

COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting Date: September 2, 2025
Department: Building, By-law & Planning
Report No.: BBP-2025-81
Submitted by: Jake DeRidder, Manager of Growth and Development
Reviewed by: Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community and Development Services
Approved by: Rob Browning, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Official Plan Review Update – August 2025

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council approve an additional \$67,612.55 to be used for the completion of the Official Plan Review project.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2020 the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc embarked upon the completion of an Official Plan 5-Year update and engaged WSP, a planning consulting firm, to complete this project along with other Master Plans.

The project was originally divided into three (3) key components, being:

1. Scoped Settlement Area Boundary Review
2. Official Plan Review and Master Plans
3. Comprehensive Settlement Area Review

Component 1 was completed back in late 2021 (Official Plan Amendment 13) which both local and County Council adoption.

Component 2 is the policy update to the Municipality's Official plan and has received local and County Council adoption of OPA 14 (and supporting Master Plans and reports), however an appeal was received on the OPA 14 and that is currently going through the appeal process with the Ontario Land Tribunal. A 10 day hearing is scheduled for November 24, 2025.

Component 3 is currently underway with a significant portion of the background work being completed. Council accepted a study area and initial evaluation matrix were endorsed on April 3, 2023, potential settlement area expansions were presented to the community and Council in

December of 2023 and the Stage 2 Evaluation Matrix being endorsed on January 29, 2024. This project was last before Council at a public consultation meeting on May 22nd, 2024 where the WSP (consultant for the Municipality) applied the evaluation matrix to provide preliminary settlement boundary expansion recommendations for feedback.

Since that time, changes to the Provincial Planning Statement (“PPS”) require that growth forecasts be based on Ontario Population Projections published by the Minister of Finance which placed the project on hold until those population number became available. Once available, the County of Middlesex was then able to complete their population forecast (Growth Analysis Update Report April 25, 2025) which is to be used by the local Municipalities. The County is continuing work to evaluate the existing land supply for local Municipalities and will be providing this information once it is complete. However, now that the County has provided the population forecast, the Municipality can return to working towards completion of Comprehensive Settlement Area review.

COMMENTS:

As a result of the PPS changes, in order to refresh and finalize the Comprehensive Settlement Area review (Component 3), additional budget is needed. An additional \$42,135.00 (plus HST) is expected to update and finalize the report based on the PPS changes, align with previous Council direction and reflect the “Vision 2055” statements passed by Council. A breakdown of these costs is attached to this report (attachment 1).

Staff are also anticipating legal and consulting costs related to support the appeal of Component 2. Although these costs are not fully known at this time and will not be known until the appeal is finalized, staff are requesting an additional \$20,000 for the appeal related costs.

Next Steps

Following endorsement of the additional budget by Council the following next steps will be undertaken:

- Prepare presentation for in-camera Council update
- Prepare draft Technical Evaluation Report Addendum and revised settlement area boundary expansion concepts
- In-Person Council presentation and endorsement of revised settlement area boundary expansion concepts
- Prepare the Draft Planning Justification Report and Official Plan Amendment
- Statutory Public Open House, to present the Draft Planning Justification Report and Draft Official Plan Amendment (Mount Brydges and Strathroy)
- Statutory Public Meeting of Council
- Revise and finalize the Planning Justification Report and Official Plan Amendment based on open house and public meeting
- Council meeting for Council Adoption

Once the Official Plan Amendment is adopted by Council, it is forwarded on to the County for approval (as the County is the approval authority for local Official Plans).

CONSULTATION:

Manger of Planning, County of Middlesex

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

An additional \$67,612.55 is requested above the originally budgeted amount for this capital project. This is proposed to be funded through the Future Needs Reserve which has a balance of \$2,396,628 (2024).

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO THE RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT: Council receive report BBP-2025-81 for information; and THAT: Council ask staff to defer the completion of the Official Plan Review project until the 2026 budget is approved.
2. Council to provide alternate direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

- 1) *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.
- 2) *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.
- 3) *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:

- Cost Breakdown from WSP