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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report PDD-29-2022 Haldimand County Official Plan General Amendment – Phase 2



For Consideration by Council in Committee on August 23, 2022

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### OBJECTIVE:

To introduce the final Haldimand County Official Plan General Amendment for Council's consideration and approval related to the legislative Official Plan Review requirements through the *Planning Act*.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report PDD-29-2022 Haldimand County Official Plan General Amendment – Phase 2 be received;
2. AND THAT the Official Plan Amendment and By-law attached to Report PDD-29-2022 be adopted and submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval.

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**Reviewed by:** Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

**Approved:** Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The report relates to Phase 2 of the Haldimand County Official Plan Update Project and provides a summary of the final proposed direction for the policy changes and updates to the Official Plan. The background work, consultation and development of policies occurred over the last two years and in conjunction with Phase 1, which was approved by the Province on November 26, 2021. An information report (PDD-16-2022) was presented to Council-in-Committee on April 19, 2022, and a presentation was provided to Council-in-Committee on May 31, 2022 to provide an overview of the key policy changes, identification of potential impacts and benefits and highlight legislative requirements.

The Official Plan review evaluated all themes/sections of the document, including:

- 1) Vision and Objectives
- 2) Environment
- 3) Economy
- 4) Growth Management
- 5) Community Building
- 6) Leisure, Heritage and Culture
- 7) Health and Social Services
- 8) Implementation/Interpretation
- 9) Site-Specific Policies
- 10) Mapping
- 11) Glossary

The subject report introduces the final Official Plan Amendment and By-law with content that has previously been presented to Council and the public through various public meetings and workshops. The report does not provide a full policy analysis as was done in the previous report (April 19<sup>th</sup>) and workshop (May 31<sup>st</sup>). Rather, the report focuses on select policy areas that have generated the majority of discussion and interest in the previous staff report and workshop. Council is being requested to adopt the Amendment and By-law such that, it can be provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for final consideration and approval.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Official Plan Review was initiated in 2019 with the retention of Matt Reniers – Planning Consultant and the official start of the project on January 14, 2020 with the required Special Council Meeting. An Official Plan describes the municipal direction and Council's objectives to guide community growth and development. The Official Plan serves as the framework to guide land use changes and plan for infrastructure within the County for 30+ years, to 2051. It seeks to balance the goals of economic prosperity, community vitality, environmental responsibility, cultural identify and infrastructure sustainability. The project was separated into two phases. Phase 1 provided direction for the growth needs and population strategy for Haldimand County and the associated Official Plan Amendment for land supply within the municipality's six urban areas. It was adopted by Council in June 2021 and approved with minor modifications, by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in November 2021.

Phase 2, the subject of this report, focuses on a general update to the document and all the policy themes/sections, including the Introduction; Environment; Economy; Growth Management; Community Building; Leisure, Heritage and Culture; Health and Social Service and Implementation, Site Specific Policies and the appendices to the Official Plan including the Glossary.

At the May 31<sup>st</sup> Council-in-Committee presentation, Planning staff provided a detailed overview on the following Phase 2 matters in a workshop format:

- Vision Statement and Objectives
- Agricultural Lands
- Commercial Lands
- Rural Residential Review
- Industrial Lands
- Hazzard Lands
- Frank Marshall Business Park – Floodway and Land Use Considerations
- Affordable Housing
- Culture and Heritage
- Parks and Recreation
- Natural Heritage Systems
- Mapping

A copy of the workshop presentation, which captures key policy changes and rationale for same, is included as Attachment 1. As part of the workshop, and following, a number of key policy matters generated discussion and/or were still works in progress. Those matters included rural residential land availability; Natural Heritage System; floodway policies within the Frank Marshall Business Park and updates to the mapping schedules. The Analysis section will focus on those areas with supplementary commentary to the previous analyses provided by staff.

## **ANALYSIS:**

The Official Plan creates the framework for guiding land use and general intention for the County over a thirty (30) year period. As part of that direction, an overall vision statement for the municipality as well as strategic directions have been established. The Official Plan review, while keeping the vision statement and strategic directions in mind, has resulted in some significant changes to the Official Plan, which were outlined in the previous staff report (PDD-16-2022 at April 19<sup>th</sup> CIC) and Council workshop (May 31<sup>st</sup> CIC). The breadth of policy changes are not re-examined in the sections below; rather, staff comments focus on the areas that generated input and questions (public and Council) as part of the previous report and public presentation. Those areas are outlined below.

### Rural Residential

Through Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review (OPR) a Population, Housing and Employment Forecast (2016 to 2051) was completed by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson). Population and household forecasts for the rural areas of Haldimand County were included in the growth forecasts for the 2016 to 2051 assessment period. Settlement areas in the rural portion of the County include the 25 hamlets designated in the Official Plan. The 21 Resort Residential Nodes delineated in the Official Plan, which include a mix of seasonal cottages and permanent homes, are legacy areas where minor development and infilling is permitted. Other homes in the rural area include non-farm residential developments scattered throughout the rural area and farm dwellings. With limited exceptions, homes in the rural area are supplied by private water and sanitary septic services.

The Watson study concluded that despite steady historical housing growth in the rural area of the County, both the percentage and absolute levels of future housing growth allocated to the rural area are forecast to decline in comparison to historical trends. From a market perspective, forecast demographic trends across the County and surrounding area suggest that the percentage share of future housing will continue to shift from the rural areas to the urban communities of the County as new residents continue to be attracted to the County in search of competitively priced housing options located within proximity to local urban amenities (i.e. schools, retail, personal service uses, etc.) and surrounding employment markets. To a lesser extent, housing demand from the 55-74 age group (empty-nesters/young seniors) and the 75+ age group (older seniors) is also anticipated to drive the future need for housing within proximity to urban amenities (i.e. shopping, entertainment, hospitals/health care) and other community infrastructure. These conclusions are based on provincial policy direction, Statistics Canada Census data (2021), building permit data (10 years+) and trends in planning applications (severances, subdivisions and site plans).

The analysis completed by Watson concluded the following in terms of population and housing units:

- Over the 30+ year forecast period, the population in the rural area is expected to be stable at 21,800 residents with no significant changes expected.
- The average size of households in the rural area is expected to decline over the 30+ year forecast period. Therefore, while the rural population is expected to be stable, the total number of rural households is expected to increase by 870 over the forecast period from 2016 to 2051. This household growth equates to an average of about 25 new dwellings each year.

To assist in determining the suitability of rural land supply to accommodate the need for 870 units, a Rural Residential Development Potential Report was completed by the County's project consultant, Matt Reniers. The study examined development potential within Hamlets, Resort Residential Nodes and the broader rural area with a focus on lands that were free of constraints (e.g. floodplain), suitably sized (minimum 0.5 acre) and had a suitable designation/zone to support residential development. The study concluded the following:

- There have been/are in process a total of 298 building permits for single detached dwellings between 2016 and 2022 which reduces the remaining need to 572 units (i.e. 870 units required

over the 2016 to 2051 period – 298 units = 572 units still required). It is noted that this uptake is approximately twice what is forecast in the balance of the planning horizon (to 2051), but that degree of uptake is not expected to continue given the factors discussed above.

- Development potential within the 25 designated Hamlets = minimum of 486 units (with potential to rise to as much as 847 based upon smaller lot areas/more dense development).
- Development potential within the 21 Resort Residential nodes = minimum of 285 year round units (with potential to rise to as much as 453 based upon small lot areas/more dense development). There is also potential for up to 562 additional seasonal dwellings (i.e. located on private roads).
- Development potential on vacant lots of record (distributed throughout the County) in the broader rural area on lots averaging 0.75 ac to 1 ac in size = 245 units.

Using the conservative potential laid out above, the total year round rural housing unit potential is 1,016 (i.e. 486 hamlet + 285 resort residential + 245 rural). Given there is a remaining need for 572 units over the forecast period (to year 2051), there is ample supply available and nearly twice what is required.

To assist Council and the public in better understanding the distribution and availability of the land supply, staff have completed a further assessment that is summarized in the table below. The table demonstrates the total number of units (conservatively) that could be built within the hamlets, resort residential nodes and rural (agricultural) area. A more detailed table can be found as Attachment 2. It further breaks down the ‘readiness’ of those lands for development. Of particular note, 43% of the total supply (433 units) is in the form of subdivision development (the 3<sup>rd</sup> category in the table below) which is a lengthy and complex process not common in rural Haldimand with history yielding (typically) one small subdivision (e.g. 10 to 15 lots) approximately every 5 years. The process is also expensive given the costs involved which include road construction. When considered in the context of small lot yields (one dwelling lot is space expansive as it needs to be large to accommodate private services) and slower uptake due to certain rural locations, the economics of subdivision development are challenging. So, this is a longer term development opportunity. The more typical form of rural development has been via the first two categories – lots of record and severance. What this would suggest—unless there are shifts in the market—is that there could be delay in the up-take of the subdivision lands given the complexities and costs involved.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Units (Lots)</b>	<b>Existing lot less than 1 ac - ready for permit immediately</b>	<b>Severance required to create lots – medium term development opportunity</b>	<b>Subdivision required to create lots (including new road network) – long term development opportunity</b>
<b>Hamlets</b>	486	86	78	322
<b>Resort Residential</b>	285	132	42	111
<b>Rural (agricultural) area</b>	245	245		
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,016	463	120	433
		45%	12%	43%

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that the short (immediate) and medium term land supply generally aligns with the expected need (583 units supply vs 572 units need). However, the

demand for these lots varies considerably given location. Point being, while the supply is adequate it does not necessarily align with where the high demand may exist. It is worth noting that rural locational demand tends to fluctuate over time with experience demonstrating that one specific area of the County (e.g. one hamlet, one lakeshore node, one rural section) has not really garnered sustained and widespread interest or significant application volumes (planning or building). It is also important to note that Provincial policy sets out that while total supply is to be provided, it does not specify or require alignment with demand areas as is the case with urban settlement land needs assessments. That is based upon the fluid nature of rural development demand. Given the adequacy (surplus) of supply, any shift in land supply in the rural area would require removal of existing designated land in one area to offset any additions of designated land in another area. Given the widespread distribution of rural development lands and the fluid nature of locational preference, that approach would present a challenge. Further, given the history of rural development in the County, it is expected that we will see a continued distribution of demand which further supports the retention of the existing supply distribution across all corners of the County.

Staff and the project consultant (Matt Reniers) have concluded that there is no demonstrated need for hamlet or resort residential node expansions as the existing rural area has land capacity to accommodate the increase. This included any additional expansions proposed either through the municipal comprehensive review or via individual property requests. A total of 12 submissions were received from landowners requesting that additional rural development opportunities be granted for their lands. Those specific requests are included as part of the May 31<sup>st</sup> workshop presentation which is included as Attachment 1. Of those 12 submissions only two are recommended for approval – they both represent resort residential node amendments are recommended and are identified as South Coast Drive, Peacock Point and the North Shore Drive, Mohawk Point. These are included in Attachment 1 and represent minor rounding out of the areas to establish coherent node boundary lines and will not create additional significant development opportunities with only one or two new potential building lots being available. This is an approach that is fully supported under Provincial policy and where the rounding out creates the limited development potential noted – i.e. 1 or 2 lots.

### Indigenous Engagement

A noted addition within the amendment includes policy respecting First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation. The policy recognizes the importance of honouring indigenous values and consultation with the communities of Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The policies embed direction for the County and for proponents to abide by relating development and redevelopment proposals throughout the County. These policies are important in terms of honouring history, strengthening relationships and integrate values relating to protecting the environment and cultural resources. Consultation and Engagement is an important component of the development process and a requirement through the province, so the inclusion of the policies within the Official Plan provides transparency and an emphasis on the requirement for open and on-going dialogue. Much of the emphasis of the policies is on matters of shared interest, including natural environment and cultural heritage and how these are to be respected and integrated into development approval processes.

### Natural Heritage

A significant component to the Official Plan Update is the inclusion of Natural Heritage System (NHS) policies and mapping. A natural heritage system is a network of interconnected natural features and areas such as wetlands, woodlands, valley lands, lakes and rivers and is important because it provides the protections and policies necessary to maintain and enhance the long-term environmental health and ecological integrity of the County. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe requires municipalities to implement a Natural Heritage System strategy with land uses policies addressing existing urban, rural and agricultural systems and map the key features. To complete the project the County retained Natural Resource Solutions Inc. – a firm that provides a variety of environmental and

ecological services. The creation of a county-wide system, which for Haldimand is actually a two system approach (described in more detail below), addresses the requirement of the Provincial Policy Statement and takes into account the history of settlement within the County, planned growth areas, agricultural lands and operations, natural resources and recreational opportunities.

The features and linkages will be included within the Official Plan schedules with new policies included within the Plan. The NHS is an important component of the OP document to ensure that the quality and integrity of natural features are protected for the long-term. The policy framework is a requirement through Provincial legislation but the approach is intended to balance the need for development with protection of on-going agricultural, recreational, tourism and environmental resources within the County. The mapping is provided to ensure that features are easier to identify and then apply appropriate policies as needed for those features. This includes appropriate protections are in place (e.g. development prohibitions within certain features), suitable development setbacks (from unique/sensitive features) are implemented and any amendment/alteration processes (for the system extent) are clearly laid out.

The two system approach (referred to above) is based on the Natural Systems as mapped by the Province in the Provincial Growth Plan (provincially significant features) and the works completed by NRSI for local significant features. Both are required to be protected and to be part of a larger system – the Province leaves it up to municipalities on how to approach this. More specifically, a municipality can do a single system approach which essentially takes the Province’s system (with the provincially significant features) and expands it to include the locally significant features or a municipality can implement a two system approach where one covers the provincially significant features and a second covers the locally significant features. In the first approach, a singular set of policies would be applied which would not necessarily distinguish between the level of significance of the features. Given this, Staff and NRSI determined it was more appropriate to go with the two system approach wherein the Province’s system is adopted and has a specific set of (more restrictive) policies given the significance of the features it covers and the County’s system is established (again, to cover the locally significant features) with a distinct and less restrictive policy regime. On the latter, the policies for the County system would still represent protections for features, but would allow for more flexibility in terms of boundary alterations, development within/adjacent to the system, and continuance/expansion of existing uses within the system.

When combined together, the Haldimand and Growth Plan Natural Heritage Systems have a total area of 42,990 ha, which equates to approximately 33.9% of the County. The Growth Plan Natural Heritage System comprises 26,716 hectares and 21.07% of the County while the County system comprises 16,274 hectares and 12.8% of the County. While the overall percentage may seem significant, it represents an increase of about 20% from the total area that is presently protected in various environmental designations. Further, as noted above, application of this system layer does not prohibit existing uses (e.g. farm operations) from continuing, or even from expanding where appropriate to do so.

The Growth Plan policies will be adopted for areas of the Growth Plan Natural Heritage System within the County. To effectively implement the Haldimand Natural Heritage System, policy changes to the current County Official Plan are recommended to address the features that have been mapped as well as other features that cannot be mapped. The policies establish the restrictions and requirements for development within or adjacent to the Natural Heritage System, as well as significant or other natural features that fall outside of it. Specific modifications and clarifications are included for the existing Haldimand County Official Plan policies that build on the existing natural environment policy framework and ensure that the policies can easily and effectively be implemented. The policies address land use, management, and protection of the environment.

Mapping related to the NHSS's are included on separate schedules and the study and recommended policies will bring the Haldimand County Official Plan into conformity with the Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement.

### Frank Marshall Business Park

J. L. Richards & Associates Limited was retained to prepare a Floodplain Analysis and Scoped Master Servicing Plan to establish a two-zone concept within the Frank Marshall Business Park (FMBP), and to provide recommendations on water, sanitary, stormwater, and road infrastructure to develop the FMBP into a mixed-use neighbourhood. This study was undertaken in support of Phase 2 of the Official Plan review to facilitate development opportunities within FMBP and as part of an urban boundary expansion to Dunnville. The analysis was undertaken to assess where development opportunities existed and where a floodplain two-zone concept could be applied recognizing the regulation limits of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA). Since the time of the Council workshop on May 31<sup>st</sup>, the work has been completed and full sign off from the GRCA has been obtained for the redefined floodplain. The benefits of that redefinition are explained further below.

The Two-Zone flood plain policy identifies floodplain lands as either floodway or flood fringe lands and for the flood fringe sets criteria for those lands to set parameters for development. Development potential in the area identified as being subject to the two-zone concept will be limited to the flood fringe with any potential development protected to the level of the Regulatory Flood. Essentially the floodway is more restrictive and limits development to only minor renovations, additions or accessory buildings for existing development (buildings or residential uses); does not allow any fill or alteration and prohibits the construction of any new buildings or structures. Within the flood fringe, however, filling or construction can be considered where it will not create an unacceptable risk to life or property, or will not result in increased flood risk upstream or downstream of the proposal. Whereas, the flood fringe is more permissive and allows various forms of development subject to:

- Residential floor space provided it is above the Regulatory Flood Level;
- Safe access for residential uses being available;
- Non-residential uses flood proofed to the Regulatory Flood level;
- No basements, except for below grade parking and/or common amenities;
- Fill permitted within Flood Fringe;
- No hospitals, nursing homes or schools; and
- Emergency service facilities are encouraged to locate outside of the flood plain.

Additionally, through the study and along with the floodplain information, land use designations have been identified for the north-east quadrant of Dunnville for the FMBP area and the lands that were added to the urban boundary in Phase 1. The lands are currently identified as either Urban Business Park for the current extent of the FMBP and Agriculture for the portion north of Sunfish Creek, which was previously the urban boundary. The proposed land uses include industrial along the west portion – maintaining the employment opportunities that currently exist; open space through the centre of the area and to recognize the existing arena property and soccer park on Logan Road; and residential for a portion on the west along Logan Road and then the balance of the area on the east side between Ramsey and Logan Road. This collection of new land use designations is shown on Attachment 1. This largely brings in the previously agricultural properties and provides for additional residential growth opportunities within the community. While Sunfish Creek and related floodway does impact the lands in terms of the net developable area, the work and mapping completed by J. L. Richards, and approved by the GRCA, provides for approximately 16 hectares (37 acres) of additional lands being available for development. The increase to the urban boundary area combined with the change of land use and two-zone floodplain approach provides for the following land area development opportunities:

Land Use	Previous Area of Development available under single floodplain	Area of development available under two-zone concept	Increase in development opportunity
Industrial	22.9 ha (56.5 ac)	25.9 ha (64 ac)	3 ha (7.4 ac)
Open Space	2.1 ha (5.1 ac)	5.4 ha (13.4 ac)	3.3 ha (8.1 ac)
Commercial	0.6 ha (1.5 ac)	1.2 ha (2.9 ac)	0.8 ha (1.9 ac)
Residential	13.3 ha (32.8 ac)	22.2 ha (56.5 ac)	8.9 ha (22 ac)
Total	38.9 ha (56.5 ac)	54.7 ha (54.8 ac)	16 ha (39.5 ac)

The increase in development opportunity can be approximated as follows (using conservative estimates/densities):

Land Use	Change in development opportunity area	Estimated Floor Area or Units
Industrial	3 ha (7.4 ac)	1.34 ha or 144,236 square feet
Commercial	0.8 ha (1.9 ac)	0.5 ha or 53,820 square feet
Residential	8.9 ha (22 ac)	168 units
Total	12.7 ha (31 ac)	

Overall, the study provided valuable information relating to development opportunities within Dunnville and established development criteria for the two-zone approach. It also established a servicing model that can be built upon and integrated into future infrastructure and servicing studies for the community.

### Mapping

As noted in the April 19, 2022 Information Report (PDD-16-2022), the Official Plan Update will include the significant upgrade and modernization to the Official Plan mapping – moving from paper-based depictions to an on-line interactive platform. This is similar to the transition that the County experienced with the Zoning By-law mapping and provides very user friendly and accurate property information. All users will be able to identify the property or community land use, any regulated areas and natural heritage features. Also, it will display if there are any special policy areas on the lands. The new on-line mapping will empower both public users and Haldimand County staff to quickly reference details and obtain accurate information.

The mapping will also be updated to include the Lake Erie Hazard mapping (completed in 2019), source water protection areas, prime agricultural lands (as defined through the Phase 2 process/work with OMAFRA), and other refinements as required.

The mapping component will be completed and reflective of the approved land use designations and overlay features following the provincial decision.

### **FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

A project manager, Matt Reniers of Matt Reniers & Associates was retained to lead all aspects of the development, coordination and implementation of the County Official Plan Update (Phases 1 and 2). Budget approval for the project was allocated through the 2019 capital budget approvals. Other costs for the project include the hiring of a facilitator to lead the community forum/visioning exercise and sub-consultants to carry out technical studies such as the natural heritage study, housing review, population



forecasts and servicing assessments. To date, the project is in line with the approved budget of \$475,000.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:**

Throughout the Official Plan project, consultation and engagement has occurred with a number of County departments, external agencies, committees and advisory boards, the public, as well as both Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. As part of the process, the following groups have provided insight or review to the proposed Official Plan amendments and draft policies:

- Haldimand County divisions:
  - Engineering Services
  - Community Development and Partnerships
  - Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry Operations
  - Economic Development & Tourism
  - Water & Wastewater Engineering & Compliance
  - Road Operations
- Haldimand County Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Haldimand County Business Development & Planning Advisory Committee
- Heritage Haldimand
- Haldimand Stewardship Council
- External Consultation:
  - Six Nations of the Grand River
  - Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations
  - Conservation Authorities
  - Various provincial ministries, in particular the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ministry of Transportation; and, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Consultation and engagement has been key throughout Phase 2 to ensure that the comments, visions and considerations from the community are being heard and incorporated where possible. To assist with the discussions, Planning staff hosted a number of open house virtual sessions to obtain feedback, with those dates held on:

- May 13, 2021 – Hazard Land Policies and Heritage System Presentation
- June 23, 2021 – Facilitated Workshop
- December 14, 2021 – Phase 2 Workshop Presentation

Additionally, staff had focused meetings/workshops with a variety of key stakeholder groups as follows:

- Agricultural Advisory Committee – May 5, 2021, July 21, 2021 and November 17, 2021
- Heritage Haldimand – January 31, 2022
- Business Development Advisory and Planning Advisory Board – January 10, 2022, March 8, 2021 and July 7, 2021
- Haldimand Stewardship – February 19, 2021, April 9, 2021 and June 24, 2021

The feedback and dialogue received from the meetings helped to shape the direction of the document and on key items including the policies surrounding surplus farm dwellings severances, on-farm diversification, natural and cultural heritage features, supportive commercial development, and opportunities to build flexibility into development policies.

Public Notice for the Public Meeting was included in the July 20<sup>th</sup> coordinated newspaper space in both the Haldimand Press and The Sachem, as well as an email distribution to all individuals who

participated in an open house, facilitated workshop or provided comments relating to the amendment. Additionally, the Notice and Draft Amendment were posted to the County website.

A letter was submitted by MHBC Planning on behalf of Lafarge Canada Inc. (Attachment 3). Their comments can be summarized as follows:

- A missing schedule was noted that has since been included in the draft amendment.
- An exemption for mineral aggregate operations is requested within vegetation protection zones.
- Proposed policies for significant natural environment areas do not permit aggregate extraction within significant woodlands, fish habitat, and habitat of endangered and threatened species. This should be amended to new operations and only within the Growth Plan Natural Heritage System.
- Supporting Natural Environment Areas should include exemptions for aggregate extraction because these exemptions exist for Significant Natural Environment Areas.
- Recommendation that the County provide greater flexibility for refinements to the Haldimand Natural Heritage System subject to appropriate site-specific study.
- Request to add mineral aggregate operations as a permitted use.
- Recommendation of changes to specific tests for aggregate applications due to challenges that would be faced in satisfying the tests.

NRSI – the consulting firm retained to complete the Natural Heritages System - was consulted regarding comments above related to natural heritage and whether they were appropriate to incorporate into the draft by-law. In general, NRSI concurs with the majority of these requests (with some refinements) and those policy changes will be incorporated into the final by-law.

### **Next Steps:**

If the Official Plan Amendment is accepted and adopted by Council, staff will submit the full record to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). The MMAH will then proceed to determine if the submitted record is completed. Once it is deemed complete, the Ministry will post all of the OP information on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) for a 30 day public comment period. Once that comment period closes, the MMAH will review (along with any partner Ministries) the document and any comments reviewed and provide their evaluation. They will also determine if any further modifications or information is required. The Province will have 90 days to render a final decision on the County's Official Plan Amendment once the ERO posting period is complete. Once a decision is rendered, it cannot be appealed and is considered final.

A draft amendment By-law has been included as Attachment 4.

### **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

### **REFERENCES:**

None.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. May 31 Council-in-Committee Presentation
2. Hamlet and Resort Residential Node Development Potential Table
3. MHBC Letter – Lafarge Canada Inc.
4. Draft Official Plan Amendment