

**Meeting Date:** July 18, 2022  
**Department:** Building, By-law and Planning  
**Report No.:** BBP-2022-82  
**Submitted by:** Jennifer Huff, Director of Building & Planning  
Matt Rodrigues, MCIP, RPP, Team Lead & Project Planner (WSP)  
**Approved by:** Fred Tranquilli, Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** **Growing Together Redline Official Plan Amendment No. 14 – Recommendation of Adoption Report.**

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**RECOMMENDATION: THAT:** Report BBP-2022-82 be received for Information; and further, **THAT:** By-law 53-2022 to Official Plan No. 14 be approved adopting OPA No. 14; and further, **THAT:** Official Plan Amendment No. 14 be sent to the County of Middlesex for approval.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This matter is in accordance with the following strategic priorities:

**Economic Development:** Strathroy-Caradoc will have a diverse tax base and be a place that offers a variety of economic opportunities to current and prospective residents and businesses.

**Growth Management:** Strathroy-Caradoc will be an inclusive community where growth is managed to accommodate a range of needs and optimize municipal resources.

**Destination Building:** Strathroy-Caradoc will provide distinct experiences that celebrate its past and future by prioritizing innovative new ideas that set the community apart.

Specifically, the 5-Year update to the Official Plan was identified as one of several short-term tactics necessary to achieve the above noted strategic priorities.

## **BACKGROUND**

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On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Council held a Statutory Public Meeting in support of the red-lined revised Official Plan Amendment, whereby the proposed changes to the Official Plan were reviewed and Council and the public had an opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the proposed changes. An additional opportunity for the public to review the revised Redline Official Plan and OPA 14 was provided by way of a virtual Public Open House held on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022. These meetings are a

culmination of work that has been on-going since the Municipality awarded the contract to WSP to update our Official Plan in October 2020.

The Official Plan Update project has been branded as the “**Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc**” Project and a website has been created that is dedicated to the project: [growingtogethersc.ca](http://growingtogethersc.ca). The OP Update has included an extensive engagement program (summarized below), as well as the completion of eight (8) Master Plans and Studies to provide direction and recommendations on the necessary policy changes to the Official Plan.

The project can be divided into three (3) key components, being:

1. Scoped Settlement Area Boundary Review – Completed (OPA 13 approved by the County of Middlesex in November 2021)
2. **Official Plan Review and Master Plans – subject to a July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, adoption recommendation to Council.**
3. Comprehensive Settlement Area Review – in progress, anticipated completion date in Spring 2023

Council has received several project updates since fall 2020 as the Municipality has proceeded through this project, including endorsement of background reports and a Council input workshop. This subject report deals exclusively with the second project deliverable noted above.

## **Master Plans and Studies**

At this time, all eight (8) of the Master Plans and Studies have now been completed and are available on the project website [www.growingtogethersc.ca](http://www.growingtogethersc.ca).

The recommendations of each of the reports and master plans have been used to inform the policy amendments to the Official Plan where appropriate. While many of the recommendations are to be implemented by the Official Plan, in many cases they will also be used to inform changes to other policies, by-laws, standards and Municipal operations. Together, the Official Plan and Master Plans will guide budgetary decisions, future studies and Environmental Assessments, and growth and development across Strathroy-Caradoc for years to come.

## **KEY DATES**

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The Municipality’s Official Plan Review formally began in January 2021. Since then, several key milestones have been achieved including the approval of OPA 13 to implement scoped changes to the Strathroy Settlement Boundary. Below is a listing of key dates in the Official Plan Review process:

- January 11, 2021 – Notice of Study Commencement Issued and public launch of project
- March 15, 2021 – Special Meeting of Council to initiate the Official Plan Review under the Section 26 of the *Planning Act*

- May 12, 2022 – Draft Redline Official Plan and Official Plan Amendment No. 14 (OPA 14) released for public comment
- May 25, 2022 – Statutory Public Open House - Draft Redline Official Plan and Official Plan Amendment No. 14 (OPA 14)
- June 6, 2022 – Statutory Public Meeting - Draft Redline Official Plan and Official Plan Amendment No. 14 (OPA 14)

## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

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The Municipality's Official Plan Review has been informed by a comprehensive public and stakeholder engagement program that began in February 2021. The engagement program was broken down into several 'rounds' which aligned with the technical milestones of the project.

The Municipality also launched a dedicated project webpage on the Bang the Table platform which serves as the central repository of information for the project including reports, upcoming consultation dates, and interactive tools. Since the launch of the page in Q1 2021, the project team has ensured that the latest information is posted on the website. Community members have registered to receive newsletter updates on this page and various interactive tools (e.g., idea boards, maps) have been posted to solicit input into the Official Plan Review and Master Plans and Studies.

Throughout the project several meetings have been held with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to seek focused input and confirm findings. The TAC is comprised of representatives from a wide range of agencies including Conservation Authorities, school boards, public health units, the County, and housing agencies. The SAC is comprised of community members who applied to participate and representatives from various community groups in Strathroy-Caradoc. Input from the SAC and TAC has been vital throughout the process and has directly informed policy directions and changes to the Official Plan.

The Growing Together Strathroy-Caradoc project was also an important opportunity for the Municipality to consult with Indigenous communities throughout the process. At the outset of the project, letters were sent directly to several communities to confirm their preferred means of consultation and notify them of the project. Starting in 2022, the Project Team began holding regular meetings with representatives from Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) to discuss the various Master Plans, Studies, and processes and to seek their input. COTTFN provided comments to the Municipality which directly informed revisions to the Redline Official Plan, including a new Territorial Acknowledgment and policies related to consultation, cultural heritage, climate change, and archaeological resources. COTTFN provided formal written comments to the Municipality following the Statutory Public Meeting which were considered in revising OPA 14. These comments are attached to this Report in **Appendix X**.

### Round 1

To kick-off the process, three visioning workshops were held in March 2021 to seek community input on the future of Strathroy-Caradoc. The findings of these sessions informed the development of the

various Master Plans and Studies and fed into the development of the Policy Directions and Conformity Report. A kick-off meeting was also held in February 2021 with landowners and the development community to introduce the Official Plan Review project and how they could subsequently stay involved through the Comprehensive Review process.

The findings of Round 1 Engagement were summarized in the Background Review Report.

## **Round 2**

On June 2, 2021, a workshop was held with Municipal Council to seek input on the thematic areas outlined in the Background Review Report. A subsequent Public Open House was held on July 20, 2021, to provide an update on the Official Plan Review process and to present the Background Review findings and considerations. In August 2021, the Background Review Report was presented to Municipal Council for endorsement.

The findings of Round 2 Engagement were summarized in the Background Review Report.

## **Round 3**

On November 1, 2021, a staff workshop was held with Municipal and County staff from a wide range of departments to introduce preliminary policy directions, ensure a degree of coordination between the Municipality and County, and identify further directions to be considered.

On November 16, 2021, a virtual public open house was held to present the preliminary policy directions and have community conversation about key considerations in the Official Plan. The attendees were prompted with a series of questions pertaining to several themes in the policy directions report such providing more housing choices in neighbourhoods, climate change and sustainability, transportation, and on-farm diversified uses), and an open discussion was facilitated to answer questions related to the new Official Plan.

The findings of Round 3 Engagement were summarized in the Policy Directions and Conformity Report.

## **Statutory Engagement Process**

The *Planning Act* sets out minimum requirements for consultation to be completed through the Official Plan Review process. On March 15, 2021, a Special Meeting of Municipal Council was held to initiate the Official Plan Review. This meeting satisfies Section 26 requirements of the *Planning Act* for a special meeting of council.

If an Official Plan is being reviewed under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, the Act requires that at least one public open house is held for the purposes of giving the public an opportunity to review and ask questions about the information and material. It also requires that at least one public meeting is held for the purpose of giving the public the opportunity to make representations in respect to the proposed plan. The Act also requires that the materials be made available a minimum of 20-days prior to the public meeting.

- On **May 12, 2022**, the Draft Redline Official Plan, including schedules and companion Official Plan Amendment, was released for consultation. A comment submission deadline of **June 13, 2022** was publicized to provide time for the public and stakeholders to review materials and submit comments to the Municipality.
- On **May 25, 2022**, the Statutory Public Open House was held to provide an opportunity to review and ask questions about the information and material. Approximately 60 people registered to attend this session. Verbal comments received include:
  - Add additional language to the Official Plan to encourage design excellence in built form and to promote the use of durable and natural materials;
  - The opportunity to review the policy changes informed by the Employment Lands Study and to defer them to the Comprehensive Review process;
  - The opportunity to review policies for community revitalization in Melbourne, recognizing the limited opportunities for growth in the Hamlet; and
  - The need to maintain parks and trail facilities to a high standard to meet the needs of a growing community.

These comments were considered in revising OPA 14 prior to Council adoption.

- On **June 6, 2022**, the Statutory Public Meeting was held to give the opportunity for the public to make representations and submit formal comments on the Draft Redline Official Plan. This was held as part of the Regular Meeting of Council and 4 delegations registered to attend. Following this meeting, comments continued to be received by the Municipality prior to the June 13, 2022 deadline.

All formal written comments received up to and including June 13, 2022 have been compiled and attached to this report as an attachment. All comments and input received has been reviewed by the Project Team and where applicable, changes have been made to OPA 14. Below is a summary of how comments received have been considered in revising the plan:

- Comments of a site-specific nature requesting changes of land use designation to facilitate future development were reviewed by the project team. It was deemed that these requests are best suited for a site-specific Official Plan Amendment and/or Zoning By-law Amendment process and were not implemented through OPA 14.
- Some comments received are related to the Municipality's Comprehensive Review process and directly relate to growth management matters that will be addressed through a subsequent Official Plan Amendment in Spring 2023;
- The hamlet policies of the Official Plan (Section 4.2.2 – and applicable only in Melbourne) have been reviewed to ensure that they provide appropriate support for growth within the current settlement area boundary, while ensuring that development will be appropriate given soil conditions. This requires ensuring lots to be appropriately

sized to accommodate a conventional private septic system. Since Melbourne straddles both Strathroy-Caradoc and Southwest Middlesex, it is noted that the policies of the Official Plan are generally consistent with those in Southwest Middlesex.

- Many comments were received from groups and agencies in support of the proposed policy changes, including minor wording modifications to strengthen the intent of the policies which were implemented in the revised OPA 14; and
- A comment was received regarding the applicability of Policy 3.3.2.5 of the Draft Redline Official Plan. This policy was introduced to provide criteria against which the Municipality will review requests received to convert lands from a Commercial designation to any non-commercial designation. This approach has been used in other municipalities in Ontario to help ensure sufficient supply of commercial development and was implemented following a recommendation contained in the Regional Commercial Systems Study. It is proposed that this policy remain in OPA 14.

## **SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

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The purpose of OPA 14 is to update the Municipality's Official Plan (SCOP) to ensure land use planning policies are current, reflect Provincial legislation and policy, conform to County policy, have regard to matters of Provincial interest and any guideline documents, are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), and reflect changing community needs for the next 25-years. OPA applies to the entire Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc.

The Redline Official Plan was prepared as a 'mark-up' of the Municipality's current Official Plan. These changes will be implemented through OPA 14 which will amend the text based on the Redline Official Plan and will repeal and replace the in-effect schedules with new schedules.

The Redline Official Plan was informed by the Policy Directions and Conformity Report which identified specific changes required to ensure conformity with Provincial and County policies and guidelines.

Below is a summary of changes introduced into the Redline Official Plan:

### **Natural Heritage System**

The policies related to the Natural Heritage System have been comprehensively reviewed, revised, and where applicable, consolidated. The County's Middlesex Natural Heritage System Study (2014) served as the basis for updates to the schedules. A new Schedule D-1 is proposed which shows the aggregate of natural areas and features which form the NHS in Strathroy-Caradoc. Schedule D-2 builds on Schedule D-1 and shows the specific locations of wetlands and woodlands. In preparing the Draft and Final Redline Official Plan, the Conservation Authorities were actively involved in providing comments and confirming the approach to the NHS in Strathroy-Caradoc.

## **Natural Hazards**

The Natural Hazard policies of the Official Plan protect certain areas of the Municipality from development due to hazards such as flooding. The Conservation Authorities are the primary agency who review development applications as they relate to natural hazards. On that basis, the revised Redline Official Plan has been updated to show the Conservation Authority Regulated Areas on Schedule E. When a proponent submits an application that is within this overlay, they are required to consult with the Conservation Authority to confirm the extent of natural hazards on their property and may be required to complete a detailed study. Given the evolving nature of natural hazards as a result of climate change, these features are not mapped in the Official Plan to avoid the need for future amendments, while continuing to protect human health and safety.

## **Land Use Designations**

The Redline Official Plan proposes several changes to the land use designations which apply across the urban and rural areas of Strathroy-Caradoc:

- A new Mixed-Use Corridor designation has been applied within Strathroy (shown on Schedule B-1) to allow for mixed-use commercial and residential development along two key corridors which serve as gateways and transition areas into Downtown. As properties along this corridor develop and re-develop, residential uses are permitted to be built above non-residential uses in a mixed-use format, subject to criteria and provided they do not undermine the primary commercial function of the lands.
- The Commercial designation has been reviewed and revised to implement the findings of the Regional Commercial Systems Study, including criteria for applications which propose to change the designation of lands within the Commercial designation to a non-commercial designation (e.g., Neighbourhoods) to ensure sufficient supply of commercial lands.
- A new Village Commercial designation has been applied within the core area of Mount Brydges to recognize the unique function of the core area (compared to other commercial areas in Mount Brydges). A range and mix of uses are permitted to create a traditional village main street which supports active transportation.
- The permitted uses within the Agricultural designation have been reviewed against Provincial and County policy. The most notable change is the introduction of a new framework for on-farm diversified uses which support the viability of the principal agricultural operation on the lot. The Municipality's Zoning By-law will be updated through a future exercise (discussed subsequently in this report) to implement these policies and provide specific requirements to ensure that they remain secondary uses.
- The Urban Employment designation has been reviewed to broaden the types of permitted uses to reflect evolving industry and to implement the recommendations of the Employment Lands Study. New criteria have been established to prevent the conversion of lands within the Urban Employment designation to a non-employment designation.

- The Neighbourhoods designation, which applies to the most land area in both Mount Brydges and Strathroy, has been reviewing to permit uses which support complete communities, including local commercial uses. Housing policy updates aim to provide a diverse, robust housing supply. The recommendations from the Attainable Housing Study have been implemented, which include targets for housing and tenure types. Policies contemplate longer residential land supply requirements for 15 years from 10 years, and created more criteria for types of housing, including ‘special needs housing’, group homes and long-term care. An intensification target is set at 15%, and new forms of housing, such as ‘additional residential units’, ‘modular housing’, and ‘tiny dwellings’ are defined and regulated with new policies.

## **Built Form**

The Redline Official Plan implements a revised approach to built form in the Municipality. To implement the recommendations of the Attainable Housing Study and to promote complete communities, the types of built forms have been comprehensively reviewed and updated. Section 2.3.9 now contains policies to shape low-rise, medium-rise, and high-rise development across the various land use designations. Low-rise development has a maximum height of 3-storeys, whereas medium-rise and high-rise development are subject to form-based policies to shape development and ensure compatibility with existing built-up areas. The use of maximum heights is now limited in the Official Plan to avoid the need for site-specific amendments and to defer to the Municipality’s Zoning By-law and future urban design guidelines.

## **Special Policy Areas and Special Study Areas**

The Municipality’s current Official Plan contains several Special Policy Areas (SPAs) which set out specific policies for defined areas within the Municipality. Special Study Areas (SSAs) set out further requirements for technical work prior to development. All SPAs and SSAs have been reviewed through the Redline Official Plan to ensure that they align with revised terminology in the Official Plan. Recent Council-approved SPAs have been consolidated into the Official Plan through this work and remain unchanged. SSAs have been revised to remove requirements for Secondary Plans where development has taken place. New SPAs have been added to the Shops at Sydenham and lands within the Albert Street Industrial Park to provide further policy guidance for these areas.

## **Natural Environment and Climate Change**

Policies have been updated to protect the Natural Environment and to recognize the threat of Climate Change. Policies have been introduced which recognize the importance of clean air and encourage urban forestry, renewable energy, electric vehicle charging, and the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Stronger protections for certain natural features which prohibit site alteration or development, and the draft policies of the Middlesex County Source Protection Plan (2017) have been integrated. The schedules and definitions have also been updated.

## **Complete Application Requirements**

The Complete Application policies of the Official Plan (Section 7.4) have been revised to include a requirement for pre-consultation with Municipal staff prior to submission of certain planning and



development applications. The provides an opportunity for the Municipality and/or County to identify submission requirements with applicants prior to the submission of a complete application. As discussed subsequently in this Report, this will also in part assist the Municipality in meeting the requirements of the Planning Act as modified by Bill 109.

### **Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act*, 2021 Considerations**

Through changes made by Bill 13, *Supporting People and Businesses Act*, 2021, the *Planning Act* provides a new discretionary authority (new Section 39.2) that allows the council of a local municipality to delegate decision-making authority under Section 34 (Zoning By-laws) that are of a minor in nature to a municipal committee, officer, employee, or agent. This authority could include delegating decisions for temporary use by-laws, removal of holding symbols and other minor zoning by-law amendments. In order to delegate the new authority, the *Planning Act* requires municipalities to specify the types of by-laws subject to delegation through official plan policies.

The Redline Official Plan (Section 7.3.4.8) includes policies which authorize the Municipality to delegate authority to pass by-laws to remove a holding symbol, pass a temporary use by-law, and to make housekeeping or clerical changes to the Zoning By-law. Should Council choose to delegate authority, this delegation may also be subject to conditions established by Council and the notice, public meeting and appeal requirements would continue to apply to Section 34 applications.

### **Bill 109, *More Homes for Everyone Act*, 2022 Considerations**

On March 30, 2022, the Province of Ontario unveiled Bill 109, the *More Homes for Everyone Act*. On April 14, 2022, the Act received Royal Assent, making various amendments to legislation with the stated intent to speed up the planning process to build more housing in Ontario. Bill 109 is prepared in response to the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force Report, which set out recommendations to increase the supply of housing of the next 10 years.

While some of the provisions of Bill 109 were brought into force and effect upon Royal Assent, others will wait for subsequent proclamation or come into force as of July 1, 2022 or January 1, 2023.

The *Planning Act* has been amended in relation to site plan applications to permit municipalities to pass by-laws requiring pre-consultation prior to an application. Complete application requirements for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments now apply to site plan applications. The Official Plan must set out enabling policy detail site plan complete application requirements before using this new authority. The Redline Official Plan includes these enabling policies. Under the Act, Municipalities are required to delegate site plan approval authority to an officer, agent, or employee (in effect July 1, 2022).

The *Planning Act* has been amended to introduce a requirement that municipalities refund fees on gradual intervals over time, up to 100% refunds, should they fail to make a decision within the statutory deadlines for decisions for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments and Site Plan Applications. These changes come into effect on January 1, 2023. The Redline Official Plan includes enhanced policies for complete applications to ensure the timely review of planning and development

applications, and to ensure that all application requirements are coordinating and complete, prior to the review period beginning.

Municipal Council received an information report on May 2, 2022 to outline the full details of Bill 109 and implications on other Municipal processes outside of the Official Plan.

## **Servicing**

The Servicing and Infrastructure policies of the Official Plan have been consolidated into Section 2.2 to provide for consistency across the Municipality. The servicing hierarchy (i.e., full servicing, partial servicing, private communal servicing, private servicing) has been aligned with Provincial and County policy. Further clarity has been added throughout the Official Plan that where private wastewater systems are proposed that they be a 'conventional' system as this provides greater assurances to the Municipality for long term operation. Criteria have also been introduced regarding the application of partial servicing (i.e. where a lot has either municipal water or wastewater services but not both) within Strathroy and Mount Brydges where full municipal services are found. Based on the recommendations of the Servicing Capacity and Constraints Study, the stormwater management policies of the Official Plan have been updated to reflect best practices and a changing climate. Further, the complete application requirements have been modified to include the potential need for applicants to provide fire flow demand calculations in support of planning and development applications.

## **Transportation & Trails**

Transportation policies have been updated to reflect and promote multi-modal transportation needs which include walking, rolling, cycling, and private vehicles. New policies have been introduced to implement the Municipality's Transportation Master Plan and Recreational Trails Master Plan. A new policy requirement is introduced for sidewalks in new developments and inclusion of cycling facilities on collector and arterial roads. Policies have also been updated to support traffic calming and complete streets for all users.

## **Housekeeping Matters**

Housekeeping and organizational changes have been made to make the Plan more readable and address minor issues not related to policy. The main sections have been reorganized to consolidate duplicated policies and eliminate unnecessary text. Sections 2 to 5 have been changed and are titled: Municipal-Wide Policies, Strathroy and Mount Brydges, Rural Area, and Protecting Natural Resources. Formatting has changed to improve document accessibility in accordance with AODA.

Some policies have been revised to address the economic and social realities resulting from the pandemic. Updated policies include more criteria and flexibility for home occupations and policies that support broadband access. Policies concerning engagement and consultation have been expanded to acknowledge the value of virtual engagement and 'hybrid' in-person and virtual engagements.

Updated policies are included to bring the Official Plan into conformity with the Provincial Policy Statement. Changes include permitting minor settlement boundary adjustments in limited cases outside of a Comprehensive Review and new policies which monitor employment land availability.

## **POLICY CONFORMITY**

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To ensure conformity with the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement 2020, the County of Middlesex Official, and other upper-tier guidelines and policies, the Official Plan Review studied the various changes to Provincial Policy and legislation through the preparation of several Background Reports and the Policy Conformity and Directions Report.

## **PLANNING ACT**

The *Planning Act* requires that municipalities ensure their Official Plan has regard to matters of provincial interest and is consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The *Planning Act* also requires lower-tier municipalities to amend their Official Plans to conform to the upper-tier Official Plan. Therefore, the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc is required to conform to the County of Middlesex Official Plan.

Various other provincial legislation has been created or amended, which impacts the Municipality's Official Plan, including the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act (2015), Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act (2011), and the Clean Water Act (2006) and were considered in the Policy Directions and Conformity Report

## **PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (PPS)**

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) was revised in 2020 and provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Several changes were made that impact planning policies within the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc ranging from promoting mixed-use areas, new policies for prime agricultural areas, and consideration for impacts of climate change. The major changes and the relevant sections are summarized below:

- Promoting more compact, mixed use employment areas (s.1.3);
- Recognition and protection of goods movement corridors (s.1.6.8.2);
- New policies for prime agricultural areas including:
  - Agricultural-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and agri-tourism (s.2.3.3)
  - Lot creation for infrastructure uses (s.2.3.4.1)
  - Non-agricultural and non-residential uses subject to satisfying certain criteria (s.2.3.6);
- Explicit consideration and planning for the impacts of climate change, including the promotion of green buildings and infrastructure (s.1.6, 1.8 and 3.1.3);
- Policies to direct development outside of hazardous lands and sites including floodway areas (s.3.1.1); and,

- Updated natural heritage designations and mapping.

## **COUNTY OFFICIAL PLAN**

Under the *Planning Act*, the County of Middlesex is the approval authority for planning decisions by the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc including OPA 14. Any changes to policies in the Strathroy-Caradoc OP must conform to the County Official Plan. The County's Official Plan was originally adopted in 1997, and most recently amended in 2006, thus the current Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan is in conformity with the current County OP.

The Municipality's Official Plan has been reviewed to ensure conformity with County's ongoing Official Plan Update. On June 14, 2022, County Council adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 3 (COPA 3) to implement changes as part of the County's Official Plan update. COPA 3 is required to be approved by the Province. As part of the Municipality's Comprehensive Review, the SCOP will address the growth management policies of COPA 3 and may further be modified to align with any modifications following Provincial approval.

## **APPROVAL PROCESS**

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Upon adoption of OPA No. 14, the amendment is provided to the County of Middlesex for approval. The County of Middlesex can approve, modify, or deny the amendment. Any subsequent decision of the County is subject to a 20-day appeal period. The County of Middlesex has been involved in the Municipality's Official Plan Review to ensure alignment with the County's Official Plan.

On June 14, 2022, County Council adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 3 (COPA 3) to implement changes as part of the County's Official Plan update. COPA 3 is required to be approved by the Province. The Municipality will continue to monitor the status of COPA 3 and may bring forward further changes to the Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan in Spring 2023 as part of the Comprehensive Review should further changes be required to achieve conformity with the County Official Plan.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

After approval of OPA 14, it will be the task of various staff at the Municipality to review its policies, procedures, and standards for consistency with the OPA and make the necessary changes / updates (e.g., development standards). A key document that will need to be updated upon the approval of OPA 14 is the Municipality's Zoning By-law. The *Planning Act* requires that a Zoning By-law conform to the Official Plan. Zoning by-laws are one of the primary implementation tools of an Official Plan.

It is anticipated that an RFP for the completion of the Housekeeping Update to Zoning By-law will be released upon approval of OPA 14, and it is anticipated that this update will take place over 12-18 months. This update will include a public consultation program, landowner meetings, open houses, and statutory consultation.

## **FUTURE WORK / NEXT STEPS**

As noted early in this report, the approval of OPA 14 represents the second of three deliverables to be completed in the larger Growing Together project. Upon adoption of OPA 14, the next step in the

process is to complete the Comprehensive Review (Settlement Area Boundary Review). Staff and consultants are in the process of reviewing all of the letters of interest received by landowners and are embarking on a two-stage process to review needs and evaluate all requests.

It is anticipated that staff will be able to bring forward a recommendation on a boundary adjustment in the Spring of 2023. The project team continues to review the engagement program as part of the Comprehensive Review process to ensure adequate opportunities to participate.

This opinion is provided in consideration of an analysis of all information and comments provided to date, including information provided at previous consultation opportunities by members of the public and agencies. Should new information arise regarding prior to or at this meeting, Council is advised to take such information into account when considering the applications.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None directly as a result of this report. The approved Master Plans will be used to inform the planning of both capital and operational budgets.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Official Plan Review: [www.growingtogethersc.ca/opr](http://www.growingtogethersc.ca/opr)
- Public and agency comments received to date

Supporting documents and reports can be accessed here: [Strathroy-Caradoc Official Plan Amendment 14](#)