



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Planning Committee  
**From:** Sarah Wilhelm, Manager of Policy Planning  
**Date:** Thursday, June 08, 2023  
**Subject:** County Official Plan Review – Progress Report #9



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### 1.0 Purpose

This progress report for the County Official Plan Review covers the period from January to June, 2023.

### 2.0 Key Updates

- County Growth Structure – Official Plan Amendment (OPA 119) approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on April 11, 2023, subject to modifications. The Province added more than 1,000 acres to urban boundaries. Boundary expansions were not part of the original Council adopted Official Plan Amendment.
- County Growth Forecast – Official Plan Amendment (OPA 120) adopted by County Council on February 23, 2023 and submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on March 1, 2023. The 120-day decision making deadline was suspended by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 2, 2023 to allow more time for review.
- Development Approval Process Updates – Official Plan Amendment (OPA 121) adopted by County Council and came into effect on April 27, 2023. Enables Community Planning Permit System and minor zoning by-law amendments. Makes other policy changes related to site plan control, complete applications and pre-consultations.
- Draft Provincial Planning Statement released for comment by Province. Proposes significant changes to Provincial land use planning framework and the County's approach to the current Official Plan Review. Deadline for submitting comments was June 5 but the comment period has been extended to August 4, 2023.
- The following County Planning Committee Reports have been brought forward to Council since the last progress report:

PD2023-01 County Official Plan Review – Progress Report #8  
PD2023-03 County Official Plan Review – OPA 120 Recommendation Report  
PD2023-05 County Official Plan Review – Agricultural System Mapping and Policy Review  
PD2023-09 County Official Plan Review – Urban Expansion Requests  
PD2023-16 County Official Plan Review – Provincial Approval of OPA 119  
PD2022-20 Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2023

### **3.0 Work Plan**

The County Official Plan Review consists of two main parts: a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) and a 5-year review. While staff have mainly focused on the MCR component to date, the proposed Provincial Planning Statement (2023 PPS) would no longer require an MCR to be completed. The Official Plan Review will continue under the 5-year review umbrella.

With the final 2023 PPS policies expected this fall, planning staff are finding ways to continue to move forward with policy development and mapping changes still necessary to support future growth, while temporarily pausing other areas of review.

#### **3.1 Key Areas to Continue with Official Plan Review**

Staff recommends that the following areas of our work plan be continued at this time:

##### **Future Development Land**

- Move forward with amendments to County Official Plan to re-designate Future Development lands within urban area boundaries in Mapleton, Minto and Wellington North (Erin Future Development lands to be considered locally).

##### **Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Review**

- Continue with evaluation of submitted requests for urban settlement area boundary expansions where a need for more land was identified in the MCR Phase 2 Report for community area growth (Centre Wellington, Mapleton and Minto) and for employment area growth (Centre Wellington, Erin and Mapleton). Given number of parcels impacted in Centre Wellington, a map in Appendix A is included to show outstanding urban expansion area requests in relation to Provincially approved boundary expansions.
- As a priority, move forward with necessary amendments to County Official Plan to implement Mapleton Council endorsed expansion areas in Drayton and Moorefield. Other municipalities to follow.

##### **Mixed Use Residential/Commercial Policies**

- Continue to review and modernize Official Plan policies to support increased flexibility for mixed use, intensification and a range of housing types, and bring forward amendments to Official Plan to implement necessary changes.

##### **Considerations Related to OPA 119 Mapping Modifications**

- Through modifications to OPA 119, the Province expanded urban areas in Fergus, Elora/Salem, Rockwood and Clifford and supported conversion of employment area lands in Arthur and Elora.
- Approaches regarding future land use designations will be reviewed within the context of the overall Official Plan Review, applicable planning policies, and other technical considerations (e.g. servicing availability, phasing, etc.).

County staff will monitor changes at the Provincial level, work closely with Member Municipalities and adjust the work plan as necessary.

### **3.2 Key Areas to Pause Official Plan Review**

Staff recommends that the following areas of our work plan be paused until the final 2023 PPS is available:

#### **Agricultural Policy and Mapping Review**

- The draft 2023 PPS policies propose to remove requirement for Agricultural System mapping (except for Greenbelt Area) and make changes to prime agricultural area policies.

#### **Rural Area Growth Review**

- The draft 2023 PPS policies provide much greater flexibility for rural residential development and less restrictive rural employment policies. Final PPS policies should therefore factor into the considerations for the following:
  - Regionally Significant Economic Development Study Area in Puslinch,
  - Rural employment areas, and
  - Rural residential development potential in secondary urban centres (Aberfoyle, Morriston), hamlets and through severances in the secondary agricultural area in Erin, Minto and Puslinch.

## **4.0 Upcoming Official Plan Amendment(s)**

In the near term, staff intend to prepare draft Amendment(s) to the County Official Plan to mainly deal with the matters under Section 3.1 of this report.

### **4.1 Purpose of the Official Plan Amendment(s)**

The purpose of the Amendment(s) is to address urban growth needs and related planning policy considerations.

### **4.2 Proposed Changes to the County Official Plan**

The main changes to the official plan being considered include:

- 1) Future Development and other land use mapping and policy changes;
- 2) Urban area boundary expansions;
- 3) Encourage mixed use developments, intensification and a range of housing options;
- 4) Other amendments to the Plan resulting from the above; and
- 5) Housekeeping matters.

## **5.0 Next Steps**

Staff will prepare a draft Official Plan Amendment(s) and circulate to our Member Municipalities and prescribed agencies for comment and conduct the necessary public consultation(s), at the appropriate times. Staff will report back to the Committee with a final amendment and recommendation.

## 6.0 Recommendations

That the report “County Official Plan Review – Progress Report #9” be received for information;

That the County Clerk forward the report to Member Municipalities; and

That staff be directed to prepare and circulate a draft amendment(s) to update the County Official Plan to address urban growth needs and to hold public meeting(s) at the appropriate time(s).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Wilhelm', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sarah Wilhelm, MCIP, RPP  
Manager of Policy Planning

Appendix A      Centre Wellington Urban Expansion Area Modifications and Remaining Requests

# Appendix A

## Centre Wellington Urban Expansion Area Modifications and Remaining Requests

