



Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: April 14, 2026

Submitted by: Durk Vanderwerff, Director of Planning and Development

Subject: Update to Ontario Land Tribunal Appeal of Thames Centre Official Plan Amendment No. 27; General Official Plan Update; File No. 39-TC-OPA27

BACKGROUND:

Thames Centre Official Plan Amendment No. 27 was approved with modifications by County Council in November 2023. Two appeals were filed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), and a third party was granted Participant status.

- [Thames Centre Official Plan Amendment No. 27](#)
- [Appeal of Thames Centre Official Plan No 27](#)

During the appeal process, the Province introduced the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, which updated the applicable policy framework and contributed to delays in processing the appeal. On March 6, 2026, the OLT issued a Decision (attached) approving portions of Amendment No. 27.

ANALYSIS:

The Municipality and the County jointly brought forward a motion in August 2025, supported by evidence, seeking approval of portions of Amendment No. 27.

Based upon the joint motion, in March 2026, the Tribunal approved portions of Amendment No. 27. The OLT decision brings into effect policies and mapping updates not subject to the remaining appeal, generally including:

- General land use direction, including policies related to the natural environment and natural hazards
- Permanent dwelling units for farm workers
- Additional Residential Units
- Policy updates to reflect the Provincial Planning Statement
- A land use redesignation for 3124 Westchester Bourne from Agricultural to Rural Industrial

- Updated policies related to Hamlet, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreational, and Parks and Open Space designations

The OLT decision leaves a number of matters under appeal, generally including:

- Growth and development policies
- Housing supply policies
- Certain agricultural policies
- Certain settlement area and land use policies
- Site plan control
- Secondary plans
- Complete application requirements
- Certain land use designations


Staff are preparing a consolidated version of the Municipality’s Official Plan that incorporates Amendment No. 27, County modifications, the OLT decision, and the remaining matters under appeal. This work is complex given the timing, interests of the parties, and scope of the approval and outstanding issues. Staff will continue to work with the Municipality and Legal toward resolution of the remaining matters under appeal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

External legal costs have been incurred, and planning resources have been allocated in support of resolving portions of the appeal. Ongoing costs are anticipated to address the remaining matters before the OLT and are expected to be accommodated within the approved budget.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Priority	Goal	Objectives
Economic Development 	Enhance overall economic well-being and community prosperity by fostering a sustainable and thriving local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance the County’s planning framework that balances diverse land uses while protecting farmland and natural environment.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Update to Ontario Land Tribunal Appeal of Thames Centre Official Plan Amendment No. 27; General Official Plan Update; File No. 39-TC-OPA27 report be received for information.