

2021



Strathroy-Caradoc OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW BACKGROUND REVIEW REPORT

DRAFT | JULY 2021



Prepared by



Table of Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 | Project Background..... | 1 |
| 1.2 | Purpose..... | 1 |
| 2 | Background Review | 3 |
| 2.1 | Overview..... | 3 |
| 2.2 | Provincial Legislation and Policy..... | 4 |
| 2.3 | County of Middlesex Planning Context..... | 10 |
| 2.4 | Local Context..... | 11 |
| 2.5 | Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc Technical Inputs..... | 17 |
| 2.6 | Summary of Inputs, Documents, and Other Drivers..... | 19 |
| 3 | Official Plan Review Engagement | 20 |
| 3.1 | Project Launch..... | 20 |
| 3.2 | Section 26 Special Meeting of Council..... | 22 |
| 3.3 | Public Comments..... | 22 |
| 3.4 | Landowner & Development Community Meeting..... | 22 |
| 3.5 | Municipal Council Input..... | 22 |
| 3.6 | Public Open House..... | 23 |
| 4 | Policy Gaps, Conflicts, and Opportunities | 24 |
| 4.1 | Policy Review..... | 24 |
| 4.2 | General Housekeeping Updates & Opportunities..... | 46 |
| 5 | Official Plan Review Next Steps | 48 |



1 Introduction

The Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc (the “Municipality”) is undertaking its Official Plan Review (OPR), which has been branded as the “Growing Together Strathroy Caradoc” project. The OPR will culminate with an amendment to the Official Plan to serve as a road map for the Municipality to responsibly manage growth and change over the next 25+ years. Through Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc, the Municipality will prepare a number of Master Plans and Studies and complete consultation with the community to inform updates to the Official Plan.

This Background Review Report (the “Report”) is a component of the Official Plan Review and represents a first step to developing a framework to update the Official Plan. This Report considers matters that will inform the preparation of an Official Plan Amendment – which will formally introduce changes to the Official Plan, such as legislative requirements, the County of Middlesex Official Plan Update, and policy assessment, among others.

1.1 Project Background

The Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc initiative began in October 2020 with community engagement sessions to develop a community vision and start a conversation about land use planning in the Municipality. The Official Plan Review is one component of the Growing Together project and is being completed in phases throughout 2021. In 2022, the Municipality will launch its Municipal Comprehensive Review to evaluate and determine whether additional lands are needed to accommodate future growth, which could result in the expansion of the urban settlement areas of Strathroy and Mount Brydges, or in the conversion of areas currently designated for Employment to Residential designations. An Official Plan Amendment to implement the Official Plan Review and Municipal Comprehensive Review will be considered by Municipal Council in 2022, before which significant consultation with the community and stakeholders is planned.

To learn more about the Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc initiative and find out how to get involved, visit growingtogethersc.ca

1.2 Purpose

This Report is the first major deliverable of Phase 2 of the Official Plan Review (**Figure 1**). This Report identifies and reviews the key policy drivers and inputs that need to be considered in the updated Official Plan, as well as other housekeeping/technical items. To date, the Municipality has completed Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review to re-designate three areas within the Strathroy Settlement Boundary. The timing of Phase 2 and 3 is aligned with the concurrent Master Plans and Studies being prepared through the Growing Together Project. Section 2.5 of

this Report outlines the various Master Plans and Studies that are being prepared as part of this initiative.

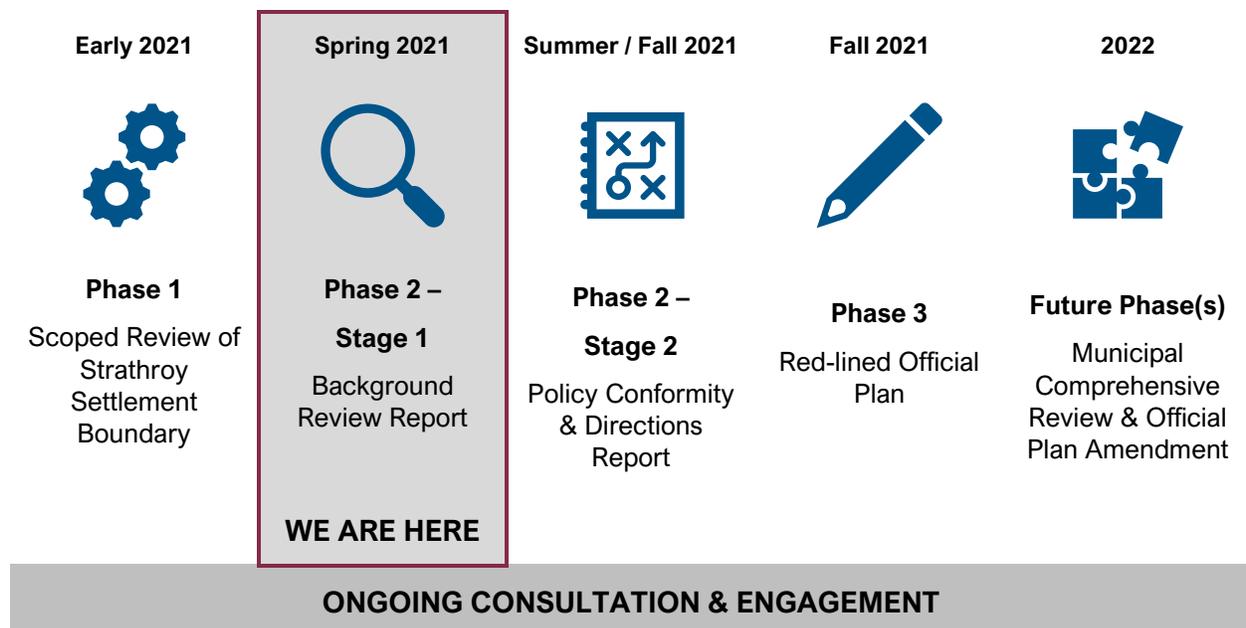


Figure 1 - Official Plan Review project process

Based on the Background Review in Section 2 of this Report, a preliminary understanding of the gaps and conflicts between the current Official Plan and more recent Provincial and County policies has been completed. This assessment is not a line-by-line review of individual policies but is intended to document and assess the significant policy changes that will need to be considered as part of the Official Plan Review. The assessment will ultimately form the basis of a policy conformity exercise through the Policy Conformity and Directions Report in Phase 2 – Stage 2 of the Official Plan Review to ensure the updated Official Plan is consistent with and conforms to Provincial and County land use policies and plans.

2 Background Review

2.1 Overview

In Ontario, official plans are the core policy tool that municipalities use to shape the land use and form of their communities. Strathroy-Caradoc is a lower-tier municipality within the County of Middlesex. An official plan contains the long-term blueprint for how a municipality would like to grow and is the primary tool for applying Provincial land use legislation and policies. Official plans may be informed by other studies (e.g., attainable housing and municipal servicing) and functional master plans (e.g. parks and recreation, transportation), and give authority to implementation measures such as the Zoning By-laws and community improvement plans, for example. Lower-tier municipalities, such as Strathroy-Caradoc, must also ensure that its Official Plan conforms to the upper-tier Official Plan (i.e., County of Middlesex). This allows for coordination of land use policies and growth with neighbouring lower-tier municipalities and helps prevent uncoordinated development.

Strathroy-Caradoc's Official Plan was adopted in 2006 and was last updated in 2015. Since then, there have been many updates to planning frameworks at the Provincial, County, and local level, which need to be considered and incorporated into the new Official Plan. A review of all the changes to policies, plans, and legislation at all three levels since 2015 that need consideration in undertaking the Official Plan update is outlined in this Report.

It should be noted that where a Provincial, County, or local policy or plan is being explicitly addressed through another Master Plan or Study (e.g., the Transportation Master Plan), it is not discussed in the following section as it will be addressed through the specific plan or study. The Policy

Provincial Legislation

The Planning Act

Provincial Policies

Provincial Policy Statement

County Plans and Policies

County of Middlesex Official Plan

Local Plans and Policies

Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan

North Meadows Secondary Plan

Functional Master Plans

Transportation Master Plan

Recreational Trails Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Technical Studies (e.g., housing, employment, commercial, servicing)

Implementing Tools

Zoning By-law

Site Plan Control

Community Improvement Plans

Conformity and Directions Report will translate the recommendations of the Growing Together project into specific policy directions and consideration for the Official Plan.

How will they be considered in the Official Plan Review?

The Provincial, County, and Local context have direct implications of the updated Official Plan for Strathroy-Caradoc. An initial overview of these key documents is provided to understand what has changed since Municipality's Official Plan was last updated in 2015. More detailed considerations stemming from these documents are summarized in Section 4.2 of this Report to understand where policies may need to change. The Policy Conformity and Directions Report will translate the gaps and conflicts identified in Section 4.2 into specific policy directions and consideration for the Official Plan.

2.2 Provincial Legislation and Policy

Provincial planning legislation and policies directly influence planning policies in Strathroy-Caradoc. This section outlines these key considerations, as well as key changes to Provincial legislation and policies since the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan was last updated.

2.2.1 Planning Act

The *Planning Act* is the central governing statute for land-use planning in the Province of Ontario, and provides the legal basis for, among other things, the preparation and updating of municipalities' official plans. Much of what the *Planning Act* governs regarding Official Plans is procedural such as timelines for approval and consultation requirements, but it does prescribe certain components that must be incorporated into an official plan. The *Act* also stipulates that all planning decisions in a municipality, including preparing and updating Official Plans (Section 26), must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and shall have regard for a list of Provincial interests. These interests include, but are not limited to, the protection of natural heritage, adequate and efficient provision and use of water, transportation, and energy infrastructure, accessibility, and adequate supply of employment and housing.

Since 2015, when the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan was last updated, the *Planning Act* has been amended several times through different pieces of legislation. These key changes include the following:

- ***Smart Growth for our Communities Act, 2015 (Bill 73)***: made significant amendments to the *Planning Act*, along with changes to the *Development Charges Act*. In broad terms, the reforms introduced by Bill 73 were intended to improve citizen engagement and the appeals process. Other changes were meant to give municipalities more tools to fund community services and growth;
- ***Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016 (Bill 7)***: amended the *Planning Act*, adding a prescription that official plans should contain policies authorizing inclusionary zoning, as well as adding various subsections guiding the implementation, assessment, and appeal of inclusionary zoning;

- ***Building Better Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act, 2017 (Bill 139)***: significantly reformed the planning appeals process, replacing the Ontario Municipal Board with the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and putting more emphasis on the decisions of planning authorities. Many changes made by Bill 139 were subsequently amended by Bill 108 (see below). Bill 139 also modified Community Planning Permit legislation, which set out an alternative approach to development approval processes in place of zoning and site plan control; and,
- ***More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108)***: amended the *Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act* to change the appeals process, and amended the *Planning Act* regarding additional residential units, development charges, and Community Benefits Charges (formerly known as Section 37 Benefits).
- ***COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 (Bill 197)***: expanded, in part, the scope of a Minister’s Zoning Order to allow the Minister to make decisions as it relates to site plan control and inclusionary zoning (affordable housing).
- ***Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021 (Bill 257)***: amended, in part, the *Planning Act* so that a Minister’s Zoning Order does not have to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. In addition, the changes provide that any existing Minister’s zoning orders, never had to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The overall purpose of the *Act* is to remove barriers to help ensure the deployment of high-speed broadband infrastructure.

2.2.2 Provincial Policy Statement (2020)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is a consolidation of the Province of Ontario’s land use policies, outlining Provincial planning goals and objectives and giving specific direction on how to achieve them. The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, and as noted above, every municipal planning decision in Ontario must be consistent with the PPS, which provides for a relative reliability and predictability of land use policies across jurisdictions.

Since the Strathroy-Caradoc OP was last updated in 2015, the PPS was revised in 2020. Key changes to the PPS in the 2020 update which should be considered in updating the OP include:

- Employment and Use Compatibility
 - Strengthening of policy language guiding the development of major facilities and sensitive land uses, and the addition of policies to protect existing and planned industrial and manufacturing uses from encroachment
- Flexibility around Comprehensive Reviews
 - Under certain circumstances, conversions of employment areas to non-employment uses may be allowed *outside* of a comprehensive review
 - Under certain circumstances, municipalities can now adjust settlement boundaries *outside* of a comprehensive review

- Land Supply
 - Municipalities are now required to plan for a 25-year horizon, instead of 20 years
- Housing:
 - Municipalities are now required to plan for accommodating residential growth for a minimum of 15 years, instead of 10
 - Requirement for transit-supportive development in proximity to transit corridors and stations
- Servicing:
 - Stormwater planning now to be integrated with water and sanitary service planning, and impact of individual on-site servicing to be reviewed at the time of an Official plan update
- General changes in language (e.g., “housing options”, “additional residential units” instead of “second units”)
- Municipalities are encouraged to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities and build cooperative relationships to share knowledge in land-use planning processes

2.2.3 Supplementary Agricultural Guidelines to the Provincial Policy Statement

In 2016, the Province published two sets of guidelines to assist municipalities in implementing the agricultural policies of the Provincial Policy Statement: the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas and the Minimum Distance Separation Formulae Document. These documents are not regulations or policies of themselves but provide additional information and tools to clarify the policies of the PPS.

The Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas provide guidance on agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses described in Policy 2.3.3 of the PPS. The Guidelines also clarify the allowance for limited non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas, as well as the mitigation of impacts from new or expanding non-agricultural uses.

The Minimum Distance Separation Document outlines in more detail the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Formulae defined in the PPS, and provides technical guidance for implementing the MDS formula, which mitigates or prevents land-compatibility issues surrounding high-odour uses like livestock facilities or anaerobic digesters. Official plans are required to have up-to-date policies around MDS requirements.

2.2.4 Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline

On May 4, 2021, the Province of Ontario released a Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline to support policies in the Provincial Policy Statement. These proposed guideline would provide planning authorities with tools to avoid conflict between incompatible land uses and would

replace several existing Provincial D-Series guidelines (e.g., D-1 Land Use and Compatibility and D-4 Land Use on or Near Landfills and Dumps). The key proposed elements of the Guideline include:

- Expanding the number of major facility classification categories to allow for fine-grain identification of potential adverse impacts;
- Providing instructions on how to classify facility types;
- Established that compatibility studies are required when a new or expanding sensitive land use is proposed; and,
- Requiring sensitive land uses to undergo a demonstration of need exercise to determine whether there is sufficient need and planning rationale to justify locating a sensitive land use where it could be affected by a nearby major facility.

The Guideline also outlines how municipalities can implement the compatibility measures through planning policy, such as an official plan. There is an opportunity to include clear definitions of sensitive land uses, major facilities, and adverse effects, and to prohibit sensitive land uses adjacent to existing major facilities where mitigation is not possible.

This proposed Guideline will be monitor as the Official Plan Review advances to understand further potential policy implications and directions.

2.2.5 Conservation Authorities

Conservation Authorities (CAs) are public sector organizations that provide programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario. Conservation Authorities are governed under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, which is administered by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP). Conservation Authorities provide advice to municipalities on natural hazard management and help to regulate development and other activities in areas affected by flooding and other water-related natural hazards through a permit process.

In this capacity, Conservation Authorities have typically been responsible for representing the provincial interest on natural hazard matters where the Province is not directly involved with the land use and development planning process. In 2020, however, the Province of Ontario introduced a number of new measures through Bill 229, *Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act*, that curtail the powers of CAs, including the following:

- Section 28.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, which previously allowed for applicants refused a permit for development by a Conservation Authority to appeal the refusal to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, has been repealed and replaced with a new Section 28.1 which allows for the Minister, upon request from the applicant, to review the decision of the Conservation Authority and grant the permit. Applicants can also now appeal a permit refusal or non-decision by a Conservation Authority within 120 days to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal.
- A new Section 28.0.1 requires Conservation Authorities to approve development applications if the proposed development is the subject of a permitting Minister’s Zoning Order and meets any other prescribed requirements. Subsection 28.0.1(4) explicitly directs that if the above criteria are met the permit must be granted even if the project contravenes requirements under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* or Section 3 (5) of the *Planning Act*.

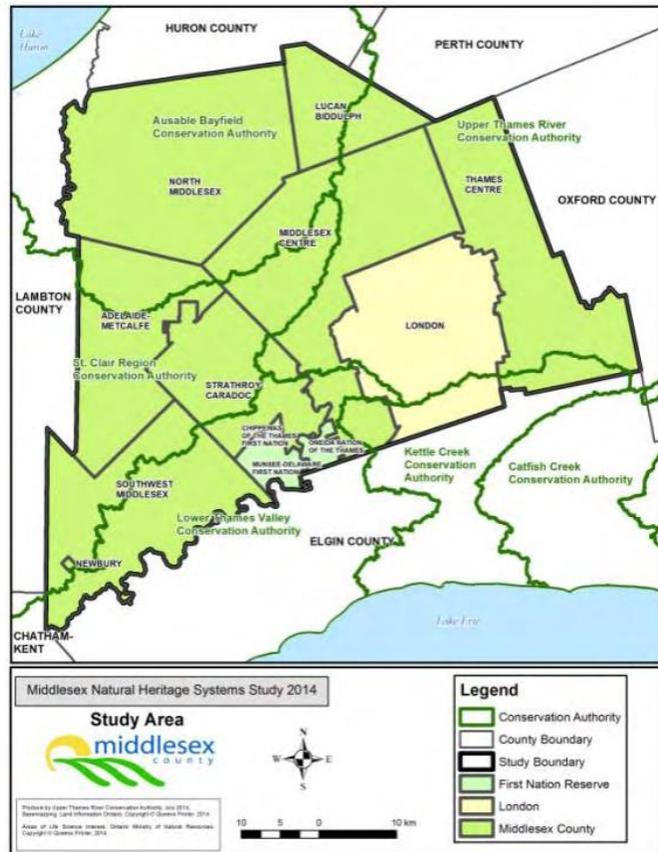


Figure 2 - Conservation Authority boundaries within Middlesex County

Strathroy-Caradoc is located within the regulatory limits of three CAs (**Figure 2**), which are characterized below.

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA)

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) has jurisdiction granted by *Ontario Regulation (“O. Reg.”) 171/06* that covers roughly the northwest half of the Municipality, including the Sydenham River watershed running through Strathroy. The SCRCA has a Wetland Policy which outlines its role in the planning process for development near provincially significant wetlands and other similar areas. The SCRCA has also developed Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping showing the watercourses and adjacent lands within its boundaries that are subject to *O. Reg. 171/06*, as well as natural heritage features and adjacent lands. It should be noted that the SCRCA’s mapping does not include detail on the type of natural heritage feature (i.e., wetland, woodland, etc.).

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) has jurisdiction granted by *O. Reg. 157/06* that covers a small part of the Municipality to the northwest of Mount Brydges. Strathroy-Caradoc is not presently a member municipality of the UTRCA, which means that its jurisdiction within the Municipality is not able to be regulated. The UTRCA offers a comprehensive Environmental Planning Policy Manual which outlines the Authority's integrated systems approach for watershed planning and provides significant detail on the role of the UTRCA in development application process as well as its input in the creation or updated of Official Plans and area studies. Like the SCRCA, the UTRCA has developed GIS mapping that indicates the location of all regulatory areas within its watershed but provides no detail on the type of hazard.

Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA)

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) has jurisdiction granted by *O. Reg. 152/06* that covers the southeastern part of the Municipality, including Melbourne. The LTVCA provides a succinct Operation Guidelines document that outlines how development should proceed in its regulatory areas.

2.2.6 Source Water Protection

The Provincial government passed the *Clean Water Act*, 2006 to protect existing and future sources of municipal drinking water throughout Ontario. A key deliverable required under the Act is a source water protection plan, which is undertaken to:

- Protect existing and future drinking water sources in the source protection area
- Ensure that activities never become a threat in every area where an activity is or would be a threat to drinking water

Section 40 of the *Act* requires municipalities to bring their Official Plans into conformity with the relevant policies and map schedules of those Source Protection Plans that regulate their municipal drinking water systems.

In 2017, a Background Report on Source Protection Plan Implementation was completed by the County. The purpose of the Report was to form the basis of future amendments to the County Official Plan and those of the lower-tier municipalities, such as Strathroy-Caradoc, that have municipal drinking water systems regulated by a Source Protection Plan.

The **Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Plan** is applicable to Strathroy-Caradoc. There are no municipal drink source water systems located in Strathroy-Caradoc. The Source Protection Plan directs that Official Plans be updated within three years of the effective date, or at the time of the next Official Plan Review, whichever comes first. The County is currently undertaking Source Protection Plan implementation in conjunction with its Municipal Comprehensive Review.

2.3 County of Middlesex Planning Context

Under the *Planning Act*, the County of Middlesex is the approval authority for planning decisions by the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc like the update of the Official Plan. Any changes to policies in the Strathroy-Caradoc OP must conform to the County Official Plan. The County's Official Plan was originally adopted in 1997, and most recently amended in 2006, thus the current Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan is in conformity with the current County OP.

The County is also currently undertaking a statutory five-year review and update of its OP, which the updated Strathroy-Caradoc is required to conform with; therefore, consideration must be paid to the ongoing work of the County review. It should be noted that many of these inputs (e.g., the Cycling Strategy and Transportation Report) will be directly addressed through the various Master Plans and Studies (e.g., the Transportation Master Plan). This work includes a series of studies and proposed policy changes which will inform the updated County OP.

- **Population and Housing Projections 2021-2046:** Includes three growth scenarios (Low, Reference, and High), including housing and population growth, over a 25-year horizon for the County and each of the local municipalities. Local municipalities can select the growth scenario that is most appropriate to their contexts. In March 2021, Strathroy-Caradoc Council endorsed the high scenario as the projection to be used in the Municipality's Official Plan.
- **Strategic Plan 2021-2024:** In the Fall of 2020, County Council approved a new Strategic Plan for Middlesex County which included goals of promoting community wellness, attracting/retaining youth, strengthening the agricultural sector, improving options for public transit and active transportation, and supporting the development of downtown core areas within the County.
- **Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan: 2019 – 2024:** Stipulates goals of improving the supply of affordable and/or supportive housing in the County, as well as providing a more diverse range of housing options. The plan also outlines a homeless prevention strategy that includes supports to help people retain housing and avoid homelessness.
- **Draft Cycling Strategy (2018):** Aims to increase cycling for recreation and transportation within the County through an interconnected network of safe on- and off-road routes.
- **Middlesex Natural Heritage Systems Study (2014):** The Middlesex Natural Heritage Systems Study (MNHSS) updated the 2003 Natural Heritage Study and was prepared by the five conservation authorities in Middlesex County. The MNHSS focused on characterizing the natural heritage system within Middlesex County landscape. The MNHSS includes comprehensive mapping of vegetation, which was used in conjunction with 15 criteria to determine the significance of the features. The study concludes that 20% of the County is covered in natural vegetation, and 19.7% of the County is significant natural heritage. The MNHSS will be implemented in the County's Official Plan through the County's ongoing Official Plan update.

- **Economic Development Strategy Update (2021-2025):** Outlined goals of revitalizing rural communities, attracting investment in tech-based manufacturing, ag-tech, and food production, leveraging the combination of quieter rural life and nearby urban amenities to attract skilled workers, and improving business development services to increase investment readiness.
- **Transportation Report (2018):** An internal review of the County Official Plan’s transportation policies produced a number of recommended amendments, including strengthening language encouraging active transportation infrastructure and notably for adjusting the language around road hierarchies.

2.4 Local Context

Strathroy-Caradoc is required to implement Provincial and County direction through its Official Plan and land use planning decisions by Municipal Council. It is important to understand what work has been completed by the Municipality to provide direction to consider in the Official Plan as summarized below.

2.4.1 Strathroy-Caradoc Strategic Plan 2020-2029

In July 2020 the Municipality adopted a new Strategic Plan, which sets out the roadmap for Strathroy-Caradoc over the next ten years across all service sectors. The Strategic Plan outlines a community vision that Strathroy-Caradoc is working toward; its mission; the core values driving the work of the Municipality and its interaction with residents; goals the Municipality wants to achieve; general strategies for achieving those goals; and specific implementation tactics related to those strategies.

Many of the implementation strategies and tactics from the Strategic Plan are being undertaken through the Growing Together project (see Section 2.5 of this report), and some key strategies can also be supported through the update of Official Plan policies. These can be summarized as follows:

- **Infrastructure:**
 - Developing equitable standards and strategies for water and wastewater infrastructure
- **Economic Development:**
 - Development of a new Community Improvement Program
 - Advocacy for the locating of a postsecondary educational institution in the Municipality
- **Community Wellbeing:**
 - Setting annual targets for new active transportation
 - Long-term goal of building a new park in north Strathroy when the area is fully developed

- **Growth Management:**
 - Creation of a new Official Plan
 - Increasing density and rental options in Downtown Strathroy
 - Long term goal of increasing mixed density, residential and commercial development in Mount Brydges
- **Destination Building:**
 - Supporting the revitalization of downtowns in Strathroy and Mount Brydges
 - Investing in public realm improvements

2.4.2 Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan

As noted above, Strathroy-Caradoc’s Official Plan was adopted in 2006 and was last updated for conformity with the Provincial and County frameworks in 2015. The Official Plan generally defines the desired land uses, built form, intensity and character throughout the Municipality, establishes management strategies for current and future growth, and ensures that decisions related to development, redevelopment, and physical improvement of land are consistent across the Municipality.

Since adoption the Official Plan has been the subject of twelve Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) including nine site-specific OPAs, as well as three Municipality-led OPAs, which can be summarized as follows:

- OPA #5 (2015): statutory update to bring the Official Plan into consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) conformity with the Middlesex County Official Plan, and reflect other changes in legislation, regulation, and best practices since the Official Plan was adopted in 2006. Policy changes addressed:
 - Amendments to the Planning Act through Bill 51 and the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act*;
 - Enactment of the *Green Energy Act* which generally exempted renewable energy projects from approvals under the *Planning Act*;
 - Connection of Strathroy to the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System;
 - Full municipal services for Mount Brydges including connection to the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System and a stand-alone sewage treatment plant;
 - Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) where the Municipality has the ability to apply or not apply MDS I and II in certain cases; and
 - Matters of a housekeeping nature that were identified in the day-to-day administration of the Official Plan.
- OPA #11: Downtown Master Plan and Community Improvement Plan (CIP)
- OPA #12: North Meadows Secondary Plan

2.4.3 Secondary Plans

The Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan contains a number of policies directing that secondary plans should be undertaken for certain areas of the Municipality prior to their development or re-development. These areas are indicated on Schedule 'C' (Special Study Areas) of the Official Plan and include:

- Molnar Industrial Park
- North Meadows
- Saulsbury
- Queens

To date, only the North Meadows area has a complete secondary plan, which was adopted by Council in February 2021. The North Meadows Secondary Plan is intended to plan for a pedestrian-scaled residential community that comprises high quality urban design and streetscaping, is well-connected to the Municipality's trail system, and provides for quality open public space and the protection of significant natural features.

Given that the North Meadows Secondary Plan recently came in effect, it contains contemporary policies and language and will be a valuable resource to draw on for the update of the Official Plan. These include policies on public parks and open space, and mobility policies that place a high emphasis on active transportation and walkability.

2.4.4 Downtown Strathroy Master Plan (2020)

In 2020 the Municipality undertook a review of its existing Downtown Master Plan for Strathroy, which was adopted in 2008. The result of the project was an updated Downtown Strathroy Master Plan, which was adopted in Fall 2020.

The intent of the new Downtown Strathroy Master Plan was to better reflect current downtown conditions and capture municipal priorities as well as best practices for downtown revitalizations. The core of the Master Plan is the reimagining of Downtown Strathroy as a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use area, with Frank and Front Streets transformed into "woonerf"-style shared or living streets, and a stronger connection to the Strathroy Via Rail station as a revitalized transit hub. The achievement of this vision for the Downtown will require a significant amount of intensification and redevelopment, and the policies of the updated Official Plan should support its implementation wherever possible.

2.4.5 Downtown Strathroy Urban Design Guidelines

The Downtown Strathroy Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs) were created in 2018 to complement and support the previous versions of the Downtown Master Plan and Community Improvement Plan. The intent for the UDGs was to provide additional detail not stipulated in the Master Plan or CIP for the desired urban form for Downtown Strathroy and aid both property owners submitting development applications and Municipal staff reviewing those applications.

The UDGs employ guiding principles that focus on human-scaled design, prioritizing people over cars, protecting heritage, and beautifying the public realm. Notable for this Official Plan Review is that the UDGs generally prescribe a medium- to high-density mixed-used character for the Downtown: one-storey buildings are discouraged, buildings are intended to have minimum ground floor heights of 4.5 metres, and should create a “street wall” framing the civic realm. This vision for a highly urbanised, human-scaled Downtown Strathroy should be reflected in the updated Official Plan, and there is potential for the design principles in the UDGs to be applied broadly across the Municipality through integration into the Official Plan.

2.4.6 Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

In 2020 the Municipality undertook a review of its existing Community Improvement Plan, which was adopted in 2006. The result of the project was an updated Municipality-wide Community Improvement Plan, which was adopted in Fall 2020.

The updated Community Improvement Plan (CIP) applies to the entirety of the Municipality, although certain incentives apply only to certain areas. The CIP outlines five guiding sets of goals:

1. Increasing the supply of attainable rental housing and generally increasing the stock, density, and diversity of housing in the Municipality.
2. Increasing the quantity and quality of public and green spaces, beautifying buildings, and improving the accessibility and safety of streetscapes and major intersections.
3. Preserving and enhancing heritage features throughout the Municipality and building a collection of local public art, cultural amenities, and civic spaces.
4. Reinvigorating underused core areas of the community (Strathroy, Mount Brydges, and Melbourne) to reinforce them as destinations.
5. Diversifying the rural economy and attracting new economic investment.

Incentives are provided for several areas, and take the form of tax increment financing, grants, permit and application fee rebates.

2.4.7 Strathroy-Caradoc Residential Land Needs Assessment

The Strathroy-Caradoc Residential Land Needs Assessment, prepared by the Municipality in August 2020, is the culminating report of the Municipality’s three-part land needs assessment process which began in August 2019. The purpose of Residential Land Needs Assessment report was to determine, based on the growth projections and desired housing form and density, whether the amount of developable land within Strathroy-Caradoc’s settlement areas was sufficient to meet projected housing demand over 3-year, 15-year, and 25-year horizons.

Comparing the projected housing needs over 3-year, 15-year, and 25-year horizons with land supplies over the same horizons, municipal staff came to the following conclusions as of August 2020:

- While there is a theoretical surplus of land in Strathroy-Caradoc that is available for development within a 3-year timeframe (with some shortages in the Residential One (R1) and Residential Two (R2) zone categories in Strathroy; and in the Residential Two (R2) zone category in Mt. Brydges), only about one-third of available lots in Strathroy and two thirds of available lots in Mt. Brydges are viable for development in the short term.
 - This leads to less than a 2-year supply of land necessary to accommodate growth over the next 3-years.
- The Municipality has a surplus of developable land (approximately 15 ha) over the 15- year timeframe.
- Over the 25-year timeframe, the Municipality has a deficit of about 45 ha of developable land.

It should be noted that the draft approval of several plans of subdivision within Strathroy in 2020 has resulted in the shift of some lands from the 15-year supply to the 3-year supply, slightly reducing the former's surplus and the latter's deficit. However, the construction of almost 300 new housing units in 2020 has reduced the 3-year supply of residential lands in Strathroy, which approximately evens out the changes from the addition of draft plans of subdivision. Thus, the option of adding further to the supply of residential land within Strathroy should still be explored whether through further intensification and redevelopment or through a settlement boundary expansion. The latter will be undertaken through the future Municipal Comprehensive Review components of the Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project.

2.4.8 Strathroy-Caradoc Growth Management & Housing Report

The Growth Management and Housing Report, prepared by the Municipality in 2020, provides analysis of the historical and current housing, demographic, and economic trends in the Municipality and offers recommendations on housing forms and densities that the Municipality should pursue in order to improve housing availability and affordability in the Municipality. Based on demographical patterns of the last two decades, the Municipality has a population that is both growing and aging. Between 2001 and 2016 the proportion of the Municipality's population occupied by seniors (65 and older) increased substantially. As of 2016 there was also a significant gap with the 25-29 age range, indicating an outward migration of young people in their post-secondary years.

Additionally, the average household size in Strathroy-Caradoc is shrinking. Lone-parent families are increasing in numbers as couple families decrease, and the number of couples without children is also increasing. Overall this is contributing to more housing needed per family. While the Municipality has the highest proportion of non-single-detached housing (approximately 25% of all housing) and the highest proportion of rental housing vs. owned housing in Middlesex County, there is still a substantial shortage of rentals, especially affordable ones. 42% of renters in the Municipality are spending more than 30% of their income on housing; the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) had the Municipality's vacancy rate at 3.2% in 2018, but more recently, there is anecdotal evidence from local developers, tenants, and

landlords that the vacancy rate in the Municipality is virtually 0%. The lack of affordable “entry-level” housing stock will make it difficult to accommodate the increase in number of households as the population grows, as well as attracting young workers to live in the community. The Municipality is aiming to fill its “missing middle” housing gap and encourage denser housing forms (for both rent and ownership) like townhouses, semi-detached, link, duplexes, and low-rise multiple units.

2.4.9 Strathroy-Caradoc 2021-2046 Population and Housing Projections

On March 15, 2021, Municipal Council approved the 2021-2046 population and housing projections prepared by the County of Middlesex as part of the County Official Plan Update. It was recommended that the high growth scenario be adopted, which would see 35,360 residents in 15,260 households in the Municipality by the year 2046 (**Figure 3**). This represents an increase of 13,770 residents between 2016 and 2046.

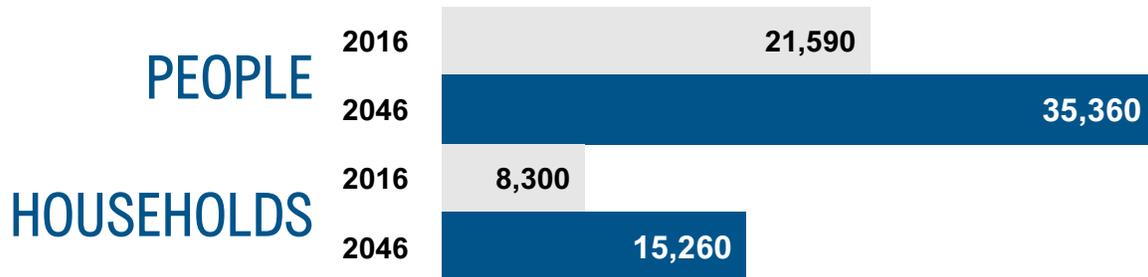


Figure 3 - Population and household forecasts for Strathroy-Caradoc (High Scenario)

Through the subsequent Municipal Comprehensive Review being completed in 2022, the Municipality will complete the work required to ensure that it has sufficient land to accommodate this project growth for Strathroy-Caradoc.

2.5 Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc Technical Inputs

The Official Plan Review is being prepared as part of the Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project, which includes a series of eight different Master Plans and Studies, including the:

1. Parks and Recreation Plan
2. Transportation Master Plan
3. Recreational Trails Master Plan
4. Employment Lands Study
5. Attainable Housing Study
6. Regional Commercial Systems Study
7. Servicing Capacity and Constraint Study
8. Fire Station Location Study

How will they be considered in the Official Plan Review?

The Master Plans and Studies are closely linked to the preparation of this Background Report and subsequently policy directions for the Official Plan. An initial overview of each Master Plan and Study is included within this document to understand the potential considerations and implications of each. It is anticipated that the Master Plans and Studies will be completed in draft alongside the development of the Policy Conformity and Directions Report. The Policy Conformity and Directions Report will translate the recommendations of the Growing Together project into specific policy directions and consideration for the Official Plan.

Potential Official Plan Implications

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will establish:

- A parks and recreation vision and guiding principles
- An updated parks and open space hierarchy
- Locations for future community services and facilities
- Policies to support the implementation of this functional servicing master plan, such as parkland dedication





The Transportation Master Plan will establish:

- A transportation vision and guiding principles
- Updated transportation network mapping
- Policy considerations to support the implementation of this functional servicing master plan, such as guidance for the development of new communities and updated right-of-way classifications



The Recreational Trails Master Plan will establish:

- A trails vision and guiding principles
- Updated trails network mapping
- Policy considerations to support the implementation of this functional servicing master plan, such as principles for planning, constructing, and maintaining trails



The Employment Lands Study will establish:

- Whether sufficient employment lands are designated and in the most appropriate location in order to secure and protect a range of employment opportunities across the Municipality
- Employment land conversion policies
- A hierarchy of employment lands



The Attainable Housing Study will establish:

- Policies to address the need for more diverse housing options such as smaller dwellings and affordable family-sized dwellings
- Policies to increase the supply of purpose-built rental housing
- Policies to development more attainable ownership options
- Policies which respond to shifting housing preferences due to the COVID-19 pandemic



The Regional Commercial Systems Study will establish:

- Whether the designated commercial lands (e.g., shopping areas) are sufficient to meet the current and anticipated market needs
- Address emerging commercial trends such as online shopping and pandemic implications
- Policies to support the vibrancy of Strathroy-Caradoc's main streets





The Servicing Capacity and Constraint Study will establish:

- Servicing needs for areas that are growing and major issues affecting the community in terms of water, wastewater, and stormwater systems
- Providing recommendations to address these servicing needs to support economic growth and protect public health and the environment



The Servicing Capacity and Constraint Study will establish:

- The optimal location(s) for fire stations and alternative locations including the possible construction of a third fire sub-station
- It is noted that the Fire Station Location Study has minimal implications for the Municipality's Official Plan; rather, it is using inputs from the various planning initiatives to make recommendations (e.g., population forecasts)

2.6 Summary of Inputs, Documents, and Other Drivers

Since the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan was last updated in 2015, significant Provincial, County and local policy and legislative changes have occurred, to which consideration must be given through this Official Plan Review. The most notable changes are the various, some of them ongoing, amendments to the *Planning Act*, the 2020 update of Provincial Policy Statement, as well as the 2016 supplemental guidelines applying to agricultural areas, and the ongoing update of the County of Middlesex Official Plan. Additionally, the work undertaken toward the revitalization of the core areas of the Municipality (particularly Downtown Strathroy) since 2018 is representative of Strathroy-Caradoc's vision and direction for the coming decades concerning where growth is to be oriented. Together, the various Provincial, County, and local documents provide a strong basis from which to update the Official Plan. As noted above, the Master Plans and Studies being prepared concurrently with the Official Plan Review will inform policy directions and recommendations for Strathroy-Caradoc's Official Plan.



3 Official Plan Review Engagement

To inform the development of this Background Review Report, and as part of the larger Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project, several engagement milestones have been achieved to-date for the OPR. This section provides a summary of these key milestones which have focused on educating the public about the project and importance of the Official Plan, to develop a recognizable brand, and collect feedback from the community.

3.1 Project Launch

In January 2021, the OPR was officially launched publicly through various communications, including an update to the Municipality’s website, the launch of the Growing Together project website (Figure 4), social media outreach, and radio advertisements in the community.

The project website included a series of frequently asked questions, planning resources, and interactive tools to solicit feedback from the public. The website serves as a central repository of information for the OPR and will be continually updated as the project progresses. As of July 1, 2021, over 3,100 unique visitors have visited the Growing Together project website – 540 of which have viewed the OPR project page.

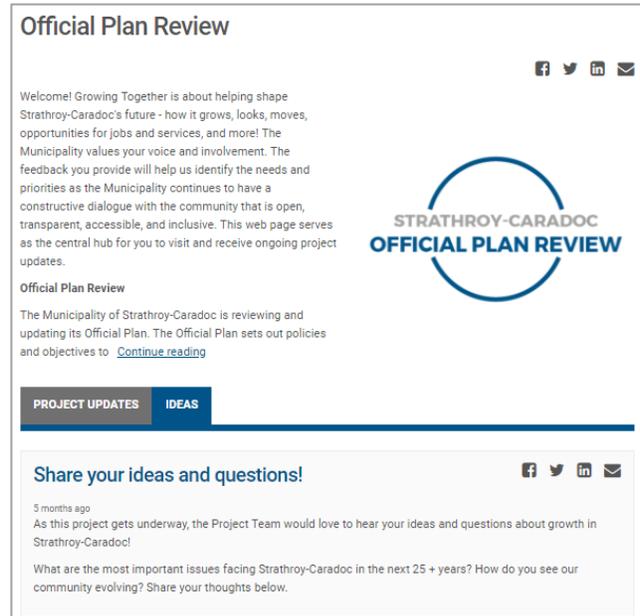


Figure 4 - Official Plan Review project website

During this phase of the OPR, the Ideas Tool was used to solicit public input. The Newsfeed dashboard was also updated to provide ongoing announcements and updates on engagement activities. Sixteen community members shared their ideas about growth in Strathroy-Caradoc as of June 1, 2021 (Figure 6). The tool remains open and active to offer visitors to identify their top priorities or concerns for the Municipality.

Following project launch, the Project Team announced the establishment of a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (“SAC”) based on a hybrid approach of Municipality-appointed members and an open call for community participants (Figure 5). The purpose of this SAC is to provide a sounding board for the Project Team and share insights into key issues and draft policy during the OPR



Figure 5 - Stakeholder Advisory Committee Call for Participation

process. Over 40 community members applied to be members of the SAC. The SAC will meet regularly over the course of 2021 and 2022 as part of the broader Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project.

Share your ideas and questions!

16

IDEAS

As this project gets underway, the Project Team would love to hear your ideas and questions about growth in Strathroy-Caradoc!

What are the most important issues facing Strathroy-Caradoc in the next 25+ years? How do you see our community evolving? Share your thoughts below.

🔍 Search for ideas Sort by Discover ▾

Add your idea

PolliSolPSWPlanner
4 months ago

Compost collection
Include compost bins for weekly compost collections with garbage ...

Share 0 Comment 4 ❤️

PolliSolPSWPlanner
4 months ago

City fit path
Long distance running route with series of exercise stations and ...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

PolliSolPSWPlanner
4 months ago

Pedestrian cross walks
Adelaide Road between Carroll St W and Metcalfe St needs crossing...

Share 0 Comment 2 ❤️

shubroom
4 months ago

Change the two-way stop sign to a 4-way stop sign at the intersection of Saxton Rd and Carroll St
4-way sign required

Share 1 Comment 1 ❤️

ElaineZ
4 months ago

Re-locate Grey Ridge egg factory
This is on Queen Street which is a very busy street that is mostl...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

Mandyl
4 months ago

Sidewalks added
Continuation of sidewalks on Glengyle / Carroll from Walmart to P...

Share 0 Comment 1 ❤️

clarkteaple
4 months ago

municipal broadband
It might be worth looking into the cost/benefit of creating publi...

Share 1 Comment 0 ❤️

Joshua Randall
4 months ago

INDOOR POOL
THIS, YESTERDAY.

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

ElaineZ
4 months ago

Add curbs to roads that currently do not have them.
Queen Street is a prime example of how shabby the street looks. ...

Share 0 Comment 1 ❤️

ElaineZ
4 months ago

Add Home Depot, Hotel and more independent bars and restaurants.
I do not want to see Strathroy commit to adding more fast food ch...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

PolliSolPSWPlanner
4 months ago

Balance housing types in zones
Housing types(single family dwelling, attached family homes, cond...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

ElaineZ
4 months ago

Kenwick Mall overhaul
This mall is a dead zone and yet it has a lot of potential. Down...

Share 0 Comment 2 ❤️

Gregory Tobin
3 months ago

Manage Spending to keep taxes lower, to ensure that more than just rich Torontonians can live here
Spending and deficits have skyrocketed across the country at all ...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

Bradley Payne
3 months ago

Expansion of amenities for rural residents.
I would like to see an expansion on reliable, non-wireless high s...

Share 0 Comment 0 ❤️

ElaineZ
4 months ago

Combine sidewalk and bike paths

Figure 6 - Ideas shared through the Official Plan Review project webpage



3.2 Section 26 Special Meeting of Council

A statutory public meeting was held on March 15, 2021, in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. The public meeting was hosted online and was broadcast on the Municipality's website as part of a larger Municipal Council meeting. A presentation was delivered to provide an overview of the role of the Official Plan, the purpose of the OPR, the guiding Provincial policy framework, and the project work plan and schedule. This meeting was used to formally launch the OPR process and to seek Council's authorization to proceed with the proposed work program.

3.3 Public Comments

Since the start of the project, the Municipality has received comments from several members of the public, including individual residents/landowners and members of the development and building industry. Most comments submitted included requests for the expansion of a settlement area to allow for development of specific lands. This is typical for any OPR. Each of the property locations has been noted and they will be considered for inclusion within a settlement area if a need to expand is identified through the Municipal Comprehensive Review in subsequent phases of this project.

3.4 Landowner & Development Community Meeting

On February 23, 2021, a meeting was held with a group of local landowners and members of the development community to introduce the Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project. A key objective of this meeting was to outline future opportunities to get involved in this multi-year project and ways to submit formal comments and requests for consideration. All comments and requests received to-date from this group have been reviewed and logged for consideration through the OPR.

3.5 Municipal Council Input

On June 2, 2021, a workshop was held with Municipal Council to discuss specific policy topics and seek input on the types of matters Council would like to see considered in the Official Plan. The input received generally reflected the values and priorities expressed by the community during the Visioning Workshops and provided some specific input on several subjects, including:

- Support for the development of complete communities, including supporting local business and facilitating active transportation connections;
- The need for policies to guide intensification and infill development;
- Addressing the unique needs of Mount Brydges and Strathroy;
- Using the policies of the North Meadows Secondary Plan as a best practice resource for other areas of the Municipality;

- The need to respond to climate change, including planning for more intense storms and supporting green infrastructure (e.g., electric vehicles);
- Protecting wells and drinking water in the rural areas and promote stewardship activities such as tree planting;
- Aligning the transportation system and planning with the County’s transportation plans;
- Providing context-specific recommendations to support active transportation in Strathroy-Caradoc;
- Connecting Campbellvale, Mount Brydges, and Strathroy by trail;
- Establishing policies for agriculture-related uses and promoting on-farm diversified uses, subject to criteria;
- Addressing the demand for larger scale farm event venues (e.g., weddings);
- Exploring the concept of food hubs to promote food security;
- Introducing policies for cannabis production uses;
- Finding new ways to promote an understanding of the Official Plan; and,
- Responding to the impacts and lessons learned from COVID-19 (e.g., volunteerism, parking, small businesses, mental health etc.).

These comments will be used to help frame an approach to the issues and gaps identified in this Report. The subsequent Policy Conformity and Directions Report, as well as the concurrent Master Plans and Studies, will explore opportunities to address these priorities and issues.

3.6 Public Open House

Note to Draft: To be populated based on the Public Open House which be held to seek input on the Draft Background Review Report in July 2021.



4 Policy Gaps, Conflicts, and Opportunities

The purpose of Section 4 is to identify the major policy gaps, opportunities for new policies, and potential conflicts between the Municipality’s current Official Plan and emerging or recent Provincial/Regional policy, as well as the anticipated outcomes of the broader Growing Together project. This section builds on the background review completed in Section 2.

4.1 Policy Review

Table 1 characterizes the existing policy of the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan, identifies the key issue, conflict or gap, and summarizes the key policy and legislative drivers and resources to address this issue, conflict, or gap. Through this process, the project team will develop a list of priority policy changes and issues to be discussed further with the Province, County and Conservation Authorities.

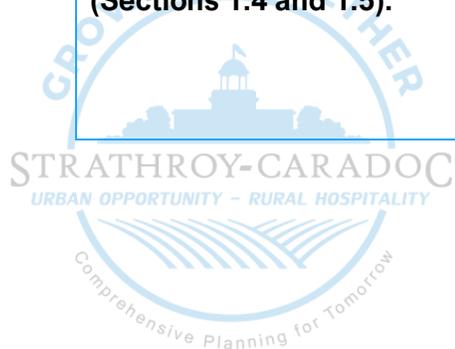
The table is organized by chapter of the Municipality’s Official Plan. Given the developing nature of the Master Plans and Studies being prepared as part of the Growing Together project, further gaps and opportunities may be identified and added through the final iteration of this Report, and through the future Policy Conformity and Directions Report. This second report will build upon this table to propose policy directions for each of the issues, conflicts, and gaps identified in **Table 1**.

For convenience purposes, the following is a list of acronyms used in **Table 1**:

- PPS means the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
- SCOP means the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan
- County OP means the County of Middlesex Official Plan
- MNHSS means the Middlesex Natural Heritage Systems Study, 2014

Table 1 - Policy Issues, Conflicts, and Opportunities Assessment

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|---|---|
| Chapter 1: Introduction | | |
| The OP contemplates growth up to the year 2034 (Sections 1.4 and 1.5). | There is a need to plan for forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2046. Section 1.4 should be updated with the latest figures, and also include the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS requires municipalities to plan for a 25-year planning horizon to the year 2046. – Population and Employment Forecasts |



| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|--|
| | Municipality’s employment forecasts. | approved by Municipal Council. |
| The Introduction provides context into the Municipality and the development of the SCOP. | The introductory statement, as well as Sections 1.1 and 1.2, contain some outdated references / dates and should be reviewed and updated in line with consultation completed throughout the Growing Together project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Various inputs, including public consultation and visioning, and the Strathroy-Caradoc Strategic Plan. |
| Section 1.7 lists the various matters of Provincial interest under the <i>Planning Act</i>. | Ensure the policy aligns with recent updates to the <i>Planning Act</i> . Consideration may also be had to remove the exact language from the <i>Planning Act</i> to ensure the SCOP remains current as the <i>Planning Act</i> is amended from time to time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> lists the various matters of provincial interest. |
| Chapter 2: General Planning Directions | | |
| Section 2.1 establishes policies for ‘Industry’. Policy 2.1.5 states that the Municipality shall protect industrial areas and industries from encroachment of unwanted land uses. | <p>This section should be reviewed against the recommendations of the Employment Lands Study.</p> <p>There may be an opportunity to review these policies against the Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline (May 2021).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Employment Lands Study will provide guidance to update SCOP policies related to employment lands (industry). – The Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline outlines new measures to implement the PPS regarding the buffering and separation of sensitive land uses and major facilities. |
| Section 2.3 establishes policies for ‘Commerce’. | This section should be reviewed against the recommendations of the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Regional Commercial Systems Study will provide guidance to update SCOP policies |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>Regional Commercial Systems Study.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to strengthen commercial land use policies to ensure that commercial uses remain as the principal use on a lot.</p> | <p>related to commercial lands and retail uses.</p> |
| <p>Section 2.4 establishes policies for ‘Housing’. Section 2.4.8 speaks to the preparation of a housing strategy.</p> | <p>This section should be reviewed against the recommendations of the Attainable Housing Study, including the vision and guiding principles for housing.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Attainable Housing Study will establish a vision and series of guiding principles to inform updates to the SCOP. It will also establish other policy recommendations to support the provision of housing. |
| <p>Section 2.4.3 speaks to maintaining a 10-year supply of residential land.</p> | <p>There is a need to plan for a 15-year residential land supply.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS now requires the Municipality to plan to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years. |
| <p>Section 2.5 establishes policies for ‘Parks and Recreation’.</p> | <p>This section should be reviewed against the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including the vision and guiding principles.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will establish a vision and series of guiding principles to inform updates to the SCOP. It will also establish other policy recommendations to support the provision of parks and recreation, such as new services and amenities. |
| <p>Section 2.6.3 speaks to urban design principles within the settlements.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to review these principles to ensure they reflect the current vision(s) for the settlement area, and address</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Downtown Strathroy Urban Design Guidelines may provide a basis from |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|--|
| | matters such as intensification and infill. | which to update this section. |
| Chapter 3: Strathroy | | |
| Section 3.1 describes the character and image of Strathroy. | This section contains some outdated references and projections and should be reviewed and refreshed in line with consultation completed throughout the Growing Together project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Various inputs, including public consultation and visioning, and the Strathroy-Caradoc Strategic Plan. |
| Section 3.3.1 establishes specific policies for Downtown Strathroy, including permitted primary & secondary uses. It also speaks to the future preparation of a Downtown Master Plan. | The outcomes of the Downtown Master Plan and Community Improvement Plan were implemented through OPA #11. Consideration can be had to consolidate OPA #11 into the SCOP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Downtown Strathroy Master Plan was revised in 2020 to identify opportunities for improvements and redevelopment. – The Strathroy-Caradoc Strategic Plan supports an increase in density and rental options in Downtown Strathroy. |
| Section 3.3.2 establishes policies for urban commercial areas of Strathroy, including permitted uses and the form of development. | <p>There may be an opportunity to revise the permitted uses and development standards to better reflect current trends in retail.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to confirm the hierarchy of retail uses between Downtown Strathroy and the commercial centres outside of Downtown.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Regional Commercial Systems Study will provide policy recommendations to consider for the commercial areas of the Municipality. |
| Section 3.3.3 establishes policies for urban industrial areas of Strathroy, including permitted uses | There may be an opportunity to revise the permitted uses and form of development policies to support local | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Employment Lands Study will provide recommendations to consider for the industrial areas of the Municipality. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|---|
| and the form of development | economic development objectives and job creation. | |
| Section 3.3.4 establishes policies for urban residential areas of Strathroy. | There is an opportunity to revise this section to promote higher density forms of housing (e.g., townhouses, mid-rise apartment buildings). Section 3.3.4.1 establishes that a range of housing types and densities ranging from single detached dwellings to high-rise apartment buildings are permitted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS supports the development of a range and mix of residential housing types (Section 1.1.1.b). – The Attainable Housing Study will provide recommendations to improve the supply of attainable housing within the Municipality. |
| Section 3.3.4.5 and 3.3.4.6 provide policies for medium density and high-density development, respectively. Section 3.3.4.7 relates to residential intensification. | <p>Policies should be clarified to ensure development criteria is consistently assessed according to clear performance measures. Subjective terms such as “fit”, “complement”, “not adversely impact” should be avoided unless accompanied by urban design guidelines or more detailed direction.</p> <p>Further policy guidance is required for buildings greater than 3-storeys in height.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS requires municipalities to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities and supports the established of development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment, and new residential development (Section 1.4.3). – The Attainable Housing Study will provide recommendations to support a range housing options in the community. |
| Section 3.3.4.7.1 permits the establishment of one secondary dwelling unit in a main residential use or within an accessory building to the main residential use. | There is a need to review and update policies regarding Additional Residential Units (ARUs). ARUs, a Provincial term, refers to additional dwelling units that are within an accessory building or are contained entirely within a single detached, semi- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|---|
| | detached, or townhouse dwelling. | |
| <p>Section 3.3.4.10 establishes policies for group homes, including requirements for the Zoning By-law to regulate their type, size, and location.</p> | <p>Any reference to minimum distance separation for group homes should be removed as these policies conflict with the Ontario Human Rights Code. The SCOP permits group homes broadly within residential areas and prefers mixed-use locations on major roadways.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Section 35(2) of the <i>Planning Act</i> says municipalities may not pass zoning bylaws that distinguish between people who are related and people who are unrelated in respect of the occupancy or use of a building. For example, a zoning bylaw cannot stipulate that a family rather than roommates must occupy a house. – The Attainable Housing Study may provide recommendations to support the provision of ‘shared housing’ more broadly. |
| <p>Section 3.3.4.12 establishes policies for home occupations which are secondary to a principal residential use.</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to establish more comprehensive policies for home occupations to address matters such as parking signage, and outdoor storage*.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has also seen the rise of new forms of home-based businesses such as food-based businesses and online retail.</p> <p>*this applies to the various home occupation policies throughout the SCOP</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Province of Ontario has expanded permissions under the <i>Health Promotion and Promotion Act</i> to allow home-based food businesses which can sell low-risk foods which are non-hazardous and do not require refrigeration. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Section 3.3.6 establishes policies for Open Space, including Table 1 which sets the classification and standards for parks and open space (i.e., parks classifications and minimum hectares).</p> | <p>There may be a need to revise the classification of parkland, as well as the current rate of 8 ha. per 1000 residents.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan may establish a revised rate for parkland and open spaces, and/or revised parks classifications. |
| <p>Section 3.3.7 establishes policies for the Natural Heritage designation within Strathroy, including wetlands and woodlands.</p> | <p>There is a need to review and update the policies and mapping for the natural heritage system.</p> <p>The SCOP prohibits development within wetlands and reiterates the County’s requirements for a Development Assessment Report (DAR) within 120 m of the feature but does not distinguish between evaluated and unevaluated wetlands. Greater clarity is needed to identify Provincially Significant Wetlands.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS requires a natural heritage system to be established per Section 2.1.3. – The MNHSS recommends that official plan policies be updated to encourage protecting the natural heritage system, in lieu of singular features. The MNHSS provides a strong basis to inform policy and mapping updates the in SCOP. – Wetlands are deemed to be “Provincially Significant” if they meet the criteria of the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System and are confirmed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Municipalities may also define and identify locally significant wetlands, including those wetlands that may not have been evaluated. – The Conservation Authorities maintain their own Operation Guidelines, procedures and policies |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|--|
| | | that provide direction on matters of importance for Official Plans, such as regulations for wetlands and buffering. |
| <p>Section 3.3.8 establishes policies for the Urban Reserve designation.</p> | <p>The only application of the Urban Reserve designation is the lands East of Saxton Road which have been subject to the draft OPA #13 to re-designate the lands as part of Phase 1 of the OPR. There may be a need to re-visit the application of or future need for this designation in the updated SCOP.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – OPA #13 is proposed to re-designate the lands East of Saxton Road within the Residential designation. |
| <p>Section 3.4 establishes policies for infrastructure within Strathroy, including roads, water supply, sanitary sewage, and stormwater management.</p> | <p>There will be a need to review and update the noted rated capacities for the sanitary sewage system, as well as the current state of the water supply system.</p> <p>There is a need to consider green, sustainable approaches to infrastructure as the Municipality adapts to climate change.</p> <p>There is a need to review and update the Municipality’s road network and associated policies for the new planning horizon and to address themes such as complete streets.</p> <p>There may also be an opportunity to revise Table 2 which sets out the road design widths for the road</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS directs municipalities to plan for transportation systems to be safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and meet projected needs (Section 1.6.7). – Section 1.6.6.3 of the PPS directs that where municipal services are not available, planned, or feasible, private communal sewage services and private communal water services are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development. – Section 2.4.5.1 of the County’s Official Plan establishes the County’s |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>hierarchy (i.e., local, arterial, and collector roads).</p> <p>There is an opportunity to review the servicing policies of the OP to reflect communal services within the servicing hierarchy.</p> | <p>preferred servicing hierarchy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Section 1.6.2 of the PPS and other Provincial policies promote green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is also a defined term in the PPS. – The Servicing Capacity and Constraints Study will provide recommendations which can inform updates to the SCOP. – The Transportation Master Plan may provide updates to roadway widths and road classifications. |
| Chapter 4: Mount Brydges | | |
| <p>Section 4.1 describes the character and image of Mount Brydges.</p> | <p>This section contains some outdated references and projections and should be reviewed and refreshed in line with consultation completed throughout the Growing Together project.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Various inputs, including public consultation and visioning, and the Strathroy-Caradoc Strategic Plan. |
| <p>Section 4.3.1 establishes policies for urban residential areas of Mount Brydges.</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to revise this section to promote higher density forms of housing (e.g., townhouses, mid-rise apartment buildings).</p> <p>For example, Section 4.3.1.3 requires that the density and form of new residential development shall complement and reinforce the ‘small’ village character of Mount Brydges. Policies should be clarified to ensure</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS supports the development of a range and mix of residential housing types (Section 1.1.1.b) – The PPS requires municipalities to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities and supports the established of development standards for residential |



| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>development criteria is consistently assessed according to clear performance measures. Subjective terms such as “complement”, “not adversely impact” should be avoided unless accompanied by urban design guidelines or more detailed direction. The policy notes that density and height shall be strictly controlled, without provided specific performance metrics. Further policy guidance is required for buildings greater than 3-storeys in height.</p> | <p>intensification, redevelopment, and new residential development (Section 1.4.3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Attainable Housing Study will provide recommendations to improve the supply of attainable housing within the Municipality. |
| <p>Section 4.3.1.4.1 permits the establishment of one secondary dwelling unit in a main residential use or within an accessory building to the main residential use.</p> | <p>There is a need to review and update policies regarding Additional Residential Units (ARUs). ARUs, a Provincial term, refers to additional dwelling units that are within an accessory building or are contained entirely within a single detached, semi-detached, or townhouse dwelling.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings. |
| <p>Section 4.3.2 establishes policies for urban commercial areas of Mount Brydges, including permitted uses and the form of development.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to revise the permitted uses and form of development policies to better reflect current trends in retail.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Regional Commercial Systems Study will provide policy recommendations to consider for the commercial areas of the Municipality. |
| <p>Section 4.3.3 establishes policies for urban industrial areas of the Mount Brydges, including</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to revise the permitted uses and form of development policies to support local</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Employment Lands Study will provide recommendations to consider for the industrial areas of the Municipality. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|---|
| permitted uses and the form of development | economic development objectives and job creation. | |
| <p>Section 4.3.4 establishes policies for Open Space in Mount Brydges, and notes that additional parkland is not required in the community.</p> | <p>There may be a need to review and revise this section based on the outcomes of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to ensure sufficient parkland is planned for in Mount Brydges.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan may establish a revised rate for parkland and open spaces, and/or revised parks classifications. |
| <p>Section 4.3.6 establishes policies for the Natural Heritage designation within Mount Brydges, including wetlands and woodlands.</p> | <p>There is a need to review and update the policies and mapping for the natural heritage system.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS requires a natural heritage system to be established per Section 2.1.3. – The MNHSS recommends that official plan policies be updated to encourage protecting the natural heritage system, in lieu of singular features. The MNHSS provides a strong basis to inform policy and mapping updates the in SCOP. – Wetlands are deemed to be “Provincially Significant” if they meet the criteria of the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System and are confirmed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Municipalities may also define and identify locally significant wetlands, including those wetlands that may not have been evaluated. – The Conservation Authorities maintain their own Operation Guidelines, |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|---|
| | | <p>procedures and policies that provide direction on matters of importance for Official Plans, such as regulations for wetlands and buffering.</p> |
| <p>Section 4.4 establishes policies for infrastructure within Mount Brydges, including roads, water supply, sanitary sewage, and stormwater management.</p> | <p>There will be a need to review and update the noted rated capacities for the sanitary sewage system, as well as the current state of the water supply system.</p> <p>There is a need to consider green, sustainable approaches to infrastructure as the Municipality adapts to climate change.</p> <p>There is a need to review and update the Municipality’s road network and associated policies for the new planning horizon and to address themes such as complete streets.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS directs municipalities to plan for transportation systems to be safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and meet projected needs (Section 1.6.7). – Section 1.6.2 of the PPS and other Provincial policies promote green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is also a defined term in the PPS. – The Servicing Capacity and Constraints Study will provide recommendations which can inform updates to the SCOP. – The Transportation Master Plan may provide updates to roadway widths and road classifications. |
| Chapter 5: Rural Area | | |
| <p>Section 5.3.1 establishes policies for the Agricultural land use designation in the Municipality.</p> <p>Secondary farm occupations, which can be equated to the current term of on-farm diversified uses,</p> | <p>Permitted uses and other policies for rural lands and prime agricultural lands must be reviewed to ensure they meet Provincial and Regional requirements, which generally intend to protect the agricultural land base from non-agricultural or non-</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Section 1.1.5 of the PPS apply to permitted uses and development on rural lands. – The PPS encourages municipalities to use an Agricultural System approach to maintain and |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|--|
| <p>and agriculture-related uses are permitted a secondary uses within the Agricultural designation.</p> | <p>compatible development and uses.</p> <p>Additionally, there is an intent to support farming operations and viability through appropriate flexibility, such as the permission of on-farm diversified uses.</p> | <p>enhance the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network (Section 2.3.2). Agricultural System is a newly defined term in the PPS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Province has released guidelines regarding permitted uses in Prime Agricultural Areas, which help guide on-farm diversified uses and agriculture-related use permissions. The Guidelines also establish considerations to ensure these uses remain secondary to the agricultural uses. |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.5 addresses policies for Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) to avoid land use conflicts within the Agricultural designation.</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to review this section to confirm the application of MDS to on-farm diversified and agriculture-related uses.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The PPS requires new land uses in prime agricultural areas to comply with MDS formulae (Section 2.3.3.3). - The MDS Formulae were updated in 2017 and provide implementation guidelines within an OP. - The Background Report prepared as part of the County’s OP Review suggests that MDS formulae are best prescribed in the lower-tier OP. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Section 5.3.1.6 establishes policies for the division of farm parcels, while Section 5.3.1.8 establishes policies for dwellings surplus to a farming operation.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to provide greater direction and clarity regarding how applications for surplus farm residence severances should be evaluated. There may also be an opportunity to provide additional direction for severances for agriculture-related uses to prevent over development of agricultural lands (e.g., a minimum lot size).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS permits severances of surplus farm residences to facilitate farm consolidation (Section 2.3.4.1.c). – The PPS permits lot creation for agricultural uses and agriculture-related uses, subject to criteria (Section 2.3.4.1.a-b). |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.9 establishes policies for secondary farm occupations to help ensure they are limited in scale and remain secondary to the principal farm use.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to provide greater detail in this policy with respect to permitted uses and standards to ensure they remain secondary to the principal use. More specific requirements can be outlined in the Municipality’s zoning by-law. There is also an opportunity to identify those on-farm diversified uses which are not suitable in the agricultural area.</p> <p>The term ‘on-farm diversified use’ can be used to maintain consistency with Provincial policies.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS permits on-farm diversified uses within prime agricultural areas (Section 2.3.3.1). – The Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas provide examples of on-farm diversified uses which would be permitted or would not typically be permitted, as well as criteria to ensure that they remain secondary to the principal agricultural use. |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.10 establishes policies for temporary dwellings on farms which accommodate farm help as part of a principal agricultural use.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to review policies for temporary dwellings on farms and these should be reviewed against the revised framework for secondary dwelling units / additional residential units within the rural area. Consideration</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The County OP permits temporary residential units for farm help if grouped with the existing farm buildings. – The Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas note |



| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>should also be had to distinguish between temporary and full-time farm help dwellings. The OP can also set out development standards to help improve the quality of housing for farm workers and set a framework for the Municipality’s Zoning By-law.</p> | <p>that housing for farm workers is considered an agricultural use and is therefore permitted within prime agricultural areas.</p> |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.12 sets out policies for granny flats, otherwise known as garden suites, where are permitted a temporary use.</p> | <p>These policies should be reviewed against updated policies for additional residential units (ARUs) permitted within a detached structure to provide clarity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings. |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.12.1 establishes policies for secondary dwelling units.</p> | <p>There is a need to review and update policies regarding Additional Residential Units (ARUs). ARUs, a Provincial term, refers to additional dwelling units that are within an accessory building or are contained entirely within a single detached, semi-detached, or townhouse dwelling.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings. |
| <p>Section 5.3.1.14 establishes policies for agriculturally related commercial and industrial uses. These uses are permitted in Settlement Areas, and rural Industrial and Commercial lands (outside of settlement areas).</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to review the policies for these uses. There is also an opportunity to consider revising the terminology to reference ‘agriculture-related uses’ to align with Provincial policies and guidelines.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS permits agriculture-related uses within prime agricultural areas (Section 2.3.3.1). – The Guidelines for Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas provide examples of agriculture-related uses, as well as criteria to ensure that they are compatible with and |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|--|
| | | do not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. |
| <p>Section 5.3.2 establishes policies for the Natural Heritage designation in the rural area. The Natural Heritage mapping is included as an overlay in the rural area over the underlying agricultural land use designation.</p> | <p>There may be a need to review and update the policies and mapping for the natural heritage system.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to clarify that existing agricultural uses are permitted to continue within or adjacent to natural areas and natural hazards.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS requires a natural heritage system to be established per Section 2.1.3. – The MNHSS recommends that official plan policies be updated to encourage protecting the natural heritage system, in lieu of singular features. The MNHSS provides a strong basis to inform policy and mapping updates the in SCOP. – Wetlands are deemed to be “Provincially Significant” if they meet the criteria of the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System and are confirmed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Municipalities may also define and identify locally significant wetlands, including those wetlands that may not have been evaluated. |
| <p>Section 5.3.3.5 and 5.3.4.2 establish policies for the commercial and industrial uses in the rural area.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to clarify the naming of this designation (e.g., Rural Industrial, Rural Commercial) to improve interpretation of the SCOP and distinguish these two designations from the commercial and industrial designations within the hamlets</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Section 5.3.3.5, 5.3.4.2, and 5.3.5.3 establishes servicing policies for Hamlet, Commercial, and Industrial designations in the rural area.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to review the servicing hierarchy for the rural area.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Servicing Capacity and Constraints Study may provide recommendations for servicing in the rural area. |
| <p>Section 5.4 establishes policies for roads and highways in the rural area.</p> | <p>There is a need to review and update the Municipality’s road network and associated policies for the new planning horizon and to address themes such as rural cycling routes.</p> <p>There may also be an opportunity to revise Table 3 which sets out the road design widths for the road hierarchy (i.e., local, arterial, and collector roads).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS directs municipalities to plan for transportation systems to be safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and meet projected needs (Section 1.6.7). – The Transportation Master Plan may provide updates to roadway widths and road classifications. |
| <p>New policy opportunity.</p> | <p>Through the Municipality’s previous OP Review (OPA #5), policies pertaining to green energy (e.g., commercial wind energy and small-scale wind energy systems) were removed from the SCOP in accordance with the <i>Green Energy Act</i>.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to consider the need to permit or guide development of energy systems. Further, there is a need to consider green energy policies.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS indicates that planning authorities should consider providing opportunities for development of energy systems to meet current/future needs (Section 1.6.11.1). – The <i>Green Energy Act</i>, which previously removed municipal authority to regulate green energy infrastructure in order to promote its development, was repealed by the Province. |
| <p>New policy opportunity.</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to create policies to encourage the development of broadband services in the</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act</i>, 2021 outlines the |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|--|
| | rural areas of the Municipality. This has become an emerging gap in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. | Province’s commitment to expand broadband access in Ontario in part through coordination with municipal and provincial infrastructure projects. |
| Chapter 6: Land Use and Development Sensitivity Areas | | |
| Section 6.1 establishes policies for hazard lands, such as those lands within the floodway or flood fringe. | There is a need to plan for the effects of climate change on natural hazard risks, such as flooding and erosion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS outlines policies which emphasize the avoidance of natural and human-made hazards and directs development away from areas where there is a risk to public health and safety or property damage, and not create a new or aggravated hazard (Section 3.0). Within the context of the PPS, natural hazards include hazardous lands, flooding hazards, erosion hazards, dynamic beach hazards, and wildland fire. – Natural Hazards form part of the County’s OP Natural System, and includes steep slope hazards, unstable soils, and fill regulated areas. Within Natural Hazards, development is not prohibited, and there is a need to protect these features from incompatible land uses (Section 2.2.1.3) |
| Section 6.2 establishes policies for source water protection, and notes that | Provincial policies regarding protection of drinking water sources have evolved and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Plan, prepared |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|---|---|
| <p>the once the Source Protection Plans are approved and in effect, that the SCOP may be amended to reflect new policies and land use schedules.</p> | <p>there is a need to ensure the Municipality’s Official Plan is up to date.</p> <p>There are no municipal drinking water sources in Strathroy-Caradoc that are regulated by a Source Protection Plan. The Lake Huron Primary Intake, which services Strathroy-Caradoc, is not regulated by a Source Protection Plan.</p> | <p>per the <i>Clean Water Act</i>, includes recommended policies and directions to be incorporated into Official Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Middlesex County Source Protection Plan Implementation Report (2017) identifies that there are Highly Vulnerable Aquifers (HVAs) and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas (SGRAs) within Strathroy-Caradoc. The approach to mapping HVAs and SGRAs, per the Report, needs to be confirmed with the Municipality as part of this OPR. – Source Protection policies will be addressed as part of the County’s OP review. |
| <p>Section 6.3 sets out policies for lands adjacent to railways.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to review the policies against the 2013 Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations to ensure development in proximity to railways is sufficiently addressed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The 2013 Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations helps guide new development in proximity to railways. The guidelines propose building setbacks, noise and vibration influence areas, security fencing and warning clause guidelines. |
| <p>Section 6.5 establishes policies for landfill sites and other contaminated sites.</p> | <p>There may be an opportunity to review these policies against the Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS emphasizes the importance of buffering and separating sensitive |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|---|
| | (May 2021), which address major facilities such as landfills. | land uses and major facilities. – The Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline outlines new measures to implement the PPS regarding the buffering and separation of sensitive land uses and major facilities. |
| Section 6.6 establishes policies to address land use compatibility adjacent to sewage treatment plants. | There may be an opportunity to review these policies against the Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline (May 2021), which address major facilities such as sewage treatment plants. | – The PPS emphasizes the importance of buffering and separating sensitive land uses and major facilities. – The Proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline outlines new measures to implement the PPS regarding the buffering and separation of sensitive land uses and major facilities. |
| Chapter 7: Implementation and Interpretation | | |
| Section 7.3.3 requires that the Municipality review its Official Plan every 5 years. | The review timelines established in the SCOP do not align with updates to the <i>Planning Act</i> . | – Section 26 of the <i>Planning Act</i> now establishes the review timelines for an OP which are ten years after a new SCOP has come into effect and every 5 years thereafter. Section 24 provides limitations on appeals of new and updated official plans. |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Section 7.4.3.2 establishes policies for cash-in-lieu of parkland.</p> | <p>The policies for cash-in-lieu of parkland may now longer reflect the needs of the Municipality with respect to parkland requirements.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will make recommendations as it relates to the provision of parkland. – Bill 108 revised Section 37 of the <i>Planning Act</i> to permit municipalities to impose a Community Benefits Charge to pay for the capital costs of facilities, services, and matters related to growth for developments greater than 10 units. |
| <p>Section 7.4.5.3 contains policies which permit garden suites as a temporary use, subject to a temporary use by-law.</p> | <p>These policies should be reviewed against updated policies for additional residential units (ARUs) permitted within a detached structure to provide clarity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings. |
| <p>Section 7.4.6 sets out policies for site plan control.</p> | <p>Agricultural uses are currently exempted from the requirements of site plan control. Site plan control can be expanded to agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses to address issues of compatibility. There is an opportunity to consider a scoped/expedited site plan control for agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas notes that site plan control may be used to ensure that new uses fit within the agricultural character of the area. This can avoid the need for official plan and zoning by-law amendments. |
| <p>Section 7.5 sets out policies for complete applications to ensure all materials are received in support of a development application.</p> | <p>New policies can be considered to require pre-consultation with the Municipality and/or peer</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Planning Act</i> allows municipalities to require mandatory pre-consultations. The outcome of the pre- |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|---|--|
| | review of any required studies or reports. | consultation is intended to provide clear direction of the studies, reports and drawings that will be required in support of a complete application. |
| <p>Section 7.6 establishes policies for public consultation in line with the requirements of the <u>Planning Act</u>.</p> | <p>There is an opportunity to include new policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities, including the need to confirm the preferred level of consultation. Consideration should be had to ensure this goal applies to participation in environmental management and consultation, cultural heritage, and development application review.</p> <p>Consideration may be had to re-naming this section to a broader “consultation” or “engagement and participation” section.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to consider revising language to reflect changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as virtual consultation and other online communication tools.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to specify different means of engagement and requiring public consultation (e.g., open houses) for certain development applications.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The required contents of an Official Plan are set out in Section 16(1) of the <i>Planning Act</i> and include a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public for Official Plans/Amendments, Zoning By-laws, Plans of Subdivisions, and consents. – The PPS encourages planning authorities to build constructive and cooperative relationships through meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities to facilitate knowledge-sharing in land use planning processes. Section 1.2.2 requires planning authorities to engage with Indigenous communities. |
| Glossary | | |
| <p>This sections contains definitions for key terms</p> | It is anticipated that several new definitions will be | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The PPS includes many new and updated |

| Existing Policy Characterization | Issue, Conflict, or Gap | Key Policy & Legislative Drivers and Resources |
|--|--|---|
| <p>used throughout the Official Plan.</p> | <p>required based on updates to other policies of the SCOP. Some existing definitions will require updates to ensure align with Provincial and County policies and to modernize the SCOP.</p> <p>Throughout the SCOP, there is also an opportunity to bold defined terms to indicate that a term is defined in the glossary.</p> | <p>definitions (e.g., on-farm diversified uses, agriculture-related uses).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New terminology has been introduced under the <i>Planning Act</i>. |

4.2 General Housekeeping Updates & Opportunities

While a primary objective the Official Plan Review is to respond to recent Provincial and County policies, and the outcomes of the Growing Together Master Plans and Studies, there is also an opportunity to address other general updates and housekeeping updates. These might include any technical errors or omissions, grammatical errors, updating outdated terminology, and ensuring that the Official Plan is user-friendly. Certain references throughout the Official Plan, such as the preambles for the different land use designations may require modification to reflect current conditions (e.g., the preamble for Section 3.3.2 references a development which is ‘under construction’).

Preparing an updated Official Plan also presents an opportunity to re-visit the overall structure of the Official Plan and consider changes to streamline interpretation and improve the overall readability of the document. As such, the following changes and considerations have been identified for further refinement and implementation in subsequent stages of the project:

- The Official Plan cover page will need to be updated to reflect the revised planning horizon and updated map;
- The Table of Contents should be hyperlinked to various sections of the Official Plan, recognizing that the document is predominantly accessed online;
- References to gendered language should be revised (e.g., “Where development is proposed in ‘Hazard Land’ areas, the proponent may be required to undertake, at *his* expense...”);
- There is an opportunity to revise the styles of the section headings to improve readability and incorporate the section heading within the header bar at the top of the page;
- There is an opportunity to identify and consolidate policies that apply to both Mount Brydges and Strathroy;

- There is an opportunity to establish a consolidate section of ‘policies for specific uses’ which provides additional detailed policy guidance for certain types of land uses. For example, there are several instances of policies for home occupations for each land use designation that could be consolidated into one section to improve readability and streamline future OP edits;
- There is an opportunity to add a ‘preamble’ section to the Official Plan which serves as a user-guide to the document and support interpretation of the policies;
- The mapping / schedule template can be made consistent between the various Schedules and Figures;
- Sub-section heading font sizes/styles should be revised to distinguish between the third and fourth levels of headings (e.g., 3.3.1 and 3.3.1.1) to improve readability; and,
- Where possible, italics should be removed from the document to improve document accessibility in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.



5 Official Plan Review Next Steps

The Background Review Report is the first deliverable of Phase 2 of the Official Plan Review and identifies and review key policy drivers and inputs that need to be considered in the updated Official Plan. This section provides an explanation of next steps moving through Phase of the project.

Consultation

A virtual Municipal Council Workshop was held in June 2, 2021 with members of Strathroy-Caradoc Council to gain a better understanding of Council's view of the existing Official Plan. Feedback from this session has been consider and integrated into this Report. Subsequently, this report has been posted to the Growing Together project website for public review and comment. Public and stakeholder consultations will occur in Summer 2021 to present the findings of this Report and seek input on other matters to be addressed in the Official Plan.

Draft Policy Conformity & Directions Report

Based on the background review and input received through consultation, the Draft Policy Conformity and Directions Report will be prepared. This second report will provide recommendations on various policy matters, as well as guidance and justification for changes to policy, land use designations, and mapping. Outcomes of the Growing Together Master Plans and Studies will be used to inform the report, which will identify outstanding policy gaps or issues that need to be incorporated in the updated Official Plan. Subsequent consultation will be held to present the findings of the Draft Policy Conformity and Directions Report.

