

COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting Date: July 21, 2025
Department: Community Services
Report No.: CS-2025-36
Submitted by: Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community and Development Services
Approved by: Rob Browning, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Land Needs Analysis – Municipal Campus

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive report CS-2025-36 for information, and further;

THAT: Council direct staff to conduct an Expression of Interest process to identify available and suitable parcels of land in the Mount Brydges area.

BACKGROUND:

Council passed the following motion at their June 2, 2025, meeting

Moved By: Colin Grantham

Seconded by: Donna Pammer

THAT: staff be directed to complete a land needs analysis for a Municipal Complex in Mount Brydges, such complex to include but not limited to a future arena and firehall.

COMMENTS:

Staff have considered the following as potential components of a future Municipal Complex in Mount Brydges:

1. Twin Pad Arena with Community Space – Approximately 20 acres
2. Fire Station, Training Grounds, and Potential EMS Facility – Approximately 4 acres
3. Public Works Yard – Approximately 7 acres

In total, the recommended land area for such a complex would range between 30 to 35 acres. This estimate remains preliminary, as the final site size will be influenced by factors such as building design, layout, required amenities, stormwater management (if required), and buffer zones, particularly where the site may abut existing or future residential development.

As part of initial internal discussions, several departmental Directors provided feedback regarding both site requirements and potential land use conflicts:

- The Fire Chief and Director of Fire Services confirmed that 4 acres would be sufficient to accommodate a new fire station, training areas, and support facilities such as space for maintenance, equipment cleaning, and potential additional emergency services integration. However, he expressed strong reservations about locating a fire station within a residential subdivision. Based on operational experience, fire stations can generate significant noise and activity at all hours of the day. Activities such as running apparatus outside after calls, cleaning and loading hose, and servicing equipment like generators or pumps often occur late at night or early in the morning—frequently leading to complaints from nearby residents.
- The Director of Community and Development Services advised that 20 acres would be ideal to accommodate a twin pad arena along with complementary community uses, such as a gymnasium, municipal customer service office, and a police substation. However, similar to the Fire Chief, the Director cautioned against placing such a high-traffic facility within a residential area, citing concerns around traffic congestion, noise and lighting impacts, safety, and lack of adequate buffering.
- The Director of Engineering and Public Works indicated that an approximately 7-acre site would meet the needs of a Public Works Yard, allowing for truck bays, salt domes, equipment storage, office space, and landscaping. Construction of a new site could also create an opportunity to consolidate some Environmental Services staff into a single starting location. However, he noted that Public Works Yards do not necessarily benefit from being located directly adjacent to other municipal buildings such as arenas or firehalls, as there aren't many areas of overlap between business units. Public Works yards can also contribute to noise, dust, and truck traffic, which, depending on the location, may be perceived as undesirable to neighboring properties.

While each Director highlighted the risk of land use conflict, everyone agreed that many of these issues could be reduced with proper site planning, such as landscaped buffers, strategic building locations, and traffic control measures.

If Council approves, staff will initiate an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to identify available and suitable parcels of land in the Mount Brydges area. Additionally, staff could engage if directed by Council the services of a professional Land Site Selector to assist in evaluating options and determining the most appropriate site based on operational needs, land use compatibility, and long-term growth potential.

CONSULTATION:

Fire Chief and Director of Fire Services
Director of Engineering and Public Works
CAO

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

NA

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO THE RECOMMENDATION:

1. (Alternative, if any)
2. Council to provide alternate direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

Local Infrastructure and Capital Investment: Households and businesses in Strathroy-Caradoc will be supported by reliable, financially responsible, and well-maintained infrastructure networks.

Community Well-being and Quality of Life: Residents of all ages in Strathroy-Caradoc will have access to community amenities and activities that are accessible and support active lifestyles and wellbeing.

Community Safety: Community safety is fundamental to community well-being, and all relevant services and organizations, including the Hospital and fire service, have key roles to play. The Municipality values its community-based Police Service.

Municipal Customer Service: The Municipality offers seamless, responsive service and an exceptional experience for every customer.

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:

NONE