

New Official Plan Background Report

**Prepared for:
The Municipality of Huron Shores**

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Key Points

Population and Economy

- The latest Census Data indicates the 2016 fulltime population of 1,660, increased 11.8% to 1,864 between 2016 and 2021.
 - Much of this growth may be attributed to retiring baby boomers moving to their seasonal dwellings fulltime and an increasingly remotely located workforce able to work from home.
- **Agriculture, outdoor recreation, tourism, resource based and service-oriented activities are important aspects of the economic and social fabric of the Municipality.**
 - **It is important to protect productive agricultural areas from incompatible development, while at the same time providing diversified income opportunities for farmers by permitting a variety of related and diversified uses that do not take away from the agricultural use.**
 - **The north shore of Lake Huron and numerous inland lakes form the basis of world class outdoor recreational and tourism opportunities such as cottaging, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, snowmobile and ATV trails. Protecting these natural features is critically important.**
 - **Resource based activities such as forestry and mining (primarily aggregate) will continue to play an important economic role in the community. Aggregate pits and areas, which are critical to support local and regional construction projects, will continue to be protected from the encroachment of incompatible uses.**
- **Further investment into high-speed internet connectivity infrastructure is critical in attracting and retaining an increasingly mobile workforce and supporting the existing fulltime and seasonal population.**

Growth and Settlement Patterns

- The Village of Iron Bridge is the administrative, commercial and service hub of the Municipality however there are a number of other communities or nodes that are generally characterized as having denser forms of primarily residential development and in some cases other non-residential land uses.
- Highway 17 is the main corridor running through the Municipality. The access provided by the Highway has been a magnet for the full scope of uses found throughout the Municipality.
- Lake Huron's North Shore and the many inland lakes and watercourses throughout the Municipality have attracted shoreline residential and seasonal residential development.

- In many cases these lots are significantly undersized and there are a number of cottage areas accessed by private roads, which presents future development challenges.
- The remainder of the Municipality is generally characterized as having large lots utilized for agricultural or resource related purposes, located along the exiting network of Municipally owned and maintained roads.
 - These areas may include a minimal number of smaller residential lots that have been severed away from larger parcels.
- The current Official Plan policy approach is to accommodate anticipated growth and development through the build-out of existing lots or intensification in existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.
 - Home based business and industry policies generally permit a wide variety of commercial and lighter industrial uses, which can accommodate the relatively small sale growth that is anticipated.
- There is ample vacant land available to accommodate anticipated growth for at least the next 10 years and beyond. Anticipated development will continue to be accommodated in a manner consistent with the current policy approach, more specifically, *'through the build-out of existing lots or intensification in existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.'*
- **A flexible policy approach to the overall growth and settlement of the community can be seen as important to accommodate a wider variety of uses and activities in more parts of the Municipality. It is recommended that this flexible approach be continued.**

Housing

- Since 2010 an average of about 4 permanent and 3 seasonal dwellings were constructed per year.
- There are currently 847 vacant residential properties within the Municipality. While it is noted that some of these properties may have site specific constraints to development, there is ample vacant residential land available to accommodate anticipated year-round residential demand.
- The current OP appropriately aims to accommodate future development upon existing vacant lots, infill development and through intensification of lots within existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.
- **It is recommended that:**
 - **Lands within the Residential Policy Area of the Official Plan be the primary focus for relatively higher density forms of intensification, such as developments with greater than 3 units on one lot.**
 - **Lower density forms of intensification, such as developments of up to 3 dwelling units be permitted within the Residential, Countryside and Commercial Policy Areas.**
 - **Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) (second and in some cases third units) be recognized as a viable and locally appropriate**

form of intensification, permitted in association with any single detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwelling located within the Residential, Countryside and Commercial Policy Areas, subject to all other applicable OP policies and future zoning regulations.

- **That residential intensification, primarily in the form of ADUs, is generally not permitted on lands within the Waterfront Policy Area or lands without the benefit of direct frontage and access to a year-round publicly owned and maintained roadway.**

Land Use

- Current Policy Areas include Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Countryside, Waterfront, Mineral Aggregate and Waste Management.
- Land Use Overlays, which for the most part function as Policy Areas include, Parks and Open Space, Minerals and Agriculture.
- The existing land use designations and policy overlays are generally appropriate within the development context of Huron Shores; however, there are a number of amendments that are recommended:
 - **Permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in a wider variety of areas, including the Commercial and Countryside Policy Areas.**
 - **Council may wish to consider a separate 'Agricultural Policy Area' and/or the identification of 'prime agricultural areas', either within the PPS definition or a local approach, which might provide additional local flexibility from the Provincially defined framework.**
 - **A fairly significant portion of the Municipality, as shown in Section 5.1.8.3 of this report is identified as having Mineral potential. Given existing development of sensitive residential/cottage uses throughout this area, which might preclude mineral extraction operations, it is recommended that council include policies that recognize and support the continued viability of these sensitive uses.**
- **Land Use Compatibility – the grouping of compatible uses and the separation of incompatible uses is a cornerstone of land use planning.**
 - **There are a variety of Provincial regulations and guidelines (D-Series, NPC300 and OMAFRA MDS to name a few) that must be utilized when assessing the placement of sensitive and noxious uses in close proximity.**

Natural Heritage Features and Areas

- The Municipality is blessed with an abundance of natural heritage features and areas that play a major role in the overall character of the area and the outdoor lifestyle that many residents and tourists enjoy. These areas should

be protected from development and include fish habitat, wetlands and significant wildlife habitat areas.

- The manner in which such areas are protected is largely dictated by Provincial Policy.
- Updated mapping provided by MNRF identifies fairly significant increases in the overall area of wetlands and core deer habitat.
- **The current Official Plan approach to protecting natural heritage features and areas is generally consistent with Provincial Policy, however it is recommended that the OP be reconfigured and amended to be specifically consistent with the PPS.**
- **It is also recommended that to the greatest extent possible, within the context of PPS requirements, flexibility be built in to permit development or waive the need for additional studies where development is small scale or infill in nature, or where encroachment into adjacent lands of an identified natural heritage feature is minimal.**
- **Lake Development Capacity represents a significant challenge going forward. The existing OP specifically indicates that as part of any comprehensive OP Review. Maintaining the overall health of the Municipality's inland lakes and waterbodies is critical to the overall social and economic vitality of the Municipality. Therefore, it is recommended that the Municipality discuss the potential of assessing key inland lakes to determine their development capacity. Until then, new development may not be permitted within 300m of an inland lake, unless accompanied by a lake capacity analysis.**
 - **In 2011, Big Basswood and Bright Lakes were assessed. Big Basswood was determined to be well below capacity, and Bright Lake well above capacity.**
 - **The aforementioned requirements would generally not apply to existing lots of record on any lake, including Bright Lake or any small-scale development proposals on Big Basswood Lake.**

Hazards

- Natural hazards include flooding, wildland fire, and significant slopes. Local built hazards include contaminated sites and old mine sites.
- Generally, development should be directed away from natural or built hazards. Where appropriate, specific risks may be mitigated.
- The effects of climate change may amplify certain natural hazards, like flooding and wildland fire.
- The flood elevation for Lake Huron is well established and appropriately implemented. Current inland flood plain mapping is far less reliable.
 - Hatch Ltd. Recently undertook a Flood Risk Assessment for key inland waterbodies. This assessment is the first step in determining detailed flood mapping for these areas.

- **It is recommended that the high-level mapping created as part of the risk assessment be utilized for planning purposes until such time that more detailed mapping can be undertaken.**
- **Provincial Policy now requires development to be directed away from lands that pose “high to extreme” risk for wildfire. Where development is proposed in an area identified as having a high to extreme risk, an assessment may be required.**
- **In addition to directing development away from forests that pose a high to extreme risk, there are also a number of methods for mitigating the risk, including forest management, site layout and constructing fire breaks.**

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- Often referred to as ‘soft services’ these spaces and facilities define the character of Huron Shores and reinforce the overall lifestyle and quality of life attributes.
- Official Plan policies are intended to support the ongoing viability of these spaces and facilities.
 - **It is recommended that new policies be added to the Official Plan that specifically allow for a grouping and wide variety of social service, cultural and recreational uses within parks and community facilities, in the form of community hubs. Examples include social events, community gardens and non-profit social service providers to name a few.**
- The Planning Act permits the Municipality to collect parkland or cash in lieu of parkland as a condition of different types of development.
 - **It is recommended that Council take better advantage of these provisions. More specifically, as a condition of any new lot creation, it is recommended that Council obtain 5% cash in lieu of parkland, based upon the value of the newly created lot. Such funds can be put into a reserve and utilized to upgrade existing parks and community facilities or construct new facilities.**

Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

- Built Heritage Resources include significant buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history, identified as being important to the community. These resources may be designated for their protection under the Ontario Heritage Act or listed by local or Federal jurisdictions.
- There are currently no designated built heritage resources within the Municipality, however the ‘old Little Rapids School’ and the two 12 sided barns do warrant protection for their heritage values.

- There are currently 17 archaeological sites identified within the Municipality. In the absence of a community-wide archaeological assessment, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture's (MHSTC) general criteria are applicable and result in much of the Municipality having archaeological potential.
 - **Local discretion is warranted to only require archaeological assessments in relation to specific types of applications (residential/seasonal consents are excluded). It is also appropriate to exclude areas exhibiting previous 'intensive and extensive soil disturbance'.**
 - **It is recommended that Council explore conducting a Municipal wide archaeological assessment to potentially eliminate areas, as resources allow and subject to potential funding opportunities.**
 - **It is recommended that the OP be reworked to more clearly communicate the MHSCTI criteria and what types of applications and development proposals require archaeological assessments.**
 - **It is recommended that the Municipality enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MHSTC so that known archaeological sites can be shared with Municipal Staff, on a confidential basis, so that future land use applications can be screened to ensure they are not within close proximity to a known archaeological assessment.**

Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities

- The provision of 'hard services' such as roads, road maintenance, fire protection and refuse collection are core Municipal services and operations.
- For the most part, all development within Huron Shores provides on-site water and sewage services, with the exception of a relatively small portion of the Municipality abutting the Town of Thessalon to the northeast. Generally, the provision of on-site services is the preferred option to accommodate anticipated future development.
- The Municipality has contracted GFL Environmental Inc. to operate drying beds at the Wards 1 and 3 landfill sites. Pending MECP approval to increase the capacity of the Ward 1 drying beds, there will exist ample hauled sewage capacity within the Municipality to accommodate existing and projected future development over the lifetime of the Official Plan.
- The current Official Plan appropriately speaks to sewage within the context of ensuring that future development can be adequately serviced by on-site septic systems, with special regard for ensuring minimum lot sizes to accommodate appropriate septic systems and replacement beds in the event of a failure.

- The Municipality operates 4 landfill sites which offer solid waste disposal and recycling services. AECOM has been retained by the Municipality to complete a number of Design and Operations (D&O) Reports for submission to MECP. As part of this review, the Municipality is awaiting a ruling from MECP with regards to the capacity of the Ward 4 Landfill Site.
- OP policies must also address land use compatibility concerns. The current OP appropriately discourages the development of sensitive land uses within 500m of the property boundaries of the landfill sites, however this 'buffer area' was not outlined in Zoning By-law 18-18 and is recommended to be included as part of any zoning by-law updates.
- Stormwater is generally managed through an integrated network of, ditches, culverts and low-lying areas which eventually lead to natural watercourses. There is a small underground stormwater system in Iron Bridge, which outlets into the Mississagi River.
- Current OP policies speak to managing stormwater quantity and quality and ensuring that post development flows do not exceed pre development flows, with special regard for receiving streams and the cumulative effect that development (creation of impermeable surfaces) can have on water levels. Stormwater management is required to be integrated into larger developments.
- The current OP recognizes the following road classifications:
 - Provincial Highways
 - Municipal Roads
 - Year round maintained
 - Seasonally maintained
 - Unassumed
 - Unmaintained
 - Emergency Routes
 - Private Roads
 - Resource Access Roads
- Development in the vicinity of Provincial Highways 17, 129 and 546 is subject to Ministry of Transportation (MTO) approvals for any development within:
 - 45m (148') of the limit of any highway
 - 180m (591') of the centre point any intersection along Highway 17
 - **It is recommended that further discussions occur with MTO to ensure that local regulations consider existing and future traffic volumes, which are relatively low, especially on Highways 129 and 546. With regards to Highway 17, Provincial regulatory approaches should consider the reduced speed limits in Iron Bridge.**
- It has been the general intent of the Municipality to allow existing lots of record to be developed along the private road network. Currently, the OP does not permit the creation of new lots on a private road, with the exception

of narrowly defined infill lots, and a limited number of waterfront lots on specific inland lakes, subject to a 'planning justification report'.

- **Council may wish to discuss permitting development upon private roads or the creation of new public roads/shared driveways where the following circumstances exist:**
 - **Where multiple lawfully established dwellings are located on one lot, prior to the passing of Zoning By-law 18-18.**
 - **Where proposed lots have frontage upon a publicly owned and year-round maintained road, but a shared driveway is deemed to be less impactful and most appropriate.**
 - **Where proposed development is 'infill' in nature. In this case, Council may wish to revisit the current narrowly defined definition of infill, however a more detailed review may be warranted to ensure that any revisions do not result in a proliferation of new lot creation along private roads, which in most cases provide access to seasonal waterfront lots.**
- The Canadian Pacific operated railway is a critical regional transportation corridor, primarily focussed on freight, however the potential does exist to re-establish passenger service. Land use compatibility and public safety are key land use planning matters that need to be addressed, to protect the long-term operation and viability of this important transportation corridor.
 - Rail lines are generally recognized as Class II Industrial Uses and sensitive uses are discouraged from locating within 70m of the Rail Line ROW.
- Utility Corridors within Huron Shores include transmission corridors, such as the high-pressure natural gas pipeline and high tension Hydro One power lines, as well as distribution networks primarily aimed at distributing natural gas and electricity to the end user. Section 20.6.6 of the OP appropriately communicates the overall intent of the Plan to protect existing utility infrastructure corridors from land use activities that may interfere with the safe operation of these corridors.
- Public service facilities are generally operated by a government or non-profit organization, focused on providing programs and services such as recreational, police, fire protection, health, education and cultural activities.
 - **It is recommended that additional policies be added to the OP to encourage and permit a wide variety of public uses and activities to locate within existing and new public service facilities, within the concept of a 'community hub'. These policies would then underwrite future zoning by-law amendments to define 'community hub' and generally broaden the permitted uses within the Community Facilities Zone.**

Planning Tools

- There are a wide variety of tools available to help Council implement the policies of the Official Plan.
- The current Official Plan generally contains the required policies permitting Council to make use of these tools.
- Of note, Council has approved the use of Site Plan Control and Holding Provisions to further control development. Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) can also be utilized to provide various incentives for certain types of development that Council feels addresses a community need. It may be appropriate to utilize CIPs to incentivise the development of higher density residential developments aimed at accommodating seniors. Another example might be affordably priced dwelling units. CIP incentives can include among other things, waiving application fees, tax increment equivalent grants, grants and loans.
- As previously noted, it is recommended that Council consider taking better advantage of the parkland dedication clauses in the Planning Act. More specifically, Council may wish to consider obtaining 5% cash in lieu of parkland as a condition of any new lot creation.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Planning in Ontario



In Ontario, planning and decision making on land use and development is conducted under a “policy-led planning system”. As illustrated above, the authoritative planning document in Ontario is the **Planning Act**, which is the enabling legislation that gives municipalities the power and tools to make decisions on land use and development.

Under the Planning Act, the Province regularly issues Province-level policy documents that express the Government’s goals for development. The most important of these documents is the **Provincial Policy Statement**¹, most recently updated in 2020, which is an expression of “matters of Provincial interest” related to planning. It covers policies about managing growth, using and managing natural resources, protecting the environment, public health and safety. The **Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (2011)**² is another Provincial policy document — it provides guidance to align decision making and investment for economic and population growth in Northern Ontario.

All local decisions on planning matters must be consistent with Provincial legislation and policy documents. This includes the adoption of local planning documents such as Official Plans, Zoning By-laws and the approval of site specific ‘current planning’ applications such as rezonings and severances.

¹ Available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

² Available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/growth-plan-northern-ontario>

Every municipality in Ontario has an **Official Plan** that acts as the top planning document for the municipality. The Official Plan is based upon the vision and projected growth for the municipality on a time horizon of at least 20 years. Upon adoption of the Official Plan, municipalities utilize various planning tools provided through the Planning Act to realize the vision and implement the policies in the Official Plan.

1.2 The Local Planning Framework

The local planning framework of the Municipality of Huron Shores is relatively recent, dating back to 1999 when the Municipality was created through the amalgamation of the Townships of Thessalon, Thompson, Day, Bright Additional and the Village of Iron Bridge. While previous Official Plans and Zoning By-laws existed for the area, the current Official Plan was approved by the Province with modifications in December 2011. A Comprehensive Zoning By-law (18-18) covering the entire Municipality was approved in early 2018, prior to which, there were a number of different area-specific zoning by-laws. Until 2018, there were also portions of the Municipality not subject to a zoning by-law.

Municipal Council is the overall approval authority for the majority of Planning Act approvals such as new zoning by-laws and rezonings, plans of subdivision and severances to name a few. The Province remains the ultimate approval authority for new Official Plans, comprehensive OP reviews and Official Plan Amendments.

1.3 Economic Strategic Plan – June 2012

The Economic Strategic Plan³ completed in 2012 was undertaken by a consortium of 5 Municipalities, including Huron Shores, Bruce Mines, Thessalon, Johnson and Plummer Additional. The Economic Strategic Plan defined the following Community Values:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating further impacts to all aspects of the natural environment.
- Maintaining the individual and unique nature of the community.
- Keeping taxes as low as possible, consistent with the desired level of service.

The Mission Statement is to enhance prosperity in the community focusing on:

- Well-paying and enduring employment opportunities
- Encouraging diverse, value-added and appropriate industries to locate in the community
- Agriculture as a key component.

Although somewhat dated, the Huron Shores Economic Strategic Plan can be utilized to inform a wide variety of Official Plan Policies.

³Economic Development Plan - [April, 2008 \(huronshores.ca\)](http://www.huronshores.ca)

1.4 Huron Shores' Comprehensive Official Plan Review

On August 11, 2021, The Municipality of Huron Shores Council initiated a Comprehensive Official Plan Review under the following Resolution:

WHEREAS the Planning Act requires that Official Plans be reviewed every five years (or ten years after the approval of a new Official Plan) to ensure it conforms to Provincial Legislation, policy and plans; AND

WHEREAS the Municipality adopted a new Official Plan in 2008, and received final approval, with modifications, from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2011;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Municipality of Huron Shores hereby commences a review of the Municipality's Official Plan, under Section 26 of the Planning Act; AND THAT staff begin the necessary public outreach, background research, and pre-consultation with the Province; AND THAT a Special Meeting of Council, open to the public, be scheduled (early 2022) to review the municipal comprehensive background report and discuss the revisions of the Official Plan that may be required.

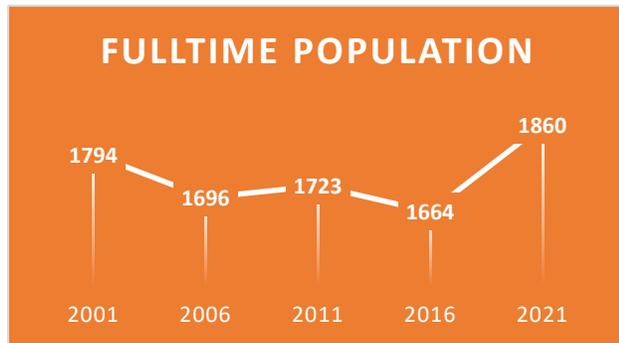
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Timeline of Huron Shores Comprehensive Official Plan Review and Anticipated Next Steps.

Event	Timeframe
Municipal Council Launches OP Review	August 2021
Pre-Consultation with Provincial Ministries	September 2021 – January 2022
Public Release of OP Background Report	February 2023
Public Council Meeting to Discuss Background Report and Draft Official Plan	April 2023
Public Consultation Public Open Houses Meetings with Stakeholders	April 2023
Submission of draft Official Plan to the Province (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing) for comment	May 2023
Public Consultation Public Open Houses Meetings with Stakeholders	July - September 2023
Council Meeting to Discuss Preliminary Provincial Comments on proposed OP Amendments	October 2023
Approval of the new Official Plan by City Council	November 2023
Submission of new Official Plan to Province for final approval	November 2023

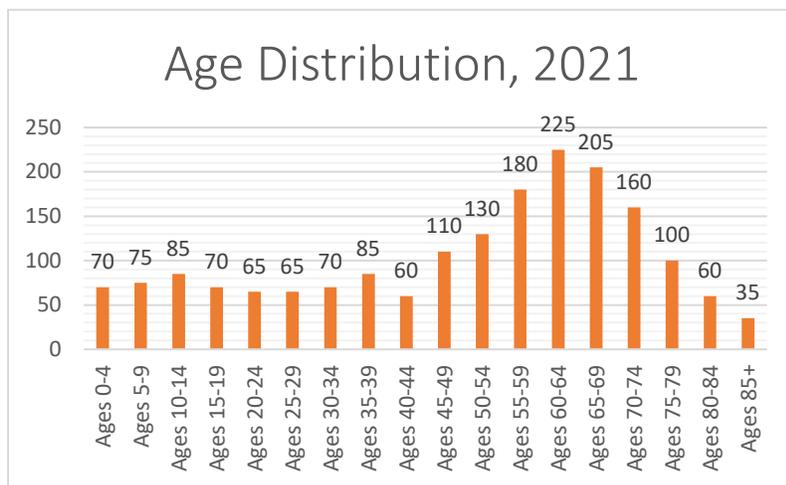
2 Population and Economy

The Municipality is located in Northeastern Ontario and the District of Algoma. With a total land mass of 457.35km² and a population density of approximately 4 persons/km², Huron Shores is a rural community, located along the North Shore of Lake Huron and Highway 17 between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury.



According to the most recent data available from Statistics Canada, the 2021 full time population of Huron Shores was 1,860 people, representing a 3.7% increase since 2001, and an 11.8% increase over the past 5 years, which is significant.

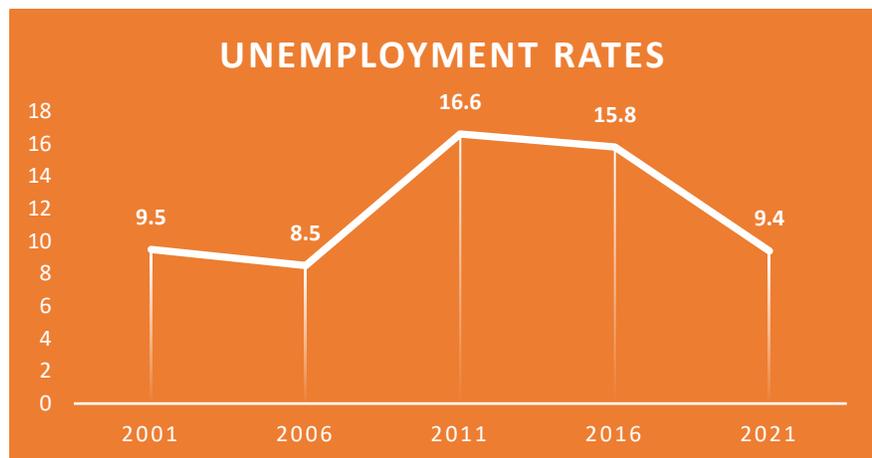
According to 2018 Municipal Election Records, there is also a fairly significant seasonal population of approximately 670 people, representing approximately 30% of the total fulltime and seasonal populations. The fulltime population shall be



utilized for the purposes of population projections and anticipated demand for new housing; however, it is recognized that the seasonal population also utilize certain local services and amenities for the duration of their stay, albeit at a lesser rate and over a shorter period than those who are fulltime residents.

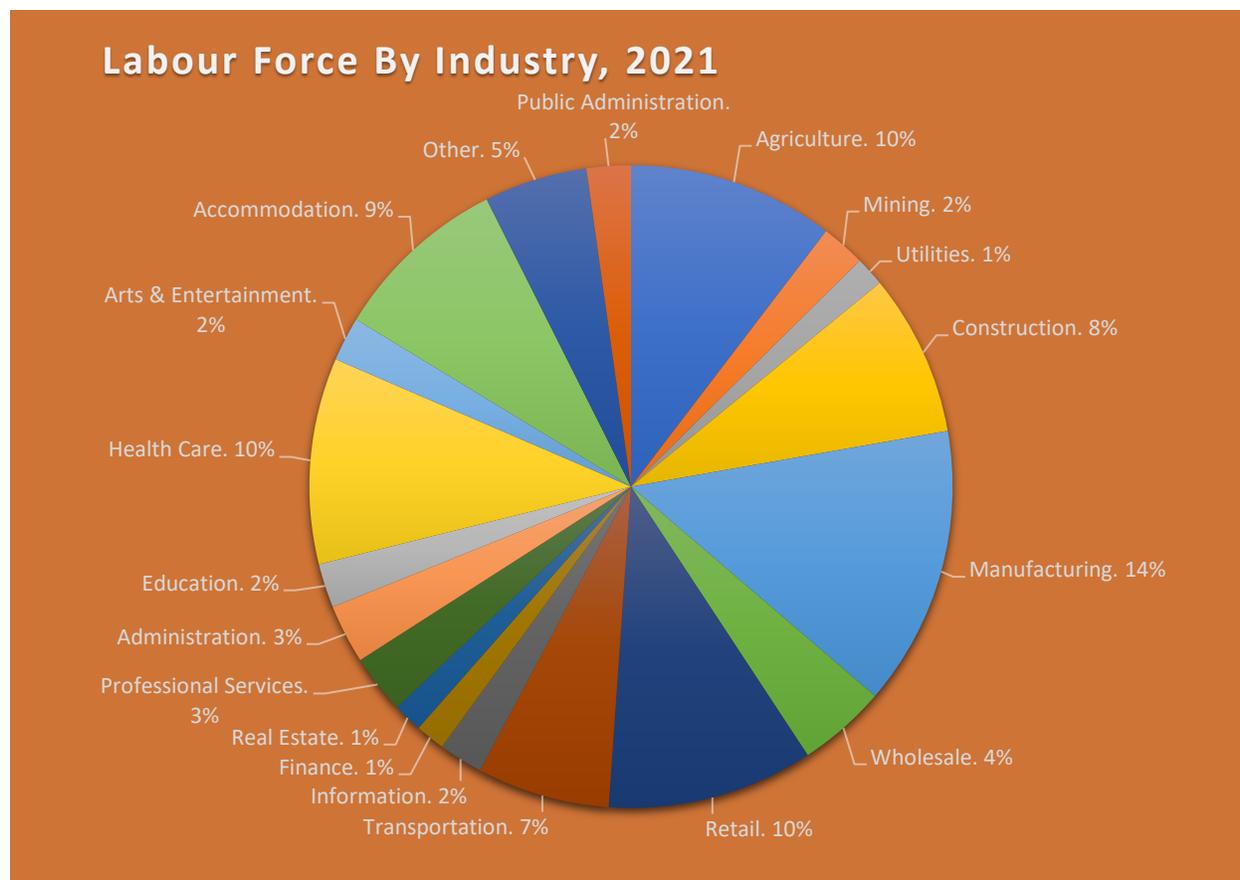
Like much of Northern and Rural Ontario, Huron Shores' population is demographically older than other parts of the province. The median age in Huron Shores is 54 compared with the Provincial median age of 41. Residents 60 years of age or older account for 37% of the population, compared to 21% of the entire Province.

The median household income of fulltime residents in 2021 was \$67,500 compared to



the Provincial median of \$91,000. There were 665 people in the labour force, with an unemployment rate of 9.4%, below the 12.2% unemployment rate for the entire Province. Local employment rates and participation rates are lower than Provincial rates.

According to 2021 Census data, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Health Care, Construction, Retail and Accommodation are the largest sectors employing locals. Census data also suggests that about half of all local workers travel beyond Municipal limits for employment purposes.



2.1 Important Economic Sectors

2.1.1 Agriculture

The Economic Strategic Plan notes that 'value-added agricultural opportunities' exist and the 'Municipality can encourage the local agricultural community to engage in these activities...These value-added opportunities may include a local organic food network, further processing of crops and livestock, farm tours and vacations and on-farm retail outlets. Linking and cross-promoting festivals and other events to the agricultural aspects, such as a farmers market, would increase the potential for economic benefit.'

There is increasing demand for locally sourced and produced foods resulting from a greater recognition of knowing where one's food comes from, as evidenced by movements such as the '100-mile diet'.

2.1.2 Outdoor Recreation and Tourism

The Northshore of Lake Huron and the numerous inland lakes provide world class, quintessentially Northern Ontario outdoor recreational experiences including cottaging, camping, boating, hiking, hunting, fishing, snowmobile and ATV trails. Seasonal occupancy and tourism are important aspects of the Municipality's overall character and economy, with the summer months being the busiest. Seasonal occupants make up about 30% of the total population of Huron Shores.

From a land use perspective, it is important to view the natural environment as a resource asset, which forms the basis for the majority of local tourism and seasonal occupancy. Therefore, maintaining existing pristine character of lakes, forests, cottaging areas and tourist operations is key in supporting and growing this valuable sector.

2.1.3 Resource Based Activities

As noted in the existing Official Plan, the community's local employment base is also closely tied to resource-based activities such as forestry and mineral aggregate extraction. Most of the industrial activity within the Municipality is resource based.

Local aggregate pits and quarries (sand and gravel) tend to supply private and public construction projects within local and regional markets, given the relatively large transportation costs. On the other hand, mineral extraction (copper, gold, uranium to name a few) would supply commodities to global markets. The 2012 Economic Strategic Plan notes that mining activities require significant private sector investment which cannot be readily encouraged by community efforts. While this may be true from an economic development standpoint, from a local land use perspective, specific planning decisions could preclude the ability to mine known mineral and aggregate resources, which in some cases, are located in close proximity to cottaging areas that are also an important economic sector for the Municipality. This issue is land use compatibility, which is discussed in greater detail in Section 5.2 of this document and represents a significant local land use policy decision for Council.

The 2012 Economic Strategic Plan also notes that the Forestry Sector *'is in a continuing slump and, with highly automated post harvesting processes, fewer and fewer jobs are being created. Existing mills in the area have been looking for value added opportunities.'* Within the past 2 years the forestry industry has in fact rebounded and anecdotally, a number of portable saw mills have set up throughout the rural areas of the Municipality and in many cases, these activities are accessory to or in association with agricultural operations. While there is no doubt that increased automation will continue to impact forestry and other resource based and manufacturing sectors, it is difficult to determine the overall direction forestry will take, other than to recognize that larger scale forestry products are commodities

that will fluctuate with larger markets. Having said this, there will always be a smaller regional market for locally sourced and produced wood products.

2.1.4 Service Oriented Activities

There are also a number of other service commercial, administrative and institutional activities which contribute to the local economy. These uses exist primarily to serve local fulltime and seasonal residents, longer stay tourists and those passing through along Highway 17. Administrative and institutional uses are also locally focused, such as the Municipal Offices in Iron Bridge. Much like local residents traveling outside of the Municipality for employment, it is also recognized that local residents travel to nearby towns such as Thessalon and Blind River for certain services, and further to Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury for other specialized services.

2.2 Conclusions: Population and Economy

Provincial Policy, the Huron Shores OP and best land use planning practices aim to support local economies and efficient land use patterns which reflect projected population and economic growth, within the context of the existing character of the area and overall vision for the Municipality.

2.2.1 Population

The current Official Plan 'is based on sustaining at the very least, a stable population in the range of 1,800-2,000. To achieve this, the community must continue to develop its resource base, build its outdoor recreation and tourism industry, increase the housing supply, retain the existing forest products industrial base, retain existing businesses and the range of educational, social, health care, recreational and cultural services essential to a community of this size. The settlement pattern is a mix of rural settlements and lakefront development disbursed along a network of municipal roads. This pattern will continue to dominate.'

The Official Plan also states that *'the 20-year land supply for development will be met through the build-out of lots of record or intensification of existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.'*

The planned population of at least 1,800-2,000 people is appropriate. Furthermore, this does not include a relatively sizable seasonal population which also utilizes local services.

The following factors will impact local population levels:

- Demographics
 - An ever-increasing number of retiring baby boomers will leave job vacancies that must be filled, likely by new workers moving to the area.
 - Retiring baby boomers converting seasonal dwellings to year-round primary residences or spending more time at a seasonal residence

upon retirement – perhaps ‘ice out to ice in’ rather than just a few weeks or weekends.

- On the other hand, and aging population will continue to result in higher death rates than birth rates over the next 10-20 years.
- An increasingly mobile workforce and growing affordability issues in larger centres should also have a positive effect on population levels. The major employment sectors of full-time residents such as agriculture, health care, manufacturing and retail, tend not to be jobs that that can be accomplished remotely; therefore, an increasing ‘work from anywhere’ trend will not likely result in an outflow of workers. On the other hand, Administration, Professional Services, Finance and Information sectors, which make up a very small proportion of the local labour force, can and will continue to be increasingly mobile jobs that can be accomplished remotely, which could result in an inflow of workers who choose the rural, small-town, outdoor recreational lifestyle afforded in Huron Shores. It is also possible that cottagers will have additional opportunities to spend more time at their seasonal dwelling. As later discussed, Huron Shores remains relatively affordable in terms of real estate prices in comparison to other nearby larger communities such as Sudbury or Sault Ste. Marie, and is significantly more affordable than most of Southern Ontario, especially the Greater Toronto Area.

Reliable, high speed internet connectivity remains a challenge to accommodating a mobile, work from home workforce, however new technologies (satellite based) and existing local, Provincial and Federal efforts should result in increasing high speed connectivity.

In conclusion, **the existing population range of 1,800-2,000 people remains an appropriate target** from which to plan from.

2.2.2 Economy

Agriculture, outdoor recreation and tourism as well as resource-based activities are key sectors that drive the local economy and have land use implications. Their continued growth and development should be supported through a variety of overarching and land use policies that ensure their orderly, appropriate development.

The Economic Development Section of the current OP states 'The diversification of the economic base and business retention is essential to the long-term economic prosperity of Huron Shores. The OP supports the wise management and use of the community's natural resources. The Plan encourages other activities and initiatives that build on the area's natural and scenic attributes, ie. destination tourism as a 4-season community; by building motorized recreational activity tourism (snowmobiling and ATVs); and by exploring opportunities for Ecotourism. The Plan also encourages home-based business, small business development and business retention as part of the economic development strategy. The intent of the Plan is

to also encourage strategies for business retention and small business development as important for employment.'

This overarching statement is generally appropriate as it relates to job retention, supporting small business development (primarily through home-based businesses and industries) tourism development and resource-based activities; however, there are a number of gaps worth further discussion:

- Recognize the importance of **internet connectivity as a priority**. Not only is connectivity increasingly important for all locals, it is critical in attracting an increasingly mobile workforce.
- **Agriculture continues to be an integral part of the local economy** and support for locally sourced foods continues to grow, as evidenced by the '100-mile diet' and other movements to support local foods. Having said this, the current OP does not necessarily recognize the value of the diversified economic opportunities agriculture brings. Current OP policies do not specifically support 'agricultural related uses', such as value-added processing facilities as part of a farm operation or 'on-farm diversified uses' that may not necessarily be related to agriculture, but can be accommodated upon the relatively large parcels and provide small scale farmers additional income generating opportunities without negatively impacting the farm operation. Examples include contractors' yards, indoor/outdoor storage and agritourism related uses such as bed and breakfasts, farmers markets and banquet/wedding venues. It is therefore recommended that **supporting local agriculture be an economic priority**.
- As referenced in The Economic Development Plan, **large scale industrial development is somewhat limited** due to a variety of reasons. Furthermore, there do not appear to be any funding sources available to obtain or service new or existing industrial parks, such as the Municipally owned industrial park parcels near Thessalon. While potentially beyond the scope of the Official Plan, it is recommended that Council remain flexible and creative in maximizing the overall benefits associated with those lands.

3 Growth and Settlement Patterns

While population projections and to a lesser degree economic priorities represent the overall demand for various types of land and services, high level growth and settlement policies generally direct appropriate development to appropriate areas. These high-level policies are then refined and implemented through various land use designations and policies, which are discussed later.

Provincial Policy, the current OP and best land use planning practises aim to accommodate an efficient land use pattern that builds upon existing nodes or clusters of development and major corridors, such as Highway 17.

The Village of Iron Bridge is the administrative, commercial and service hub of the Municipality however there are a number of other communities or nodes that are generally characterized as having denser forms of primarily residential development and in some cases other non-residential land uses. Each of these nodes or clusters have a unique history, most notably the Hamlets of Little Rapids and Sowerby. Other smaller nodes or development clusters include Ansonia, Day Mills, Dayton, Dean Lake, Eley, Livingston, Livingston Creek, Maple Ridge, Nestorville, Sherwood and Sunset Beach.

Highway 17 is the main corridor running through the Municipality. The access provided by the Highway has been a magnet for the full scope of uses found throughout the Municipality.

Lake Huron's North Shore and the many inland lakes and watercourses throughout the Municipality have attracted shoreline residential and seasonal residential development (with increasing conversions to permanent) on relatively small lots with water frontage or access. In many cases these lots are significantly undersized and there are a number of cottage areas accessed by private roads, which presents future development challenges, as discussed in greater detail later.

The remainder of the Municipality is generally characterized as having large lots utilized for agricultural or resource related purposes, located along the exiting network of Municipally owned and maintained roads. These areas may include a minimal number smaller residential lots that have been severed away from larger parcels.

3.1 Current Policy Approach – Growth and Settlement

The current Official Plan policy approach is to accommodate anticipated growth and development through the build-out of existing lots or intensification in existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas. Furthermore, the current approach speaks to grouping commercial uses along the Highway or Municipal Roads. Home based business and industry policies are generally permissive in nature, permitting a wide variety of commercial and lighter industrial uses, which can accommodate the relatively small sale growth that is anticipated. Although future larger scale industrial growth is somewhat limited, the Municipality owns 3 vacant, industrially

designated parcels near Thessalon, totalling about 44ha (108acres). Residential land needs are discussed in greater detail in the Housing Chapter.

Generally speaking, the current approach is quite flexible, utilizing key phrases such as 'shall generally' and 'should' as opposed to 'shall', which is appropriate.

3.2 Conclusions, Recommendations and Discussion Points on Growth and Settlement

In terms of land supply, there is ample vacant land available to accommodate anticipated growth for at least the next 10 years and beyond. Anticipated development will continue to be accommodated in a manner consistent with the current policy approach, more specifically, *'through the build-out of existing lots or intensification in existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.'*

A flexible policy approach to the overall growth and settlement of the community can be seen as important to accommodate a wider variety of uses and activities in more parts of the Municipality, albeit, such flexibility could result in developments that may be unsettling to neighbouring property owners. On the other hand, a more rigid framework could preclude certain developments, but at the same time maintain the existing character of various areas throughout the community.

Within the local context of fairly limited growth, the current flexible approach is appropriate. When read in conjunction with the remainder of the OP, the overall policy framework provides a locally appropriate level of flexibility to accommodate new growth, while at the same time ensuring an appropriate level of predictability by protecting the existing character of the communities and development areas within the Municipality.

4 Housing

The provision of housing that is adequate and affordable is a cornerstone of building a strong community. This includes ensuring an appropriate amount and variety of housing types and tenure (owned or rented). Provincial Policy requires the Municipality to ensure that it has an adequate supply of residential lands to accommodate anticipated growth, with special regard for ensuring the provision of affordable housing.

According to Census Data from Statistics Canada, there are 745 private households in Huron Shores with an average household size of 2.2 people. In addition, there are approximately 335 cottages occupied seasonally. 96% (715) of dwellings are single detached and 90% of households own their dwelling, with 10% of households renting.

Census Data (25% sample) notes that 11% of respondents indicated that their dwelling was in need of major repairs, with 89% responding that their home only required minor repairs and regular maintenance, compared to Provincial responses of 6% and 94% respectively.

4.1 Housing Demand and Supply

According to building permit data, since 2010 46 new year-round residences were constructed for an average of about 4 permanent dwelling units per year. 31 seasonal recreational dwellings were constructed for an average of about 3 per year.

Providing an appropriate range of housing types

and tenure forms ensures that different people have access to appropriate housing at different stages throughout their life. The Housing Section of the existing Official Plan recognizes a need for additional higher density forms of housing, aimed primarily at accommodating seniors wishing to downsize. As previously noted, there are very few higher density, rental housing options currently available. Therefore, Council may wish to further review market demand and incentivize the creation of additional higher density senior's units.

On the supply side, it is important to ensure there is an adequate amount of vacant land available for residential development. Utilizing Municipal Property Assessment (MPAC) information, there are currently **847 vacant residential properties**



within the Municipality. While it is noted that some of these properties may have site specific constraints to development, there is ample vacant residential lands to accommodate anticipated year-round residential demand.

4.2 Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is a top priority for current Federal and Provincial Governments. The affordable housing crisis facing Ontario is not limited to Southern Ontario or larger Cities and increased affordability issues are emerging in rural communities, especially as it relates to seniors housing.

As a rule of thumb, housing is deemed to be unaffordable where a household is required to spend more than 30% of their gross income on accommodation costs.

Based upon Census Data, home ownership in Huron Shores appears to be relatively affordable when

compared to the Algoma Region and the Province. Having said this, average house prices in Huron Shores increased by \$66,313 between 2016 and 2021, representing a 36% increase.

On the rental side, although Huron Shores remains relatively more affordable, much like that of the Region and Province, affordability issues are more pronounced relative to affordable ownership concerns.

% of 'Ownership Households' Spending more than 30% Gross Annual Household Income on Shelter Costs (2021)	
<i>Source: StatsCanada Community Profile</i>	
Huron Shores	7.7%
Algoma Region	8.0%
Ontario	17.7%
Average Home Prices	
Huron Shores	\$249,600
Algoma Region	\$266,800
Ontario	\$807,000

% of 'Renter Households' Spending more than 30% Gross Annual Household Income on Shelter Costs in (2021)	
<i>Source: StatsCanada Community Profile</i>	
Huron Shores	22.2%
Algoma Region	33.6%
Ontario	38.4%
Average Monthly Shelter Costs for Renters	
Huron Shores	\$740
Algoma Region	\$875
Ontario	\$1,408

4.2.1 Defining Affordable Housing in Huron Shores

The Provincial Policy Statement requires Municipalities to define affordable housing in the following manner:

4.2.1.1 Affordable Ownership Housing

According to the Provincial Policy Statement, in the case of ownership housing, "affordable" means the least expensive of:

1. Housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households (where "low and moderate income households"

- are those with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for all households in the regional market area); or
2. Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.

2020 Household Incomes and Corresponding Affordable House Prices In Algoma Region DSAB⁴ (Excluding SSM and SSM North Areas)

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

	Income Percentiles	Income	Affordable House Price
LOW	10 th	20,400	75,900
	20 th	29,800	108,300
	30 th	39,100	142,000
MODERATE	40 th	48,700	176,900
	50 th	59,700	216,900
	60 th	74,600	271,000
HIGH	70 th	92,200	335,000
	80 th	118,000	428,700
	90 th	155,800	566,000

According to MMAH, in 2020, the average house price in Algoma DSAB was \$200,245, resulting in an affordable purchase price of \$180,221. Therefore, within the PPS definition of affordable home ownership, **\$180,221** is the most currently defined affordable home purchase price in Huron Shores.

4.2.1.2 Affordable Rental Housing

According to the Provincial Policy Statement, in the case of rental housing, "affordable" means the least expensive of:

1. A unit for which the rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households (where "low and moderate income households" are those with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for renter households in the regional market area); or
2. A unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent in the regional market area.

⁴ Algoma Region DSAB – Algoma Region excluding the City of Sault Ste. Marie and the Sault North Area which includes the 31 unincorporated Townships north of Sault Ste. Marie to Montreal River.

2020 Household Income and Corresponding Affordable Rents in Algoma Region DSAB (Excluding SSM and SSM North Areas)

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

	Income Percentiles	Income	Affordable Monthly Rent
LOW	10 th	\$14,800	\$370
	20 th	\$18,800	\$470
	30 th	\$23,000	\$580
MODERATE	40 th	\$26,300	\$660
	50 th	\$31,900	\$800
	60 th	\$37,800	\$950
HIGH	70 th	\$47,200	\$1,180
	80 th	\$57,100	\$1,430
	90 th	\$77,500	\$2,360

At this point there is no reliable 2020 data for affordable rents in the Algoma Region DSAB, therefore, within the PPS definition of **affordable residential rent, \$950 per month** is the most currently defined affordable monthly rent in Huron Shores.

4.2.1.3 Defining the Regional Market Area

The 'Algoma Region DSAB' is utilized for the purposes of defining the Regional Market Area, consisting of the Algoma Region excluding the City of Sault Ste. Marie and 'Sault North Area', which consists of 31 unincorporated townships north of Sault Ste. Marie to Montreal River.

4.3 Housing Conclusions, Recommendations and Discussion Points

Consistent with the overall approach to Growth and Settlement, the current OP aims to accommodate future development upon existing vacant lots, infill development and through intensification of lots within existing settlement, lakefront and rural areas.

Provincial Policy requires Official Plans to establish a number of housing targets to ensure adequate land is available for residential development over the short medium and long term. Section 7.2.5 contains required general policies to ensure adequate residential land is available. The following specific targets are outlined:

- A minimum of 25 vacant lots or units shall be available at all times.
- A minimum supply of 150 units over the life of the Plan.

The OP also has policies that speak to encouraging an appropriate mix of housing types, tenure and affordability. More specifically, Section 7.2.4, contains the following specific targets:

- Approximately 80% of housing should be low density (singles and two-unit) and 20% allocated to medium or higher density.
- Approximately 25% of all housing be affordable, within the definitions outlined above.

In general, the existing housing policies are appropriate, however there are a few gaps that need to be addressed:

Residential Intensification and Accessory Dwelling Units

The current Official Plan does not have specific policies regarding Residential Intensification or Accessory Dwelling Units, which represent a viable method of achieving locally appropriate residential intensification.

Residential Intensification is the development or redevelopment of an existing building or property to house additional dwelling units beyond what currently exists upon the property and surrounding area. For example, adding a 'second dwelling unit' to a single detached dwelling.

The *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act 2011*, The *More Homes Built Faster Act 2022* and associated amendments to The Planning Act requires Municipalities to permit up to 2 'Accessory Dwelling Units' within existing single, semi-detached or multiple attached (townhouse) dwellings. Accessory dwelling units can be in the form of an apartment within an existing dwelling, accessory building (ie. above a garage) or as a standalone building.

Accessory dwelling units have numerous benefits:

- They are often recognized as affordable in nature.
- They provide property owners additional income generating opportunities, which can help with home ownership affordability.
- They allow age-in-place opportunities for family members or caregivers to live in close proximity, but still within a separate dwelling unit.

Within the local context, there are also a number of potential concerns primarily related to:

- Land Use Compatibility - Where existing noxious uses (livestock barns, industrial uses, landfills) may be negatively impacted by the addition of another sensitive residential use.
- Servicing capacity – where existing on-site services (septic systems) cannot support the addition of a second unit.
- Hazards - where a second unit is proposed within a hazardous area (flood zone).
- Seasonal Residential Areas - Where proposed second units are in waterfront areas or on lots without frontage on a publicly owned and year-round maintained roadway.

It is recommended that Council discuss the following amendments and additions to the Housing Policies of the Existing Plan:

Residential Supply:

- **That in addition to the Residential Policy Area, lands within the Countryside Policy Area be recognized and included when determining and assessing residential supply.**

Residential Intensification:

- That lands within the Residential Policy Area of the Official Plan be the primary focus for relatively higher density forms of intensification, such as developments with greater than 3 units on one lot.
- That lower density forms of intensification, such as developments of up to 3 dwelling on one lot units be permitted within the Residential, Countryside and Commercial Policy Areas, so long as all other policies are adhered to, with special regard for land use compatibility and hazards, among others.
- That accessory dwelling units be recognized as a viable and locally appropriate form of intensification.
- That residential intensification is not permitted on lands within the Waterfront Policy Area, or lands without the benefit of direct frontage and access to a year-round publicly owned and maintained roadway.

Accessory Dwelling Units:

- That accessory dwelling units (second units) are generally permitted within the Residential, Countryside and Commercial Policy Areas, and must meet all other applicable OP policies, with special regard for land use compatibility and hazards.
- That additional accessory dwelling units (third units) may be permitted in the Residential, Countryside and Commercial Policy Areas where appropriate, which may require a rezoning.
- That accessory dwelling units are not permitted on lands within the Waterfront Policy Area, or lands without the benefit of direct frontage and access to a year-round publicly owned and maintained roadway.

5 Land Use and Development

Grouping compatible and separating incompatible land uses and ensuring that sufficient lands are appropriately designated to accommodate future development are core matters that land use planning addresses. The primary method to manage land use compatibility is through the designation of land into separate categories that identify the types of uses that are permitted to be located on lands in different areas of the Municipality. The Official Plan identifies the high-level designation for each parcel of land in the Municipality, such as Residential or Commercial. The Zoning By-law, which must conform to the Official Plan, contains more detailed designations for each property, such as residential low density (R1) and Multiple Residential (MR). Additionally, the Official Plan and Zoning By-law address specific land use compatibility considerations, including minimum distance separation between incompatible uses and restrictions for uses that may have undesirable impacts.

5.1 Land Use Designations

The current Official Plan contains the following land use designations or 'policy areas' and 'policy overlays' which for the most part, function as land use designations. For planning purposes, the policy areas and overlays serve the Municipality well and are generally appropriate within the development context of Huron Shores; however, as noted later in this Chapter, there are a number of amendments that are recommended.

5.1.1 Residential Policy Area

Applied to existing residential areas in Iron Bridge, Little Rapids and Sowerby, the Residential Policy Area permits a full range of housing types, including single, 'two-unit' and town housing, boarding houses, apartments, senior's residences, group homes and crisis housing. Garden suites, which are temporary 'granny flats' are also permitted within the Residential Policy Area. 'Second Units' or 'in-law suites' are also permitted where appropriately zoned, however as discussed in greater detail in the Housing Chapter, Provincial Policy requires the Municipality to have policies that permit accessory dwelling units within a much wider variety of areas.

5.1.2 Commercial Policy Area

Applied to approximately 30 parcels within Iron Bridge, the majority of which front onto Highway 17, and 3 smaller parcels in Sowerby, also fronting on Highway 17. Permitted uses within the Commercial Policy Area include a full range of retail, personal service, automotive, recreational and resort commercial uses. Residential uses are generally permitted within the same building, as an accessory to a commercial use, excluding 'heavier uses' such as automobile and engine repair uses.

5.1.3 Industrial Policy Area

Generally applied to existing industrial uses, including Midway Lumber and Birchwood Plywood, the industrial policy area permits a full range of industrial uses such as automotive, industrially-related commercial use, salvage or wrecking yards.

The OP also notes that mineral mining operations are considered to be industrial uses. A lack of municipal water and sewer services and the need for on-site well and septic systems is a significant factor limiting industrial uses to those which are 'dry' in nature.

5.1.4 Countryside Policy Area

This designation is by far the most common throughout the Municipality, generally applied to rural areas along the network of municipal roadways, including agricultural areas. Given the wide variety of areas to which the Country Side Policy Area applies, there is also a wide variety of uses, including those relating primarily to the management or use of resources and resource-based recreational activities, agriculture and rural residential development. The current OP also permits a variety of commercial uses, subject to a rezoning, and Industrial Uses subject to an Official Plan Amendment.

5.1.5 Waterfront Policy Area

The actual designation is generally applied to smaller waterfront lots, however in practice, the policies of the Waterfront Policy Area are applied to all lots within 300m (984') of a waterbody. The Waterfront Policy Area permits among other things, seasonal and year-round residential, as well as recreational commercial uses such as campgrounds, marinas, tourist lodges and restaurants. Land use policies within the Waterfront Policy Areas are generally restrictive in nature, with the overall goal of protecting the existing character and environmental features which attract cottagers and tourists to the Municipality. The overall policy framework also recognizes that many of these waterfront properties are only accessible via private roads, which presents a variety of municipal challenges.

5.1.6 Mineral Aggregate (sand and gravel) Resource Policy Area

Applied to existing aggregate pits, quarries and areas identified as having mineral aggregate resources, including a large part of the western portion of the Municipality, and areas north of Basswood Lake. Permitted uses include mineral aggregate extraction and processing, asphalt and cement plants and recycling facilities. Forestry uses, hunt camps, peat extraction and agricultural uses are also specifically permitted, although there is no reference limiting such uses to existing lots of record.

Mineral aggregate resources are considered a Provincially Significant Resource. Transportation expenses make up a significant proportion of the overall cost of aggregate, and therefore, maintaining the ongoing viability of the resource is critical in supporting local and regional construction. From a land use perspective, the issue is land use compatibility, as discussed later in this Chapter.

Aggregate pits operate under the Aggregate Resources Act and are required to have a valid licence through the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNR, formerly MNR). The process for obtaining and maintaining a pit license is rigorous, including various requirements for rehabilitating sites once the aggregate resource has been depleted.

5.1.7 Waste Management Systems Policy Area

Applied to existing waste management facilities including landfills and sewage disposal sites. Permitted uses include landfill and recycling facilities, septage disposal sites and composting sites. As discussed later, land use compatibility, or ensuring the ongoing viability of these important sites is of critical importance to the land use planning and development process.

5.1.8 Land Use Overlays

Although not specifically identified as land use policy areas, the current OP contains sections specifically relating to the following:

5.1.8.1 Parks and Open Space

Permitted uses include parks, playgrounds, sports fields, trails, public places and open spaces designed and developed for public recreation, leisure, fitness and aesthetic appreciation. These areas may also serve as habitat areas and linkages for wildlife, and represent significant quality of life attributes for fulltime and seasonal residents, as well as tourists. The current OP notes that lands are not specifically designated for Parks and Open Space, therefore, such uses may be located throughout the Municipality where appropriate. In practise, the Zoning By-law further defines and permits such uses in various zones.

5.1.8.2 Agriculture

Although no lands are identified as Provincially Significant or Prime Agricultural Lands, the intent of the existing Plan is to permit within the Countryside Policy Area, agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and secondary uses on or adjacent to lands used for agriculture, provided the best agricultural soils are conserved for food production. Non-farm development is permitted on 'lesser capability soils' provided Council is satisfied that such development does not negatively affect farming practises. The current OP defines agricultural uses to include a wide variety of crop and livestock farming practises, as well as a variety of what Provincial Policy refers to as Agricultural Related Uses and On-farm Diversified Uses.

While the current policies related to agriculture are generally ok, there are a number of policy gaps requiring further discussion. More specifically, it is recommended that:

- **Various definitions and descriptions be reconfigured to be more in line with current Provincial Policies as it relates to agricultural uses, agricultural related uses and on-farm diversified uses, and that the Zoning By-law be amended to specifically permit a wider variety of uses in association with an active farm use.**
- **Council further explores the appropriateness of identifying Prime Agricultural Areas and potentially creating an Agricultural Policy Area to be applied to identified Prime Agricultural lands. This could be done within the Provincial meaning of Prime Agricultural Areas or under a local framework that might provide for additional flexibility.**

5.1.8.3 Minerals

The map below, identifies a fairly substantial portion of the Municipality as having mineral potential. The current OP policy approach encourages mineral resource related extraction uses, including exploration within all of these areas and requires all new mineral mines to adhere to The Mining Act and The Environmental Protection Act. Much like aggregate resources, there exists a fairly rigorous Provincial statutory framework for licensing and regulating mineral extraction operations, including rehabilitation requirements once the mineral resource has been depleted, which is also required under the existing Official Plan.

This Section of the OP also addresses mine hazards, which are discussed in more detail in the Hazards Chapter of this Report.

Areas of Mineral Potential

Source: *Municipality of Huron Shores GIS*



Based upon the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDMNR) Mineral Deposit Inventory there are a total of 19 mineral occurrences within Huron Shores, consisting of 15 copper, 3 uranium, 1 trap rock and 2 granite occurrences. Of the 19 occurrences, 10 are deemed to be 'discretionary occurrences', 6 are 'occurrences', and one each of 'developed prospect without reserves', 'developed prospect with reserves' and 'past producing mine without reserves.'

From a land use perspective, Provincial Policy aims to ensure that Municipalities identify and protect known mineral deposits and significant areas of mineral potential. New sensitive land uses, such as residential uses, within or adjacent to known deposits and areas of mineral potential that could preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:

- Resource use would not be feasible; or

- The proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and
- Issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

The issue is that of land use compatibility, however, it is likely that in many cases, existing sensitive use development, such as cottages along the south shore of Basswood Lake, would preclude or make mineral operations not feasible.

The current OP does not contain policies that specifically reference protecting areas of mineral potential. In this regard, it is recommended that Council adopt a balanced approach which specifically allows for defined infill development of new sensitive uses within identified mineral potential areas where existing sensitive use development and previous severances resulting in relatively small lots already precludes the feasibility of mineral resource extraction activities and serves a greater long-term public interest within the local context.

5.2 Land Use Compatibility

Separating incompatible land uses is a cornerstone of land use planning. Sensitive land uses are those where routine or normal activities would be negatively impacted by a nearby use that emits noxious discharges such as noise, dust, odour and vibrations. Examples of sensitive land uses include residential uses, day care centres, parks, and educational and healthcare facilities. Uses that can produce noxious discharges include industrial uses, aggregate pits and quarries, major transportation and public infrastructure facilities, and agricultural uses where livestock are kept. The construction of new sensitive or incompatible uses within the influence area of a noxious use is generally discouraged.

Summary of Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) D-6 Guidelines* – Compatibility between Industrial/Noxious and Sensitive Uses.

Source: Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Industrial Facility Type	General Characteristics	Minimum Recommended Separation Distance	Potential Influence Area
Class 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale, self-contained, no outdoor storage. • Fugitive outputs are infrequent. • Daytime operation only. • Infrequent movement of products/trucks. 	20m	70m
Class 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium scale processing or manufacturing, with outdoor storage. • Periodic outputs of minor annoyance. • Shift operations are permitted. • Frequent movement of products/trucks during daytime hours. 	70m	300m
Class 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale manufacturing or processing with outdoor storage of raw and finished products. • Shift operations are permitted. • Large production volumes and continuous movement of products/trucks 24 hours per day. 	300m	1000m

Notes: *The D-6 Guideline is presented as a general summary. There exist other D Series Guidelines that apply to specific land uses.⁵

Below are a number of minimum separation distances between sensitive uses and specific major facilities:

⁵ For more information on the D-Series Guidelines, please see: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-land-use-planning-guides>

- Rail Yards: 300 metres — Class 3 Industrial Use (MECP D-6 Guidelines).
- Rail Lines: 70 metres — Class 2 Industrial Use (MECP D-6 Guidelines).
- Landfill: 500 metres from the landfill footprint (MECP D-4 Guidelines).
- Wastewater Treatment Sites (Drying Beds): 150 metres from the periphery of the odour producing source structure (MECP D-2 Guidelines).

Reductions to established minimum distance separations may be permitted where:

- Mitigation measures such as berms and vegetated buffers will sufficiently reduce potential impacts.
- In support of infill development and redevelopment, where there is existing intervening development between the proposed sensitive and/or noxious use.

The land use compatibility policies within the existing OP are generally appropriate and consistent with Provincial requirements.

5.2.1 Minimum Distance Separation Requirements Between Livestock Facilities and Nearby Sensitive (Residential) Uses

Provincial policy requires the application of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Formulae. OMAFRA’s MDS applies to new residential development in the vicinity of an existing livestock operation, as well as the expansion of an existing livestock facility (barn or manure storage) in close proximity to sensitive uses such as rural residences. The issue is odour and the MDS Formulae are based upon the size of the livestock facility and the type of livestock.

Sample Agricultural Minimum Distance Separation Calculations.

Source: Ontario Agricultural Planning Tools Suite, MDS Calculator.

Livestock facility		Minimum distance from “Type A Land Use” to existing facility (Less sensitive, rural land uses)		Minimum distance from “Type B Land Use” to existing facility (More sensitive, urban land uses, residential, parks)	
Number and type	Typical barn area	Distance to barn	Distance to manure storage	Distance to barn	Distance to manure storage
2 horses	46m ²	81m (265’)	10m (341’)	162m (531’)	183m (599’)
6 horses	139m ²	93m (307’)	116m (381’)	165m (542’)	186m (611’)
2 dairy cows	19m ²	92m (303’)	274m (899’)	185m (606’)	348m (1141’)
6 dairy cows	56m ²	110m (365’)	289m (948’)	193m (634’)	355m (1163’)

Notes:

- MDS I formula was used, i.e. distance from an existing livestock facility.

- Manure storage type used was worst-case manure storage type for that type of livestock facility.

The current OP contains appropriate policies related to agricultural minimum distance separation guidelines.

6 Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Natural heritage features are sensitive components of the natural environment that need to be protected. These include wetlands, fish habitat and other significant wildlife habitat that may be critical to endangered and threatened species. Provincial policies require Official Plans to protect these significant natural heritage features from development. Generally, environmental impact assessments are required prior to development or site alterations within or adjacent to these features. 'Adjacent' typically means within 120 metres of the feature or area.

6.1 Fish Habitat

Fish habitat includes lakes, streams, intermittent creeks and even drainage courses that are part of a valuable, connected habitat that serves a variety of fish and their prey throughout various stages of their life cycle.

The Province requires municipalities to protect fish habitat, in accordance with Provincial and Federal regulations. Development or site alteration within or adjacent to fish habitat is not permitted unless it can be demonstrated, through an environmental impact assessment, that there will be no negative impacts to nearby fish habitat. Potential impacts include vegetation removal adjacent to watercourses and increased sediment from stormwater. Protecting fish habitat is synonymous with protecting surface water quality.

Current OP policies related to fish habitat are appropriate and consistent with Provincial requirements.

6.2 Wetlands

Wetlands provide valuable environmental functions such as wildlife habitat, water quality enhancement and flood control. None of the currently identified wetlands in Huron Shores have been evaluated.

Similar to other significant natural heritage features, there are a number of Provincial policies that must be followed when development is proposed within or adjacent to a wetland. From a regulatory standpoint, Provincial policies establish the following 4 types of wetlands:

6.2.1 Provincially Significant Wetlands and Provincially Significant Coastal Wetlands

Provincially Significant Wetlands, whether coastal or not, are those wetlands that have been evaluated by a qualified evaluator in accordance with the **Ontario Wetland Evaluation System**⁶. The evaluation system is a points-based system that defines, identifies and measures wetland functions and values. Ecosystem values include groundwater storage and release, wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Human utility values include flood prevention, improved water quality and recreational opportunities. Points are attributed to these values and if a wetland reaches a specific threshold, it is deemed Provincially Significant. Provincial policies afford Provincially Significant Wetlands the highest level of protection. Most types

⁶ More information at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/wetlands-evaluation>

of development within or adjacent to (120m) a Provincially Significant Wetland are prohibited, unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts to the natural features or their ecological functions.

Given that no local wetlands have been evaluated as of yet, there are currently no Provincially significant wetlands in Huron Shores, however it is likely that upon evaluation, there would be certain wetlands, especially those along Lake Huron, that may be determined to be Provincially Significant.

6.2.2 Coastal Wetlands

Within Huron Shores, coastal wetlands are those located along Lake Huron. Provincial policies afford coastal wetlands a significant level of protection. Most types of development are not permitted within a coastal wetland or within 120m of its boundary, unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.

6.2.3 Evaluated Non-Provincially Significant Wetlands

Evaluated wetlands are those which have been evaluated in accordance with the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System and determined not to be Provincially Significant. Current Provincial policy permits development within wetlands that are deemed to be neither coastal wetlands nor Provincially significant wetlands.

6.2.4 Unevaluated Wetlands

All currently identified wetlands in Huron Shores are unevaluated wetlands. Provincial policies require that a wetland evaluation be conducted prior to any development either within the wetland or adjacent lands (120m).

6.2.5 Conclusions – Wetlands

The 2011 Official Plan identifies about 9,232 acres of wetlands within the Municipality. Updated mapping from the Province identifies approximately 14,076 acres of wetlands, a 52% increase. Given the high level of Provincial protection afforded to wetlands and the fact that none have been evaluated, this will impact future development within the Municipality.

With this in mind, it is recommended that the current OP policy approach to wetlands be amended to better reflect Provincial Policy as outlined in Section 6.2.6 below. Furthermore, given the relatively small scale of local development, it is recommended that policies be added that waive the need for a wetland evaluation or permit scoped studies under certain circumstances.

6.2.6 Proposed Wetland Policy Approach

Type of Wetland	Development Within the Wetland	Development Upon Adjacent Lands (Within 120m of wetland boundary)
Provincially Significant Wetlands and Provincially Significant Coastal Wetlands (Determined through a wetland evaluation)	No development or site alteration.	No development or site alteration within 120m of wetland boundary, unless an appropriate study shows that such development will not impact the natural heritage features or ecological functions of the wetland.
Coastal Wetlands (Wetlands adjacent to Lake Huron, as defined by the PPS)	No development or site alteration unless an appropriate study shows that such development will not impact the natural heritage features or ecological functions of the wetland.	No development or site alteration within 120m of wetland boundary, unless an appropriate study shows that such development will not impact the natural heritage features or ecological functions of the wetland.
Evaluated Wetlands (Determined not Provincially Significant or Coastal)	Development and site alteration may be permitted, subject to any recommendations outlined in the wetland evaluation.	Development and site alteration permitted, subject to appropriate buffering and stormwater management.
Unevaluated wetlands <0.5ha in size and not containing characteristics and components typical of a significant wetland.	A wetland evaluation may be waived, supported by a study prepared by a qualified professional indicating that the wetland does not contain characteristics and components typical of a significant wetland.	Development and site alteration permitted, subject to appropriate buffering and stormwater management.

Type of Wetland	Development Within the Wetland	Development Upon Adjacent Lands (Within 120m of wetland boundary)
Unevaluated wetlands >0.5ha in size.	<p>A wetland evaluation is required as part of a complete Planning Act application.</p> <p>If determined not to be Provincially significant or coastal, development and site alteration may be permitted, subject to any recommendations outlined in the wetland evaluation.</p>	If determined not to be Provincially significant, development and site alteration permitted, subject to appropriate buffering and stormwater management.

- Infrastructure projects may be permitted to locate within or adjacent to a Provincially Significant or Coastal Wetland where it can be shown, through the Environmental Assessment process, that the proposal cannot be located outside of the wetland. Examples include pipelines, Provincial highways, roads, electric power facilities and water treatment plants.
- **It is recommended that the following policies be added to permit some flexibility in determining the overall scope of a particular study:**
 - **The need for an Environmental Impact Study or wetland evaluation may be waived or the level of effort may be reduced where:**
 - **Only a minor encroachment into the adjacent lands is proposed.**
 - **Significant ‘intervening buffers’ exist between the proposed development and the wetland or adjacent lands, such as roads and existing development.**
 - **Appropriate land use controls, such as Site Plan Control or Holding Provisions, can be utilized to ensure that development does not encroach into the wetland or adjacent lands.**

6.3 Endangered and Threatened Species and Their Habitats

According to the Province, there are **47 species at risk that live in the Algoma Region** which may or may not actually be present within the Municipality of Huron Shores. These include 24 bird species, 4 reptile species, 6 mammal species, 4 invertebrate species, 2 plant species (though both are a result of cultivation rather

than natural occurrence) and 7 fish and mussel species. In some cases, these animals may simply pass through the community or stop for a short period of time. The Province prohibits development and site alteration within the habitat of endangered species and threatened species, except in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements.

At this point in time, the Official Plan does not specifically identify any known endangered and threatened species habitat, but that is not to say that such habitats do not exist.

The Species at Risk in Ontario (SARO) List of endangered and threatened species, and their defined habitat is continually evolving as new species are added, removed or identified. Future amendments to the plan may be required to ensure accuracy and currency.

Current OP policies appropriately:

- Prohibit development or site alteration in the habitat of endangered and threatened species, except in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements.
- Require proponents to exercise due diligence to ensure that any activities being contemplated do not contravene the Endangered Species Act, 2007. Where a new endangered or threatened species occurrence is identified, any development or site alteration activities must immediately stop, and the Province must be contacted.

6.4 Other Significant Wildlife Habitats

In addition to wetlands, fish habitat and potential endangered species habitat, the Huron Shores Official Plan currently identifies 'Core Deer Habitat' and 'Bald Eagle Feeding Areas' as specific significant wildlife habitats.

6.4.1 Core Deer Habitat

Existing core Deer Habitat is identified over approximately 50% of the Municipality. More recent information provided by MNR indicates that deer wintering areas cover an even larger portion of the Municipality.

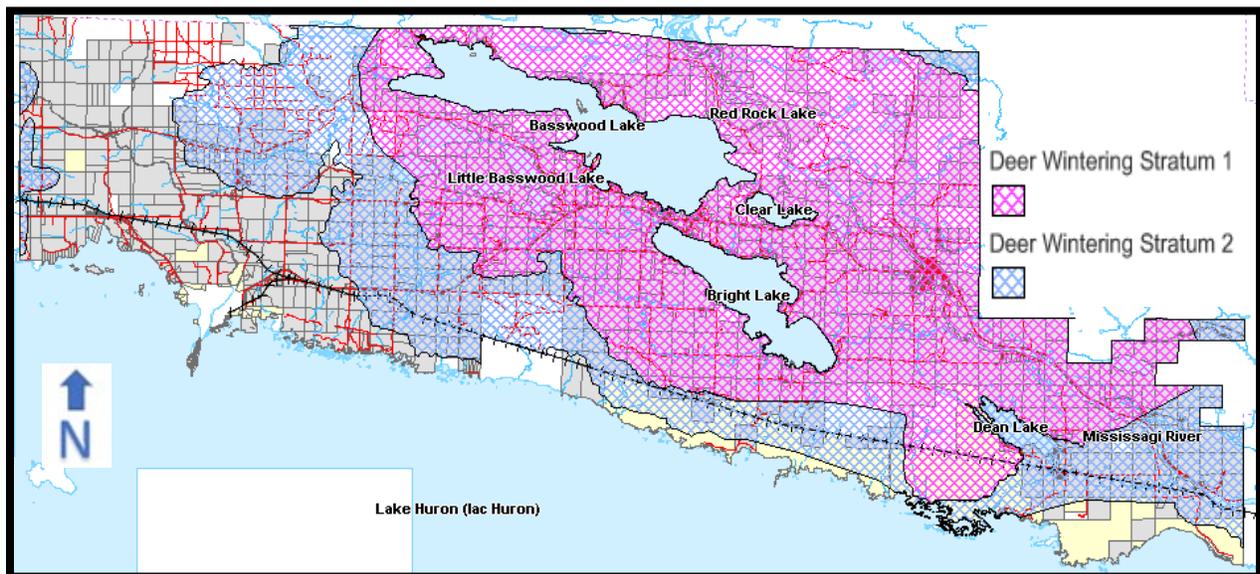
Existing Core Deer Habitat Identified in Huron Shores

Source: Municipality of Huron Shores GIS and MNRF



Current Core Deer Habitat Identified in Huron Shores

Source: Municipality of Huron Shores GIS and MNRF



Although development is still permitted within identified core deer habitat, it is noted that 'core deer wintering yards', which are generally characterized as dense coniferous forests that provide shelter during winter months, are the most important. Therefore, vegetation retention in these areas is paramount. Current OP Policies permit development in core deer habitat, provided new lots are a minimum of 90m by 90m (295'x295') and that vegetation retention is maximized through the use of tools such as site plan control or some other form of development agreement.

This approach remains appropriate, **however additional details are recommended, to strengthen protections and require additional study under certain circumstances, such as for larger scale development where significant vegetation removal will occur, and provide additional flexibility for smaller scale developments where vegetation removal is not required or areas have already been de-vegetated, such as in agricultural areas or infill development in existing built-up areas.**

6.4.2 Bald Eagle Feeding Area

The shores of the Mississagi River are identified as bald eagle feeding areas, however there are no policies within the current OP that speak to this. Within this context and notwithstanding any policies aimed at protecting quality fish habitat within the river, the overall goal is to maintain tall mature trees which eagles often utilize as perches when feeding. **It is therefore recommended that policies be put in place to require development within the bald eagle feeding areas to maintain existing vegetation, with special regard for tall mature trees.**

6.4.3 Evaluating the Potential for Significant Wildlife Habitat

Not all significant wildlife habitats have been identified. From time to time there may be development proposals such as subdivisions or larger scale commercial or industrial developments in previously undisturbed areas, where the potential for wildlife habitat needs to be evaluated through additional study, as part of a complete development application. The exiting OP contains appropriate policies in this regard.

6.5 Areas of Natural or Scientific Interest (ANSI's)

Provincial Policy requires Municipalities to protect and preserve ANSI's as part of the land use planning process. ANSI's generally recognize unique geological or ecological features. A nearby example would be the 'Ripple Rock' just west of Desparats. Although there are no ANSI's currently identified in Huron Shores, current OP policies appropriately note that in the event an ANSI is identified, it shall be protected.

6.6 Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation

In 2017, the Province introduced amendments to the Municipal Act requiring municipalities to develop policies for the protection and enhancement of the local tree canopy and natural vegetation. In March 2020, Wishart Municipal Law Group developed a *Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy* for the Municipality. The Policy generally describes the various benefits of the local tree canopy and vegetated areas, especially along shorelines. The Policy clearly recognizes the need *'to protect and enhance its (local) trees and natural vegetation while at the same time ensuring they continue to be available for vital economic development.'* The following matters outlined in the *Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy* are generally applicable to the Official Plan:

6.6.1 Vegetation Retention

When development is considered, the Municipality will apply creative approaches to planning to protect and enhance its tree canopy and natural vegetation so as to ensure the Municipality's amenity values and identity is enhanced as it grows.

6.6.2 Native Plantings

Where vegetation plantings are required, native species shall be utilized. The Policy also contains a list of native species which is a very useful resource.

6.6.3 Planting the Right Species in the Right Location

This speaks to maintaining public safety and the ongoing viability of public infrastructure. For example, vegetation shall not be planted in a manner that impacts sightlines at street and driveway intersections. Furthermore, certain species shall not be planted beneath overhead power infrastructure, which would eventually need to be maintained by the operator.

- **While the Official Plan generally speaks to vegetation retention, especially along shorelines/riparian areas, it is recommended that specific policies be put in place that speak to vegetation retention, requiring the planting of native species, and ensuring the vegetation planting does not impact public safety or infrastructure.**
- **Municipalities can also pass tree by-laws to prohibit or regulate the destruction of existing trees and woodland areas. Given the rural character of Huron Shores, such policies are not recommended at this time.**

6.7 Water Quality and Sourcewater Protection

Protecting water quality is paramount in sustaining public and environmental health. Certain land uses and activities have the potential to pollute surface and groundwater resources. Common examples include fuel stations, septic systems and livestock operations to name a few. In some cases, it is appropriate to restrict or prohibit development and in other cases, risks can be appropriately mitigated.

Section 21 of the Official Plan speaks to sourcewater protection and outlines a number of additional studies that can be obtained as part of an application or condition of approval, and lists a number of best management practises such as prohibiting on-site bulk storage of petroleum products, pesticides and other chemicals. Site Plan Control and Holding Provisions can be utilized to further implement and regulate best management practises.

The current best management practises prohibit the 'bulk storage' of petroleum products, agricultural source material (manure) and other chemicals. This approach does not necessarily recognize certain engineered solutions that can significantly reduce the risk.

Therefore, it is recommended that the following additional matters be added as best management practises to facilitate safe bulk-storage of materials that could be harmful to ground and surface water:

- **The use of double walled tanks, with alarm systems to alert of a breach in either the inner or outer wall.**
- **That double walled storage tanks be located upon an impervious surface, and in some cases, an impervious containment area capable of holding 100% of the tank volume in the event of a spill.**
- **Require stationary refueling and storage equipment to be effectively shielded to prevent damage in the event of a collision.**
- **Require all maintenance and refueling activities to occur on an impervious surface.**
- **Require spill response kits and a spill response plan to be located on-site.**

6.7.1 Lake Capacity

The inland lakes within Huron Shores represent a significant recreational, environmental and economic asset to the community and region. Consequently, their overall protection from over-development is of critical importance. Lake capacity generally refers to a lake's ability to withstand adjacent development without water quality impacts. The main concern is nutrient or phosphorus loading from nearby septic systems or other land use activities such as agriculture. Lake trout lakes, such as Big Basswood, are especially sensitive to the impacts of nutrient loading, which can result in higher water temperatures and algae blooms such as blue green algae which can be detrimental to human and animal health.

In 2011, Freshwater Research conducted a Lake Capacity Study for Bright and Basswood Lakes on behalf of the Municipality. The report concluded that while Big Basswood Lake is not at capacity, Bright Lake is far beyond development capacity. The report further concludes that the nutrient loading found in Bright Lake is the result of human activities, with nearby agricultural uses likely the largest contributor, as opposed to seasonal and year-round residential development along the shoreline.

The current OP approach prohibits development on lands adjacent to a water body that has or will reach development capacity. Existing lots (vacant or otherwise) are exempt and may be developed. Adjacent is defined as within 300m (984.2') of the shoreline of a lake or associated tributary. Appendix 1 of the OP includes a 'Lake Development Capacity Table' which was completed for key inland lakes in 2004. The residual development capacity in the table indicates how many cottages or permanent dwellings a particular lake could support prior to reaching development capacity.

Appendix 1 – Municipality of Huron Shores Official Plan 2011

Lake Development Capacity Table -2004				
Lake	Predicted Lake Classification Trophic Level	Predicted Mean Phosphorus Value (ppb)	Residual Lake Development Capacity	
			Cottages #	Permanent Dwellings #
Big Basswood	1	3.2 (5.9)	3446 (2088)*	1149
Birch	1	4.5	176	59
Bright		3.9	1896	632
Brownlee	1	6.5	44	15
Clear	1	5.3	106	34
Cranberry	1	6.5	80	27
Dean	1 (4)	4.0 (41.3)	243 (0)**	81
Little Basswood	1	4.1	279	93
Red Rock***	2	13.6	No limit	No limit
Warnock	1	7.3	24	8
<p>Notes</p> <p>Table results are predicted values from MOE model. Measured results are in (brackets). Trophic Level 1 - Excellent water quality 0-9.9 ppb total phosphorus</p> <p>Trophic Level 2 - Good water quality 10-18.5 ppb total phosphorus</p> <p>Trophic Level 3 - Fair water quality 18.6-29.9 ppb total phosphorus</p> <p>Trophic Level 4 - Poor water quality >30 ppb total phosphorus</p> <p>*lake trout lake, should be considered sensitive</p> <p>** (value based on measured data), modelled data indicates a capacity for 243 additional lots</p> <p>***part of Mississagi River system</p>				

The table above is intended to be utilized as a guideline in assessing development proposals upon the key lakes noted. **Section 11.2.8 of the OP states that as part of any Comprehensive OP Review, a new approach, consistent with**

that of the *Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook*⁷ shall be utilized to re-evaluate the lakes listed above, as funds permit.

At present, only Big Basswood and Bright Lakes have been evaluated utilizing the method outlined in the Lake Capacity Handbook. Therefore, as per Provincial Policy, a lake capacity study is generally required as part of a complete application for additional development within 300m of an inland lake or waterbody. It is recognized that for the majority of local, small-scale applications, such a study would be cost prohibitive. **Given the importance of protecting local inland lakes and waterbodies, it is recommended that OP policies be put in place to restrict development within 300m of any inland lake except where:**

- 1. Development is proposed within 300m of Big Basswood Lake, which has been assessed utilizing the Lake Capacity Handbook and found to be far below development capacity. In this case, such development must be beyond 300m of any other key inland lake.**
- 2. Development is accompanied by a Lake Capacity Study, prepared by a qualified professional, showing the lake has residual capacity to accommodate the proposed development.**
- 3. Development does not have the effect of increasing the overall intensity of existing development, with special regard for increased sewage flows and any vegetation removal within 15m of the shoreline.**
- 4. Where there exists intervening development or topographical features between the proposed development and the waterbody that mitigate any potential impacts. This may require an appropriate study prepared by a qualified professional.**

Another option might be for the Municipality to undertake lake capacity studies for key inland lakes; however, such studies would be costly. Furthermore, given the network of private roads, access limitations and the current approach to generally prohibiting new lot creation on private roads, small scale development in the form of severances is limited. On the other hand, there is some potential for larger scale development, by way of a subdivision or condominium (creation of new roads), which would be of a scale and scope where requiring a lake capacity study would be prudent and appropriate.

6.8 Energy, Air Quality, Sustainability and Climate Change

The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS) requires Municipalities to support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and preparation for the impacts of a changing climate. In general, planning authorities are urged to promote compact urban form, active transportation, a structure of nodes and corridors, focusing freight intensive uses in

⁷ [Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook: Protecting Water Quality in Inland Lakes | Ontario.ca](#)

close proximity to highways, maximizing vegetation retention and promoting design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation.

Within the local rural development pattern, this translates into facilitating infill development and directing significant growth and larger development towards existing nodes and development clusters as further discussed in Chapter 3 of this Report.

Section 22 of the current OP speaks to energy, air quality and sustainability and is generally appropriate within the local context, however the existing OP does not speak to the potential impacts of climate change. According to a report released by The Algoma Freshwater Coalition, 'A Guide for Algoma – Living with Climate Change'⁸, locally, by 2050, the last frost in the spring is predicted to occur 2 weeks earlier, with the first frost in the spring occurring about 2 weeks later. In general, a warmer climate is predicted, with more extreme weather events, such as more intense storms and longer periods of drought.

With this in mind, **it is recommended that additional policies be added throughout the Official Plan, including Section 22, to further address the impacts of a changing climate.** It is however recognized that at present, Engineering standards related to flooding (ie. the 1 in 100 year flood) and other potential impacts of climate change have yet to be developed. Therefore, at this point in time, it is difficult to specifically define the impacts of climate change, especially within the context of flooding.

⁸ [e0a55d_12307bf24adf430bbc37b5860fa8ec9e.pdf \(centralalgomafreshwatercoalition.ca\)](https://centralalgomafreshwatercoalition.ca/e0a55d_12307bf24adf430bbc37b5860fa8ec9e.pdf)

7 Hazards

Within Huron Shores, there are a number of natural hazards, such as flooding, wildland fire, and significant slopes. Local built hazards include contaminated sites and mine hazards. Generally, development should be directed away from natural or built hazards. Where appropriate, specific risks may be mitigated. As discussed further in Chapter 6.8, the effects of climate change may amplify certain natural hazards, like flooding and wildland fire.

7.1 Flooding

The Municipality has experienced a number of inland flooding events over the past 50+ years, including floods in 1970, 1979, 1985 and 2013, with the flooding in 1979 being the largest. There have also been a number of more recent, localized events that have impacted individual properties and transportation infrastructure.

There are two regulatory flood plains in Huron Shores, the Lake Huron Flood Plain and flood plains associated with inland lakes and rivers.

The Lake Huron Flood Plain is well defined, at an elevation of 178.3m (584.9') Canadian Geodetic Datum (C.G.D.). This elevation includes a 0.5m (1.6') allowance for wave uprush. Current OP policy requires openings to new buildings and structures to be above the prescribed (178.3m C.G.D.) elevation.

Inland flood prone areas are not well defined and in many respects, represent the greatest potential risk to public health and safety in relation to personal property and critical local infrastructure, such as the local network of roads. The 'regulatory standard' for inland flood plains is the '1 in 100-year flood level'. Within Algoma Region, the 'Timmins Storm', which was a significant rain event that occurred in August 1961, is generally understood to be the '1 in 100-year storm event'.

Given the relatively limited inland flood mapping that is available, the Municipality recently commissioned a Flood Risk Assessment⁹ by Hatch Ltd. In early 2022 Hatch completed a Background Report and in summer 2022 Hatch presented a Draft Flood Risk Assessment to Council. The Flood Risk Assessment is intended to be a high-level exercise to generally identify areas within the Municipality that are prone to flooding.

⁹ https://huronshores.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/H366743-0000-228-230-0003_Rev0-Flood-Risk-Assessment.pdf

Waterbodies Assessed By Hatch Flood Risk Assessment, 2022

Major Rivers	Minor Rivers	Lakes
Mississagi River	Bolton River	Basswood Lake
Thessalon River	Harris River	Birch Lake
	Pickerel River	Bright Lake
	Pahpashcah River	Brownlee Lake
	Potomac River	Clear Lake
	Little Thessalon River	Cranberry Lake
		Dean Lake
		Little Basswood Lake
		Little Dean Lake
		Warnock Lake

Flood Risk Areas Identified by Hatch Flood Risk Assessment 2022

Source: Municipality of Huron Shores Flood Risk Assessment – Hatch Ltd.



Hatch’s Risk Assessment resulted in a number of additional flood prone areas, most notably along the Little Thessalon River. The preliminary assessment of the Village of Iron Bridge has also resulted in altered flood prone areas. As a result of the Risk Assessment, Hatch is recommending that specific flood mapping be conducted for the following areas/waterbodies:

- Mississagi River
- Thessalon River
- Little Thessalon River
- Bright Lake
- Bolton River
- Pickerel Creek

The mapping will result in the identification of a flood plain and a flood fringe, with development significantly restricted within the flood plain, and the identification of minimum elevations for building openings within the flood fringe.

Given the well-established Lake Huron Flood Plain, the current Official Plan approach is appropriate.

In the case of inland flood plains, it is recommended that OP Schedules be amended to reflect the most recent high level flood plain mapping completed by Hatch, and that policies be added in support of additional flood plain mapping. The OP can then be amended to reflect new, more detailed flood plain mapping that may occur in the future.

7.2 Wildland Fire

Behind flooding, wildfires are the second largest factor for natural disasters. On average, the Province responds to over 1,200 wildfires each year. The anticipated impacts of climate change (increased frequency and severity of drought periods) coupled with communities expanding into forested areas have increased the risk of wildfires.

The Province requires that development be generally directed away from lands that pose “high to extreme” risk for wildfire. Vegetation types which often present high to extreme risk for wildfire include natural conifer forests and unmanaged conifer plantations, with black or white spruce, jack pine, balsam fir and immature red and white pine. Mixed wood forests with greater than 50% conifer composition and forests that have experienced disease or wind damage also pose a potential risk. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry provides high-level mapping of forests’ risk for wildland fire. Where development is proposed in an area identified as having a high to extreme risk, an assessment may be required.

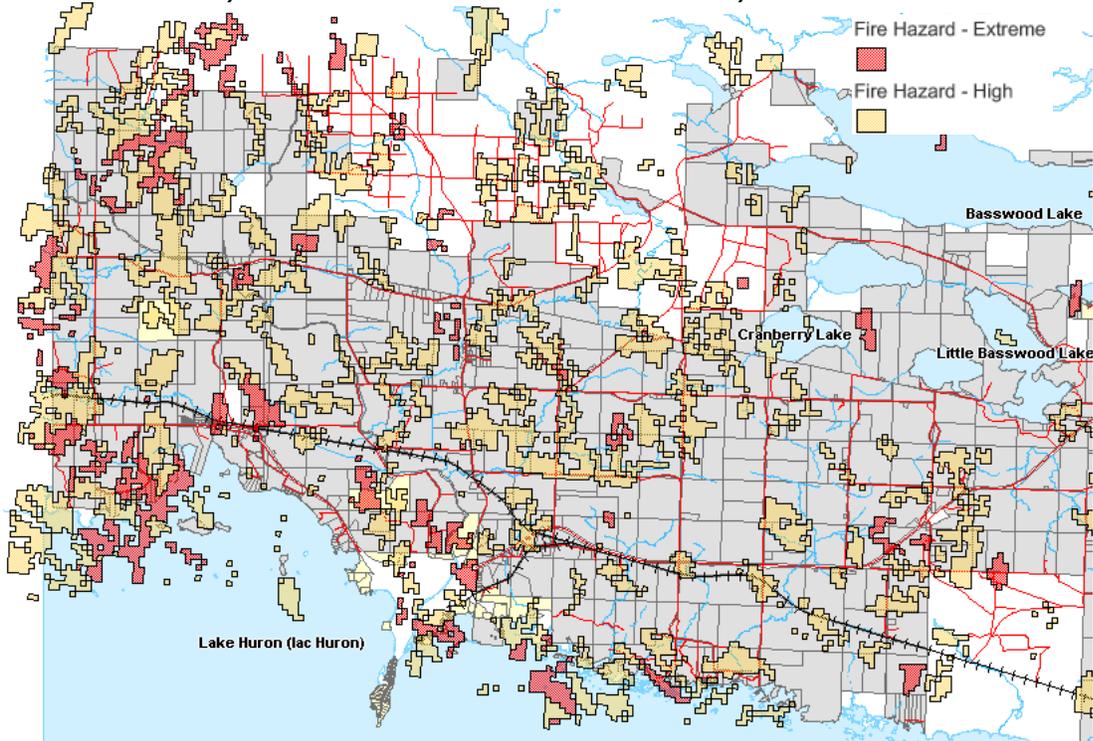
In addition to directing development away from forests that pose a high to extreme risk, there are also a number of methods for mitigating the risk, including forest management, site layout and constructing fire breaks.

The maps below show high to extreme forest fire risks within Huron Shores. MNR’s current Wildland Fire mapping for the area is fairly high level, and subject to more detailed review upon the submission of a development application.

The current OP was drafted prior to Provincial Policies being passed which recognize wildland fire as a land use hazard. Therefore, new policies will need to be added to the OP, which generally direct development away from areas of a high to extreme wildland fire hazards, or require additional study to mitigate the risk, as a condition of a complete application.

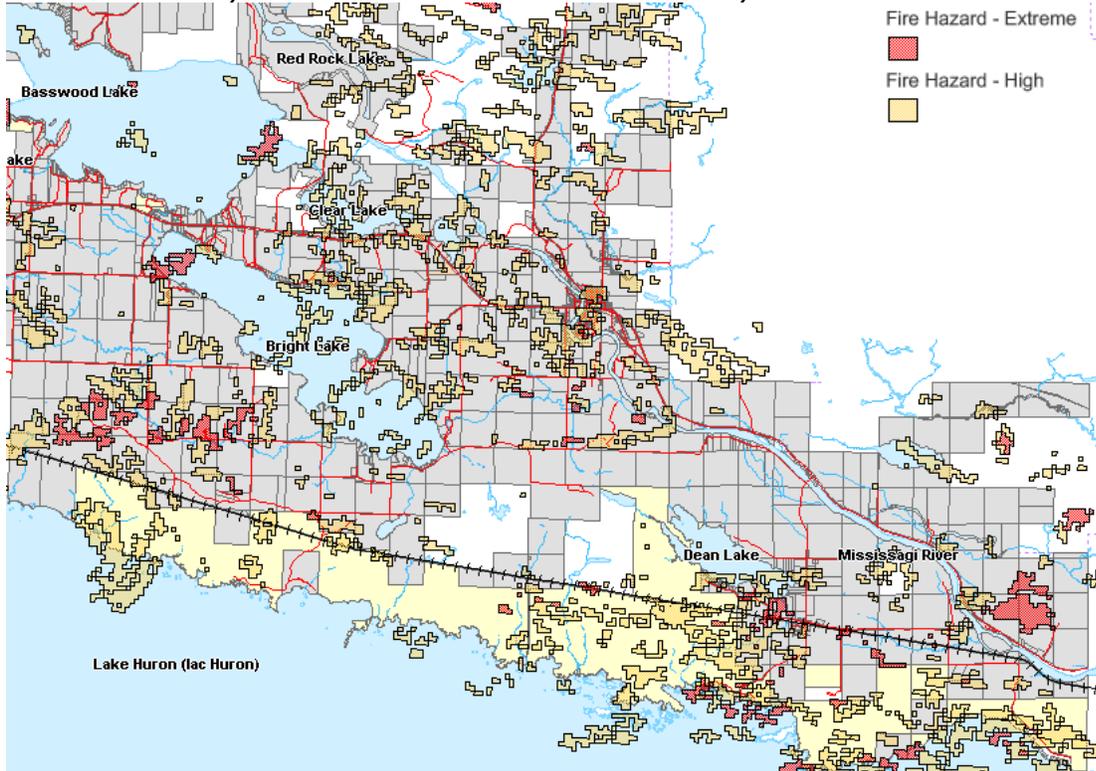
High to Extreme Wildland Fire Risks in the Western Portion of Huron Shores

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry



High to Extreme Wildland Fire Risks in the Eastern Portion of Huron Shores

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry



7.3 Significant Slopes

Development or site alteration on or near significant slopes can result in safety risks and property damage, depending upon the stability of the slope. Various sections throughout the Official Plan speak to 'the terrain' and require certain studies to be completed as a condition of development.

7.4 Mine Hazards

The Province's Abandoned Mines Inventory System (AMIS) identifies 13 mine hazards within Huron Shores or within 1km of the Municipal boundary. As per Provincial Policy, development or site alteration is not permitted 1km of an identified mine hazard without first consulting with Provincial staff.

To this end, Section 16.4 of the OP notes, '*development proposed within 1 km [0.62 miles] of the abandoned mine sites identified on the Official Plan schedules should not be permitted without prior consultation with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines' Regional Land Use Geologist. The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines will work with proponents to refine development setbacks and to assess the need for additional geotechnical studies.*' This policy remains appropriate.

Based upon comments received from the Ministry, it is recommended that additional policies be added that require consultation and written consent from the Minister of Northern Development, Mines Natural Resources and Forestry prior to the disturbance of any rehabilitated mine hazard feature.

7.5 Contaminated Sites

Contaminated and potentially contaminated sites (brownfields) are lands where contaminants may be present due to previous industrial, transportation, utility or similar uses. Sources of contamination can include disposal of waste materials, raw material storage, residues left in containers, maintenance activities and spills. Some commercial uses such as gasoline stations and automotive repair garages have a similar potential.

Where a site is contaminated or has the potential to be contaminated (brownfield site), certain sensitive land uses such as residential and parks uses should not be developed, until such time that contaminants can be removed to an appropriate Provincial standard or it has been confirmed that there is no contamination present.

Section 23.3 of the Official Plan addresses contaminated sites and requires a Record of Site Condition to be submitted as part of any development application. Records of Site Condition are generally required under the Ontario Building Code as part of a complete Building Permit Application, and more specifically outlined in O.reg 153/04 of the *Environmental Protection Act*. It is also noted that records of site condition are only required in association with building permits to locate a sensitive land use on a property that was last occupied by a non-sensitive land use as prescribed in the Legislation.

In recognizing this rigorous Provincial framework, a more general policy approach is recommended:

- **The overall intent is to identify and remediate known and unknown contaminated sites.**
- **All development applications shall be screened with the purpose of determining whether a site is contaminated or has the potential to be contaminated.**
- **Where a sensitive land use is proposed on a contaminated site or site that has the potential to be contaminated, a record of site condition may be required as a part of the development approvals process, within the scope of the Environmental Protection Act.**

The current OP permits the use of Site Plan Control and Holding Provisions to require additional studies prior to development proceeding, which remains appropriate.

8 Parks, Open Space and Community Facilities

Often referred to as ‘soft services’ these spaces and facilities define the character of Huron Shores, and reinforce the overall lifestyle and quality of life attributes. As a starting point, the Municipality of Huron Shores is blessed with a diversity landscapes and open spaces, as well as a rich heritage. Official Plan policies are intended to support the ongoing viability of these spaces and facilities, and protect and preserve any cultural heritage features and areas.

8.1 Existing Municipal Parks, Community Facilities and Cemeteries in Iron Bridge

The Municipality currently operates a wide variety of parks, recreational and cultural facilities that are critical services that underpin the very fabric of the Community. It is also recognized that a number of equally important facilities and trails are operated by other non-profit or public groups, that either operate facilities independently or in partnership with the Municipality. Examples include but are not limited to the Lion’s Club, The Thessalon Township Heritage Association, the Township of Thessalon cemetery Board to name a few, the Province (preserves and crown land), the Voyageur Trail Association and the Iron Bridge Night Hawks Snowmobile Club.

Community Facilities	Location	Details
Thessalon Township Community Centre	4 Little Rapids Road	The former Little Rapids school house. Available for community events, dances, dinners or private parties.
Little Rapids Gazebo and Ballpark	34 Little Rapids Road	This covered gazebo has a canteen kitchen, washrooms, 100-plus persons seating capacity. The gazebo and ballpark are ideal for hosting family/group picnics or reunions, weddings and receptions.
Sowerby Hall	1410 Basswood Lake Road	Formerly the Township of Day and Bright Additional Municipal Office, this 100-plus year-old building is a popular venue for quilting groups, painting classes and weekly square dances throughout the year.
Historic Cordukes/Weber 12-sided Round Barn	1410 Basswood Lake Road	This renovated and historic structure is available for private and public functions on a seasonal basis. The Cordukes/Weber Barn is one of only 3 12-sided barns in Ontario. The Historic Cordukes/Weber 12-Sided Barn – Huron Shores
Iron Bridge Recreational Centre	1 Chiblow Lake Road	Contains a full-service kitchen supporting catered functions such as wedding receptions, dinner/dances or similar private group events. It is the main venue for the Annual Agricultural Society Fall Fair held on the Saturday of Labour Day weekend, as well as flea markets, quilt and craft

		shows and other large-scale community celebrations.
Ward 4 Recreation Centre	23802 Highway 17	This newly renovated gym is located in the former Thompson Township Community Hall/Municipal Office.
Huron Shores Public Library	10 Main Street	Located next to the Municipal Offices, the library was founded as the Iron Bridge Library in 1974. In 1997 computers with internet access were added. As a result of amalgamation, in 1999 The Iron Bridge Public Library was changed to The Corporation of the Municipality of Huron Shores.
Iron Bridge Lions Club Inc.	10 Clarissa Street	
Lions Club Ball Park and District A-5 Memorial Forest	2 Northern Avenue	This public park is administered by the Iron Bridge Lions Club. There is a children’s playground area and basketball court. The ball park plays host to the annual Iron Bridge Lions Club Community Days and Family Baseball Tournament each August.
Parks, Playgrounds, Boat Launches	Location	Details
MacBeth Bay Boat Launch	41 Emily Court	This new public boat launch, ideal for canoes and kayaks, provides access to Lake Huron seasonally from May to October. A parking area is provided for day-trippers. The boat launch is currently closed but slated for repairs this year.
Little Basswood Beach Park & Boat Launch	Basswood Lake Road	This park is located near the Sowerby Hall and the Historic Cordukes/Weber 12-Sided Barn. Recent upgrades include separate entrances to access the swimming/beach area. Amenities include picnic tables, seasonal/portable toilet facilities, and bear-proof waste disposal bins.
Roe Park & Boat Launch	779 Sunset Beach Road	Located on the northeast shore of Bright Lake. Amenities include seasonal portable toilet facilities, bear-proof waste disposal bins, park benches, a picnic table, swing-set, and rocker horse.
Centennial Park & Boat Launch	52 Mississagi Crescent	The boat launch provides access to the Mississagi River in the heart of the Village of Iron Bridge. Amenities include picnic tables, seasonal portable toilet facilities and bear-proof waste disposal bins.

Tally Ho Park and Cenotaph	3 Main Street	The Cenotaph pays tribute to area World War veterans. Amenities include a gazebo with picnic tables. The Park provides access to the TransCanada and Voyageur Trails and Veterans' Bridge.
Beharriell Park & Boat Launch	1236A Dean Lake Road	This municipal Boat Launch, provides seasonal access to Lake Huron in the heart of the Mississagi Delta Provincial Nature Reserve. Amenities include picnic tables, bear-proof waste bins, and seasonal portable toilet facilities.
Active Cemeteries	Location	Details
Sunset Cemetery	23044 Highway 17	
Carlyle Cemetery	398 Tait Road	
Spruce Grove Cemetery	21995 Highway 17	
Arnill Cemetery	22147 Highway 17	
Pine Grove Cemetery	10 Ansonia Road	located in the former Thessalon Township and are under the jurisdiction of the Town of Thessalon and the Thessalon Town and Township Cemetery Board.
Maple Ridge Cemetery	100 Brownlee Lake Road	
Historic Cemeteries	Location	
Little Rapids Cemetery	33 Little Rapids Road	
Forest Lawn Cemetery	18 Collver Road	
Little Rapids Cemetery	33 Little Rapids Road	
Forest Lawn Cemetery	18 Collver Road	
Museums	Location	Details
Iron Bridge Historical Museum and Gazebo	1 James Street	Facilities include accessible Public Washrooms, picnic tables and a covered gazebo. The gazebo houses the Saturday Farmers' Market, and periodic exhibits by local artists and a free children's arts program.

Iron Bridge Historical Museum - Log House	1 James Street	The timber structure dates back to 1879 and the museum was first established in 1974. The museum contains artifacts used by farmers and loggers in the area. Other artifacts include local wedding gowns, WWII military uniforms, 1950's era baseball uniforms, 25 years of Bind River District High School graduation programs, items from the Inkster family farm in Dean Lake, and much more.
iron Bridge Historical Museum - Tulloch/Carlyle House	1 James Street	Originally built in 1890, the timber home was relocated to the Museum site from Bright Township. The home depicts the interior of a local farm home and contains artifacts commonly in use until 1939.
Heritage Park Museum	2 Little Rapids Road	Established in 1977, the Heritage Park Museum offers a glimpse of what life would have been like for those living in the area over 100 years ago: authentic displays and buildings include a general store, a chapel, the blacksmith shop, a drive shed, the schoolhouse and a pioneer home. The Heritage Park Museum is wholly owned and operated by the Thessalon Township Heritage Association

8.2 Current OP Approach to Parks and Open Space Recreation and Community Facilities

8.2.1 Parks and Open Space

The Official Plan generally describes parks as playgrounds, sports fields, recreational trails, walkways, public beach areas, boat launches, campgrounds, conservation areas and reserve, stormwater management facilities, cemeteries, golf courses and open space. Lands are not specifically designated 'Parks or Open Space', rather such uses may be located throughout the Municipality where appropriate and subject to a rezoning if required. OP policies state that parks and opens spaces intended for public use should have access from a public road and adequate parking facilities.

Current OP policies specifically aim to conserve and add to the system of recreational trails or single and multi-use trails, for motorized and non-motorized use. In support of economic development and tourism initiatives, the OP states that '*Huron Shores is a snowmobile and 4-wheel off-road friendly community*', with the caveat that controls may be imposed upon motorized trails to protect residential areas and ensure safe crossings of highways, roads and rail crossings.

The OP also specifically encourages new opportunities for public access to lakes and water bodies, through such measures as the retention and provision of boat launches, public beaches and road allowances.

8.2.1.1 Parkland Dedication

Section 42 of the Planning Act gives municipalities the ability to collect parkland or cash in lieu of parkland as a condition of any development and redevelopment. The Planning Act establishes the following maximum parkland dedication requirements:

- Not exceeding 2% of land area or cash in lieu of, for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment.
- Not exceeding 5% of land area or cash in lieu of, for all other types of development and redevelopment, such as residential and institutional.
- For higher density residential developments, the following alternative rates may be utilized:
 - 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units.
 - Cash in lieu of 1 hectare per 500 dwelling units.

The Official Plan recognizes and contains policies permitting the Municipality to obtain parkland or cash in lieu of parkland as prescribed by the Ontario Planning Act, more specifically, parkland or cash in lieu of parkland, at a rate of 2% for commercial and industrial developments and 5% for residential developments. Given the relatively small-scale, low-density nature of local development, the alternative rate based upon dwelling units is likely not applicable given the relatively small-scale, low-density nature of local development. Development includes new lot creation, and redevelopment includes proposals to increase the density of development (ie. one dwelling unit to 2 dwelling units).

8.2.2 Community Facilities

Community Facilities such as community centres, halls, libraries and museums are grouped with Public Service Facilities, which also include, recreation facilities, health care facilities, and public service administration buildings, schools, police and fire stations. Much like Parks and Open Space, they are permitted to be located throughout the Municipality and such facilities are encouraged to be integrated with parks and open space.

8.3 Parks, Open Space and Community Facilities: Conclusions and Discussion Points

Generally speaking, the Municipality is well served with a diversity of parks, open spaces, recreational and community facilities, in a manner that reinforces the rural character of the area.

8.3.1 Parkland Dedication

Huron Shores' rural, low density, character affords plenty of open space opportunities. Future development will also be small scale, low density. **Therefore, although Council can obtain parkland as part of certain development approvals, it is more appropriate to collect cash in lieu of parkland as part of the small-scale rural development, such as new lot creation by Consent.** Such cash is then placed in a Parkland Reserve Fund and

can be utilized to help in developing and maintaining a wide variety of parks, open space and recreational facilities. In practise, Council is not fully utilizing this tool.

It is recommended that Council discuss collecting cash in lieu of parkland as a condition of any new lot creation. For example, collecting 5% of the assessed value of the severed parcel. On the one hand, well maintained parks and vibrant community facilities with appropriate levels of programming represent significant quality of life attributes for locals and attractions for new residents and tourists. On the other hand, it is recognized that this might be viewed as a development charge that might hinder development. Council does have some flexibility to define what amount (up to 5%) will be taken and for what specific developments cash is taken. For example, Council may not wish to require cash in lieu of parkland for residential intensification proposals.

- **If Council determines it to be appropriate to take better advantage of parkland dedication provisions, it is recommended that additional OP policies be added to generally describe what developments parkland dedication will apply to and when parkland or cash in lieu of parkland is preferred.**

8.3.2 Community Hubs and New Uses in Parks and Community Facilities

It is recommended new policies be added to the Official Plan that allow for a grouping and wide variety of social service, cultural and recreational uses within parks and community facilities, in the form of community hubs. Examples include social events, community gardens and non-profit social service providers to name a few.

9 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

9.1 Built Heritage Resources and Cultural Heritage Landscapes

Built Heritage Resources include significant buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history, identified as being important to the community. These resources may be designated for their protection under the Ontario Heritage Act or listed by local or Federal jurisdictions. There are currently no designated built heritage resources within the Municipality, however the 'old Little Rapids School' and the two 12 sided barns do warrant protection for their heritage values. At present, the old Little Rapids School and Cordukes/Weber 'round barn' are both located on properties owned by the Municipality and the 'Round Barn Gift Shop' on Brownlee Road is under private ownership.

The Dean Lake Road Bridge across the Mississagi River also has some heritage value, however it is recognized that it may not be feasible to maintain the current structure, versus removal and replacement, given the importance of this transportation link.

Cultural Heritage Landscapes are defined geographical areas of heritage significance which have been modified by human activities and is valued by the community. These areas involve the grouping of individual heritage features such as structures, spaces archaeological sites and natural elements, which together create a distinctive form. A common example would be to designate a historic neighbourhood as a 'heritage area'. There are no 'heritage areas' identified in Huron Shores and at present, there does not appear to be any areas within the Municipality that would warrant 'heritage area' designation.

With regards to built heritage resources, Section 24 of the OP notes that by by-law, Council may designate properties, structures and areas for their protection, under the Ontario Heritage Act, and where feasible and desirable, provide incentives to developers and owners in exchange for preserving cultural heritage resources.

Council may wish to establish a Municipal Heritage Committee for the purposes of identifying and recommending designations.

9.2 Archaeological Resources

There are currently 17 known archaeological sites identified within the Municipality. The Anishinabek have lived in the Great Lakes for thousands of years and it is likely that such artifacts would be from First Nations travelling through and living throughout the area. In the absence of a community-wide archaeological assessment, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI) has established the following criteria for determining if an area has archaeological potential. Where a development proposal is determined to be within one of the areas identified above, Phase I and/or Phase II archaeological assessments are required:

- The presence of known archaeological sites within 300 metres of the property;
- The presence of a water source (primary, secondary, ancient) within 300 metres of the property;
- Elevated topography (e.g., knolls, drumlins, eskers, plateau);
- Pockets of sandy soil in a clay or rocky area;
- Unusual land formations (e.g., mounds, caverns, waterfalls);
- Proximity to a resource-rich area (concentrations of animal, vegetable or mineral resources);
- Evidence of early Euro-Canadian (non-Aboriginal) settlement (e.g., monuments, cemeteries) on the property;
- Proximity to historic transportation routes (e.g., road, rail, portage);
- The property is protected under the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- Local knowledge of archaeological sites on the property or of the property's heritage value.

The application of MHSCTI's general criteria would likely result in much of the Municipality having archaeological potential. For example, any property within 300m of a water body, including historic shorelines of Lake Huron, is considered to be an area of archaeological potential. Those properties not within 300m of a water body are likely located upon elevated topography. Relatively small-scale development in relation to the costs associated with an archeological study is such that the general criteria could significantly impact development going forward.

Where properties are determined to be within an area of archaeological potential, the current Official Plan requires archaeological assessments, prepared by a licenced archaeologist and approved by MHSCTI, for the following types of applications:

- A zoning amendment
- A consent for
 - Commercial use
 - Industrial use
 - Institutional use
 - multi-unit residential building
- Subdivision

In addition to only requiring archaeological assessments in relation to specific types of applications, the following is excluded from requiring an archaeological study:

- Building permit applications where the use and setbacks are in accordance with current zoning.
- Residential/seasonal consents.
- Areas exhibiting previous `intensive and extensive soil disturbance which applies to previously built-up sites and areas, as well as agricultural areas that have been actively tilled.

Where archaeological remains are identified, all work must cease and MHSCTI must be immediately contacted. Where burial sites are discovered, in addition to MHSCTI, the OPP and Cemeteries Regulation Unit shall also be contacted. Current OP policies appropriately address these requirements; however, **it is recommended that policy be added to require consultation with appropriate First Nations Communities.**

Council may wish to explore conducting an archaeological potential study for the entire Municipality, with the goal of further refining MHSCTI's criteria within the local context. If this is the case, it is recommended that Council add a policy outlining it's intent to conduct such a study, as resources allow and subject to potential funding opportunities.

The OP should also be reworked to more clearly communicate the MHSCTI criteria and what types of applications and development proposals require archaeological assessments. Finally, it is recommended that multi-unit residential buildings also be excluded.

It is also recommended that the Municipality enter into a memorandum of understanding with MHSCTI so that the location of known archeological sites can be shared with Municipal Staff, on a confidential basis, so that future development applications can be assessed to determine proximity to known archaeological remains.

10 Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities

The provision of 'hard services' such as roads, road maintenance, fire protection and refuse collection are core Municipal services and operations.

10.1 Sewage and Water Services

For the most part, all development within Huron Shores provides on-site water and sewage services, with the exception of a relatively small portion of the Municipality northeast of Thessalon where properties are hooked up to a Municipal drinking water system operated by the Town of Thessalon. Huron Shores has an agreement in place (by-law 09-72) with the Town for the continued operation of this water system.

In support of on-site septic systems, The Municipality has contracted GFL Environmental Inc. to operate drying beds at the Wards 1 and 3 landfill sites. Ensuring these beds have sufficient capacity to accept hauled sewage associated with existing development and future growth is an important planning matter. The Ward 1 (Thessalon) Landfill site has an approved disposal limit of 475m³ per year, and GFL has an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) application pending to increase this limit to at least 1170m³/yr. The Ward 3 (Red Rock) drying beds are approved to accept 1320m³/yr. **Upon approval to increase the capacity of the Ward 1 drying beds, there will exist ample hauled sewage capacity within the Municipality to accommodate existing and projected future development over the lifetime of the Official Plan.**

The current OP communicates an intent to avoid a density of development that will require municipal water or sewage services. Generally, the provision of on-site services is the preferred option. The OP permits infilling and rounding out of existing development on the existing Municipal water system. The OP recognizes and calls for the Municipality to coordinate efforts with the Town of Thessalon to upgrade or provide Municipal water and sewage services where such services might benefit the development of the Industrial Park and other lands east of the Town Boundary. **Given the age of the current agreement, Provincial staff have recommended that council revisit By-law 09-72 and update as necessary.**

Notwithstanding hauled sewage capacity, the current Official Plan appropriately speaks to sewage within the context of ensuring that future development can be adequately serviced by on-site septic systems, with special regard for ensuring minimum lot sizes to accommodate appropriate septic systems and replacement beds in the event of a failure. Furthermore, the OP recognizes that development along waterbodies can negatively impact water quality through nutrient loading from nearby septic systems. Lake Capacity is discussed in Chapter 6.7.1.

10.2 Solid Waste Management (Landfills)

The Municipality operates 4 landfill sites which offer waste disposal and recycling services. As mentioned above, the Ward 1 and 3 sites also accept hauled sewage. All landfills operate with separate Environmental Compliance Approvals (ECAs) under the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). AECOM has

been retained by the Municipality to complete a number of Design and Operations (D&O) Reports for submission to MECP. As part of current ECAs, monitoring wells have been installed around each landfill to monitor potential leachate.

Summary of Landfills

Source: *Estimated Closure and Post-Closure Costs – Ward 1 to Ward 4 Landfill Sites Future Financial Liability- Dec. 2021*

Landfill Site Name	Total Site Area (ha)	Current Landfill Disposal Area (ha)	Landfill Disposal Capacity (tonnes)	Estimated Year of Closure
Thessalon Township (Ward 1)	24	1.2 (estimated)	Adequate for an estimated 25 years of disposal Capacity	2045
Day & Bright Township (Ward 2)	50.7 (estimated)	1.2	Adequate for an estimated d25 years of disposal Capacity	2046
Village of Iron Bridge (Ward 3)	60	1.05	8,264	2045
Thompson Township (Ward 4)	12.37	0.81	2,200	2025-2026*

*Note - The disposal capacity at Ward 4 is currently under review by the Ministry. AECOM has identified two scenarios in the Annual Report which have two drastically different remaining site life estimates (i.e, 26 years and 4-5 years). The Municipality is awaiting a ruling on this from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

In addition to ensuring that sufficient capacity exists to accommodate the needs of the community over the lifetime of the Official Plan, OP policies must also address land use compatibility concerns – namely, the encroachment of new sensitive uses, which could impact the continued operation of the landfill sites, due primarily to odour nuisances. **MECPs D-4 Guidelines require a minimum 500m separation between a proposed sensitive use and the landfill footprint. The current OP establishes a 500m radius around each landfill property.** Any proposed sensitive use development within this radius requires appropriate impact studies. It is worth noting that the D-4 Series Guidelines require 500m separation between the 'landfill footprint', which is the approved area where waste can be deposited, however the current OP approach applies the 500m separation to the landfill property, which in all cases is significantly larger than the landfill footprint. Given the difficulties associated with establishing new landfill sites, the current approach is appropriate, and will help to ensure that new sensitive use development does not impact the Municipality's ability to expand landfill footprints in the future. It is also

worth noting that as required by Section 13.2.3 of the current OP, zoning provisions relating to the 500m 'influence area' around each landfill site were not established in Zoning By-law 18-18, which is where they are implemented.

10.3 Stormwater Management

Stormwater is generally managed through an integrated network of ditches, culverts and low-lying areas which eventually lead to natural watercourses. There is a small underground stormwater system in Iron Bridge, which outlets into the Mississagi River.

Traditionally, the main focus of stormwater management was that of quantity control, however quality controls, including the removal of suspended solids and potential contaminants such as salt and hydrocarbons has become increasingly important.

Section 20.5 of the Official Plan requires quantity and quality controls for stormwater. Post development flows cannot exceed pre development flows, with special regard for receiving streams and the cumulative effect that development (creation of impermeable surfaces) can have on water levels. Current OP policies also speak to requiring stormwater management to be integrated into larger scale developments such as subdivisions, multiple lot/unit residential developments, commercial and industrial developments. The OP also supports utilizing natural features and processes, such as wetlands, as a means to control stormwater quantity and quality.

Underground Storm Sewer System in Iron Bridge
Source: Tulloch Engineering



10.4 Transportation

The Municipality maintains 458 lane kilometres of roads, 17 bridges, 8 railway crossings, numerous culverts and roadside ditches, supported through 2 public works facilities. Maintaining the local road network is a key local responsibility accounting for a significant portion of the annual budget.

The current OP recognizes the following road classifications:

- Provincial Highways
- Municipal Roads
 - Year round maintained
 - Seasonally maintained
 - Unassumed

- Unmaintained
- Emergency Routes
- Private Roads
- Resource Access Roads

10.4.1 Provincial Highways

Highways 17, 129 and 546 are recognized as Provincial Highways. Development within the vicinity of these Highways is subject to Ministry of Transportation (MTO) approvals. More specifically, an MTO permit is required prior to the construction of a building or structure, or the creation of a new lot or entrance within:

- 45m (148') of the limit of any highway
- 180m (591') of the centre point any intersection along Highway 17
- 395m (1,296') of the centre point of any interchange on a controlled access Highway. There are currently no interchanges or controlled access Highways within the Municipality.

Proponents may be required to submit site plans, drainage plans, traffic studies and noise/vibration studies in support of any applications to the MTO.

The primary function of Highways is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. It is important to ensure that the development of new sensitive uses does not impact this function. Therefore, the overall goals of MTO's controls on development in the vicinity of Highways are that of public safety and land use compatibility.

Up to the drafting of this Report, comments have not been received from MTO. It is however recommended that further discussions occur with MTO to ensure that such regulations consider existing and future traffic volumes, which are relatively low, especially on Highways 129 and 546. Provincial regulatory approaches should also consider the reduced speed limits on Highway 17 in Iron Bridge, in order to facilitate new development and redevelopment in this important node.

10.4.2 Municipal Roads

The Municipal road network consists of publicly owned and year-round maintained roads, seasonally maintained roads, unassumed roads and unmaintained roads. To the greatest extent possible, all Municipal Roads should have a Right of Way (ROW) width of 20m (66').

10.4.3 Private Roads

There are numerous private roads serving existing development throughout the Municipality. The development of new private roads is generally not permitted, unless the private road is part of a condominium development. It is the general intent of the Municipality to allow existing lots of record to be developed along the private road network. Currently, the OP does not permit the creation of new lots on a private road, with the exception of narrowly defined infill lots and a limited

number of waterfront lots on specific inland lakes, subject to a 'planning justification report'.

Although Council is under no obligation to assume private or unassumed roads or begin maintaining unmaintained roads, the Municipality has a guideline outlining the process and design standards required in support of an application to assume a private road. Such costs are usually borne by the developer. Upgrading private roads is generally cost prohibitive and, in most cases, not within the best long-term interests of the Municipality. Finally, it is virtually impossible to bring many local private roads up to a Municipal Standard, given topographical challenges and other constraints.

10.5 Discussion: Development on Private, Unassumed, Seasonally Maintained or Unmaintained Roads

OP policies limit development on any road that is not Municipally owned and maintained on a year-round basis. Road maintenance requires a significant portion of the annual budget. Furthermore, the small-scale, low-density nature of development will not generally cover the long-term costs of maintaining new roads.

Not surprisingly, development upon private, unassumed and unmaintained roads continues to be a significant local issue. Municipalities generally restrict development upon private roads for the following reasons:

- Safety concerns – In the event of an emergency, is the private road capable of supporting emergency vehicles, including winter maintenance standards?
- Increased Service Requests – As development continues to occur on private roads, landowners pressure the Municipality to assume and/or maintain such roads, which as previously discussed, is generally not within the best financial interest or long-term public good of the Municipality.

These issues are exacerbated as seasonal (summer) residents retire and move to their cottages year-round.

Council may wish to discuss permitting development upon private roads or the creation of new public roads/shared driveways where the following circumstances exist:

- **Where multiple lawfully established dwellings are located on one lot.**
- **Where proposed lots have frontage upon an owned and year-round maintained road, but a shared driveway is deemed to be less impactful and most appropriate. In this case, shared driveways are for all intents and purposes private roads.**
- **Additional infill development. The definition of 'infill' is very restrictive in nature, which was likely by design in an effort to restrict infill development on private roads. More specifically, 'infill means the creation of a residential lot between two existing residences which are on separated lots of a similar size and which are situated on the same side of a road and is not more than 200m**

(656') apart'. Council may wish to revisit the current narrowly defined concept of infill; however, some caution and a more detailed review may be warranted to ensure that any revisions do not result in a proliferation of new lot creation along private roads, which in most cases provide access to seasonal waterfront lots.

In all scenarios outlined above, Municipal Consent(s) would be required to formalize private access and establish long term, surveyed easements.

10.6 Rail Corridors

Canadian Pacific operates a regional rail corridor traversing the southern portion of the Municipality, generally running parallel with the Lake Huron Shoreline. There is also a rail spur connecting the main line with the Town of Thessalon. This rail corridor is critical regional transportation corridor, primarily focussed on freight, however the potential does exist to re-establish passenger service along this corridor, which connects Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury and North Bay, with connections to the main National Line at North Bay and north of Sault Ste. Marie.

Land use compatibility and public safety are key land use planning matters that need to be addressed, to protect the long-term operation and viability of this important transportation corridor.

In terms of land use compatibility, rail lines create noise and vibrations that can be detrimental to nearby sensitive uses. Rail lines are generally recognized as Class II Industrial Uses and sensitive uses are discouraged from locating within 70m of the Rail Line ROW. Section 23.4 of the OP requires applications to develop new sensitive uses, within 300m of a rail line ROW to be accompanied by a land use compatibility study, which demonstrates that noise and vibration levels at the sensitive receptor will not exceed Provincial minimums, which may require sound attenuation measures such as berms or sound attenuating construction methods.

It is recommended that 300m be reduced to 70m.

10.7 Utility Corridors

Utility Corridors within Huron Shores include transmission corridors, such as the high-pressure natural gas pipeline and high tension Hydro One power lines, as well as networks that distribute natural gas and electricity to the end user.

Section 20.6.6 of the OP appropriately communicates the overall intent of the Plan to protect existing utility infrastructure corridors from land use activities that may interfere with the safe operation of these corridors.

10.8 Public Service Facilities

Public service facilities are those which are operated by a government or non-profit organization, focused on providing programs and services such as recreational, police, fire, protection, health and education and cultural activities. Public service facilities can generally be classified into 2 categories:

1. Those facilities which are open and available for the public to utilize and obtain services at. These include recreational facilities, community halls and libraries to name a few. A more detailed list of various 'public facing' community facilities can be found in Section 8.1 of this Report.
2. Those facilities that are required to support the provision of public services, but their primary function does not necessarily include being open to the public. Such facilities include public works garages and fire stations.

In some cases, public service facilities may contain components that are geared to both.

Section 19 of the OP permits Public Service Facilities to locate *'throughout the Municipality where appropriate to the needs of the community.'* Section 19.2.4 supports integrating public service facilities with parks and open space areas where feasible. **It is recommended that this integration be taken a step further, with additional policies to encourage and permit a wide variety of public uses and activities to locate within existing and new public service facilities, within the concept of a 'community hub'. These policies would endorse future zoning by-law amendments to define 'community hubs' and generally broaden the permitted uses within the Community Facilities Zone.**

11 Planning Tools

The Ontario Planning Act establishes the framework for how municipalities conduct development and land use planning. Most of the tools that municipalities have in their planning toolbox originate from the Planning Act, with additional tools and regulations provided through numerous applicable Provincial Laws and Regulations such as the Municipal Act, Building Code Act, Clean Water Act and others.

Please note that **a number of the planning tools referenced below are not necessarily applicable or recommended to be utilized within Huron Shores.** At a minimum, the descriptions below can be utilized as a resource. **In some cases, 'enabling policies' are recommended to be included in the OP so that Council would have the ability to utilize these tools in the future even though they may not be contemplated at this time.**

11.1 Tools to Control Land Use

11.1.1 Zoning (Section 34 of the Planning Act)

A Zoning By-law is the primary tool for implementing the Official Plan. The Zoning By-law designates lands with a zone, which outlines specific permitted uses and development regulations that must be adhered to when developing those lands. Development regulations include minimum building setbacks from lot lines, minimum lot area, maximum building height, maximum lot coverage and minimum required parking spaces. Whereas the Official Plan indicates the general intent for the lot via its land use designation, the Zoning By-law is more specific as to the regulations for use and development of the lot.

A property owner or applicant (with property owner's consent) may submit a Rezoning application for Council's approval to have the zoning changed. Sometimes this may involve giving the lot a Zone Exception if specific variances from the Zoning By-law's regulations are sought.

The Planning Act requires the Municipality to update the Zoning By-law within 3 years of the adoption of a new Official Plan to ensure it conforms with the most current Official Plan. Upon completion of the Comprehensive Official Plan Review, Council will be going through the process of updating Zoning By-law 18-18.

11.1.2 Minor Variances (Section 45 of the Planning Act)

A property owner or applicant (with property owner's consent) may submit an application for a Minor Variance to the Zoning By-law. A minor variance is a 'minor' relief from the terms of the Zoning By-law. Minor variances must meet the following 4 tests:

1. Is it minor?
2. Is it desirable for appropriate use and development of the land?
3. Does it maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?
4. Does it maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

Given that such applications are by definition minor in nature, the application process and associated fees are usually quicker and lower than that of a rezoning. The Municipality of Huron Shores does not currently process minor variance applications. All applications for relief of Zoning By-law provisions are handled as rezoning applications under Section 34 of the Planning Act.

In larger communities, minor variances are heard by a 'Committee of Adjustment', which is a committee of Council. In smaller communities, such as Huron Shores, Councils are generally deemed to be the Committee of Adjustment for the purposes of hearing minor variance applications. As a result of Bill 23, '*The More Homes Built Faster Act*', minor variances are no longer subject to 'third party appeals', which generally relate to appeals by neighbours. Applicants and 'prescribed persons', such as utility companies can still appeal minor variance applications.

- **It is recommended that Council explore establishing a separate application fee and procedure, under Section 45 of the Planning Act, for the purposes of processing minor variance applications.**

11.1.3 Holding Provision (Section 36 of the Planning Act)

The Planning Act permits a municipality to pass a Holding Provision ('H') By-law in conjunction with the zoning on a particular lot, area or use to prohibit development until specific conditions have been met.

Where a Holding Provision is applied, development cannot proceed until such time Council is satisfied that the specific conditions have been met. The zoning establishes the 'principle of development' and the Holding Provision is used to address technical matters such as environmental studies, archaeological assessments or servicing to name a few.

Public notice procedures apply when establishing Holding Provisions By-laws, but not prior to Council considering the removal of an 'H'. This is because the underlying zoning establishes the 'principle of development' and the holding provision restricts development until certain technical matters are addressed to Council's satisfaction.

The Official Plan must indicate the general conditions for which a Holding Provision can be applied. More specific conditions, including what is required to support an application to remove the 'H' can be applied in the Holding Provision (Zoning) By-law.

- Section 25.4 of the existing Official Plan appropriately enables Council's use of the Holding Provision tool.

11.1.4 Interim Control By-law (Section 38 of the Planning Act)

Where Holding Provisions are reactive in nature, Interim Control By-laws are proactive in nature. Council may pass an Interim Control By-law to prohibit specific uses, buildings or structures within a specified area or areas for up to 2 years, during which Council can undertake a more detailed review to develop land use planning policies related to use, building and/or area to which the Interim Control By-law applies. The Municipality is not required to provide public notice of Council’s intention to pass an Interim Control By-law, however notice is required after the passing of an I/C By-law.

Recently, a number of Municipalities utilized Interim Control By-laws to prohibit new short term rental accommodations (Airbnb, Vrbo etc...) until such time that they could establish appropriate regulations. Another common example would be to ‘freeze’ development upon vacant lots within a specific area that is undergoing development pressure that may not have been contemplated during the initial planning processes, until such time that Council can develop an appropriate plan, policies and regulations for the development of the area.

- Section 25.5 of the current OP appropriately enables Council’s use of Interim Control By-laws.

11.1.5 Temporary Use By-law (Section 39 of the Planning Act)

Temporary Use By-laws permit the temporary use of land for a purpose that is otherwise prohibited by the Zoning By-law. The temporary use may not occupy the land in excess of three years, unless Council authorizes extensions of not more than three years each. Municipalities often utilize Temporary Use By-laws where Council deems it appropriate to ‘try out’ a particular use with the intention of either approving or denying on a more permanent basis in the future.

- Section 25.6 of the current Official Plan provides Council with the opportunity to pass Temporary Use By-laws, however **it is recommended that additional policies be added to discourage the construction of permanent buildings or structures in association with a temporary use.**

11.1.6 Expansion and Alteration of Legal Non-Conforming Uses.

‘Legal Non-Conforming’, refers to uses, buildings, structures or lots which legally existed prior to the passing of zoning regulations and no longer conform due to the passing of a new or amended zoning by-law. Planning Act tools such as Zoning By-laws are not retroactive, so such uses, buildings, structures or lots may continue to lawfully exist and operate as ‘legal non-conforming’.

Common local examples include undersized waterfront lots and multiple cottages on one lot. Legal non-conforming uses are generally viewed as undesirable, however there are instances where it may be appropriate to permit the extension, enlargement or change of a non-conforming use, building, structure or lot.

- Section 25.10 of the OP contains appropriate criteria to be utilized when assessing an application to alter a legal non-conforming use. The criteria are generally based upon neighbourhood impact. It is worth noting that OP policies do not prevent the reconstruction of a legal non-conforming use where it has been destroyed by natural causes, such as fire or flooding.

11.2 Tools to Control Division of Land

The Planning Act states that no person shall convey land (transfer, charge/mortgage, sell or lease for 21 years or more) unless the land is within a registered Plan of Subdivision or Municipal Consent is given to convey that land.

The following 'subdivision controls' are outlined in the Planning Act.

11.2.1 Plan of Subdivision (Section 51 of the Planning Act)

Plans of Subdivision are utilized where the extension of public infrastructure is required to facilitate the orderly creation of new lots, which often implies the creation of more than 3 or 4 lots. Within Huron Shores, plans of subdivision are residential in nature, but they can also be used for commercial and industrial developments, such as the creation of a new serviced 'industrial park'. Council grants Draft Plan of Subdivision approval based upon a 'draft plan' and 'conditions of draft approval' after which the developer enters into a Subdivision Agreement, a legally binding agreement addressing a wide variety of matters, including:

- The manner in which public infrastructure (such as a road) must be constructed (by the developer at their cost) before it is assumed by the Municipality.
- Required financial securities, in the event that public infrastructure is not constructed to the satisfaction of the Municipality; these funds can be utilized to finish required work.
- Any specific development restrictions or requirements on specific lots.
- Potential notices to future purchasers.
- Parkland dedication requirements.

In some cases, a Plan of Condominium can occur under the same section (Section 51) of the Planning Act as a Plan of Subdivision. Most commonly, this occurs with vacant land condominiums. A more detailed discussion on Condominiums can be found in Section 11.2.4.

- Current OP policies related to Plan of Subdivision are appropriate. On the one hand the OP policies contained in Section 25.8 note the Plan of Subdivision process is the preferred approach where multiple unit or lot developments are proposed, with a reference to (>5 lots/units). On the other hand, the OP policies within 25.8 also provide suitable flexibility when determining whether the Plan of Subdivision or Consent to Sever process is most appropriate.

Bill 23, 'The More Homes Built Faster Act' eliminates the need for Council's to hold a public meeting when making a decision on a Draft Plan of Subdivision or condominium. Within the local context, a draft plan application will likely represent a significant development. **It is therefore recommended that Council continue with the practice of holding a special public meeting as part of the process. To this end, it is recommended that a policy be added to the OP communicating this intent, should Council be agreeable.**

11.2.2 Consents and Severances (Section 53 of the Planning Act)

Severances are generally utilized where a small number of lots are proposed to be created and the extension of public infrastructure, such as a road, is not required. Severance is the most common way lots are created in Huron Shores.

'Consent' from Municipal Council is also required for the following:

- Add land to a neighbouring lot (lot addition/conveyance).
- Create one or more rights-of-way (easements).
- Charge over a part of a property (mortgage).
- Enter into a lease over a part of a property when the term of the lease totals 21 years or more, inclusive of renewal options.

Consents and severances have been and will continue to be the most common development application received by the Municipality. **Bill 23, 'The More Homes Built Faster Act' has eliminated 'third party appeals' on all consent applications.** Third party appeals generally relate to those by neighbours. Applicants and 'prescribed persons', which includes utility companies, still maintain their right to appeal.

11.2.2.1 Discussion Points – Consents and Severances

Maximum number of Lots to be Created by Consent (2+1)

- Current OP policies limit rural residential severances to the creation of 2 new lots from the remnant or remaining parcel resulting in a total of 3 lots. The '2+1' severance 'cap' is an appropriate overarching restriction to ensure that this process is utilized for 'small scale' development.

Minimum Lot Frontage and Area

- Current OP policies also outline minimum lot frontage and area requirements, depending upon the nature of the development and Policy Area in which the proposed development is located. **Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) have indicated that new Provincial Guidelines recommend a minimum lot size of 1.0ha, an increase from the existing 0.8ha. Council may wish to include policies to permit smaller lots than the specified minimums based upon the overall character of the surrounding area.**

11.2.3 Condominium Act Approvals

A condominium is a development where separate units are owned by individuals, but common elements or areas such as, mechanical components, infrastructure and

amenity areas are jointly owned and maintained by those owning or leasing individual units. When most people think about condominiums, they think about owning a unit in an apartment building and sharing ownership and maintenance costs of all of the amenities that make up the apartment building. In fact, condominiums generally refer to the form of tenure, rather than the type of development, and most types of developments can take the form of a condominium, including single detached waterfront cottage subdivisions and even commercial and industrial developments.

The following types of condominiums exist in Ontario¹⁰:

- Freehold Condominiums: There are two types of freehold condominiums. A standard condominium consists of both units and common elements and a common elements condominium only consists of the common elements. In both cases, one owns the unit and has an interest in the common elements or shared assets. In a standard condominium, Buildings and common elements must be constructed and the builder cannot sell units until the condominium is registered. In the case of a common elements condominiums, only the common elements need to be constructed prior to condo registration.
- Vacant Land Condominiums: From an ownership standpoint, these are identical to freehold condominiums, except that 'units' can be sold and the condominium can be registered before buildings or common elements are constructed. In this manner, the approval authority (Municipality) becomes the surety to guarantee that all common elements will be constructed; therefore, as a condition of registration, the Municipality needs to obtain sufficient funding commitment from the developer to ensure that all common elements are constructed to the satisfaction of the Municipality. In the event common elements are not constructed, the funding commitment, most often in the form of a letter of credit, is utilized to complete construction.
- Leasehold Condominiums: In a leasehold condominium, the land is not owned by the condominium corporation. Purchasers buy a leasehold interest in a unit or other aspects of the development but do not own the land. Lease purchasers are required to pay a common expenses fee which includes rent, payable to the landowner. Once the lease expires, the occupant's right to occupy the unit or land is terminated.

There are other types of condominium configurations that exist in Ontario, including stacked condominiums, which are essentially 'condo's within condo's' and phased condominiums, where new units and common elements can be added over time.

¹⁰ Information from: www.condoauthorityontario.ca/condominium-living/condominium-types/

Condominiums are commonplace throughout the Greater Toronto Area and other larger cities; however, they have become an increasingly common form of shoreline development.

In most cases, the approval of new condominium developments occurs by first getting Draft Plan of Subdivision approvals under Section 51 of the Planning Act, and then registering the Condominium under the Condominium Act. In other cases, condominium developments are first constructed, then registered. Finally, there can also be situations where existing development can be converted to a condominium. In all cases, the provisions of the Condominium Act ¹¹ apply.

- Existing OP policies speak to condominium development within the context of private roads – Condominiums are the only form of development where frontage on a publicly owned and maintained road is not required. Section 20.6.3 further notes that private roads accessing new condominium developments shall meet '*a municipal construction standard (ie. 20m right-of-way).*'

11.3 Tools to Control Development Design

11.3.1 Site Plan Control (Section 41 of the Planning Act)

The Planning Act permits a municipality to designate specific properties and land uses as subject to Site Plan Control. Prior to development of a property or use that is subject to Site Plan Control, the developer must enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the Municipality, which is registered on title. The developer is bound by the terms of the agreement, which includes matters related to exterior site layout, including the location, size and height of buildings, well and septic locations, landscaping, parking and access. Site plan control cannot be utilized to regulate interior design and layout.

- The current Official Plan provides appropriate direction for the use of Site Plan Control. It is however noted that the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) may require most development with direct access to a Provincial Highway to be subject to site plan control. Up to the drafting of this Report comments have yet to be received from MTO staff. The recently passed Bill 23 also eliminates the ability to utilize site plan control on any residential development consisting of less than 10 units.

11.4 Tools to Maximize Benefits from Development

There are a number of tools that allow the Municipality to collect financial, in-kind and/or land contributions as a condition of certain types of development. Generally speaking, small rural municipalities such as Huron Shores do not utilize many of these tools.

¹¹ [Condominium Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 19 \(ontario.ca\)](#)

11.4.1 Parkland Dedication

Sections 42, 51.1 and 53 of the Planning Act allow municipalities to collect parkland or cash in lieu of parkland as a condition of any development and redevelopment. The Planning Act establishes the following maximum parkland dedication requirements:

- Not exceeding 2% of land area or cash in lieu of, for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment.
- Not exceeding 5% of land area or cash in lieu of, for all other types of development and redevelopment, such as residential and institutional.

The current OP contains policies enabling the collection of parkland or cash in lieu of, however the Municipality does not currently collect as a condition of any development. Council may wish to consider the possibility of collecting 5% cash in lieu of parkland for new residential and seasonal residential lot creation. The 5% (or less) cash amount is determined based upon the value of the land the day before development commences and the funds would be deposited into a special account and used for a variety of local parkland and recreational facility improvements. The recently passed Bill 23 requires Municipalities to spend or allocate at least 60% of the funds within parkland reserve account by the beginning of each year.

11.4.2 Development Charges and Community Benefits Charges

Development Charges and Community Benefits Charges can be imposed upon development and used to pay for a variety of capital costs associated with that development.

- These Charges are aimed to assist larger high growth communities and cannot generally be utilized on the small-scale, low-density, on-site serviced development found in Huron Shores. Therefore, the Official Plan need not contain policies related to either.

11.5 Tools to Incentivize Development

11.5.1 Community Improvement Plans (CIP) (Section 28 of the Planning Act)

The Planning Act permits a municipality to designate specific areas or the entire area of the municipality as a 'community improvement project area'. The CIP tool is utilized to address environmental, social and economic issues through the use of special incentives. In general, development incentives should be strategic and should involve a certain level of public good or community benefit.

Community Improvement Plans must outline the overall intent of improvements for the area, which may include the entire Municipality. In implementing a CIP, the municipality may take actions such as acquiring and clearing land for development, constructing or repairing buildings on municipal land, selling or leasing municipal

land, providing grants or loans to owners and tenants to carry out improvements, and waiving various municipal fees such as landfill tipping and application fees.

Section 25.9 of the OP contains the appropriate policies which enable the Municipality to utilize the community improvement tools.

11.6 Public Participation in the Planning Process

Public participation is an integral part of the Planning process. The Planning Act establishes the minimum requirements for providing public notice and opportunities for the public to submit their input in the decision-making process. There is nothing stopping Municipalities from going above and beyond minimum statutory requirements.

For most Planning Act applications, municipalities have the option of:

- Providing a mailed notice AND posting a sign on the property; OR
- Placing an ad in a daily newspaper having, in the opinion of the Clerk, sufficient circulation.

In Huron Shores, notice is provided by mail and the posting of a sign. Application notices are also posted on the Municipal website. This practice is sufficient and is recommended to be continued.

11.7 Pre-consultation

Pre-consultation between applicants, their consultants, relevant staff and outside agencies such as Hydro One and Algoma Public Health is a key function of land use planning.

As part of its annual User Fee's By-law update, Council approved a pre-consultation fee schedule consisting of \$80/hr. to cover the costs associated with pre-consultation, which is appropriate. Other Municipalities have also established minimum requirements that must be met by proponents before they can engage in pre-consultation, such as requiring ownership of the subject property or having various consultants in place. Such minimum requirements are not recommended at this time. Furthermore, it is understood that the application of pre-consultation fees is discretionary, based upon the complexity of a particular application.

11.8 Complete Applications

Given the policy-led planning system in Ontario, the determination of what makes an application 'complete' is a significant decision and milestone in the Planning Act application process. Depending upon the application, the Planning Act outlines specified timeframes to deem an application as complete. Once an application is deemed complete, the Planning Act outlines specific timeframes for Council to make a decision upon the complete application. Where an application is not deemed complete or a decision is not made within the specified timeframes, proponents can make 'non-decision' appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal (formerly LPAT and OMB). In some municipalities, especially in the Greater Toronto Area, non-decisions are a significant issue.

Although not an issue in Huron Shores, **it is recommended that complete application requirements be generally outlined in the Official Plan, including a general policy that permits the Municipality, at its own discretion, to have reports and studies peer reviewed, with the option of requiring those costs to be covered by the applicant.** Pre-consultation also plays an important role in determining and communicating complete application requirements to applicants.