



# Planning Report

**To:** Town of Saugeen Shores Council

**From:** Coreena Smith, Senior Development Planner

**Date:** August 26, 2024

**Re:** Local Official Plan Amendment L-2024-007 and Zoning By-law Amendment Z-2024-025 (Saugeen Shores)

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## Recommendation:

That Council adopt By-law 65-2024, for Local Official Plan Amendment L-2024-007 (Saugeen Shores), and that it be forwarded to Bruce County for approval; and

That Council approve Zoning By-law Amendment Z-2024-025 (Saugeen Shores) and By-law 66-2024.

## Summary:

The purpose of this application is to consider amendments to the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan and Zoning By-law addressing the following matters:

- Conformity with the implementation amendment to the Bruce County Official Plan;
- Introduction of On-Farm Diversification as per the Bruce County Official Plan and Provincial Policy Statement;
- Encouraging intensification and diversification of housing;
- Changes to parking provisions; and
- Other Official Plan and Zoning By-law housekeeping amendments.

The proposal was presented at a public meeting on June 17, 2024 (see [Regular Council Agenda](#)). County and Town staff have since amended the proposal to reflect comments provided at and subsequent to the public meeting. Staff consider these changes to be minor and in response to the feedback received from Council and the community. Staff are of the opinion that a second public meeting is not needed.

The proposed amendments are included in the revised Amendment Tracker attached to this report with further explanation outlined below. The by-laws associated with this report are included in the By-law section of the Agenda.

## Planning Analysis:

The following section provides an overview of the planning considerations that were factored into the staff recommendation for this application, including relevant agency comments (attached), public comments (attached) and planning policy sections.

### Proposed Amendments to the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law

The Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan is a comprehensive document that guides land use decisions in the municipality, specifically in the Town's Settlement Areas. The Bruce County Official Plan policies apply outside the Settlement Areas of the Town.

The Town of Saugeen Shores Zoning By-law puts the policies of the County and local Official Plans into effect. The Town's Zoning By-law applies both within and outside of its Settlement Areas.

Staff at the Town of Saugeen Shores identified the need to update sections of the local Official Plan and the Zoning By-law. Some of the proposed amendments are intended to align the Town's policies and regulations with those of the Province and the County, while other proposed changes are intended to support the Town's Strategic Plan to diversify and grow its housing stock. Other changes offer clarity and consistency in interpretation.

Staff presented the proposed amendments at a public meeting on June 17, 2024 (see [Regular Council Agenda](#)). Staff received feedback on the proposed amendments from various agencies, three developers/consultants and Town Council. In response to the comments received, County and Town staff reviewed and provided updates to the amendments as detailed in the revised Amendment Tracker attached to this report. Other comments received are outside the scope of the current amendment and will be considered through future updates to the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

The following outlines some of the changes made and/or offers clarity on the proposed amendments to assist in Council's consideration of the application.

### Density

Among comments received from the development community was a concern with the increase in minimum residential densities proposed. For example, for new low-density residential development, the minimum density is currently 15 units per gross hectare which was proposed to increase to 30 units per gross hectare. The comments indicated that this minimum density would be difficult to achieve and should be reviewed along with potential changes to minimum lot areas, setbacks, coverage and building heights in the residential zones.

Staff were not proposing any substantial changes to the residential zone regulations other than to ensure consistency across the zones for similar building types. This was done, in part, to maintain the current setbacks and massing seen in the Town while allowing for more units and building types on individual lots. However, in light of comments received, it was determined that the proposed amendments to minimum and maximum residential densities

would not proceed at this time other than to remove the maximum density allowed for high density development proposals. The number of units in a high density proposal will instead be governed by the zoning regulations of a particular lot (i.e., lot area, setbacks and height). The remaining density policies will be reviewed as part of future updates to the Town's Official Plan.

### Additional Residential Units

Various amendments are being proposed to additional residential units, including:

- Additional residential units are now permitted in or accessory to a duplex building;
- The maximum floor area of an additional residential unit has been removed;
- The number of additional residential units permitted in a principal residential building or accessory residential building has been amended to allow greater flexibility in application and with greater clarity where full municipal services are not available;
- New changes have also been incorporated for additional residential units in an Agricultural zone to align with the County Official Plan policies, which allows 1 additional residential unit or a garden suite.

When reviewing the proposed amendments associated with additional residential units, it is important to note that an 'additional residential unit' is not the same as an 'accessory dwelling unit.' Each has a separate definition in the Zoning By-law. An 'additional residential unit' is located in either a principal residential building or an accessory residential building, whereas an 'accessory dwelling unit' is associated with a non-residential use like a commercial building.

### Multi-Unit, Triplex and Fourplex Buildings

In allowing up to a maximum of four units per residential lot in the low-density residential zones, it was assessed that housing of similar purpose should be provided including purpose-built triplexes and fourplexes. This is also to diversify housing options and opportunities in Saugeen Shores. Given the complexity of the different housing configurations, it was of importance to group these housing types under one broader term being a multi-unit building.

New definitions for triplex building and fourplex building are proposed in the Zoning By-law, along with amended definitions for additional residential unit, apartment building, multi-unit building and townhouse building to allow for clarity and flexibility in interpretation.

### Low-Density Housing in the Recreational Designation and Commercial Recreation Zone

In 2023, a study conducted by a student from the University of Waterloo included an analysis of how to increase the housing supply in Saugeen Shores by comparing policies from around the Greater Toronto Area. Based on this review, it was recommended that the Town revise current policies and regulations to permit gentle density housing or low-density housing in its commercial recreational areas. The proposed amendments include the introduction of low-density residential uses in the Recreational Designation and the Commercial Recreation zone.

Currently, the Commercial Recreation zone permits uses including, but not limited to, an assembly hall, golf courses, inn, lodge, marina, motel, place of entertainment, recreational trailer camp and tourist cottage park. Introducing low-density housing into this zone will allow for additional housing opportunities in Saugeen Shores. Residential uses would only be permitted where full municipal services are available and only accessory to a non-residential use.

### Medium and High Density Housing in the Highway Commercial Designation and Zone

The amendments to the Official Plan propose to add medium and high-density residential uses as an integral part of a commercial development in the Highway Commercial designation, only where the residential uses are compatible with the commercial use. Through comments provided by the community and County staff, the list of permitted uses in the Highway Commercial zone was amended to allow for more than one accessory dwelling unit as part of a commercial building. Standalone residential buildings in the Highway Commercial zone would only be permitted through a site-specific zoning by-law amendment. This allows staff and Council the ability to review and comment on such proposals in greater detail in the context of the site and the surrounding area, and the needs of the community.

### Uses in the Agricultural Zone

Town staff have proposed regulations and other amendments to the Zoning By-law to align the Agricultural and Agricultural Commercial zones with the permitted uses, definitions and standards provided in Provincial guidelines and the County Official Plan. Comments were received in writing and during the public meeting about specific uses and their inclusion in these agricultural zones. Staff have reviewed these comments and have determined that no additional changes are needed.

### Minimum Parking Space Requirements

Understanding that vehicle parking can consume a significant amount of surface area that can prevent the development of other necessities like housing and open space, it is important to continuously review and consider where parking reductions are possible. This must be balanced against local considerations and opportunities, like the absence of public transit but a growing active transportation network as is the case in Saugeen Shores.

Town staff undertook a comparative analysis reviewing the Town's parking requirements against those in Guelph, Kitchener, Waterloo, Owen Sound, Blue Mountains and Collingwood. It was noted that there were multiple instances where a parking reduction was reasonable and in keeping with these other municipalities. The proposed amendments include parking reductions for several different land uses and not an overall reduction in parking rates in all land use categories.

A reduction in vehicle parking was further noted as reasonable considering additional parking regulations are being introduced through the Zoning By-law. These include electric vehicle ready parking, short and long-term bicycle parking, and accessible parking.

All parking space requirements outlined in the Zoning By-law are a minimum and proponents are able to provide additional parking as needed to support a particular use.

### School Parking

Parking for schools was raised as a particular concern at the public meeting. In response, staff note that the proposed reduction from 8 to 4 spaces per classroom (plus associated requirements for offices and places of assembly) would apply only to secondary, post-secondary and adult learning institutions. There are no proposed changes to the minimum number of parking spaces required for an elementary school, which is 1 space per classroom (plus associated requirements for offices and places of assembly). The proposed change for secondary schools also only relates to the provision of parking spaces; it is not related to driveway, access or loading requirements which are addressed separately in the Zoning By-law. The Bluewater District School Board has indicated its support for the proposed change to the minimum parking space requirements for secondary schools, and have recommended other changes to the parking provisions in the Zoning By-law like shared parking opportunities with uses in other zones. These additional recommendations are appreciated and will be considered by Town staff in future updates to Zoning By-law in the context of a more comprehensive review of public service facilities.

### Accessible Parking

The Zoning By-law does not currently specify the minimum number of accessible parking spaces required and the design standards associated with those spaces. The Zoning By-law indicates that parking shall be provided in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its regulations and applies these standard to all land uses, except for residential uses. Staff are now proposing to introduce accessible parking rates and design standards in the Zoning By-law to make it clear what the minimum requirements are for all land uses in Saugeen Shores, including residential uses where 5 or more parking spaces are required. These accessible parking spaces would be required for new development and in instances where any proposed increase in size of a building is proposed.

### Electric Vehicle Parking

Through the federal government's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan, it is recognized that it would be a missed opportunity if new development were not accommodating or able to provide electric vehicle parking as a result of lack of infrastructure. Electric vehicle use is increasing and, thus, the introduction of electric vehicle ready parking provisions is solely to ensure that appropriate infrastructure needs are provided or designed through new developments to accommodate electric vehicles. While initially proposed for all land uses, except residential development with 4 or less residential units, the text has been amended to require electric vehicle ready parking spaces for commercial uses only.

### Short and Long-term Bicycle Parking

Short and long-term bicycle parking definitions, updated design standards and minimum space requirements have been included in the proposed amendments. For any residential

use containing less than 5 units, long-term bicycle parking is not required. For all other land uses, short and long-term bicycle parking rates will be applicable as outlined in the table included in the amendment

Long-term bicycle parking is required to be weather protected. In response to a question received on this, staff note that weather protected would be any type of covering that would protect the weathering of bicycles. This could be provided via an outdoor enclosure, or a room that is provided on the ground floor or basement of a building dedicated to long-term bicycle storage.

Other provisions of the Zoning By-law will apply depending on how and where short and long-term bicycle parking is proposed as part of any new development (e.g., in a principal building, outdoors, in an accessory structure). As result, Town staff did not update related provisions of the by-law (e.g., landscaped open space). Vehicle parking requirements are also proposed to be reduced for several land uses which, in some circumstances, will offset the space needs of bicycle parking.

### Signage

As per the recommendation of Council at the public meeting, staff added a zoning by-law provision that requires all areas dedicated to long-term bicycle parking to be clearly marked and labelled, similar to that proposed for designed electric vehicle parking spaces. A similar signage provision was also added for accessible parking spaces.

### Study Requirements

A comment was made by Council at the public meeting to align the studies required in support of a secondary plan with the general list of supporting materials required as part of a complete planning application. Staff have reviewed the requirements of each policy and note sufficient flexibility exists in the existing policy language to request supporting documentation in the context of each proposal. Staff further note that the list of supporting materials required in support of complete planning application is extensive and meant to capture a broad range of planning application types and project scales. Secondary plans are a specific application type and tend to be of a larger scale. There are specific goals and objectives in preparation of a secondary plan that are supported by studies like master servicing plans and transportation / infrastructure review. In light of this, no changes are proposed to these policies beyond those initially presented by staff.

### Delegation of Minor By-laws

One of the amendments is proposing to enable a Committee or an Authorized Municipal Officer to pass minor by-laws with the ability of Council to attach conditions. This is a tool available under the Planning Act that Bruce County has recently adopted through their Implementation Amendment to the County Official Plan.

The delegation of minor by-laws is a way to optimize time and decision making while maintaining a trusting relationship between Council and staff in order to remain successful

as a municipality in facilitating and managing development. Implementing a tool such as the delegation of minor by-laws is being increasingly used by other municipalities and has been seen to reduce development approval timelines. It allows Council to focus on strategic priorities; frees up staff time by eliminating report preparation for routine approvals; and reduces administrative delays.

Adding language to the local Official Plan to allow delegation of minor by-laws is only enabling use of this planning tool. Council would still need to pass one or more by-laws to delegate its authority to pass minor by-laws to a Committee or an Authorized Municipal Officer, and Council would have the ability to apply conditions to that delegation of authority. Council may choose not to delegate its authority to pass minor by-laws, or only delegate its authority for certain file types. Council may also withdraw a delegation of authority through by-law. County staff recommend that the Town enable use of this planning tool in its Official Plan.

### **Next Steps**

County staff are recommending approval of the proposed amendments to the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The proposed amendments and supporting rationale are included in the revised Amendment Tracker attached to this report. The by-laws associated with this report are included in the By-law section of the Agenda.

Once adopted, the local Official Plan Amendment will be forwarded to Bruce County for approval. The Town's Zoning By-law Amendment will take effect from the date of passage by local Council and will come into full force and effect subject to the local Official Plan Amendment coming into full force and effect.

### **Appendices**

- List of Supporting Documents and Studies
- Amendment Tracker Version 2
- Agency Comments
- Public Comments
- Public Meeting Notice

## List of Supporting Documents and Studies

The following documents can be viewed in full at [Planning Saugeen Shores | Bruce County](#).

- Amendment Summary, prepared by Town of Saugeen Shores Staff, dated April 12, 2024
- Amendment Tracker, prepared by Town of Saugeen Shores Staff, dated April 12, 2024
- Amendment Tracker Version 2, prepared by Town of Saugeen Shores Staff with Town and County Staff edits, dated August 14, 2024

The revised Amendment Tracker has also been attached separately to this report.

## Agency Comments

**Bruce County Land Use Planning:** Bruce County Land Use Planning staff provided editorial and clarification comments on the proposed amendments to Town staff, along with some recommendations for staff's consideration. These changes were reviewed by Town staff and have been incorporated in the revised Amendment Tracker or will be considered as part of future updates to the local Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

**Bruce County Transportation and Environmental Services:** No comment.

**Historic Saugeen Métis (HSM) Lands, Waters and Consultation Department:** HSM has thoroughly reviewed the proposed amendments to the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment and has no objection or opposition to the application as presented.

**Hydro One:** Our design team has reviewed the attached and determined that Hydro One does not have any issues/concerns with this meeting notice.

**Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA):** In general, SVCA staff find the applications acceptable. In the opinion of SVCA staff, generally, the applications appear to be in conformance with the provincial, county, and Town of Saugeen Shores natural hazard policies (full letter attached).

**Ministry of Transportation (MTO):** MTO request certain information be included in the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment as it relates to consultation and approvals from MTO, and access requirements from Provincial highways (full letter attached).

*Staff Response: The proposed changes were reviewed with Town staff. The requested amendments will be considered in future updates to the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law. MTO will continue to be engaged in all applications within their control area to ensure the ministry's interests are addressed.*

**Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB):** BWDSB would like to use this opportunity to provide comments as they relate to BWDSB's properties (full letter attached).



The comments related to schools (which are considered public service facilities under the Provincial Policy Statement), where such facilities should be permitted and how such facilities should be described. BWDSB also requested the replacement of the term ‘day nurseries’ with ‘child care’; the inclusion of a Public Service Facility Needs Assessment as a supporting study that may be required as part of the complete application or through a Secondary Plan review process; and an increased permitted building height from 10 to 15 metres in the Institutional zone. BWDSB also supported the reduced parking rate for secondary schools and further recommended changes to the locational requirements for off-site school parking.

*Staff Response: The proposed changes were reviewed with Town staff. The requested height increase in the Institutional zone has been incorporated in the revised Amendment Tracker. The remaining comments will be considered in future updates to the Town’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law.*

### **Public Comments**

No comments were received from the public at the time of the public meeting on June 17, 2024. Staff subsequently received correspondence from a local developer and two consultants which are attached to this report.

*Staff Response: The public comments were reviewed with Town staff. Some comments were incorporated in the revised Amendment Tracker. Some comments were seeking clarification on the intent of the proposed changes, which have been addressed in the body of this report or in the revised Amendment Tracker. The remaining comments will be considered in future updates to the Town’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law.*