



## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh Council  
**From:** Meghan Tydd-Hrynyk, Planner & Denise Van Amersfoort, Manager of Planning  
**Date:** April 8, 2025  
**Subject:** Draft County Official Plan Amendment No. 6 (PPS Conformity)

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### Recommendation

That the report, titled Draft County Official Plan Amendment No. 6 (PPS Conformity) be received for information.

### Background

Council received a report on the new Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) in October of 2024 (attached for reference).

Huron County Council has initiated an amendment to the County Official Plan for the purpose of bringing it into conformity with the new provincial direction. The draft amendment is attached to this report for Council's consideration; it includes both policy amendments as well as updated Resource Maps.

### Comments

In October 2024, the Province released the Provincial Planning Statement which replaces the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019. The proposed amendment to the County of Huron Official Plan seeks to align with the new direction in the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).

There are many important policies that remain the same in the 2024 PPS as in the 2020 PPS, including:

- Decisions of Planning Authorities are required to be 'consistent with' the 2024 PPS;
- Settlement areas continue to be the focus of growth and development;
- Active transportation (e.g. walking & cycling) is important for healthy, active communities;
- Policies addressing natural areas and mineral aggregates are largely unchanged;
- Huron County is a prime agricultural area; and
- Surplus dwelling severances are permitted in prime agricultural areas.

The 2024 PPS contains new direction for many policy areas. The following is a list which are most applicable for the County of Huron:

- Comprehensive reviews are no longer required for converting employment lands or for expanding settlement areas;
- Focus is on creating complete communities;

- Planning time horizon is at least 20 years and no longer than 30 years;
- More specific direction on promoting wide range of types and forms of housing, including additional residential units in agricultural areas;
  - Indigenous Nations are to be consulted early in the planning process; and
- Enhanced direction for consideration of impacts of a changing climate in the planning process.

#### County Official Plan Proposed Amendment No. 6

County Planning staff have reviewed the existing Huron County Official Plan in light of the new Provincial Planning Statement and outlined necessary amendments. The following list summarizes the key differences between the existing Huron County Official Plan and the proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 6:

- Addition of the County's Land Acknowledgement.
- The Agriculture section is amended with the addition of stronger support for agricultural systems planning, new requirements for agricultural impact assessments and to reflect the County's Housing Friendly Lens work relating to Additional Residential units in agricultural settings.
- The Extractive Resource section is amended to reflect the Scoped Update to the Huron County Aggregate Strategy;
- The Natural Environment section is amended to reduce the adjacent lands policies to 30 metres for all natural area types.
- The Settlement Patterns section is amended to remove the comprehensive review requirement at the time of a settlement area expansion and/or alteration to an employment area.
- The Implementation section is amended to update the complete application requirements.

The draft amendment incorporates specific direction from County Council regarding the surplus farm residence criteria for the age of the residence and amends from 15 years to 10 years. If approved, this change could impact surplus farm dwelling severance applications in Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh; local Council has the option to adopt the County approach or to be more restrictive should they feel it is necessary to meet local priorities.

The amendment also updates the Appendices Tables with population and housing projections from the 2024 Watson & Associates Economists Study. The updated Resource Maps reflect changes to settlement area boundaries, level of servicing available, aggregate mapping and sourcewater protection.

#### **Next Steps**

The Public Meeting for this amendment will be held at Huron County Council on May 7, 2025. The Township will receive a formal Notice of Public Meeting. In the meantime, should Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh Council wish to provide comments on the draft amendment, direction to staff to prepare a response should be given.

Following the amendment to the County Official Plan, Planning & Development staff will work with each local municipality to amend the local Official Plans and bring policy frameworks into conformity.

Sincerely,

'Original signed by'

Meghan Tydd-Hrynyk, Planner

'Original signed by'

Denise Van Amersfoort, Manager of Planning