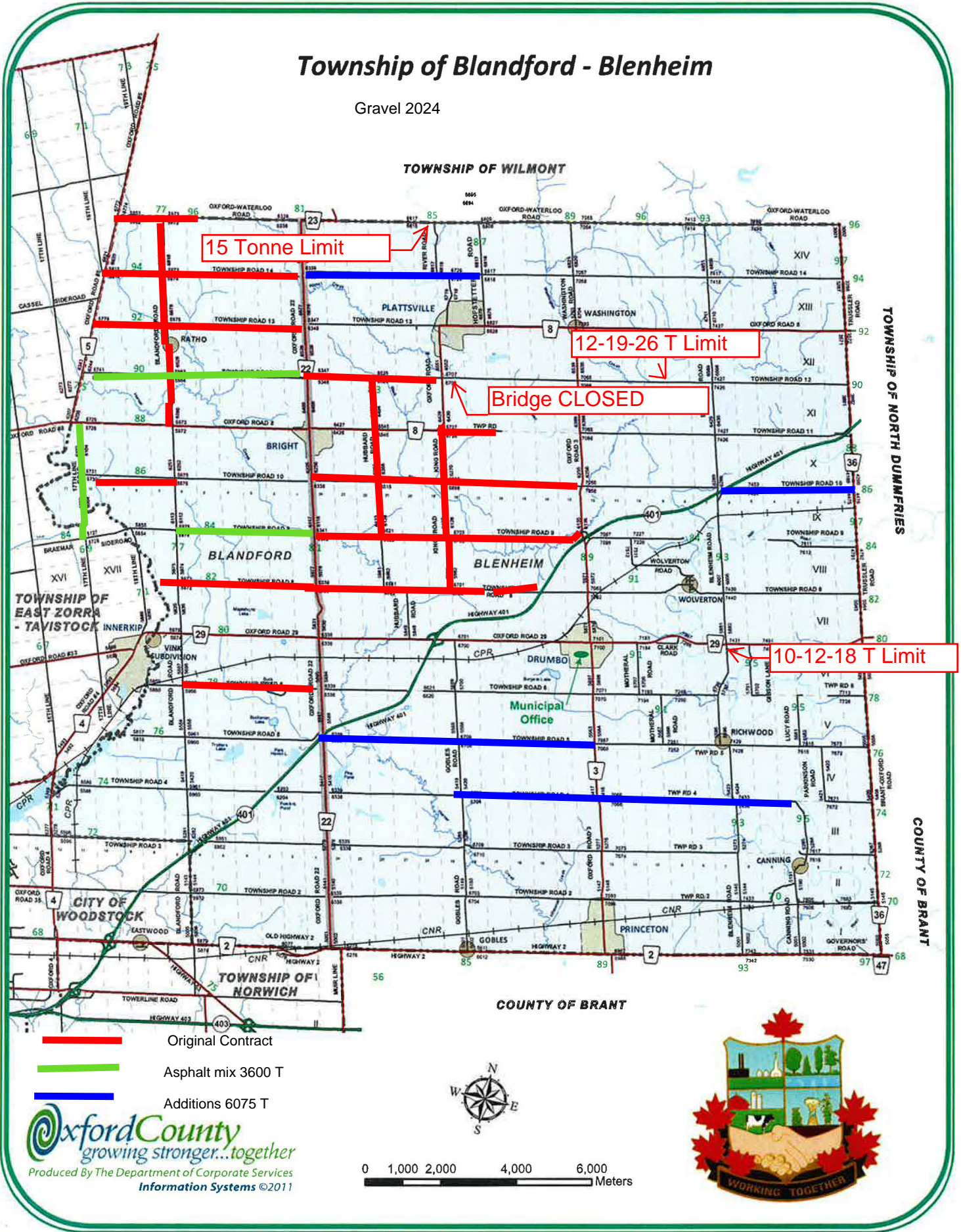
October 10 Woodstock

November 14 Ingersoll

December 11 Zorra

# Township of Blandford - Blenheim

Gravel 2024



15 Tonne Limit

12-19-26 T Limit

Bridge CLOSED

10-12-18 T Limit

- █ Original Contract
- █ Asphalt mix 3600 T
- █ Additions 6075 T

**OxfordCounty**  
growing stronger...together  
Produced By The Department of Corporate Services  
Information Systems ©2011



0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Meters





## TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM

### Agenda Item

**To:** Members of Council  
Josh Brick, CAO

**Reviewed By:** Denise Krug, Director of Finance

**Subject:** Council Conference, Education, and Training Policy

**Report #:** DC-24-01

**From:** Sarah Matheson, Clerk

**Date:** May 10, 2024

**Council Meeting Date:** May 15, 2024

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### Recommendation:

That Council receive Report DC-24-01 as information; and,

That the Council Conference, Education and Training Policy be adopted.

### Executive Summary:

- Township lacks Council Conference, Education, and Training Policy;
- Proposed policy allocates \$3000 annually per Council member;
- Eligible expenses include hotel, travel, meals, registration for conferences and training items; and,
- Regular policy review each term of Council ensures relevance and fairness.

### Background:

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim does not currently have a Council Conference, Education and Training Policy.

The Township of Blandford-Blenheim recognizes the importance of providing direction and guidance for Members of Council regarding conferences, education, and training opportunities.

This policy draft aims to establish clear guidelines for the allocation of funds, eligibility criteria for expenses, and responsibilities of both Council members and the Township finance department in managing these resources.

### Analysis:

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The draft Council Conference, Education and Training Policy provides all members of Council with \$3000 annually. This amount may be split between conferences, education and training. It is exclusive of HST and mileage. Corporate training brought in house and provided to all members of Council is not included in the individual Council Members' allocation.

Eligible expenses to be claimed through this Policy are inclusive of hotel, travel, meals, and registration.

This policy does not outline a list of municipally-approved conferences, education or training. There are the generally accepted municipal-business related conferences, however, education and training is more nuanced. Some bodies provide opportunities for training on emerging trends in the municipal sector. If an approved list is preferred for Members, staff shall provide such list at a subsequent meeting.

There is furthermore no reference in the policy for per diem stipends per each day of conference, education or training. If Council prefers to allocate a per diem stipend, staff shall review and present a Council Remuneration Policy.

Calculations for mileage in the draft Policy are based on the closer of either the member's home, their qualifying address, or their starting point. Regular mileage will generally be calculated from the Member's home, however, should a Member not reside in the municipality, any mileage calculations will occur from their qualifying address. Starting point calculations would generally be used if a member has a summer or temporary residence that they are staying at, or if a member is going from one meeting location directly to another (i.e: Council meeting in Council Chambers followed by a training session scheduled in London - Mileage calculations will show mileage from qualifying address to Chambers, then from Chambers to London, and from London back to qualifying address).

The draft provides that the Township will not cover any costs related to campaigns or election related training for Members of Council within an election year.

The provision for a regular review of the policy preceding each election year ensures that allowance rates for Council members remain relevant and equitable. Utilizing a comparator group of municipalities for this review enhances the objectivity and fairness of the process.

### **Discussion:**

The proposed policy draft establishes a comprehensive framework for managing expenses related to conferences, education, and training for Council members. By providing clear guidelines and procedures, the policy promotes accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public funds.

In conclusion, the proposed Policy Draft on the Provision of Conferences, Education, and Training for Members of Council represents a significant step towards promoting accountability, transparency, and responsible governance within the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

By establishing clear guidelines, allocating resources equitably, and fostering a culture of fiscal responsibility, the policy will contribute to the effective functioning of the Council and enhance public trust in municipal governance.

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**Financial Considerations:**

Staff shall budget \$3,000 per member, totaling \$15,000 and shall estimate the mileage required per annum.

**Attachments:**

Draft Council Conference, Education and Training Policy

Respectfully submitted by:

Sarah Matheson  
Clerk



# Policies and Procedures

The Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim

|                           |   |                |                           |              |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Department:</b>        | Clerks  |                | <b>Effective:</b>         | May 15, 2024 |
| <b>Subject:</b>           | Council Conference, Education and Training Policy |                | <b>Policy Number:</b>     |              |
| <b>Approved by:</b>       |   |                |                           |              |
| <b>Resolution Number:</b> |   |                |                           |              |
| <b>Date of Review:</b>    | <b>Review Number:</b>                             | <b>Change:</b> | <b>Reference Section:</b> |              |
|                           |   |                |                           |              |

## PURPOSE:

To provide direction and guidance in the provision of conferences, education and training for Members of Council.

## SCOPE:

This procedure applies to all Members of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

## DEFINITIONS:

“Conference” –A conference generally includes the specific organization’s Board of Director Meeting along with various trainings and seminars over the course of 2 or more consecutive days related to municipal governance.

“Comparator Group” – a group of municipalities similar in size and structure to Blandford-Blenheim to permit a meaningful comparison in Council remuneration.

“Education” – training courses, instruction or materials related to municipal governance or the business of the municipality.

“Eligible Expense” – Any expense that is in accordance with this Policy that the Township will reimburse or pay directly.

“External Organizations or Committees” – any body not created by Council, but for which Council has appointed a Council Member to be a voting member of such body.

“Ineligible Expense” – Any expense that is not provided for in this policy and will not be reimbursed or paid by the Township.

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“Invited Attendee Meetings” – any meeting, event or function where a member of Council is invited to attend but where they are not a voting member.

“Training or Workshop” – Generally considered as any 1 full day or less of training (or any multi-day workshop on a specific topic that does not meet the definition of a conference) available to any person related to municipal governance or the business of the Township.

“Qualifying Address” – the address of the property that qualifies the Member for office.

1. Term Review of Policy

- a. A review shall be undertaken in the year preceding each regular election year to determine the allowance rates for the upcoming newly elected Council.
- b. A review of a comparator group of municipalities of sufficient size to provide a meaningful sample shall be used to undertake such a review.
- c. Amounts recommended as a result of the comparator group review, and adopted by the current Council, will be effective upon commencement of the new term of Council.

2. Conferences

- a. All Members of Council shall be allocated \$3000 (to be split with training/education allocation) per annum for specific eligible expenses, these expenses may be related to attendance at conferences, training and/or education.
- b. Eligible expenses include:
  - i. registration (including banquets and dinners);
  - ii. transportation (air, train or bus);
  - iii. ground transportation (car rental, taxi or transit) while there;
  - iv. parking;
  - v. hotel room based on single or double occupancy for the dates of the conference;
  - vi. hotel room based on single or double occupancy the night before if location is more than 100 kms away; and,
  - vii. meals with itemized receipts.
- c. Ineligible expenses include:
  - i. Personal or spousal expenses;
  - ii. Sightseeing expenses;
  - iii. Upgraded room costs in order to accommodate accompanying family; and,
  - iv. Meal expenses if the Conference registration is inclusive of such meals.
- d. In addition to the specific eligible expenses in s. 2.b, mileage to and from the destination expenses shall be paid to the member in accordance with sections 5 and 6 of this policy however shall not be included in the \$3000 per annum allocation amount.
- e. Expenses of members of Council holding positions on Municipal Associations or their Committees shall be reimbursed in accordance with Section 2 of this Policy, provided they are not reimbursed through the Association or Committee.

3. Training/Education

- a. All Members of Council shall be allocated \$3000 per annum (to be split with conference allocation) for specific eligible expenses, these expenses may be related to attendance at conferences, training and/or education.

- 
- b. Eligible expenses include:
    - i. Books, magazines and periodicals related to municipal business or support members serving in an elected member capacity (not including the regular subscriptions provided to the Corporation);
    - ii. Registration in a course;
    - iii. Meal expenses with detailed receipts;
    - iv. Transportation;
    - v. Parking; and.
    - vi. Hotel room based on single or double occupancy night before if location is more than 100 kms away.
  - c. Ineligible expenses include:
    - i. Meal expenses if the training registration includes such meals;
    - ii. Courses or education for personal benefit, not relevant to Municipal governance or the business of the Township;
    - iii. In addition to the specific eligible expenses in section 3.b of this policy, mileage to and from the destination shall be paid to the member in accordance with sections 5 and 6 of this policy, however, shall not be included in the \$3000 per annum allocation amount.
  - d. The Township may also provide required corporate training to all members of Council that shall not be taken from individual Council member allocations under this policy.
4. Meal Allowance
- a. Members of Council shall receive meal allowance outlined in section 29.4.1. of the Employee Manual, in accordance with the annual CRA rates.
  - b. Alcoholic Beverages are an ineligible expense. Members should request a separate bill for alcoholic beverages. Any costs for alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed or paid by the Township.
  - c. Members are required to submit detailed receipts for all meals. The debit or credit card receipt is not sufficient.
5. Mileage
- a. Mileage shall be calculated in accordance with CRA Rates.
  - b. Mileage shall be calculated from the closer of:
    - i. the Member's home; or
    - ii. starting point (if embarking from a location other than their home or qualifying address); or
    - iii. qualifying address to the location.
  - c. Mileage may be claimed for travel to and from all Conferences, Training, Seminars or Workshops in accordance with this policy and will not be included in the annual allocation amount.
6. General
- a. Reimbursement or payment by the Township for any expense will not be made if it is not specifically provided for in this Policy.
  - b. All expenses must relate specifically to the business of the Township or municipal governance.



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- c. Members must provide proper documentation including detailed original receipts, conference or training agendas and detailed invoices. Credit card or debit receipts only are not sufficient and will not be accepted.
  - d. Expenses must be claimed in the year they were incurred and all receipts shall be submitted within 1 month of the year end.
  - e. Unused allowance amounts can not be carried over to future years.
  - f. The Township will not approve payment or reimbursement for any campaign or election related conference, training, seminar or workshop in an election year.
  - g. Hotel rooms will only be paid for attendees for the evening before the conference or training if it is located 100 kms or more away.
  - h. Advanced bookings and discounts shall be used whenever possible and appropriate.
  - i. Car-pooling and resource sharing is encouraged whenever possible.
  - j. Should a member not be able to attend for any reason and no refund is provided, the costs incurred for the registration will be counted as an expense against the budget allocation.
  - k. Group booking for registrations and/or hotels may be made available to Members and paid by the Township. Any bookings made in this manner will be coded and deducted from the Member's respective allocation.
  - l. All expenses are subject to sufficient funds being available in the current year's allowance.
  - m. All amounts listed in the Policy are exclusive of HST.
7. Approval and Review
- a. All expenses will be available for inspection by any person at any time and may be posted on the municipal website.
8. Responsibilities
- a. The finance department is responsible for maintaining and tracking Council expenses related to this Policy.
  - b. Members of Council are responsible for submitting forms on a monthly basis.
  - c. Members of Council are responsible for exercising good judgment while incurring all expenses in accordance with this Policy.
  - d. Members of Council are responsible for monitoring their budget allocation limits and conferring with finance staff for any clarity and remaining limits.
  - e. As required under the Municipal Act 284 (1), the treasurer of a municipality shall in each year on or before March 31 provide to the council of the municipality an itemized statement on remuneration and expenses paid in the previous year.

**THE CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM  
BY-LAW NUMBER 2434-2024**

Being a by-law to provide for the adoption of budgetary estimates and tax rates for 2024, and to further provide for penalty and interest in default of payment.

**WHEREAS**, Section 290 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001 c.25, as amended, provides that the Council of a local municipality shall prepare and adopt estimates of all sums required during the year for the purposes of the municipality,

**AND WHEREAS**, Section 312 of the said Act provides that the Council of a local municipality shall, after the adoption of estimates for the year, pass a by-law to levy a separate tax rate on the assessment in each property class, and

**AND WHEREAS**, Section 307 and 308 of the said Act require tax rates to be established in the same proportion to tax ratios; and

**AND WHEREAS** regulations require reductions in certain tax rates for certain classes or subclasses of property; and

**AND WHEREAS** the Assessment Roll prepared December 12, 2023 and upon which the taxes for 2024 are to be levied, was certified by the Assessment Commissioner, and the whole of assessment for real property, according to the last Assessment Roll, and further modified to reflect changes of the Assessment Review Board, Severances and Section 442 Tax Write-Offs.

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim enacts as follows:

- 1) That the budget estimates setting out the revenues and expenditures as detailed in the Budget Estimates for the year 2024, and endorsed by by-law 2421-2024, February 21, 2024, raising the following amounts from realty taxation be adopted (Schedule "A"):
  - (a) For general municipal purposes the net levy of \$7,093,302;
  - (b) For county purposes the net levy of \$6,873,494;
  - (c) For school purposes the net levy of \$3,275,500.
- 2) That the tax rates hereby adopted for each class for the year 2024, excluding special charges or local improvements collected as taxes, shall be the tax rates as listed on Schedule "B" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law and the tax rate for each class shall be applied against the whole of the assessment for real property for that particular class and purpose.
- 3) That in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001 and the Assessment Act, the Treasurer may strike from the roll, taxes that by reasons of a decision under Section 357, 358 or 359 or of a decision of a judge of any court are uncollectible and/or refund any overpayment received.

- 4) That every owner shall be taxed according to the tax rates in this by-law. The taxes for a particular property shall be calculated by applying the Current Value Assessment against the tax rates set out and further adjusted as required by the provisions of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001. Such taxes shall become due and payable in two installments as follows:

**ALL PROPERTY CLASSES:**

**FIRST INSTALMENT**                      Friday, August 30th, 2024

**SECOND INSTALMENT**                  Thursday, October 31st, 2024

Notice of such taxes due shall be sent by first class mail (or e-mail if requested) to those persons shown as liable for the payment of taxes.

- 5) That the taxes shall be levied and collected as well as such other rates and/or Special Area Rates, pursuant to the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001 and/or the Drainage Act.
- 6) That a charge as a penalty of 1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent on the amount of any outstanding taxes levied in 2024 shall be made on the first day of default and on the first day of each calendar month thereafter in which default continues until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and any such additional amounts shall be levied and collected in the same manner as if they had been originally imposed with and formed part of the taxes levied under this by-law. The penalty charges indicated in this section shall be waived for those taxpayers participating in the Monthly Preauthorized Payment Plan provided the payments are made as agreed and without default.
- 7) That interest of 1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  percent on the amount of any taxes due and unpaid after December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, shall be charged on the first day of each calendar month thereafter in which default continues.

This by-law shall come into effect on the date of the final passing thereof.

By-law **READ** a **FIRST** and **SECOND** time this 19th day of May, 2024.

By-Law **READ** a **THIRD** time and **ENACTED** in Open Council this 19th day of May, 2024.

(SEAL)

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Mark Peterson, Mayor

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Sarah Matheson, Clerk

**Township of Blandford-Blenheim  
2024 Combined Taxation Levy**

"Schedule A"

| <b>Tax Classes</b>                        | <b>Assessments</b> | <b>Township Tax Rate</b> | <b>Township Levy by class</b> | <b>County Tax Rates</b> | <b>County Levy by class</b>   | <b>Education Tax Rate</b> | <b>Education Levy by class</b> | <b>Total Tax Rate</b> |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Residential                               | 919,073,413.00     | <b>0.00505668</b>        | \$ 4,647,460.15               | <b>0.00489998</b>       | \$ 4,503,441.34               | <b>0.00153000</b>         | \$ 1,406,182.32                | <b>0.01148666</b>     |
| Residential Farmland awaiting Development | -                  | <b>0.00227550</b>        | \$ -                          | <b>0.00220499</b>       | \$ -                          | <b>0.00068850</b>         | \$ -                           | <b>0.00516899</b>     |
| Multi Residential                         | 4,059,500.00       | <b>0.01011335</b>        | \$ 41,055.14                  | <b>0.00979996</b>       | \$ 39,782.94                  | <b>0.00153000</b>         | \$ 6,211.04                    | <b>0.02144331</b>     |
| Multi Residential - New Construction      | 1,939,000.00       | <b>0.00505668</b>        | \$ 9,804.90                   | <b>0.00489998</b>       | \$ 9,501.06                   | <b>0.00153000</b>         | \$ 2,966.67                    | <b>0.01148666</b>     |
| Commercial -Full                          | 65,444,036.00      | <b>0.00961679</b>        | \$ 629,361.55                 | <b>0.00931878</b>       | \$ 609,858.57                 | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 575,907.52                  | <b>0.02773557</b>     |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | 589,500.00         | <b>0.00673175</b>        | \$ 3,968.37                   | <b>0.00652315</b>       | \$ 3,845.40                   | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 5,187.60                    | <b>0.02205490</b>     |
| Vacant land                               | 2,252,400.00       | <b>0.00673175</b>        | \$ 15,162.59                  | <b>0.00652315</b>       | \$ 14,692.74                  | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 19,821.12                   | <b>0.02205490</b>     |
| Small Scale On Farm Business              | 16,600.00          | <b>0.00961679</b>        | \$ 159.64                     | <b>0.00931878</b>       | \$ 154.69                     | <b>0.00220000</b>         | \$ 36.52                       | <b>0.02113557</b>     |
| Industrial - full                         | 13,009,500.00      | <b>0.01329906</b>        | \$ 173,014.12                 | <b>0.01288695</b>       | \$ 167,652.78                 | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 114,483.60                  | <b>0.03498601</b>     |
| Industrial - New Construction             | -                  | <b>0.01329906</b>        | \$ -                          | <b>0.01288695</b>       | \$ -                          | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ -                           | <b>0.03498601</b>     |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | -                  | <b>0.00864439</b>        | \$ -                          | <b>0.00837652</b>       | \$ -                          | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ -                           | <b>0.02582091</b>     |
| Vacant land                               | 400,000.00         | <b>0.00864439</b>        | \$ 3,457.76                   | <b>0.00837652</b>       | \$ 3,350.61                   | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 3,520.00                    | <b>0.02582091</b>     |
| Small Scale On Farm Business              | -                  | <b>0.01329906</b>        | \$ -                          | <b>0.01288695</b>       | \$ -                          | <b>0.00220000</b>         | \$ -                           | <b>0.02838601</b>     |
| Large Industrial                          | 2,460,100.00       | <b>0.01329906</b>        | \$ 32,717.02                  | <b>0.01288695</b>       | \$ 31,703.19                  | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 21,648.88                   | <b>0.03498601</b>     |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | 22,900.00          | <b>0.00864439</b>        | \$ 197.96                     | <b>0.00837652</b>       | \$ 191.82                     | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 201.52                      | <b>0.02582091</b>     |
| Pipeline                                  | 88,878,000.00      | <b>0.00636787</b>        | \$ 565,963.55                 | <b>0.00617054</b>       | \$ 548,425.25                 | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ 782,126.40                  | <b>0.02133841</b>     |
| Farmland                                  | 878,551,939.00     | <b>0.00110084</b>        | \$ 967,145.12                 | <b>0.00106673</b>       | \$ 937,177.71                 | <b>0.00038250</b>         | \$ 336,046.12                  | <b>0.00255007</b>     |
| Managed Forest                            | 3,033,300.00       | <b>0.00126417</b>        | \$ 3,834.61                   | <b>0.00122500</b>       | \$ 3,715.79                   | <b>0.00038250</b>         | \$ 1,160.24                    | <b>0.00287167</b>     |
| New Construction Commercial: Full         | -                  | <b>0.00961679</b>        | \$ -                          | <b>0.00931878</b>       | \$ -                          | <b>0.00880000</b>         | \$ -                           | <b>0.02773557</b>     |
|   | 1,979,730,188.00   |                          | <b><u>\$ 7,093,302.47</u></b> |                         | <b><u>\$ 6,873,493.90</u></b> |                           | <b><u>\$ 3,275,499.54</u></b>  |                       |

**The Township of Blandford-Blenheim  
2024 Summary of Tax Rates**

**Schedule "B"**

| <b>Tax Class</b>                          | <b>Township<br/>Tax Rate</b> | <b>County<br/>Tax Rates</b> | <b>Education<br/>Tax Rates</b> | <b>Totals</b>     |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Residential                               | 0.00505668                   | 0.00489998                  | 0.00153000                     | <b>0.01148666</b> |
| Residential Farmland Awaiting Development | 0.00227550                   | 0.00220499                  | 0.00068850                     | <b>0.00516899</b> |
| Farmland                                  | 0.00110084                   | 0.00106673                  | 0.00038250                     | <b>0.00255007</b> |
| Multi Residential                         | 0.01011335                   | 0.00979996                  | 0.00153000                     | <b>0.02144331</b> |
| Multi-Residential - New Construction      | 0.00505668                   | 0.00489998                  | 0.00153000                     | <b>0.01148666</b> |
| Commercial -Full                          | 0.00961679                   | 0.00931878                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02773557</b> |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | 0.00673175                   | 0.00652315                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02205490</b> |
| Vacant land                               | 0.00673175                   | 0.00652315                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02205490</b> |
| Small Scale On Farm Business              | 0.00961679                   | 0.00931878                  | 0.00220000                     | <b>0.02113557</b> |
| Industrial - full                         | 0.01329906                   | 0.01288695                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.03498601</b> |
| Industrial - New Construction             | 0.01329906                   | 0.01288695                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.03498601</b> |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | 0.00864439                   | 0.00837652                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02582091</b> |
| Vacant land                               | 0.00864439                   | 0.00837652                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02582091</b> |
| Small Scale On Farm Business              | 0.01329906                   | 0.01288695                  | 0.00220000                     | <b>0.02838601</b> |
| Large Industrial                          | 0.01329906                   | 0.01288695                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.03498601</b> |
| Vacant unit/excess land                   | 0.00864439                   | 0.00837652                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02582091</b> |
| Pipeline                                  | 0.00636787                   | 0.00617054                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02133841</b> |
| Managed Forest                            | 0.00126417                   | 0.00122500                  | 0.00038250                     | <b>0.00287167</b> |
| New Construction Commercial - Full        | 0.00961679                   | 0.00931878                  | 0.00880000                     | <b>0.02773557</b> |

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BLANDFORD-BLENHEIM  
BY-LAW NUMBER 2435-2024

Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

**WHEREAS** by Section 5 of the *Municipal Act* 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, the powers of a municipal corporation are to be exercised by its Council.

**AND WHEREAS** by Section 11 of the *Municipal Act* 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, the powers of every Council are to be exercised by by-law;

**AND WHEREAS** it is deemed expedient that the proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim at this meeting be confirmed and adopted by by-law;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim hereby enacts as follows:

1. That the actions of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim in respect of each recommendation contained in the reports of the Committees and each motion and resolution passed and other action taken by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim, at this meeting held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 is hereby adopted and confirmed as if all such proceedings were expressly embodied in this by-law.
2. That the Mayor and proper officials of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the actions of the Council referred to in the proceeding section hereof.
3. That the Mayor and the Clerk be authorized and directed to execute all documents in that behalf and to affix thereto the seal of the Corporation of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim.

By-law read a first and second time this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024.

By-law read a third time and finally passed this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024

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MAYOR  
MARK PETERSON

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CLERK  
SARAH MATHESON