

Meeting Date: February 18, 2025
Department: Building, By-law and Planning
Report No.: BBP-2025-04
Submitted by: Tim Williams, Manager of Planning
Reviewed by: Jake DeRidder, Senior Development Coordinator
Approved by: Trisha, McKibbin, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Application for Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA-1-2025)
320 Metcalfe Street West, Strathroy
Owner: Valere Inc. Agent: Jaclyn Costa

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Report BBP-2025-4 regarding rezoning application ZBA 15-2024 for 320 Metcalfe Street West, Strathroy, be received for information, and further;

THAT: By-law No. 17-25 be referred to the Consideration of By-laws section of the agenda for adoption.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

- The application is facilitating the construction of a commercial building with a residential unit on the second floor.
- The applicant is proposing to amend the current 'Neighbourhood Commercial (C3-5) zone' to permit an office use.
- The site-specific 'C3-5 Zone' proposes to include a business office. The existing site-specific permissions for reduced rear setback and garage would continue.
- No concerns or objections have been identified with the application by staff or agencies provided the some of the parking spaces are placed in the front yard.

BACKGROUND:

The subject lands are located on the northwest corner of Metcalfe Street West and Buchanan Street which is approximately 749.8 m² (8070 ft²) in size with approximately 20.117 m (66 ft) of frontage on Metcalfe Street West. The site has Buchanan Street frontage of 37.274 m (122 ft). The property contains a commercial building and a garage.

The subject zone change application proposes to amend the zone to permit office uses. The

Neighbourhood Commercial (C3-5) zone permits a range of local commercial uses such as retail stores, day cares, personal care establishments and gas stations.

The property is connected to municipal water and sanitary services, and access is from Buchanan Street. Metcalfe Street is an arterial road and is under the jurisdiction of Middlesex County and Buchanan Street is classified as a 'local road' under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc.

The subject property is within the Conservation Authority's Regulated Area.

Surrounding land uses are varied with residential to the east, the West Middlesex Memorial Centre is located southwest of the site and to the north there are vacant lands.

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the site by removing the existing building and garage and replacing them with a two-storey mixed use building (office use at grade and residential dwelling unit on the second floor) with the possibility of a future garage within the rear yard.

POLICY AND REGULATION BACKGROUND:

The Provincial Planning Statement, Middlesex County Official Plan, and Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan all encourage intensification in designated settlement areas, provided the development is compatible with the surrounding area and represents an orderly and efficient use of land and infrastructure.

Provincial Planning Statement 2024

The subject lands are located within a 'Settlement Area' according to the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).

The PPS encourages lands use patterns with settlement areas that are based on densities and a mix of land uses that (s.2.2.1):

- Efficiently use land and resources;
- Are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available and avoids the need for their unjustified or uneconomical expansion;
- Provides for a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment considering existing building stock or areas; and,
- The availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure.

Section 3.6. provides the hierarchy for sewage and water services and establishes that municipal water and sewage services are the preferred form of servicing for development areas to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety.

Section 3.9.1. directs that healthy, active communities should be promoted by planning public streets, spaces, and facilities to be safe and meet the needs of pedestrians, fosters social interaction, and facilities active transportation and community connectivity, and further, by planning and providing a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural heritage settings for recreation such as parklands, public spaces, open spaces, and trails and linkages.

Comments on Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024

- The property is located within a designated 'Settlement Area' which permit commercial uses such as office uses.
- The office use will result in the utilization of the site as a commercial operation that will be car oriented and appropriately located adjacent to an arterial road, Metcalfe Street W.
- The lot is developed on full municipal services, which is identified as the preferred form of servicing for development areas and makes most efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Given the above, it is staff's opinion that the Zoning By-law amendment application is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

County of Middlesex Official Plan, 2023

The subject lands are located within the Strathroy Settlement Area according to the Middlesex County Official Plan.

The County Official Plan provides a regional policy framework within which development proposals are to be evaluated. This is detailed in Section 1.3 of the County Official Plan by outlining that the County Official Plan does not address in any detail those planning matters that can better be dealt with by the local municipalities.

Section 2.3 contains the County's growth management framework which directs that the majority of growth is to occur in designated settlement areas. The intent of the growth management framework is to make efficient use of existing infrastructure. The goal of the County Plan is that future development within settlement areas proceed on the basis of full municipal services. The County Official Plan also encourages a wide variety of housing by type, size, and tenure achieved in part by way of intensification and redevelopment of vacant or otherwise underutilized lands.

Section 2.3.4 of the County Official Plan states that economic development is an important component of the County's Growth Management policy framework and that many long-term goals and objectives depend on economic activity and the opportunity for residents to live and work in Middlesex County. The County consequently encourages diversity in its economic base.

Section 2.4.5 discusses the servicing hierarchy similar to those discussed in the PPS. Specifically, the County encourages new development to proceed based on full municipal services.

Comments on the Conformity with the County of Middlesex Official Plan

- As noted above, the properties are within a *settlement area*, are fully serviced and provide for the efficient use of infrastructure and public service facilities.
- The proposal provides for a housing type that is in demand in the community.
- The proposed use will support expanded employment opportunities within the County. Permitting commercial uses will help address a service demand that will also increase the livability within the surrounding area.

Given the above, it is staff's opinion that the Zoning By-law amendment application is consistent with the County Official Plan.

Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan

The subject lands are within the designated Settlement Area of Strathroy. The property is designated 'Residential' on Schedule 'B' of the Official Plan.

The Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan states that development within the 'Residential' designation shall be used for residential purposes including a range of housing types and densities from single unit dwellings to high-rise apartment buildings (Section 3.3.4.1).

Section 3.3.4.2 includes secondary uses may also be permitted in a Residential designation including neighbourhood supportive uses. This could include churches, schools, day care among other uses.

The Strathroy Caradoc Official Plan has been updated through OPA 14 in 2022. The purpose of this Amendment is to update the Official Plan to ensure that the land use planning policies are current, reflect Provincial legislation and policy, have regard for matters of Provincial interest and any guideline documents, are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and reflect changing community needs for the next 25 years. The most significant relevant update to the Plan was the change in designation title from 'Residential' to 'Neighbourhoods'. This designation maintains the intent of the 'Residential' designation in that it continues to support and encourage a range of housing types and densities. OPA 14 is currently under appeal and, while generally in line with the proposal, the updated policies are not determinative for this application.

Comments on Conformity to the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan and OPA 14

- The property is located within a settlement area, according to the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan that allow, as a secondary use, neighborhood supportive operations.
- The lot is fully serviced and provide for the efficient use of infrastructure.
- With respect to the policies of the Official Plan relating to development of commercial within Strathroy, the Plan encourages economic diversity and the extension of commercial inventory.
- As the proposed structure is a two-story mixed-use building, staff are of the opinion that the structure will not appear to be out of character of the area, which is made up of one and two storey dwellings.
- The application was evaluated against the recently adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA14) and staff are of the opinion that, while the updated policies are not determinative for the purposes of this application, the proposed zoning amendment is generally consistent with the updated policies as well.

Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law

The property is currently zoned 'Neighbourhood Commercial (C3-5) Zone' according to the Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law.

Section 4.23(1)(48) requires 1 parking space per 30 m² of gross floor area of office space. Section 4.23(1)(20a) requires 1.25 parking spaces per apartment dwelling unit.

The 'C3-5' zone permits Clinic, Day Care Centre, Adult Day Care Centre, Dry Cleaning Establishment, Dwelling Unit, Gas Station, Laundry Establishment, Personal Care Establishment, Restaurant, General Retail Store, Video Rental Retail Store, Shopping Centre.

The 'Neighbourhood Commercial (C3)' zone requires the following development standards a minimum lot area of 500 m², minimum lot frontage of 15 m, minimum front yard depth of 0 m and maximum front yard depth of 3 m, minimum side yard width of 1.2 m when adjacent to residential, minimum rear yard depth of 15 m (however the site specific zoning requires minimum 7.74 m), and maximum lot coverage of 65%. The maximum driveway width is 10 m (32.8 ft).

Provision	Neighbourhood Commercial (C3-5) Zone	Proposed
Use	Clinic, Day Care Centre, Adult Day Care Centre, Dry Cleaning Establishment, Dwelling Unit, Gas Station, Laundry Establishment, Personal Care Establishment, Restaurant, General Retail Store, Video Rental Retail Store, Shopping Centre.	Additional use Office
Accessory Buildings	Garage – 1 m rear setback	Existing
Lot Frontage (min)	15 m	20.1 m
Lot Area (min)	500 m ² (5,382 ft ²)	749.8 m ²
Front Yard Depth (min/max)	0 m/ 3 m	11.85 m
Exterior Yard Width (min/max)	0 m/ 3 m	7.05 m
Side Yard Width (min)	1.2 m (abutting a residential zone)	1.33 m
Rear Yard Depth (min)	15 m	7.58 m
Lot Coverage (max)	65%	27.4%
Landscaped Open Space (min)	30%	45.84%
Parking Coverage (max)	25%	No coverage provided; however, staff have estimated to be less than 20%
Parking to location	None in front or exterior side yards	Proposed in the front and exterior yard
Parking Location -Exterior	Minimum 1m	0 m
Parking, aisle, or driveway	Minimum 7.3 m Maximum 10 m	20 m width
Parking	Commercial 1 sp. per 30m ² of floor area = 6.433 spaces Residential 1.25 parking spaces per unit = 1.25 sp.	8 parking spaces

	Total = 8 sp. (7.7 sp.)	
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Comments on Amendments to the Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law

- Staff are of the opinion that the amendment to add office use to the zone is appropriate.
- The rezoning will continue the existing site-specific amendment to address the reduced rear yard setback of the main building and garage.
- The proposal also requires a zoning front setback variance, as well parking space location, and driveway width. The existing parking configuration (width and location) is permitted as legal non-conforming operation in the zoning by-law, the by-law also allows for limited expansion however there is a safety matter of having cars closer to the street (than existing) back up onto the road. In light of this, moving some of the cars to an on-site parking area is an appropriate balance of the urban design and safety considerations.

CONSULTATION:

Statutory Public Meeting

The application has been circulated to agencies and the public in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act. This included the circulation of the Notice of Public meeting to property owners within 120 metres of the subject application on January 16, 2025.

At the time of writing the subject report, no comments/concerns had been raised by the public. The following department and agency comments were received:

Department and Agency Comments

Engineering and Public Works have advised that they have no other comment on this application beyond the access. More specifically, for safety and operational reasons parking and driveway widths shall conform to the Zoning By-law. The current site does not appear to be in conformity.

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority have advised a portion of the subject property is regulated by the Conservation Authority under Ontario Regulation 41/24. SCRCA has screened the subject property and has no concerns with the proposed zoning by-law amendment.

The proposed development will require written permission/clearance from the Conservation Authority prior to works being undertaken. The applicant should contact the Authority at planning@scrca.on.ca once all *Planning Act* approvals are in place. The applicant should submit a permit application after the rezoning has been approved. Information on our permit application process can be found here: <https://www.scrca.on.ca/planning-and-regulations/permits/>

Safety and Standards Officer has advised that the existing building has a municipal address with addition of a residential unit the building should be unitized and unit numbers applied to commercial and residential uses. Secondly, the 911 property addresses are approved when building permits are issued. The 911 property address shall be posted temporarily and permanently in the same places during all stages of construction so they are maintained, visible and unobstructed so emergency

responders can easily identify the 911 property address from the road allowance and when responding from either direction on Metcalfe Street West. These items can be secured during the site plan process.

SUMMARY:

In summary, staff are supportive of the proposed rezoning as it is considered to be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024; conforms to the Official Plans of both the County of Middlesex and the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc; and represents sound land use planning.

This opinion is provided prior to the public meeting and without the benefit of potentially receiving all comments from agencies or members of the public. Should new information arise regarding this proposal prior to or at the public meeting, Council is advised to take such information into account when considering the application.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO THE RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff have provided their recommendations, however there are alternative options to this recommendation:

1. THAT: the subject report BBP-2025-4 for ZBA 1-2025 be received for information and the application for Zoning By-law Amendment be deferred sine die.;
2. THAT: the subject report BBP-2025-4 for ZBA 1-2025 be received for information and the application for Zoning By-law Amendment be denied.; OR
3. THAT: the subject report BBP-2025-4 for ZBA 1-2025 be received for information.

AND THAT: Council to provide alternate direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

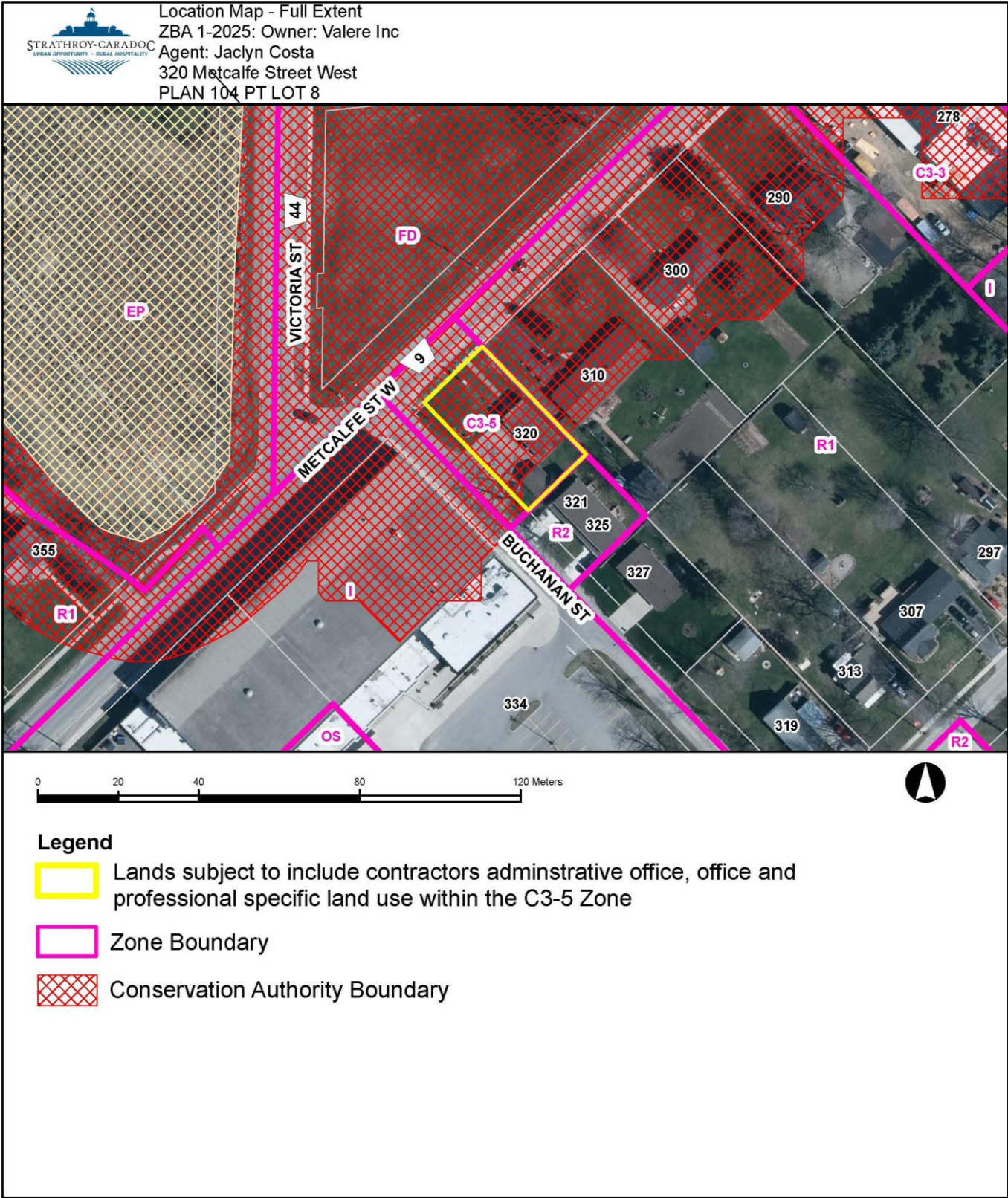
Economic Development, Industry and Jobs: Strathroy-Caradoc will have a diverse tax base and be a place that offers a variety of economic opportunities to current and prospective residents and businesses.

Managing the Challenges of Growth for the Municipal Organization: Strathroy-Caradoc will be an inclusive community where growth is managed to accommodate a range of needs and optimize municipal resources. We are committed to maintaining operational efficiency and economies of scale through these times of change.

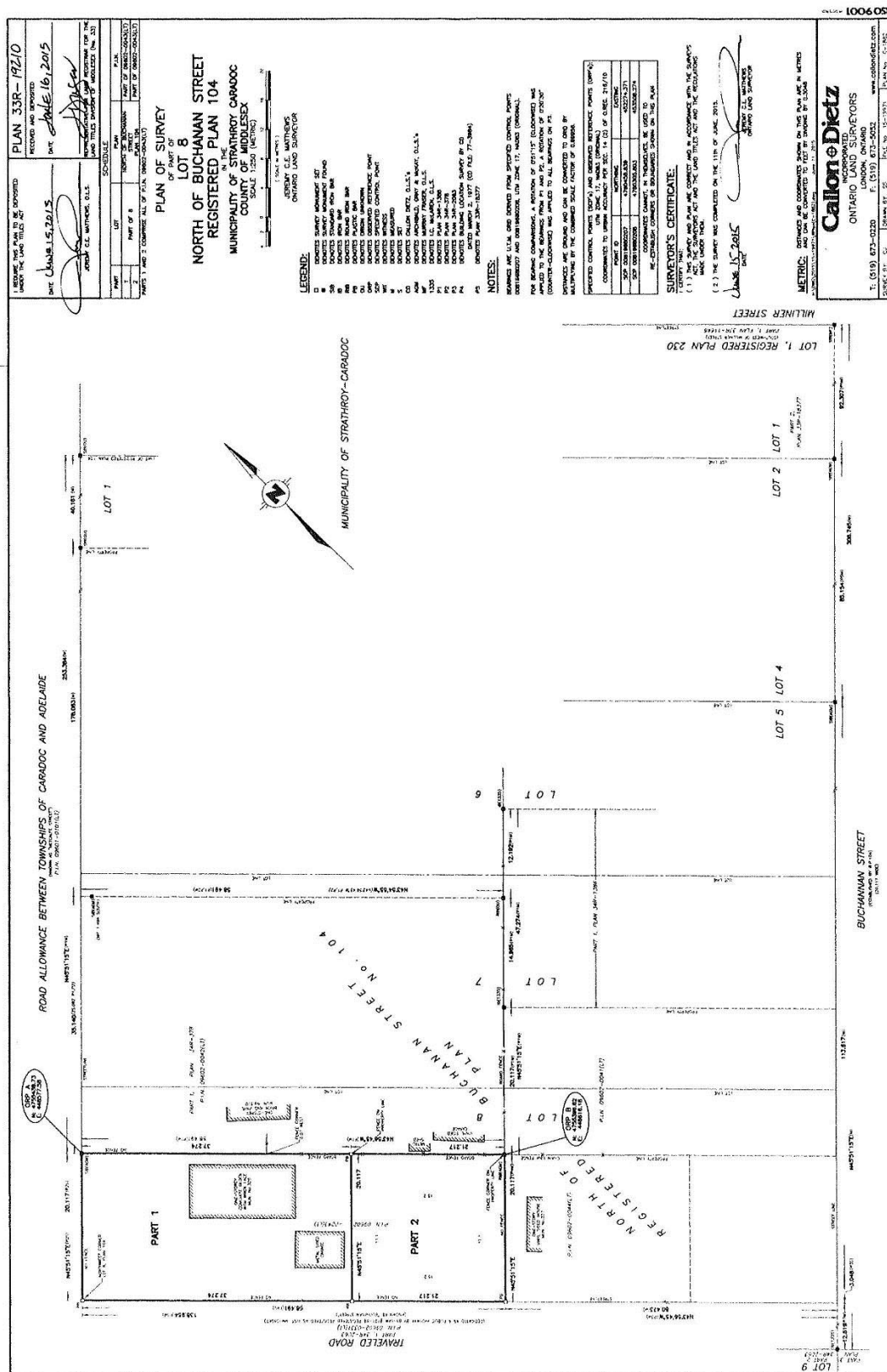
ATTACHMENTS:

Location Map
Survey Plan
Site Plan
Front Elevation

Location Map



Survey Plan



Site Plan

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Floor Plan and Elevation

