

Prepared for:

MUNICIPALITY OF BROCKTON
100 Scott Street,
Walkerton, ON
N0G 2V0

Prepared by:

J.L. RICHARDS & ASSOCIATES LIMITED
107-450 Speedvale Avenue West
Guelph, ON
N1H 7Y6
TEL: 519-763-0713

Background Report

Municipality of Brockton Walkerton Official Plan and Municipal-wide Zoning By-law Review



Credit: Municipality of Brockton



J.L. Richards

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 Why Update the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law**
- 1.2 The Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law Project**
- 1.3 Purpose of the Report**



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1.0 Introduction

The Municipality of Brockton (hereinafter, the Municipality) is a lower-tier municipality within Bruce County located along the Saugeen River situated north of the Municipality of South Bruce, south of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie and the Town of Saugeen Shores, east of Kincardine and west of the Municipalities of Hanover and West Grey (Figure 1). It comprises of the former Town of Walkerton, Township of Brant and Township of Greenock. The Municipality is located in the heart of some of Bruce County's most fertile farmland and includes many natural heritage features including the Saugeen River, Greenock Swamp and several small inland lakes and streams. The Municipality of Brockton is home to 9,784 people¹ and includes the Walkerton Settlement Area and Hamlets of Cargill, Chepstow, Elmwood, Glammis, Pinkerton and Riversdale and other small inland lake communities.

Figure 1 Location of Municipality



The Municipality of Brockton is growing and is expected to continue to grow over the next 20 to 30 years. Bruce County as a whole is experiencing unprecedented growth resulting from increased remote work opportunities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, employment opportunities at

¹ Statistics Canada (2025). 2021 Census for Municipality of Brockton Census Subdivision. Retrieved March 20, 2025 from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&DGUIDlist=2021A00053541032&GENDERlist=1&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=0>

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Bruce Power and pressures on the housing market from an affordability and housing stock perspective. More people are choosing to move away from larger urban centres in search of more affordable housing options, increased remote work opportunities and a more small town lifestyle. The Municipality of Brockton is a welcoming and affordable community with quality school, services and amenities, making it desirable for people looking to put down roots. Only the designated settlement area of Walkerton contains full municipal sewer and water services and will need to accommodate the majority of the projected population growth in the Municipality as established by the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) and Bruce County Official Plan (BCOP). However, climate change is increasing the number and frequency of extreme weather events, raising concerns related to flooding and other hazards, necessitating the need to consider how to grow while protecting public health and safety.

Given these factors, the Municipality will need to navigate considerable changes in relation to growth management, housing, climate change, the protection of its agricultural land base and need to provide long term economic sustainability. It needs to consider its current goals and strategies to determine if they remain suitable to guide the future growth and development within the Municipality over the next 25 years.

The Walkerton Official Plan (OP) and Municipality of Brockton Zoning By-law are key tools to help the Municipality in navigating these changes. The Walkerton OP and Municipality of Brockton Zoning By-law were last comprehensively updated in 2017 and 2013, respectively. While Zoning By-law has undergone a number of housekeeping amendments, several policy and legislative changes have occurred at provincial and County levels that necessitate updates to both the OP and Zoning By-law.

1.1 Why Update the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law?

Given the long-term nature of an OP, the physical changes that can occur in the external environment and the evolving legislative, policy, and regulatory environment, it is a standard municipal practice to periodically review an OP and Zoning By-law. This is enshrined in Section 26 of the *Planning Act* which requires municipalities to revisit their OP no less frequently than 10 years after it comes into effect as a new OP and every 5 years thereafter, unless replaced by a new OP. Similarly, Section 26 (9) of the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to review and update their Zoning By-laws to conform with required statutory updates to the OP. The purpose of such a review is to ensure that the OP has regard to matters of provincial interest listed under Section 2 of the *Planning Act*; is consistent with policy statements issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*; and that it conforms or does not conflict with provincial plans. The review also represents an important opportunity to ensure the OP continues to represent Council's vision and goals for the community. Achieving a balance between local and provincial perspectives is of great importance.

Bruce County is in the final stages of its municipal comprehensive review of its OP to address several legislative and policy changes and determine how and where the County will grow. Its Growth Management Amendment was approved by the Province in August 2024 which established growth management and growth forecasts for the County and its lower-tier municipalities. Per Section 27 of the *Planning Act*, once the Province has approved the

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amendments to the Bruce County OP, the Municipality has one (1) year to amend its OP to conform to the changes.

1.2 The Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law Review Project

Understanding that updating the OP and Zoning By-law is in the community's best interest, Municipal Council retained J.L. Richards & Associates Limited to assist with the OP and Zoning By-law Review (project). The project includes five phases, which are illustrated below:



This report represents the conclusion of phase 2 and summarizes the findings of the background and technical review. As part of our work to date, we have:

- Undertaken a technical review of the current OP and Zoning By-law.
- Undertaken a review of provincial plans and supporting documents including:

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- The Planning Act.
- Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024
- The draft Bruce County Official Plan (BCOP) and Growth Management Official Plan Amendment
- Brockton 2021-2025 Strategic Action Plan
- Saugeen Valley Source Protect Area Source Protection Plan.
- Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Environmental Planning and Regulations Policies Manual.
- Master Servicing Plan
- Recreation and Master Services and Facilities Plan
- Development Charges Background Study
- Preliminary Planning Analysis in Support of a Request for the Expansion of the Walkerton Settlement Area Boundary in the Municipality of Brockton by Monteith and Brown Planning Consultants
- Sought input from the surrounding First Nations communities.
- Reviewed and analyzed 2021 Census of Canada data release for the community.
- Prepared a report and presentation for a Special Meeting of Council held in March 2025.
- Issued one survey to gain feedback on key themes and visioning for the future documents.

1.3 Purpose of the Report

This report summarizes key information from several different sources and provides recommendations for the draft OP and Zoning By-law. It will act as the blueprint for the drafting of the OP and Zoning By-law amendments. This report will remain in draft form throughout the OP and Zoning By-law review project and will be finalized as part of Phase 5 once the final draft OP and Zoning By-law are prepared.

Please note that while not specifically addressed in this background report, minor changes to ensure consistency with the PPS and BCOP and reflect updated terminology will be made to the draft Official Plan.

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Section 2

What We Heard

- 2.1 Engagement Plan
- 2.2 Survey Results



Credit: Municipality of Brockton

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2.0 What We Heard

2.1 Engagement Plan

The Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review project will be shaped by public engagement including two public surveys, a public information session, a public open house and a statutory public meeting.

The objective of each public engagement method and their estimate timing is summarized in the below table (Table 1):

Table 1 Public Engagement Methodology

Method	Objective	Timing
Public Surveys	To provide an opportunity for members of the public and stakeholders to identify areas for consideration and new ideas to inform the project.	Phase 2- March to April 2025
Public Information Session	To provide an in-person opportunity introduce the project to the public and provide the preliminary results of the background research thus far.	Phase 3 - June 2025
Statutory Public Open House	To provide members of the public and stakeholders an informal opportunity to review the draft documents and directions and ask questions.	Phase 4 - September 2025
Statutory Public Meeting	To provide members of the public, stakeholders and council a formal opportunity to provide comments and ask questions	Phase 5 - December 2025

2.2 Survey Results

Two surveys were developed to gather feedback on directions for both the Walkerton Official Plan and Brockton-wide Zoning By-law Review. Both surveys were published on the Municipality's website in March 2025 and ran for approximately 6 weeks until late April. The Official Plan survey focused on gaining an understanding of specific priorities and challenges faced by Walkerton and developing directions to guide growth over the next 25 years. The Zoning By-law survey was intended to gain an understanding about how the current by-law functions and identify the specific priorities and challenges to be addressed in the updated Zoning By-law Review.

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2.2.1 Walkerton Official Plan Review Survey

The majority of respondents lived in Brockton and were between the ages of 25 and 54 years old. When asked what you value most about your community that you would like supported more in the Official Plan, respondents highlighted Walkerton's heritage, natural features, small town feel and walkability.

When asked to pick the top three priorities for the Official Plan Review, the most popular responses included parkland and open spaces, infrastructure and services (i.e., roads), housing, appropriate growth and protection of the natural environment.

The survey was organized into three distinct sections and the responses for each section are summarized below.



Housing

When asked to identify the biggest challenges related to housing, respondents highlighted housing costs, lack of different housing options and a lack of rental opportunities. Respondents also identified opportunities for improvement including optimizing tax and development charges, welcoming newcomers, exploring new land for development and adapting to global economic trends. As the Municipality recently completed a Development Charges Background Study in 2024 to establish Development Charges, it is unclear whether the respondent was referring to County or Municipal charges. When asked to identify what types of housing they would like to see in Walkerton, the most popular dwelling types were seniors housing which encompasses a range of dwelling types including apartments, bungalows, independent living facilities and assisted living facilities. Followed by additional residential units, townhouses, duplexes/triplexes and apartments. When asked if there were areas in the Town where they would like to see more dense housing options, responses were mixed with a couple of respondents identifying the downtown and some respondents wanting to co-locate them with commercial/industrial areas. Some respondents did not want to see more dense housing or if it does occur, would like to see it directed away from schools. Most respondents (63%) also identified that there is an equal need for both rental and homes for purchase.



Economic Development

When asked whether they were satisfied with the mix of commercial and employment uses in Walkerton, the results were split 50/50. When asked whether there were opportunities for additional business growth in Walkerton, respondents identified opportunities to use underutilized buildings, opportunities to bring new businesses outside of the downtown, the need for more industrial, office and employment growth. While not a business opportunity, it was identified that uses like gas stations, pubs, activities for adults and dog parks were needed in the community. Some of these are opportunities the Municipality is already capitalizing on, such as the implementation of a dog park at Walkerton Park. When asked what challenges they feel pose barriers to business growth,

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responses were mixed, respondents identified a desire to increase affordable housing options, streamline rules and regulations and attract skilled labour to address business challenges. Respondents identified other economic priorities to be reviewed including the need to save farmland, need to bring new businesses into town and the need to encourage apprenticeships.



Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage

The majority of respondents (88%) identified that it is important that the Official Plan enhance or increase protections of the natural environment. When asked what aspects of natural heritage need additional protection in the Official Plan, respondents identified the need to protect existing green spaces, the river, trails, trees and the need to keep development out of natural areas. When asked whether there were any sites of cultural and/or natural significance that warrant enhanced or increased protection in the Official Plan, respondents identified the downtown core, buildings like the Armoury and Hartley House, and existing green space. It is noted that the Armoury and Hartley House need rehabilitation and therefore opportunities need to be explored which recognize their cultural heritage value while facilitating improvements and maximizing their use.

When asked whether there were any other planning topics that should be reviewed as part of the Official Plan review, respondents identified that they would like to see policies for a new walkable mixed-use area (i.e., second downtown), higher density targets, green spaces and some respondents did not want to see more areas that mix industrial and residential uses.

2.2.2 Brockton Zoning By-law Survey

Similar to the Official Plan survey, the majority of respondents lived in Brockton and were between the ages of 25 to 44 years old.

When asked about the functionality of the existing Zoning By-law, most responses were neutral, not providing a strong indication whether the Zoning By-law was hard to interpret and whether the document was working well.

When asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with specific statements related to topic areas within the Zoning By-law, most respondents indicated that they agreed that it is important that the Zoning By-law permit a range of housing options and that it establishes mixed use areas. Most respondents indicated that they believed the Zoning By-law had adequate parking standards. Most respondents indicated that they would like to see permissions for value-added agricultural uses in the Zoning By-law.

The data collected through both surveys has been used to inform the directions of the background report.

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Section 3

What We Know

- 3.1 Planning Context
- 3.2 Growth and Settlement
- 3.3 Housing
- 3.4 Employment and Commercial Areas
- 3.5 Recreational, Parks and Open Space
- 3.6 Changing Climate
- 3.7 Natural Environment
- 3.8 Protecting Public Health and Safety
- 3.9 Rural and Agricultural Areas
- 3.10 Cultural Heritage
- 3.11 Other Considerations



Credit: Municipality of Brockton

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3.0 What We Know

3.1 Planning Context

The planning policy and regulatory framework for the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law Review is formed by the *Planning Act*, the PPS, BCOP and Saugeen Valley Source Protection Area Source Protection Plan. This section summarizes this framework.

3.1.1 Planning Act

The *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, provides the statutory authority for land use planning in Ontario and provides the basis for municipalities to prepare their OPs.

Decision makers shall “have regard to” matters of provincial interest as listed in Section 2 of the *Act* and land use planning decision making must be consistent with the PPS and must conform to / not conflict with provincial plans.

Several updates to the *Act* have occurred since the OP came into effect in 2017:

- *Building Better Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act, 2017 (Bill 139).*
- *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108).*
- *Covid-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 (Bill 197).*
- *Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act, 2021 (Bill 276).*
- *More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022 (Bill 109).*
- *Build More Homes Faster Act (Bill 23); and,*
- *Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act (Bill 97).*

The key changes to the planning framework through these updates include:

- Introduction of community benefit charges.
- Requirement for affordable housing and climate change policies in OPs.
- Modified parkland dedication requirements.
- Permitted two additional residential units as-of-right in urban areas.
- Modified timelines for appeals of non-decisions for certain development applications; and,
- the types of matters and reasons for appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (formerly the Ontario Municipal Board).
- Modifications to development subject to site plan control (i.e., site plan does not apply to a residential development project with 10 or fewer units where not located adjacent to a waterbody or railway)

3.1.2 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024

The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and is intended to guide municipalities in making planning decisions. The *Planning Act* requires that municipal decisions in respect to the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter “shall be consistent with” the PPS. The PPS replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The PPS came into effect on October 20, 2024.

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The PPS is a consolidated statement of the Province's policies on land use planning that guides decision making in municipalities. Similar to the Provincial Policy Statement 2020, it promotes appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural and built environment. However, the PPS has a stronger focus on housing and providing municipalities with the tools and flexibility needed to build more housing and support the creation of complete communities.

The PPS makes the following changes that directly impact the Municipality of Brockton:

- Emphasizes building a greater range and mix of housing options for all Ontarians.
- Replaces concept of “healthy, safe and livable” with “complete communities” and includes a new definition for complete communities.
- Allows municipalities to continue to use forecast growth issued previously by the province, however moving forward municipalities will base population and employment growth forecasts on the Ontario Population Projections prepared by the Ministry of Finance.
- Includes policies for Strategic Growth Areas which are areas like downtown's which will be focus areas for intensification and compact development.
- Greater focus on redevelopment opportunities for underutilized sites.
- Permits settlement boundary expansions to occur outside of a municipal comprehensive review provided specific criteria is satisfied.
- Amends employment area definition per the Planning Act to exclude office, institutional and retail uses from the definition unless they are associated with the employment use.
- Requires municipalities to promote economic development and competitiveness by planning for a diverse mix of uses and addressing land use compatibility concerns.
- Permits the removal of lands from an employment area outside of a municipal comprehensive review, subject to criteria.
- Permits 2 additional residential units as-of-right where an existing dwelling is located on a lot within the rural and prime agricultural areas subject to criteria.

Please note that the above summary does not include all changes implemented through the PPS but rather is a summary of major changes which affect growth and development within the Municipality of Brockton.

3.1.3 Bruce County Official Plan (BCOP)

The BCOP was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs in September 1998 and provides the over-arching policy directions on matters of County and Provincial interests.

The County is currently in the process of completing a three (3) phase official plan review, consisting of four (4) separate amendments:

- i. Additional Residential Units and CIP Amendment – Approved by County Council in July 2021.
- ii. Growth Management Amendment (new visioning, guiding principles and growth forecasts) – Approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on August 23, 2024.
- iii. Implementation Amendment (reduce duplication and improve useability) – Approved by County Council in March 2024.
- iv. New BCOP (final outstanding policy updates) – Draft OP released; work is on-going. It is the County's intention to bring it forward for adoption by the end of 2025.

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Settlement Boundary requests are being reviewed as part of the new BCOP work. However, due to the changes to the PPS, the Municipality now has the ability to consider settlement area boundary requests outside of the County's OP Review provided it conforms with the BCOP.

Updated policies to the Walkerton OP are required to ensure orderly development and management of resources in the community. The Walkerton OP must conform to the BCOP and as such, the Municipality will have one (1) year to amend its OP, as required by the *Planning Act*, to conform to the changes to the BCOP, once the latter is approved.

3.1.4 Housing Accelerator Fund

In November 2024, the Municipality of Brockton received Housing Accelerator Funds from the Federal government to implement the following initiatives:

1. Reduce and eliminate parking standards.
2. Complete a comprehensive review of development charges and fee schedules.
3. Make municipally owned lands available for priority housing development.
4. Develop OP and zoning by-law amendments to eliminate density restrictions and introduce new residential development flexibility.
5. Develop and implement new site plan control policies and promote low-rise infill development.
6. Develop affordable housing community improvement plan and concierge service to introduce new affordable housing based incentive programming.

Through these initiatives, the Municipality has set priorities to increase its housing supply by 433 permitted housing units. The OP and Zoning By-law Review project ties into initiatives 4,5 and 6 as it will revisit OP policies related to housing, density and site plan control.

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3.2 Growth and Settlement

Understanding the future development needs of the community is critical to ensuring there is adequate land supply, servicing, and infrastructure available, and a framework in place to ensure development meets the needs of the community. As the Municipality of Brockton is an area municipality within Bruce County, a Growth Management Study and associated Land Needs Assessment (LNA) was completed as part of Bruce County's OP review process. Unlike adjacent municipalities in Bruce County along the shores of Lake Huron, Brockton has fewer seasonal residents and contains a larger proportion of permanent residents.

Based on the Bruce County's population forecasts, it is projected that the Municipality will grow from a population of approximately 10,000 residents and 4,670 jobs in 2021 to a population of approximately 13,200 residents and 6,090 jobs in 2046. In terms of household growth, it is projected that the number of households will grow to 5,520 households in 2046 (from 3,950 in 2021).

Per Section 2.1.3 of the PPS, at the time of an OP Review, municipalities shall ensure that sufficient land is made available to accommodate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for 20 to 30 years. Section 2.1.4.a) of the PPS states that to meet the project requirements municipalities shall maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through lands that are designated and available for residential development and maintain at all times land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide a three year supply of residential units available through lands suitability zoned, including units in draft approved or registered plans.

Per the PPS and BCOP, the Walkerton settlement area shall be the focus of development. While growth will occur in the hamlet areas, it will be at a smaller scale than Walkerton. Municipalities should support opportunities for intensification and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment. The BCOP establishes a minimum intensification target of 15 percent for the built-up areas of its Primary Urban Areas (i.e., urban settlement areas like Walkerton). To ensure cost effective development which efficiently uses land and resources, the PPS encourages local municipalities to establish density targets (i.e., a minimum number of people and jobs or units per hectare) for undeveloped lands within the settlement area.

Per the PPS, municipalities first need to consider opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth within its existing settlement area boundaries before looking at opportunities to expand. Typically, a LNA determines how much growth can be accommodated within a municipality's existing settlement areas through vacant lands and intensification and determines whether additional land is needed to accommodate growth projections. Bruce County completed a LNA through its OP review and determined that between 2021-2046 it is projected that the Municipality will need 1,470 units to accommodate forecasted growth. As shown in Table 2, approximately 760 units can be accommodated on vacant lands in the settlement area and 80 units can be accommodated through intensification, resulting in a deficit of 680 units. When reviewing employment needs, Walkerton needs 19 hectares of employment lands and currently has 26 hectares of vacant employment lands, resulting in a surplus of 7 hectares. It is important to note that these numbers do not include the MZO lands in Walkerton which will add

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approximately 260 residential units and 13 hectares of vacant employment lands. Therefore, additional lands will be required to accommodate residential growth in Brockton.

Table 2 Residential and Employment Land Needs to 2046

	Residential/ Employment Vacant Land Supply	Intensification Supply (10%)	Total Supply	Forecasted Growth	Surplus/Deficiency
Residential Needs	760 units	80 units	840 units	1,470 units	- 630 units
Employment Needs	26 hectares	N/A	26 hectares	19 hectares	+ 7 hectares

It should be noted that the BCOP establishes an intensification target of 15% whereas the County growth assumptions utilized a rate of 10%. Should a 15% intensification target be applied, the unit deficiency will decrease to 596. With the areas proposed to be added to the settlement area boundary, there will be sufficient lands available to accommodate growth over the planning horizon.

Section 2.3.2 of the PPS establishes new policies for the consideration of settlement boundary expansions. Unlike the 2020 PPS, where settlement boundary expansions could only be considered by a municipality through a comprehensive review (i.e., a statutory Official Plan Review), the current PPS allows for the consideration of settlement area boundary expansions outside of this process and permits boundary expansion applications by a private landowner or individual.

In lieu of the previous comprehensive review requirements, Section 2.3.2 of the PPS states that the following must be considered when reviewing a settlement area boundary expansion:

- a) Need for additional lands to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of uses;
- b) Availability of infrastructure and public services;
- c) Presence of speciality crop areas;
- d) Alternative locations avoiding prime agricultural lands;
- e) Compliance with the minimum distance separation formulae;
- f) Mitigation of impacts to the agricultural system; and
- g) Phased progression of urban development.

Notwithstanding the above, policy considerations, the Municipalities may only identify a new settlement area where it has been demonstrated that the infrastructure and public service facilities to support development are planned or available.

As part of Bruce County's OP review, the Municipality of Brockton submitted requests to expand the settlement boundary area at two locations (Figure 2). Bruce County planning staff evaluated these requests to determine if they met the criteria outlined in Section 2.3.2 of the PPS as part of their "Draft New Bruce County Official Plan Settlement Boundary Adjustments" report dated November 21, 2024. They concluded that both settlement area expansions requests satisfied their criteria subject to the submission of an agricultural impact assessment.

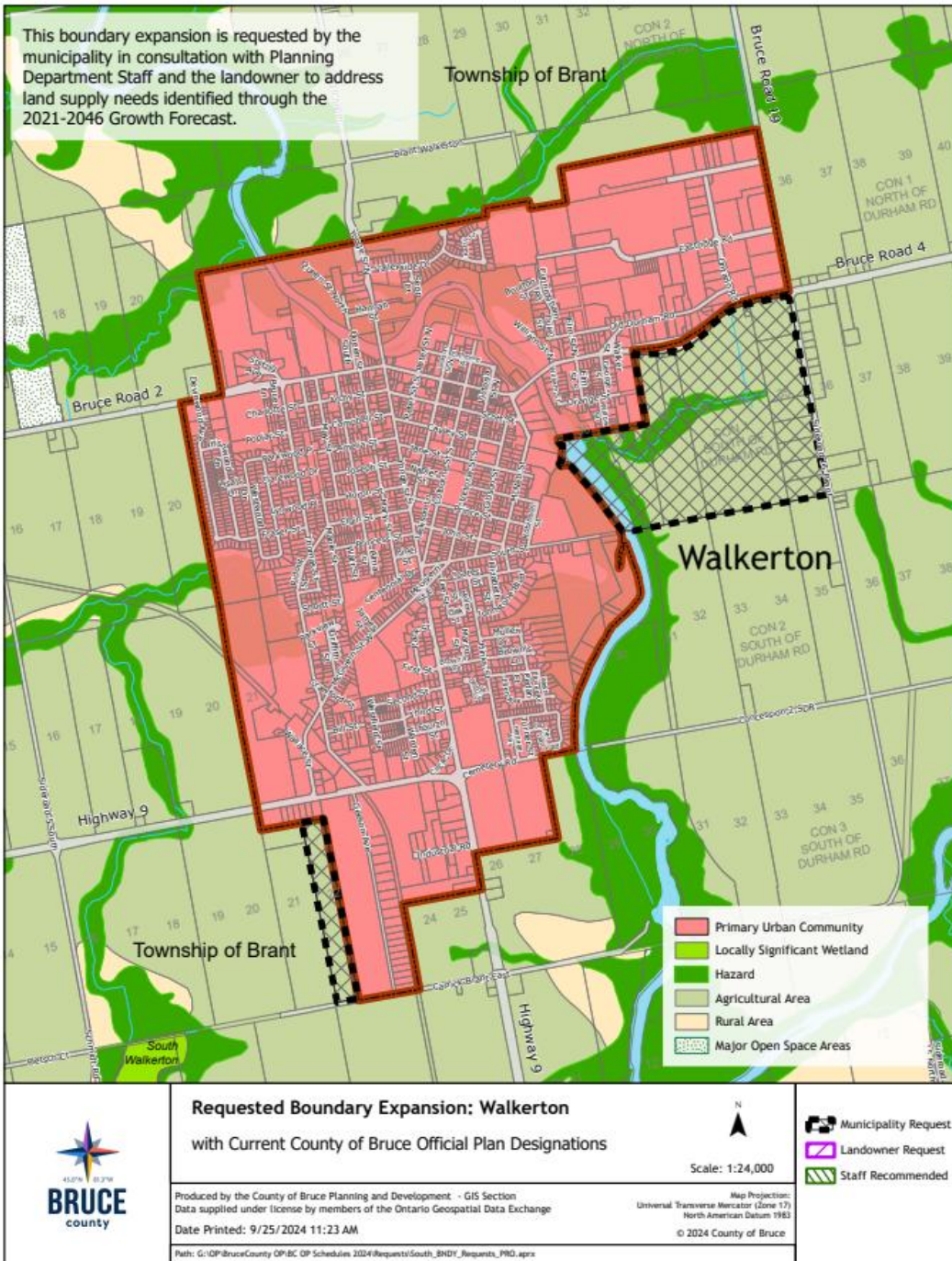
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The first expansion request covers 78 hectares of land and is located directly south of Bruce Road 4, west of Sideroad 15. The second request includes a 9.6 hectare portion of a parcel divided by the existing settlement area boundary and is located south of Highway 9 and west of Yonge Street South. These requests were further supported through a Preliminary Planning Analysis prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants dated April 5, 2023. Table 3 assesses the proposed requests against the PPS criteria outlined in Section 2.3.2.

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Figure 2 Brockton Settlement Area Boundary Requests



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Table 3 PPS Policy Evaluation of Settlement Area Boundary Request

Criteria	Expansion Area Request 1	Expansion Area Request 2
Are additional lands needed to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of uses?	<p>Yes, Watson Study identified a deficit of lands to accommodate 370 units (630 minus 260 units added through MZO). Further, the Commercial Market Study recommends that we explore opportunities to increase the supply of vacant commercial.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the expansion could yield 33 hectares for residential development, which is estimated to yield 495 residential units.¹</p>	<p>Yes, Watson Study identified a deficit of lands to accommodate 370 units (630 minus 260 units added through MZO). Further, the Commercial Market Study recommends that we explore opportunities to increase the supply of vacant commercial.</p> <p>Per the preliminary planning analysis, it appears that 8.2 hectares of this land is developable resulting in a proposed residential unit count of 123.¹</p>
Is there sufficient capacity in existing of planned infrastructure?	Yes. Servicing is addressed in municipal Master Servicing Plan.	Yes. Servicing is addressed in municipal Master Servicing Plan.
Does it include speciality crop Areas?	No.	No.
Does it avoid prime agricultural areas?	Lands were redesignated rural in Bruce County Official Plan. Lands are cropped and are located south of the exist settlement area and contain fragmented lots, which are not ideal for agricultural. The settlement area to the north uses Bruce Road 4 as its main access road to the Walkerton community, which may result in increased transportation conflicts between agricultural vehicles and other vehicles associated with urban uses.	The lands are designated prime agricultural, but they constitute half of a 20-hectare parcel, with the first portion already situated within the settlement area. Therefore, these are not viable agricultural lands.
Does it comply with MDS?	No perceived MDS conflicts.	No perceived MDS conflicts.
How will the proposal avoid or mitigate impacts to the agricultural system?	By expanding the area directly south of the existing settlement area to Sideroad 15, the expansion ensures that farm vehicles can use Sideroad 15 to avoid conflicts with	The lot itself is already fragmented and is bordered by the existing settlement area boundary to the north and east. By adding the lands to the settlement area, it ensures

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Criteria	Expansion Area Request 1	Expansion Area Request 2
	<p>the settlement area. Any proposed draft plan of subdivision application will need to demonstrate how transportation impacts can be mitigated. Through the County's OP review, additional lands have been identified as prime agricultural.</p> <p>The County is currently in the process of preparing an agricultural impact assessment to confirm these findings.</p>	<p>that the lands can be efficiently used and future development proposals will need to demonstrate how traffic impacts will be mitigated. It may include ensuring main access points to these lands are provided by roads already within the boundaries of the existing settlement area.</p> <p>The County is currently in the process of preparing an agricultural impact assessment to confirm these findings.</p>
Can it be designed to efficiently use land?	Yes.	Yes.

(1) It is assumed that lands will be planned to achieve a minimum density of 15 units per hectare per Section 5.9.2.(4) of the BCOP.

Based on the above, it appears that both the proposed settlement area requests are compliant with section 2.3.2 of the PPS subject to the submission of an agricultural impact assessment. The proposed settlement area expansions together are estimated to exceed the unit demand for Walkerton for the 20 year planning horizon by 248 units. The PPS requires municipalities to plan for a minimum growth horizon of 20 years but no more than 30 years. While this unit count exceeds the 20 year horizon, additional units will be required to accommodate growth to the 30 year horizon. It should be noted that the County's growth projections were prepared prior to the release of the Ministry of Finance projections, which anticipates additional growth for Bruce County, and it is our understanding that the County may update their projections accordingly. Therefore, it is appropriate that the settlement area expansions accommodate additional growth beyond the initial 20-year horizon. It is further recommended that these areas are appropriately phased to ensure orderly growth.

Section 2.4 of the PPS establishes policies for Strategic Growth Areas and states that planning authorities are encouraged to identify and focus growth and development within Strategic Growth Areas. Strategic Growth Areas are defined as areas within settlement areas that have been identified to be the focus for accommodating intensification and high-density mixed uses. These may include areas with frequent transit services, downtowns or other areas where growth and development will be focuses such as brownfield sites. In the case of Walkerton, its entire downtown is within the flood fringe and directing the majority of higher density growth to this area may not be appropriate. The Municipality may want to consider whether it would like to identify the new expansion areas as Strategic Growth Areas where higher density mixed uses in a more compact built form would be permitted.

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3.2.1 The Official Plan

3.2.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

Bruce County is currently in the last stages of its Official Plan Review, which will conclude with a final Official Plan Amendment with recommended settlement area boundary expansions. It is intended that this Official Plan Amendment will be brought forward to County Council for adoption at the end of this calendar year.

Section 2.2.1(2) of the BCOP states that the County will manage growth in an efficient, orderly, and sustainable manner that provides housing and employment opportunities, while protecting agricultural lands, natural heritage and public health. It is the policy of the County to direct the majority of growth to Primary Urban Communities, like Walkerton and permit limited growth in its hamlet and rural areas. Section 2.2.2 (2) establishes the target that 15% of new growth in the County will be accommodated through intensification in built-up areas of the local municipalities to encourage sustainable and efficient growth.

Section 2.2.3 highlights that if growth proceeds in accordance with the forecasts stated previously, the Walkerton community will have an insufficient residential and commercial land supply. It further states the local municipalities are best suited to understand their land supply constraints and encourages them to review opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth through redesignation within the existing settlement area boundaries.

Section 2.2.4 reiterates that Walkerton is expected to become constrained, and a boundary expansion will be required to accommodate forecasted residential growth. Section 2.2.4 (3) establishes the County's criteria for the consideration of expansions or adjustments to the settlement area boundary which largely mirror the requirements of the PPS but includes the following additional criteria: consideration for financial implications, regard for the natural environment and the consideration for early consultation feedback received from the Saugeen Anishnaabek. Both proposed Walkerton settlement area boundary expansions will not result in undue financial burden as they will make use of existing and planned infrastructure and services. Natural features have been identified on both properties and will be required to be protected through the development process. Letters inviting the Saugeen Anishnaabek and the Historic Saugeen Métis Nation to participate as part of the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law Review project have been sent. The Municipality has begun the consultation process with Saugeen Anishnaabek per their protocol. The Historic Saugeen Métis have provided correspondence indicating their desire to review the draft documents.

Section 2.2.5 of the BCOP speaks to the phasing of development and requires local municipalities to prepare phasing policies to enable the achievement of the 15% intensification target and ensure the orderly progression of development.

3.2.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

The Walkerton OP is intended to direct growth and development in the community until the year 2026 and population, housing and employment forecasts are provided until that year. Per the PPS and BCOP, the Walkerton OP's planning horizon requires updating to the year 2026 at a

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minimum to ensure appropriate, sustainable and orderly growth. An intensification target of 20% is established for the residential area, but there are no intensification policies for other land use designations in the Plan.

Currently the Walkerton OP does not permit settlement area expansion outside of a comprehensive review and does not contain criteria for the consideration of settlement area boundary expansions. At present, as a settlement area boundary was not included as part of the Plan's last comprehensive review, there are no policies to direct the appropriate phasing of development.

It is recommended that the Walkerton OP be updated to:

- Update the plan horizon and growth forecasts to the year 2046, in conformity with the BCOP.
- Include both settlement boundary expansions within the urban area
- Redesignate the newly added settlement area to the west residential area
- Redesignate the newly added settlement area to the east as "Settlement Expansion Area" and require a separate Official Plan process to ensure that the area is comprehensively planned to address land needs requirements and transportation needs.
- Add policies for the consideration of expansions to the settlement area in accordance with the policies of the PPS and BCOP.
- Include phasing policies to address Section 2.2.5 of the PPS.
- Include intensification policies which apply to the entire Walkerton built-up area and establish a minimum intensification target of 20%.

3.2.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

It is recommended that the Brockton Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Rezone the newly added settlement areas 'Planned Development' to allow the future uses and applicable provisions to be determined through more detailed development processes.
- Include a new mixed-use zone to facilitate residential and commercial opportunities and a compact built form.

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3.3 Housing

Housing is a basic human right. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, international law requires that Canada work towards having access to adequate and affordable housing. There is ample evidence that demonstrates that attainable and affordable housing is central to achieving positive economic and social outcomes. It is no secret that Canada's housing market has become more competitive in recent years, placing upward pressure on housing costs, both ownership and rental.

The PPS requires that municipalities provide a range of housing types, tenures and densities to ensure that households of different ages, sizes and incomes have access to housing within their means. To meet these needs, Section 2.1.4 of the PPS requires that municipalities to have sufficient land which is designated and available to accommodate residential growth for a minimum 15 years and ensure that there is land with servicing capacity and zoning sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential growth.

The PPS further requires that municipalities establish affordable housing targets in their Official Plans, permit a range of housing options and intensification opportunities and promote densities which make efficient use of land, resources and services.

The Province also implemented legislative and policy changes to encourage intensification as a means of increasing housing stock. Recent changes to the *Planning Act* as a result of *Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act (2022)*, changed the jurisdiction of municipalities to permit or restrict residential dwellings. The *Planning Act* now requires municipalities to permit three residential dwellings per residential lot as-of-right on urban residential lands, in any combination within a detached, semi-detached or townhouse or ancillary building to the primary dwelling. On June 1, 2024, the Development Charges Act, 1997, S.O.1997.c.27, was amended to include updated definitions for affordable and attainable residential units. These definitions rely on the proposed MMAH Affordable Residential Units bulletin to establish guidance on income-based rents and affordable purchase prices. The Affordable Residential Units bulletin is effective June 1, 2024, and will be replaced by a new bulletin annually.

In reviewing the Statistics Canada Census data for Brockton, the average household size has remained consistent at around 2.4 persons per household over the past 20 years. Additionally, the median population age has remained in the 40-45 age range, which is similar to the County's overall demographics. Which is demonstrates a slightly older population. The total number of occupied private dwelling by permanent residents has increase from 3,941 in 2016 to 4,032 in 2021 (2.3% increase). Of the total occupied units, the three predominant dwelling types are single detached dwellings (76.7% of dwellings or 3095 units), apartments in a building with fewer than 5 storeys (10.3% of dwellings or 415 units) and row houses (5.3% of dwellings or 215 units). The majority of the residents within Brockton own their homes (79%). In reviewing the median value of owned dwellings, it has increased from \$240,184 in 2016 to \$436,000 in 2021, a significant increase.

Short-term rentals pose a risk to the housing supply in various municipalities across Ontario, particularly those with a larger seasonal population. Zoning can be used as a tool to address concerns associated with short term rentals. This will be discussed in further detail in Section 3.11.

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Land use planning can impact the cost of housing and support more affordable options by ensuring an adequate land supply, facilitating all forms and densities of housing, ensuring efficient use of land, and using effective business practices.

3.3.1 The Official Plan

3.3.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The BCOP projects that the number of households within Brockton as a whole will increase to 5,520 in 2046, a grow of approximately 28%. Similar to the PPS, the BCOP encourages a range and mix of housing types and directs municipalities to support opportunities to increase the supply of housing through infilling, intensification and infilling. As part of the County's Official Plan Review, new policies are proposed which would require that lower-tier municipalities establish intensification policies which identify intensification areas and targets, promote the efficient use of land, promote mixed-use development and determine the appropriate type and scale of development.

In line with the changes to the Planning Act, the BCOP introduced new policies for additional residential units and garden suites, which build upon provincial legislative requirements. The BCOP provides criteria for units on private services to ensure that the rural or agricultural property can support the additional unit (s). Further, it provides enabling policies for local zoning by-laws to consider additional criteria for additional residential units such as compatibility, relationships with home-occupations and restrictions regarding unit size, parking requirements and sewer/septic requirements. Updated policies for garden suites now consider the possibility for their conversion to additional residential units, requires that they be permitted in any designation which permits single detached, semi-detached or rowhouse dwellings, and considers a garden suite as an additional residential unit for the purposes of establishing the maximum number of permitted additional residential units on a property.

As it relates to affordability and supportive housing, the BCOP establishes a target that at least 30% of new residential development within the County be considered affordable housing. This provision is mirrored in the Walkerton Official Plan. The BCOP includes strategies to achieve the affordable housing target such as permitting higher density housing forms, development of housing in proximity to jobs and services and permitting smaller dwelling sizes and alternative dwelling types.

3.3.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

The Walkerton OP establishes a community goal to promote a mixed and affordable supply of housing. The existing Residential Designation permits a range of different housing types. However, the specific density categories are limiting in terms of height (i.e. maximum 2-storeys in the medium density residential category) and density (i.e. maximum of 2 dwelling units in a building in the low density residential category, maximum 35 units per hectare in the medium density residential category) and requires updating to meet provincial requirements and provide more flexibility to promote a more diverse housing stock. The current OP does not contain policies for additional residential units and will require updates to its policies regarding garden suites.

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As it relates to affordable and assisted housing, the Official Plan establishes a target that 30% of new housing be considered affordable housing, in line with the BCOP. The OP utilizes outdated terminology for assisted and supportive housing (i.e., special needs) and outdated definitions (i.e., affordable housing) which require updating to ensure consistency with the PPS.

It is recommended that the Walkerton Official Plan be updated to:

- Establish policies for additional residential units in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act and in line with the policies of the PPS and BCOP.
- Include definitions for affordable, attainable, and supportive housing in line with *Planning Act* and *Development Charges Act* definitions.
- Update policies relating to garden suites, supportive housing and affordable housing, specifying that the Municipality will work with the County to achieve its affordability goal.
- Merge low and medium density residential categories into one.
- Remove density caps in the high density residential category and rely on maximum building heights and other policies to control built form.
- Establish updated policy directions related to infill and intensification.
- Redesignate employment lands which were zoned residential through the Ministerial Zoning Order 515/22.
- Correct inconsistencies with BCOP.
- Reflect recent changes to the *Planning Act* and PPS.

3.3.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

Similar to the Walkerton Official Plan, the Brockton Zoning By-law requires updated regulations related to additional residential units and garden suites. Opportunities exist to streamline the regulations and residential zones of the Zoning By-law and move away from the R1 to R3 residential density model and transition to a two-zone approach within the urban area.

It is recommended that the Brockton Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Reflect the changes proposed to the draft Walkerton OP.
- Remove minimum dwelling sizes and gross floor area sizes for residential units and rely on minimum standards established through the Ontario Building Code.
- Increase maximum lot coverage to 45% in urban areas.
- Update regulations regarding group homes to ensure provisions do not contradict Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Update residential zoning standards to facilitate a more compact urban form through reductions to the front yard setback and lot frontage requirements.
- Reduce the number of urban residential zones to two to streamline the application of the Zoning By-law and permit a greater range of housing types.
- Update definitions to remove references to who must occupy a dwelling type and their duration.
- Review parking standards.

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3.4 Employment and Commercial Areas

A strong economy is fundamental to the growth and stability of a municipality. As per the 2021 Brockton Census Profile, the top three industries in Brockton include Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting based on the North American Industry Classification System.² Agriculture has remained an important part of Brockton's economy and will be protected for the long term. The Municipality's proximity to the GTA, historic downtown and industries makes it attractive to businesses seeking to move away from the land and housing costs of the GTA.

In recent years, the nature of work has changed resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce and global economy, and more people are working from home or in a hybrid work environment. In the Municipality of Brockton, while the number of people working from home has increased (835 in 2021 vs 535 in 2016), work is mostly conducted on-site.

Per the BCOP, it is projected that the total number of jobs in Brockton will grow from 4,670 in 2021 to 6,090 in 2046.

Section 2.1.6 of the PPS requires that municipalities plan for complete communities which contain an appropriate mix and range of land uses, housing options, transportation options and public services. Section 2.8.1 of the PPS speaks to supporting a modern economy, which provides an appropriate range of uses, provides opportunities for a diversified economic base and encourages intensification.

Protected employment areas are crucial for maintaining the long-term viability of more-intensive industry. The PPS 2024 updated the definition of employment area to exclude stand alone office and commercial uses from being permitted in an employment area. This is to ensure the long-term viability of industry and to direct uses which may be compatible with residential areas to mixed use areas to encourage the creation of complete communities. The PPS includes policies to ensure adequate separation distances between employment areas and sensitive land uses and prohibit incompatible land uses to safeguard both industrial operations and public health and safety. The PPS requires that municipalities to protect and designate employment areas in their OPs.

Per the County's Good Growth Discussion Paper, dated September 2022, there are approximately 39 hectares of vacant employment land in Walkerton and it is projected that 19 hectares of employment land will be required to meet forecasted demand to the year 2026, resulting in a surplus of 20 hectares. This number does not include work from home jobs. Therefore, Brockton has sufficient available employment lands to meet projected demand. It should be noted that the 39 hectares of employment land is not all designated as an "employment area" per the PPS. Given the surplus, not all employment area may need to be protected and policies to remove lands from employment areas should be included within the Walkerton OP. Based on the County's Good Growth Discussion Paper, it appears that

² Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). *Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 10, 2025)

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approximately 5.5 hectares of land is required to accommodate primarily industrial uses, and land should be protected for that purpose.

Based on the Commercial Market Study for the County of Bruce, prepared by Watson & Associates Economics Ltd., dated September 2022, it is expected that of the County of Bruce's inland communities, the majority of commercial growth over the next 25 years will occur within Walkerton. There are currently seven (7) hectares of vacant commercial land available for development in Walkerton after a market contingency adjustment (i.e., 20% adjustment to reflect that some lands may not be available for development over the planning horizon). It is anticipated that approximately five (5) hectares of that land will be required to accommodate future commercial growth. Therefore, the Commercial Market Study recommends that opportunities to increase the supply of vacant commercial land be explored.

While no Strategic Growth Areas have been identified, the PPS states that industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that can locate adjacent to sensitive land uses without adverse effects are encouraged to locate in Strategic Growth Areas.

3.4.1 The Official Plan

3.4.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

Section 1.3 of the BCOP seeks to create opportunities for a diversity of businesses, jobs and employers. Per the BCOP, the majority of employment growth is to be directed to Primary Urban Communities, like Walkerton.

Agriculture, tourism and energy remain important economic contributors to the County and the policies of the BCOP are intended to support their long-term prosperity. Primary Urban Communities like Walkerton are intended to accommodate a mix of uses, including a range of commercial and employment uses. Hamlets like Cargill, Pinkerton and Chepstow are rural service centres intended to accommodate employment and commercial uses at a smaller scale.

While the BCOP does not identify employment areas on the schedules, it requires that employment areas be identified and protected by lower tier municipalities and establishes criteria for their removal in accordance with Provincial direction. The previous BCOP identified that industrial areas are employment areas. Further, policies for employment areas need to consider compatibility considerations in accordance with Provincial direction. Local municipalities are encouraged to develop employment lands strategy to plan for the long-term protection, servicing and development of employment lands.

Section 4.2.4.4 speaks to Highway Oriented Land Uses, and states where they are identified in local plans, any plans to redevelop these areas with residential uses must evaluate the potential impact to the planned function of these areas and the local market needs.

3.4.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

The OP's vision highlights the community's desire to provide a positive economic climate for new investment and employment, capitalize on its tourism potential, retain and attract industrial,

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support its institutional employers and sustain and expand its downtown. Downtown Walkerton is intended to function as the community's economic hub and Walkerton as its whole is intended to remain an economic focal point in Bruce County. The East Ridge Business Park is intended to accommodate most of the Municipality's more intensive industry.

The Walkerton Official Plan establishes five commercial and/or employment land use designations:

1. **Historic Downtown:** intended to provide a mixed-use function within a traditional main street built form. It permits a wide variety of commercial, retail, office, personal service, administrative, cultural, institutional, health/medical and entertainment uses. Automobile related uses are not permitted.
2. **Commercial:** Intended to complement the downtown and mirrors the permitted uses of the Historic Downtown land use designation. However, is intended to permit a variety of built forms in the form of plazas, free-standing stores and mixed-use buildings.
3. **Residential Transition:** intended to provide limited non-retail commercial uses at a scale which complements the existing character of the residential area. It is not intended to accommodate intensive commercial development. Permitted uses must be compatible with residential uses and may include business or professional offices, studios, medical clinics, personal service shops and child care centres.
4. **Business Park 1:** intended to accommodate the needs of larger scale commercial/retail, highway commercial or light industrial uses. Shopping centres, strip malls, professional medical services and other associated health care facilities, are prohibited.
5. **Business Park 2:** Intended to accommodate heavy manufacturing and industrial uses and specifically prohibits retail uses.

Home-based employment or commercial opportunities exist in the residential area in the form of home-based businesses and childcare facilities.

The OP's community improvement plan policies apply in the commercial areas, with specific grants targeting aesthetic improvements within the historic downtown and others catering to offsetting costs related to building improvements and expansions. The floodplain poses a constraint to development in the Historic Downtown and Commercial land use designations.

The existing commercial and employment policies of the Walkerton OP provide a good foundation to support economic development.

To protect employment lands for industry, it is recommended that the Municipality implement an employment area designation. As stated previously, the PPS limits permitted uses in employment areas to traditional industrial uses and specifically excludes stand-alone office, retail or institutional uses. The Business Park 2 designation contains permission which are most aligned with employment areas in the PPS. However, this land use designation covers a large area of land and some of these areas are in proximity to sensitive uses. It would be beneficial from an implementation perspective to remove the Business Park 2 designation and apply new designations to those lands to protect certain lands for industry while allowing a more flexible range of uses on the others, which are more compatible with sensitive uses.

To accommodate future commercial and employment growth in line with Provincial and County directions, it is recommended that the Walkerton OP be updated to:

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- Remove the residential transition designation and rename specific designations to better reflect their intent.
- Delete the Business Park 2 designation and redesignate those lands as follows:
 - Redesignate the majority of CLICE lands on the north side of Creighton Road to Employment Area.
 - Redesignate all other Business Park 2 lands and CLICE lands, north of Creighton Road but in proximity to sensitive uses, Business Park.
- Identify that any removals of land from the Employment Area must be in accordance with Provincial policy directions.
- Prohibit stand-alone commercial, office, institutional and residential uses within the Employment Area designation in accordance with the requirements of the PPS which prohibits these uses in employment areas.
- Include policies which recognize existing commercial, residential and institutional uses within the Employment Area designation and provide direction for the Zoning By-law.
- Provide improved direction regarding land use compatibility considerations and recommended separation distances between employment and sensitive uses.
- Add more flexibility for the industrial site plan design considerations to allow for the consideration of irregular lot patterns.
- Add a policy which enables the municipality to develop an employment lands strategy in the future.
- Include a policy that requires that the minimum amount of land within the proposed expansion be commercial and institutional lands and priority will be given for lands with frontage on Bruce Road 4. It may be beneficial to implement a new mixed-use designation which allows for a range of uses and provides the opportunity for the location of these uses to be determined through site specific Zoning By-law Amendments.
- Expand Downtown Walkerton designation to cover majority of land zoned C1 in the zoning by-law
- Add additional flexibility for different residential and commercial built forms in Downtown Walkerton on all streets except for Durham Street and Jackson Street.
- In Downtown Walkerton, prohibit parking in the front yard, with exceptions for ground oriented residential buildings.
- Include criteria for the consideration to remove employment lands from the employment area in accordance with Section 2.8.2.4 and 2.8.2.5 of the PPS.
- Include updated definitions in accordance with the PPS and BCOP.

3.4.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

There are twelve (12) commercial and employment zones with the Brockton Zoning By-law. Generally, the four (4) commercial and two (2) commercial/industrial zones contain permitted uses and standards that is reflective of their intent and do not permit incompatible uses. However, there are some outdated permitted uses (i.e. video outlet).

The four (4) urban industrial zones overlap in terms of overall intent and many benefit from consolidation to create one “light industrial/business park” and one “heavy industrial” zone. The Business Park 2 (BP2) zone is intended to implement the BP2 designation. With the recommended removal of the BP2 designation and implementation of an Employment Area

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designation, a new implementing zone will be required. The last industrial zone, Extractive Industrial (M3) is intended for resource extraction or pit uses.

Industrial uses in the Zoning By-law are subject to additional provisions related to screening, outdoor storage, buffers and fuel storage. Section 3.3 of the Zoning By-law outlines required buffers between industrial and sensitive lands uses and classifies industrial uses into two categories based on the Provincial D-6 compatibility guidelines: Class I and Class II. No Class III uses, which are very intensive industrial uses, are permitted as-of-right.

It is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Remove obsolete permitted uses and consider opportunities to expand permitted uses.
- Delete the BP2 Zone and introduce a new Employment Zone, Lands previously zoned BP2 will be rezoned to reflect the updated designations for these lands in the Walkerton Official Plan.
- Consolidate uses where appropriate for ease of reference.
- Expand C1 zone to cover properties in new limits of Downtown Walkerton. Create site specifics for existing properties which do not comply with the C1 Zone permitted uses.
- Consolidate zones with a similar function where appropriate.
- Add more flexibility in Section 3.3 to consider uses that are not shown within the existing two tables.
- Recognize existing incompatible uses within or adjacent to industrial areas.
- Implement Official Policies on land use compatibility between sensitive and industrial uses.

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3.5 Recreational, Parks and Open Space

Access to nature and outdoor activities is essential for a healthy, livable, and safe community. Parks and open spaces offer numerous benefits. Culturally, they offer spaces to gather and connect. Environmentally, they help reduce flood risks and combat climate change by providing permeable, absorbent land that mitigates potential flooding, and trees and vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide and offer cooling shade.

The Municipality of Brockton has dedicated waterfront park space and outdoor recreational spaces for both active and passive recreational activities. This includes parks like Cunningham Rotary Nature Park, Riverbend Park, Optimist Park, Heritage Water Garden and many more. Residents, employees and visitors in Brockton have access to a variety of different trails including the Brant Tract Trail, Bruce County rail trail, Saugeen River trails and various seasonal cross-country ski trails. The Municipality also has privately owned recreational facilities such as campgrounds and golf courses.

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the legislative and regulatory framework governing parkland dedication in the *Planning Act* was updated by the Province of Ontario. The outcome of these changes relate to:

- non-applicability of parkland dedication rates for non-profit residential development and additional residential units.
- reductions to the maximum alternative parkland dedication rate (1 hectare/600 units for land and 1 hectare/1000 units for cash-in lieu)
- establishment of a maximum amount of land to be conveyed or paid in lieu (10% for sites under 5 hectares and 15% for sites greater than 5 hectares in size).
- changes to the timing of parkland dedication.
- identification, agreement, or refusal of, and appeal related to parkland dedication.
- requirements for municipalities to reserve parkland funds within a particular account and spend or allocate at least 60% of allocated funds annually.
- requirement that a parks plan be prepared prior to the passing of any future parkland dedication by-laws.

These changes will primarily impact the new expansion areas and vacant lands. Additional pending changes to the *Planning Act* are the eligibility of privately owned public spaces (POPS) or encumbered parkland (strata parks) for parkland dedication, parkland dedication requirements for affordable and attainable housing, and the ability for private landowners to identify the lands they wish to provide as parklands.

3.5.1 The Official Plan

3.5.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

BCOP policies related to parkland are limited, which is reflective of its role of as an overarching policy document for several different municipalities. The BCOP directs more formalized recreational uses to the existing settlement and hamlet areas.

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The BCOP designates several areas within the Municipality of Brockton as Open Space Area. The Open Space designation is intended to capture conservation lands and privately owned commercial recreational establishments, like golf courses, which play a large role in the tourism economy. These areas are intended to be persevered for recreational uses and the County limits permitted uses in the Open Space Area to reflect that. No changes to the Walkerton OP are required to implement these policies.

3.5.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

The OP seeks to ensure that a broad range of recreation and open space opportunities are available for all residents and visitors which works in tandem with its other community goals to protect Walkerton's rich cultural and natural heritage and to improve community facilities.

The Recreation and Open Space designation applies to the parks within the Walkerton community and permits a range of active and passive recreation activities including public parks, paths, playgrounds, picnic areas, sports fields and swimming pools. It also permits golf courses, cemeteries and municipally-owned campgrounds. The OP contains criteria for the evaluation of new parkland, encourages coordination with school facilities and references the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (2011) to provide guidance on the delivery and maintenance of parkland. It should be noted that this reference is outdated as the document has been replaced with the Recreation Master Service and Facilities Plan (2023).

Section 6.6 of the OP encourages walking and cycling within Walkerton and states that the Municipality shall develop a pedestrian walkway system. It states that pedestrian access to the Downtown and waterfront are important for economic development and should be improved upon where possible. Further, the OP requires that all new developments include adequate sidewalks.

Section 7.13 of the OP speaks to parkland dedication and references the previous parkland dedication requirements established by the *Planning Act*. It also allows Council to waive parkland dedication requirements for affordable housing projects and does not permit the conveyance of natural features or hazard lands for the purposes of parkland dedication.

It is recommended that the OP be updated to:

- Update parkland dedication or cash-in-lieu of parkland as a condition of development approval, to reflect recent legislative changes to the *Planning Act*.
- Include pedestrian connections on Schedule B – Roads.

3.5.2 Zoning By-law

The Zoning By-law includes the Rural and Urban Open Space zones (OSR & OS). The Rural Open Space (OSR) zone permits generally more passive recreation uses or uses that require larger land requirements such as conservation areas, snowmobile clubs, golf courses, gun clubs, adventure games and also permits agricultural uses. The Urban Open Space (OS) zone generally includes the same permitted uses as the OSR zone but does not permit uses that require larger land requirements and separation such as a gun club, snowmobile club, adventure games or agricultural uses. The Walkerton Gun Club will be included within the urban

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area through this review, and considerations for compatibility will need to be considered in this By-law.

Section 3.1.6 of the Zoning By-law permits multi-use trails in all zones except it prohibits trails that permit motorized vehicles in environmentally sensitive areas.

It is recommended that the Zoning By-law expand the permitted uses in the OS Zone to include uses such as a community garden and museum.

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3.6 Changing Climate

Climate change means long-lasting changes in temperature and weather. While these changes can occur naturally, human activities since the 1800's have accelerated these changes due to the increased release of greenhouse gases which warm the Earth's atmosphere.

Climate change is a major concern as it leads to increased extreme weather events such as flooding, forest fires, heat waves and droughts. Changes that have been experienced firsthand by the Brockton community.

Canada is part of the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC), with the primary objective to negotiate global agreements to address and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by protecting the natural environment, encouraging renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency and encouraging clean technology innovations.

According to the Canadian Centre for Climate Services, annual mean temperature and total precipitation are projected to increase over the next 30 years in the Municipality. Available data for Brockton shows ([Location — ClimateData.ca](#)):

- For the 1971-2000 period, the annual average temperature was 6.7 °C and the average annual precipitation was 1018 mm.
- Under a high emission scenario, the annual average temperature is projected to increase to 9.5 °C for the 2021-2050 period and 11.6 °C for the 2051-2080 period.
- Under a high emission scenario, the average annual precipitation is projected to be 9.5% higher for the 2021-2050 period, 12% higher for the 2051-2080 period and 15% higher for the remainder of the century.

The PPS requires that municipalities plan for the impacts of climate change by supporting energy conservation efforts, renewable energy, compact community designs that reduce the reliance on the automobile, support green infrastructure that protects the environment and take into consideration any additional approaches that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Ontario Professional Planning Institute released a Climate Change Adaption Practice Guide in 2025, intended to assist planners in developing policies and tools to support adaption planning. Per the Practice Guide, good climate adaption planning considers cross sector collaboration with various groups and impacted parties, equitable engagement, minimizes risk by avoiding development in hazard lands, encourages the development of climate-resilient infrastructure and urban form, supports nature-based solutions and ensures that people have equitable access to essential services should a major climate event occur. Planning for climate change acknowledges that the most vulnerable groups are future populations, some of which will be more affected due to structural or systemic factors. It is our responsibility as planners to work in the public interest to plan for climate change and work with communities to manage risks. This includes developing enabling policies to support climate change adaption, monitoring and mitigation programs such as policies which support extreme weather monitoring, heat-resilient infrastructure, cooling centre, community-based water stewardship programs and fire-resistant landscaping.

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Bruce County's Strategic Plan (2023-2026) includes Environment and Climate Change as one of its four (4) pillars and establishes the goal to build and mitigate the impacts of a changing climate. This includes the objective to create a Climate Action Plan and protect and enhance the natural environment and greenspaces in the County.

3.6.1 Official Plan

3.6.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The BCOP states that the County will work with local municipalities to integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within their policy documents and guidelines. Similar to the PPS, the County supports land use and development patterns which support complete communities, protect agricultural lands and the natural environment. The BCOP includes enabling policies to allow the County to adopt a climate mitigation plan and strategies to reduce its vulnerability and improve its resilience to a changing climate. It also directs that local municipalities may develop their own resources to direct, guide and encourage development that incorporates elements of sustainable design. No further changes have been proposed to these policies through the County's final draft OP.

3.6.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

Section 1.5 of the Walkerton OP includes goals to protect of the natural environment and reduce air and land pollution. Section 4 of the OP establishes general community goals which includes sustainability policies (4.5) which requires Council to consider the long-term impacts on the environment, economy and community, when making decisions. This includes criteria for new developments which considers climate change and air quality, energy conservation, ecological, financial and social impacts. Section 4.5 further encourages the use of local materials and services, building designs which minimize energy consumption, water conservation and active transportation (i.e. walking and cycling).

The sustainability policies on the OP are generally consistent with the PPS and BCOP. Policies in other sections of the Plan contribute to climate change mitigation efforts by permitting increased residential densities through additional residential units, directing development away from hazards and encouraging alternative forms of transportation to the car such as cycling and walking within Walkerton and the hamlet areas.

To further address the objectives of both plans it is recommended that the OP be updated to:

- Reference climate change mitigation as a goal in Section 1.5 Community Goals.
- Include a policy that the Municipality will support the County in its climate change mitigation efforts.
- Include policies which encourage green infrastructure to complement traditional infrastructure.
- Require stormwater management to consider the impacts of a changing climate through the effective management of stormwater including the use of green infrastructure such as bio-swales, permeable pavers and green roofs.
- Include policies which support-sector collaboration on climate mitigation and adaption strategies.

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- Including enabling policies which support the use of climate change mitigation measures in development and support the development of monitoring tools.

3.6.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

The Brockton Zoning By-law implements the climate change policies of the BCOP and Walkerton OP by requiring electric vehicle parking for certain developments, setbacks to watercourses, protecting natural features and establishing landscaping requirements. The existing Zoning By-law establishes a minimum required landscaped open space to ensure an appropriate level of stormwater management via permeable surfaces on site. However, it does not include provisions regarding small scale renewable energy facilities that generate power for individual use. It is recommended to further support existing policies and regulations that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Include a definition for an “electric vehicle parking space”.
- Exclude solar panels from height restrictions in all zones.
- Permit small scale renewable energy facilities as on-farm diversified uses.
- Include a definition for small scale renewable energy facilities.

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3.7 Natural Environment

The Municipality of Brockton boasts a vast natural system comprised of rivers, wetlands, creeks, forests, valleys and areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI) and includes the Saugeen River and its tributaries, Teeswater River, Pearl Creek, Deer Creek, Schmidt Lake, Rosalind Lake and the Greenock Swamp (Figure 3).

The PPS requires that natural features and areas are protected for the long term. The PPS prohibits development and site alteration in significant wetlands. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant woodlands, valleylands, significant wildlife habitat and significant areas of natural and scientific interest unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts. Further, the PPS does not permit development in adjacent lands to natural features unless a study has been complete to confirm it will have no negative impacts. These restrictions are not intended to limit the ability of agricultural uses to continue.

In determining the scope of what constitutes “adjacent lands” to the above-referenced natural heritage features and areas, the Natural Heritage Reference Manual prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources (updated 2010) provides the following recommendations:

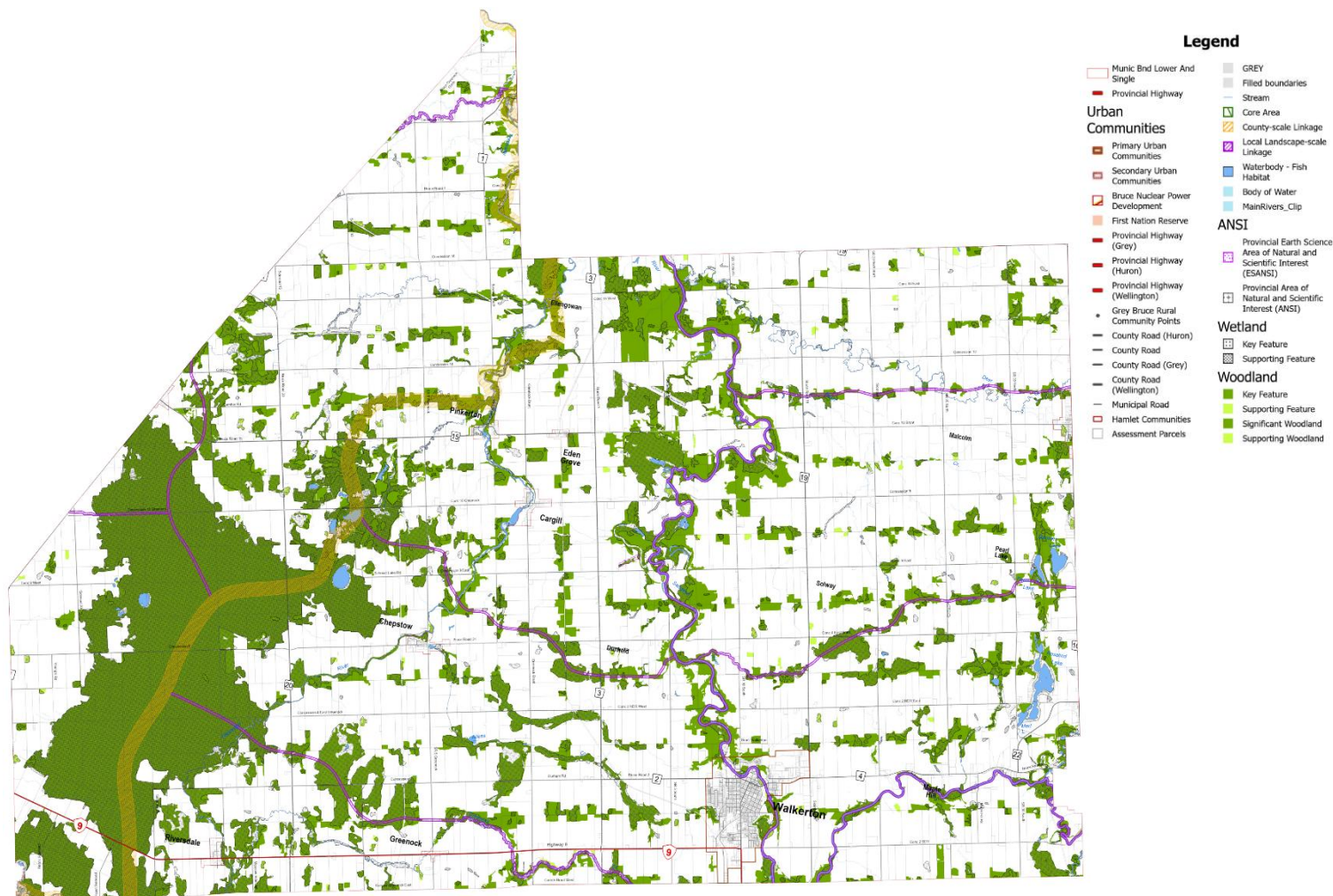
Table 4 Width of adjacent lands by natural heritage feature or area

Natural Heritage Feature / Area	Adjacent Lands
Habitat of endangered and threatened species	120 m
Significant wetlands and significant coastal wetlands	120 m
Significant woodlands	120 m
Significant valleylands	120 m
Significant wildlife habitat	120 m
Significant areas of natural and scientific interest – life science	120 m
Significant areas of natural and scientific interest – earth science	50 m
Fish habitat – inland lake trout lake (at capacity) on Canadian shield	300 m*
Fish habitat – all other fish habitat	120 m*

* To be measured from the seasonal high water mark

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Figure 3 BCOP Schedule E Natural Features



3.7.1 Source Water Protection

The Municipality of Brockton is captured within the Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region where a Source Water Protection Plan has been developed to protect drinking water sources. This plan includes policies that address activities and uses that are not permitted or are limited in these areas to eliminate or reduce risks within municipal Water Intake Zones or Wellhead Protection Areas. The Wellhead Protection Area boundaries have not changed since the BCOP and Walkerton OP were last reviewed. The boundaries of Intake Protection Zone-2 which surrounds Ruhl Lake have been scoped back, which means permitted uses may also need to be reviewed. This means that uses were restricted, such as the application of manure and certain storage uses can be relaxed on lands no longer part of Intake Protection Zone-2.

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3.7.2 Official Plan

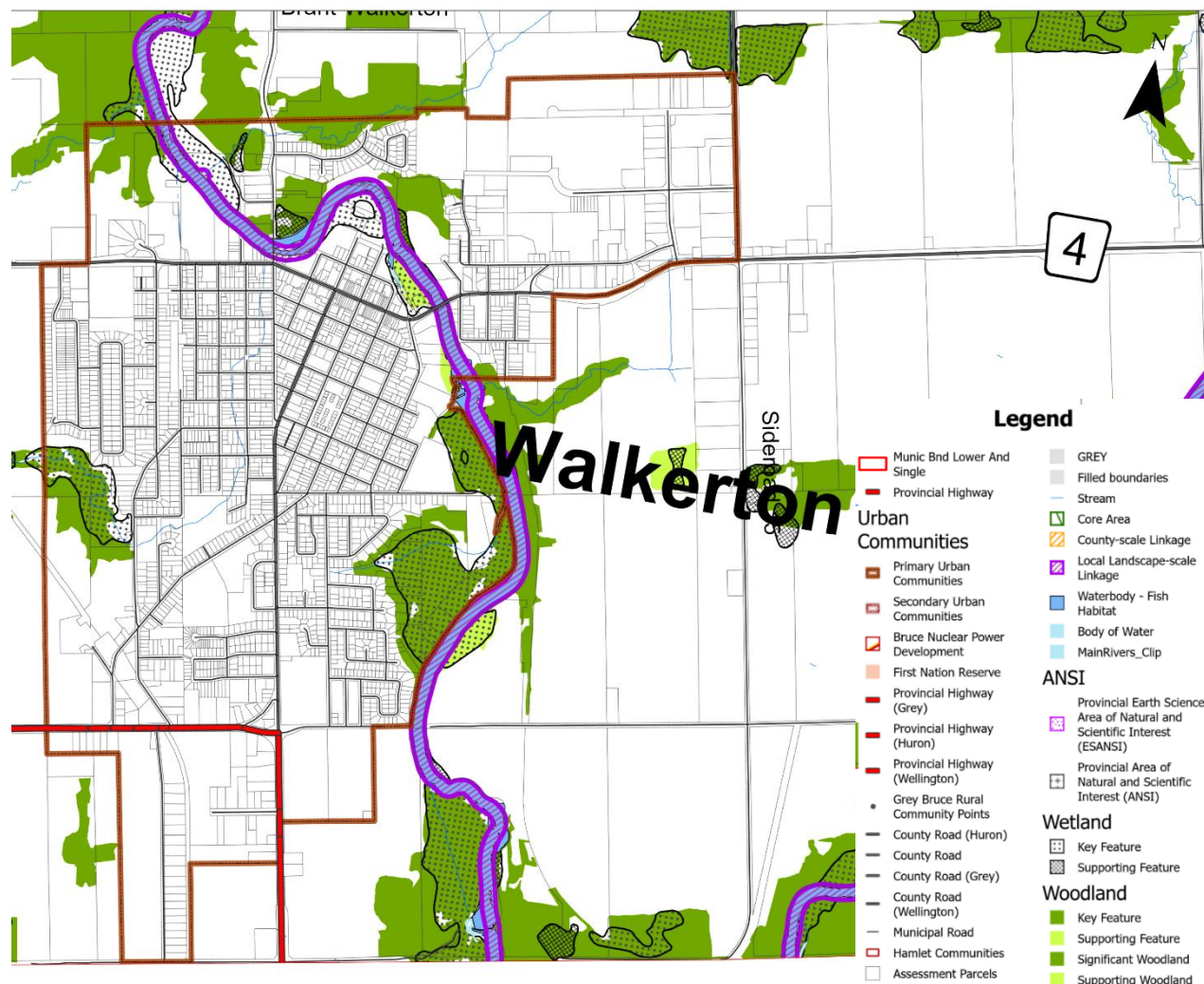
3.7.2.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The County-wide Natural Environment System is comprised of two sub-systems: Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System. The Natural Heritage System is a network of natural features and areas such as woodlands, wetlands and linkages that enable plant and animal movement. Whereas the Water Resource System contains water-based features like watercourses and wetlands which play an important role in the integrity of the watershed and groundwater system. Within Walkerton, the BCOP Schedule E- Natural Environment System identifies a local landscape linkage along Saugeen River and fish habitat, wetland and woodland features along Saugeen River and along other tributaries (Figure 4). Across the broader municipality, the BCOP identifies an ANSI and Woodlands associated with Greenock Swamp, a county scale linkage associated with woodlands and wetlands and other woodland and wetland features (Figure 3). It is the objective of the BCOP to identify, protect, restore and enhance the Natural Environment System and support comprehensive and long-term land use planning for the responsible stewardship of the Natural Environment System.

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Figure 4 Excerpt of Walkerton on BCOP Schedule E



Section 3.9.3.1 of the BCOP identifies Key Features and Areas identified by the Province and establishes development and adjacent lands criteria in accordance with Provincial guidelines. It identifies that features like significant wetlands, habitat of endangered and threatened species, significant wildlife habitat and alvars cannot be mapped on Schedule E due to insufficient data and their ever-changing nature. These features will be identified on a case-by-case basis when site-specific evaluation is required. This will be triggered when a study is required to address other natural features or areas which have been mapped. The BCOP also identifies supporting features and areas and has developed specific development criteria within Section 3.9.3.2. In scenarios where opportunities to avoid, minimize or mitigate are not available, the BCOP provides offsetting policies and identifies specific scenarios where it may be considered. It also provides the Municipality with the opportunity to develop its own offsetting policies in accordance with Provincial direction.

Through its OP Review process, the County updated its Environmental Impact Study policies to provide criteria for when an approval authority may exempt the requirement for an EIS, that the

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EIS may be peer reviewed and that the proponent is encouraged to consult with the County, First Nations and other agencies early in the process.

Section 3.9.6.2.2 speaks to Source Water Protections Areas and identifies specific uses which are a threat to municipal water supplies and specifically prohibits waste disposal activities in areas with a WHPA vulnerability score of 8.

3.7.2.2 Walkerton Official Plan

Schedule C of the OP identifies the Natural Heritage System within Walkerton which includes wetlands, waterbodies and wooded areas. These features are incapsulated within the Environmental Protection designation shown on Schedule A which includes hazard lands and key natural features. Only existing uses, essential flood, erosion, sediment control structures and open spaces are permitted within the Environmental Protection designation.

Section 4.4.3.4 speaks to Fish Habitat and states that development will only be permitted where there will be no net loss of fish habitat. This does not fully capture the policies relating to Fish Habitat in the PPS. Section 4.4.10 speaks to the Walkerton Natural Heritage System (WNHS) and states that the Municipality shall encourage its long term protection and that an EIS may be required to determine if unidentified natural heritage features and areas exist on the remainder of a property. These policies require updating to identify the types of natural features and areas in accordance with the PPS and to require an EIS where development is proposed adjacent or within these features.

It is recommended that the OP:

- Update Schedule C to show the key and supporting natural features and areas identified on BCOP Schedule E.
- Identify the different types of natural features and areas, adjacent lands distances and development criteria.
- Reference County policies to ensure alignment between plans and reduce duplication.

3.7.3 Brockton Zoning By-law

The Environmental Protection (EP) zone applies to lands designated Environmental Protection of Schedule A of the Walkerton Official Plan and lands designated Hazard on Schedule A of the BCOP. The EP zone permits existing agricultural uses, a cross county ski facility, conservation area, a public park and boat launching and docking. It specifically prohibits buildings and structures unless these are essential for flood/erosion control, public services or will have minor impacts such as unenclosed picnic shelters and washroom facilities associated with a public park or conservation use. However, buildings and structures are not permitted in key natural features and areas per the PPS 2024.

Section 3.2 establishes a minimum setback of 30 metres to the top of bank of any watercourse or within an EP zone boundary.

It is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to include the caveat that buildings and structures are not permitted in key natural features and areas.

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The Zoning By-law will be updated to reflect any changes to the OP as applicable.

3.8 Protecting Public Health and Safety

A key element of land use planning is ensuring that development does not occur in locations that are not appropriate due to the risk of public health and safety and property damage/loss. These areas fall within two categories – natural hazards and human made hazards.

Natural hazards include hazardous lands, hazardous sites and hazardous forest types for wildland fire. These hazard types are influenced by climate change. The PPS defines hazardous lands as property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Policies concerning natural hazards in the 2024 PPS direct development to generally occur in areas outside of hazardous lands adjacent to the shorelines of large inland lakes, rivers, streams, and small inland lakes impacted by flooding hazards, erosion hazards, and/or dynamic beach hazards and in areas outside of hazardous sites (i.e., property or lands that could be unsafe for development and site alteration due to naturally occurring hazards, including unstable soils or unstable bedrock, steep slopes which may be associated with slope instability, erosion, or access constraints).

The PPS expressly prohibits development and site alteration within floodways, regardless of whether the area of inundation contains high points of land not subject to flooding. Natural hazard policies in the PPS further prohibit development and site alteration within areas that would be rendered inaccessible to people and vehicles during times of flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards, unless it has been demonstrated that the site has safe access appropriate for the nature of the development and the natural hazard. Municipalities may choose to identify a single zone for all an entire floodplain or apply a one or two zone concept to recognize both a floodway, of greater risk to safety, and the flood fringe, of lesser risk to safety when appropriate mitigation measures are in place. In Walkerton, a Two-Zone policy applies, meaning that development and site alteration may be permitted within the flood fringe subject to appropriate floodproofing. While not mapped, erosion hazards are typically identified where development occurs adjacent to a waterbody, valleyland, cliff or steep slope.

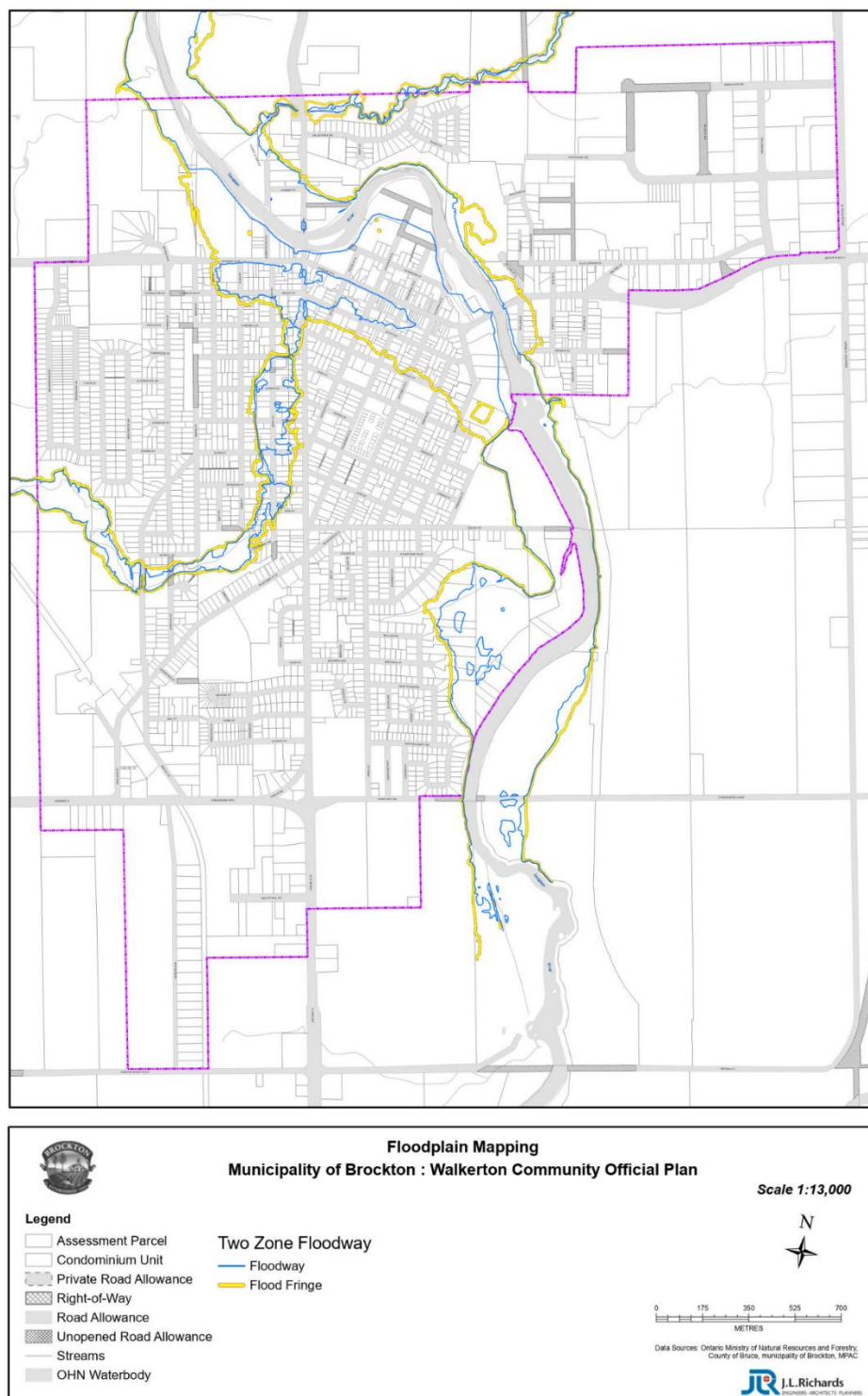
For Wildfire Hazards, the PPS generally directs development away from these features. Development may be permitted within Wildfire Hazards where the risk has been mitigated in accordance with provincial standards.

Institutional uses, essential emergency services and uses associated with hazardous substances are expressly prohibited within all hazard lands.

Natural Hazards in Walkerton are illustrated on Figure 5 and Figure 6 .

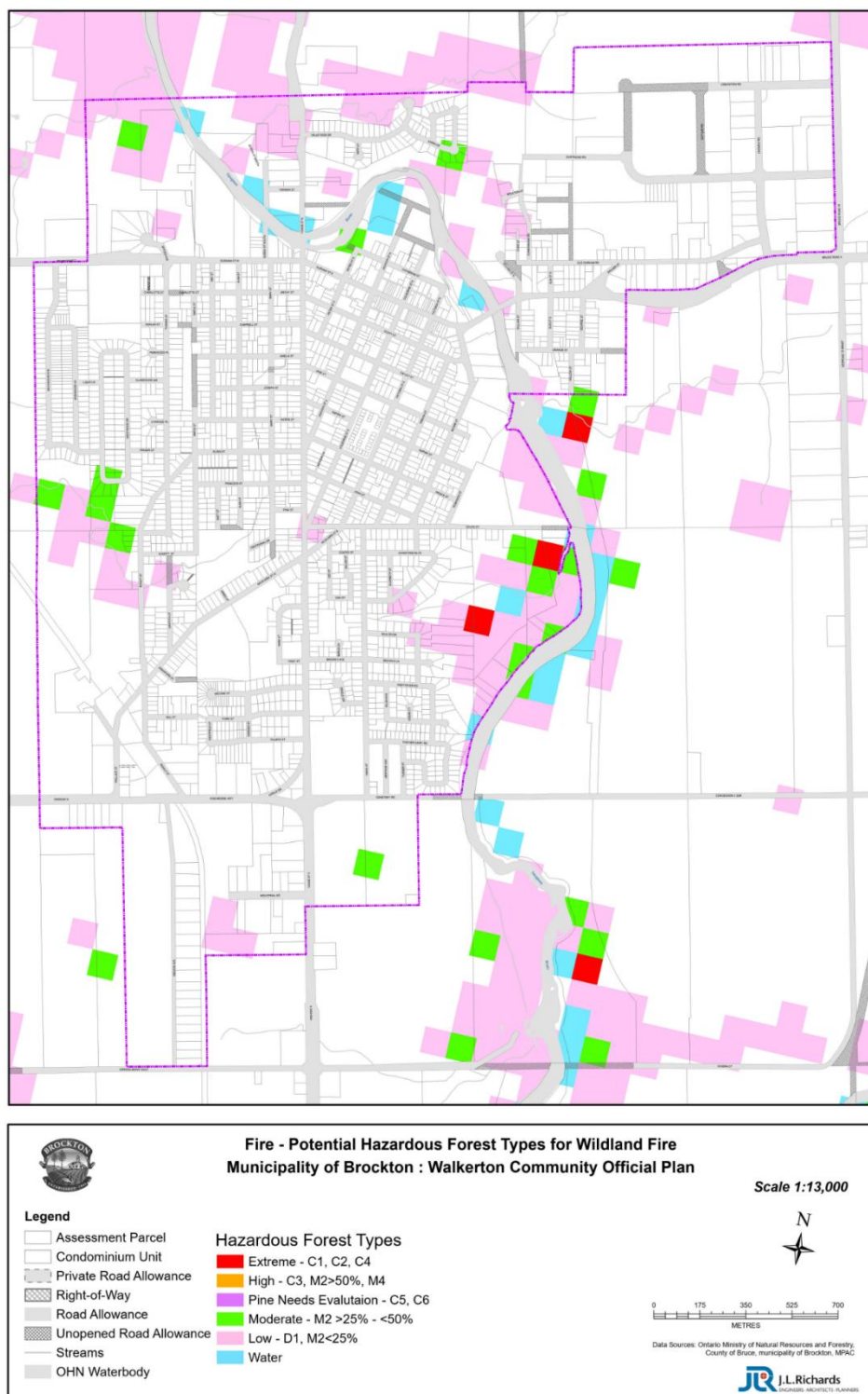
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Figure 5 Two Zone Floodplain in Walkerton



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Figure 6 Wildfire Hazards in Walkerton



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The second hazard category in the PPS are human made hazards, that is areas where human activity on the landscape has occurred, and the activity has created a risk to further development. Human-made hazards include mine hazards, oil, gas and salt hazards, contaminated lands or former mineral mining operations, mineral aggregate operations, or petroleum resource operations. The PPS directs development outside of areas of human-made hazards unless rehabilitation and remediations of hazards or contaminants can be taken to ensure there are no adverse effects as a result of proposed future uses.

3.8.1 Official Plan

3.8.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The BCOP mirrors the policies of the PPS as it relates to hazard lands by explicitly prohibiting buildings/structure and site alteration within hazard lands, save for essential flood/erosion works. Hazard lands outside of settlement areas are illustrated on draft Schedule A of the BCOP. The BCOP specifies that for lands adjacent to watercourse or inland lakes where erosion or slope stability concerns exist, all new development will be prohibited past the stable slope or restricted within the 100 year erosion limit and will be required to provide appropriate setbacks to the stable slope. Further, the BCOP includes policies to direct the extension or expansion of legal non-conforming uses within hazard lands.

Section 5.7.6 of the BCOP speaks to contaminated lands and requires that a Record of Site Condition (RSC) may be required to identify contaminated lands and that where they have been identified, a remediation plan should be prepared.

There are several active and closed landfill sites identified on draft schedule C. These may be further refined should additional information be made available. Active and closed landfills are to be protected from incompatible land uses. No other human-made hazards have been identified in the BCOP.

3.8.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

As the historic downtown is largely impacted by flooding hazards, the current OP provides extensive direction regarding development in or in proximity to natural hazards. The Environmental Protection designation encapsulates hazard lands within the Walkerton community and explicitly limits development to essential flood/erosion works and passive open space uses. The Environmental Protection designation discourages the extension or enlargements of existing buildings within hazard lands.

Flood Fringe areas are identified on Schedule A of the current OP and policies which govern development in the Flood Fringe generally mirror those of the PPS. It also includes site specific development criteria within the Silver Creek Flood Fringe, such as lot coverage requirements and density limitations. This will be impacted by Ontario Regulation 299/19 which requires that the Municipality permit lot coverages up to 45 percent where additional residential units are permitted. Additional discussions with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority will be required to determine how to address this requirement while protecting public health and safety.

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Further, there are existing uses within the flood fringe which do not contain flood proofing measures. It is recommended that the Municipality include enabling language to encourage flood proofing measures for these existing uses.

Section 3.7.5 of the OP speaks to valleylands and requires that development which may have a significant impact on these features submit an EIS. While not identified on a schedule, valleyland are defined as slopes that are predominantly in a natural state and the level land measured 30 metres back from the top of the valley slope.

The OP requires that an EIS be submitted where development is proposed within the Environmental Protection designation, where development is proposed adjacent to or within valleys or where an applicant is proposing to redesignate lands within the Environmental Protection designation. It also provides flexibility for the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority to waive the requirement for an EIS where the proposal is of minor nature or where site conditions are such that the preparation of an EIS would serve no useful purpose.

Section 4.4.3.3 establishes site redevelopment policies in line with Provincial requirements and states that where a site is proposed to be redeveloped with a more sensitive use, that a RSC is required as a condition of development.

It should be noted that there are no waste disposal facilities or mine hazards located within the limits of the Walkerton community.

While not identified within the Official Plan, a 100-year erosion limit associated Saugeen River was established by Golder Geotechnical, which impacts properties along Valleyside Drive between Sepp Court and Karin Crescent.

It is recommended that the Official Plan be updated to:

- Define a two-zone floodplain to provide better direction for the interpretation of the floodway and flood fringe within Walkerton.
- Include a separate hazard lands schedule for ease of reference which illustrates the floodway, flood fringe and 100 year erosion limit.
- Include reference to wildfire hazards and state that development applications be screened for this risk.
- Include policies which speak to the 100 year erosion limit and prohibits development within its limits.
- Include updated policies which speak to the impact of climate change on hazard lands.
- Include enabling policies to encourage existing uses in the floodplain to adopt floodproofing measures.
- Make any refinements to the flood plain boundaries, if applicable.

3.8.2 Zoning By-law

The EP zone includes natural hazards designated Environmental Protection of Schedule A of the Walkerton OP and lands designated Hazard on Schedule A of the BCOP. As stated

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previously, limited development is permitted within the EP zone. A Flood Fringe Overlay is utilized in the Zoning By-law to identify flood fringe lands and the uses permitted in this overlay, which excludes institutional uses, essential municipal services and uses associated with hazardous substances.

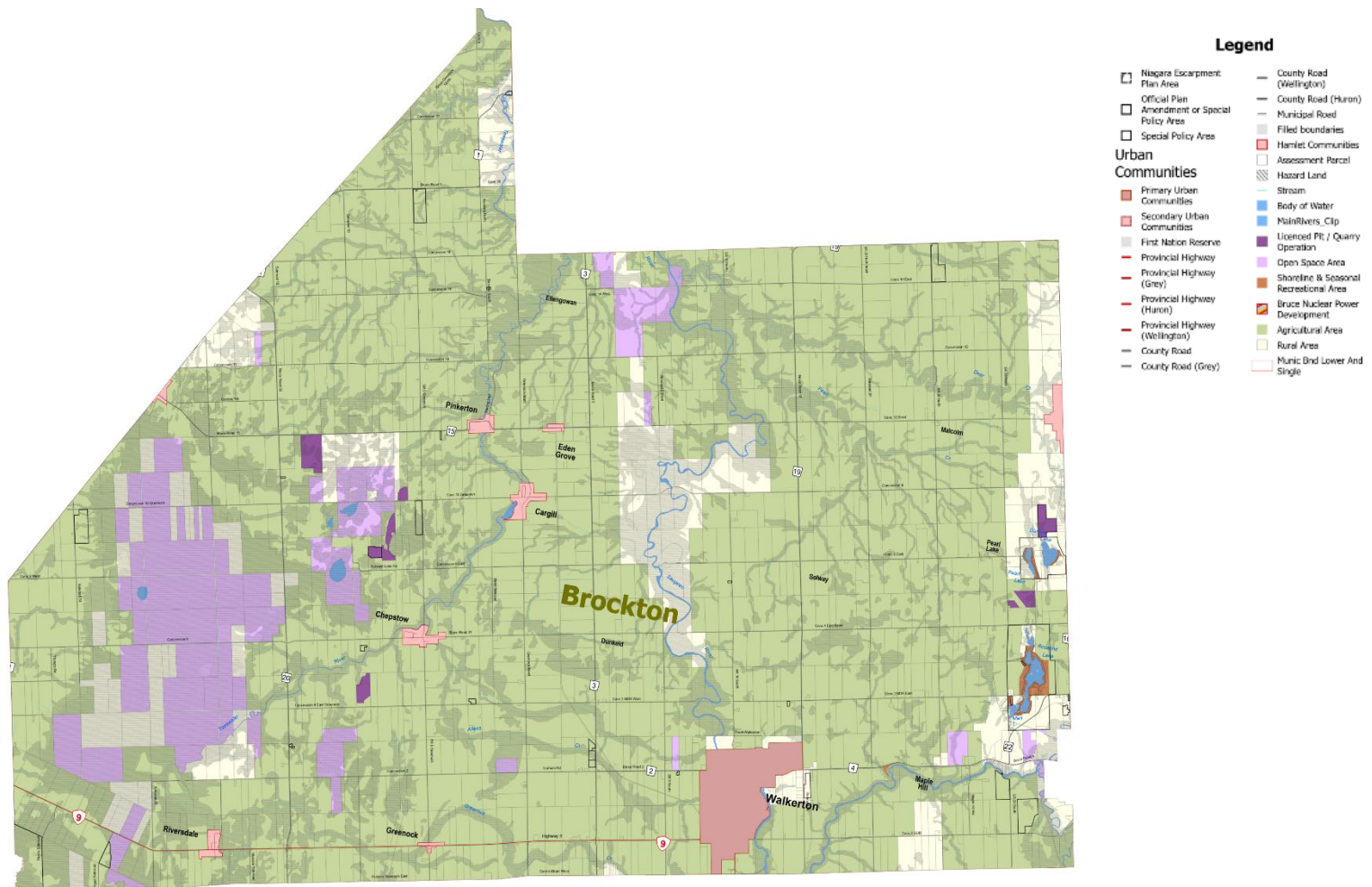
The Zoning By-law will be updated to reflect any changes to the OP as applicable.

3.9 Rural and Agricultural Areas

The Municipality is predominantly rural, with most lands in these rural areas classified as prime agricultural areas within the draft BCOP (Figure 7). Per the PPS, prime agricultural lands shall be designated and protected for long-term agricultural use. As a Province, we are required to follow an agricultural system approach, meaning it is our goal to maintain and enhance a geographically continuous agricultural land base and support and foster the long-term economic prosperity and productive capacity of the agri-food network.

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Figure 7 Excerpt of BCOP Schedule A Land Use



To protect prime agricultural lands for long-term purposes, the PPS limits permitted uses to agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified use. Agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses are required to be compatible with and not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. Lot division in prime agricultural lands is limited to prevent lot fragmentation and ensure agricultural lots are of sufficient size to be productive.

On-farm diversified uses is a relatively new term and is defined in the PPS as:

“uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include but are not limited to, home occupations, home-industries, agri-tourism uses, uses that produce value-added agricultural products, and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems, and energy storage systems.”

Where a residential dwelling is permitted on an agricultural lot, the PPS now permits the development of 2 additional residential units subject to specific criteria such as compliance with

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the minimum distance separation (MDS) formulae, compatibility with the agricultural system, limited size and sufficient servicing capacity. Where an additional residential unit is proposed on a lot smaller than 0.4 hectares or where two additional residential units are proposed on a lot smaller than 0.6 hectares, the County presently requires the submission of a Nitrate Study to determine sufficient servicing capacity. This is intended to support multigenerational living and provide for a greater range of housing options to support the agricultural economy.

Limited non-agricultural uses, which are non-residential in nature, may be permitted in prime agricultural areas, provided a specific set of criteria is satisfied such as the proposed use complies with the Minimum Distance Separation formulae, there is an identified need for the use and alternative locations have been evaluated and are not feasible. Extraction of minerals, mineral aggregates and petroleum may be permitted in prime agricultural areas but are required to demonstrate through an agricultural impact study that they will not negatively impact the agricultural system or where impacts cannot be avoided, how impacts will be minimized and mitigated.

Outside of Prime Agricultural areas, rural lands in the PPS provide for a greater range of uses to support a diversified rural economy while protecting agricultural land and resource-related uses by directing incompatible uses away from these areas. Lot creation on rural lands is more flexible with the requirement that the lot is a sufficient size to support private services and complies within minimum distance separation requirements.

3.9.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The BCOP generally mirrors the policies of the PPS and directs that agricultural development will occur in a manner that provides for large continuous farmland free from incompatible and conflicting lands uses. The BCOP adopts the best practices for farm parcel sizes and states that farm parcels shall generally be a minimum of 40 hectares in size but provides for instances where smaller parcel sizes may be considered.

When considering the development of agriculture-related uses in the Agricultural Area designation, the BCOP directs that the use must be related to local farm operations and primarily serve the agricultural community. Further, the applicant must demonstrate why the use cannot reasonably locate outside of the prime agricultural area.

In considering on-farm diversified uses (OFDU), the BCOP establishes the following criteria:

- The OFDU must be located within the limits of an existing farm operation.
- The OFDU cannot occupy more than 2% of the land area of the farm.
- The OFDU remains secondary to the main agricultural use.
- The OFDU is not subject to MDS unless it attracts a high number of visitors or includes overnight accommodations.
- Home occupations and home industries are permitted as OFDUs.

The BCOP permits up to two additional residential units within the Agricultural Area designation and requires that municipal Zoning By-law's implement criteria established in Section 3.2.6 (7) and 3.2.6.(8) primarily related to compatibility, the prohibition of business operations in

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additional residential units, parking, separation distances and servicing. At no time shall the combined total of the primary unit, additional residential unit (s) or garden suites exceed 3 units on a lot. However, temporary farm accommodations are permitted in addition to the primary residence and additional residential unit(s)

The Rural Area designation applies to lands which are not considered prime agricultural areas and contain agricultural and agriculture-related operations, forestry, aggregate extraction, conservation and tourism-based activities. Typically, industrial and commercial uses are directed to existing settlement areas but may be permitted within the rural area subject to specific criteria. It will be important that the Zoning By-law be flexible to promote economic diversity and innovation but also protect prime-agricultural lands predominantly for agricultural and agriculture-related uses.

3.9.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

The General Agriculture (A1) zone applies to lands designated Agricultural Area in the BCOP. Permitted uses are limited to agricultural, agriculture-related, home-occupation and home industry uses. Currently the Zoning By-law does not contain provisions for OFDUs.

A minimum lot area of 39 hectares is established for an Agriculture lot and a lot size between 0.5 to 4.0 hectare is established for non-farm lots. A site specific A1-1 zone is used where a consent has been granted to sever a surplus farm dwelling to prohibit residential uses on the retained farm parcel.

It is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Include provisions for OFDUs.
- Update definitions for agricultural and agriculture-related uses in accordance with the PPS.
- Update lot size provisions in accordance with the policies of the BCOP.
- Update MDS (2017) requirements.
- Include provisions for temporary farm worker accommodations.

3.10 Cultural Heritage

Brockton has a rich history that dates back over 150 years. The Municipality is an amalgamation of the Townships of Brant and Greenock and the Town of Walkerton and includes several historic villages which are foundational to the settlement of this area. Policy documents are key to establishing the enabling policies to protect heritage within communities.

The PPS directs that protected heritage properties shall be conserved and that development shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or archaeological potential unless the significant archaeological resources have been conserved. Development is not permitted on lands adjacent to protected heritage properties unless the heritage attributes are conserved. The PPS also directs municipalities to engage with indigenous communities early on

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to ensure their interests are considered when identifying, protecting and managing archaeological resources and protected heritage properties.

The Municipality has 11 designated properties under part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) and 23 listed properties. Since the Walkerton Official Plan was last updated, the Ontario Heritage Act was updated and properties that were listed on the municipal heritage register on or after January 1, 2023, must be removed from the register if the municipality does not give notice of intention to designate the property. Further, the OHA now requires that properties must now meet two or more criteria under Ontario Regulation 9/06 to be eligible for designation under Part IV of the OHA. This does not apply retroactively, meaning it has no impact on existing designated properties.

On April 17, 2025, the Province of Ontario released the proposed amendments to the OHA under the draft Protect Ontario By Unleashing our Economy Act. The proposed amendments would allow for the exemption from archaeological requirements where it could advance specific provincial priorities (i.e., transit, housing, health and long-term care). The proposed amendments would also provide the Minister with more authority to require assessments, investigations and prevent damages.

3.10.1 Official Plan

3.10.1.1 Draft Bruce County Official Plan

The BCOP recognizes the rich history and inventory of cultural heritage resources within the County. The BCOP establishes tools that the Municipality may use to protect heritage resources including the Archaeological Management Plan, heritage registers, heritage conservation districts and other planning tools like holding symbols.

3.10.1.2 Walkerton Official Plan

The Walkerton Official Plan includes enabling policies to establish tools (i.e., municipal heritage register) to protect heritage properties. It further requires that all new development to have regard for cultural heritage resources and encourage the incorporation of these resources into any plans. Where a development may impact a property with archaeological potential, the Official Plan states that an Archaeological Assessment may be required as a condition of development. It does not include a provision for the requirement of a Heritage Impact Study where development is proposed on or adjacent to a property of cultural heritage value. This would mean that a development proposal adjacent to a property of cultural heritage value or interest would be required to submit a heritage impact study to determine if the proposal could have negative impacts on the adjacent property's cultural heritage value.

Council may want to consider whether they would like to require a Heritage Impact Study where a development proposal is proposed on or adjacent to a property with cultural heritage value.

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3.10.2 Brockton Zoning By-law

Similar to the Municipality of South Bruce, Council may consider applying a holding symbol for properties with potential archaeological value. A holding symbol pauses future development on a property until a certain set of conditions are met. In this case, the condition would be that the proponent submit an Archaeological Assessment prior to development occurring on site. Properties subject to the holding symbol could be determined based on data provided by the Bruce County Archaeological Master Plan.

3.11 Other Considerations

3.11.1 Urban Backyard Chickens

As part of the background review, staff requested that we include a preliminary assessment regarding backyard chickens and whether they should be permitted within urban and settlement areas. There are several public health implications related to housing chickens in urban areas including the spread of the avian influenza, consumption of unregulated chicken products and exposure to contaminated environments. To mitigate these public health concerns, standards must be established and residents must be diligent in the care and up-keep of chickens.

Several municipalities in Ontario permit backyard chickens subject to specific standards including the Town of Saugeen Shores, Township of Georgian Bluffs and Municipality of Grey Highlands. Standards typically include:

- A maximum number of chickens that can be kept on a property. Generally, it ranges from 2 to 6.
- Lot size requirements.
- Requirements that chickens are held in enclosed runs/coops.
- Setback regulations for an enclosed chicken coop.
- Prohibition on home sales, home slaughtering of chickens and the sale of eggs.
- Coop and sanitation regulations.

Several municipalities have implemented pilot projects to permit urban chickens in specific zones and regulate their care through permitting such as the Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the City of Toronto. The City of Toronto's pilot program concluded in 2023 and generally determined that there were no significant issues with the pilot program but there were growing concerns related to the potential rise of the avian influenza, costs for the expansion of the program and potential for nuisance or rodent issues. The pilot program also raised operational and animal welfare concerns, with a limited number of veterinarians being able to provide appropriate care for hens. Access to a veterinarian is critical to reducing the outbreak of the avian influenza. To support the backyard chickens' program in Toronto, significant resources would be required to support proactive responses to animal welfare, which would result in significant costs. The City ultimately decided to end the program as a result.

The Township of Huron-Kinloss and Municipality of Kincardine prohibit backyard chickens in residential areas citing concerns with biosecurity, noise and animal care and indicating that there are sufficient food chains for eggs and poultry in Ontario, especially within their agricultural communities.

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In the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, their Public Health Unit raised a number of concerns related to backyard chickens and the Kent Federation of Agriculture opposed any by-law that would allow chicken in urban areas stating that it has been proven that contaminating of commercial flocks with avian influenza originates in urban areas.

3.11.1.1 Recommendations

At this time, further study is required to determine the suitability of a backyard chicken program within the Municipality. Similar to Huron-Kinloss, Brockton has a wealth of agricultural land which provides for local eggs and poultry and there is no shortage of these resources in the food chain. Introducing backyard chickens in the urban and hamlet areas may impact existing poultry operations due to an increased risk for disease and increased demand for veterinary services. The Municipality will need to weigh the risks of implementing a backyard chicken program in urban and hamlet areas with the potential impacts to its large agricultural community. Given the proximity of local eggs and poultry to the urban and hamlet areas, is a backyard chicken program needed and worth the resources required to support its success?

The Municipality may want to consider a pilot program to determine whether the risk factors can be appropriately mitigated and determine the resources required to support the program. At this time, it is recommended that the Municipality include enabling policy language in the Walkerton OP to state that the Municipality may consider permitting backyard chickens through a future by-law.

3.11.2 Renewable Energy

There have been a number of legislative changes pertaining to the approval of renewable energy undertakings since the OP was last updated. Now municipalities have the ability to regulate green energy undertakings through OPs, Zoning By-laws and Site Plan Control.

Section 3.8 of the PPS states that planning authorities should provide opportunities for the development of energy supply including renewable energy systems and alternative energy systems to accommodate current and projected energy needs. The PPS also permits renewable energy systems as on-farm diversified uses.

Section 3.7(5) of the BCOP is not a new policy but directs the County to work with local municipalities to investigate the need, feasibility and suitable locations for renewable or non-traditional energy sources such as solar, wind, better energy and bio-energy to promote low-carbon renewable and alternative energy generation or storage. Where these projects are approved through an Environmental Assessment or similar process or where the proponent is Hydro One and/or Ontario Power Generation, an amendment to the BCOP is not required.

3.11.2.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that the OP be updated to refer to the policies of the PPS and BCOP and existing legislative environment. Further, it is recommended that it include reference to Council's

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motion to not permit commercial/large-scale renewable energy facilities on prime agricultural lands.

3.11.3 Relationships with Indigenous Communities

Equitable land use planning requires recognition of the rights and values of all people living on the land, historically, currently, and in the future. In 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada prepared 94 calls to action for Canadians and all levels of government to recognize and amend the history of systemic mistreatment, subjugation, and the removal of Indigenous people from their lands and culture. At the local level, municipalities have a role to play in establishing land use policies and practices which work to reconcile relationships with Indigenous Communities and recognize the value of Indigenous knowledge and practice in regard to land stewardship and cultural heritage.

Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 recognizes and affirms the existing aboriginal and treaty rights. The Municipality of Brockton is located within Treaty 45 ½ (1836) which provides for specific rights for the treaty holders. The Municipality of Brockton is on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabek Nation: the People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. We also acknowledge that the Municipality is within the traditional harvesting territory of the Metis Nation of Ontario and Historic Saugeen Metis. The Saugeen Ojibway Nation are the traditional keepers of this land. We have sent invitations to the rights holders to participate in the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law Review to understand their interests and rights.

The PPS acknowledges the unique role that indigenous communities have in land use planning and development. Section 6.2 of the PPS requires that municipalities engage with indigenous communities early in the process and that they coordinate on land use planning matters to facilitate know-ledge sharing, support indigenous interests and the identification of potential impacts of decisions on treaty rights. The BCOP builds upon these policies and requires that the Municipality engage and coordinate with Indigenous Communities on land use planning matters, particularly those related to archaeological and environmental matters.

3.11.3.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Walkerton OP be updated to:

- Include a land acknowledgement which recognizes the historical and ongoing relationships of Indigenous Communities to the lands within and surrounding the Municipality.

Please note that consultation is underway with treaty rights holders and additional recommendations may be developed based on additional information provided through those discussions.

3.11.4 Cannabis

The *Cannabis Act* came into effect on October 17, 2018. It had the effect of legalizing the production, sale, and use of cannabis (sometimes referred to as marihuana or marijuana) for recreational purposes in Canada. Prior to the introduction of the *Cannabis Act* in 2018, cannabis

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was an illegal substance and only permitted to be grown and sold for medical purposes. There were rules in place for the personal growth and consumption of medical cannabis, as well as rules for the commercial growth, processing, and sale of cannabis for medical purposes.

In Spring of 2018, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) published the Municipal Guide to Cannabis Legalization: A Roadmap for Canadian Local Governments. This document provides an overview of several topics related to the legalization of cannabis, including a discussion of land use management (i.e., jurisdictional issues, location and scale of commercial cultivation and processing, location and density of retail facilities, and personal cultivation). Given that cannabis production is an intensive type of agriculture, the FCM recommends that these uses be permitted in agricultural or industrial zones.

Other considerations for licensed cannabis production facilities include those of land use compatibility, especially given potential impacts to adjacent uses due to light pollution or odour emissions. It is recommended that any provisions to regulate licensed cannabis production facilities provide a minimum separation distance between this use and other sensitive land uses, including residential and institutional uses, or any property that contains an existing residential dwelling, school, or church (e.g., 150 metres). Further consideration may be given to the scale of cannabis cultivation and/or processing that is permitted (i.e., where to permit commercial-scale cannabis cultivation and/or processing) and whether to introduce permissions for the retail sale of cannabis and in which zone(s).

The BCOP permits cannabis production and processing facilities within the agricultural area and rural area. The Walkerton Official Plan contains no guiding policies.

3.11.4.1 Recommendations

As the BCOP permits cannabis production and processing facilities within the agricultural area and rural area, which is outside of the limits of the Walkerton OP, it is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Define cannabis production facilities and cannabis processing.
- Include regulations under the General Provisions section of the Zoning By-law to establish setback requirements, parking, accessory uses and storage considerations.
- Add permissions for Cannabis Production Facilities within the Agricultural and Rural Area based on best practices.

It is recommended that these facilities are not permitted as-of-right, and that the Municipality require a Zoning By-law Amendment for the consideration of new cannabis production facility.

3.11.5 Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals such as Airbnb and VRBO are arrangements between individual property owners and guests to use all or part of their property for temporary accommodations, typically for less than a month. Short-term rentals, unlike motels, hotels and bed and breakfast establishments, often operate outside standard regulatory frameworks. Short-term rentals have grown in popularity amongst shoreline communities.

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Zoning By-laws or licensing by-laws can be used as a mechanism to regulate short-term rentals. Zoning By-laws tend to be more restrictive whereas licensing by-laws can be more resource extensive. Municipalities like South Bruce and the Township of Puslinch have introduced provisions for short-term rentals in their zoning by-laws. These uses tend to be treated similar to bed and breakfast establishments and contain provisions related to maximum occupancy load, minimum distance from other short-term rentals and limitations to what type of uses may also occur on the property (i.e., limitations of home businesses).

3.11.5.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- Include a definition for short-term rentals which include a maximum duration of stay (i.e., 30 days).
- Permit short-term rentals wherever bed and breakfast establishments are permitted.
- Include maximum occupancy loads and specify uses which are not permitted to locate on the same lot such as home occupations.
- Require that they have frontage on a year-round municipally maintained road.

3.11.6 Implementation

Since the OP was last comprehensively reviewed, there have been several updates to the *Planning Act* which impacts the implementation of its policies.

3.11.6.1 Recommendations

To address legislative changes and assist with interpretation it is recommended that:

- Include a subsection within Section 2.3, which clarifies the usage of the auxiliary verbs “shall”, “should” and “may” to assist with interpretation of specific policies.
- Include a subsection for definitions rather than relying solely on the definitions from the PPS and BCOP.
- Revise Section 7.3 Pre-consultation to state that applicants “are encouraged to consult with staff” to reflect the changes to the *Planning Act* which no longer permit municipalities to require pre-consultation meetings.
- Update Section 7.7 Legal Non-Conforming Uses to reflect changes in BCOP as it relates to legally non-conforming uses in hazard lands.
- Delete Section 7.9 Increased Height and Density Provisions as Section 37 Bonusing provisions of the Planning Act was replaced with Community Benefits Charges. In its place, it is recommended that a new section titled “Community Benefit Charges” be added to enable the establishment of a by-law to collect charges from higher density developments to fund capital costs of facilities, services and other matters.
- Update policies related to site plan control to reflect legislative changes to the *Planning Act*.
- Include a section which provides direction for the review of plan of subdivision applications.
- Ensure AODA compliance.

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It is recommended that the Zoning By-law be updated to:

- make stylistic changes to the text to improve usability.
- Update standards that have been frequently amended to provide a more appropriate standard.
- Ensure AODA Compliance.

3.11.7 Housekeeping Changes

As part of the OP and Zoning By-law Review, a number of housekeeping changes were proposed related to:

- Limiting accessory apartments in the Hamlet Commercial zone.
- Capping the maximum lot coverage for non-residential accessory buildings to 10% where an additional residential unit is proposed.
- Increasing the maximum height of an accessory building where a larger setback is provided.
- Adding language to permit temporary tents and structures for community events.
- Provide improved direction on permissions for community events vs temporary uses.

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Section 4

What is Next



Credit: Municipality of Brockton

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4.0 What is Next

Like many other municipalities in southern Ontario, we know that the Municipality is projected to grow over the next 25 to 30 years. Residents, employees and visitors alike enjoy the Municipality's rich cultural and natural heritage and these assets need to be protected and enhanced as the Municipality continues to grow. Growth cannot only occur outside the existing built-up area and a combination of infill and greenfield development is needed to accommodate future growth to make efficient use of goods and services and protect our agricultural resources and natural environment. This will require a mix of different uses and building types to further encourage the development of complete communities.

Climate change is a major consideration for the OP and Zoning By-law Review project, understanding that it can have major impacts on climate and the severity and frequency of extreme weather events. As a first line of defense, the Municipality will need to ensure its policies and regulations protect the natural environment, consider the implications of climate change on infrastructure planning and avoid or mitigate impacts from natural hazards.

To encourage a strong economy, consideration needs to be made regarding uses permitted around employment areas to ensure compatible development. We also need to ensure that regulations in the Zoning By-law continue to protect the viability of agricultural land, understanding that it plays a large role in Brockton's economy.

Other local consideration related to urban chicken, cannabis, short-term rentals and housekeeping need to be reviewed to ensure that the policies and regulations are reflective of local interests.

The recommendations presented in this report will inform the basis for updating the Walkerton OP and Brockton Zoning By-law and will be presented to Council, stakeholders and the public for their input. Community engagement regarding the background report will be held during Phase 3 Public Engagement.

JLR used directions of the Background Report and feedback received during Phase 3 to proceed to Phase 4, the drafting of the OP and Zoning By-law.

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J.L. RICHARDS & ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:



Alison Bucking, RPP, MCIP
Planner



David Welwood, RPP, MCIP
Senior Planner

Ottawa

343 Preston Street
Tower II, Suite 1000
Ottawa ON Canada
K1S 1N4
613-728-3571
ottawa@jlrichards.ca

Kingston

203-863 Princess Street
Kingston ON Canada
K7L 5N4
613-544-1424
kingston@jlrichards.ca

**Sudbury**

314 Countryside Drive
Sudbury ON Canada
P3E 6G2
705-522-8174
sudbury@jlrichards.ca

Timmins

834 Mountjoy Street S
Timmins ON Canada
P4N 7C5
705-360-1899
timmins@jlrichards.ca

North Bay

555-501 Oak Street E
North Bay ON Canada
P1B 8E3
705-495 7597
northbay@jlrichards.ca

Guelph

107-450 Speedvale Ave. West
Guelph ON Canada
N1H 7Y6
519-763-0713
guelph@jlrichards.ca



Platinum
member

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