



# THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

## - A G E N D A -

**Monday June 8, 2026**

### **REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL**

7:00 p.m., Council Chambers, Fingal/Via Video Link

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- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM**
- 3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
- 4. ADOPTION AND REVIEW OF MINUTES**
  - (a) Draft Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of May 25, 2026
  - (b) Draft Minutes of the Economic Development Committee Meeting of May 28, 2026
- 5. DELEGATION**
- 6. DRAINAGE**
- 7. PLANNING**
  - (a) **7:00 p.m. Committee of Adjustment – PLA 2026-18 MV 2026-06, 10628 Sunset Road (Sent as separate agenda package)**
- 8. REPORTS**
  - (a) FIR 2026-09 Activity Report – April and May 2026
  - (b) CBO 2026-16 Activity Report – May 2026
  - (c) CBO 2026-17 Mobile Health Unit
  - (d) IDS 2026-24 Activity Report – May 2026
  - (e) IDS 2026-25 OCWA Change of Scope to Agreement
  - (f) IDS 2026-26 Lynhurst Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS) Management Review
  - (g) IDS 2026-27 Parks and Trails Master Plan
  - (h) IDS 2026-28 Lawrence Road Overpass Update

- (i) DPC 2026-03 2026 Summer Meeting Schedule
- (j) DPC 2026-04 2026 Christmas Holiday Closure
- (k) CAO 2026-12 Activity Report – May 2026
- (l) CAO 2026-13 Leaf and Yard Waste
- (m) CAO 2026-14 Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program
- (n) Verbal Update – Fingal Construction/Fingal Ball Park

**9. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Municipality of Calvin Resolution RE: Request for Provincial Review of Current Value Assessment (CVR).

**10. BY-LAWS**

- (a) By-law No. 2026-28, being a by-law to provide for drainage works, Bowlby-Futcher Drain 2025, third and final reading.
- (b) By-law No. 2026-43, being a by-law to confirm the resolutions and motions of the Council of the Township of Southwold, which were adopted on June 8, 2026

**11. OTHER BUSINESS** *(For Information Only)*

- (a) Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System and the Elgin Area Water Supply System: Introducing Huron Erie Water (formerly Regional Water)
- (b) Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus May 2026 Newsletter

**12. CLOSED SESSION**

- (a) 239(2) (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board (Multiple properties)
- (b) 239(2) (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

**13. ADJOURNMENT:**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL**

**Monday June 22, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.**

**Council Chambers, Fingal/Via Video Link**



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### MINUTES

Regular Council Meeting  
Monday May 25, 2026  
7:00 p.m. Council Chambers, Fingal/Via Video Link

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Grant Jones  
Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings  
Councillor John Adzija  
Councillor Sarah Bod  
Councillor Scott Fellows

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk  
Michele Lant, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer  
Aaron Van Oorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services  
Corey Pemberton, Director of Building and Community Services (virtually) (left at 8:04 p.m.)  
Michela Testani, Junior Planner (left at 7:58 p.m.)  
June McLarty, Deputy Clerk

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Mayor Grant Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Council acknowledged that Councillor Sarah Emons is now known as Councillor Sarah Bod.

#### **CONFIRMATION/ADDENDUM TO AGENDA:**

#### **2026-164 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings**

**RESOLVED THAT** the agenda for the May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 meeting of the Council of the Township of Southwold be approved.

**CARRIED**

**DISCLOSURES:** None

## **ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

### **Council Minutes – Adopt**

#### **2026-165 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Adzija**

**RESOLVED THAT** the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 are hereby adopted; and,

**THAT** the minutes of the Court of Revision for the Bowlby-Futcher Drain 2025 are hereby adopted.

**CARRIED**

### **Committee Minutes – Review**

#### **2026-166 Councillor Fellows – Councillor Bod**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council had reviewed the Draft Minutes of Economic Development Committee Meeting of April 23, 2026 and the Draft Minutes of the Young at Heart Committee Meeting of May 14, 2026

**CARRIED**

## **DRAINAGE:**

### **Appointment of Engineer – Lewis Drain**

#### **2026-167 Councillor Adzija – Councillor Bod**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council receive the request for a major improvement under Section 78(1) of the Drainage Act for the Lewis Drain and has decided to proceed with the project; and,

**THAT** staff received confirmation from Jason Homewood, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority on April 22, 2026, that an environmental appraisal under Section 78(2) of the Drainage Act would not be required, if Council decided to proceed with the project; and

**THAT** Council now appoints the engineering firm Spriet Associates to prepare the necessary reports: and,

**THAT** notice will be sent to all required to be notified under the Drainage Act of Council's actions.

**CARRIED**

**REPORTS:**

**CBO 2026-15 By-law Enforcement Policy**

**2026-168 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council approve By-law No. 2026-40, being a By-law to adopt the Municipal Law Complaint & Enforcement Policy for the Township of Southwold; and,

**THAT** the Municipal Law Complaint & Enforcement Policy attached to By-law No. 2026-40 be adopted as the official policy governing municipal law enforcement administration within the Township of Southwold.

**CARRIED**

**IDS 2026-23 Review of By-law No. 2025-44, Integrated Water Systems Management By-law**

**2026-169 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council direct staff to prepare amendments to By-law 2025-44, the Integrated Water Systems Management By-law, based on Option 2.

Option 2: Amend the language as above but add a further exemption clause specifying the residents on Talbotville Gore Rd, Shady Lane Cr. and Greenpark Dr., that received a stub as part of capital projects prior to 2025, have an indefinite deferral to connect to the system, subject to the inspection conditions applied through the bylaw. Collection of the capital base charge would remain subject to the 2-year deferral from the date of the by-law passing (ie. will be imposed starting in July 2027) or when the property connects to the system, whichever is earlier.

**CARRIED**

**PLANNING:**

**MV 2026-04, Edward Street**

**2026-170 Councillor Bod – Councillor Adzija**

**RESOLVED THAT** the regular Council meeting adjourn to sit as a Committee of Adjustment at **7:30 p.m.** to hear application MV 2026-04, Firm Foundation Holdings Inc, Edward Street.

**CARRIED**

**MV 2026-04 Adjournment of Public Hearing**

**2026-171 Councillor Fellows – Councillor Adzija**

**RESOLVED THAT** the meeting of the Committee of Adjustment to hear application MV 2026-04, Firm Foundation Holdings Inc. Edward Street adjourns, and the regular meeting of council reconvenes at **7:58 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

**REPORTS:**

**CAO 2026-11 Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan**

**2026-172 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Fellows**

**RESOLVED THAT** By-Law Number 2026-38, being a by-law to designate a Community Improvement Project Area, be presented for enactment; and,

**THAT** By-Law Number 2026-39, being a by-law to adopt the 2026 Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan, be presented for enactment.

**CARRIED**

**Elgin County Council Highlights May 12, 2026**

Mayor Jones presented this report to Council for information purposes.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command Military Service Recognition Book Ad**

**2026-173 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council of the Township of Southwold agrees to the placement of a business card size ad in the Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command Military Service Recognition Book to help to honor Ontario's Veterans at a cost of \$395.00 (HST included).

**CARRIED**

**BY-LAWS:**

- By-law No. 2026-38, being a by-law to designate a Community Improvement Project Area
- By-law No. 2026-39, being a by-law to adopt a Community Improvement Plan
- By-law No. 2026-40, being a by-law to adopt a Municipal Law Complaint and Enforcement Policy
- By-law No. 2026-41, being a by-law to amend User Fees – By-law Enforcement
- By-law No. 2026-42, being a by-law to confirm the resolutions and motions of the Council of the Township of Southwold, which were adopted on May 25, 2026

**By-laws:**

**2026-174 Councillor Adzija – Councillor Bod**

**RESOLVED THAT** By-laws Nos. 2026-38, 2026-39, 2026-40 and 2026-41, be read a first and second time, considered read a third time and finally passed this 25<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.

**CARRIED**

**CLOSED SESSION**

**2026-175 Councillor Bod – Councillor Adzija**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council of the Township of Southwold now moves again into a session of the meeting that shall be closed to the public at **8:12 p.m.** in accordance with Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. 25 for

discussion of the following matters;

- 239(2) (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board (Multiple properties)

- 239(2) (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

**CARRIED**

### **Adjournment of Closed Session**

#### **2026-176 Councillor Adzija – Councillor Fellows**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council of the Township of Southwold adjourns the Closed Session of the Regular Council meeting at **8:39 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

### **STAFF DIRECTION**

Staff was directed by Council to the items that were discussed in the Closed Session.

### **Confirmation By-law**

#### **2026-177 Councillor Bod – Deputy Mayor Pennings**

**RESOLVED THAT** By-law No. 2026-42, be read a first and second time, considered read a third time and finally passed this 25<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.

**CARRIED**

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

#### **2026-178 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Adzija**

**RESOLVED THAT** Council for the Township of Southwold adjourns this Regular meeting of Council at **8:40 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

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Mayor  
Grant Jones

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CAO/Clerk  
Jeff Carswell



**Southwold Economic Development Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 7:30 am  
Old Station Kitchen/Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen**

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Present: Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings  
Steve Bushell  
Tanya Buttinger  
Barry Harrison  
Stuart Lackey  
Scott Young

Staff/Resource: Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk  
Anne Kleinsteuber, Business Enterprise Facilitator  
Aaron VanOorspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development Services  
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives

Regrets: Councillor John Adzija

**1. Call to Order**

Deputy Mayor Pennings called the meeting to order at 7:41 a.m. The Committee expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet in the newly renovated facility, formerly a Township fire hall and water department building, which was purchased and redeveloped by Heather Harris. The relocation of Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen retail store and the addition of Old Station Kitchen by The Streeterly are valued by the Township,

the Southwold EDC, and the community.

## **2. Approval of Agenda**

The Committee approved the agenda for the May 28, 2026 meeting.

## **3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None

## **4. Approval of the April 23, 2026 Minutes**

The Committee approved the minutes as drafted from the April 23, 2026 meeting.

## **5. Economic Development Plan Update**

CAO Jeff Carswell provided an update on Economic Development Plan Project:

- May 19<sup>th</sup> – McSweeney & Associates facilitated a staff workshop, attended by a variety of staff, including County Planning and County Economic Development
- Kevin McPhillips from McSweeney was taken on a Township tour to familiarize the consulting team with the area
- Focus Group Sessions – Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup>, Keystone Complex – Facilitated by McSweeney & Co.
  - Approximately 100 invites to the Focus Group Sessions sent out to local businesses, organizations, and groups – Elgin Business Directory was the primary source, plus Township known contacts
- Project Webpage setup
- Survey is live, will be promoted until mid-June – the survey is another means to gather public input
- July 8<sup>th</sup> – Economic Development Plan Working Session – Keystone Complex

## **6. Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism Updates**

Carolyn Krahn and Anne Kleinsteuber reported on the following:

- Elgincentives Update – the new CIP is going through the approval process with municipalities, and the new plan should be launched soon. There is \$80,000 in grants available for 2026.
- Employment Lands Study

- Western Ontario Wardens Caucus – Queens Park Day
- Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI)
- Elgin Tourism updates
- OMCA (Ontario Motor Coach Association) Group Tour Opportunities
- Local Business Highlights – “A Place in the Woods” from Southwold was recently highlighted.
- Cultivating Success Event

## **7. Development and Infrastructure Updates:**

Aaron Van Oorspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development Services reported on the following items:

- a) Fingal Reconstruction Progress and Highlights.
- b) Updates on the Shedden/Fingal Sanitary Servicing Project – PVX will be back to repair sections of Union Road. The plan is for this work to be completed before the Rosy Rhubarb Festival.
- c) WWTP Updates for Shedden & Talbotville
- d) Parks and Trails Master Plan Project Update – Final updates based on input from the Parks and Keystone Committees are being incorporated for the final draft for Council approval at the next meeting
- e) The Zoning By-law Update Project has started. This project will be a comprehensive update to the Zoning By-law. To date activity has focused on data collection and reviewing areas to address. It is anticipated that input and feedback from the Committee will be sought throughout this project.

## **8. 2026 Cultivating Success Networking Event Updates**

The 2026 Cultivating Success Networking Event will be held on Tuesday, June 16th, 2026 at Nature’s Oasis Retreat. The guest speaker will be Peter Katz. To date 110 people have registered. Local vendors including Made With Love and Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen will be providing food. The evening will also feature local wine from Skye Chase Estate Winery and craft beer from Natterjack Brewing Company and Port Stanley Brewing Company.

## **9. New and Other Business**

Steve Bushel advised that representatives from Dutton-Dunwich are interested in learning more about the Southwold Economic Development Committee. The

committee suggested coordinating the next meeting to facilitate a discussion with Councillor Henry Dreyfhout and CAO Tony Houad.

Scott Young updated the committee on a recent event he attended. The event was for a Boralex Energy Storage Project in Hagersville. The energy storage site is approximately 25 acres and uses industrial scale batteries to store energy when demand and cost is low and supply it to the grid when demand and cost is higher. A project such as this may be suitable and beneficial for the Southwold industrial area, especially if the more marginal, less desirable land areas could be utilized. Projects such as this benefit from local and indigenous support.

#### **10. Next Meeting date, time and location**

The next meeting was tentatively booked for June 23 or 24, 2026 at 8:00 am depending on availability of representatives from Dutton-Dunwich. Location to be determined based on Dutton-Dunwich availability.

#### **11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 am.

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Chairperson, Justin Pennings

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Staff Resource, Jeff Carswell



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff McArthur, Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief

**REPORT NO:** FIR 2026-09

**SUBJECT MATTER: Fire Activity Report - April and May 2026**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. None – For Council Information.

#### **Purpose:**

To update Council on Fire Department Activities for April and May 2026.

#### **Background:**

*Department updates on activities and meetings since last report:*

- a. *Calls for service* – a total of 39 incidents were responded to, including seven MVCs, and one shed fire.
- b. *Meetings* – Fire Chief attended County Chief, Prevention, and Mutual Aid meetings.  
The Quarterly Health & Safety meeting was held.
- c. *Inspections* – various alarm checks were completed.
- d. *Public Education* – Grand Opening at Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen.
- e. *Public Relations* – flag hanging for Communities in Bloom.
- h. *Apparatus & Equipment* – ongoing routine maintenance including apparatus annual inspections. Annual pump & ladder testing was completed.

A drone has been donated to the fire department, with thermal imaging capability. It has been registered with Transport Canada, and training is underway.

*Report on any outstanding items:*

- a. The Fire Chief is working with our GIS & Asset Management Coordinator on a solution to outdated mapping issues regarding fire response zones.
- b. The County Fire Chiefs are discussing options regarding Hazardous Materials response agreements, as there are currently no formal agreements within Elgin County. A draft agreement has been created and sent to County Legal for review; with the expectation it will be brought to Council for approval in early summer.
- c. A Community Risk Assessment (CRA) is underway. A CRA is required under Ontario Regulation 378/18 to be completed every five years for municipalities and fire departments to identify, analyze, and prioritize public safety risks to make informed decisions on fire protection services.
- d. Site work at the Talbotville Station is expected to begin this summer, in preparation for the County Live Fire Training Facility.
- e. Radio testing was conducted at the Amazon Facility, to address radio operational issues.

*Training Undertaken by Staff:*

- a. Department training topics included operational guideline implementation and review, mapping, firefighter survival, search & rescue, and ladders.
- b. Members attended Fire Code courses, NFPA 1002 Pumper Operations, NFPA 1006, Auto Extrication, and NFPA 1041 Instructor Levels I & II
- c. Provincial Certification was presented for NFPA 1001 Firefighter, and NFPA 1006 Auto Extrication.
- d. Members continue to support the Elgin-Middlesex Regional Fire School, filling instructor roles.

*Capital Project Progress :*

<b>2026</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Status/Comments</b>
Shedden 4th Bay	\$175,000	In progress.
Shedden Bunker Gear Room	\$32,890	Planning stage, Provincial fire protection grant
<b>2025</b>		
Electronic Sign – New Talbotville Station (2024 allocation)	\$35,000	Planning stage.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

None.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Jeff McArthur  
Director of Emergency Services/Fire  
Chief

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



# TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

## Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Corey Pemberton Director of Building and Community Services

**REPORT NO:** CBO 2026-16

**SUBJECT MATTER: CBO Activity Report – May 2026**

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**Recommendation:**

1. None – For Council Information.

**Purpose:**

To update Council on monthly activities since last report.

**Background:**

**1. 2023/2025 Capital Project Process:**

<b>2023</b>		
<b>Projects</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Status/Comment</b>
<b>Parks</b>		
Corsley Park parking lot widening	\$10,000.00	
Dog waste bins and signage	\$2000.00	
Park benches	\$16,000.00	Ongoing
<b>2025</b>		
<b>Township Office</b>		
Security Upgrades	\$40,000	Completed
<b>Parks/Facilities</b>		
Walking trails conversion to concrete	\$5,000.00	
Parks and Trails Master Plan – funded through Green Lane Community Trust Fund	\$47,600.00	In Progress
<b>2026</b>		
<b>Parks/Facilities</b>		
Corsley Park Sanitary Connection	\$50,000.00	

Medical Centre Sanitary connection/Parking lot	\$90,000.00	
<b>Building</b>		
Truck replacement	\$70,000.00	Ordered
<b>Admin Building</b>		
General Up keep	\$30,000.00	
Front Counter Upgrades	\$25,000.00	

**Comments/Analysis:**

Appendix A attached to report CBO 2026-15 is the permit comparison report.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

None.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:


- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Corey Pemberton  
 Director of Building and Community Services

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
 CAO/Clerk

 <b>TOWNSHIP OF Southwold</b>	Township of Southwold	
	Permit Comparison Summary	
	Issued For Period January- May 2026	

Current Year to Date 2026				Previous Year to Date 2025			
PERMIT CATEGORY	PERMIT COUNT	FEE	COST OF CONSTRUCTION	PERMIT CATEGORY	PERMIT COUNT	FEE	COST OF CONSTRUCTION
Accessory structures	8	2,889	310,000	Accessory structures	5	1,778	386,500
Agricultural	7	12,297	2,662,602	Agricultural	2	14,730	1,800,000
Change of Use				Change of Use			
Commercial	1	1,913	159,465	Commercial			
Demolition	8	1,940	280,051	Demolition	6	960	128,920
Heating	1	180	6,500	Heating			
Industrial Building	2	23,820	1,960,000	Industrial Building	3	1,520	349,999
institutional Building				institutional Building			
Miscellaneous	1	180	1,500	Miscellaneous	1	150	110,000
Plumbing	7	1,230	241,000	Plumbing	4	780	34,500
Pools	2	360	205,000	Pools	2	1,005	100,000
Residential Building	9	30,937	5,223,980	Residential Building	11	27,074	6,214,600
Sewage System	8	5,140	191,890	Sewage system	6	3,000	124,000
Signs				Signs	1	150	5,000
Combined Use				Combined Use	1	6,855	840,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>80,886</b>	<b>11,241,988</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>58,002</b>	<b>10,093,519</b>

Current Year			Previous Year		
TOTAL PERMIT ISSUED		54		42	
TOTAL DWELLING UNITS CREATED		9		13	
TOTAL PERMIT VALUE		11,241,988		10,093,519	
TOTAL PERMIT FEE		80,886		58,002	
TOTAL INSPECTION COMPLETED(YTD)		527		505	

May 2025 Compared to May 2026							
Current Year				Previous Year			
	PERMIT COUNT	FEE	COST OF CONSTRUCTION		PERMIT COUNT	FEE	COST OF CONSTRUCTION
Accessory structures	1	390	80,000	Accessory structures	2	1,229	36,500
Agricultural	1	541	800,000	Agricultural	1	980	100,000
Change of Use				Change of Use			
Commercial	1	1,913	159,465	Commercial			
Demolition				Demolition	2	360	53,920
Heating				Heating			
Industrial Building				Industrial Building			
institutional Building				institutional Building			
Miscellaneous				Miscellaneous	1	150	110,000
Plumbing	1	180	5,000	Plumbing	1	180	17,000
Pools	1	180	30,000	Pools	1	330	50,000
Residential Building	1	3,227	26,000	Residential Building	3	6,780	665,000
Sewage System		580		Sewage System	1	1,000	30,000
Signs				Signs			
Combine Use				Combined Use	1	6,855	840,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7,011</b>	<b>1,100,465</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17,864</b>	<b>1,902,420</b>



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Corey Pemberton, Director of Building and Community Services/Chief Building Official

**REPORT NO:** CBO 2026-17

**SUBJECT MATTER: Mobile Health Unit**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Council authorizes the continued operation of a Mobile Health Unit at the Keystone Complex.

#### **Purpose:**

This report seeks Council's approval for the mobile health unit to continue at the Keystone Complex

#### **Background:**

The Municipality received an inquiry from the Central Community Health Centre (CCHC) team in St. Thomas regarding the use of the Keystone parking lot for the operation of a Mobile Health Centre on a weekly basis. The proposed hours of operation are approximately 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with Monday identified as the preferred day; however, this may be subject to change.

In response, staff reached out to the local physician to determine if the proposed Mobile Health Centre would pose any concerns or conflicts with her existing medical practice. While the physician expressed some concerns, she indicated she was generally supportive of the initiative, provided it be conducted on a trial basis and reviewed after six months to assess any potential impact on her business.

#### **Comment/Analysis:**

Staff have reached out to the Doctor and had a discussion with her. She has stated that there has been no impact on her practice and she has no concerns with the mobile health unit continuing.

Staff have also contacted the Community Health Centre (CCHC) team to discuss the unit's utilization. The team indicated that activity levels were somewhat slower during the winter months; however, they anticipate increased usage as the weather improves and public awareness of the service continues to grow.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

There are no financial implications at this time.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Corey Pemberton, Director of  
Building and Community  
Services/Chief Building Official

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Cassandra Loewen Public Works Superintendent  
Brent Clutterbuck, Drainage Superintendent  
Mike Taylor, Manager of Environmental Services  
Aaron VanOorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

**REPORT NO:** IDS 2026-24

**SUBJECT MATTER: Activity Report for Infrastructure and Development Services (IDS) – May 2026**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. None – For Council Information.

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the report is to update Council on the Infrastructure and Development Services team activities for May 2026.

#### **Development:**

- Union Road Sanitary Sewers – road works substantially completed the week of May 29 final restoration works to be completed by June 5, 2026.
- North Shedden Sanitary Sewers and Pumping Station – mainline sewers were installed on Union Road to Orchard Street, and on Elizabeth to John.
- Fingal Pumping Station and Forcemain – Forcemain was drilled from the Shedden Treatment Plant to the limits of the Fingal Reconstruction, clean up work, the connection to the plant and commissioning remain. Work on the pump station is set to resume in August.
- Fingal Reconstruction – Sewer mainline on Union is completed to the north limits, mainline is being installed from the Pump Station south towards Fowler Street. Use of the slide rail is limiting the excavation limits, reducing granular backfill usage and impacts for access. Fingal Ballpark access will be restricted for the entire season. Staff are working with the contractor to amend the project schedule based on impacts of poor ground conditions.

- Shedden Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) – majority of foundations for the wastewater treatment plant have been completed, the structure of the headworks building, digester tanks and equalization tanks are coming out of the ground. Majority of site servicing is completed.
- Parks and Trails Master Plan – final submission received, before Council for adoption.
- Planning activity continues to be elevated, significant number of proposals from minor variances and consents to major planning applications like subdivision and site plan submissions.
- Ongoing work to support the successful grant applications, tracking spending, work progress, and consultation with Indigenous communities.
- Attended over 30 meetings in the month of May, advancing Township Projects, Planning Applications, Operations and Team Exercises.



Total list of active subdivision/site plan files is shown below:

<u>Development Files</u>	<u>New this Month</u>	<u>Stage of Development Process</u>	<u>Settlement Area</u>
Talbotville Meadows Phase 1	Developer has formally submitted for assumption of Phase 1	Residential build out	Talbotville
The Clearing		Working towards assumption	Talbotville
Enclave Phase 1		Residential build out almost complete, working towards request for assumption	Talbotville
Florence Court		Residential build out, working towards request for assumption	Ferndale
Talbotville Meadows Phase 2		Residential Buildout	Talbotville
40134 Talbot Line		Site plan agreement	Talbotville
McBain Line		Draft plan, working towards engineering submission	Ferndale
35743 Horton Street (Stoss)	Draft Agreement being finalized, servicing works are wrapping up, aim to be permit ready mid to end of June, depending on condition clearance	Pre-Servicing	Shedden
4509 Union Road (Turville)		Working towards registration of subdivision	North Port Stanley
8068 Union Road		Studies, preparing for draft plan submission	Fingal

10247 Talbotville Gore Road		Studies, preparing for site plan	Talbotville
Talbotville Meadows Blocks 177		Construction	Talbotville
Talbotville Meadows Blocks 178		Pre-Consultation	Talbotville
4324 Thomas Road		Subdivision Registered	North Port Stanley
7882 Union Road		Pre-Consultation	Fingal
11085 Sunset Road		Pre-Consultation	Talbotville
35556 Fingal Line		Background information	Fingal
9925 Union Road		Draft Plan Submission	Shedden
Teetzel Development	Draft Plan Approved by Township, County Approval by end of June	Draft Plan Submission	Shedden
8115 Union Road		Consultation	Fingal
35866 Rose Ave		Consultation	Shedden
11432 Sunset Road		Pre-Consultation	Talbotville
36391 Talbot Line		Construction	Shedden
7985 Church Street		Pre-Consultation	Fingal
11405 Wonderland Road	Site Plan Registered, work has commenced	Site Plan Approval	Talbotville

**Fingal Reconstruction -  
Slide Rail System  
Advancing towards  
Fowler**



**Infrastructure:****a) Water and Sanitary:**

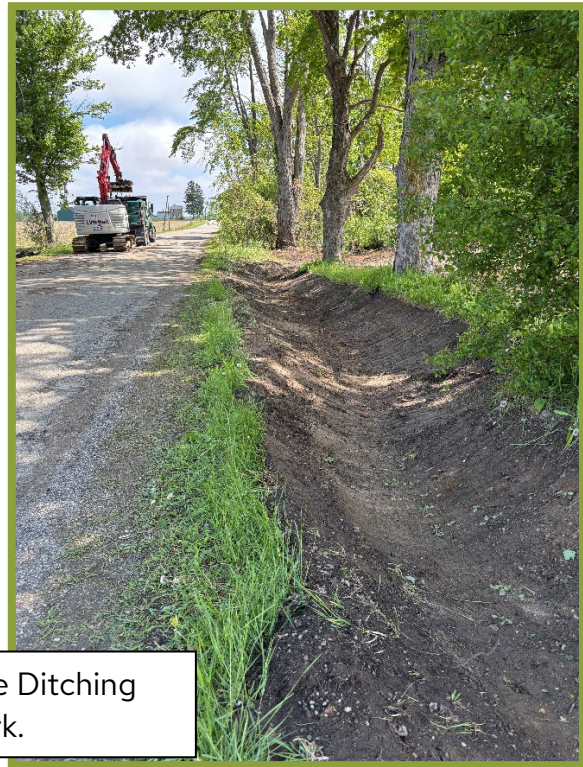
- Staff attending ongoing bi-weekly construction meetings for Shedden WWTP project.
- Staff attending bi-weekly construction meetings with Bre-Ex, Dillon, Elgin County, and AECOM for Fingal construction project.
- Staff supporting North Shedden sanitary sewer project.
- Supporting MTO and Parsons for MTO Highway 3 By-pass. (ongoing)
- Watermain commissioning and final tie-in completed for Shedden Meadows Phase 1.
- Final upgrades completed at Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) Chamber at John Wise and Fingal Line. (installation of by-pass line for better pressure control of water system).
- 138 locates received from One Call for May. 502 locates received/completed for first four months. Represents 39% increase year over year.
- Five service requests completed from Citywide (final reads/meter complaints, water shutoffs, meter inspections).
- 4 water meters replaced in May (15 meters replaced year to date). (Meter replacements are generally due to customer driven complaints or meters have failed to register a reading.)
- New water service and meter chamber installed for 6048 Union Road. (see image below)
- New water service and meter pit installed for 8173 Union Road.
- Talbotville WWTP: Sludge press failure – coordinating repairs. Currently offline.
- Urban meters read for May (1112 meters).
- Building meter assemblies for new connections and repairs.



**Two Water Service and  
Meter Pit Install on Union  
Road**

**b) Roads and Bridges:**

- Gravel shoulders for both County and Township roads are completed for the spring.
- Annual Gravel Resurfacing progressing well, only a few long stretches of road remaining and then a lot of the short township roads will be completed in house with gravel being delivered to the yard.
- Annual Dust Suppressant application began on April 17<sup>th</sup> with most roads now completed. Roads still requiring gravel application and short roads remaining. A few more loads to be scheduled in June.
- Second Line ditching is completed and road repairs have commenced. Poor condition road sections have been pulverized with the road base being replaced/repared as needed. The road is closed to through traffic while work is being completed.
- Roadside grass cutting to commence shortly.
- The Roads Department responded to 29 Service Requests, 19 of which have been completed or were closed upon first contact, the remainder are either waiting on parts/materials, or staff availability due to the ongoing capital work within the Township this month.



Second Line Ditching  
Work.

**2026 Capital Project Summary:**

<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Status/Comment</b>
<b>Water and Sewer</b>			
Shedden Wastewater Treatment Plant	\$25 million		Construction Underway
Talbotville Wastewater Servicing			Successful Grant Application \$24 million in grant funding secured
South Shedden Sanitary Sewers	\$3,663,048.41		Surface Asphalt Completed in May, final items to clean up before Rosy Weekend
North Shedden Sanitary Sewers	\$5,364,151.12		Mainline Installed to Orchard Street, additional storm work and tie ins at the Pump Station are being completed
Fingal Reconstruction	\$10,850,690.68		Working towards Fowler Street, ground conditions are a challenge.
Fingal Pumping Station and Forcemain	\$3,814,971.76		Majority of Forcemain is Installed, work on the Pump Station is set to resume in August
<b>Roads</b>			
Thomas Road Construction	\$2,060,000		Storm sewer work is nearly complete, road works following behind, curb mid-June
Grand Canyon Road – Micro Surface	\$25,000		Scheduled for July
Mill Road – Single Surface Treatment and Spot Repair	\$260,000		Scheduled for July
Second Line – Structural Repairs and Single Surface Treatment	\$150,000 (Edge Repairs incld.)		Ditching and Structural Repairs completed, surfacing planned for July
Scotch Line – Structural Repairs and Single Surface Treatment	\$132,000		Scheduled for July

Parsons Road Rehabilitation	\$429,000		Scheduled for July
Paynes Mills Road Rehabilitation	\$260,000		Scheduled for July
<b>Bridges/Culverts</b>			
Scotch Line Culvert Replacement	\$450,000		Deferral to 2027
Lyle Bridge Rehabilitation	\$200,000		Awarded, Construction start end of May

**c) Drainage:**

**Drains Before Council:**

**Construction:**

- **Bowlby Futcher Drain (2024):** Tenders were put up on Bids and Tenders May 28, they close later this June
- **Edison Drain (2024)** tenders Robinson Farm Drainage. for a total cost of \$126,215.00+HST, construction later this year
- **Ryan Drain (Sept 19):** Received a certificate from the Engineer. I have asked a few questions of the engineer and once answered adequately Council will finally pass the by-law

**With the Engineer:**

- **Lewis Drain:** engineer has been appointed, on site meeting to be arranged
- **Best Drain (2024)** We will be digging along Scotch Line at Fingal Line to confirm if a drain was constructed in the intersection by the County during reconstruction. A follow up meeting with landowners will be held to discuss options that they requested investigated.
- **Jones Drain (2024)** a meeting to review the proposal of the engineer was held January 22<sup>nd</sup>
- **Horton Drain (2025):** Drain from the SWM pond to the north, onsite meeting has been held, engineer is compiling information

- **Horton Drain 2026:** Drain improvement from the SWM downstream to Talbot Creek. On-site meeting to be arranged
- **Gold Seal Drain (2025)** on site meeting was held March 19, 2026
- **Fingal Drain (2025)** on site meeting to be arranged
- **Burwell Drain (2026):** on site meeting was held January 22nd
- **Third Line – Magdala Drain (formerly Con 3, Lot 5 Drain): (June 12):** Council returned to Engineer.
- **Bogart Drain Ext. (Dec 15):** The proponent has asked that this drain be put on hold for the time being.
- **Fowler Drain (April 2026):** drain improvement from the regional SWM pond downstream. Onsite meeting to be arranged.

**Maintenance:** Work being assigned to contractors as requests coming in. Drainage Superintendent has been out in the field looking at maintenance requests, reviewing contractor work and fielding landowner questions.

**Grant Applications:** the grant application for the maintenance completed in 2025 has been submitted to OMAFA

<b>2026 Capital Project Process:</b>	
<b>Edison Drain 2025</b>	29,121.00
<b>Bowlby Futcher Drain</b>	65,501.00

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

None.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity

Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Infrastructure and Development  
Services Team

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Mike Taylor, Manager of Environmental Services

**REPORT NO:** IDS 2026-25

**SUBJECT MATTER: Operating Agreement with the Ontario Clean Water Agency – Change in Services**

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#### **Recommendations:**

1. That Report IDS 2026-25 relating to Existing Operating Agreement with the Ontario Clean Water Agency, be received for information; and
2. That the Mayor and CAO/Clerk be authorized to accept the change order proposal from the Ontario Clean Water Agency, for a seven-month period, based on a cost sharing arrangement at a price to not exceed \$55,151.00; and
3. That the change order be added to the existing Operations & Maintenance Agreement between the Ontario Clean Water Agency and the Township of Southwold.

#### **Purpose:**

This report seeks Council's consideration and approval to amend the existing agreement with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) for a term of seven-months to support operational activities for the Drinking Water System and the construction and commissioning on the new wastewater treatment plant.

#### **Background:**

The Ontario Clean Water Agency was created by the province in 1993 to segregate the ownership, operations and maintenance of provincially owned systems away from the MOE, which is now known as the MECP. This was done to minimize its perceived conflict of interest with the province. Since then, OCWA has been primarily providing services to municipally owned infrastructure, across Ontario for the operations and maintenance of water and wastewater systems.

OCWA, has been operating and maintaining Southwold's Drinking Water System since 2016 and the wastewater system since 2019. Over the course of this time, OCWA has been operating and maintaining these systems under contract with the Township. This partnership was developed based on a hybrid system in which the Township has provided Staff to supplement various activities for the Drinking Water System that are not contractually obligated by OCWA, including but not limited to meter reading, Ontario One Call locates, dead-end flushing.

In November 2025, Council authorized the Mayor and CAO/Clerk to enter into agreement with OCWA for a five-year renewal to operate and maintain the Southwold Drinking Water System and Talbotville Wastewater Treatment Plant with a start date of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

**Comment/Analysis:**

Over the last several months, dating back to September of 2025, there has been a significant change in work scope to the IDS Department: Water Wastewater Compliance Superintendent (WWWCS) position. This change is a result of the increased frequency of water meter readings relating to urban settlement areas in which storm water charges are now in place. Prior to last fall, meter readings were completed on a quarterly basis, totalling 7,400 readings. With the changes to the billing process, monthly readings are completed for urban areas, plus maintaining quarterly readings, equates to 16,500 readings per year. The time required to undertake the extra readings, equates to an additional 450 hours/year to the WWWCS position. Furthermore, Ontario One Call locates have been increasing month over month, and as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 the increase compared to this same period last year is up almost 40%.

With the added work, there currently isn't enough time to complete these seasonal duties for 2026. Primarily, seasonal duties are limited to construction activities and the dead-end flushing program which takes over 40 hours per month to complete from April-November. As a result of these changes and additional summer workload, Staff approached OCWA to discuss the current challenges around seasonal tasks and all the additional work that has fallen under the responsibility of the WWWCS to complete.

Due to these changes, Township Staff requested for OCWA to provide pricing to support the Township for seven months commencing in early June, by providing a full-time operator. Additionally, with the ongoing construction of the Shedden wastewater treatment plant, OCWA and Township Staff took the opportunity to also discuss the future operations and maintenance of this plant. It was mutually agreed upon by both

parties, that it would be advantageous to have OCWA involved in the construction phase of the contract for potential future operations.

It should be noted that by agreeing to this change order, it doesn't guarantee that OCWA will operate and maintain the future wastewater treatment plant. Staff will be preparing and presenting a report for Council's consideration later this year which will include available options for operating this new plant (which is expected to be completed in Spring 2027).

#### Temporary Change in Scope:

The services covered over the seven months with the additional operator include the following:

- (Monthly): Flush all dead-ends June through to and including November for 32 locations.
- (Weekly): Complete and monitor all temporary dead-end flushing locations in Shedden and Fingal as part of ongoing construction activities (12 in total).
- (Weekly): Flush and monitor new dead-end flushing locations (three manual/one autoflusher) in Shedden Meadows.
- (End of year): Winterize all dead ends by early December.
- Attend all construction related meetings, commissioning, training for the Shedden wastewater treatment plant.
- Support any additional construction activities on the Drinking Water System including commissioning, repairs, services etc.
- As a gesture from OCWA, dead-end flushing for April and May were completed by OCWA Staff to assist getting the dead-end flushing program up and running during discussions between the Township and OCWA.

All the above duties will not fall under the responsibilities of a new operator. The operator will be dedicated entirely to Southwold for the seven months, and all employees in the Aylmer cluster, will have exposure to the construction of the treatment plant and will share the additional duties within the change order.

Township Staff recommends that Southwold Township Council, accepts the seven-month change order proposal presented by OCWA to provide an additional full-time operator at a 50/50 cost sharing agreement for a full-time operator with a termination date not to extend past seven months. This will assist the Township Staff in ensuring compliance is met with the Safe Drinking Water Act, Ontario One Call responsibilities, and assisting with preparing for the future operations of the Shedden/Fingal wastewater treatment plant.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

Attached as Appendix A, OCWA submitted a formal change order proposal on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026. The impact to the Drinking Water System is \$55,151.00. The structure of the change order is based on OCWA providing one full-time operator, along with associated costs of hiring the employee including PPE, vehicle, training etc. The cost is based on the Township covering 50% of the costs and that OCWA would cover the costs for the other 50%.

Although the change order identifies an expiration date of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027, the term technically ends seven months after approval. If approved by Council, the seven months would commence thereafter.

Subject to Township approval, OCWA is prepared to hire an operator to fulfill the obligations of this change order.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Mike Taylor  
Manager of Environmental Services

**Reviewed by:**

Aaron VanOorspronk, LET.  
Director of Infrastructure and  
Development Services

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk

<b>Change Being Requested – Southwold Township additional labour – 1 FTE</b>			
<b>Name of Change:</b>		<b>Additional FTE w/ shared cost</b>	
<b>Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA)</b>		<b>Per:</b> _____ <b>Name:</b> Jeff St Pierre <b>Title:</b> VP Operations	<b>Date (YYYY/MM/DD):</b> _____
<b>Client</b>		<b>Per:</b> _____ <b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Title:</b> _____	<b>Date (YYYY/MM/DD):</b> _____

<b>Adjustment</b>	
Check Appropriate Type of Change	
<b>Apply (Y/N)</b>	<b>Type of Change:</b>
Y	Adjustment to Estimate
Y	Change to Service
Y	Impact

<b>Adjustment to Estimate</b>
<b>Description – Attach Additional Documentation if Required</b>
<p>The Client has requested that OCWA share in the expense of a new FTE for 7 months ahead of the commissioning of a new Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection system in Shedden by January of 2027. OCWA and Southwold township will share the expense of this new FTE 50/50, as negotiated. This position will be added to the current five (5) year O&amp;M agreement that started January 1, 2026. The additional cost will be added for June -December of 2026 at which time it will end. January 1, 2027, a new Change Order can be added to the existing O&amp;M agreement to include full O&amp;M of new facilities and would include this FTE, negotiations pending.</p>

<b>Change in Services</b>
<b>Description – Attach Additional Documentation if Required</b>
<p>Client has requested an additional FTE for our O&amp;M partnership This new position will start in June 2026 as part of preparing for the commissioning of the new wastewater facility and collection system in Shedden, as this new facility is scheduled to start operating in January 2027. Starting a new FTE this June will allow for appropriate training on all commissioning including equipment and facilities ahead of the facility opening. The additional FTE will also be available to assist current staff with other operational tasks across the township, including dead-end flushing, as requested by Client.</p>

<b>Cost Breakdown for Change in Services</b>			
<b>Item</b>		<b>One-time Cost</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
One FTE Addition June 1 – Dec 31, 2026 (7 months)		\$55,151.00	
OCWA sharing cost of FTE with Client for 7 months.			
50% Client = \$55,151.00			
50% OCWA = \$55,151.00			
Total Cost = \$ 110,302.00			
	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$55,151.00</b>	



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Mike Taylor, Manager of Environmental Services

**REPORT NO:** IDS 2026-26

**SUBJECT MATTER: Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS):  
Lynhurst Park Drive – Management Review Report**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Report IDS 2026-26 relating to the 2026 DWQMS Management Review for Lynhurst Park Drive, be received for information.

#### **Purpose:**

This report is intended to inform the Township Council as to the outcome of the Management Review between the City of St. Thomas and the Township of Southwold, for the Lynhurst Park Drive drinking water infrastructure, which is a subsystem of Southwold's distribution system.

#### **Background:**

As a result of the Walkerton Tragedy in May of 2000, the Province of Ontario initiated the Municipal Drinking Water Licensing Program (MDWL). One of the key elements of the MDWL, required municipalities to implement a Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS). The DWQMS requires an Operational Plan, which is made up of 21 elements. One of the key elements of this plan is Element 20, Management Review.

The DWQMS requires that the Owner has a procedure in place for the Management Review which includes a list of topics that must be discussed. This review must be conducted at a minimum of once annually, between the Owner and the Operating Authority. The main purpose of completing the Management Review, is to evaluate the continuing suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of the Quality Management System. Items discussed during the Management Review process include:

- Emerging Issues.
- Operational Performance.
- Water Quality Results.

- Resource requirements.
- Infrastructure review.
- Life cycle or capital recommendations.

The results of the Management Review are reported to the Owner, through Council Reports as indicated in Element 20 of the Operational Plan.

**Comment/Analysis:**

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026, Township Staff met with St. Thomas Staff and conducted the Management Review of the Quality Management System. The review is completed collectively between the Owner (Southwold), and the Operating Authority (St. Thomas). On May 19<sup>th</sup>, the Operating Authority provided the meeting minutes to the Township. Attached as Appendix A to this report.

**Review Highlights (minutes):**

The below list highlights some of the pertinent information that has been extracted from the meeting minutes as provided by the City of St. Thomas. Please refer to the attached Management Review minutes for the complete list.

**Internal and Third-Party Audit Results:**

An internal along with an external audit were conducted since the last Management Review. The external audit identified one non-conformance relating to identifying a root cause when a non-conformance has been identified during an internal audit. This has now been resolved.

For the internal audit completed on November 6, 2025, no non-conformances were identified.

**Incidents of Regulatory Non- Compliance:**

The Lynhurst Park Drive subsystem drinking water infrastructure is not inspected as part of the St. Thomas' annual inspection and is captured during the annual inspection from the MECP on the entirety of Southwold's Drinking Water System.

**Incidents of Adverse Drinking-Water Tests:**

There were no incidents of adverse water tests reported in the subsystem.

**Effectiveness of the Risk Assessment Process:**

The Hazard Assessment Team last met on March 11, 2026, and undertook a complete re-assessment exercise. There were no new critical control points identified during this review.

**Results of Emergency Testing:**

Emergency response testing was completed through a debrief of a real emergency situation. This relates to a Boil Water Advisory in St. Thomas and specifics of the event are detailed in the minutes.

**Staff Suggestions:**

There were no staff suggestions recorded from the previous Management Review up until the end of 2025.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

N/A

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Mike Taylor  
Manager of Environmental Services


**Reviewed by:**

Aaron VanOorspronk, LET.  
Director of Infrastructure and  
Development Services

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell

CAO/Clerk

	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>DWQMS Management Review</b>  <b>Township of Southwold</b>  <b>(Lynhurst Park Drive)</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>May 19, 2026</b>  <b>2:30 PM</b>  <b>St. Thomas City Hall – Teams Meeting</b></p>
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# MEETING MINUTES

## Attendee(s)

- Present:**     **Mike Taylor** – Manager of Environmental Services, Twp of Southwold  
**Shayne Reitsma** – Manager of Development & Compliance, City of St. Thomas  
**Karel Kamerman** – Environmental Compliance Coordinator, City of St. Thomas
- Regrets:**     **Chris Andrew** – Manager of Water/Sewer, City of St. Thomas  
**Kevin De Leebeeck** – Director of Env. and Infra. Services/City Engineer

## Agenda Items

- a. Incidents Of Regulatory Non-Compliance**  
 The Township of Southwold - Lynhurst Park Drive drinking water infrastructure is a subsystem of the Southwold Distribution System and undergoes Ministry Inspection at the same time as the remainder of the Southwold Distribution System. The City of St. Thomas has had no contact with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) relating to the operation of the Southwold - Lynhurst Park System over the 2025 year.
- b. Incidents Of Adverse Drinking-Water Tests**  
 Zero (0) incidents of Adverse Drinking Water Tests were reported in the Southwold - Lynhurst Park System over the 2025 year.
- c. Deviations From Critical Control Point Limits and Response Actions**  
 Zero (0) deviations from the Chlorination Critical Control Point (CCP) were recorded in 2025 within the Southwold - Lynhurst Park System.
- **NOTE:** CCP’s related to backflow, discolouration and pressure have been removed, effective July 2025 version of the DWQMS, on the recommendation of our external auditor. Chlorination remains as the only critical control point for the system.
- d. Effectiveness Of the Risk Assessment Process**  
 The Hazard Assessment Team convened on October 2025 to assess the effect the addition of South Edgeware Booster Station to the drinking water systems, and the redundancies it provides in emergency response. The Team convened again on March 11, 2026 to complete a re-assessment exercise. No new critical control points for the Southwold - Lynhurst Park System were identified as part of these events.

**e. Internal And Third-Party Audit Results**

Two (2) audits of the DWQMS (reports attached as appendices) have been conducted since last management review.

All audit findings were placed in the corrective action tracking spreadsheet, discussed in a follow-up meeting, and corresponding actions were taken, or are planned, for each identified non-conformance, as described below. Opportunities for Improvement (OFI's) identified by auditors are also placed in the corrective action tracking spreadsheet and discussed in a follow-up meeting. Actions may or may not be taken in response to OFI's, based on the merit of the finding.

One (1) external audit was completed since the last management review.

From the external audit conducted on July 4, 2025, there was one (1) non-conformance identified related to the operation or maintenance of the Southwold (Lynhurst Area) Water System, as described below:

**NC #1: CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT** – Corrective Action processes are not fully effective. There is no evidence available to demonstrate that root causes are routinely identified for internal audit non-conformities. Eg. 2 NC's from May 2025 audit did not have root cause identified.

**Correction Made:** The 2 NC's from May 2025 were assessed for root cause.

**Continual Improvement:** A fishbone diagram was introduced to the DWQMS as a template to use to show root cause analysis has been performed.

One (1) internal audit was completed since the last management review.

From the internal audit conducted on November 6, 2025, there were no non-conformance findings related to the operation of the Southwold - Lynhurst Park Water System.

**f. Results Of Emergency Response Testing**

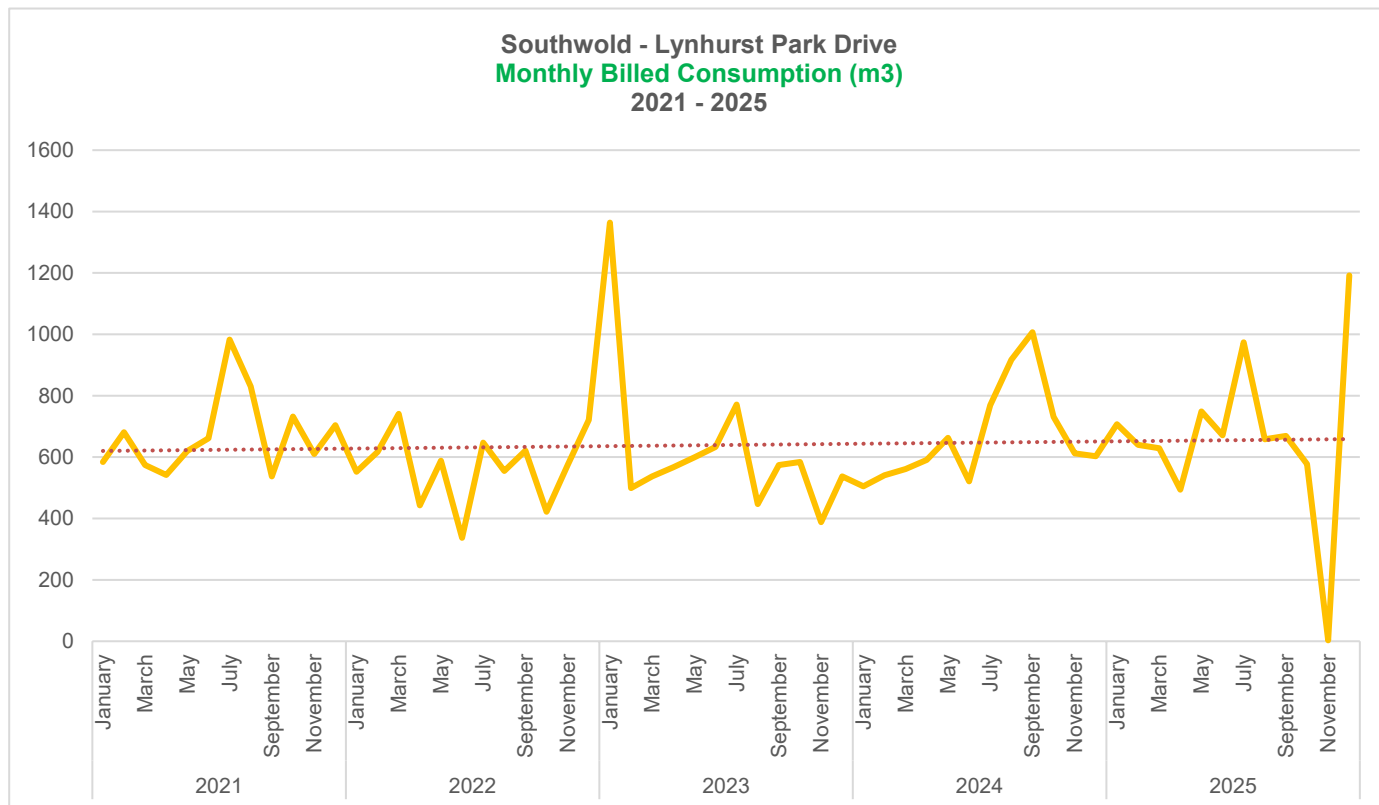
Emergency Response Testing was completed through the debrief of a real emergency situation encountered by the Operating Authority during 2025. Summaries are provided below of the resulting actions taken in response of the debrief exercise to better emergency responses in the future.

SYSTEM - Event	Action Items Identified (Status)
<p><b>STWDS</b> – Elm and Wilson Area Boil Water Advisory (Routine Sampling returned results indicating the presence of <i>E. coli</i> bacteria in the water for a sample collected from the Sample Station located at 80 Elm St.). The PHU issued a Boil Water Advisory for an area including approximately 500 homes. Notices were posted to social media. Resamples returned with no bacterial growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with PHU – Notification methods vs. affected area size. (<b>ON-GOING</b>: PHU is in the process of developing an internal procedure for our reference)</li> <li>• Determine internal limit for door-to-door notice delivery, regardless of PHU direction to hand deliver or not, update response procedure accordingly. (<b>COMPLETE</b>)</li> </ul>

**g. Operational Performance**

**Monthly Billed Consumption**

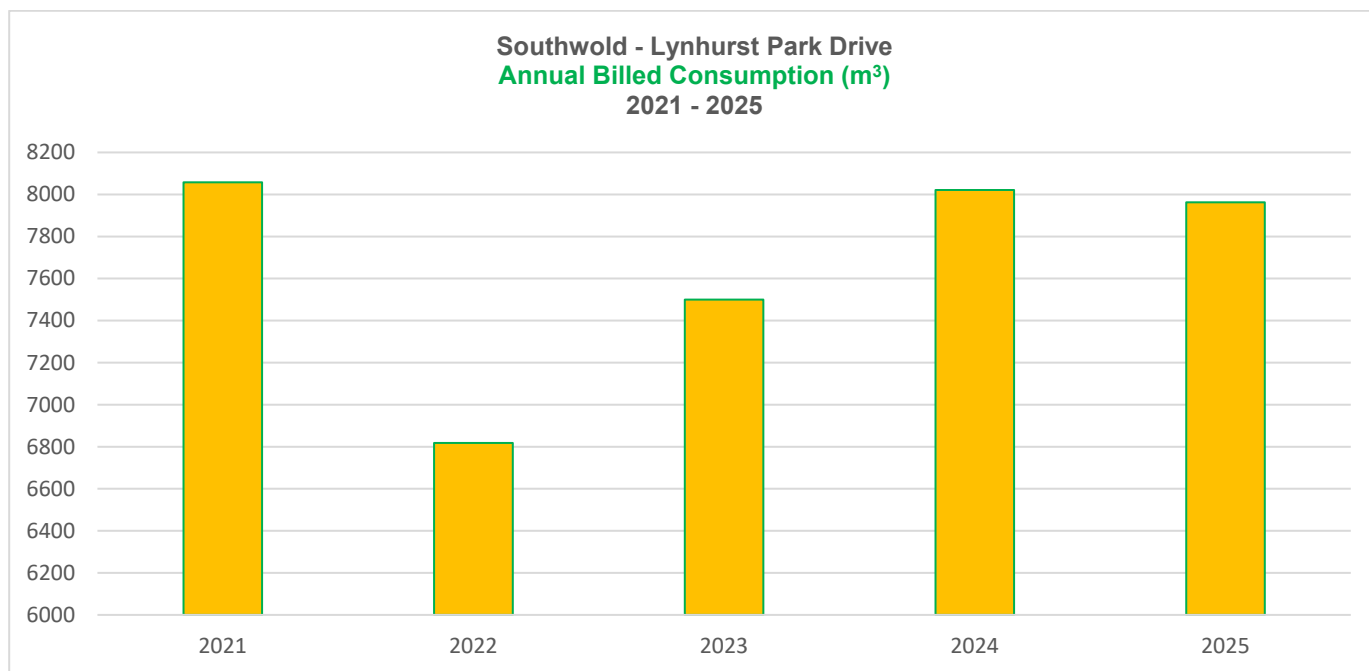
Monthly billed consumption data from 2021 – 2025 is presented in the table below. Note that billing issues in November 2025 resulted in the majority of those flows being billed in December.



**Annual Billed Consumption**

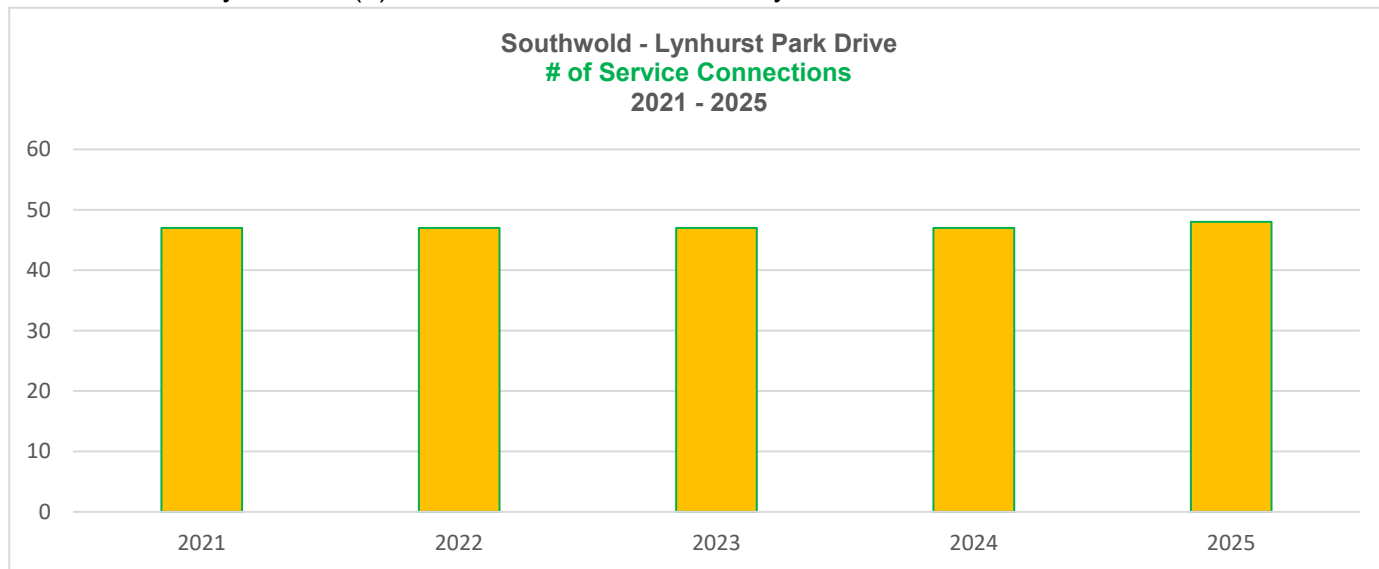
The table below demonstrates the Annual Billed Consumption for Southwold - Lynhurst Park System from 2021 -2025. Over the 2025 year, 7963 m<sup>3</sup> of water was consumed by users in the Southwold – Lynhurst Park System. This represents a decrease of 58 m<sup>3</sup> from 2024, or 0.7%.

A watermain replacement project in the area resulted in reduced usage being recorded in 2022.



**# of Connections**

Over the 2025 year, one (1) customer was added to the Lynhurst Park Drive area.



**Maintenance Tasks**

The following table provides a summary of Maintenance tasks completed in 2024 and to June 30, 2025.

Southwold - Lynhurst – Summary of Maintenance Completed		
Task	Maintenance Standard	2025
Valve Turning	Ongoing	100%
Hydrant Checks	Annual Maintenance Frost Checks as required	100% 2 complete rounds
Hydrant Painting	As required	None
Fire Flow Testing	On Demand	None
Directional Flushing	Annually	100%

**h. Raw Water Supply and Drinking Water Quality Trends**

**Raw Water Supply**

Raw water is supplied through the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System. On March 11, and October 1, 2025 the EAPWSS issued Taste and Odour Advisories. The March event was attributed to wind, rain and significant spring runoff and the Fall event, a result of lake-turnover. A summary of historical colour, taste and odour events is below:

Year	Summary of Event
2021	Fall – colour and odour event related to lake turnover events (numerous complaints received)
2022	Fall – pre-emptive communication, no noticeable deterioration in water quality (no complaints)
2023	Fall (November) – a number of taste and odour complaints from various locations throughout the city. PAC treatment resumed and complaints stopped.
2024	Fall (August) – lake turnover event.
2025	Spring (March) – EAPWSS issued advisory following a number of complaints.

	Fall (October – December 1) – EAPWSS issued pre-emptive notice following detection of Geosmin and MIB in raw water.
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**Water Quality Test Results**

Reviewed 2025 Southwold (Lynhurst Park Drive) Annual Summary Report.

A summary of historical water quality test results are below.

Microbiological Testing Result Summary				
Year	# samples	MAXIMUM <i>E. coli</i> result (cfu/100ml)	MAXIMUM Total Coliform result (cfu/100 ml)	Range of HPC results (cfu/mL)
2021	13	0	0	<10 - 970
2022	9**	0	0	<10 - 20
2023	12	0	0	<10 - 70
2024	13	0	0	<10 - 80
2025	13	0	0	<10 - 10

\*\* - a watermain replacement project in the area resulted in less routine samples taken in 2022.

Chlorine Residual Grab Sample Result Summary			
Year	# of samples	MINIMUM Free Chlorine Residual (mg/L)	MAXIMUM Free Chlorine Residual (mg/L)
2023	12	0.36	0.88
2024	13	0.31	1.02
2025	13	0.20	0.87

Trihalomethane / Haloacetic Acid Monitoring Result Summary Chemical Testing Results Summary (Sampled within St. Thomas)			
Year	# of samples	ANNUAL AVERAGE Total Trihalomethane's (ug/L)	ANNUAL AVERAGE Total Haloacetic Acids (ug/L)
2021	4	21.2	5.48
2022	4	19	5.3
2023	4	21.3	5.3
2024	4	21.8	5.3
2025	4	19	5.6

No discernable trends have been observed in drinking water quality based on water quality testing and monitoring results.

**i. Follow-up Action Items from Previous Management Reviews**

All action items identified in previous management reviews have been addressed. Three (3) action items were identified in the most recent management review.

Item #	Action	Deadline	Responsible Party	Status
--------	--------	----------	-------------------	--------

1.	Report Southwold – Lynhurst Management Review Meeting Minutes to Owner Representative.	10-31-2025	SR	Complete: October 1, 2025.
2.	Review Southwold Owner Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities and MR attendees with Owner reps to reflect desired set up with new Manager of Enviro Services.	12-31-2025	KK	MUN-DW-QMS-402 i[dated to reflect SW Manager of Enviro as mandatory MR attendee.
3.	CA to communicate flushing plans with MT for Lynhurst park drive so that they may communicate to their residents.	09-30-2025	CA	Flushing was completed.
4.	Review water and sewer billing (47 vs. 51) listings to determine which ones have only one service and confirm.	10-31-2025	KK	Three (3) St. Thomas water only customers were found to be coded to Southwold Lynhurst area. Accounts were corrected.
5.	Update audit documentation to identify which system each NC/OFI is applicable to, such that the city only reports on the findings applicable to that system at MR.	09-30-2025	KK	Complete.

**j. The Status of Management Action Items Identified Between Reviews**

No Management action items were identified between the reviews.

Throughout the year, there are many discussions between St. Thomas and Southwold with regards to operation and maintenance of the water distribution systems. Although there may not be any specific action items noted here, many discussions take place to help improve the system.

**k. Changes that Could Affect the DWQMS, QMS Elements, or Legislative Changes**

Anticipated changes that could have an effect on the DWQMS, include:

- DWQMS 3.0 has been approved – Conformance required by first audit in 2028.
- Director’s Directions for Minimum Requirements for Operational Plans has been updated. Allows for consolidation of operational plans for systems with different owners. City plans to consolidate Operational Plans to realize savings on audit costs and paperwork. – to be completed by December 31, 2026.
- MECP Best Management Practices have been published. Meetings have been set for May 2026 to consider their implementation.
- Work continues to proceed in area to provide water servicing for NW1.

**l. Consumer Feedback (including any concerns, complaints, or expectations from customers)**

Over the 2025 calendar year, one (1) service requests with regards to water quality or pressure issues were received by St. Thomas regarding the operation of the Lynhurst Park Drive. A summary of these service requests can be seen below:

Category	2025
Water Quality – Air	1
Water Pressure	0

**m. The Resources Needed to Maintain the Quality Management System**

There are adequate resources available to City of St. Thomas to maintain the DWQMS.

**n. The Results of the Infrastructure Review**

Proposed projects are listed below in the review. The results of the review allowed for coordination and awareness of planned works within the vicinity.

**STASWSS - Capital / Development Projects**

- o Water Tower Road Tower Project
- o Hwy 3 Bypass STASWSS re-routing
- o SEBS connection to STASWSS and St Thomas DWS

**o. Operational Plan Currency, Content, And Updates**

The St. Thomas Operational Plans were updated effective January 15, 2026, and revisions made to a number of procedures to reflect the Cities new Supervisor of Water and Sewer.

Significant changes made to the DWQMS since last management review include:

1. SEBS was inserted in system descriptions, etc. (MUN-DW-SOP-560)
2. Transitioning away from reference to Ford in STASWSS system. Ford Chamber now referenced as Clinton Line Chamber, likewise, the Ford Tower is now referenced as STASWSS Water Tower.
3. Inserted a discussion on how serviced population is estimated, to determine bacteriological sampling requirements, etc. (MUN-DW-QMS-1000)

Updates will be required in response to any system changes discussed in item K above.

**p. Staff Suggestions**

No staff suggestions were recorded over the 2025 calendar year.

Identified Action Items			
#	Description	Due Date	Responsible
1.	Report Southwold – Lynhurst Management Review Meeting Minutes to Owner Representative.	10-31-2026	SR
2.	Review fire flow data for area and colour coding of hydrants in Lynhurst Park Drive.	2026-05-31	KK
3.	Review flushing regime in Lynhurst Park Drive.	2026-05-31	KK
4.			
5.			

**Next Meeting Date: Spring 2027 (TBD)**

These minutes were completed by Karel Kamerman and reviewed by Shayne Reitsma, P.Eng.. Any changes or discrepancies should be forwarded to [kkamerman@stthomas.ca](mailto:kkamerman@stthomas.ca).



## NSF International Strategic Registrations Audit Report

### **City of St. Thomas Environmental & Infrastructure Services (TSWDS)**

545 Talbot Street P.O. Box 520  
St. Thomas, Ontario N5P 3V7 CAN

**C0811333**

#### **Audit Type**

Surveillance Audit

#### **Auditor**

Rose Johnson

#### **Standard**

Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2  
(Exp Date: 18-AUG-2027)

#### **Audit Date(s):**

07/04/2025 - 07/04/2025

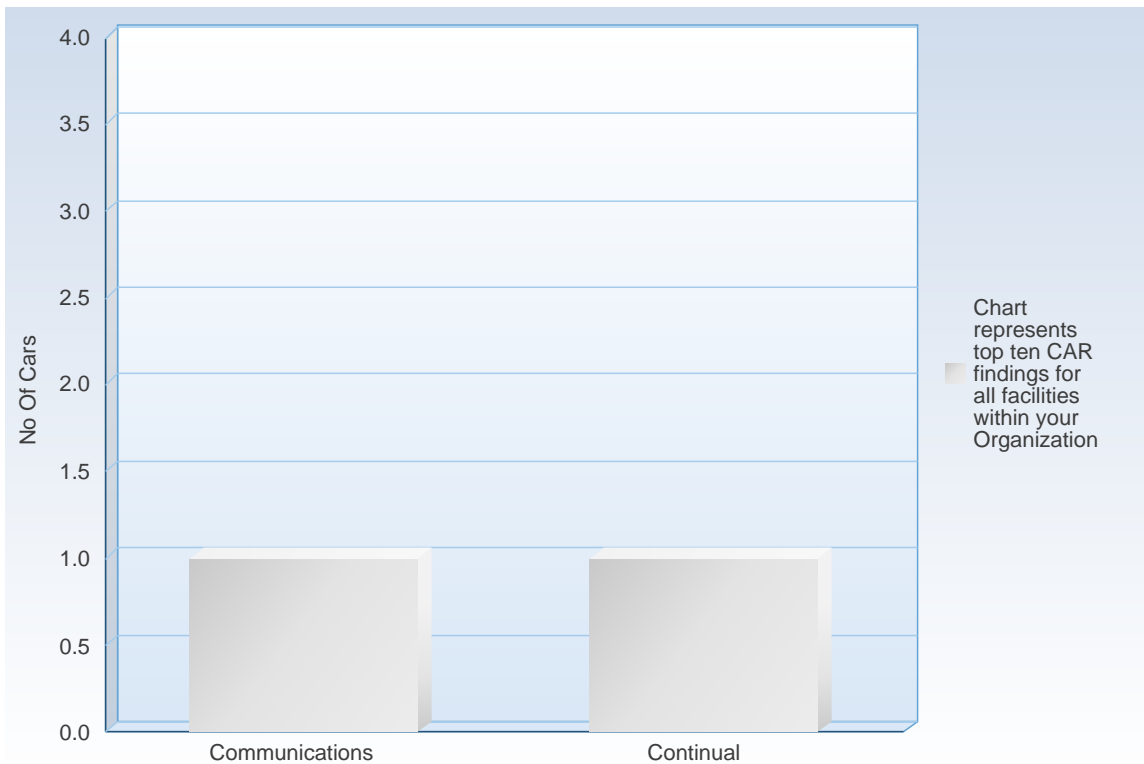
#### **Recommendation**

Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2 : Continue Certification  
Pending Closure of Minor NCR(s)



Executive Summary	
Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2	<p>This was a remote system audit for the Township of Southwold Water Distribution System - Lynhurst Area (TSWDS).</p> <p>The audit results are summarized as follows:            Zero major non-conformities (NCs)            One minor non-conformity            Five Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs)</p> <p>Please respond to the minor NC via NSF-Connect, with containment, root cause, and corrective action plan. Note: OFIs do not require a formal response, but are included in this report for consideration by the DWQMS team.</p> <p>The support and cooperation of all involved in the audit is acknowledged and appreciated. Thank you for choosing NSF for your DWQMS accreditation.</p>

Top 10 Non Compliant Standard Clauses  
 CAR Chart Displays Current and Previous Years Data



City of St. Thomas Environmental & Infrastructure Services

Standard Clause Description	
<b>Communications</b> <b>Continual Improvement</b>	
Opportunities	
Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2	See below
Corrective Action Request Summary By Type	
Car Type	Car Count
MINOR	1



## Corrective Action Request Summary By Standard Clause

Standard Clause	Car Count
Continual Improvement	1

## Corrective Action Requests

CAR No	T00015536369-1	Type	MINOR
Standard & Clause	DWQMSV2, Continual Improvement	Discussed with	Karel Kamerma / Shayne Reitsma
Auditor Name	Rose Johnson		
Statement of Requirement	PLAN – The Operating Authority shall develop a procedure for tracking and measuring continual improvement of its Quality Management System by:  ...b) documenting a process for identification and management of Quality Management System Corrective Actions that includes: i. investigating the cause(s) of an identified non-conformity, ii. documenting the action(s) that will be taken to correct the nonconformity and prevent the non-conformity from re-occurring, and iii. reviewing the action(s) taken to correct the non-conformity, verifying that they are implemented and are effective in correcting and preventing the re-occurrence of the nonconformity.		
Statement of Nonconformity	Corrective action processes are not fully effective		
Objective Evidence	There is no evidence available to demonstrate that root causes are routinely identified for internal audit nonconformities (NCs), e.g. 2 NCs resulting from the May 2025 internal audit.		
Location of Finding	Corrective action records		

## Corrective Action Information and Instructions

See NSF-ISR Policies for Accredited Registration Services for corrective action information and instructions. (Available in the "Standards and Policies" section of [NSFOnline](#))

Also, submit all corrective actions through [NSFOnline](#). For instructions on how to use [NSFOnline](#), please click "Help" in the upper right-hand corner. If you require any assistance in accessing your [NSFOnline](#) account, please contact your Registration Specialist (Natasha Kwas email: [KWAS@NSF-ISR.ORG](mailto:KWAS@NSF-ISR.ORG)).

## Site Information

The audit was based on a sampling of the company's management system.

### Industry Codes

N/A

### Scope of Registration

Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2 : Township of Southwold Water Distribution System (Lynhurst Area), 055-OA2, Entire Full Scope Accreditation



## Opportunities for Improvements

### Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2

Opportunity	Observations / Auditor Notes
Opportunities for Improvements (DWQMS)-01	<p><b>Location of OFI</b> Operational Plan;</p> <p><b>Discussed With</b> Karel Kamerman / Shayne Reitsma;</p> <p><b>Description</b> Although generally found to be meeting the requirements of the Standard, an opportunity exists to include a table of contents in the Operational Plan;</p>
Opportunities for Improvements (DWQMS)-02	<p><b>Location of OFI</b> Operational Plan - Commitment / Endorsement;</p> <p><b>Discussed With</b> Karel Kamerman / Shayne Reitsma;</p> <p><b>Description</b> Although generally found to be meeting the requirements of the Standard, an opportunity exists to reference Appendix A (top management endorsement) in Section 3 of the Operational Plan;</p>
Opportunities for Improvements (DWQMS)-03	<p><b>Location of OFI</b> Risk Assessment records;</p> <p><b>Discussed With</b> Karel Kamerman / Shayne Reitsma;</p> <p><b>Description</b> Although generally found to be meeting the requirements of the Standard, an opportunity exists to review identified CCPs to confirm that they can truly be controlled (vs. triggering a response).</p> <p>Note: repeated from previous audit;</p>
Opportunities for Improvements (DWQMS)-04	<p><b>Location of OFI</b> Management Review records;</p> <p><b>Discussed With</b> Karel Kamerman / Shayne Reitsma;</p> <p><b>Description</b> Although generally found to be meeting the requirements of the Standard, an opportunity exists to clarify the period covered by the Management Review;</p>
Opportunities for Improvements (DWQMS)-05	<p><b>Location of OFI</b> Continual Improvement / Corrective Action records;</p> <p><b>Discussed With</b> Karel Kamerman / Shayne Reitsma;</p> <p><b>Description</b> In addition to the minor nonconformity referenced in this report, consideration could be given to developing a numbering system for Nonconformities &amp; Opportunities for Improvement;</p>

## General Information

<b>Operating Authority: Legal Name &amp; Address</b>	<p><b>City of St. Thomas Environmental &amp; Infrastructure Services 545 Talbot Street, PO Box 520, St. Thomas, ON N4P 3V7</b></p>
<b>Owner: Legal Name and Address</b>	<p><b>The Corporation of the</b></p>



	<p><b>Township of Southwold, 35663 Fingal Line, Fingal, Ontario N0L 1K0</b></p> <p><b>Owner contact: Aaron Van Oorspronk; Tel: 519-769-2010; development@southwold.ca</b></p>
<b>Operating Authority Representative Information (Name, Title, Phone, Email &amp; Address, if different from the OA Address)</b>	<p><b>Karel Kamerman, Compliance Coordinator Tel: 519-631-1680 x4224 kkamerman@stthomas.ca www.stthomas.ca</b></p>
<b>Accreditation Option</b>	<b>Full Scope - Entire DWQMS</b>
<b>List Drinking water system names and Population of the Subject System(s)</b>	<b>Township of Southwold Water Distribution System (TSWDS): 146</b>
<b>Activities:</b>	<b>Distribution</b>

## Processes



<b>Summary of Findings</b>	
<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Finding</b>
1. Quality Management System	OFI
2. Quality Management System Policy	N/A
3. Commitment and Endorsement	OFI
4. Quality Management System Representative	C
5. Document and Record Control	N/A
6. Drinking-Water System	N/A
7. Risk Assessment	C
8. Risk Assessment Outcomes	OFI
9. Organizational Structure, Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities	N/A
10. Competencies	N/A
11. Personnel Coverage	N/A
12. Communications	N/A
13. Essential Supplies and Services	N/A
14. Review and Provision of Infrastructure	N/A
15. Infrastructure Maintenance, Rehabilitation & Renewal	N/A
16. Sampling, Testing & Monitoring	N/A
17. Measurement & Recording Equipment, Calibration & Maintenance	N/A
18. Emergency Management	N/A
19. Internal Audits	C
20. Management Review	OFI
21. Continual Improvement	Mn, OFI
<b>Mj</b>	Major Non-Conformity. The auditor has determined one of the following: (a) a required element of the DWQMS has not been incorporated into a QMS; (b) a systemic problem with a QMS is evidenced by two or more minor conformities; or (c) a minor non-conformity identified in a corrective action request has not been remedied.
<b>Mn</b>	Minor Non-Conformity. In the opinion of the auditor, part of a required element of the DWQMS has not been incorporated satisfactorily into a QMS.
<b>OFI</b>	Opportunity for Improvement. Conforms to requirement, but there is opportunity for improvement.
<b>C</b>	Conforms to requirement.
	Not Applicable to this audit
*	Additional Comment added by auditor in the body of the report.



## Verification of CARs For Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Version 2

**Have you verified the effectiveness of all previous CARs? (List all new CAR's that you initiated in this report because you did not verify effective implementation of a previous CAR)**

Yes.

**Discuss your evaluation in detail.**

Reviewed corrective action implementation relating to previous audit minor NC:

T00015468327-1– Communications

Previously confirmed that DW-ADMIN-800 Essential Supplies & Services Procedure has been updated to reflect removal of Anchem and addition of R&S Pools & Spas; related training records also previously reviewed, as well as signed Essential Supplier record for Elgin Pure Water.

One new Essential Supplier added since previous audit – Hach Sales & Service Canada – confirmed signed Essential Supplier record available, dated September 3, 2024. No further issues..

**Audit Date(s): November 6, 2025**

**Audit Objective:**

The objective of the internal audit was to verify and evaluate the degree of conformance of the City of St. Thomas' Quality Management System (QMS), utilized in the operation and maintenance of the St. Thomas Secondary - **STASWSS**, St. Thomas Distribution - **STWDS**, Southwold (Lynhurst Area) - **SW** and Central Elgin (St. Thomas Suburban Area) - **MCE** Drinking Water Systems, to Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard, Version 2.0. The internal audit will provide an opportunity to identify process variations within the QMS by auditing all elements. By identifying these sources of variation and by eliminating them through the application of effective corrective action, the operating authority can begin to focus on preventive action and continual improvement.

**Audit Scope:**

The internal audit was conducted on November 6th, 2025. Physical inspections of the Albert Roberts Pump Station and South Edgeware Booster Station were undertaken as part of this audit. The internal audit was conducted as outlined in MUN-DW- ADMIN-1200, Rev. 2.9 of the QMS manual. The internal audit was carried out through a review of a sampling of documents and records, interviews and observations by the auditors to demonstrate conformance with the standard by auditing a sampling of elements as the action items from non-conforming items from the Spring 2025 internal or August 2025 external audit have yet to come due. The review and audit should not be construed as a complete and comprehensive review of all aspects, documents and records.

**Internal Auditor(s):**

- LEAD: Karel Kamerman, Environmental Compliance Coordinator

Auditor Qualifications can be found in Appendix A to this report.

**Audit Criteria:**

Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Standard – Version 2.0 as released in February 2017.

**Definitions:**

- A non-conformance (NC) is a non-fulfillment of the QMS Operational Plan.
- An opportunity for improvement (OFI) describes a requirement that can be more effectively addressed.

**Audit Findings:**

The following is a summary of the audit findings, including non-conformances and opportunities for improvement. The detailed checklist can be found in Appendix B of this report.

**Non-Conformances:**

~ None ~

**Opportunities for Improvement**

**OFI#1: Essential Supplies and Services**

**Applies to: STWDS**

An OFI exists to list fuel supplier and an alternate in the essential supplies and services listing and obtain a DWQMS acknowledgement sign-off form from them.

**OFI#2: Essential Supplies and Services**

**Applies to: ALL**

An OFI exists to review the OP for references to Execulink and update to reflect Rogers wireless communications, and ERAMOSA as service provider for communications issues.

**OFI#3: Drinking Water System**

**Applies to: STWDS, STASWSS**

An OFI exists to complete the review and update of documentation to reflect the addition of SEBS to the systems.

**OFI#4: Drinking Water System**

**Applies to: STWDS**

An OFI exists to review the microbiological and residual sampling plans and update and ensure the YY area is adequately covered.

**OFI#5: Measurement and Recording**

**Applies to: SW, STWDS, STASWSS**

An OFI exists to complete a review of the equipment listing vs. equipment on site vs. calibration records and verify identification information for equipment at each site.



**DRINKING WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

**Appendix A**



# CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

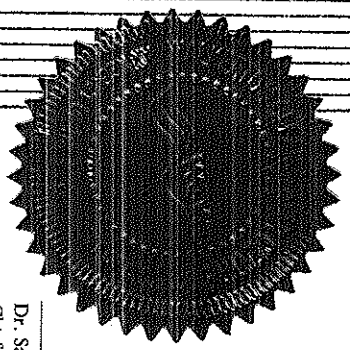
**KAREL KAMERMAN**

*has successfully completed the*

*Internal Auditing for the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard Course*

**November 5 & 6, 2009**

**Director Approved Continuing Education Units: 1.4**



Dr. Saad Jastim, P. Eng.  
Chief Executive Officer

WWW.WCWC.CA

November 6, 2009  
Date



**DRINKING WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM  
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

**Appendix B**

<b>PROCEDURE TITLE</b>		<b>DWQMS AUDIT CHECKLIST</b>			
<b>PROCEDURE No.</b>		MUN-DW-QMS-1202F	<b>REVIEW FREQUENCY</b>		Annually
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	June 1, 2009	<b>REVISION No.</b>	2.9	<b>REVISION DATE</b>	July 1, 2025
<b>APPROVAL BY</b>	Manager of Development & Compliance				
<b>APPLICABLE TO THE FOLLOWING DRINKING WATER SYSTEM(S):</b>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Thomas Secondary		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Thomas Distribution		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southwold Distribution	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Central Elgin Distribution					

<b>DATE OF INTERNAL AUDIT:</b>	<del>October 22, 2025</del> <sup>31/11</sup> <b>November 6/25</b>
<b>AUDITOR NAMES:</b>	Karel Kamerman
<b>DRINKING WATER SYSTEM(S):</b>	STASWSS St. Thomas WDS Southwold DWS (Lynhurst Park Drive) Central Elgin DWS (St. Thomas Suburban Areas)
<b>AREA(S)/FACILITY VISITED:</b>	SEBS ARBS Collective System in Yarmouth Yards.
<b>PEOPLE INTERVIEWED:</b>	Chris Andrew <del>Chris Kenny</del> John Marrs.
<b>DOCUMENTS VIEWED:</b>	↳ Audit Report (Spring 2025). ↳ CAS (external Audit). ↳ CS Trading Spence sheet. ↳ Calibration Records

DWQMS Requirement	Notes	Findings (C/OFI/NC)
<p><b>1. Quality Management System PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a QMS that meets the requirements of this Standard.</p>		
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall establish and maintain the QMS in accordance with the requirements of this Standard and the policies and procedures documented in the Operational Plan.</p>		
<p><b>2. Quality Management System Policy PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a QMS Policy that provides the foundation for the QMS, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) includes a commitment to the maintenance and continual improvement of the QMS,</li> <li>b) includes a commitment to the consumer to provide safe drinking water,</li> <li>c) includes a commitment to comply with applicable legislation and regulations, and</li> <li>d) is in a form that provides for ready communication to all Operating Authority personnel, the Owner and the public.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> <li>c)</li> <li>d)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall establish and maintain a QMS that is consistent with the Policy.</p>		
<p><b>3. Commitment and Endorsement PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall contain a written endorsement of its contents by Top Management and the Owner.</p>		
<p><b>DO</b> - Top Management shall provide evidence of its commitment to an effective QMS by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring that a QMS is in place that meets the requirements of this Standard,</li> <li>b) ensuring that the Operating Authority is aware of all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements,</li> <li>c) communicating the QMS according to the procedure for</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> <li>c)</li> </ul>

<p>communications, and d) determining, obtaining or providing the resources needed to maintain and continually improve the QMS.</p>		d)
<p><b>4. Quality Management System Representative</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall identify a QMS representative.</p>		
<p><b>DO</b> - Top Management shall appoint, and authorize a QMS representative who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) administer the QMS by ensuring that processes and procedures needed for the QMS are established and maintained,</li> <li>b) report to Top Management on the performance of the QMS and any need for improvement,</li> <li>c) ensure that current versions of documents required by the QMS are being used at all times,</li> <li>d) ensure that personnel are aware of all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements that pertain to their duties for the operation of the subject system, and</li> <li>e) promote awareness of the QMS throughout the Operating Authority.</li> </ul>		a)
		b)
		c)
		d)
		e)
<p><b>5. Document and Records Control</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for document and records control that describes how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) documents required by the QMS are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. kept current, legible and readily identifiable</li> <li>ii. retrievable</li> <li>iii. stored, protected, retained and disposed of, and</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) records required by the QMS are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. kept legible, and readily identifiable</li> <li>ii. retrievable</li> <li>iii. stored, protected, retained and disposed of.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		a)i.
		a)ii.
		a)iii.
		b)i.
		b)ii.
		b)iii.
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure for document and records control and shall ensure that the QMS documentation for the</p>		

<p>subject system includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the Operational Plan and its associated policies and procedures,</li> <li>b) documents and records determined by the Operating Authority as being needed to ensure the effective planning, operation and control of its operations, and</li> <li>c) the results of internal and external audits and management reviews.</li> </ul>		a)
<p><b>6. Drinking-Water System PLAN</b> – The Operational Plan shall document, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) for the Subject System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the name of the Owner and Operating Authority,</li> <li>ii. if the system includes equipment that provides Primary Disinfection and/or Secondary Disinfection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. a description of the system including all applicable Treatment System processes and Distribution System components,</li> <li>B. a Treatment System process flow chart,</li> <li>C. a description of the water source, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. general characteristics of the raw water supply,</li> <li>II. common event-driven fluctuations, and</li> <li>III. any resulting operational challenges and threats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. if the system does not include equipment that provides Primary Disinfection or Secondary Disinfection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. a description of the system including all Distribution System components, and</li> <li>B. a description of any procedures that are in place to maintain disinfection residuals.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>b) if the Subject System is an Operational Subsystem, a summary description of the Municipal</li> </ul>	<p><i>None confirmed (D'Arcy C.A. deadlines of Dec. 2025)</i></p> <p><i>-viewed DRAFT OPM Manual &amp; updated Sample locations &amp; <del>Chlorination</del> Discharge Maps.</i></p> <p><i>OPI <del>at</del> Marquette Yards Kent SEBS not currently commissioned. Remedial to reflect in documents w/in 1 yr.</i></p> <p><i>OPI Fuel Supplier: (Sign-off form)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) i.</li> <li>a) ii.</li> <li>A.</li> <li>B.</li> <li>C. I.</li> <li>C. II.</li> <li>C. III.</li> <li>a) iii. A.</li> <li>a) iii. B.</li> <li>b)</li> </ul>

<p>Residential Drinking Water System it is a part of including the name of the Operating Authority(ies) for the other Operational Subsystems.</p> <p>c) if the Subject System is connected to one or more other Drinking Water Systems owned by different Owners, a summary description of those systems which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. indicates whether the Subject System obtains water from or supplies water to those systems,</li> <li>ii. names the Owner and Operating Authority(ies) of those systems, and</li> <li>iii. identifies which, if any, of those systems that the Subject System obtains water from are relied upon to ensure the provision of safe drinking water.</li> </ul>		c) i.
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall ensure that the description of the drinking-water system is kept current.</p>		c) ii.
<p><b>7. Risk Assessment</b> <b>PLAN</b> – The Operational Plan shall document a risk assessment process that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Considers potential hazardous events and associated hazards, as identified in the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change document titled Potential Hazardous Events for Municipal Residential Drinking Water Systems, dated April 2022 as it may be amended. A copy of this document is available at <a href="http://www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater">www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater</a>.</li> <li>b) identifies additional potential hazardous events and associated hazards,</li> <li>c) assesses the risks associated with the occurrence of hazardous events,</li> <li>d) ranks the hazardous events according to the associated risk,</li> <li>e) identifies control measures to address the potential hazards and hazardous events,</li> <li>f) identifies Critical Control Points,</li> </ul>		c) iii.
		a)
		b)
		c)
		d)
		e)
		f)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) identifies a method to verify, at least once every calendar year, the currency of the information and the validity of the assumptions used in the risk assessment,</li> <li>h) ensures that the risks are assessed at least once every thirty-six months, and</li> <li>i) considers the reliability and redundancy of equipment.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g)</li> <li>h)</li> <li>i)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall perform a risk assessment consistent with the documented process.</p>		
<p><b>8. Risk Assessment Outcomes</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the identified potential hazardous events and associated hazards,</li> <li>b) the assessed risks associated with the occurrence of hazardous events,</li> <li>c) the ranked hazardous events,</li> <li>d) the identified control measures to address the potential hazards and hazardous events</li> <li>e) the identified critical control points and their respective critical control limits,</li> <li>f) procedures and/or processes to monitor the critical control limits,</li> <li>g) procedures to respond to deviations from the critical control limits, and</li> <li>h) procedures for reporting and recording deviations from the critical control limits.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> <li>c)</li> <li>d)</li> <li>e)</li> <li>f)</li> <li>g)</li> <li>h)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedures.</p>		
<p><b>9. Organizational Structure, Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) describe the organizational structure of the Operating Authority including respective roles, responsibilities and authorities,</li> <li>b) delineate corporate oversight roles, responsibilities and authorities in the case where the Operating</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> </ul>

<p>Authority operates multiple subject systems,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) identify the person, persons or group of people within the management structure of the organization responsible for undertaking the Management Review,</li> <li>d) identify the person, persons or group of people, having Top Management responsibilities required by this Standard, along with their responsibilities, and</li> <li>e) Identify the Owner of the subject system.</li> </ul>		<p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>e)</p>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall keep current the description of the organizational structure including respective roles, responsibilities and authorities, and shall communicate this information to Operating Authority personnel and the Owner.</p>		
<p><b>10. Competencies</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) competencies required for personnel performing duties directly affecting drinking water quality,</li> <li>b) activities to develop and/or maintain competencies for personnel performing duties directly affecting drinking water quality, and</li> <li>c) activities to ensure that personnel are aware of the relevance of their duties and how they affect safe drinking water.</li> </ul>		<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall undertake activities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) meet and maintain competencies for personnel directly affecting drinking water quality and shall maintain records of these activities, and</li> <li>b) ensure that personnel are aware of the relevance of their duties and how they affect safe drinking water, and shall maintain records of these activities.</li> </ul>		<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>

<p><b>11. Personnel Coverage</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure to ensure that sufficient personnel meeting identified competencies are available for duties that directly affect drinking water quality.</p>		
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure.</p>		
<p><b>12. Communications</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for communications that describes how the relevant aspects of the QMS are communicated between Top Management and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the Owner,</li> <li>b) Operating Authority personnel,</li> <li>c) Suppliers that have been identified as essential under Plan (a) of Element 13 of this Standard, and,</li> <li>d) the public.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> <li>c)</li> <li>d)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure.</p>		
<p><b>13. Essential Supplies and Services</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) identify all supplies and services essential for the delivery of safe drinking water and shall state, for each supply or service, the means to ensure its procurement, and</li> <li>b) include a procedure by which the Operating Authority ensures the quality of essential supplies and services, in as much as they may affect drinking water quality.</li> </ul>	<p><i>OFF Fuel Supplies not listed. Pak-test reagents not listed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXECOLINK</li> <li>b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ERAMOSA instead</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement the procedure.</p>		
<p><b>14. Review and Provision of Infrastructure</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for reviewing the adequacy of the infrastructure necessary to operate and maintain the Subject System that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Considers the outcomes of the risk assessment documented under Element 8, and</li> <li>b) Ensures that the adequacy of the infrastructure necessary to operate and maintain the Subject System is reviewed at least once every Calendar Year.</li> </ul>	<p><i>ADD REFUEL (24 Hour) + Parker Keros. AH.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sud sigheffo Chris</li> <li>b)</li> </ul>

*OK! Conf analysis done SPS*

<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure and communicate the findings of the review to the Owner.</p>		
<p><b>15. Infrastructure Maintenance, Rehabilitation and Renewal PLAN</b> – The Operational Plan shall document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a summary of the Operating Authority's infrastructure maintenance, rehabilitation and renewal programs for the Subject System, and</li> <li>b) a long term forecast of major infrastructure maintenance, rehabilitation and renewal activities.</li> </ul>		<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>
<p><b>DO</b> – The Operating Authority shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) keep the summary of the infrastructure maintenance, rehabilitation and renewal programs current,</li> <li>b) ensure that the long term forecast is reviewed at least once every Calendar Year,</li> <li>c) communicate the programs to the Owner, and</li> <li>d) monitor the effectiveness of the maintenance program.</li> </ul>		<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p>
<p><b>16. Sampling, Testing and Monitoring PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a sampling, testing and monitoring procedure for process control and finished drinking water quality including requirements for sampling, testing and monitoring at the conditions most challenging to the subject system,</li> <li>b) a description of relevant sampling, testing or monitoring activities that take place upstream of the subject system, and</li> <li>c) a procedure that describes how sampling, testing and monitoring results are recorded and shared between the Operating Authority and the Owner, where applicable.</li> </ul>		<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p>
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedures.</p>		

*Chubino No EAST,*

*(Serial#)*

*→ Southside Chubino Passover.  
Wallerstein Rd Passover.  
No Ford Tower; No Ford Chamber?*

*OK*

<p><b>17. Measurement and Recording Equipment Calibration and Maintenance PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for the calibration and maintenance of measurement and recording equipment.</p>		
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure.</p>		
<p><b>18. Emergency Management PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure to maintain a state of emergency preparedness that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a list of potential emergency situations or service interruptions,</li> <li>b) processes for emergency response and recovery,</li> <li>c) emergency response training and testing requirements,</li> <li>d) Owner and Operating Authority responsibilities during emergency situations,</li> <li>e) references to municipal emergency planning measures as appropriate, and</li> <li>f) an emergency communication protocol and an up-to-date list of emergency contacts.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Diagonal line</i></p>	a)
		b)
		c)
		d)
		e)
		f)
<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure.</p>		
<p><b>19. Internal Audits PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for internal audits that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) evaluates conformity of the QMS with the requirements of this Standard,</li> <li>b) identifies internal audit criteria, frequency, scope, methodology and record-keeping requirements,</li> <li>c) considers previous internal and external audit results, and</li> <li>d) describes how Quality Management System corrective actions are identified and initiated.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Diagonal line</i></p>	a)
		b)
		c)
		d)

*Transit*

<p><b>DO</b> - The Operating Authority shall implement and conform to the procedure and shall ensure that internal audits are conducted at least once every calendar year.</p>		
<p><b>20. Management Review</b> <b>PLAN</b> - The Operational Plan shall document a procedure for management review that evaluates the continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the QMS and that includes consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) incidents of regulatory non-compliance,</li> <li>b) incidents of adverse drinking-water tests,</li> <li>c) deviations from critical control point limits and response actions,</li> <li>d) the effectiveness of the risk assessment process,</li> <li>e) internal and third-party audit results,</li> <li>f) results of emergency response testing,</li> <li>g) operational performance,</li> <li>h) raw water supply and drinking water quality trends,</li> <li>i) follow-up on action items from previous management reviews,</li> <li>j) the status of management action items identified between reviews,</li> <li>k) changes that could affect the QMS,</li> <li>l) consumer feedback,</li> <li>m) the resources needed to maintain the QMS,</li> <li>n) the results of the infrastructure review,</li> <li>o) Operational Plan currency, content and updates, and</li> <li>p) staff suggestions.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> <li>b)</li> <li>c)</li> <li>d)</li> <li>e)</li> <li>f)</li> <li>g)</li> <li>h)</li> <li>i)</li> <li>j)</li> <li>k)</li> <li>l)</li> <li>m)</li> <li>n)</li> <li>o)</li> <li>p)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DO</b> - Top Management shall implement and conform to the procedure and shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensure that a management review is conducted at least once every calendar,</li> <li>b) consider the results of the management review and identify</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a)</li> </ul>

<p>deficiencies and actions items to address the deficiencies,</p> <p>c) provide a record of any decisions and action items related to the management review including the personnel responsible for delivering the action items and the proposed timelines for their implementation,</p> <p>d) report the results of the management review, the identified deficiencies, decisions and action items to the Owner.</p>		b)
<p><b>21. Continual Improvement PLAN</b> – The Operating Authority shall develop a procedure for tracking and measuring continual improvement of its QMS by:</p> <p>a) reviewing and considering applicable best management practices, including any published by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and available on <a href="http://www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater">www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater</a>, at least once every thirty-six months;</p> <p>b) documenting a process for identification and management of QMS Corrective Actions that includes:</p> <p>i. investigating the cause(s) of an identified non-conformity,</p> <p>ii. documenting the action(s) that will be taken to correct the non-conformity and prevent the non-conformity from re-occurring, and</p> <p>iii. reviewing the action(s) taken to correct the non-conformity, verifying that they are implemented and are effective in correcting and preventing the re-occurrence of the non-conformity.</p> <p>c) documenting a process for</p>		a)
		b) i.
		b) ii.
		b) iii.

<p>identifying and implementing Preventive Actions to eliminate the occurrence of potential non-conformities in the QMS that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. reviewing potential non-conformities that are identified to determine if preventive actions may be necessary,</li> <li>ii. documenting the outcome of the review, including the action(s), if any, that will be taken to prevent a non-conformity from occurring, and</li> <li>iii. reviewing the action(s) taken to prevent a non-conformity, verifying that they are implemented and are effective in preventing the occurrence of the non-conformity.</li> </ul>		c) i.
<p><b>DO-</b> The Operating Authority shall strive to continually improve the effectiveness of its QMS through the use of corrective actions.</p>		c) ii.
		c) iii.

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## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Aaron Van Oorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

**REPORT NO:** IDS 2026-27

**SUBJECT MATTER: Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Council adopt the Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan dated February 2026 prepared by pl.ural.

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for the adoption of the Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails and Master Plan. This plan is intended to guide the future development, enhancement, and management of the Township's parks and recreational trail systems, ensuring they meet community needs and support a high quality of life for residents now and in the years to come.

#### **Background:**

A comprehensive Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan provides significant benefits to the Township by establishing a coordinated framework for the long-term development, enhancement, and stewardship of local parks and trail systems. The decision to undertake this project arose from a recognized need to ensure that these community amenities continue to meet evolving resident needs, especially as residential development progresses. The plan and the facilities that result support healthy lifestyles and contribute to the Township's overall quality of life. Initiated in early 2025, the planning process was guided by robust public and stakeholder consultation, including input from municipal staff, Council, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, user groups, and volunteers. A draft version of the Master Plan was presented to Council as a delegation at its regular meeting on September 22, 2025, inviting further comment and review. Feedback received from Council and other commenting agents was subsequently provided to the consultant for incorporation, ensuring that the final plan is responsive, inclusive, and reflective of community priorities.

**Comment/Analysis:**

The final version of the Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan was submitted by the consultant on February 22, 2026. Council asked that the final draft report be presented to a combined committee meeting, between the Parks and Keystone Committees. The committees had some additional comments which were compiled and sent to the consultant for review and consideration in the report. The final plan was submitted in May 2026, Township staff conducted a comprehensive review of the document, ensuring that all requested amendments and feedback from Council and stakeholders were thoroughly addressed and integrated into the final plan. The final revision of the Parks and Trails Master Plan is attached to this report as Appendix "A". Staff are satisfied that the plan is responsive to community input and aligns with the Township's objectives for park and trail development. Accordingly, staff recommend that Council formally adopt the Master Plan as presented. Following adoption, the plan will be made publicly available on the Township's official website, providing residents, stakeholders, and interested parties with convenient access. Additionally, the adopted plan will serve as an authoritative guide for future parks and recreation initiatives, supporting informed decision-making and the continued enhancement of local amenities.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

This plan does not entail any direct or immediate financial impacts; rather, it will serve as a guiding framework for future decisions related to Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Trails as Council evaluates capital projects, development initiatives, strategies, and more. The report includes capital plans with cost estimates in 2025 dollars, prepared in accordance with the recommendations of the Master Plan. Implementation of these projects and their respective timelines are contingent upon individual Council approvals, typically addressed during annual budget reviews.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Aaron VanOorspronk, LET.  
Director of Infrastructure and  
Development Services

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell

CAO/Clerk



# Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan



**Final Report**

Last Revised: February 2026

## Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan

Prepared for:



### Township of Southwold:

Municipal Team:

**Aaron VanOorspronk**, Director of Infrastructure & Development Services

**Jeff Carswell**, CAO/Clerk

**Corey Pemberton**, Director of Building & Community Services/CBO

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# 1.0 Overview & Summary

# 1.1 Understanding the Master Plan

## 1.1.1 A Set of Strategies

It is a common belief that a township anticipating a magnitude of change to its parks and recreational trail system over the next few decades requires a master plan, to shape that change so that constituent projects work together to form a cohesive whole. While popular, it is a common misunderstanding that it is desirable and somehow possible to firmly fix the shape of years, likely decades, of future upgrades and development through a single plan. Plans that try to predefine the future in this way tend to present more rigidity of the constituent projects (and its community members) and often, many of these projects are abandoned. This leads to an opposite feeling about master plans — that they should be as vague as possible to allow for future flexibility, minimize constraints on township and community advisory committees and councils, and allow park and recreational trail planning creativity to flourish.

The Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan take neither of the above approaches. Its central theme is that the Township parks and recreational trail network is greater than its parts, and that the whole can be beneficially designed, or at least directed, but not in the same way that other elements (e.g., community facilities, buildings, etc.) are designed. It must be sufficiently flexible to respond to its own evolution. The Master Plan, is therefore in essence, a set of strategies, that will last well into time, and that are clearly definitive as to intent but not to final form.

## 1.1.2 Implementation through Communal and Constituent Projects

The Township parks and recreational trail network is made up of two types of projects: the communal and the constituent. Communal projects are what might be referred to as ‘public works’. They deal with linkages, frameworks, management, and supporting services. Constituent projects are those undertaken by various Township departments, focus groups, and support groups — recreation and sport, environmental consideration, economic development. They meet their

own private needs, but they should also address public needs — through design and implementation in alignment with strategies outlined in 4.0 Planning Strategies on page 33 of this report.

### **1.1.3 Reinforcing the Best, Repairing the Rest**

The Master Plan is founded on existing conditions and an evolving context — a result of development history, physical relationships with neighbouring properties, natural features, changing climate, and the spirit of the place.

A significant portion of the Master Plan is a reaffirmation of strengths, an attempt to enhance existing infrastructure, policy and procedure, or to repair unsatisfactory aspects of the Township parks and recreational trail system. With unique natural heritage, diverse user groups, strong community connection to the land, parks, and trails themselves, there is ample potential awaiting action.

A smaller percentage of the Master Plan deals with new ideas, understanding that making a whole and resilient Township parks and recreational trail system is a bigger idea than trying to be new.

### **1.1.4 A Commitment**

Pursuit of this initiative — creation, adoption, and action upon the Master Plan — exemplifies a commitment by the Township of Southwold to establishing and maintaining sustainable parks and recreational trail planning, development and management practices moving forward. Furthermore, it acknowledges that the Township parks and trails network is, and will continue to be, an important part of the fabric of the community — supporting healthy active lifestyles, community connections, access to nature, and strengthening community identity.

## 1.2 Summary of Planning Strategies

More detail on each strategy is provided in 4.0 Planning Strategies on page 33 of this report.

### 1.2.1 Environmental Quality

#### **Quality, Permanence & Economy**

The Township will be committed to quality, permanence, and life-cycle economy in all its park and trail development, maintenance, and renewal projects. All design and product decisions will be based on life-cycle as well as first capital costs.

#### **Environmental Responsibility & Stewardship**

Parks and trails are sought after by residents and visitors alike, as a means to access, explore, and connect with nature. The Township should provide community leadership in responsible and effective environmental action through mindful park and trail development (i.e., design, alignment, construction, renewal, etc.) and community outreach.

#### **The Spirit of the Place**

The design of new projects should embrace the character of the area, which is fundamental to the established image of the community. Moving forward, consistency will be paramount — contributing to a strong, authentic sense of place, that welcomes residents and visitors alike.

#### **A Network Approach**

A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of properties, segments, and/or the sum of those parts — it is a system. The Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.

## **Trail Safety & Risk Management**

The Township must strive to establish and maintain safe park and recreational trail environments, to welcome residents and visitors alike. To ensure a safe trail network, the Township must identify an accepted level of risk, produce documents, policies, and procedures, and act upon them.

## **Respecting Neighbours**

The Township will seek to maintain positive relationships with park and trail neighbours by identifying and addressing common issues, seeking appropriate permissions, and mitigating the impact of park and recreational trail use, activity and development on adjacent land uses.

### **1.2.2 Project Design**

#### **Preserve the Best, Repair the Rest**

Projects will be identified to preserve park and trail assets, favour the repair of problem sites, and avoid compromising good quality structures, buildings, and landscapes.

#### **Designing Safe Spaces**

Landscapes, built forms, furnishings, fixtures, and lighting throughout township parks and trail environments must be designed and managed to promote personal safety.

#### **Accessibility, Barrier Free Environments**

The Township recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality.

#### **Trail Ownership & Alignment**

The Township will ensure that existing township trails and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s).

### **Trail Classification & Standards**

The Township will establish, adopt, and comply with a defined trail standard, demonstrating proper due diligence, ensuring thorough inspection and maintenance, and informing future trail construction.

### **Trail Design, Managed & Designed Use**

With such diversity in terms of trail use, the Township should adopt the concept of managed and designed use, an industry best practice, to inform trail management and design parameters.

### **Trail Management**

The Township will employ a hybrid approach to trail management, relying on qualified township staff and professional trail contractors, to conduct regular trail inspection, assessment, monitoring and maintenance.

### **Constituent and Communal Needs**

Generally, projects should focus on the communal needs of the community as a whole; even projects established to meet the needs of a particular user group will contribute to the communal needs of the community, accordingly.

## **1.2.3 Identity and Movement**

### **Entry, Orientation and Wayfinding**

The Township will seek ways to give the township parks and recreational trail network a stronger sense of identity, well-defined entrances, and an easy sense of orientation.

### **Pedestrian Circulation**

Pedestrian zones — paths, walkways, trails, open spaces that facilitate movement — are defining features of parks. They should be strategically positioned and expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement.

## **Pedestrian Trail Crossings**

The Township will ensure that pedestrian crossings are situated and outfitted appropriately, to enhance safety for trail users and motorists alike.

## **Bicycles**

The increased use of bicycles, both for access to and for moving around township parks, will be encouraged and accommodated in future development.

## **Parking**

The Township will adopt a two-pronged approach to parking: reduce demand for parking through establishing community connections, and advocate for parking within comfortable walking distance to trailheads, supporting facilities, and amenities.

## **Underground Utilities**

The Township will plan ahead to ensure necessary upgrades to underground utilities are made before, or during, park development projects to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruptions.

## **Lighting**

Exterior lighting will increase user safety and comfort, and subtly reveal the character of parks at night.

## **Site Furnishings**

The Township intends to develop an economical and comprehensive system of visually coordinated and comfortable outdoor furnishings. Durability in function and attractive appearance under low maintenance conditions are essential.

## **1.2.4 Implementation**

### **Plan Continuity**

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan will be promoted and be approved as Township policy and maintained as an effective development directive through continuity of responsibility, consistent application, and regular updating and review.

### **Project Design Checklist**

Designers (i.e., landscape architects, planners, engineers, etc.) of projects throughout the township parks and recreational trails network must respond to specific criteria — encompassing themes such as site use and organization, local context, local climate, circulation and barrier free access, public safety, and more — and present evidence as to how they have been addressed at each major step of the design process.

### **Campaign Establishment**

Campaigns should be established to raise awareness and funds for major park and recreational trail planning, construction, and redevelopment projects.

## 2.0 Foundations

## 2.1 Introduction

### 2.1.1 Origin

In 2024, The Township of Southwold identified a need for a Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan. In a dynamic period of growth, marked by an increasing population and evolving community needs, the Master Plan will help the Township work towards their vision to create a connected, inclusive, and healthy community through quality investments in municipal parks and recreational trails. Without a formal plan to direct actions and projects related to parks and recreational trail infrastructure, the Township saw a need for a long-range vision.

*If you don't know where you want to go, you will never get there.*

In working with Township Council and Staff, regulatory agencies, and community interest-holders, the Master Plan would need to establish a long-range vision and offer recommendations for how the Township should respond to development pressures. Ultimately, a tool used by the Township's Infrastructure and Development Department, Building and Community Services Department, Public Works, and Administration and Finance, among others, the Master Plan would support staff in determining how to allocate resources while preparing their annual budget.

### 2.1.2 Role & Scope

*The Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan is aimed at ensuring that the physical environment, both built and natural, meets the needs and aspirations of its inhabitants and the community around it, and enables Township goals and decisions to be realized.*

The Master Plan will be the vehicle for implementing new development and renovation projects, and for maintaining and preserving existing facilities and infrastructure. It will also provide a means for articulating a common purpose, and for communicating it to the Township and the community at large.

The form of a township-wide parks and recreational trail network cannot be determined by a single designer, or even by a single team, as is the

case when designing a building, civic space, or other identifiable project. A comprehensive parks and recreational trail network is a family of projects and therefore a fixed blueprint representing a construction scenario at a single point in time is inappropriate. The Master Plan must be firm about the essentials, but flexible about the details, particularly those which can only be defined by future project programs developed to meet the needs which cannot at present be foreseen except in broad outline.

### **Communal Action**

The Master Plan directs action so that the physical environment suits the community's needs, meets Township goals, and is a joy to be a part of. Its existence and content demonstrates commitment to establishing and maintaining parks and multi-use recreational trails while protecting and preserving the surrounding natural environment for years to come.

### **Community Plan**

Southwold is host to a community of permanent homeowners, second-homeowners, seasonal residents, repeat long-term visitors, and more. An important component in the development of the Master Plan is public engagement that permits the community to shape the Master Plan, ensuring a realistic vision and appropriate recommendations are realized.

### **Plan Interaction**

The Master Plan is one piece of a planning process. In response to evolving needs and growth, the Township has updated and added to its roster of planning documents in recent years. Adopted planning documentation includes, but is not limited to:

- Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021).
- Township of Southwold Asset Management Plan (Township of Southwold, 2022)
- Township of Southwold Strategic Plan, Implementation Plan (Township of Southwold, 2023)

While each document focuses on a different topic, they are highly interdependent. The decisions of one exercise influence, and/or respond to the conclusions of another, as they are developed and implemented.

## **Fiscal Reality**

In order to be successfully implemented, the Master Plan needs to consider current fiscal realities. The Master Plan is a vision, but not a fantasy. It sets realistic policies that can be achieved over time through creative implementation practices and sound long-term planning.

## **Principal Audiences**

The Master Plan is targeted towards two principal audiences, the first being the Township of Southwold, represented by Township Council, Township Staff, and residents alike. The Township is meant to use the Plan as a manual for the physical development and management of Township parks, recreational trails and supporting infrastructure.

Included in this target audience is the Township's Infrastructure and Development Department, Building and Community Services Department, Public Works, and Administration and Finance, among others in the Township who participate in initiating, guiding and executing projects.

The second principal audience is comprised of the various partners that help to fund and support, or cooperate with the Township. This may include, but is not limited to, the Provincial and Federal Governments, First Nations, corporations, and friends. The Master Plan illustrates the Township's intentions and provides guidance for regulation and funding actions.

## **Strategies**

The Master Plan does not describe future built or landscape projects in great detail. Instead, it contains a set of planning strategies that define intent, but not final form. The planning strategies guide physical change to ensure that general objectives are met but are flexible enough to accommodate specific needs as they arise in the future.

Demonstrations included in this plan only illustrate one of several possible ways the planning strategies might be implemented.

## **Reinforce & Repair**

The Master Plan identifies strengths — existing infrastructure and landscapes which make Southwold a special place. Likewise, the Master Plan identifies areas that detract, and could benefit from improvement. It is understood that much of the existing park and recreational trail

infrastructure has been incrementally developed over time — though well intentioned, often in an ad hoc manner. The Master Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the positive aspects, while repairing the challenging aspects of the Township parks and recreational trail network.

### **Planning Horizons**

The Master Plan is projected into two planning horizons, to respond to the diminishing clarity of more distant futures.

The Short Range Horizon represents a vision of a desirable and reasonable foreseeable future. It is based on current goals and aspirations, and on existing constraints and opportunities. The short range framework is firmly based on present realities, but extended far enough into the future to provide a comprehensive context for upcoming planning decisions (up to 10 years).

The Long Range Horizon suggests a future based on goals and growth expectations, which can be articulated only in general terms. The thrust of this horizon is to identify options for future development and suggest measures for their protection beyond the 10 year period.

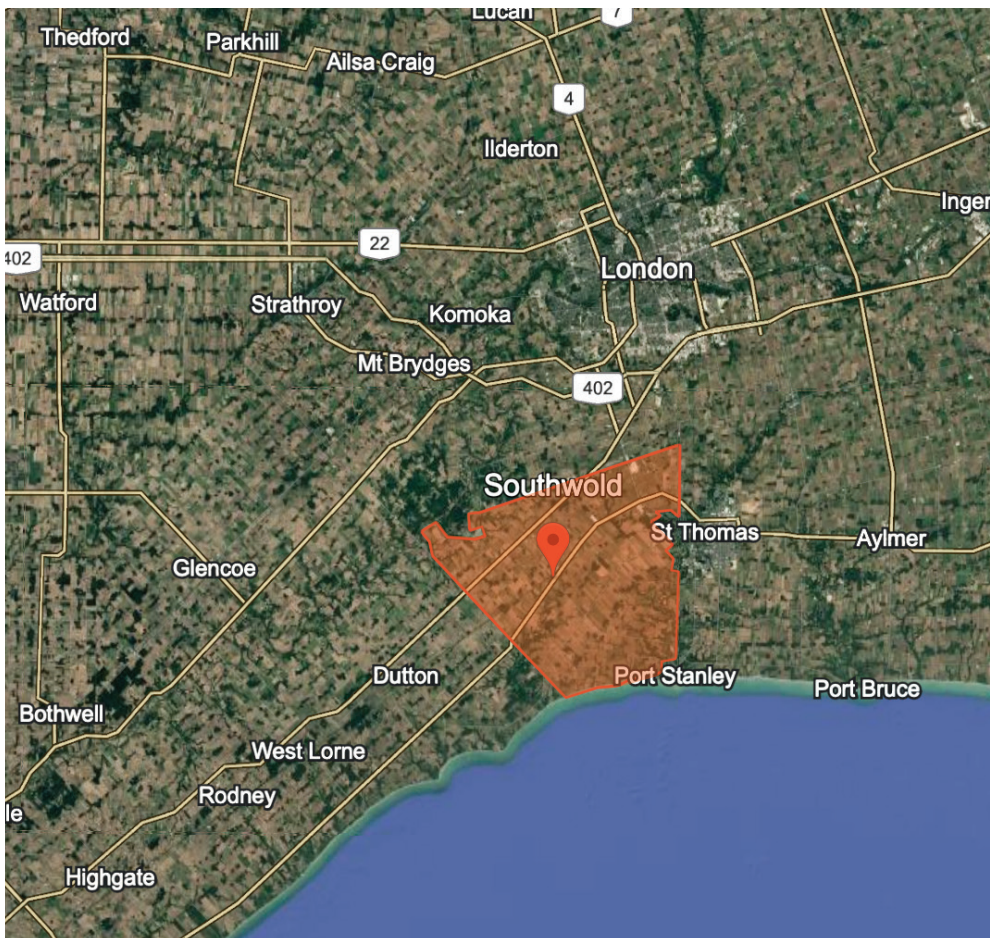
### **Primacy of Parks & Recreational Trails**

The role of parks and recreational trails in the community is not expected to diminish in the foreseeable future. They will need to accommodate residents, their guests, and visitors alike, facilitate an abundance of recreation opportunities, and host an array of events.

## 2.2 Context

The Township of Southwold is a municipality within Elgin County, located on the north shore of Lake Erie. The municipality was incorporated in 1852 and is made up of the following communities: Fingal, Iona, Iona Station, Paynes Mills, Shedden, and Talbotville.

The Township of Southwold is a vibrant, safe, and growing rural community recognized for its high quality of life and economic opportunity, with a rich history of pioneering development, growth, and the preservation of heritage buildings in its villages and hamlets.



*Figure 1: Southwold Context Map, Adapted from Google Earth*

## 2.3 Framework

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan is subject to regulations as outlined by the Township of Southwold, Elgin County, and the Province of Ontario. Documents outlining this framework include:

- Township of Southwold Official Plan, 2021
- Elgin County Official Plan, 2015
- Elgin County Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2021-2026
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

### Other Guidance & Advocacy

There are several other documents pertinent to the parks and recreational trails master planning process in Southwold, including, but not limited to:

- Township of Southwold Strategic Plan. Implementation Plan, 2023
- Township of Southwold Asset Management Plan, 2022
- Corporation of the Township of Southwold Parks Strategic Plan, 2014

### National Frameworks

Guiding documents for public recreation in Canada have also been referenced throughout, including:

- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Reflecting the Current Context, 2025
- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing, 2015

# 2.4 Demographic Profile

## 2.4.1 Population

According to Statistics Canada (2023), the permanent population of Southwold in 2021 was 4,851 — 9.7 percent higher than the population recorded in 2016. This population growth was significant, exceeding provincial population growth (i.e., 5.8 percent) during this period.

According to Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019), the Township population is anticipated to see continued growth, estimating 1,840 new residents and 1,050 new housing units over the next two decades — reaching an estimated 6,640 total residents and 2,780 housing units by 2041.

### Population and Housing Forecast Summary, Town of Southwold

Year	Population	Total Housing
2016	4,570	1,630
2019	4,800	1,730
2031	5,940	2,280
2041	6,640	2,780

Figure 2: Population and Housing Forecast Summary, Township of Southwold

Note: Population includes net Census undercount. Figures may not add precisely due to rounding.

Source: 2016 from Statistics Canada Census data; Forecast by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019).

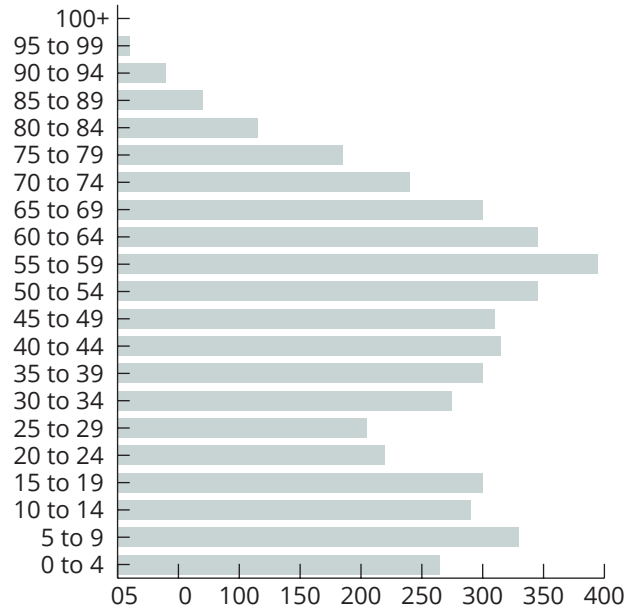
Worth noting, internal development plans suggest more rapid growth is set to occur in the near future; with an estimated 1734 new residential units slated for development in the next 5 years, probable growth could lend to a total population of nearly 9,500 residents<sup>1</sup>. In addition, 735 new residential units are currently under discussion; potential growth (5-years and beyond) could see the population reach 11,500 residents<sup>1</sup>.

1 Estimated based on Township of Southwold 2021 average household size of 2.8 (Statistics Canada, 2023).

## 2.4.2 Age Profile

In the Township of Southwold, the median age of the population is 44 years, slightly higher than that of the Ontario population (41.6 years).

### Township of Southwold



### Province of Ontario

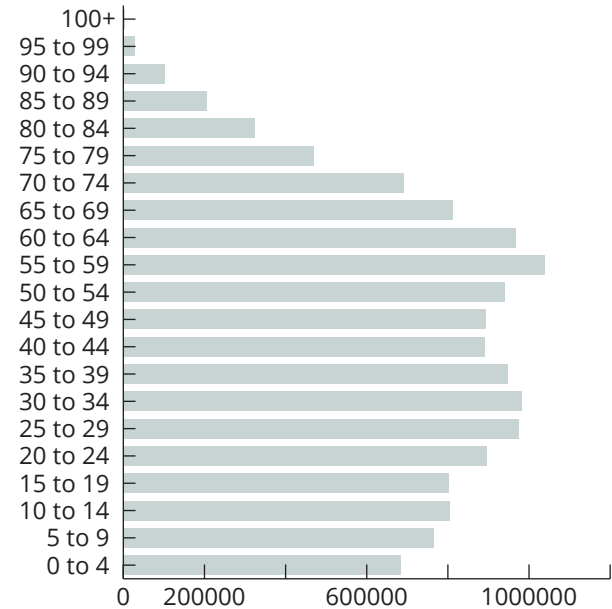


Figure 3: Permanent Population by Age Group Comparison, 2021

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data

## 2.4.3 Language

In the Township of Southwold, 99.1 percent of the population reports English to be their first official language spoken.

## 2.4.4 Income, Employment & Commuting

According to Statistics Canada (2023), the median after tax income of households in the Township of Southwold in 2020 was \$41,600. This was significantly lower than the provincial median after tax income of household, which was \$91,000 in 2020. However, only 4 percent of residents were considered to be below the poverty line in 2021, compared to the provincial average of 10 percent.

Approximately 11.6 percent of the employed labour force aged 15 years and over with a usual place of work commute within the Township of

Southwold (Statistics Canada, 2023). Another 48.7 percent commute outside of the Township, but within Elgin County, and the remaining 39.7 percent commute outside of Elgin County.



### Recommendations

- Continue to monitor population growth, to ensure appropriate park and recreational trail planning provisions are maintained.
- Consider how park and recreational trail design can accommodate an aging population (i.e., anticipated influx of seniors), as well as young children.
- Continue to monitor the evolving demographic profile, including age, language, and income, employment and commuting, to ensure parks and recreational trails (and related infrastructure) is tailored to the local community needs.

## 3.0 Community Engagement

### 3.1 Overview

Community engagement is an important part of parks and trails master planning, as a means to understanding current and anticipated use, and learn about community needs and desires. Working with the Township of Southwold, a three (3) part engagement process was devised, to gather input from interest holders and the general public; including a series of interest holder interviews, a community engagement survey, and a community open house. Public-facing initiatives were advertised online through Township social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) as well as through print materials (e.g., print posters, handouts).

This section offers an overview of these engagement initiatives and subsequent findings. It is important to note that the information and suggestions presented in this section should not be interpreted as recommendations. Community input has not been altered, even in instances where comments may incorrectly reflect actual policies, practices, or level of provision.

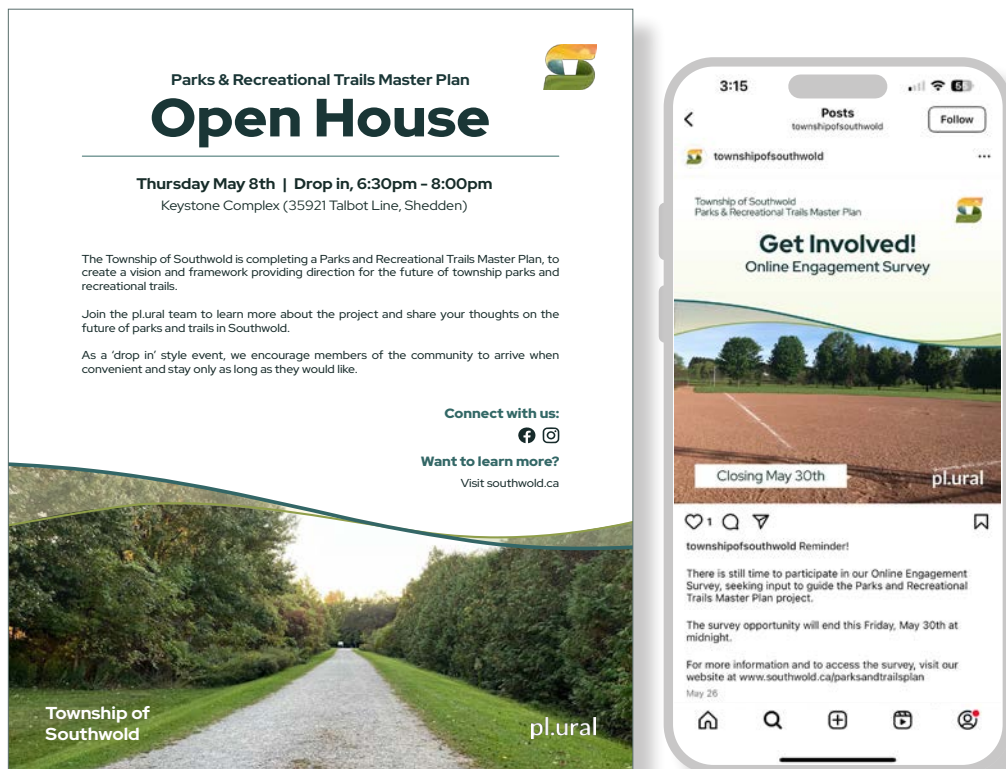


Figure 4: Engagement Initiative Advertisement Mock Ups, Digital and Print Media

## 3.2 Community Engagement Survey

From May 13, 2025 through to May 30, 2025, an online engagement survey was available to the public. In total, **65 unique responses** were received.

### 3.2.1 Who We Heard From

The majority of responses (61) were submitted by individuals who identify as permanent residents of Southwold. Those who identify as neighbouring community visitors (e.g., second homeowners, trailer campers, cottage renters, etc.) accounted for the remaining responses (4) aside from a single response submitted by an individual identifying as a seasonal visitor.

Most of the permanent residents who participated (41) reported living in Shedden. Other notable participation was observed amongst residents of Talbotville (14), Fingal (10), and north of Port Stanley (1).

Majority of participants (24) were adults aged 30 to 39. Nineteen (19) participants aged, 40 to 49, and eleven (11) 50 to 59. Very few young adults and/or seniors participated and no individual's 18 and under participated in the Community Engagement Survey.

Most participants (41) reported having children living in their household. Among them, about half (22) have children under the age of 5. Others (13, 15 and 15) have children ages 6 to 9, 10 to 14, and 15 to 18, respectively.

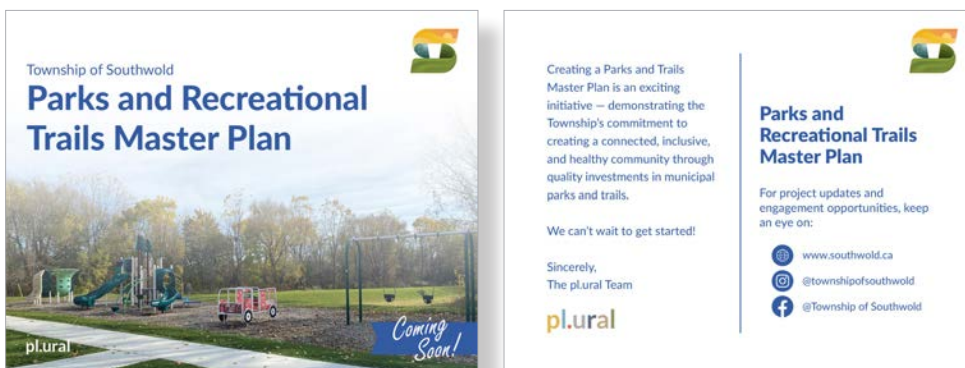


Figure 5: Engagement Initiative Advertisement Mock Ups, Digital and Print Media

## Residents vs. Visitors

- Permanent resident
- Seasonal resident (i.e., second homeowner, trailer camper, cottage renter)
- Neighbouring community visitor
- Seasonal visitor

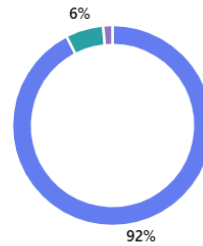


Figure 6: Survey Results, are you a resident or visitor of Southwold?

## Permanent Residents' Place of Residence

- Talbotville 14
- Shedden 25
- Fingal 10
- North Port Stanley 1
- Other 11

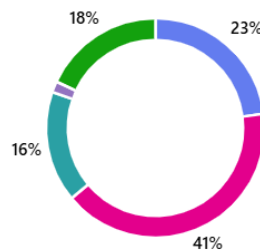


Figure 7: Survey Results, where in Southwold do you reside?

## Age Profile

- 18 and under 0
- 19 to 29 6
- 30 to 39 24
- 40 to 49 19
- 50 to 59 11
- 60 and over 6

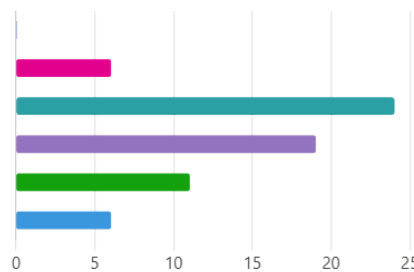


Figure 8: Survey Results, what age group do you belong to?

## Age Profile: Children in Household

- 5 and under 22
- 6 to 9 13
- 10 to 14 15
- 15 to 18 15
- I do not have children in my household 20

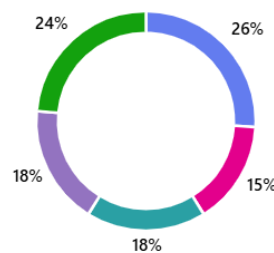


Figure 9: Survey Results, if you have children in your household, what age group(s) do they belong to?

### 3.2.2 Understanding Use: Municipal Parks

According to engagement survey results, when it comes to municipal parks:

- Municipal parks are being commonly visited, with majority of participants visiting parks 1-2 times a week.
- Survey results show The Keystone Complex is the most visited municipal park, followed by Corsely Park and Fingal Ball Park.
- The majority of individuals are driving to parks (43 out of 66). Respectfully many residents are also walking to the local parks (34 out of 66) and cycling (22 out of 66).
- Residents are enjoying municipal parks with family members, young children, community groups, friends, and more. There appears to be a variety of users.
- Walking, playgrounds, and organized sports appear to be the leading reasons for residents' use of municipal parks.
- Based on park ratings', The Keystone Complex appears to be the most in need of improvement. Following, Fingal Ball Park and Corsely Park are in need of some improvement. Many are unsure on how to rate their local municipal parks.
- Half of survey participants responded that municipal park needed moderate support and improvements.

#### Importance of Municipal Park Improvements

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| ● <b>Low:</b> prefer no change to municipal service delivery; limit budget to community-based funding, grants,...    | 4  |
| ● <b>Moderate:</b> support reallocating municipal budget to tend to improvements.                                    | 33 |
| ● <b>Considerable:</b> support slight increase in taxes and/or user fees, to tend to improvements while maintaini... | 13 |
| ● <b>High:</b> support more significant increase in taxes and/or user fees to tend to facility improvements a...     | 16 |

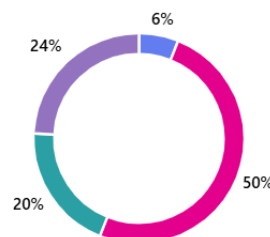


Figure 10: Survey Results, How important are municipal park improvements to you within the Township of Southwold?

## Frequency of Use

Daily (i.e., 1-2 times a day)	8
Weekly (i.e., 1-2 times a week)	34
Monthly (i.e., 1-2 times a month)	11
Seasonally (i.e., only during certain seasons)	7
Inconsistently or During Events	4
Rarely or Never	2

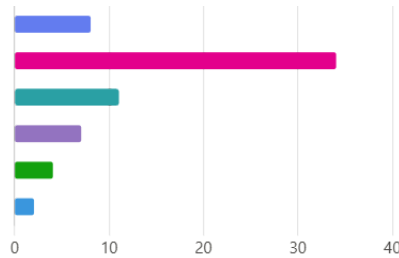


Figure 11: Survey Results, How often do you visit municipal parks?

## Park Use

Keystone Complex	47
Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park	10
Talbotville Optimist Sports Park	14
Fingal Ball Park	19
Fingal Heritage Park	14
Ferndale Park	4
Corsely Park	24
Other	4

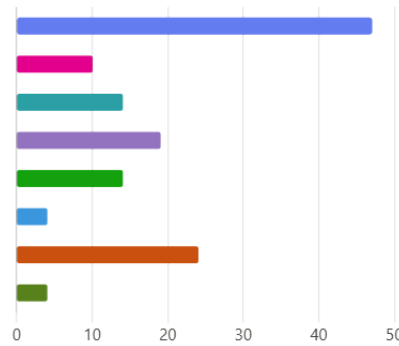


Figure 12: Survey Results, What municipal parks do you visit?

## Transportation to Parks

Bike	22
Walk	34
Drive	43
Other	0

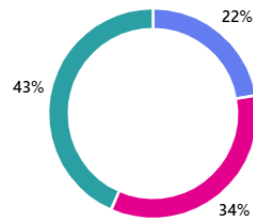


Figure 13: Survey Results, How do you get to municipal parks?

## Who visits Municipal Parks

A friend	17
A group of friends	13
Family	45
Young children	33
Seniors	1
Community group or team	15
By myself	17
Other	3

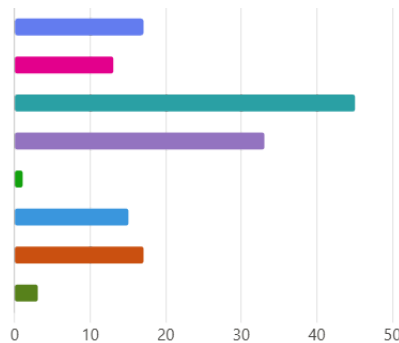


Figure 14: Survey Results, Who do you visit municipal parks with?

## Why Visit Municipal Parks

● Walking	41
● Dog Walking	20
● Hiking	9
● Exercise or Jogging	20
● Cycling	13
● Relaxing	18
● Spend time in nature	27
● Picnicking	8
● Family gathering, time with friends	18
● Playground	37
● Racquet sports (e.g., tennis, pickleball)	4
● Basketball	6
● Skateboarding	0
● Attending events	15
● Organized sports (e.g., local leagues, lessons, etc.)	27
● Informal or pick-up sports	5
● Other	4

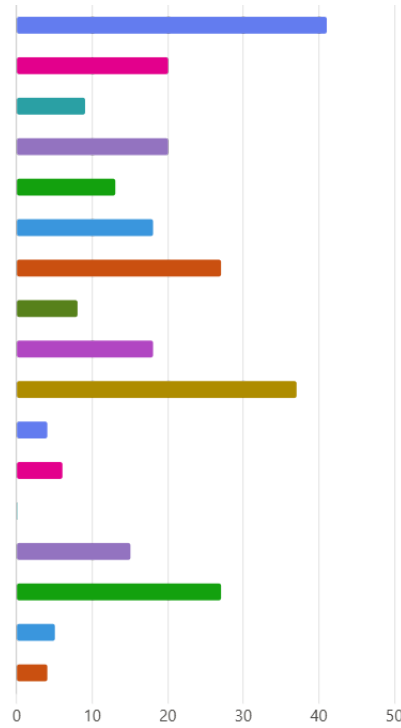


Figure 15: Survey Results, Why do you visit municipal parks?

## Park Preference

- Needs work asap
- Good, could be improved
- Love it
- Unsure

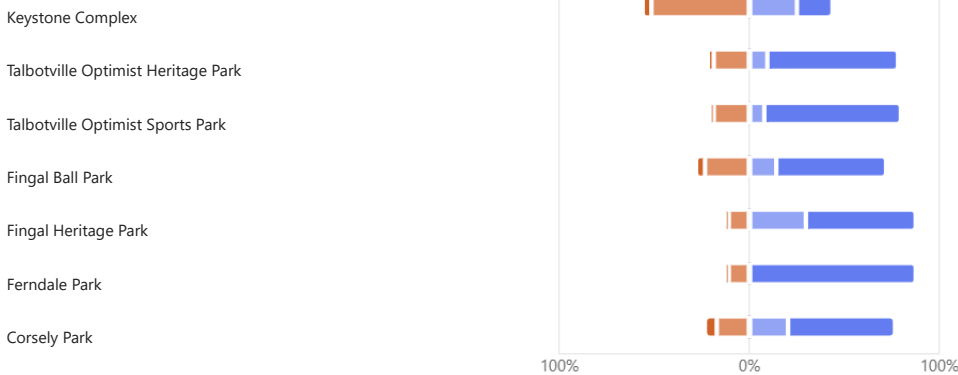


Figure 16: Survey Results, How do you rate each of the following municipal parks?

### 3.2.3 Understanding Use: Municipal Trails

According to engagement survey results, when it comes to Municipal Trails:

- Respondents report that recreational trails are used most during the summer months, with a near balance of use in the fall and spring. However, consistently throughout the year a significant amount of residents are not using recreational trails in Southwold.
- The majority of respondents identified their form of transportation to recreational trails within Southwold to be by vehicle (41 out of 66) 22 respondents walk to local recreational trails, while others use other means of transportation.
- Majority (42) of respondents are enjoying recreational trails with family members, followed by a fairly even split of respondents (21, 19, 19) are visiting trails with friends, young children, and by themselves, respectively.
- Walking is the most common purpose for recreation trail use in Southwold; exercise and experiencing nature are also prioritized by local residents.
- With a majority of respondents seeing the potential in Southwold recreational trails, 27 believe they are good, but in need of improvement and 16 respondents believe the trails are in need of immediate work,
- Majority of Respondents are not using resources to access recreational trail information.

## Recreational Trail Community Priorities

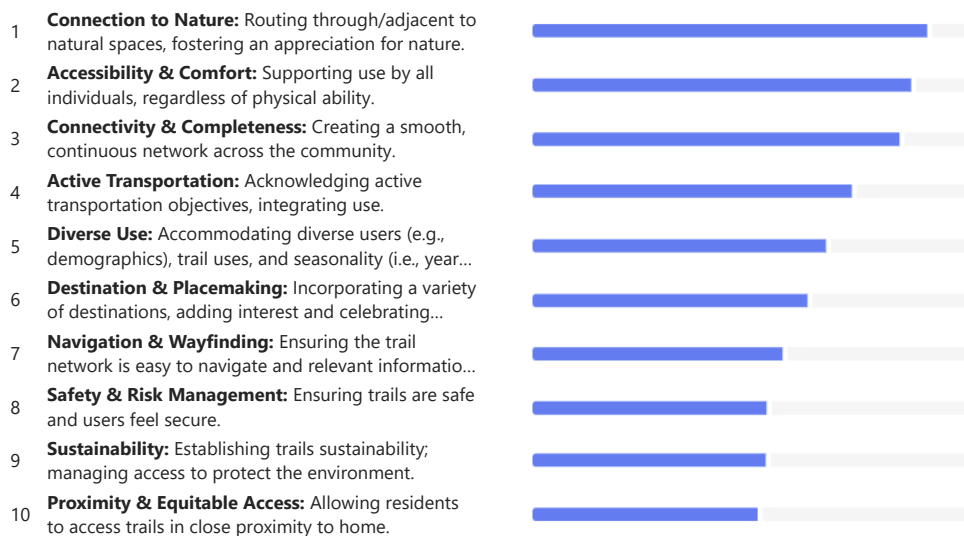


Figure 19: Survey Results, When planning for recreational trails in Southwold, what matters most to you?

## Frequency of Use

- Daily (i.e., 1-2 times a day)
- Weekly (i.e., 1-2 times a week)
- Monthly (i.e., 1-2 times a month)
- Inconsistently or During Events
- Rarely or Never



Figure 17: Survey Results, How often do you visit recreation trails in Southwold?

## Permanent Residents' Place of Residence

- Bike 15
- Walk 22
- Drive 41
- Other 4

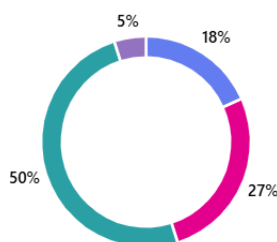


Figure 18: Survey Results, How do you get to recreation trails in Southwold?

## Who visits Recreational Trails

A friend	21
A group of friends	13
Family	42
Young children	19
Seniors	1
Community group or team	4
By myself	19
Other	4

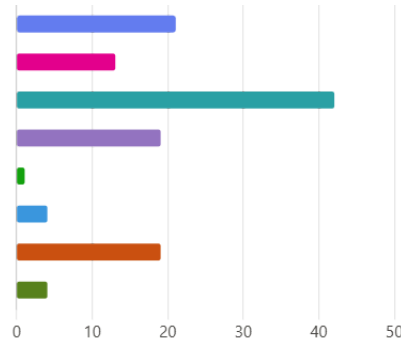


Figure 20: Survey Results, Who do you visit recreation trails with?

## Why visit Recreational Trails

Walking	44
Dog-walking	19
Hiking	18
Exercise or Jogging	28
Cycling	14
Transportation	1
Experiencing nature	27
Social interaction	12
Birdwatching	7
Photography	3
Other	1

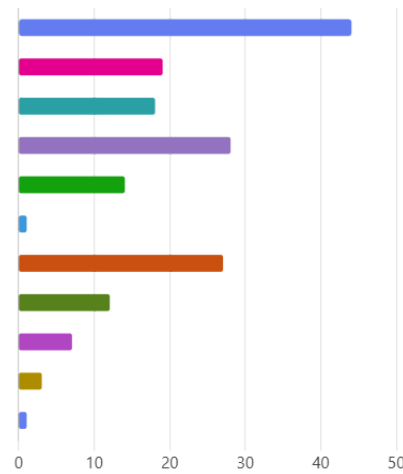


Figure 21: Survey Results, Why do you visit recreational trails in Southwold?

## Rating Recreational Trails

Need work asap	15
Good, could be improved	27
Love them	8
Unsure	16

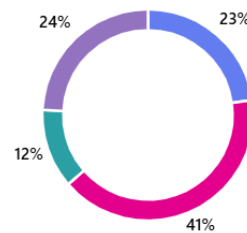


Figure 22: Survey Results, How would you rate recreation trails in Southwold?

## Utilized Trail Resources

Elgin County GIS	5
Print materials	12
Township website	11
Other websites	3
External apps (e.g., AllTrails)	9
Google Maps	16
None	28
Other	0

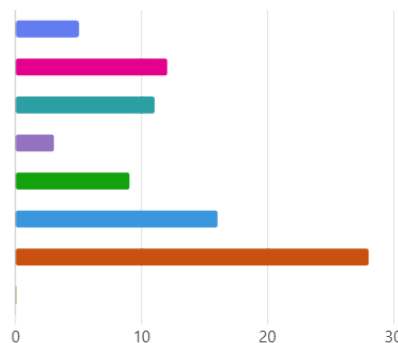


Figure 23: Survey Results, what resources do you use to access recreational trail information/ maps?

### 3.3 Interest Holder Interviews

Over several months, between the months of May and September 2025, a total of **9 interviews** were conducted, seeking insight from project interest holders.

#### Who We Heard From

Municipal staff established the list of interest holders — capturing an array of perspectives, without compromising project budgetary constraints. Collectively, participants had experience working with, or on behalf of the following:

- Township Council
- Southwold Parks Committee
- Rosy Rhubarb Committee
- Keystone Complex Committee
- Shedden Truck and Tractor Pull Committee
- Shedden Soccer Representative

Worth noting, many interview participants brought valuable insights beyond the scope of the organizations and/groups above — speaking as long-term local residents, residents newer to the area, parents, young professionals, retirees, local business owners, recreationalists, volunteers, and more.

#### Emerging Themes

There were several key themes emerging from interviews, including, but not limited to:

- **Community relations;** the community cares about parks and recreational trails in Southwold — as demonstrated by passionate volunteers, and community groups, who continue to raise funds to support local infrastructure. At times there appears to be apprehension amongst user groups to participate in conversations regarding the future of these community spaces. Establishing and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with constituent groups will be important to long term success.

- **Trail infrastructure;** Trail connectivity and maintenance was a common theme. There is a desire for trail links between communities (i.e. Fingal and Shedden, Talbotville and Ferndale). In addition to the linking of trails, trail surfacing and multi-purpose trails were a topic of conversation. As the community continues to grow (and vehicular traffic intensifies), there is a desire to have safe, well-connected, and enjoyable spaces to walk — suitable for a wide array of users (e.g., young families, dog-walkers, etc.).
- **Township Parks;** Township parks are well used and enjoyed by the community. The Keystone Complex being a major staple for Southwold is well spoken of by interest holders. A desire for some additional amenities to the parks such as: pickle ball courts, community splash pad, and a stage and or event space. Overall parks are well received.
- **Flexible infrastructure;** As the population grows and community needs evolve, it is recognized that there is value in designing park infrastructure (e.g., sport fields, venues, etc.) to be flexible, permitting diverse and varied use. There is a desire to see some existing facilities, particularly sports fields, retrofitted to permit a wider array of use — offering more outdoor recreation opportunities to residents, while also promoting use of these facilities outside of current peak programming.
- **Community greening;** Tree planting and/or preservation of existing tree canopy is of great importance. The community highly values their many naturalized areas. Ongoing and anticipated stormwater management infrastructure projects (e.g., ponds, bioswales, etc.) are recognized as excellent opportunities to create naturalistic spaces throughout the community, to enhance the look and feel of Township parks and open spaces.
- **Community development;** With a growing community, the development of local neighbourhoods brings some concern of green space being lost and or relocated due to residential and commercial developments. Community fears development may outpace park and green space planning.
- **Maintenance;** With a rapidly growing community, excitement for the future is accompanied with some concern for lack of

maintenance. Community interest-holders want to ensure that with the growth of spaces there is sufficient staff and resources to maintain community parks and trails — and that appropriate plans are in place to guide these efforts, now and into the future.

- **Accessibility;** Accessibility is a priority. Parks and recreational trails should offer equitable opportunities for community members of all ability levels. Additionally, there is a desire for more accessible washroom facilities within major outdoor parks.
- **User conflict;** As park use increases, there are growing concerns surrounding permitted uses and reports of user conflict in these spaces (e.g., off-leash dogs, motorized vehicular use, etc.). There is desire to see the Township work with the appropriate user groups to understand needs, opportunities and challenges, and to make informed decisions regarding park programming, and facility provision and siting to mitigate conflict, where possible.

### 3.4 Community Open House

On Thursday May 8th, 2025, we hosted a Community Open House, welcoming the community to the Keystone Complex in Southwold.

#### Existing Conditions, Understanding Use

With an illustrative park and facility inventory on display, attendees were encouraged to confirm findings, and offer feedback on existing conditions — strengths and weaknesses. Related findings have been verified and captured in the respective inventories contained within this document.

Alongside a great turnout of Township staff, we received feedback from community members and members of local committees. Based on this feedback we were able to identify the following emerging themes:

- Interest in trail connectivity across the municipality
- Community Interest in improved sport facilities
- An appreciation for local parks



Figure 24: Photo, attendees participating at the community open house event.

# 4.0 Planning Strategies

## 4.1 Environmental Quality

The first series of strategies deal with the quality of renovations and new developments throughout the Township parks, open space and trail environments, as well as the preservation of existing character and quality.

### 4.1.1 Quality, Permanence & Economy

Strategy 1

*The Township will be committed to quality, permanence, and life-cycle economy in all its park and trail development, maintenance, and renewal projects. All design and product decisions will be based on life-cycle as well as first capital costs.*

Comprehensive life-cycle costing is one of the essential tools used for the planning and design of new park facilities, trail tread, surrounding landscapes, supporting structures, fixtures and furnishings — a tool that helps ensure long-lasting, superior parks, recreational trails, and public spaces are constructed and maintenance costs are reduced.

The Township should adopt the philosophy that, within the constraints of fiscal reality, quantity should not compromise quality, and that design cost decisions should be measured against the full life of the product, space or landscape rather than its construction alone. This implies a three-part commitment: first to high quality design/finish, construction/installation and maintenance; second to the eventual replacement of temporary and facilities; and third to the renewal of aging and inadequate facilities.



*Typical Costs over a 35 Year Life Cycle: the smaller, earlier costs greatly influence larger, later costs.*

## 4.1.2 Environmental Responsibility & Stewardship

*Parks and trails are sought after by residents and visitors alike, as a means to access, explore, and connect with nature. The Township should provide community leadership in responsible and effective environmental action through mindful park and trail development (i.e., design, alignment, construction, renewal, etc.) and community outreach.*

For many communities, connection to the environment is considered a fundamental component to community identity. Subsequently, parks, open spaces and recreational trails, which offer means to access, explore, and connect with nature, tend to be focal points — sought after by residents and visitors alike. The importance of these spaces and the natural heritage found within, should be more strongly reflected in ongoing and future landscape efforts and projects.

Means to achieving greater connection to natural heritage for the community across the Township's parks and open spaces could include encouraging biodiversity through planting native trees, shrubs and perennials, establishing 'no maintenance' areas (e.g., allowing meadows to grow freely, etc.), and integrating stormwater management infrastructure (e.g., ponds, bioswales, rain gardens, etc.), where appropriate.

Further, means to developing sustainable trails for the community could include informed alignment, consideration of sensitive ecosystems, use of native biodiversity in revitalization efforts, invasive species education and control initiatives, and the use of low impact construction practices and environmentally friendly construction materials. Building in-house capacity and seeking assistance from qualified professional trail contractors, where necessary, will also be an important step in developing sustainable Township trails.

Maintaining positive working relationships with regulatory agencies, environmental groups, and interest-holders (e.g., Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, etc.) will be a critical component to all future development and appropriate naturalization in these areas. Collaborating with these groups, and seeking approvals where necessary, will encourage responsible environmental action and continued compliance with legislation.

### 4.1.3 The Spirit of the Place

*The design of new projects should embrace the character of the area, which is fundamental to the established image of the community. Moving forward, consistency will be paramount — contributing to a strong, authentic sense of place, that welcomes residents and visitors alike.*

The community and its visitors value and want to preserve the qualities that make the Township of Southwold unique. Beyond natural beauty emanating from the shores of Lake Erie and rolling farm fields, punctuated by woodlots, Southwold embodies a desirable sense of simplicity — welcoming, quiet, and laid back.

When it comes to local parks and trail environments much of the character is the result of previous siting and design decisions, or lack thereof. Incremental development over many decades has led to spaces (i.e., parks, trails, staging environments, infrastructure) lacking cohesion, intention, and sense of purpose, among other challenges and limitations.

The key character-defining elements of parks and trail environments can be reinforced by preserving, adapting, and integrating places of value, protecting and improving natural (or naturalistic) landscapes, and by designing spaces and structures, routing trails, and selecting fixtures and furnishings to compliment, not compete, with the spirit of the place. Furthermore, seeking to clean up, coordinate, and consolidate built forms, site furnishings, and signage, should be a priority.

#### 4.1.4 A Network Approach

*A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of properties, segments, and/or the sum of those parts — it is a system. The Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.*

A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of segments, or the sum of those parts — it is a system that connects, provides access to, and frames the natural and built environments between them. Servicing many community needs, from nature access, recreation, connectivity, and more, the Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.

Due to incremental development, there are functional, safety, and aesthetic aspects that could be improved upon through changes to the existing spatial structure of the township parks and recreational trails network. Understanding existing and desired uses, verifying (trail) ownership, adopting trail classifications, building to appropriate design parameters, and appreciating parks and trails as parts of a larger network, will be crucial steps in improving the spatial composition, connectivity, level of service and user group satisfaction throughout the Township.

### 4.1.5 Trail Safety & Risk Management

*The Township must strive to establish and maintain safe park and recreational trail environments, to welcome residents and visitors alike. To ensure a safe trail network, the Township must identify an accepted level of risk, produce documents, policies, and procedures, and act upon them.*

Maintaining environments which are safe for all users must be a high priority throughout the township parks and recreational trail system. Highly desirable natural qualities and unique environmental character are responsible for drawing residents and visitors to township parks and recreational trails. Conversely, some of the associated natural (or naturalistic) conditions can pose hazard to personal safety. Due to the complex nature of park and recreational trail environments, certain areas present greater risk to users than others.

With diverse trail users, and uses, throughout the Township, identifying managed and designed uses, appropriate trail classifications, and acting upon them will be an important step towards conflict mitigation, and enhancing user experience and safety.

The Township must identify their accepted level of risk, and produce documents, policies, and procedures to ensure a safe trail network; accepting said level of risk, controlling associated risks, and eliminating risks that exceed the resources available.

Further, the Township must seek ways to promote personal safety of all users, through continued monitoring, preventative infrastructure, and strategic design interventions to influence user behaviour.

#### 4.1.6 Respecting Neighbours

*The Township will seek to maintain positive relationships with park and trail neighbours by identifying and addressing common issues, seeking appropriate permissions, and mitigating the impact of park and recreational trail use, activity and development on adjacent land uses.*

Spanning across the Township, and amongst several settlement areas, township parks and trails affect and are affected by neighbouring communities, landowners, and land uses. Identifying common issues surrounding park and recreational trail development and use including, but not limited to, impacts of heightened use — noise, reduced feeling of privacy, increased traffic, congested parking areas and/or illegal parking, trespassing, perceived ownership, etc. — And planning pro-actively will be an important step in maintaining positive relationships.

## 4.2 Project Design

This series of strategies provide guidance for the design of new park and trail construction and/or redevelopment projects as they arise.

### 4.2.1 Preserve the Best, Repair the Rest

Strategy 7

*Projects will be identified to preserve park and trail assets, favour the repair of problem sites, and avoid compromising good quality structures, buildings, and landscapes.*

In defining new projects, the Township should place priority on the repair or enhancement of problem sites and facilities rather than to the modification of high quality ones: physical park and trail assets should be enhanced, rather than diminished, through redevelopment.

Potential projects include enhancing existing open programmable spaces, facilities, parking environments, pedestrian networks, planted areas, perimeter trees, etc. as outlined in 5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment on page 87. A growing trend for municipalities and rural communities is the development of 'image' committees, which are mandated to identify and prioritize image problems as a means to developing a 'game plan' for engaging participation and funding for community physical improvements.

## 4.2.2 Designing Safe Spaces

*Landscapes, built forms, furnishings, fixtures, and lighting throughout township parks and trail environments must be designed and managed to promote personal safety.*

The development of township park and trail environments which are safe for all users must be a high priority. Township parks and trails which are perceived to be safe, will be used by more people and for longer, enhancing the vitality of these spaces and extending the effective utilization of facilities.

Personal safety is not a single dimensional issue. It requires an environment(s) that has clarity, legibility, vitality, and fosters community life. As more people use township parks and trails, especially at night, the safer they will be.

The design of the public domain, in its structure and details, is critical to ensuring personal safety. A clear spatial structure with a legible hierarchy of clearly identified routes and spaces provides users with orientation and clarity necessary to move through township parks and trails with comfort. Appropriate lighting and well-designed planting are essential for maintaining visibility during both the day and night. There should be no provision of high berming, dense shrubs, dead-end paths, or hiding places.

The circulation networks that support vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and other modes of active transportation are essential components of township parks, that are not currently optimized to promote personal safety. Unsafe intersections, poor sight lines, and disconnected land use lend to conflict between these user groups and increased liability for the Township. These networks should support safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians and limit crossings and intersections, where possible. Further, some aspects of these existing circulation networks inhibit emergency access, which should be addressed immediately.

Buildings and facilities, such as washrooms, are also essential components of the safety networks of township parks. As destinations, structures and their entrances should be clearly identified and illuminated. Structures should define important public spaces, and have windows or openings to demonstrate to people in the surrounding area that they are occupied, providing casual surveillance of otherwise 'open' spaces and adjacent facilities. The Township has a role in identifying and rectifying 'unsafe' situations in their jurisdiction and endorsing principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

### 4.2.3 Accessibility, Barrier Free Environments

*The Township recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality.*

The impact of the physical environment on persons with mobility, visual, hearing, and other impairments is so great, that the Township is encouraged to make the accommodation of those with special needs a first priority. Effective accommodation is a basic responsibility of the Township, upheld by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) in Ontario, and can be of immense benefit to the community. Those who might otherwise be restricted from township parks, recreational trails (and naturalistic environments) will be able to more fully participate in and contribute to community life, and accommodation measures tend to create an environment which is better for all people — more legible, accessible, comfortable, and efficient.

The development of an accessible environment in a new project need not involve exorbitant costs. What is required is an attitude toward development founded on awareness and sensitivity from the start of the design process. Future consideration of a Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) for Southwold would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects. Besides legal ramifications, a solution which ignores accessibility requirements may reduce mobility and comfort for many, and incur very high costs for retrofitting at a later date.



#### Value Added Opportunity

Future consideration of a Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) for Southwold would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects.

## Trails, Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Based on our experience and informed by legislation, this section is intended to highlight key components of the AODA relevant to recreational trail planning, redevelopment, and construction, applicable at the time of report publication — it may be used as a guide, but does not eliminate the need to review applicable legislation, policies, standards and guidelines on a regular basis.

The Design of Public Spaces Standards — also referred to as Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment, referenced in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, under the AODA — speak to accessible trail standards.

### Application

Generally, these standards apply to newly constructed and redeveloped recreational trails that the Township intends to maintain, but does not apply to the following types of recreational trails:

1. Trails solely intended for cross-country skiing, mountain biking or the use of motorized snow vehicles or off-road vehicles.
2. Wilderness trails, backcountry trails and portage routes.

### Consultation

Often, accessible trail standards are determined through comparison of similar trails or trail networks, and identifying what is reasonable and predictable for trail users. Before constructing new or redeveloping existing recreational trails, the Township is obligated to consult with the public and persons with disabilities, as well as their township



#### Worth Noting

Adopting an awareness and sensitivity to accessibility is seen as an asset to entire communities. Although there are exceptions under the AODA, the Township is encouraged to consider accessibility in all trail related projects.

advisory committees, where one has been established under the Act. Consultation must address:

1. The slope (i.e., longitudinal and cross slope) of the trail.
2. The need for, and location of, ramps/handrails on the trail.
3. The need for, location and design of,
  - i. Rest areas,
  - ii. Passing areas,
  - iii. Viewing areas,
  - iv. Amenities on the trail, and
  - v. Any other pertinent feature.



#### Worth Noting

Although not explicitly identified under this section of the AODA, consultation should also address trail staging areas (i.e., trailheads).

### Technical Requirements

Newly constructed and redeveloped recreational trails, that the Township intends to maintain, must meet the following technical requirements:

1. A recreational trail must have a minimum clear width of 1,000 mm.
2. A recreational trail must have a clear height that provides a minimum head room clearance of 2,100 mm above the trail.
3. The surface of a recreational trail must be firm and stable. . As a general strategy, limestone screenings/chips & dust is the Township standard. Pavement to be used only when funds, traffic/usage patterns, and rectification of challenging drainage and maintenance warrant.

4. Where a recreational trail has openings in its surface,
  - i. The openings must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm, and
  - ii. Any elongated openings must be orientated approximately perpendicular to the direction of travel.
5. Where a recreational trail is constructed adjacent to water or a drop-off, the trail must have edge protection that meets the following requirements:
  - i. The edge protection must constitute an elevated barrier that runs along the edge of the recreational trail in order to prevent users of the trail from slipping over the edge.
  - ii. The top of the edge protection must be at least 50 mm above the trail surface.
  - iii. The edge protection must be designed so as not to impede the drainage of the trail surface.
6. Despite paragraph 5, where there is a protective barrier that runs along the edge of a recreational trail that is adjacent to water or a drop-off, edge protection does not have to be provided.
7. The entrance to a recreational trail must provide a clear opening of between 850 mm and 1,000 mm, whether the entrance includes a gate, bollard or other entrance design, and in certain locations, accessible parking.

### **Signage & Media**

Technical requirements also speak to signage. A recreational trail must have signage at each trail head, that provides the following information:

1. The length of the trail.
2. The type of surface of which the trail is constructed.
3. The average and the minimum trail width.
4. The average and maximum running slope and cross slope.
5. The location of amenities, where provided.

Additionally, signage text must have a high tonal contrast with its background (i.e., assist with visual recognition) and include characters that use a sans serif font.



### Value Added Opportunity

Future consideration of a Township Wayfinding Plan would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects.

Where other media, such as park websites or brochures, are used by the Township to provide information about the recreational trail, beyond advertising, notice or promotion, the media must provide the same information (i.e., listed above).

Future consideration of a Township Wayfinding Plan (i.e., Identification, orientation, direction, information) would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects. There is an opportunity to pair wayfinding signage with historical, ecological, or other educational messaging to make recreational trails an interactive experience. Trails can become interactive experiences with learning opportunities through signage and displays. In addition to this, there is a potential to partner with community organizations, committees, and conservation authorities to create and install signage.

### Boardwalks

Where a recreational trail is equipped with a boardwalk, the boardwalk must meet the following requirements:

1. The boardwalk must have a minimum clear width of 1,000 mm.
2. The boardwalk must have a clear height that provides a minimum headroom clearance of 2,100 mm above the boardwalk.
3. The surface of the boardwalk must be firm and stable.

4. The boardwalk must not have any openings in the surface that allow the passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm.
5. The boardwalk must have edge protection that is at least 50 mm in height.
6. If a boardwalk has running slopes that are steeper than 1:20, the running slopes must meet the requirements for ramps (see below).
7. Location for the needs and type of guardrails/handrails to be determined as boardwalk segments are implemented.

## Ramps

Where a recreational trail is equipped with a ramp, the ramp must meet the following requirements:

1. The ramp must have a minimum clear width of 900 mm.
2. The ramp must have a clear height that provides a minimum headroom clearance of 2,100 mm above the ramp.
3. The surface of the ramp must be firm and stable.
4. The ramp must have a maximum running slope of no more than 1:10.
5. The ramp must be provided with landings that meet the following requirements:
  - i. Landings must be provided, at the top and bottom of the ramp, where there is an abrupt change in the direction of the ramp, and at horizontal intervals not greater than nine metres apart.
  - ii. Landings must be a minimum of 1,670 mm by 1,670 mm at the top and bottom of the ramp and where there is an abrupt change in direction of the ramp.
  - iii. Landings must be a minimum of 1,670 mm in length and at least the same width of the ramp for an in-line ramp.
  - iv. Landings must have a cross slope that is not steeper than 1:50.

6. The ramp must not have any openings in the surface that allow the passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm.
7. The ramp must be equipped with handrails on both sides of the ramp and the handrails must,
  - i. Be continuously graspable along their entire length and have circular cross-section with an outside diameter not less than 30 mm and not more than 40 mm, or any non-circular shape with a graspable portion that has a perimeter not less than 100 mm and not more than 155 mm and whose largest cross-sectional dimension is not more than 57 mm,
  - ii. Be not less than 865 mm and not more than 965 mm high, measured vertically from the surface of the ramp, except that handrails not meeting these requirements are permitted if they are installed in addition to the required handrail,
  - iii. Terminate in a manner that will not obstruct pedestrian travel or create a hazard,
  - iv. Extend horizontally not less than 300 mm beyond the top and bottom of the ramp, and
  - v. Be provided with a clearance of not less than 50 mm between the handrail and any wall to which it is attached.
8. Where a ramp is more than 2,200 mm in width,
  - i. One or more intermediate handrails which are continuous between landings must be provided and located so that there is no more than 1,650 mm between handrails, and
  - ii. The handrails must meet the requirements set out in paragraph 7.
9. The ramp must have a wall or guard on both sides and where a guard is provided, it must,
  - i. Be not less than 1,070 mm measured vertically to the top of the guard from the ramp surface, and
  - ii. Be designed so that no member, attachment or opening located between 140 mm and 900 mm above the ramp surface being protected by the guard will facilitate climbing.

10. The ramp must have edge protection that is provided,
  - i. With a curb at least 50 mm high on any side of the ramp where no solid enclosure or solid guard is provided, or
  - ii. With railings or other barriers that extend to within 50 mm of the finished ramp surface.

### **Exceptions**

Exceptions to these requirements are permitted under certain circumstances. Generally, exceptions are made when a Township can demonstrate their affect on a property with cultural heritage value, hinder preservation of a national historic site, threaten natural heritage, or pose significant risk to the natural environment and species within it.

Where an exception is permitted to a requirement that applies to a recreational trail, the exception applies solely to the particular requirement for which the exception is allowed and not to any other requirement that applies to the recreational trail, and to the portion of the recreational trail for which it is claimed and not to the recreational trail or beach access route in its entirety.

The full list of exceptions, complete with conditions (i.e., required designations, parameters, etc.) provided under the AODA should be referenced, to verify exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

## 4.2.4 Trail Ownership & Alignment

*The Township will ensure that existing township trails and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s).*

It is imperative that the Township identify property limits, and verify that existing township trails, and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s) (as permitted under the Ontario Trails Act, 2016). Besides showing respect for trail neighbours, this will ensure that township trails — as community connections, recreation opportunities, and access to nature — can exist in perpetuity.

Over time, the Township may absorb transitional areas or adjacent properties through the amiable practice of self-directed disposition, in order to facilitate strategic trail expansion. Mindful of operational and fiscal realities, associated costs, maintenance, management, level of use, and potential redundancies, should be carefully considered, before accepting or acquiring lands.

Where disputes on land ownership arise, the Township should work with concerned landowners, to establish common understanding of property boundaries, registered easements, trail use impacts, and opportunities to address them moving forward. Vandalism, or impeding public access to township trails should not be tolerated.

### Ontario Trails Act, 2016

This section is intended to highlight key components of the Ontario Trails Act, 2016, relevant to trail easements, applicable at the time of report publication — it may be used as a guide, but does not eliminate the need to review applicable legislation, policies, standards and guidelines on a regular basis.

### Easements Overview

Under the Ontario Trails Act, 2016, an owner of land may grant an easement, with covenants, to one or more eligible bodies (e.g., Township), for the preservation, enhancement or management of the use of, or access to, all or a portion of the land for purposes relating to trails or to activities relating to trails or for the creation, maintenance or management of trails for public use.

### **Voluntary or Reserved**

An owner of land may grant an easement, though this decision is voluntary. When an eligible body (e.g., Township) conveys land, it may also reserve an easement.

### **Defining Use**

An easement shall contain one or more covenants, as may be agreed upon by the owner of the land and the eligible body (e.g., Township), stating the uses and activities permitted, restricted or prohibited on the land to which the easement relates and a description of those uses and activities.

### **Easement Registration**

An eligible body (e.g., Township) shall register the easement against the land affected in the proper land registry office and, once registered, the easement and the covenants contained in the easement run with the land against which it is registered. An easement is not valid under the Act, unless it is registered.

### **Easement Lifespan**

An easement is valid for the term specified in it. The term must be specified as a period of months, years or in perpetuity.

### **Enforcing Easements**

An eligible body may enforce an easement that is registered on title to the land, including the covenants contained in the easement, against the owner of the land and against any subsequent owner of the land against which it is registered.

The owner of land may enforce against the eligible body the covenants contained in an easement that is registered on title to the land.

## 4.2.5 Trail Classification & Standards

*The Township will establish, adopt, and comply with a defined trail standard, demonstrating proper due diligence, ensuring thorough inspection and maintenance, and informing future trail construction.*

Trails should be built and maintained to a standard — establishing a trail standard and trail classification is the first step in proper risk management. It is important the standard be reviewed, to ensure it reflects what is manageable and sustainable with respect to operational and fiscal realities. Next, it must be adopted, to ensure continued compliance.

Consistency is important for trail users. In the wake of trail development and expansion efforts in the areas, township-led and by others, it is recommended that the Township establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

### Trail Classification

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) has produced a trail classification, aimed at trail managers, land managers, trail designers/builders, user groups that manage trails (i.e., ATV, XC ski, MTB), and insurance providers. According to the OTC, the intention of the document is to:

- Organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development,
- Articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level,
- Introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class, and
- Support and complement trail risk management training and best practice document.

The OTC Trail Classification has been attached as an appendix item, to be used at the discretion of the Township.

## 4.2.6 Trail Design, Managed & Designed Use

*With such diversity in terms of trail use, the Township should adopt the concept of managed and designed use, an industry best practice, to inform trail management and design parameters.*

Trail uses, and users, throughout the Township are diverse. Some see opportunities to participate in sport or leisure, while others view trails as a means of transportation throughout, and between, communities. While some uses/users are season-specific, others take advantage of the trails year round. It is understood that existing trail use includes walking and dog-walking, hiking, cycling (i.e., road, gravel, and mountain biking), equestrian use (i.e., horseback riders), motorized vehicular use (i.e., ATVs, dirt bikes, snow mobiles), snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and first nations traditional use.

With such diversity in terms of trail use, it is recommended that the Township adopt the concept of managed and designed use — and the understanding that trails are not designed to be ‘one-size-fits-all’. Considered an industry best practice, the concept has been employed in plans and strategies close to home, though the Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives, published by the USDA Forest Service, defines these terms and their application particularly well. As such, the following definitions and explanations have been borrowed from this resource, with some modification to fit local application.

### **Managed Use**

Managed Use is a mode of travel that is actively managed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management.

1. Managed Use indicates management intent to accommodate a specific use.
2. There can be more than one Managed Use per trail or trail segment.
3. The Managed Uses for a trail are usually a small subset of all the allowed uses on the trail, that is, uses that are allowed unless specifically prohibited. For example, on a trail that is closed to all motorized use but open to all non-motorized use, the Managed Uses could be hiking and equestrian. The allowed uses, however, would also include bicycles and all other non-motorized uses.

4. Identify the Managed Uses for each trail based on applicable land management plan, direction, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction.
5. There is a direct relationship between Managed Use and Trail Classification: generally, one cannot be determined without consideration of the other. Not all Trail classes are appropriate for all Managed Uses.

### **Designed Use**

Designed Use is the single Managed Use of a trail that requires the most demanding design, construction, and maintenance parameters and that, in conjunction with the applicable Trail Classification, determines which Design Parameters will apply to a trail.

1. There is only one Designed Use per trail or trail segment. Although a trail or trail segment may have more than one Managed Use and numerous uses may be allowed, only one Managed Use is identified as the design driver or Designed Use.
2. Determine the Designed Use for a trail or trail segment from the Managed Uses identified for that trail. When making this determination, consider all Managed Uses that occur during all seasons of use of the trail or trail segment. Assess any essential or limiting geometry for the Managed Uses of the trail or trail segment to determine whether any trail-specific adjustments are necessary to the applicable Design Parameters.
  - i. In some situations, when there is more than one Managed Use identified for a trail, the Designed Use may be readily apparent. For example, on a trail with Managed Uses of all-terrain vehicle and motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle use would be the Designed Use because this use requires wider tread widths and has lower tolerances for surface obstacles and maximum trail grades.
  - ii. In other situations involving more than one Managed Use, the Designed Use may not be readily apparent, as is often the case when there are fewer differences between the applicable sets of Design Parameters. For example, on a trail that is actively managed for hiker, pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle

use, equestrian use would likely be the Designed Use because of the three “managed uses” -- equestrian use generally has the most demanding design requirements. While the bicycle use design parameters resemble equestrian design parameters in some ways, design parameters for this trail may need to be adjusted to accommodate bicycles.

## 4.2.7 Trail Management

*The Township will employ a hybrid approach to trail management, relying on qualified township staff and professional trail contractors, to conduct regular trail inspection, assessment, monitoring and maintenance.*

It is recommended that township staff and professional trail contractors work together to fulfill trail management roles and responsibilities.

### Roles

Township staff, in essence the land managers, must provide management and oversight of township properties and trails. In terms of visitor experience, township staff may be required to educate visitors, and respond to negative visitor experiences, when necessary. In terms of maintenance, township staff may tend to maintenance works according to their level of expertise, recruiting professional trail contractors to tend to maintenance works beyond their scope.

Professional trail contractors can provide consulting, design, construction, and maintenance services — generally, relied upon when township staff are unable to perform duties in house or additional expertise is necessary.

### Trail Inspection & Assessment

Trail inspection is an important component of risk management, referring to the process of reviewing a trail (i.e., trail tread, drainage, corridor, surroundings, and associated infrastructure), and identifying hazards, defects or problem areas. The process of evaluating identified hazards, defects or problem areas is referred to as trail assessment. Both trail inspection and assessment should be conducted on a regular basis (e.g., monthly, seasonally, annually, etc.) in accordance with the



#### Worth Noting

Formalized trail environments require management, oversight, inspection, assessment, measurement and maintenance. As recreational trail development and renewal occurs, township staffing levels should be continually monitored and adjusted, to meet evolving needs.

adopted trail classification. Both should be conducted by qualified individuals; generally, township staff or a professional trail contractor.

### **Record Keeping**

All trail inspections, assessments, and maintenance should be documented on standardized forms/templates. Often referred to as a 'risk mitigation log', these records should be kept on file for a minimum of 7 years, as per industry standard.

### **Measuring Performance**

It is important to monitor trail use (i.e., number of users, time of visit, etc.), to help guide decisions related to maintenance, trail classification, management and funding. Infrared trail counters are a common means of collecting this data. Installing cameras at ground level — capturing only feet, to maintain user privacy — is another approach which may be used, to collect relevant data. Regardless of the technologies used, it is important to erect signage in staging environments, indicating that trail counters are being used on the premises.

## 4.2.8 Constituent and Communal Needs

*Generally, projects should focus on the communal needs of the community as a whole; even projects established to meet the needs of a particular user group will contribute to the communal needs of the community, accordingly.*

Township park and trail development projects meet two kinds of needs: the communal (i.e., of benefit to all) and the constituent (i.e., of benefit to specific groups). Currently, large portions of township parks are consumed by facilities and services to meet the need of constituent user groups. Yet, many of the best things about township parks are a result of providing for the community's communal needs.

From the very outset, all projects must seek to appease communal needs, above those of the constituent. The program and design of new projects should meet the needs of the user group, but with limited land and under township ownership, have an obligation to make a positive contribution to the park environment, to serve the whole community.

## 4.3 Identity and Movement

This series of strategies deal with access and movement through the township parks and recreational trail network.

### 4.3.1 Entry, Orientation and Wayfinding

Strategy 15

*The Township will seek ways to give the township parks and recreational trail network a stronger sense of identity, well-defined entrances, and an easy sense of orientation.*

Generally, Township parks and recreational trail environments lack a satisfactory sense of entry and orientation.

#### A Primary Entrance

As parks are improved, the means of accessing them, or the entry sequence, will need improvement too. A primary entrance should be identified for each park site; outfit with necessary place identification signage and other treatments, to support navigation and confirm arrival.

Secondary entrances with quality treatments should be developed in support of the primary entrances — facilitating arrival via alternative vehicular routes, or adjacent trail environments, where possible.

#### Staging Environments

Staging environments offer access to trails, and encompass the spaces and facilities we generally associate with trailheads — parking, washrooms, signage, picnic areas, space to meet, organize and prepare, and/or programmable space to accommodate trail related activities and events (e.g., lessons, group activities, races, etc.).

These spaces should be designed to welcome visitors to the trails, and to support managed and designed trail uses. Staging environments, their finishes and furnishings (e.g., signage), can also distinguish township trails from others in the community.

Staging environments come in many shapes and sizes, responding to surrounding geography, intentions, trail access, and means of arrival. For example, a trail situated in an isolated context requiring vehicular access may require more space for parking (i.e., vehicles, trailers, etc.),

washroom facilities, and other amenities to support trail users — perhaps concentrated at a single entrance. Alternatively, a trail with several opportunities for community connections (e.g., pedestrian paths from adjacent residential areas) may warrant smaller staging areas, designed to welcome, inform, and orient pedestrians and cyclists, without accommodation for vehicles.

### **Signage & Wayfinding**

A coordinated signage system should be developed, to welcome, orient, inform, educate, and direct park and trail users. Property entrances (i.e., staging environments) should be identified, and staging environments should be outfitted with appropriate information to equip visitors, and satisfy risk management policies. This may include, but is not limited to, code of conduct, guidelines for use, waiver sign, trail mapping, emergency information, and design parameters as prescribed under the AODA.

On trails themselves, wayfinding signage, such as trail markers and mapping may also be used, to ensure visitors remain on township trails and are able to make informed decisions and navigate the network appropriately. Additionally, where situations permit, the use of gates, barriers (constructed and/or planted) can assist in preventing unauthorized access/traffic to “off trail” environments. In areas of unique natural or cultural heritage, interpretive signage can be used as an interactive educational component.

Temporary signage, often used to convey trail closures, is another important component of a coordinated signage system.

The names of facilities and amenities, services, and buildings should be clearly presented and associated with building approaches and entrances.

## **Design Considerations**

The Township is advised to work with a qualified consultant, to develop a coordinated signage system specific to township parks and trails, responding to risk management policies, township goals, and the needs of park and trail users. Design considerations should include, graphics and legibility (e.g., contrast, text size, use of universal symbols, visibility, etc.), content (e.g., code of conduct, mapping, etc.), locations (e.g., sign situation, distance from trail tread, responding to varied topography, snow build up, etc.), dimensioning (e.g., overall size, height, etc.), and maintenance.

## **Consistent Naming & Identifiers**

Throughout the process, we have come to appreciate various names for the same spaces and/or trails, found throughout the Township. The Township should prioritize the selection of a single naming convention for each trail/space, that can be rationalized and used indefinitely. A process should be developed to outline this decision-making process, that also considers stakeholder consultation to ensure naming is agreeable and adopted by the community.

## **Named Trails & Places**

Very few communities have a set policy for naming a trail, space or entity. However, when named, trails and spaces tend to be identifiable and act as a destinations. The Township should strive to create destinations that are well signed and have a story to tell — trails and destinations tend to be harder to let fall into disrepair when they are named.

### 4.3.2 Pedestrian Circulation

*Pedestrian zones — paths, walkways, trails, open spaces that facilitate movement — are defining features of parks. They should be strategically positioned and expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement.*

Pedestrian paths are defining features of township parks. These, and associated pedestrian zones, should be expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement. Consolidation and connectivity between open spaces, free from vehicular traffic, should be encouraged.

The only routes that require automobile access are those leading to parking lots. At all times, pedestrian movement should be given priority. Where vehicular crossings are required, sidewalks should be constructed to address the crossing — sidewalks should not be paved over, giving vehicles priority.

Pedestrian access to facilities and amenities should, where feasible, reflect a balance between environmental preservation and the desired line of movement.

A pedestrian circulation system should be developed that facilitates convenient and comfortable movement around township parks, and the larger community beyond.

### 4.3.3 Pedestrian Trail Crossings

*The Township will ensure that pedestrian crossings are situated and outfitted appropriately, to enhance safety for trail users and motorists alike.*

Rural, high-speed roadways, especially those with poor sight lines can pose risk to pedestrians. Although many township trails are isolated from vehicular traffic, others intersect with roadways — sometimes more than once.

When planning for new trail construction, or trail redevelopment which would require users to cross a roadway, every effort should be made to locate trail crossings where sight lines meet or exceed best practices, as well as provincial engineering standards.

Where possible, or required due to substandard sight lines, a trail crossing warning system should be considered. Often composed of signage to demonstrate the purpose of the trail, as well as flashing beacons to warn oncoming traffic of the trail crossing, trail crossing warning systems can improve safety for trail users and motorists alike.

It is understood that roads throughout Southwold span township, county, and provincial jurisdiction. The Township is encouraged to work collaboratively with regulatory agencies, to understand where opportunities to align safe trail crossings exist and to determine the feasibility of trail crossing warning systems, where necessary.

Across the province, we are seeing public works and engineering policies be developed, speaking to the logistics of erecting hiking trail crossings on county roads. As an example, in Renfrew County the Public Works and Engineering Policy PW-14: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads (included as an appendix item, for reference) outlines a collaborative process, where costs and responsibilities are shared between the County and member municipalities — there may be opportunity to establish a similar model within the context of Southwold and Elgin County.

#### 4.3.4 Bicycles

*The increased use of bicycles, both for access to and for moving around township parks, will be encouraged and accommodated in future development.*

Bicycle use offers many opportunities to the community — lessening environmental impact, decreasing demand for vehicular access and parking, encouraging healthy, active living, and providing another enriching means to enjoy the existing network of township parks and trails.

Bicycles are an extremely efficient means of local transport, but they present problems for planners precisely because they are fast and mobile. Not powered vehicles but not pedestrians either, bicycles are found on all reasonably level surfaces — roads, lanes, sidewalks, walkways, plazas, and trails — and frequently come into conflict with vehicles and pedestrians alike. To create a separate, designated system for bicycles is ambitious; to completely restrict bicycles from all pedestrian areas would (if even possible) defeat their value.

Major approach roads to most Township parks are broad and busy. The continued provision of bicycle lanes (and separated multi-use paths) should be encouraged by the Township within Township parks, paths and thoroughfares, and should be identified and marked to aid in the clear and safe movement of bicycles. In some areas of the pedestrian precinct (i.e., gathering areas, plazas) it may be necessary to heighten pedestrian awareness of cycling activity within in these areas.

The Township should provide bicycle parking on the periphery of the pedestrian precinct, located conveniently and visible from facilities and amenities. If possible, sheltered bicycle parking and related amenities (i.e., repair stands) should be provided — few communities offer them, yet they has been proven to be a significant amenity in attracting cycling clubs and tours.



#### Worth Noting

Parks host a wide array of cyclists — families with young children, leisurely folks, athletes, etc. It is important to recognize that not all cyclists have the same needs and additional infrastructure may be required to ensure safety and enjoyment for all.

### 4.3.5 Parking

*The Township will adopt a two-pronged approach to parking: reduce demand for parking through establishing community connections, and advocate for parking within comfortable walking distance to trailheads, supporting facilities, and amenities.*

Where possible, demand for parking should be reduced through establishing community connections (i.e., trail access from residential areas, existing parks, community facilities, etc.). Often overlooked, community connections can be of immense benefit — encouraging active transportation, reducing barriers to recreation opportunities, and reducing parking demand (i.e., less resources allocated to expansion and maintenance of parking environments).

Given the rural context and expansive geography of the area, it is understood that not all parks and recreational trails will be serviceable through community connections, and will require parking environments. In these instances, park and recreational trail use will be correlated with parking capacity, and vice versa. It's a balance, where insufficient parking will limit park and recreational trail use, yet an abundance of parking could lend to congestion, or remain unused (i.e., wasted resources). When planning to construct or redevelop parking facilities, the Township must consider use, demand (i.e., typical, not peak), and current capacities, to right size these facilities. Well maintained gravel parking is to be considered the Township's level of service.

#### **Maximize Efficiency of Existing Lots**

Despite park and recreational trail users' reliance on motor vehicles to access township trail infrastructure, existing parking environments servicing township parks and trailheads can be improved upon. Each lot should be considered individually to determine the best operating, personal safety, and aesthetic design.

### 4.3.6 Underground Utilities

*The Township will plan ahead to ensure necessary upgrades to underground utilities are made before, or during, park development projects to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruptions.*

Township utilities — including but not limited to water, gas, electricity, storm, sewage, and communications — have been developed piece by piece over many decades. In the wake of new development in the area, particularly residential subdivisions, many systems are approaching their maximums or are limited in reach, and may be insufficient to support future expansion set to occur. Municipal utilities — including but not limited to water, gas, electricity, storm, sewage, and communications — tend to be developed incrementally over time. In the wake of new development in areas having utilities, particularly residential subdivisions, the Township may have utilities that are approaching their end of useful life, maximum capacity, and may be limited in supporting future expansion.

The program for rationalization and rehabilitation should be coordinated with other park development, including the construction of new buildings, road redevelopment, and landscape projects, in order to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruption.

Conversely, each park project should give adequate consideration to its impact on the existing systems and potential contribution it might make to future utilities rationalization. The cost of updating and/or engineering systems should in part be borne by the project budgets of new buildings and facilities which draw upon those systems, and in part by a utility infrastructure budget.

### 4.3.7 Lighting

*Exterior lighting will increase user safety and comfort, and subtly reveal the character of parks at night.*

A cohesive lighting system should be developed that increases user safety and comfort at night, and reinforces the spatial structure and organization of Township parks. Effective and well-designed artificial lighting is critical to comfort, personal safety, and orientation, and in some instances, extended play. The Township should consider lighting for all of its soccer facilities, primary trail segments, and of amenity/ congregation areas (washrooms, entrances, etc). determined to be accessible after hours.

Township parks change at night. Activity diminishes. What were colourful gardens can become shadowed recesses. A sense of orientation, difficult as it is to maintain during the day, can be further reduced. But it does not need to be; nighttime outdoor can and should be as pleasant as daytime.

Good lighting must be adequate; though, this does not necessarily mean in greater quantities. Glare and extreme contrast are just as great a problem as too little light. It is a great mistake to try to provide daytime-like intensities; those areas that are not as brightly lit become seemingly more dark, purely by contrast and the inability for the eye to adapt. The lighting strategy therefore is to limit light levels to no more than what is required to see at night (i.e., not much more than full moonlight) and to distribute light more evenly with smooth transitions between illuminated buildings, roads, walkways, and open spaces. This allows the eye to comfortably adapt and thus be able to see into shadows.

Lighting can also add immeasurably to the night aesthetic of parks, by subtly illuminating key features. This will assist orientation and engender a sense of comfort and satisfaction. All building entrances, alcoves and/ or dark corners should be softly lit.



#### Worth Noting

Excessive lighting can also pose challenges for some, notably neighbouring residents and wildlife; light intensity, distribution, necessity, placement and orientation should be considered.

Overly bright lighting which may disturb adjacent residential areas and sensitive wildlife must be avoided. All lighting should be 'dark sky' compliant allowing the visibility of the night sky to be preserved as a community asset.

Lighting fixtures are an important part of the furniture that embellishes parks; they are as important during the day as they are at night. All lighting should coordinate with other park site furnishings.

### 4.3.8 Site Furnishings

*The Township intends to develop an economical and comprehensive system of visually coordinated and comfortable outdoor furnishings. Durability in function and attractive appearance under low maintenance conditions are essential.*

To be conducive to use and social interaction, an environment must be well endowed with a range of furnishings, including seating, waste receptacles, bicycle racks, and other elements of convenience. These components should be designed as a visually coordinated system that works well with other elements, like signage, to enhance the identity of parks as places with special purposes and roles.

Furnishings play a key role in the ‘branding’ of the community through consistent visual reminders that the viewer is in Southwold, whether in a township park or travelling upon a township trail. Care should be taken to ensure consistency throughout the community, through establishing ‘standards’ (i.e., parks and recreation furnishing standard), or seeking furnishings that complement other township efforts.

Furnishings should also be comfortable, durable, vandal-resistant and attractive under low maintenance conditions, and should be located where they will be used. Materials should be comfortable and dry, and components should be designed to accommodate a range of needs with respect to posture and individual preference. Components should be located to take maximum benefit of seasonal climactic changes and characteristics.

## 4.4 Implementation

This series of strategies deal with plan management and project delivery.

### 4.4.1 Plan Continuity

Strategy 23

*The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan will be promoted and be approved as Township policy and maintained as an effective development directive through continuity of responsibility, consistent application, and regular updating and review.*

To ensure that the Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan remains an effective basis for development, the Township should establish administrative structures for its approval, application, and updating.

#### **An Approved Master Plan**

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan, particularly the strategies and its implementation and review mechanisms, should be received by Township Council.

#### **Applying the Master Plan**

The strategies contained within should be applied to all parks and recreational trail development or renewal projects, regardless of scale or type. The prime responsibility for this should be assigned to a township department (i.e., infrastructure and development services, building and community services, public works, etc.) whose job it will be to ensure that the Master Plan is brought forward at all stages of the parks and recreational trail development process.

This Master Plan represents the institutional “intention and memory” of the Township, and will be a source of reference for many people, staff and departments. The Master Plan will require consistency in interpretation, for which the continued leadership of a township planner is necessary as well as the continuity of those associates with the task, both at the planning and project levels.

## Updating the Master Plan

The Parks and Recreational Master Plan should be capable of responding to changing needs over time. Implemented in projects, each defined by the conditions of the current time, once completed, each project will influence subsequent projects (i.e., the completion of a short-term project will serve to inform the design planning of subsequent projects). It therefore requires periodic updating. Master Plan amendments should be made explicitly not implicitly, following formal amending procedures.

## Plan Amendment

An amendment is made when a proposed project would contradict the Master Plan in some way, but seems otherwise to be desirable. The first method of updating is a “Plan Amendment” which is triggered if it is found that a project is desirable but does not comply with the Master Plan. The second method is a Formal Review, conducted at five year intervals, by which the Master Plan’s policy status is confirmed. This review will include a re-examination of the strategies, and the incorporation of Master Plan Amendments made in the preceding period. A ‘working group’ including township planning and community services staff, should review and advise as to whether a proposed project is consistent with the Master Plan, and be responsible for requesting that Council decide whether amendment should be made.

## 4.4.2 Project Design Checklist

*Designers (i.e., landscape architects, planners, engineers, etc.) of projects throughout the township parks and recreational trails network must respond to the following criteria and present evidence as to how they have been addressed at each major step of the design process.*

During the design of new and renovated spaces, structures and amenities, the project team — users, administrators, managers, and designers — will have three areas of responsibility: the first towards particular project needs, the second towards communal needs, and the third towards outdoor space and circulation.

### Site Use and Organization

- Land use efficiency should be maximized.
- Sites should be selected to assist the rationalization of movement and of utility infrastructure.
- Built forms should be located on those parts of the site which are in worst condition, rather than the best.

### Responding to Local Context

- Open spaces and associated structures should be designed to enhance the larger compositions created by groups of facilities, amenities, and landscapes; these should also preserve and increase physical and visual connections to Southwold's hamlets and residential areas.
- Spaces and associated infrastructure should be organized in a way that makes new function and circulation routes compatible with those of adjacent uses and open spaces.
- Existing high quality open spaces should be protected and enhanced.
- New open spaces should form part of a continuous network.
- New structures adjacent to open spaces, trails and thoroughfares, should be treated as fronts and should activate these environments.

- All uses should relate directly to grade for ease of access and continued/increased accessibility.

### **Response to Local Climate**

- Park spaces, both outdoor and indoor (e.g., washrooms, facilities, etc.), should benefit from the sun, yet also consider protection for excessive solar radiation.
- Sun, rain and snow shelters should be provided in high use areas, and adjacent to frequently travelled pedestrian routes.
- Park paths, walkways, and plaza gradients should be minimized and/or skid resistant to reduce slipping when wet, icy, and/or snow-covered.

### **Circulation & Barrier Free Access**

- Park, open spaces, trail environments, and associated structures/amenities should be universally accessible.
- New open spaces, associated structures, and amenities should be barrier free, including clear, unobstructed direct paths for the persons with visual impairments and/or disabilities. Create logical, intuitive guides to major destinations.

### **Public Safety**

- New projects and renovations should be designed to provide actual personal safety as well as impart a sense of comfort and well-being in park and recreational trail users.
- Personal safety is a broad-spectrum requirement that is basic to all aspects of the environment, including spatial clarity and legibility, signage and orientation, lighting and visibility, planting, paving materials, and winter walkability-mobility, as well as ramp gradients, traffic controls, and safety alert devices.

## Long Life/Loose Fit

- New spaces, structures, and amenities should be capable of being adapted to new uses and expansion as the needs and the priorities of the community change.

## Expression

- Southwold's landscapes should express a sense of connectedness to nature, to permanence, resiliency and respect while ensuring a sense of connection to the community's traditional roots and its historical legacies.
- Southwold's parks, open spaces and trail environments, and associated amenities, should express the township's commitment to serving the community, their guests, and its visitors — and its responsibility to treat leisure and recreational activity as a public resource. To express this, landscapes and amenities should be open, safe, accessible, welcoming and fair.
- Southwold's parks, open spaces, and trail environments should express a connection to nature, providing the opportunity to tie nature and recreation

## Scale

- The scale of spaces and amenities throughout township parks should relate to the scale and size of the human body, to make approaching and using of the space/amenity a comfortable experience.
- The scale of elements and massing should correspond to the various distances from which it is viewed.

## **Materials, Finishes and Products**

- Materials, finishes and products should reinforce the cohesion of related groups of uses (i.e., recreation zones, access and parking, etc.).
- Materials, finishes and products should reflect the role of township parks, open spaces and trail environments as focal points of the community.

## **Landscape Quality**

- Landscape design should receive the same level of attention and budget stability afforded to buildings and infrastructure, elsewhere in the township.
- Landscapes should be designed to ensure personal safety.

## **Servicing**

- Service areas and associated utility infrastructure should be located and designed to efficiently support parks and trails functions and operator requirements.
- Services areas should in general be located away from public open spaces and thoroughfares.
- Where service areas are integrated with pedestrian use, design treatments should reflect the pedestrian use.

## **Technical Performance**

- Projects should be subjected to life-cycle costing to determine the best fit between capital costs, operating costs and ongoing maintenance costs; projects should be designed to reduce maintenance costs.
- All design efforts should reduce energy and resource consumption and environmental impact.

## Environmental Quality

- Improvements and new use development should demonstrate high respect for the environment and should not compromise the existing natural features necessary in supporting resilience.
- Amenities and structures should not be permitted to emit unacceptable noxious or otherwise unpleasant run-off, fumes/gases, etc. into township parks, open spaces, or trail environments.
- Noise generating activities should be located within facilities designed or strategically situated to protect other park and trail users from noise intrusion, where possible.

### 4.4.3 Campaign Establishment

*Campaigns should be established to raise awareness and funds for major park and recreational trail planning, construction, and redevelopment projects.*

Campaigns should identify independent projects with specific budgets to be financed by the Township and its funding partners. Creating means for the community to invest in, to help shape, and to care for their local parks, open spaces, and trail environments, can also lend to a heightened sense of appreciation, stewardship, and civic pride.

# 5.0 Parks & Outdoor Recreation Facilities

## 5.1 Classification & Service Level Summaries

The Township of Southwold is home to several parks and open spaces, offering active and passive outdoor recreation opportunities to residents and their guests.

### 5.1.1 Parkland Classification

The Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), identifies two types, or classifications, of parks — Community Parks and Neighbourhood Parks — which will provide a range of recreational and open space opportunities, within settlement areas.

#### Community Parks

As per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), Community Parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of the residents at the community level. Community Parks will:

- a. Provide indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and are a focal point for community activities;
- b. Provide predominantly for active recreational uses;
- c. Be accessible to the community; and
- d. Incorporate elements of the natural environment wherever feasible.

#### Neighbourhood Parks

As per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), Neighbourhood Parks are permitted uses in all land use designations. Neighbourhood Parks will generally consist of small children's play facilities at the neighbourhood level and greenbelt area that serve neighbourhoods within a community. More specifically, Neighbourhood Parks will:

- a. Be accessibly located within a neighbourhood;
- b. Provide opportunities for minor recreational activities; and
- c. Provide opportunities for passive enjoyment of the environment.

## Recommended Classification

Beyond those identified in the Official Plan, it is recommended that the Township adopt additional parkland classification (and associated parameters) when describing current parks, and planning for new ones. It is also recommended that the Township Official Plan be amended to support these additional parkland classifications. In alignment with industry best practices and comparator municipalities, the following parkland classification is recommended for use.

### Recommended Parkland Classification, Town of Southwold

Classification	Description	Size (ha)
Parkette	Small open spaces with limited recreational facilities, if any. Supports passive recreational use (i.e., rest, play, gathering). May include areas of natural heritage, historic or architectural significance.	Under 0.6
Neighbourhood Park	Provide opportunities for minor recreational activities and passive enjoyment of the environment. Generally consist of small children's play facilities and green space.	0.6 to 4.0
Community Park	Intended to serve the recreational needs of residents at the community level. Provides indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, predominantly for active recreational uses.	4.0+
Regional Park	Intended to serve the recreational needs of residents, the broader community and region. Provides a variety of amenities and/or unique environmental areas. May provide additional income opportunities (e.g., sport tournaments, tourism, etc.).	Varies

Figure 26: Recommended Parkland Classification

Using the recommended parkland classification above, the following table provides an overview of existing parks in the Township.

**Overview: Southwold Parks**

Name	Recommended Classification	Settlement Area	Size (ha)
Corsley Park	Community Park	Shedden	6.3
Ferndale Community Park	Neighbourhood Park	Ferndale	2.8
Fingal Ball Park	Community Park	Fingal	6.5
Fingal Heritage Park	Parkette	Fingal	0.5
Keystone Complex	Regional Park	Shedden	11.4
Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park	Neighbourhood Park	Talbotville	1.9
Talbotville Optimist Sports Park	Community Park	Talbotville	5.8

*Figure 27: Overview of Parks in Southwold*

**5.1.2 Parkland Service Level**

The Township owns and manages approximately **35.2 ha** of parkland. Based on the current population of Southwold, this yields a service level of approximately **7.3 ha per 1,000 residents**.

As demonstrated in the figure below, on average the parkland service level of comparator municipalities is **4.0 ha per 1,000 residents** — in alignment with their average target service level. In comparison, the parkland service level in Southwold is considerably higher than that comparator municipalities. However, considering the probable 5-year growth (i.e., totalling 9,500 resident population) and potential growth 5-years and beyond (i.e., totalling 11,500 resident population), this service level is under threat. If the Township’s parkland inventory remains as-is, the service level could fall to 3.7 ha per 1,000 residents, then 3.1 ha per 1,000 residents, respectfully.

Worth noting, beyond quantity, it is up to the Township to take appropriate steps to assess and ensure an acceptable quality of parkland — considering site suitability, programming compatibility, ease of access, proximity, public safety, environmental and/or historical significance, and connectivity, among other characteristics.



## Improvements & Recommendations

- The Township should target a parkland service level of 4.0 ha per 1,000 residents, in alignment with the average amongst comparator municipalities.
- Although there is currently an abundance of parkland in the community (i.e., service level exceeds target), it is recommended that the Township retain parklands through anticipated period of unprecedented growth, to avoid falling below target.

### Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply of Parks	Service Level (ha /1000 pop.)	Target Service Level (ha /1,000 pop.)
Town of Alymer	7699	14	3.57	3.88
Township of Malahide	9308	7	0.79	2.2
Town of St. Marys	7386	19	4.55	4.2
Town of Ingersoll	13693	18	3.39	2.5
Town of Tillsonburg	18615	19	4.29	4.5
Town of Petrolia	6013	14	4.27	4.3
Town of Shelburne	8994	17	6.41	6.41
Town of Goderich	7881	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of St. Thomas	42840	43	4.83	4
<b>Average</b>	<b>13603</b>	<b>18.88</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>4.00</b>

Figure 28: Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

## Surplus Lands

As explained above, based on probable and potential growth it is recommended to retain current parkland, to ensure the desired service level target is met. In the future, should the Township determine there to be a surplus of parkland, properties should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with the support of a qualified consultant, as needed. Considerations may include, but are not limited to:

- Ease of access, proximity;
- Site suitability, programming compatibility;
- Public safety;
- Environmental and/or historical significance; and
- Connectivity.

### 5.1.3 Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Existing parks throughout the Township feature many outdoor recreation facilities, supporting both active and passive park use.

As demonstrated in the figure below, when compared to the respective service levels of comparator municipalities, the Township generally meets or exceeds an acceptable service level for most facility types. However, considering probable 5-year growth (i.e., totalling 9,500 resident population) and potential growth 5-years and beyond (i.e., totalling 11,500 resident population), many of these service levels will fall below those of comparator municipalities.

#### Other Considerations

There are many other recreation facilities that may warrant discussion, as the Township seeks opportunities to diversify their outdoor recreation offerings. These may include, but are not limited to BMX/skatepark/pump track facilities, disc golf courses, fitness parks, beach volleyball courts, and outdoor skating rinks. With a lack of comparator data to determine adequate service levels for these facilities, provision should be based on community desire and feasibility (i.e., fiscal and operational realities, environmental conditions, etc.).



#### Improvements & Recommendations

- The Township should consider probable and potential growth, when planning for the provision of new outdoor recreation facilities.
- Where possible, multi-use facilities should be considered to maximize use potential without incurring excess installation and maintenance costs (e.g., explore multi-sport courts, which may support tennis, pickleball, basketball, and more).
- The Township should monitor community interest in unique outdoor recreation facilities (e.g., BMX/skatepark/pump track facilities, etc.) to determine need.

### Outdoor Recreation Facility Service Level Summary, Town of Southwold

Facility Information			Calculated Provision (per Population)				Considerations	
Facility	Current Supply	Comparator Provision (1:x)	Current (4800 pp.)	Probable (9500 pp.)	Potential (11500 pp.)	Community Desire	Supply Status	
Baseball Diamond	4	1471	3.3	6.5	7.8	Satisfied	Ok	
Basketball Court	2.5	7705	0.6	1.2	1.5	Improvements needed	High	
Off-Leash Dog Park	0	8665	0.6	1.1	1.3	Moderate	Low	
Outdoor Pool	0	15301	0.3	0.6	0.8	Low	Ok	
Pickleball Court	0	3060	1.6	3.1	3.8	High	Low	
Playground	6	1703	2.8	5.6	6.8	Improvements needed	High	
Soccer Pitch	5	1920	2.5	4.9	6.0	Moderate	High	
Splash Pad	0	9892	0.5	1.0	1.2	High	Ok	
Tennis Court	1	3861	1.2	2.5	3.0	High	Ok	

Comparator provision based on comparator municipalities, including Town of Alymer, Township of Malahide, Town of St. Marys, Town of Ingersoll, Town of Tillsonburg, Town of Petrolia, Town of Shelburne, Town of Goderich, and City of St. Thomas.

Figure 29: Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

## 5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment

Based on site observations collected in April 2025, and supplemented by desktop research and community engagement findings, site specific inventories have been prepared for existing park sites in Southwold<sup>1</sup>. Each site has also been assigned a 'necessary improvements' rating, based on overall conditions, equipment, and finishing — considering safety, repair, desirability, among other criteria.

Site specific recommendations have been made for each site, complete with illustrative demonstration plans, to help guide physical change through the short-, mid- and long-term.



*Fingal Ball Park (Township of Southwold, n.d.)*

1 Excluding Fingal Heritage Park, as per project scope.

## 5.2.1 Corsley Park

Corsley Park (previously Shedden Open Space Park) is delineated on one side by Union Road. Although currently adjacent to large swaths of vacant land (i.e., lands cleared for development, farm fields), the park will soon be surrounded by residential development.



### Inventory

- Linear pedestrian path along northeast property line extends beyond park boundary through adjacent development lands to the Keystone Complex.
- Soccer fields (approx. 34 goalposts)
- Pavilion
- Accessible playground
- Seasonal washroom
- Gravel parking lot



### Site Observations, Conditions

- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Soccer fields appear saturated and uneven, difficult to walk on.
- Pathway to Keystone Complex materiality varies and is not accessible (i.e., no footpath) from parking lot or pavilion.
- Accessible playground equipment but no accessible route to the playground.
- Seating is concentrated in one area.

### Address

9210 Union Rd, Shedden, ON N0L 2E0

### Facility Condition – Improvement Need



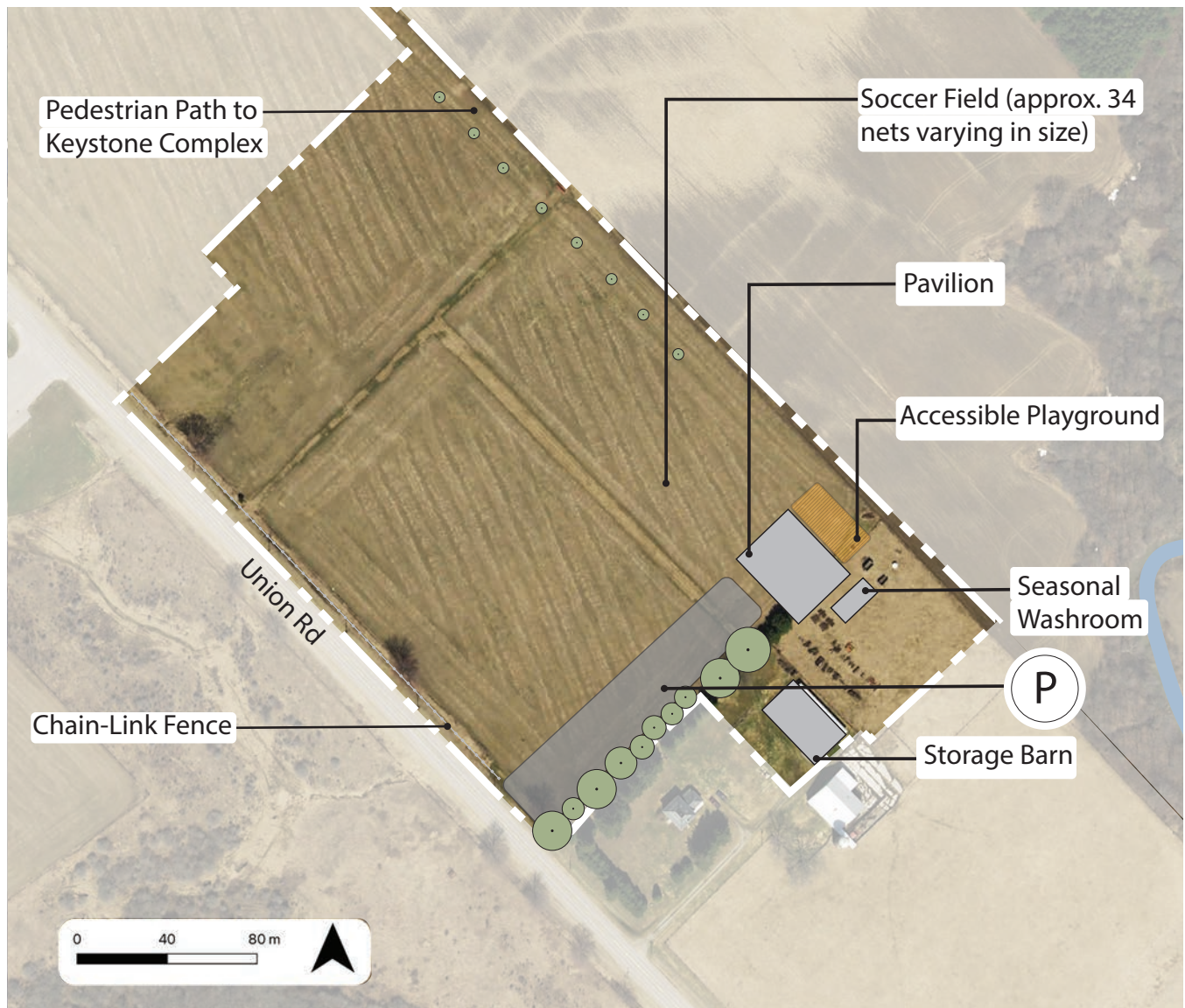
*Existing path to Keystone Complex (above), pavilion and park facility (centre), washroom facility (below).*



## Other Considerations

- Ground has been broken on residential development to the northwest; consider increased pedestrian use, dog-walking.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the north.
- Conservation lands may be established to the south, across Union Rd.
- Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail opportunity.

Figure 30: Corsley Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





## Improvements & Recommendations

- Consider adjusting soccer pitch alignment, to improve playability (i.e., reduce sun interference) and mitigate rogue soccer balls in proximity to Union Rd.
- Monitor demand for other field-based programming (e.g., rugby, lacrosse, etc.) and consider investment in additional equipment/line painting to promote more diverse use of these facilities.
- Improve multi-use path; refer to 6.0 Recreational Trails on page 113 for more information.
- Add perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate noise complaints and exposure to elements (i.e., supplement existing perimeter tree planting efforts).
- Ensure accessible playground facility can be accessed via an accessible pathway.
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity. Well maintained gravel parking is to be considered the Township's level of service.
- Consider reinstating turf in overflow parking area, to support passive use outside of peak parking times.

Figure 31: Corsley Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Existing Soccer Fields — realign to improve playability and safety.
- (B) Parking Lot Improvements — refine footprint and delineate parking stalls; add drop off to improve circulation.
- (C) Existing Accessible Playground Improvements — ensuring accessible pathway access; shade tree planting.
- (D) Multi-Use Perimeter Path
- (E) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment
- (F) Pedestrian Crosswalk, as permitted — to connect to future Conservation Area.

- (G) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (H) Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.

## 5.2.2 Ferndale Community Park

Ferndale Community Park abuts Wellington Road — the Town of Southwold and Municipality of Central Elgin boundary. Residential development surrounding the park spans across (and blurs) the Town boundary. The park was recently outfitted with new equipment, facilities and amenities.



### Inventory

- Playground
- Seasonal portable washrooms
- Gravel parking lot
- Pedestrian walking trail loop (i.e., mixed materials) through woodlot



### Site Observations, Conditions

- Most facilities and amenities, including playground equipment and signage, are new.
- Walking trail appears well-used.
- Seating opportunities are limited throughout (i.e., around playground, along walking trail).
- Paved sidewalk is easily accessed from the parking lot however, lacks connectivity to park assets (e.g., users must cross sod to access the playground).

### Address

41993 McBain Line, St Thomas, ON N5P 3T1

### Facility Condition — Improvement Need



*Park identification signage and playground (above), paved sidewalk (centre), accessible transition to sidewalk from parking area (below).*



## Other Considerations

- There is an entrance to a Municipality of Central Elgin multi-use trail directly across Wellington Rd to the east; desire lines suggest informal crossing and park access occurs frequently and behaviour is likely to continue. Opportunity to support cross-boundary pedestrian circulation and enhance access to neighbouring park facilities (e.g., Lynhurst Park and Turvey Park Skate Pad).

Figure 32: Ferndale Community Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





## Improvements & Recommendations

- Install more seating opportunities, to support parents (i.e., surrounding playground) and pedestrians (i.e., along walking path).
- Ensure 'accessible' sidewalk is purposeful and permits use of park facilities (e.g., provide adequate connection to playground, seasonal portable washrooms, etc.).
- Consider working with Elgin County and the Municipality of Central Elgin to establish a formal pedestrian crosswalk across Wellington Rd, in alignment with existing trail access/ egress (i.e., maintain comfortable walking distance, create safer environment to support existing movement/behaviour patterns).

Figure 33: Ferndale Community Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Existing Playground — with safety and access improvements.
- (B) Pedestrian Walking Trail
- (C) Pedestrian Crosswalk, as permitted.
- (D) Formalized Parking Area — complete with accessible parking space, delineated by new tree planting.
- (E) Naturalistic Area — allow area to naturalize, providing ecosystem diversity and point of interest for users.



### 5.2.3 Fingal Ball Park

One of Southwold's largest parks, Fingal Ball Park boasts several sports facilities — including ball diamonds and sport courts — and an expansive lawn. A new stormwater management pond is under development on site, towards the northwest. New residential development slated for the immediate vicinity will alter context, access and use.

#### Inventory

- Sport courts (i.e., tennis and basketball)
- Baseball diamonds, lit (x2)
- Seasonal washrooms
- Pavilion
- Gravel parking lot

#### Site Observations, Conditions

- Expansive parking lot is difficult to navigate, lacks order and is showing signs of wear (i.e., poor drainage, potholes).
- Lack of formal pathways to sport facilities (i.e., pedestrians crossing long, uneven sections of lawn to access facilities).
- Lack of seating, specifically around sport courts.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Large maintained lawns appear resource intensive, yet underutilized.

#### Address

8086 Millpark Street, Fingal, ON N0L 1K0

#### Facility Condition — Improvement Need



Tennis and basketball court (above), baseball diamond and supporting infrastructure (centre), pavilion and parking area (below).



## Other Considerations

- New residential development to the west will alter context, access and use; consider increased pedestrian use, dog-walking.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the north, across Union Rd; may be opportunity to establish pedestrian crossing and access path, to further enhance connectivity.

Figure 34: Fingal Ball Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





## Improvements & Recommendations

- Establish paths to improve access and navigation to park facilities and amenities.
- Establish trails to promote passive recreational around the site.
- Ensure stormwater management pond plans integrate multi-use perimeter path, in a safe and desirable manner.
- Sport court improvements, to address aging and/or missing infrastructure (e.g., nets, baskets, etc.). Resurfacing should include new lines, to accommodate multi-sport use (e.g., pickleball).
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off), maximize parking opportunity, enhance pedestrian safety and promote accessibility.

Figure 35: Fingal Ball Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Multi-Use Paths — improving facility access; supporting pedestrian use.
- (B) Stormwater Pond — opportunity to encourage biodiversity; a picturesque setting to complement perimeter trail.
- (C) Parking Lot Improvements — refine footprint and delineate parking stalls.
- (D) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (E) Meadow Planting — ‘no mow’ areas, to promote biodiversity while reducing maintenance costs.

- (F) Lookout — point of interest, complete with rest area.
- (G) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment



## 5.2.4 Keystone Complex

Host to many longstanding events — the Shedden Fair, Rosy Rhubarb Festival, and Shedden Truck and Tractor Pull, among others — the Keystone Complex is a focal point of the community. The space appears expansive, with vacant farm fields and residential estates in the vicinity however, ongoing development will see the grounds surrounded by mid- to high-density residential use in the near future.



### Inventory

- Keystone Complex (Community Hall & Library)
- Basketball court
- Baseball diamond, lit
- Seasonal washroom
- Storage shed
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Tractor pull lane
- Horse riding ring
- Asphalt parking lot



### Site Observations, Conditions

- Generally, facilities in good condition.
- Facility alignment could be improved, to promote use, safety and sight lines.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Baseball diamond falling into disrepair.

### Address

35921 Talbot Line, Shedden, ON N0L 2E0

### Facility Condition — Improvement Need



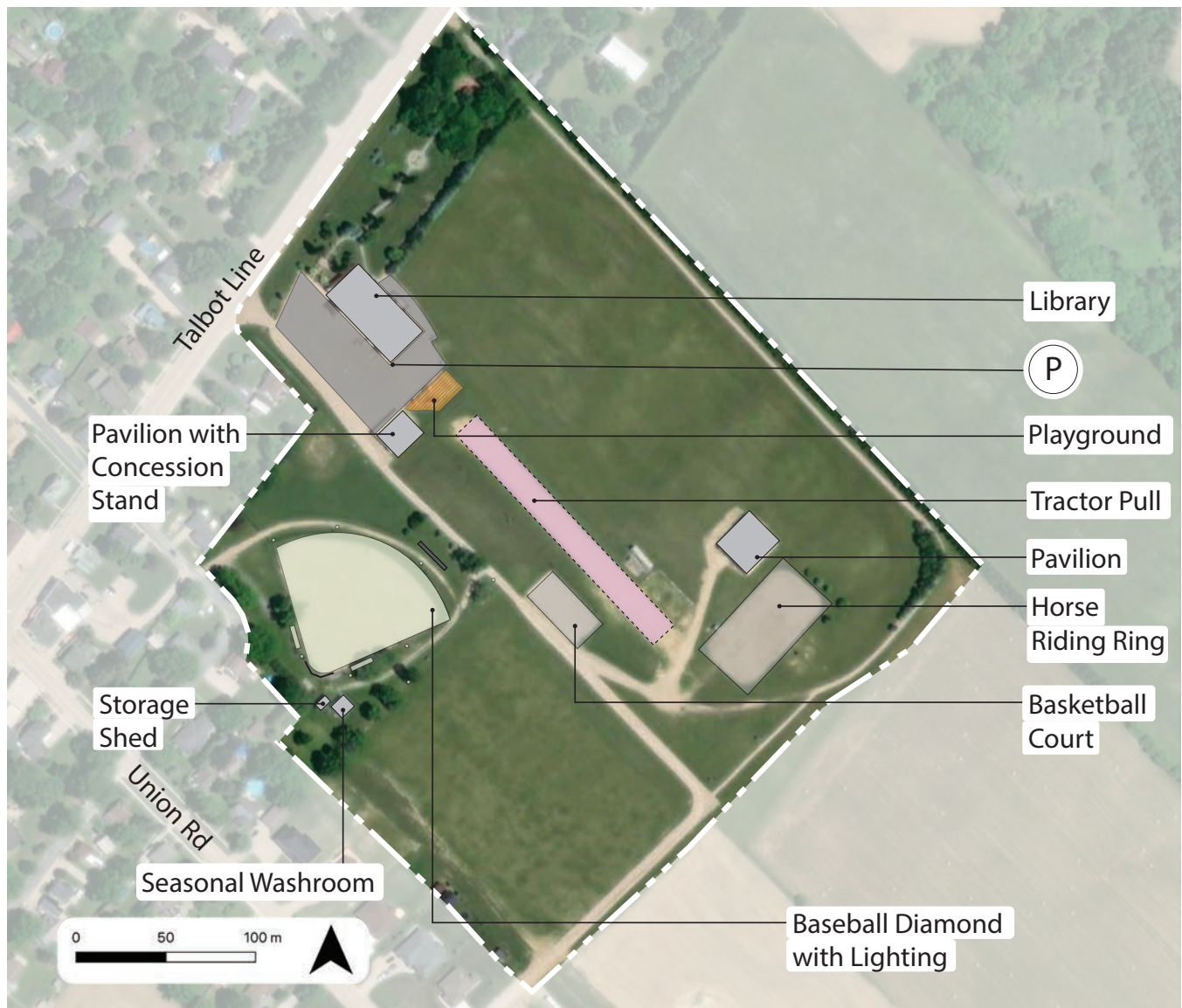
*Keystone Complex and basketball court (above), fairground infrastructure and pavilion (centre), playground (below).*



## Other Considerations

- New residential development to the southeast will alter context, access and use; site will appear smaller, more defined.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the east.
- Shedden to Fingal trail connection opportunity.
- With increased development pressures in Shedden, some proponents would prefer to see the south most corner re envisioned as residential development.

Figure 36: Keystone Complex Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition

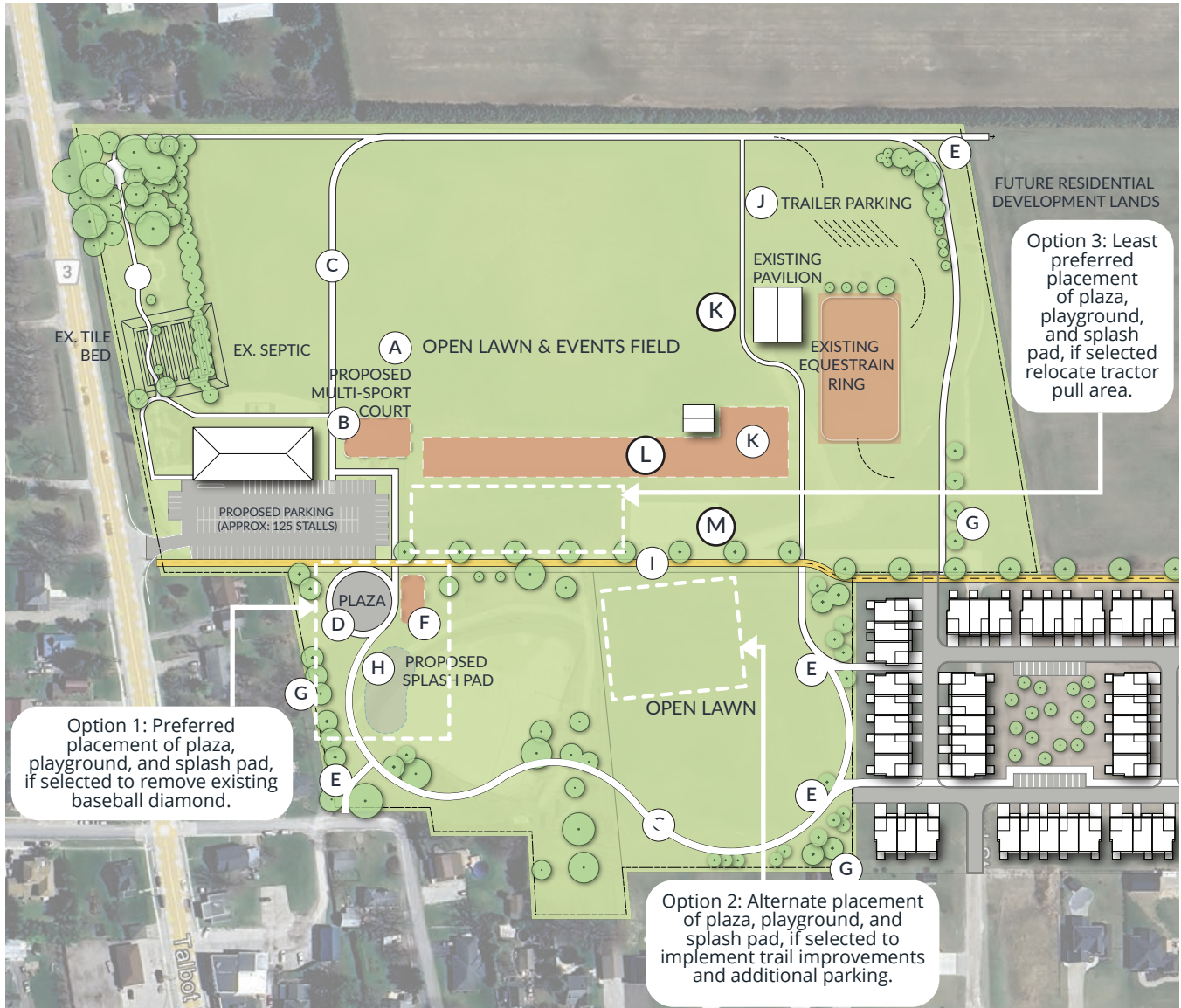




## Improvements & Recommendations

- Engage with primary event organizers to investigate options to realign fairground infrastructure, to improve space use, access and safety.
- Add perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, a mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate noise complaints and exposure to elements.
- Formalize pedestrian access from John St/Waugh St.
- As playground and court facilities near end of lifespan, relocate out of direct path of travel (i.e., create buffer between play and parking environments).
- Maintain park extents — development on existing greenspace is not recommended at this time.

Figure 37: Keystone Complex Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Open Lawn & Events Field — to support community-wide events.
- (B) Multi-Sport Court
- (C) Multi-Use Perimeter Path — accepts controlled vehicular access to support maintenance and event setup.
- (D) Plaza — paved plaza area, to support gatherings and events.
- (E) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (F) Playground
- (G) Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce elemental exposure and improve aesthetics

- (H) Splash Pad
- (I) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment
- (J) Temporary Trailer Parking — to support event setup, circulation.
- (K) Alternative Tractor Pull Area
- (L) Primary Tractor Pull Area
- (M) Existing Plaza - to remain until end of useful life

## 5.2.5 Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park

Though not a new park, the Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park has undergone changes over recent years, in the wake of residential development. As adjacent parcels (some of which were once parkland) have been developed, and incremental development has occurred on site, site circulation and facility siting has suffered.



### Inventory

- Basketball (half) court
- Seasonal washroom
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Swing sets (x2)
- Soccer field
- Gravel parking lot



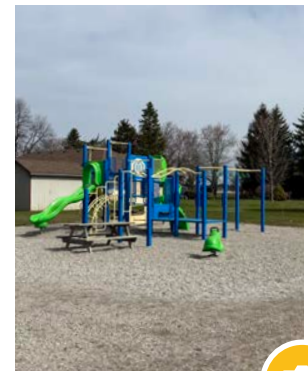
### Site Observations, Conditions

- Washroom facilities could be improved, updated.
- Swing set placement (i.e., behind soccer goalpost) poses safety concerns.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Pavilion abutts parking environment, without physical or visual buffer.

### Address

116 Optimist Dr, Talbotville, ON N5P 3T2

### Facility Condition – Improvement Need



Park identification signage (above), fairground infrastructure and pavilion (centre), playground (below).



## Other Considerations

- Recent residential development around the park has prompted the park to get smaller in size and access has changed (i.e., some facilities are no longer sited appropriately, based on new bounds).

Figure 38: Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





## Improvements & Recommendations

- Add new pathway, to improve connectivity and passive use of the space.
- Create visual separation between parking environment and pavilion area.
- Remove swing set; relocate to playground facility area.
- Add buffer (e.g., planting, mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) between soccer field and pavilion/lawn space.
- Reconfigure and formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity.

Figure 39: Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- Ⓐ Soccer Field — to accommodate one 11x11, or two 9x9 pitches.
- Ⓑ Parking Lot Improvements — reduce footprint, reconfigure stalls.
- Ⓒ Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.
- Ⓓ Playground



## 5.2.6 Talbotville Optimist Sports Park

Recently developed, the Talbotville Optimist Sports Park is well equipped for both soccer and baseball programming.



### Inventory

- Baseball diamond, lit
- Seasonal washroom
- Storage shed
- Soccer fields (x2)
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Gravel parking lot
- Pedestrian walking path



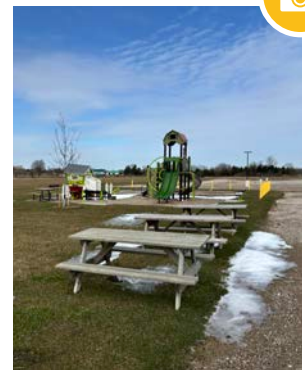
### Site Observations, Conditions

- Generally, facilities in good condition.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Perimeter pathway lacks formality; not inherently inviting for pedestrian use.
- Lack of seating around sports facilities.
- Large open lawn areas appear underutilized.
- Gravel parking lot lacks organization and circulation control.
- Playground is very close to parking environment, posing safety concerns.

### Address

51 Optimist Dr, Talbotville, ON N5P 3T2

### Facility Condition – Improvement Need



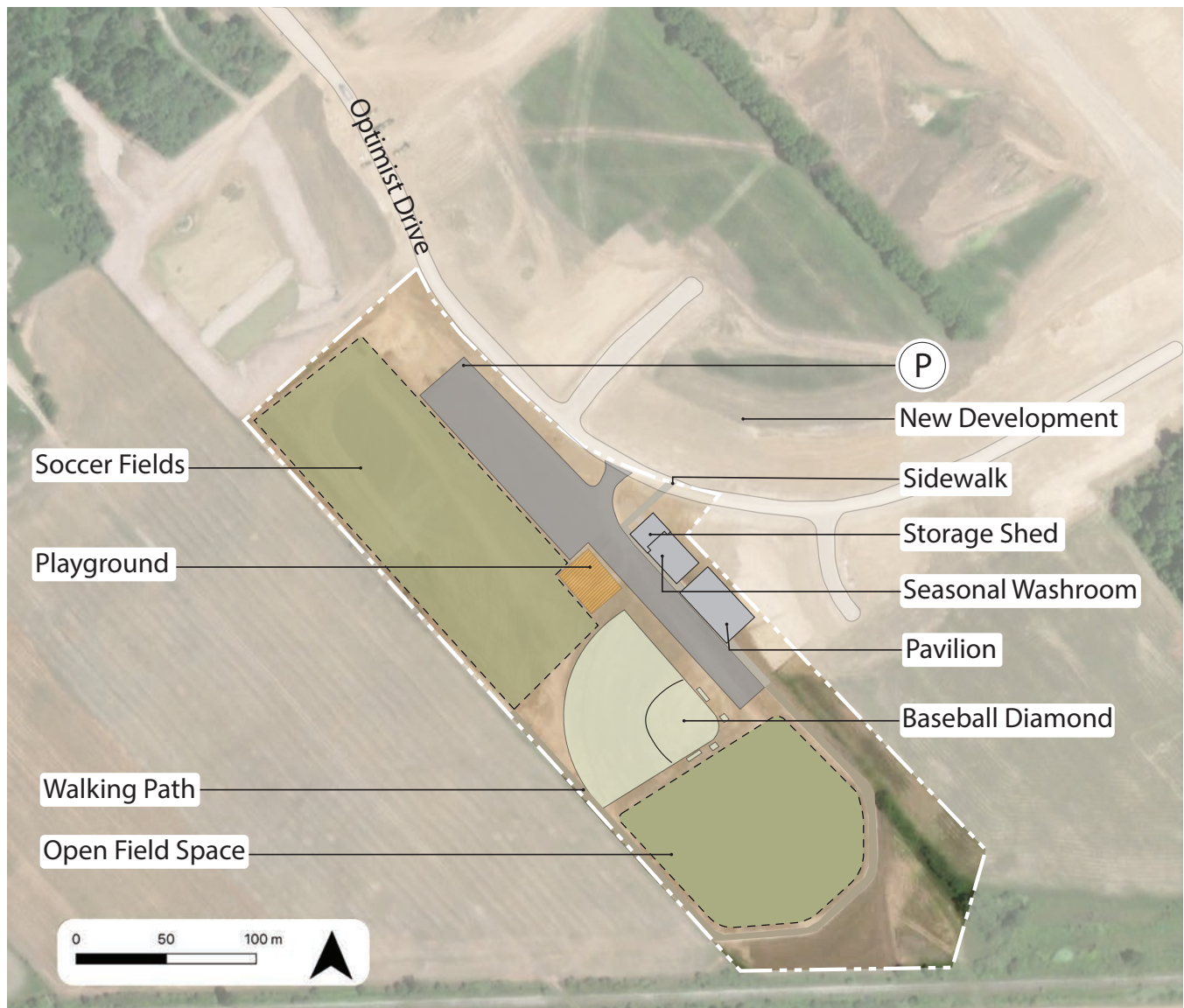
*Parking environment, seasonal washrooms (above), playground and picnic area (centre), pavilion (below).*



## Other Considerations

- Original park development plans suggest provision of additional soccer field(s) and baseball diamond on site; opportunity to reorient these facilities to adhere to best practice (e.g., baseball diamond configuration to reduce afternoon glare).
- Significant residential development in the area; opportunity to support passive, family-oriented recreation.

Figure 40: Talbotville Optimist Sports Park Inventory Mapping — **Existing Condition**






## Improvements & Recommendations

- Improve perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, a mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate exposure to elements.
- Ensure accessible playground facility can be accessed via an accessible pathway.
- Add buffer (e.g., planting) between playground and parking facility, to improve safety.
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity.
- Continue to monitor demand for additional soccer field, baseball diamond.

Figure 41: Talbotville Optimist Sports Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- Ⓐ Soccer Field — to accommodate one 11x11, or two 9x9 pitches.
- Ⓑ Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.
- Ⓒ Baseball Diamond — add new diamond, facing NE to improve playability (i.e., reduce sun interference).
- Ⓓ Parking Lot Improvements — reduce footprint, reconfigure stalls; add vegetated medians.

- 0                      75                      150m
- 
- Ⓔ Existing Multi-Use Perimeter Path — extend where necessary, to ensure access to park facilities.
  - Ⓕ Multi-sport court.

## 5.2.7 Fingal Heritage Park

The Fingal Heritage Park provide opportunity for both passive and active recreation.

### Address

35663 Fingal Line, Fingal, Ontario, N0L 1K0

### Inventory

- Softball tribute
- Recreational trail
- Footbridge
- Outdoor adult fitness equipment
- Accessible playground
- Picnic shelter
- Naturalized area

### Facility Condition – Improvement Need



Through the work of staff and volunteers, Fingal Heritage Park has achieved the desired park concept, and provides the envisioned amenities. No further improvements are recommended at this time.



Figure 42: Fingal Heritage Park Concept Plan

## 6.0 Recreational Trails

## 6.1 Overview & Classification

Trails are valuable outdoor amenities, supporting many community user groups — pedestrians and dog-walkers, hikers, runners, and cyclists, to name a few — and providing means to access, explore and connect with nature. Furthermore, trails can also act as key components in the Township’s active transportation network, enhancing community connectivity and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles amongst residents.

### 6.1.1 Existing Trails

Currently, the Township’s trail infrastructure is limited to pedestrian-oriented paths (e.g., unpaved, limestone screenings and/or concrete sidewalks) found in existing Township parks and open spaces (refer to 5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment on page 87 for more information). While these existing trail segments service park users (i.e., providing access between outdoor recreation facilities), there is opportunity to enhance the Township’s trail system, to improve safety and access, enhance the visitor experience, and address gaps in connectivity which have formed through years of incremental development.

### 6.1.2 Trail Classification

Trails should be built and maintained to a standard — establishing a trail standard and trail classification is the first step in proper risk management. It is important the standard be reviewed, to ensure it reflects what is manageable and sustainable with respect to operational and fiscal realities. Next, it must be adopted, to ensure continued compliance.

Consistency is important for trail users. With an abundance of trails, municipal and others, in the area, it is recommended that the Township establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

## OTC Trail Classification

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) has produced a trail classification, aimed at trail managers, land managers, trail designers/builders, user groups that manage trails (i.e., ATV, XC ski, MTB), and insurance providers. According to the OTC, the intention of the document is to:

- Organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development,
- Articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level,
- Introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class, and
- Support and complement trail risk management training and best practice documents.

The OTC Trail Classification has been attached as an appendix item, to be used at the discretion of the Township.



### Recommendation

- Establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

### 6.1.3 Recommended Trail Development Standards

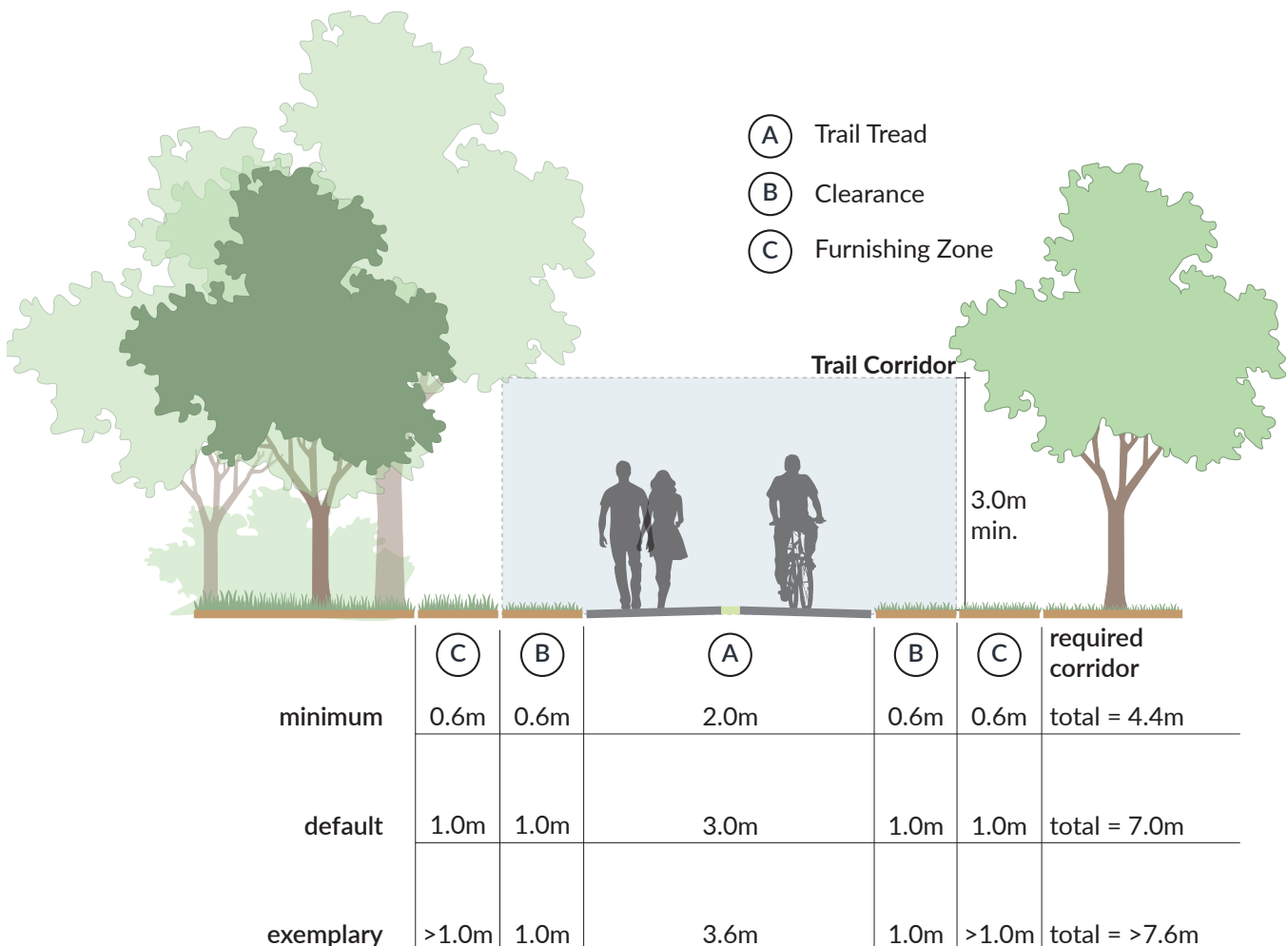
Trail development standards should reflect the adopted trail classification and vice versa. In alignment with the OTC Trail Classification and industry best practices, the following illustrations depict trail development standards recommended for use in the Township.

#### Category 1 (Developed) Trail

Often described as urban multi-use paths or rail trails, these non-motorized paths are important active transportation thoroughfares, connecting parks, destinations, and neighbourhoods throughout a community.

Trail tread should be constructed of a hardened or compacted surface, such as asphalt, concrete or stone dust; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 43: Category 1 (Developed) Trail Development Standard Illustration

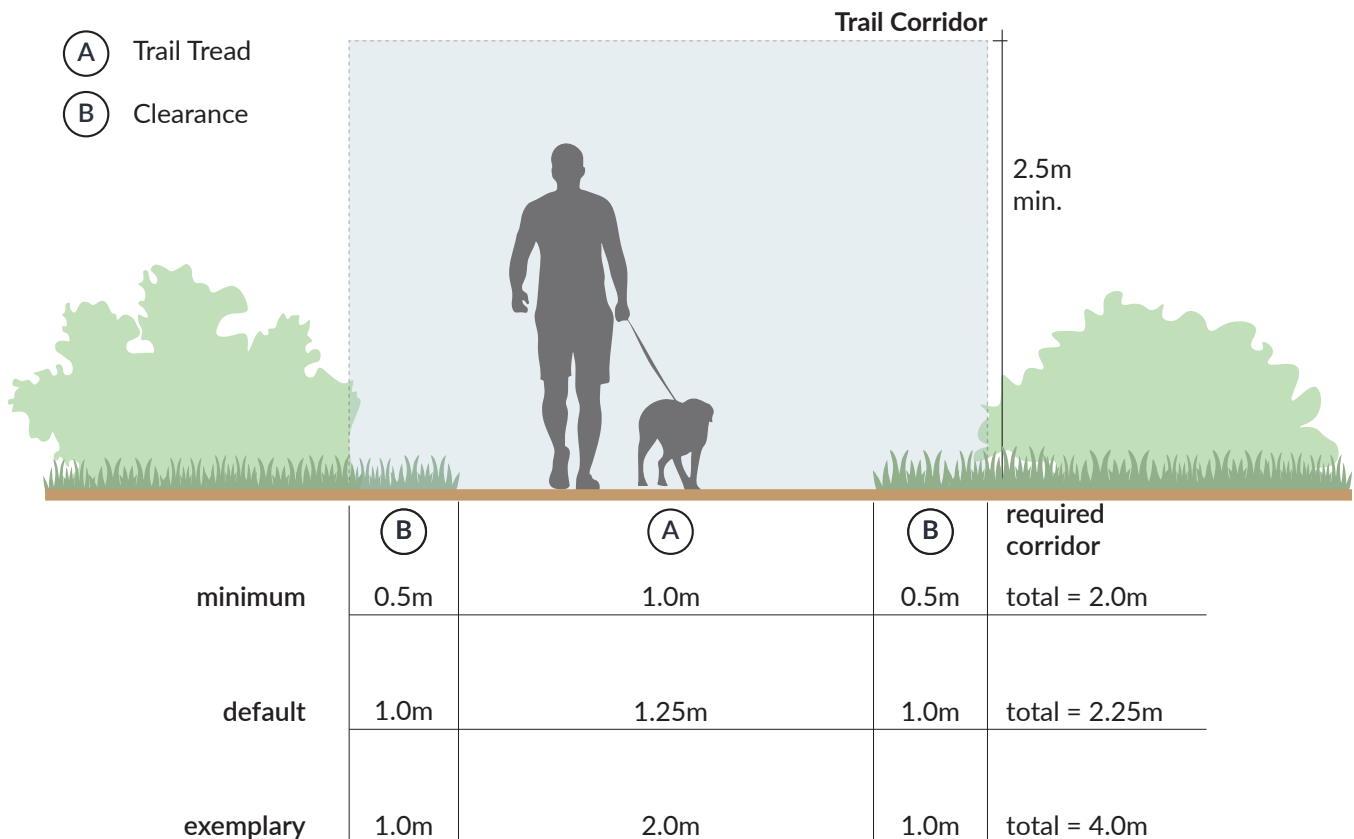


## Category 2 (Semi-Developed) Trail

Often described as urban, natural environment or wilderness-based multi-use paths or rail trails, these non-motorized paths often service park amenities, facilitate local connections, and feed into Category 1 (Developed) Trails, where possible.

Trail tread should be constructed of a compacted surface, such as stone dust or compacted earth; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 44: Category 2 (Semi-Developed) Trail Development Standard Illustration

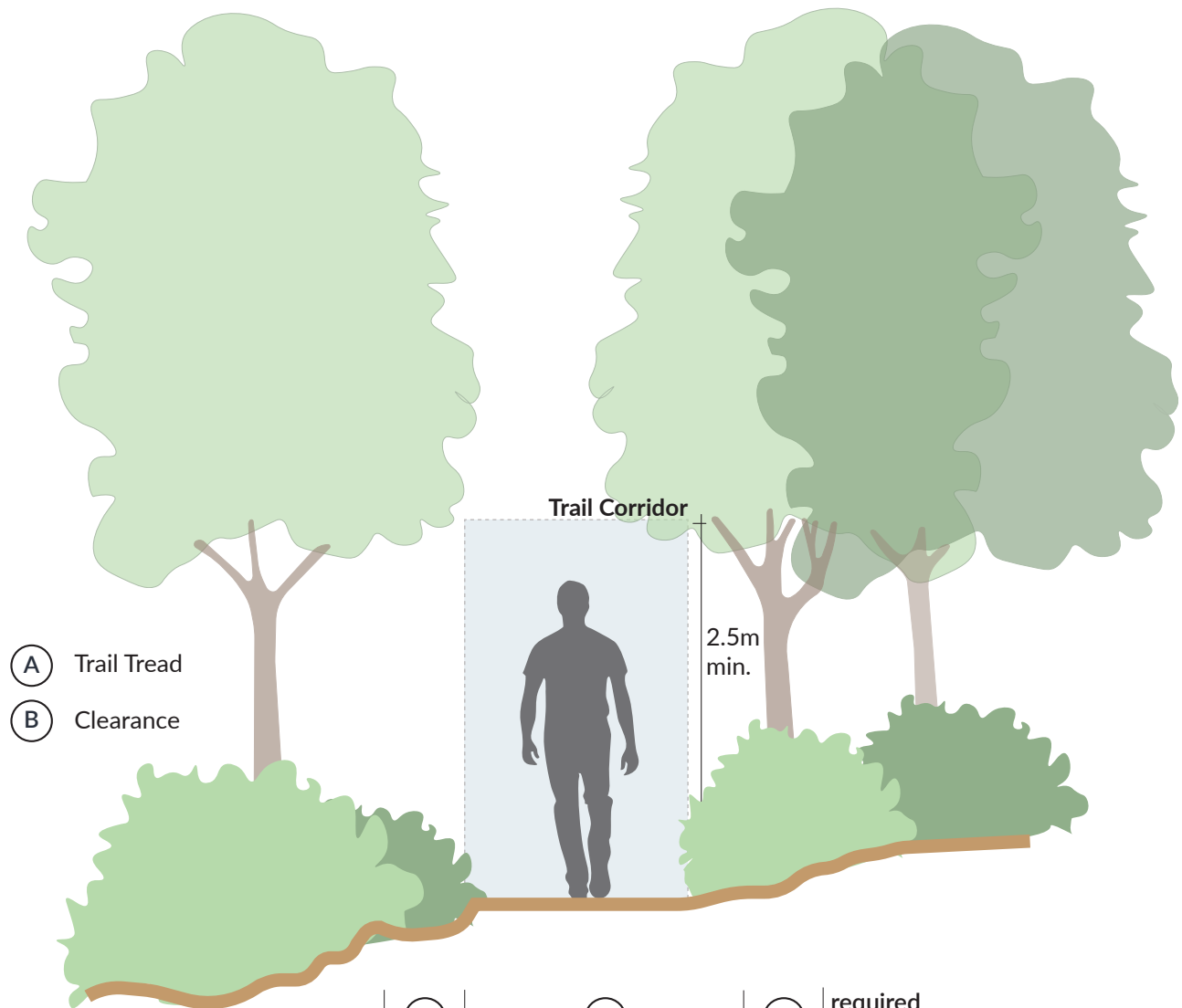


### Category 3 (Single Track) Trail

Often described as single track or hiking trails, these non-motorized paths situated in natural settings offer opportunities to access, explore and connect with nature.

Trail tread should consist of a natural surface, such as compacted earth; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 45: Category 3 (Single Track) Trail Development Standard Illustration



	(B)	(A)	(B)	required corridor
minimum	0m	0.25m	0m	total = 0.25m
default	0.5m	1m	0.5m	total = 2.0m

## 6.2 Opportunities Assessment

As Southwold continues to grow and develop, it is critical that the Township continue to seek and assess opportunities to develop new trails, and improve and connect existing trail segments — to enhance community connectivity and encourage healthy, active lifestyles amongst residents. Further, as per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), connectivity of neighbourhoods is required through recreational spaces, parks, **trails**, sidewalk and other active transportation linkages where feasible.

### 6.2.1 Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail

The Township, in collaboration with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA), has identified an exciting opportunity to connect the settlement areas of Shedden and Fingal via **Category 1 (Developed) Trail**. As illustrated in the figure below, the proposed trail would begin at the Keystone Complex and traverse a new residential development before entering Corsely Park. From here, the proposed trail would cross Union Road (i.e., via formalized pedestrian crossing), providing access to the site of a future conservation area, to be owned and operated by the LTVCA. Although trail alignment and staging area siting is yet to be determined for the property, ongoing conversations suggest that future infrastructure would offer trail users unencumbered access through the site to the next Township-managed segment situated on the southeast side of the property. The proposed trail would then span two right-of-ways (i.e., to be acquired, owned and operated by the Township), one on either side of McDiarmid Line, before reaching Fingal Ball Park.

The Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail, approximately 3.1km in length (i.e., excluding LTVCA owned/operated segments, supplementary access from adjacent residential development, etc.), has potential to provide an estimated 1000+ residents with safe and desirable access to all three of Southwold's park sites located in Shedden and Fingal (i.e., Keystone Complex, Corsley Park, and Fingall Ball Park) as well as the facilities and amenities located within (e.g., community centre and library, sporting venues, etc.).



## Recommendations

- The Township should take appropriate steps, to see the Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail come to fruition.
- Continue working with key interest groups (i.e., LTVCA, adjacent landowners, etc.) to foster strong working relationships and identify common goals, opportunities and challenges.
- Establish formal agreements with appropriate landowners, to ensure the trail can continue to exist and be used in perpetuity.

Figure 46: Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Demonstration Plan



- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment
- Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity\*
- Proposed Sidewalk Connection
- Proposed Access to Conservation Area\*
- Existing Staging Environment
- Proposed Staging Environment
- Proposed Pedestrian Crossing
- Area to Accept Future Stormwater Management Pond



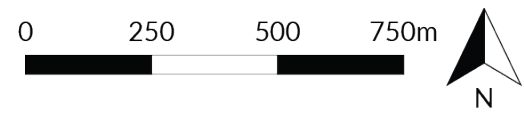
- (A) Keystone Complex
- (B) Corsley Park
- (C) New Residential Development
- (D) Future LTVCA Conservation Area
- (E) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (F) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (G) Fingal Ball Park

\*LTVCA to confirm alignment.

Figure 47: Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Demonstration Plan, Enlargement A



-  Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment
-  Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity\*
-  Proposed Sidewalk Connection
-  Proposed Access to Conservation Area\*
-  Existing Staging Environment
-  Proposed Staging Environment
-  Proposed Pedestrian Crossing
-  Area to Accept Future Stormwater Management Pond



- (A) Keystone Complex
- (B) Corsley Park
- (C) New Residential Development
- (D) Five Maples Conservation Area
- (E) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (F) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (G) Fingal Ball Park

\*Alignment to be confirmed by LTVCA.

## 6.2.2 Talbotville to Ferndale Connection

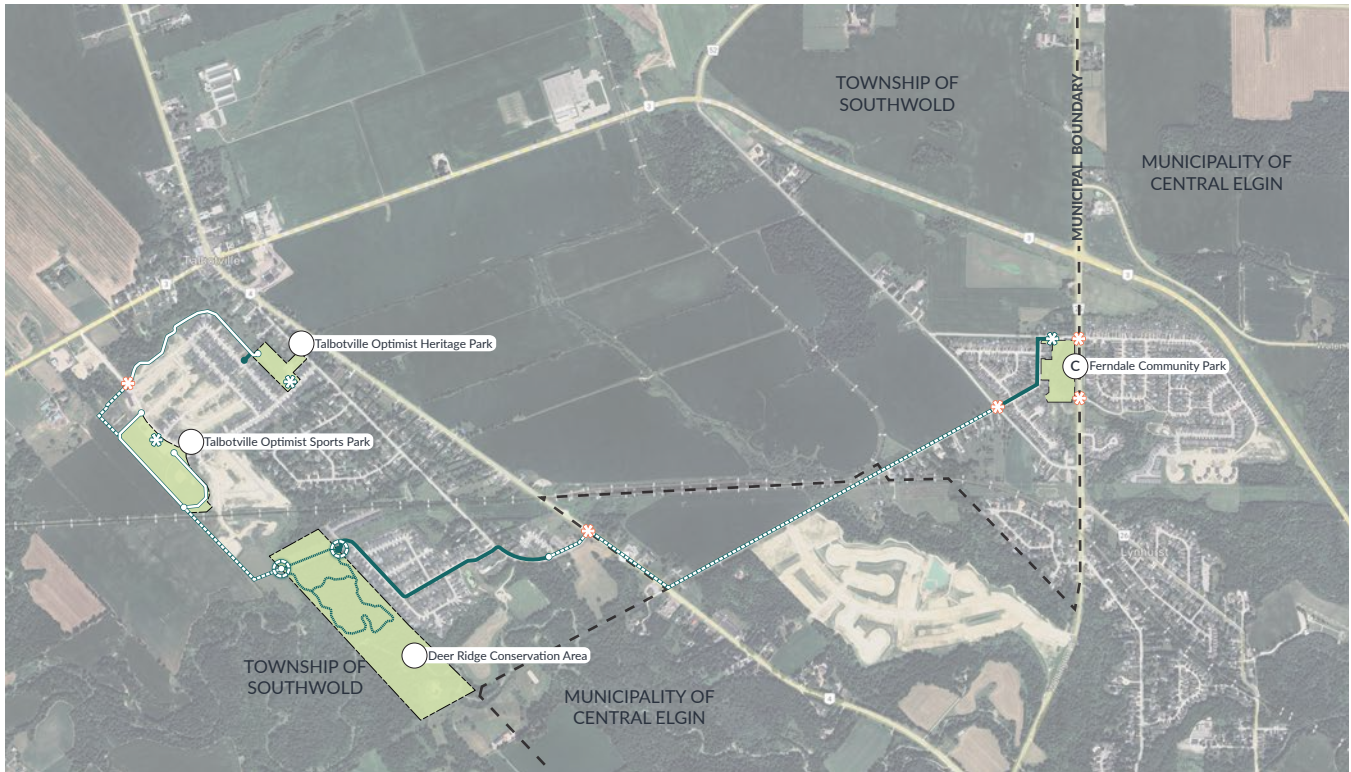
Across the Township, another connection opportunity has been identified between the settlement areas of Talbotville and Ferndale. As illustrated in the figure below, the proposed route would be comprised of **Category 1 (Developed) Trail** and sidewalk segments. Beginning at Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park, the proposed route would travel along the existing Talbotville Meadows (i.e., developer-built) trail, then along a new trail segment before reaching Talbotville Optimist Sports Park. From here, the proposed route would cross a former rail line (i.e., alignment, permissions, etc. to be confirmed), eventually meeting the existing trail network at Deer Ridge Conservation Area, courtesy of Kettle Creek Conservation Authority. Once through the adjacent residential neighbourhood, a collaborative effort between the Township and the City of St. Thomas would be necessary, to establish a trail parallel to Major Road — sections of which would span municipal boundaries. Existing sidewalks in Ferndale would support users in reaching Ferndale Community Park. The Talbotville to Ferndale Connection, approximately 6.0km in length (i.e., excluding KCCA owned/operated segments), has potential to provide residents of the area with safe and desirable access to several park sites located in Talbotville and Ferndale (i.e., Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park, Talbotville Optimist Sports Park, Deer Ridge Conservation Area, Ferndale Community Park), as well as amenities found nearby in the adjacent residential development(s) of neighbouring Municipality of Central Elgin.



### Recommendations

- The Township should take appropriate steps, to see the Talbotville to Ferndale Connection come to fruition.
- Continue working with key interest groups (i.e., KCCA, City of St. Thomas, private developers, adjacent landowners, etc.) to foster strong working relationships and identify common goals, opportunities and challenges.
- Establish formal agreements with appropriate landowners, to ensure the connection can continue to exist and be used in perpetuity.

Figure 48: Talbotville to Ferndale Connection Demonstration Plan



-  Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment\*
-  Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity\*
-  Proposed Sidewalk Connection
-  Proposed Access to Conservation Area\*
-  Existing Staging Environment
-  Proposed Staging Environment
-  Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

0 0.5 1 1.5km



- (A) Talbotville Optimist Sports Park
- (B) Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park
- (C) Ferndale Community Park

\*Alignment to be confirmed by appropriate agencies (i.e., KCCA, Municipality of Central Elgin, etc.).

# 7.0 References

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Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019). Township of Southwold Official Plan Review: Council Presentation #2. <https://www.southwold.ca/en/business-and-development/resources/Documents/Planning-and-Development-Documents/New-Official-Plan-Documents/Township-of-Southwold-OPR-Presentation-2.pdf>

# Appendix A

## Trail Classification

Ontario Trail Council, 2020





Ontario Trails Council Trail Policy Outline re: Risk Management

Intention of document:

1. To organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development
2. to articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level;
3. introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class;
4. support and complement trail risk management training and best practice document.

Intended Audience: Trail manager, land manager, trail designer/builder, user groups that manage trails (i.e. ATV, XC ski, MTB), insurance providers

TRAIL CATEGORIZATION BY TYPE

Parameter Sub-class	Category 1 Developed	Category 2 Semi-developed	Category 3 Single Track	Category 4 Undeveloped
Sample image				
Type described as	Urban multi use path; non motorized; rail trail	Urban, natural env or wilderness multi use path with constructed tread; rail trail; reclaimed roadway; motor or non; (inc groomed xc ski trail and sno-mo trail in winter)	Single track width, developed or semi-developed trail in natural env or wilderness; hike, bike, horse, atv/moto; motor or non; (inc xc ski trail in winter, groomed or non)	Undeveloped natural environment pathway; or wilderness or backcountry trail, path or portage; unmaintained or low level maintenance; includes unauthorized pathways in populated areas
Corridor	Typically +1m either side tread, 3m tall	Typically 0.5m either side tread, 2.5m tall	Typically 0m either side tread, 2.5m tall	Variable
Tread	2+m wide or wider, hardened (asphalt,	1+m wide or wider, aggregate soft surface,	0.25-1m wide singletrack, natural surface	Unsurfaced natural environment

	concrete or stone dust) or compacted surface	natural or compacted surface		
Surface obstruction	Hardened surface cracks and bumps; minimal effect on user	Variable natural or compacted loose surface; minimal obstruction	Roots, rocks, variable surface	Rough surface
Maintenance effort	Commensurate with volume of use: High for high traffic trails, lower for low traffic trails	Seasonal as needed; commensurate with volume of use; maintenance of tread surface and corridor	Seasonal as needed; commensurate with volume of use to low maintenance; minimal to no maintenance of tread surface and corridor	No maintenance of tread; low to no maintenance of corridor
Risk mitigation effort	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard	Commensurate with volume and type of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard	Commensurate with volume and type of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard; low effort for wilderness environment	Low to no effort
Inspection interval (regular visual inspection)	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; approximately monthly (when open) for high volume/close proximity trails; approx. seasonal for low volume/distant trails	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; approximately monthly (when open) for high volume/close proximity trails; approx. annual for low volume/distant trails	Annual	No
Hazard marking	Yes i.e. road crossing signs, warning signs	Yes in close proximity to population; little to no otherwise	No	No
Difficulty rating	Suitable for all permitted users	Close proximity to population suitable for all permitted users; natural env or wilderness may	May have difficulty rating for intended activity or no rating	May have difficulty rating for intended activity or no rating

Installed features (where they exist i.e. bridge, trailhead, parking)	Engineered	have difficulty rating for intended activity	Rustic, minimalist construction	Minimalist construction to no
AODA compliance considerations	Yes, consideration required	Engineered when or where warranted; otherwise overbuilt for intended use Yes in close proximity to population, otherwise no in wilderness or designated use (i.e. ATV trail, xc ski trail)	No	No

#### MINIMUM SIGNAGE STANDARD

Uniform/standardized expectations for signage/markings of recreation trails in Ontario

Trailhead/map/online information required of Type 1,2,3:

1. Recreation trail label/designation and trail classification (as per this document)
2. Targeted user group with expected average grade, maximum grade, and cross slope grade (or difficulty rating, if applicable to activity)
3. Designate authorized/unauthorized users
4. Users assume all risks as per Occupiers' Liability Act RSO 1990
5. 911 address or emergency contact info

Hazard marking and waymarks: standardized ISO compliant warning icon for road crossing, cliff edge, steep up/down, merging traffic (to be determined)

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Trail: a general term applied to a track, route or pathway
  - a. Recreation trail: a category of trails with recognition under the Occupiers' Liability Act RSO 1990 and AODA, where the intended purpose of use is for recreation and/or travel that is not upon an automobile roadway
  - b. Wilderness or backcountry trail: a trail removed from population centres, often with minimal infrastructure and time-delayed access to emergency response

- c. Natural environment trail: a trail traveling through forested or agricultural zones, either within urban areas or in close proximity to population centres; improved access to emergency response relative to a wilderness/backcountry trail
  - d. Specific use trail: an AODA designation indicating a trail authorized for a single use type/activity
  - e. Multi use trail: a trail with multiple authorized use types/activities
  - f. Unauthorized trail or pathway: a recreation trail that is user generated and not endorsed or maintained by the occupier/land manager
  - g. Water trail: a recognized waterway route designated for recreational use or travel
2. Corridor: the average or typical width and height of the opening or area through which the recreation trail travels; assumed variation given natural environment and activity type; clear of highly unusual encumbrances for permitted users.
  3. Tread: the ground surface upon which users travel;
    - a. hardened tread (AODA defines hardened as asphalt, concrete or stone dust),
    - b. compacted tread (soil stabilizers, aggregate and mineral)
    - c. natural tread (insitu mineral or no treatment)
  4. Visual inspection: a regular process of visually identifying emergent safety hazards (to all potential users) on a defined section of trail
  5. Technical inspection: process of assessing the integrity of trail subsurface, tread, drainage, corridor, and infrastructure (i.e. gate, fence, bridge); often requires specific technical training or credentials
  6. Volume of use: relative to other trails in the management jurisdiction; a spectrum or grouping of trails from highest use/volume to lowest use/volume

#### REFERENCES:

Ontario Trails Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/16o08>  
 Occupiers' Liability Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o02>  
 AODA trail requirements and exceptions: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK92>  
 Book 18 Cycling Facilities; Ontario Traffic Manual  
[http://www.rqgsb.mto.gov.on.ca/techpubs/eps.nsf/0/825810eb3ddd203385257d4a0063d934/\\$FILE/Ontario%20Traffic%20Manual%20-%20Book%2018.pdf](http://www.rqgsb.mto.gov.on.ca/techpubs/eps.nsf/0/825810eb3ddd203385257d4a0063d934/$FILE/Ontario%20Traffic%20Manual%20-%20Book%2018.pdf)

Disclaimer: While the Ontario Trail Council does its best to provide useful information and guidance on matters of interest to its members. The Ontario Trails Council recognizes that statutes, regulations and common law continually change and evolve, vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and are subject to differing interpretations and opinions. The Ontario Trails Council recommends that this document be used in conjunction with a Trail Management Plan for the construction and maintenance of trails. The information provided by the Ontario Trails Council is not intended to replace legal or other professional advice or services. The information provided by the Ontario Trails Council herein is provided "as is" and without any warranty, either expressed or implied, as to its fitness, quality, accuracy, applicability or timeliness. Before taking any action, consult an appropriate professional and satisfy yourself about the fitness, accuracy, applicability or timeliness of any information or opinions contained herein. The Ontario Trails Council

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# Appendix B

**Example Policy, Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads**

County of Renfrew, 2021

<b>Corporate Policies &amp; Procedures</b>			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> May 2010	<b>REV. DATE:</b> February 2021	<b>COVERAGE:</b> Public Works and Engineering Department	<b>PAGE #:</b> Page 1 of 6

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The County of Renfrew as a road authority, has a need to ensure that any Pedestrian Crossing or Hiking Trail Crossing on a County Road is consistent with the Department’s primary objective of providing and maintaining a safe road system.

### **BACKGROUND**

The County of Renfrew, as the road authority having jurisdiction over County Roads, may make and enforce by-laws and policies pertaining to those items that may be placed within the road allowance.

1. The Municipal Act, 2001 in Section 11 permits a municipality to pass by-laws pertaining to the public assets of the Municipality for the purpose of exercising its authority under the Act, and to pass by-laws pertaining to highways.
2. The Municipal Act, 2001 in Section 55 indicates that where a sidewalk is located on a highway that falls under the jurisdiction of an upper-tier municipality, the responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the sidewalk shall be the responsibility of the local municipality.
3. The Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15 (Pedestrian Crossing Treatments) provides guidance for the installation of various roadway crossing treatments consistent with the Highway Traffic Act and Provincial standards.

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> May 2010	<b>REV. DATE:</b> February 2021	<b>COVERAGE:</b> Public Works and Engineering Department	<b>PAGE #:</b> Page 2 of 6

- Local municipalities, as well as the County of Renfrew, have an extensive network of Pedestrian and Off-Road Trails which cross high-speed, high-volume County Roadways and must be able to do so safely.

#### DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

**“Highway”** has the same meaning as provided in the Municipal Act, 2001, Section 1 and pertains only to those highways that fall under the control and jurisdiction of the County of Renfrew.

**“Pedestrian Crossing”** means that portion of a County Road, designated by by-law of the County of Renfrew, at an intersection or elsewhere, distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by signs and signals on the highway and lines or other markings on the surface of the roadway.

**“Road Allowance”** means the land occupied by the highway.

**“Hiking Trail Crossing”** means any crossing of a County Road for which the purpose is a connecting trail on both sides of the County Road for which the use is limited to the purpose of hiking or sightseeing by foot. The trail must be for public use and owned and maintained by either the County of Renfrew, a local municipality situated within the County of Renfrew, or a recognized and approved entity within the County of Renfrew.

<b>Corporate Policies &amp; Procedures</b>			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> May 2010	<b>REV. DATE:</b> February 2021	<b>COVERAGE:</b> Public Works and Engineering Department	<b>PAGE #:</b> Page 3 of 6

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Pedestrian Crossings**

The County of Renfrew may permit the installation of Pedestrian Crossings on County Roads, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Requests for the installation of the Pedestrian Crossings shall be submitted by the local municipality in which the pedestrian crossing is requested. The request shall be accompanied by a resolution passed by the local municipal Council supporting the request.
2. Upon receipt of a request from a local municipality for the installation of a Pedestrian Crossing, the County of Renfrew will review the location to determine its suitability for a Pedestrian Crossing.
3. The County of Renfrew will conduct a 12-hour vehicle and pedestrian volume traffic count to determine the volume and nature of the traffic at the location of the proposed Pedestrian Crossing. The County of Renfrew will analyse the data collected from the traffic count to determine whether or not the vehicle and pedestrian volumes satisfy the minimum warrants established for the installation of a Pedestrian Crossing.
4. All Pedestrian Crossings shall meet the requirements of the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15, Pedestrian Crossing Treatments, as may be applicable at the time of request and installation. The Level and Type of facility installed shall be in accordance with the warrant requirements contained within the Manual, however, Level 2 Type D Pedestrian Crossovers shall not be permitted on County Roads. Durable pavement markings shall be used for

<b>Corporate Policies &amp; Procedures</b>			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
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all mid-block Pedestrian Crossovers and at Pedestrian Crossovers at non-signalized intersections.

5. The local municipality requesting the Pedestrian Crossing shall be responsible for all costs associated with the initial installation of the Pedestrian Crossing, including signage and pavement markings associated with the crossing, as well as the replacement of the Pedestrian Crossing. The local municipality will be required to submit a resolution of the local municipal Council agreeing to pay the costs of the installation and replacement.
6. The County of Renfrew shall include the installation of Pedestrian Crossings at all intersections where new Traffic Signals are to be installed. The cost of the Pedestrian Crossing features at these locations shall be borne by the County of Renfrew.
7. The County of Renfrew shall be responsible for the costs associated with the annual operation and maintenance of the Pedestrian Crossing and signage. The local Municipality shall be responsible for the annual pavement markings associated with the crossing.

#### **Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems**

1. Requests for the installation of Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems shall be submitted by the local Municipality in which the trail crossing is requested. The request shall be accompanied by a resolution passed by the local Municipal Council supporting the request and accepting fifty percent (50%) of the total costs of installation. These systems exclude trails used by off-road vehicles and snowmobiles.

<b>Corporate Policies &amp; Procedures</b>			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> May 2010	<b>REV. DATE:</b> February 2021	<b>COVERAGE:</b> Public Works and Engineering Department	<b>PAGE #:</b> Page 5 of 6

2. Upon receipt of a request from a local municipality for the installation of Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems, the County of Renfrew will review the location to determine if a Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System is warranted. In general, these systems will only be recommended for locations along rural, high speed roadways where sight lines are substandard. Every effort should be made to locate trail crossings where sight lines meet or exceed best practices and engineering standards for the Province of Ontario.
3. A Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System shall be comprised of appropriate signage to demonstrate the purpose of the trail, as well as a combination of flashing beacons as may be determined to be necessary in order to effectively warn oncoming traffic of the trail crossing.
4. The installation of a Trail Crossing Warning System as well as any future replacement of the system shall be cost shared by the County of Renfrew and local Municipality or Entity at a fifty percent (50%) split. Costs to be shared include all equipment, signage, and third-party costs associated with the installation or replacement. Internal staff time will not be cost shared.
5. If at anytime during the service life of the system, the Hiking Trail Crossing is closed, the County shall remove and retain the system for use at a future location.
6. The County of Renfrew shall be responsible for the costs associated with the annual operation and maintenance of the Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System including troubleshooting equipment issues and repair or replacement of damaged signage.

<b>Corporate Policies &amp; Procedures</b>			
<b>SECTION:</b> Operations	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Director of Public Works and Engineering		<b>POLICY #:</b> PW-14
<b>POLICY:</b> Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			<b>APPROVED:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> May 2010	<b>REV. DATE:</b> February 2021	<b>COVERAGE:</b> Public Works and Engineering Department	<b>PAGE #:</b> Page 6 of 6

### **APPROVALS**

The installation of new Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems on County Roads shall be approved by the appropriate Committee of County Council and authorized by the passing of a By-law by County Council.

# Appendix C

## Suggested Capital Project Listing

pl.ural, 2025

## Corsley Park Estimated Costs

1	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
1.1	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site (50 ± m³)	m³	50	\$ 25.00	\$ 1,250.00
		Granulars	Supply and Place 100mm Granular A	tonne	858	\$ 35.00	\$ 30,030.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 31,280.00</b>
1.2	Accessible Playground	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	31.5	\$ 25.00	\$ 787.50
		Sidewalks	Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (125mm concrete, 150mm Gran. A)	sq.m	105	\$ 75.00	\$ 7,875.00
		Restoration	150mm Topsoil and Sod	sq.m	189	\$ 25.00	\$ 4,725.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 13,387.50</b>
1.3	Multi-Use Path	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	387	\$ 25.00	\$ 9,675.00
		Path	Supply and Place 300mm Gran A	tonne	967.5	\$ 35.00	\$ 33,862.50
		Asphalt Surfacing	Supply and Place 50mm HL3F (Optional)	tonne	177.375	\$ 120.00	\$ 21,285.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	2322	\$ 10.00	\$ 23,220.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 66,757.50</b>
1.4	Fingal-Shedden Multi-Use Path	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	396	\$ 25.00	\$ 9,900.00
		Path	Supply and Place 300mm Gran A	tonne	851.4	\$ 35.00	\$ 29,799.00
		Asphalt Surfacing	Supply and Place 50mm HL3F	tonne	177.375	\$ 120.00	\$ 21,285.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	2322	\$ 10.00	\$ 23,220.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 84,204.00</b>
1.5	Pedestrian Crosswalk	PXO	PXO Level 2 Type B (D/C Funded)	l/s	1	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 60,000.00</b>
1.6	Subdivision Connection	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	9	\$ 50.00	\$ 450.00
		Culvert Crossing	Supply and Install 1.2m - 525mm HDPE Culvert	l/s	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
		Sidewalks	Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (125mm concrete, 150mm Topsoil and Sod)	sq.m	15	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,125.00
		Restoration	150mm Topsoil and Sod	sq.m	30	\$ 10.00	\$ 300.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 11,875.00</b>
1.7	Buffer Plantings	Plantings	Tree and Shrub Plantings	ea	50	\$ 500.00	\$ 25,000.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 25,000.00</b>
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 232,504.00</b>
						Contingency, Design Fees (25%)	\$ 58,100.00
						<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 290,604.00</b>



# Fingal Ball Diamond

3	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total	
3.1	Pedestrian Circulation Improvements Just Asphalt for SWM path, the rest is full path construction	Removal	Topsoil Excavation	sq.m	4500	\$ 2.25	\$ 10,125.00	
		Path Granular	Supply & Install 300mm Granular "A"	tonnes	2250	\$ 35.00	\$ 78,750.00	
		Path Asphalt	Supply & Install 75mm HL3F	tonnes	1125	\$ 120.00	\$ 135,000.00	
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	3000	\$ 9.00	\$ 27,000.00	
		Site Prep for benches	Excavate, Granular 'A' 300mm, 75mm HL3F	sq.m	60	\$ 75	\$ 4,500.00	
		Benches	Benches for Trail, Swim Pond and Playground	ea	24	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 40,800.00	
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 296,175.00</b>	
3.2	Storm Pond	Completed by AECOM/Greenlane/Developer Funded						
3.3	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Excavate topsoil and stockpile onsite (Hauling unacceptable material away)	sq.m	2750	\$ 2.50	\$ 6,875.00	
		Granulars	Supply and Place Granular A	tonne	910	\$ 30.00	\$ 27,300.00	
							<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 34,175.00</b>
3.4	Vegetation Planting / Clearing	Plantings	Tree Planting (50mm cal)	ea	40	\$ 500.00	\$ 20,000.00	
		Plantings	PR Meadows	sq.m	4000	\$ 10.00	\$ 40,000.00	
							<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 60,000.00</b>
3.5	Lookout Trail Rest area	Asphalt resting area	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	sq.m	300	\$ 2.25	\$ 675.00	
		Site Prep	300 mm Granular "A" & 75mm HL3F	sq.m	300	\$ 65.00	\$ 19,500.00	
		Benches	Excavate, Granular 'A' 300mm, 75mm HL3F	sq.m	10	\$ 75	\$ 750.00	
			Benches for Trail, Swim Pond and Playground	ea	4	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 6,000.00	
							<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 26,925.00</b>
					<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 417,275.00</b>	
					<b>Contingency, Design Fees (25%)</b>		<b>\$ 62,600.00</b>	
					<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 479,875.00</b>	

# Keystone Complex

4	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
4.1	Open Lawn and Events Field		Realignment of Tractor Pull Track	L.S.	1	\$ 149,600.00	\$ 149,600.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 149,600.00</b>
4.2	Ball Diamond Restoration		Removing and resuing existing topsoil	sq.m	3483	\$ 6.15	\$ 21,420.45
			Supply and place (180mm thick)	sq.m	2500	\$ 33.50	\$ 83,750.00
			100mm perforated tile	m	755	\$ 30.00	\$ 22,650.00
			150mm perforated tile	m	155	\$ 29.40	\$ 4,557.00
			Dugout (2.4mx9.0m)200mm graular base, 125mm concrete, players bench and complete enclosure including fencing and metal roof deck	each	2	\$ 28,330.00	\$ 56,660.00
			Backstop fence (1.4, 64m)	/s	1	\$ 34,560.00	\$ 34,560.00
			Sideline, infield and outfield fence, 2.4 m, with gates	m	300	\$ 231.75	\$ 69,525.00
			Aluminum Spectator Grandstand (3mx4m)	each	2	\$ 6,390.00	\$ 12,780.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 108.00	\$ 108.00
			Spike plate pitcher mound (SKU:PP)	each	1	\$ 141.00	\$ 141.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
			Removable home plate (SKU:RHPA)	each	3	\$ 150.00	\$ 450.00
			Base in ground Fixture package (SKU:SYS-K)	each	3	\$ 150.00	\$ 450.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
			Complete double bag system (SKU:SYS-D)	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 307,278.45</b>
4.3	Multi Sport Court			L.S.	1	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 120,000.00</b>
4.4	Pedestrian Circulation Improvements						
			Excavation and Grading	sq.m	600	\$ 22.50	\$ 13,500.00
			Asphalt Path (Base)	sq.m	3600	\$ 75.00	\$ 270,000.00
			300 mm Granular "A" & 75mm HL3F	sq.m	2100	\$ 9.00	\$ 18,900.00
			Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	30	\$ 75	\$ 2,250.00
			Site Prep for Benches	ea	12	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 20,400.00
			Benches for Trail			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 325,050.00</b>
4.5	Paved Plaza		Concrete Plaza for Community Gathering Events				
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 60,000.00</b>
4.6	Pedestrian Access						
			Sidewalks	m <sup>2</sup>	15	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,125.00
			Restoration	m <sup>2</sup>	30	\$ 10.00	\$ 300.00
			Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (125mm concrete, 150mm Topsoil and Sod			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 1,425.00</b>
4.7	Playground		Playground and Pavillion relocation	/s	1	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 50,000.00</b>
4.8	Buffer Planting						
			Tree Planting (50mm cal)	ea	50	\$ 500.00	\$ 25,000.00
			Plantings	sq.m	2310	\$ 15.00	\$ 34,650.00
			Wildflower Seed Mix (prepare seed bed)			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 59,650.00</b>
4.9	Splash Pad						
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>
4.10	Final-Shedden Multi-Use Path						
			Excavation and Grading	cu.m	585	\$ 25.00	\$ 14,625.00
			Asphalt Path	sq.m	1950	\$ 75.00	\$ 146,250.00
			Multi-use Path (300 mm Granular "A", 75 mm HL3F	sq.m	3510	\$ 10.00	\$ 35,100.00
			Topsoil and Hydro Seeding			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 195,975.00</b>
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 1,688,978.45</b>
			Contingency, Design Fees (25%)			\$ 422,244.61	\$ 422,244.61
			<b>Total</b>			\$ 2,111,223.06	\$ 2,111,223.06

## Talbotville Heritage Park Estimated Costs

5	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
5.1	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Excavate topsoil and stockpile onsite (Hauling unacceptable material away)	sq.m	700	2.50 \$	1,750.00
		Grading	Regrade parking lot	sq.m	1850	4.50 \$	8,325.00
		Granular Top coat	Granular "A" Top coat	tonne	460	33.00 \$	15,180.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 25,255.00</b>
5.2	Pathways	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	sq.m	450	22.50 \$	10,125.00
		Asphalt Path (Base)	300 mm Granular "A" & 75mm HL3F	sq.m	450	75.00 \$	33,750.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	900	9.00 \$	8,100.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 51,975.00</b>
5.3	Buffer Plantings	Plantings	Tree Planting (50mm cal)	ea	50	250.00 \$	12,500.00
		Plantings	Wildflower Seed Mix (prepare seed bed)	sq.m	1200	15.00 \$	18,000.00
						<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 30,500.00</b>
					<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>107,730.00</b>
					<b>Contingency, Design Fees (25%)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>26,932.50</b>
					<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>134,662.50</b>





## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Aaron VanOorspronk, LET., Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

**REPORT NO:** IDS 2026-28

**SUBJECT MATTER: Lawrence Road Over Pass Update**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Report IDS 2026-28 Lawrence Road Over Pass Update be received for information

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update respecting stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) and its consultant regarding the potential removal of the Lawrence Road overpass crossing Highway 401, and to summarize the feedback received to date for information purposes.

#### **Background:**

Council previously considered the potential future of the Lawrence Road overpass through Report ENG 2024-47, dated August 12, 2024, which outlined that the MTO had identified the structure as a candidate for permanent removal as part of its review of structures along the Highway 401 corridor. That earlier report advised Council that the structure was being evaluated in light of low traffic volumes and broader provincial capital planning considerations, and it summarized the potential advantages and disadvantages associated with closure, including reduced maintenance obligations, reduced through traffic, and the corresponding loss of a local crossing between Iona Road and Union Road. For ease of reference, the previous report is attached as Appendix "A". As part of the report, Council directed staff to provide the following comments to the MTO, "Council provided no concerns with a possible closure, the only comment is council would appreciate if the Ministry of Transportation included lanes that would accommodate agricultural traffic as part of the eventual reconstruction of the Iona Rd. Interchange."

Following Council's earlier discussion, and submitted comments, a stakeholder meeting was held on April 23, 2026, to discuss the potential permanent closure of the Lawrence Road Underpass at Highway 401. The meeting included representatives from the Township of Southwold, the Ontario Provincial Police, Medavie Emergency Medical Services, the MTO, and Dillon Consulting Limited. The minutes of that meeting, together with the associated presentation materials, are also attached as Appendix "B" and "C" respectively.

**Comment/Analysis:**

The stakeholder meeting minutes indicate that the Lawrence Road underpass is considered to be at the end of its useful life and that the MTO and its consultant are evaluating permanent closure as an alternative to replacement. At the meeting, Dillon Consulting advised that traffic volumes remain low, at approximately seven vehicles per hour, and that replacement of the structure is estimated at approximately \$4 million. The minutes further confirm that, in the event of closure, the primary detour routes would be the Iona Road underpass to the west and the Union Road underpass to the east. Emergency service representatives generally advised that no significant operational impacts are anticipated for fire or EMS response, although the Ontario Provincial Police noted that response times may vary depending on deployment location. Emergency responders also identified potential value in controlled emergency access or turnaround opportunities, and MTO advised that it would review those requests and maintain the existing median turnaround east of the site.

Although no final decision has yet been made; permanent closure continues to be treated as a serious option due to the structure's condition, low traffic usage, and the cost of replacement. The minutes also reflect that the most significant local concern continues to relate to rural mobility, particularly for the agricultural community moving equipment between lands north and south of Highway 401. The minutes show that further stakeholder and public consultation was anticipated, with a broader engagement session to follow. Notably, MTO also advised that even if replacement were pursued, a full road closure for at least one construction season would still be required, indicating that some degree of travel disruption is unavoidable under either scenario. The previous report, the stakeholder meeting minutes, and the presentation are attached to this report as Appendix "A" for Council's reference.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

N/A.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Aaron VanOorspronk, LET.  
Director of Infrastructure and  
Development Services

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** August 12, 2024

**PREPARED BY:** Aaron VanOorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

**REPORT NO:** ENG 2024-47

**SUBJECT MATTER: Lawrence Road Overpass**

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#### **Recommendation(s):**

THAT Report ENG 2024-47 relating to the Lawrence Road Overpass, be received for information; and

THAT Council provide staff with initial comments for delivery to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO).

#### **Purpose:**

This report seeks Council's comments for inclusion in initial correspondence with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO).

#### **Background:**

On July 24th, staff received correspondence from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) via phone call and follow-up email. The MTO informed staff that it is reviewing structures along the 401 corridor to assess near-future capital investment needs. During this review, the MTO identified the Lawrence Road overpass as a candidate for permanent removal. They provided a preliminary sketch showing proposed cul-de-sacs at the ends of each segment of Lawrence Road bordering the 401.



The purpose of the correspondence is to gauge the municipality's interest or concerns regarding the proposed removal. The MTO cited an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) count of approximately 77 vehicles. The Township recently completed a major capital rehabilitation of Lawrence Road, involving road pulverization, additional granular base, and a new double surface treatment. This section of Lawrence Road connects Fifth Line, a paved roadway, to Third Line (County Road 18), and is situated approximately midway between the Union Road interchange and the Iona Road interchange.

### **Comment/Analysis:**

#### *In Support of Closure:*

**Asset Reduction:** Closure reduces assets on the public ledger. While it may not directly impact Southwold residents financially, fiscally responsible decisions by all levels of government benefit ratepayers.

**Maintenance Reduction:** Removal of the structure reduces maintenance requirements for the Township. Under the current agreement, the Township is responsible for all operations and maintenance up to the bridge joint, including storm sewers, guiderails, pavement, and curbs.

Extended Road Life: Elimination of through traffic will significantly extend the lifecycle of Lawrence Road. With the road serving only local traffic, the traffic count will decrease, thereby extending the road's useful life.

Limited Impact: Union Road and Iona Road are relatively low-volume County Roads, so directing traffic to them would have limited impact.

Insignificant Crossing: Even at 100 cars a day, the traffic volume is consistent with some mid-volume gravel roads in the Township.

Jurisdictional Control: Since it's an MTO asset, maintaining jurisdictional control over our assets is ideal. It's correct in principle to reciprocate this control.

Potential Negotiation: If supportive, this could be used in a quid pro quo for another Township project within the MTO's influence (e.g., Southminister Interchange for Green Lane, crossing for Sunset Road).

Against Closure:

Reduced Access: Closure of the crossing over the 401 reduces accessible crossings in the Township to Iona Road, Union Road, and Mill Road. This forces all vehicular traffic, including agricultural equipment, to use Iona or Union Roads, adding 3-10 minutes to the driver/operator's commute.

No Direct Financial Benefit: There is no direct financial benefit to Township ratepayers.

Lower Service Level: The closure results in a lower level of service for Township road users, although this impact is negligible for most.

**Financial Implications:**

If closed it is expected to result in direct operational and maintenance savings for the Township, and result in reduced capital burden on the provincial ratepayer.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully Submitted by:**  
**Aaron VanOorspronk, CET.**  
**Director of Infrastructure and**  
**Development Services**  
**"Submitted electronically"**

**Approved by:**  
**Lisa Higgs, CAO/Clerk**  
**"Approved electronically"**

# Meeting Minutes

**Project:** Highway 401 at Currie Road Interchange Reconfiguration and Underpass Replacement (GWP 3092-21-00), Highway 401 at Lawrence Road Underpass Replacement (GWP 3074-21-00), Highway 401 at Coyne Road Underpass Replacement (GWP 3078-23-00)  
Assignment #3023-E-0043

**Subject:** 3023-E-0043 Hwy 401/Lawrence Road Underpass Stakeholder Mtg

**Date:** Thursday, April 23, 2026 – 1:00 – 1:30 PM

**Location:** Virtual – Microsoft Teams

**Our File:** 26-2821

**Distribution:** Attendees

## Attendees

Jason Bod	Medavie Emergency Medical Services - Commander/Acting Deputy Chief of System Support
Graham Ebert	Ontario Provincial Police – Operations Manager
Jeff McArthur	Township of Southwold – Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief
Aaron VanOorspronk	Township of Southwold – Director of Infrastructure and Development Services
Allan Hodgins	Ministry of Transportation, Ontario (MTO) - Senior Project Manager
Chris Evans	MTO - Senior Environmental Planner
Elizabeth Bonucchi	Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon) – Assistant Project Manager
Emma Babbitt	Dillon - Project Coordinator
Jordan Broad	Dillon - Highway Engineering Lead
Sabrina Wong	Dillon - Environmental Team Lead

## Notes

Item	Discussion	Action by
1.	The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the potential permanent closure of the Lawrence Road Underpass at Highway 401. A presentation was prepared and is appended to the meeting minutes.	
2.	<b>Project Overview and Lawrence Road Existing Conditions</b>	
2.1.	Dillon provided a summary of the study, which includes the replacement of the Currie Road and Coyne Road Underpasses at Highway 401 and the replacement or permanent removal of the Lawrence Road Underpass at Highway 401.	

Item	Discussion	Action by
2.2.	Dillon reported that the Lawrence Road Underpass at Highway 401 is at the end of its useful life. Data indicates low usage, with recorded traffic volumes of seven vehicles per hour. Due to these low volumes and an estimated replacement cost of approximately \$4 million, a permanent closure of the structure is under consideration.	
2.3.	Dillon provided an overview of potential detour routes should a permanent closure occur, identifying the Iona Road Underpass (3 km west) and the Union Road Underpass (3.5 km east) at Highway 401 as the primary alternatives.	
3.	<b>Emergency Service Provider Feedback – OPP</b>	
3.1.	Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) reported that while the proposed detour routes are viable for officers responding directly from the detachment, response times may vary as officers are frequently deployed throughout the region when a call for service is initiated.	
3.2.	OPP inquired regarding the feasibility of installing emergency access laneways or controlled gates to facilitate direct access for emergency vehicles between Lawrence Road and Highway 401.	
4.	<b>Emergency Service Provider Feedback – Medavie EMS</b>	
4.1.	Medavie Emergency Medical Services (Medavie) noted that the closure is not expected to significantly impact EMS, and the detour routes identified by Dillon are accurate.	
4.2.	Medavie expressed interest in the installation of a turnaround point on Highway 401 to facilitate emergency vehicle maneuvers in the event that crews are rerouted while traveling on Highway 401.	
5.	<b>Emergency Service Provider Feedback – Fire Department</b>	
5.1.	From the Township of Southold’s perspective (representing the Fire Chief), no significant impact on fire services is anticipated.	
5.2.	It was noted that additional controlled access points would benefit emergency responders by providing alternative entry to Highway 401 in the event that a standard exit ramp is closed.	
6.	<b>MTO and Township of Southwold Responses</b>	
6.1.	MTO noted that emergency access requirements are evaluated based on the proximity of the Iona Road/Highway 401 and Union Road/Highway 401 interchanges, as direct access is typically reserved for areas with greater than average spacing. MTO committed to reviewing the request for controlled emergency access gates at Lawrence Road and confirmed that an	MTO

Item	Discussion	Action by
	existing median turnaround located 400 meters to the east will be maintained to facilitate direction changes on Highway 401.	
7.	<b>Property</b>	
7.1.	Dillon highlighted that the closure would require the construction of cul-de-sacs on either side of Highway 401 on Lawrence Road, necessitating property acquisition.	
8.	<b>Project Schedule</b>	
8.1.	Dillon reviewed the project schedule, noting that a business and stakeholder engagement session is scheduled for June 2026.	
9.	<b>Roundtable</b>	
9.1.	The Township of Southwold (the Township) requested that Dillon provide a summary of the stakeholder discussion points to serve as formal correspondence for Council. This documentation will acknowledge that stakeholder engagement has been conducted and will provide Council with a record of the feedback received.	Dillon
9.2.	The Township highlighted concerns from the agricultural community regarding moving equipment between lands on the north and south sides of Highway 401 if the Lawrence Road Underpass were to be removed. They requested a date be provided for the public feedback session to ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to provide comment on the project.	Dillon
	Post Meeting Note: The virtual Public Information Centre has been tentatively scheduled to occur in July.	
9.3.	Dillon noted that since the issuance of the Notice of Study Commencement, initial stakeholder feedback has been received, with several comments received from the agricultural community regarding potential impacts.	
9.4.	MTO noted that the Iona Road/Highway 401 interchange has been identified for future improvements within a 10 to 15-year horizon, which is expected to enhance its capacity as a detour route over the long-term.	
9.5.	MTO emphasized that even if the structure replacement alternative were pursued, it would not eliminate travel disruptions; a full road closure for at least one construction season would be mandatory.	

### Errors and/or Omissions

These minutes were prepared by Emma Babbitt who should be notified of any errors and/or omissions.



Highway 401 Interchange Improvements at Currie Road, Lawrence Road  
& Coyne Road Underpasses  
GWP 3092-21-00, GWP 3074-21-00, GWP 3078-23-00

April 23, 2026

# Agenda

- Project Overview
- Lawrence Road Underpass
- Next Steps



Highway 401/Lawrence Road Facing Southeast

# Project Overview

## Class Environmental Assessment (EA) (Group B) & Design Build Ready Study:

- Highway 401/Currie Rd Interchange Improvements
- Highway 401/Coyne Rd Underpass Replacement
- Highway 401/Lawrence Rd Underpass Replacement or Removal

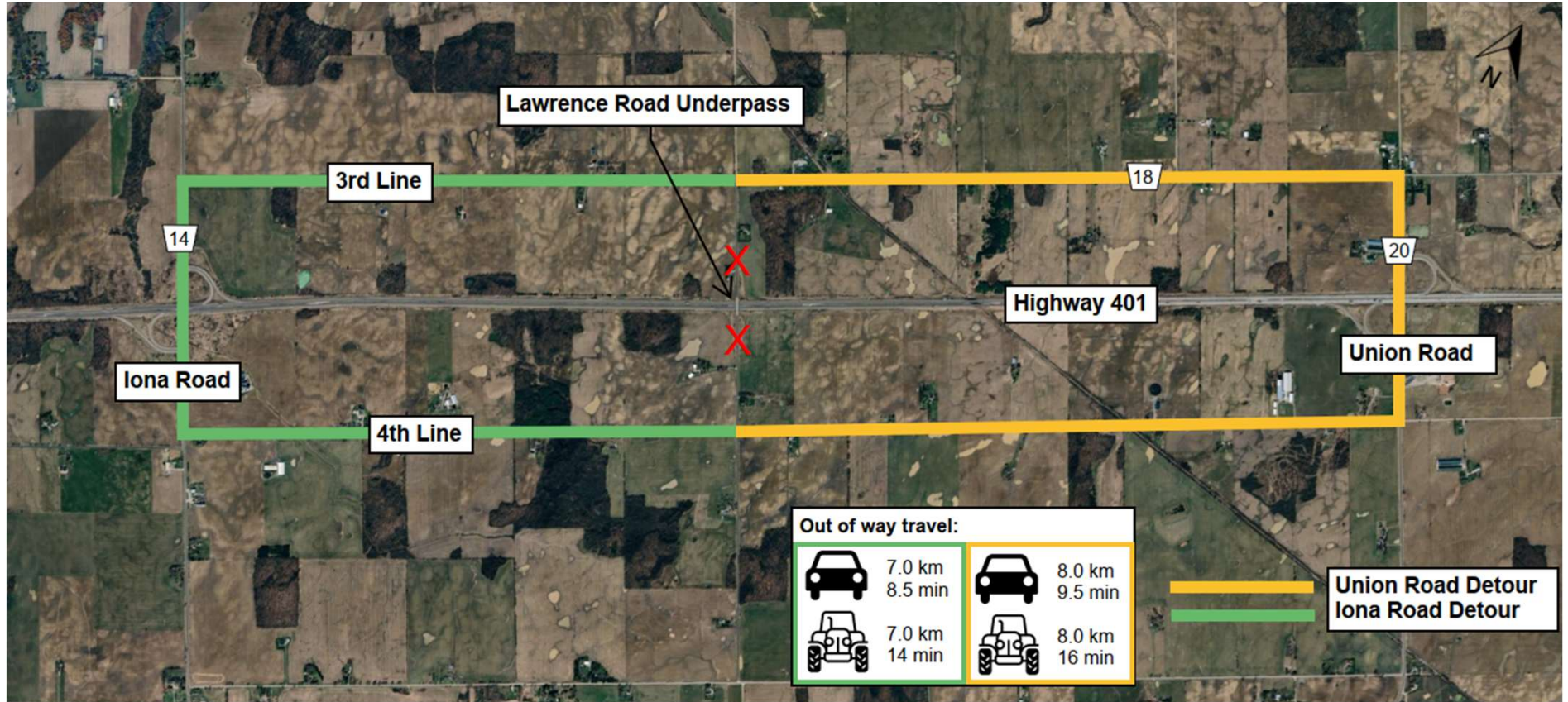


# Lawrence Road Underpass



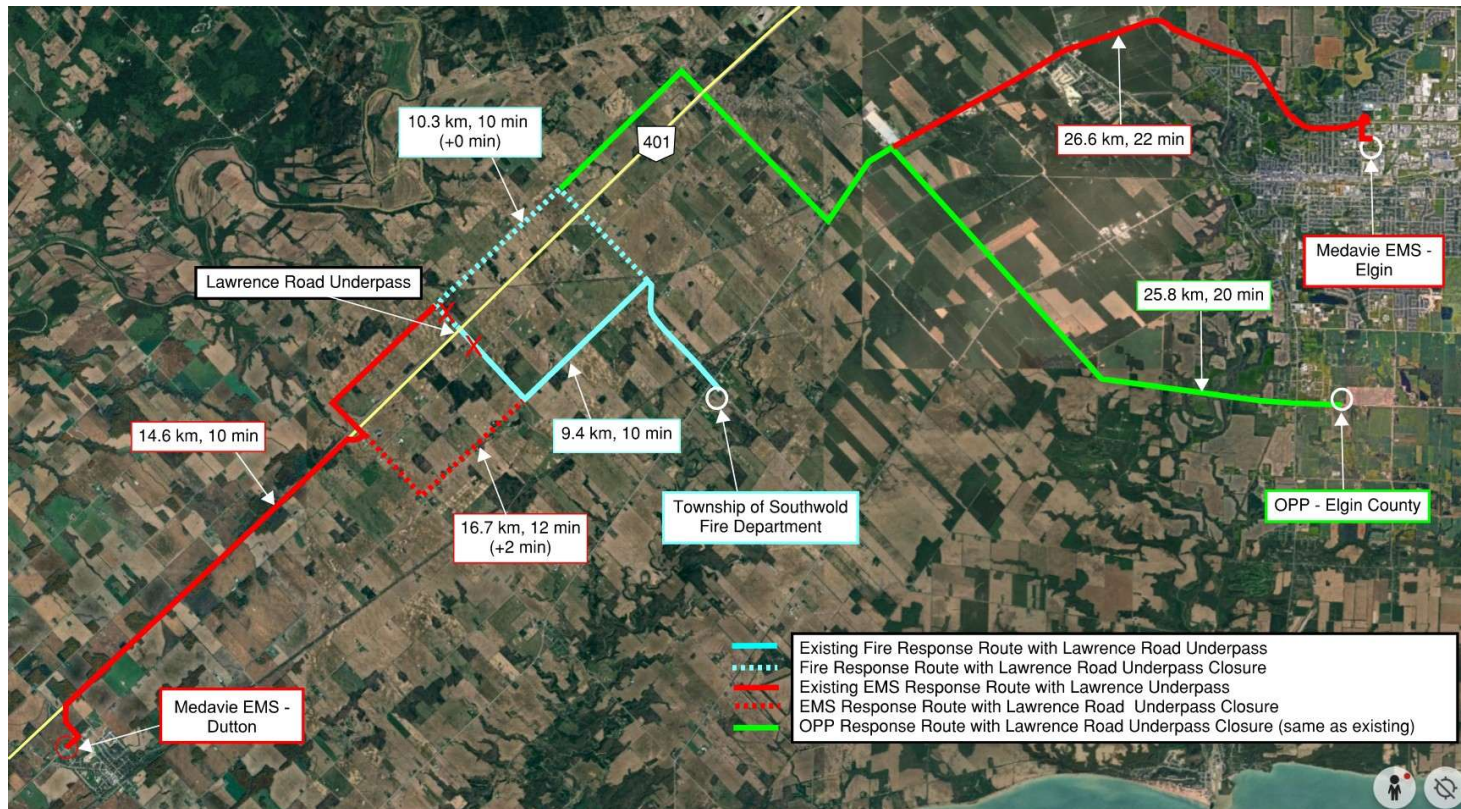
- Built in 1967
- End of Life Cycle
- Low Utilization:
  - 7 vehicles per hour (max)
  - 66 vehicles per day (max)
- Replacement Cost: \$4M

# Out of Way Travel

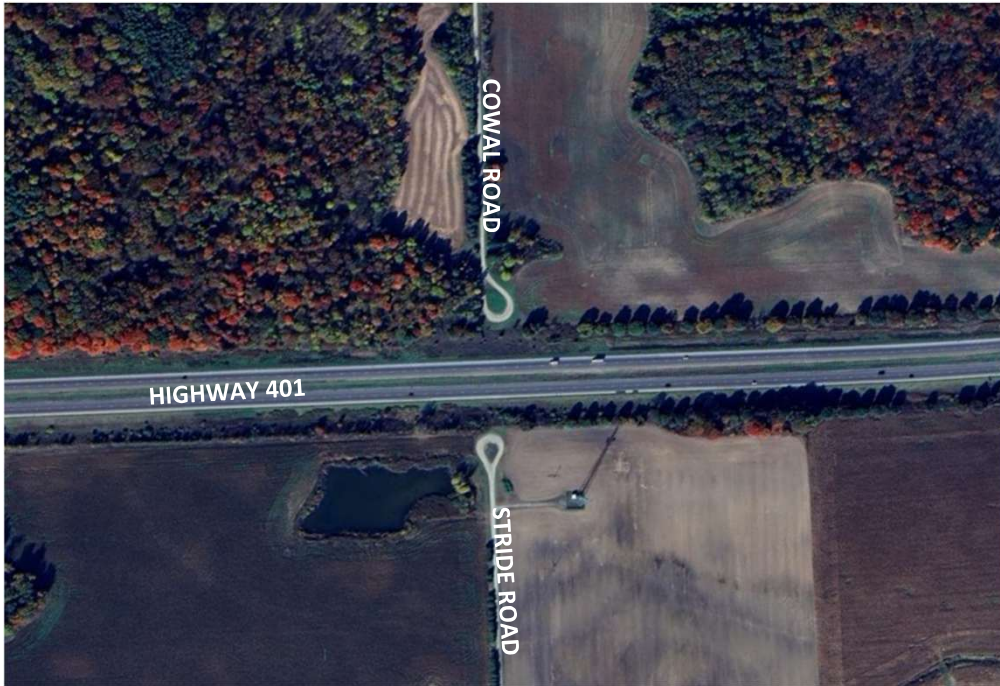


# Emergency Response

**Emergency Service Consultation** - Consultation with emergency services is being sought to review the proposed detour routes and confirm that any operational impacts remain negligible.







# Property



# Recommendation & Discussion

## RECOMMENDATION: PERMANENT CLOSURE

-  Traffic Volumes
-  Alternate Crossings/Out of Way Travel
-  Anticipated EMS Impacts
-  Property



### Other Concerns/Discussion



# Next Steps - Project Schedule

**Ongoing**

**Stakeholder Engagement**

**Fall 2026**

**Transportation Environmental Study Report**

**Early 2027**

**Design-Build Contract Initiated**

**Project Website: [401curriecoynelawrence.com](http://401curriecoynelawrence.com)**

## Questions / Comments

**Elizabeth Bonucchi, P.Eng.**  
Assistant Project Manager  
Dillon Consulting Limited  
[ebonucchi@dillon.ca](mailto:ebonucchi@dillon.ca)  
613-532-6100

**Sabrina Wong, MPA, RPP**  
Environmental Team Lead  
Dillon Consulting Limited  
[sabrinawong@dillon.ca](mailto:sabrinawong@dillon.ca)  
519-438-6192

**Allan Hodgins**  
Senior Project Manager  
MTO - West Region  
[allan.hodgins@ontario.ca](mailto:allan.hodgins@ontario.ca)  
226-973-8580



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** June McLarty, Deputy Clerk

**REPORT NO:** DPC 2025-03

**SUBJECT MATTER:** 2026 Summer Council Meeting Schedule

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#### **Recommendations:**

1. That Council cancels the second regular Council meeting in July and August, 2025 (July 27, 2026 and August 24, 2026).
2. That a Special Council Meeting be scheduled if warranted.

#### **Purpose:**

To seek approval from Council for the 2026 summer meeting schedule.

#### **Background:**

At the October 27, 2025 Council meeting, Council approved the 2026 meeting schedule. The second meeting in July and August were listed as optional but could be held if sufficient business requires them.

#### **Comments/Analysis:**

Historically, the summer meeting schedule is reduced by many organizations and municipalities. Cancelling the second meeting in July and August would allow staff more time to work on projects and schedule vacation time.

Special meetings could be scheduled to comply with the regulations under the Planning Act and the Drainage Act as well as any other time sensitive matters.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications:**

The cost savings may be minor as staff are not required to attend two meetings in July and August.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth.
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Development
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

June McLarty  
Deputy Clerk

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** June McLarty, Deputy Clerk

**REPORT NO:** DPC 2025-04

**SUBJECT MATTER:** 2026 Christmas Holiday Closure

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Council approve the closure of the Municipal office from 12:00 p.m. Thursday December 24, 2026, and reopen at 8:00 a.m. on Monday January 4, 2027 with staff utilizing Vacation or Banked-Time or days in lieu of the days that are not statutory holidays during the closure (3.5 days required).

#### **Purpose:**

To seek approval from Council for the office hours over the 2026 Christmas Holiday season.

#### **Background:**

The Municipal office traditionally closes during the holiday season to allow staff to spend time with their families and to accommodate the reduces demand for municipal services during this time.

#### **Comments/Analysis:**

Closing the municipal office during the specified period allows staff to utilize vacation or banked or lieu time, contributing to employee well-being and morale. Essential services, such as snow removal, building inspections, water/wastewater operations, fire, etc., will continue to operate without interruption. Based on the way the holidays fall, the following calendar illustrates the proposed closure for 2026. Staff will be required to use 3.5 days for the closure. Staff were consulted and support this proposal.

Proposed Closure in Yellow

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Council Meeting	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Office Closes at 12 p.m.	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day
27	28	29	30	31	1 New Years Day	2
3	4 Office reopens at 8:00 a.m.	5	6	7	7	8
10	11 Council Meeting	12	13	14	15	16

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

There are no significant financial implications associated with the proposed closure, as staff will use existing vacation or banked or lieu time balances.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth.
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods

- Economic Development
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

June McLarty  
Deputy Clerk

**Approved for submission by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk

**REPORT NO:** CAO 2026-12

**SUBJECT MATTER: CAO/Clerk Activity Report – May 2026**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. None – For Council Information.

#### **Purpose:**

To update Council on the CAO/Clerk Activities for May 2026.

#### **Meetings/Events:**

Following are several highlights for December:

- Senior Management and Staff Meetings
- JHSC Meeting
- Elgin County CAO Meeting
- Elgin County Clerks and Communications Meeting
- Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen – Grand Opening
- Economic Development Plan – Consultant Meetings
- OCWA Meeting
- St. Thomas and Elgin County TVDSB Annual Planning Meeting
- AMCTO Election Training Workshop
- Economic Development Plan Update meeting with McSweeney
- Economic Development Plan – Staff Workshop
- Zoning By-law Review Meetings
- EDC Meeting

#### **Recruitment/Staffing:**

Staffing is at full complement. There are not any active recruitments taking place at this time.

**Grant Application Progress and Updates:**

The municipality was successful on the following grant applications for 2024-2026. As new applications are submitted, they will be added to this list:

- Community Emergency Management Preparedness Grant – New Generator and Portable Radios – SUCCESSFUL – Funding of \$50,000.00
- Fire Marshal’s Public Fire Safety Council – New Smart Boards for Fire Halls – SUCCESSFUL – Funding of \$1,950.03
- Enabling Housing Water Systems Fund Grant – SUCCESSFUL – Signed Transfer Payment Agreement for \$27.8 Million for Shedden & Fingal Sanitary Servicing
- Fire Protection Grant – SUCCESSFUL – Transfer Payment Agreement on Agenda for January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting – Funding of \$16,460.90.
- Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Grant – Corsley Park Trails (additional, paving & amenities) – UNSUCCESSFUL
- Flood Hazard and Identification Mapping Program – SUCCESSFUL – Application Submitted by LTVCA with Southwold support. Township contribution from Green Lane \$67,500, LTVCA \$15,000, Grant \$82,500.
- Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund (CHIF) – UNSUCCESSFUL – Talbotville Wastewater Treatment Plant – Application Submitted with assistance from Colliers
- Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program – SUCCESSFUL – Health and Safety Water Stream (MHIP-HSWS) – Provincial CHIF Stream – Talbotville Wastewater Treatment Plant – Application will be based on Federal CHIF – Application submitted with assistance from Colliers – budget was available from prior CHIF
- Rural Ontario Development (ROD) – SUCCESSFUL – \$22,137 Grant to support an updated Community Economic Development Plan. Total project cost is \$44,275.
- 2026-27 Seniors Community Grant Program – WAITING – The Seniors Community Grant (SCG) Program provides grants up to \$25,000 for projects that promote greater social inclusion, volunteerism and community engagement for older adults. The application was submitted December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- OTF Capital Grant – WAITING – Creation of paved trails in Fingal Ball Park around the proposed Storm Water Management Facility – Amount Requested \$200,000.

- **NEW - Hydro One Community Partnership Grant** - Up to \$25,000 in funding for programs and initiatives that strengthen local emergency preparedness, critical infrastructure or community well-being – Investigating possible proposals – Due June 30th

### **Shared Services**

Planning services from the County of Elgin continue to run smoothly. County staff have been in the Fingal Office on Mondays, but residents can meet with them on other days at the County building. Staff are available to Southwold every day. We have initiated a monthly check-in meeting with all involved in the planning process to address any issues and ensure consistent, high-quality service. This will also ensure we take time to discuss and plan upcoming planning initiatives and projects.

Fire, Building, Drainage and GIS/AM Shared Services continue to operate smoothly with no issues being raised by our municipal partners, Dutton-Dunwich and West Elgin.

### **Policy Development**

Recent policy development has focussed on preparing for the 2026 Municipal Election. All required policies and procedures are in place. The Township website has been updated with information for Voters, Candidates and Third-party Advertisers. Candidate nomination packages were available before nominations opened May 1<sup>st</sup>. I

The Intact Public Entity review of the Township's Fleet Policies and Procedures has been completed. The audit identified areas that require additional policies, procedures, training and record keeping for the fleet activities. Staff will be working at addressing the recommendations.

Staff have also been reviewing policies and procedures related to accountability, transparency and communications. Staff will be developing and proposing updates to make improvements in this area, particularly around the Procedural By-law.

### **2026 Budget and Projects:**

Staff are planning out and implementing the various projects and programs in the 2026 budget. Several projects from 2025 and earlier remain in progress. As noted above in the Policy Development section, the 2026 Municipal Election will be a significant project for 2026.

Project	Budget	Funding Sources	Status/Comments
<b>Prior Years Carried Forward</b>			
HR / H&S Policy and Program Updates/Improvements	\$5,000	WSIB Rebates	In progress with contracted external assistance. An initial audit and workplan to reach compliance is being completed. Funding from the WSIB Rebate is being applied to this project.
Website Hosting – Forced Update	\$15,000	Admin Reserve	Existing website provider is indicating the need to upgrade to the newest platform – impact and alternatives being investigated – moved to 2026 Budget. Preferred vendor has been identified and work to begin migrating the site will be commencing.
Council Chamber Renewal	\$10,000	Admin Facility Reserve	Project scope and tasks to be determined. Concept for end wall circulated to Council. Chairs replaced 2025 ~\$3,500 \$6,500 Remaining
Council Chambers A/V Improvements	\$20,000	Admin Reserve	
Fingal Office Security and Access Control System	\$30,000	Admin Facility Reserve	\$5,400 spent to date for minor, short-term fixes, additional work completed to install a new entry and security system, consistent with other facilities.
<b>2026 Projects</b>			
Fingal Office - Flooring, sound proofing, minor reno, paint	\$30,000	Admin Facility Reserve	Evaluating in conjunction with Front Counter & Security Improvements
Fingal Office – Front Counter & Security Improvements	\$25,000	Admin Facility Reserve	Options being reviewed
Fingal Office - Sanitary Sewer Connection	\$45,000	Admin Facility Reserve	Waiting for sanitary sewer service

Project	Budget	Funding Sources	Status/Comments
Economic Development Plan Update	\$45,000	Ec Dev Reserve ROD Grant	RFP for consulting services closed – Southwold EDC accepted proposal from McSweeney & Associates at March 26, 2026 meeting. \$40,506 including net HST. The project has started.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Jeff Carswell  
 CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk

**REPORT NO:** CAO 2026-13

**SUBJECT MATTER: Leaf and Yard Waste Program**

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#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Council maintain the status quo for leaf and yard waste (ie. leaf and yard waste disposal remain a property owner responsibility).

#### **Background:**

At the March 23, 2026 meeting, Council directed staff to investigate the options for a leaf collection program.

#### **Comments/Analysis:**

Leaf and Yard Waste Collection Programs are services that neighbouring municipalities offer to residents. Some offer service in spring and fall, while others offer collection throughout the year, with more frequent service in the spring, summer and fall. Many municipalities have included separate leaf and yard waste collection to reduce this material going to the landfill or where other options, such as depots, are more limited. Leaf and Yard Waste also tend to be common in urban areas since there can be more challenges on smaller lots dealing with this material.

Municipal collection methods vary from contracted collection to own forces. Contracted would typically be more efficient, as equipment can compact the load. The existing waste collection contractor has indicated an ability to add this service in the Spring and Fall. Staff would not recommend using our own forces as the timing will not work well with other programs and services, especially in the spring. As well, our equipment is not well suited to efficient collection of leaves and yard waste.

While the Township has recently added an organics collection program for the Talbotville/Ferndale area, and yard waste can be included in the green bin, the quantities especially during spring and fall would exceed the green bin capacity.

If it is determined there is a need for a program, Council will have to determine what areas will receive service, how the program will be funded and who will pay for it. To assist with reviewing the provision of a leaf and yard waste program, staff referred to a Framework for Determining Municipal Service Responsibility.

### **Framework for Determining Municipal Service Responsibility**

Municipalities provide a wide range of services, which are funded through a combination of general taxation, area-rated taxation and user fees. Some services are not funded and provided. These items are left to individual responsibility. As stewards of public funds, Council must consider whether new or expanded services are appropriate to be delivered and funded at the municipal level.

In general, the following principles can help guide decisions on how services are best provided and funded.

### **Tax-Supported Municipal Services**

Services are typically funded through the general tax levy when they:

- Provide a broad benefit to the community as a whole
- Are universal in nature, meaning most residents benefit regardless of individual use
- Are related to public safety, health, or regulatory obligations
- Cannot reasonably or efficiently be tied to individual users
- Require consistent standards across the municipality

Examples commonly include:

- Roads and bridges
- Fire and emergency services
- Drainage and stormwater systems
- Elections and legislative functions
- Core administrative and by-law enforcement services

These services are generally characterized by shared benefit, shared responsibility, and shared cost.

### **Area-Rated or Localized Services**

Some services provide a benefit that is neither municipality-wide nor fully individualized, but instead serves a specific geographic area or defined subset of residents. In these cases, municipalities may consider area rating or other localized funding approaches.

Area-rated services are typically appropriate where:

- The service benefits a clearly defined area
- Usage or need is concentrated geographically
- Funding through the general tax levy would create equity concerns
- The area receiving the service can be reasonably identified and charged

Examples may include:

- Urban-specific infrastructure or services
- Localized maintenance or enhancement programs
- Services tied to older development patterns or infrastructure constraints
- Additional waste programs such as organics provided to specific area needs (i.e. Rural vs Urban)

Area rating allows a municipality to balance service delivery with fairness, ensuring costs are borne by those who receive the benefit, rather than the broader tax base.

### **User-Pay or Cost-Recovery Services**

Services are often funded wholly or partly through fees when they:

- Provide a direct and identifiable benefit to specific users
- Can be clearly measured or attributed to an individual, property, or application
- Are discretionary or optional in nature
- Would be inequitable to fund entirely through general taxation

Examples include:

- Planning and building applications
- Utility usage charges
- Facility rentals
- Certain waste and special collection services

In these cases, user fees help ensure that those who benefit most contribute proportionally to the cost of the service.

### **Services Typically Managed by Property Owners**

Some activities are generally considered part of normal property ownership and maintenance, particularly when:

- The benefit is entirely private
- The service can be readily performed by property owners or service providers they can contract with
- The cost and effort vary significantly by location or property type
- Providing the service municipally would benefit only a small portion of residents

Examples often include:

- Lawn and garden maintenance
- Snow clearing on private property
- Disposal of typical household yard waste

In these cases, municipal involvement is limited or unnecessary, and individual responsibility is generally more appropriate.

### **Evaluating Leaf and Yard Waste**

When evaluating whether to introduce a Leaf and Yard Waste Collection Program, it is important to first consider:

- Whether the service provides a general community benefit or a localized private benefit
- Whether it would be used broadly or by a limited number of residents
- How the service aligns with the Township's rural areas, more urban areas and long-term development patterns
- Whether introducing the service would result in equitable cost sharing across the tax base

Based on this framework, leaf and yard waste would be most closely aligned with an area rated service, User Pay or property owner managed. These options are reviewed further below.

#	Option	Pros	Cons
#1	Status Quo – Property Owner Responsibility (mulch/compost on-site, take to Recycling Centre, yard maintenance contractor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Township involvement, other than providing information on the St. Thomas Recycling Centre and on-site options such as mulching/composting</li> <li>• Cost is highly aligned with those needing service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For property owners – cost/time remains with property rather than transferred to property taxes or local charge</li> <li>• \$15/load when over 5 bags (up to 5 bags/visit free)</li> </ul>
#2	Leaf & Yard Waste aligned with Organics Program area (Area Rated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administratively easy to add</li> <li>• Existing Local Area Rate could be adjusted to account for increased service level</li> <li>• Increased service for more urban areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some properties in recently developed areas may not see much benefit to the program for leaves (ie. very few trees)</li> </ul>
#3	Leaf & Yard Waste Program focussed on areas with many/mature trees, within the existing Organics Program area (sub-area rated within the existing Organics Area Rate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would better align service with areas needing/wanting service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administratively difficult</li> <li>• What criteria would be used to include an area</li> <li>• Setting up another local area charge for a small area would not be cost effective</li> </ul>

#	Option	Pros	Cons
#4	Leaf & Yard Waste Program focussed on areas with many/mature trees in all urban/village areas (Area Rated or User Fee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would provide service to those getting most benefit</li> <li>• Area rated would provide reliable revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administratively difficult</li> <li>• What criteria would be used to include an area</li> <li>• User fees revenue may not be reliable depending on costs and uptake</li> </ul>
#5	Leaf & Yard Waste Program across the entire Township – funded from the General Tax Levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administratively easy, incorporated into the Tax Supported Budget like garbage collection</li> <li>• Provides service to all properties, which would include smaller residential lots in the rural area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many farm/rural residences may not need the service, but will pay for the program through taxes</li> <li>• Collection activity costs will be incurred even if rural areas don't use the service</li> </ul>
#6	Leaf & Yard Waste Program across the entire Township – Request funding from Green Lane Trust Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administratively easy, incorporated into the Tax Supported Budget like garbage collection</li> <li>• Provides service to all properties, which would include smaller residential lots in the rural area</li> <li>• Equitable use of Green Lane funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many farm/rural residences may not need the service</li> <li>• Collection activity costs will be incurred even if rural areas don't use the service</li> </ul>

Other notes:

- Taxation and area-rated charges are reliable and can be set to cover costs
- User Fees may not be predictable and may need to be relatively high to cover the fixed program costs if usage is limited
- Collection costs will be fixed, regardless of program participation
- Tipping Fees will be variable based on program use

Based on the above information, staff would recommend ruling out User Fees and sub-areas within the existing Organics Area. While providing the service to the whole Township through taxation or a Green Lane Request would be relatively simple, it would have relatively high fixed costs and staff are not aware of a significant interest across the Township.

From a practical point of view, adding leaf and yard waste to the existing Organics area would be the most feasible and cost-effective option. It would be a logical expansion of the existing program. While there are significant differences with respect tree cover across the current Organics Program area, yard waste is typically also part of these programs, so all areas would receive some benefit from the expanded program.

Staff have obtained a preliminary proposal and cost estimates to add this service to the existing Organics area. The collection contractor recommends a six week spring collection and six week fall collection. The disposal cost is based on the current tipping fee for Organics.

Collection Costs	\$11,000
Disposal	\$6,000
Total	\$17,000
Approx. HH	615
Cost/HH	~\$27

While the contractor recommended six weeks in the spring and fall, if this was cut back to 4 weeks in spring and fall, the Cost/HH may be closer to \$22/HH. Overall, the additional cost per household for the existing Organics area is not excessive and would likely be well received by those that have significant leaf and yard waste disposal needs.

If there is interest in considering adding leaf and yard waste to the existing organics area or a more extensive program across the Township, there may be merit in gathering community feedback to determine the overall interest in the program and tolerance for additional taxes.

A targeted survey for the existing organics area could be completed through a mailout directing property owners to a survey. Costs would be approximately \$1,000. A Township wide survey could be promoted through our communication and social media channels, with staff time being the main cost.

In summary, staff would recommend the status quo (ie. leaf and yard waste remain a property owner responsibility).

If there is interest in adding Leaf and Yard Waste to the existing organics area, staff would recommend consultation with the property owners in the organics program, before adding a leaf and yard waste component to the program. Such a survey could gauge interest, potential uptake, feedback on timing and tolerance to additional costs. Feedback could be gathered in June with Council making a decision to incorporate the program in July before the final property tax bills are generated.

Alternate Option 1: Council direct staff to consult with property owners in the current Organics Program area about adding curbside spring/fall leaf and yard waste collection to the program.

Alternate Option 2: Council direct staff to proceed with adding curbside spring/fall leaf and yard waste collection to the existing organics program area subject to the negotiated costs being inline with preliminary estimates and further that the area rated levy be adjusted to reflect the increased cost for the additional service.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

Financial and resource implications will be dependent on program specifics.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk



## TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

### Report to Council

**MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2026

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk

**REPORT NO:** CAO 2026-14

**SUBJECT MATTER: Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program**

#### **Recommendation:**

1. That Report CAO 2026-14 re: Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program be received for information.

#### **Purpose:**

To provide information to Council on the Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program.

#### **Background:**

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, detailed information about the Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program was released. The following documents are attached for reference:

Appendix "A" - AMO News Release.

Appendix "B" - Watson & Associates – Program Information.

It was also noted that Funding through the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build will also be made available for rural, small and northern municipalities, with more details to be announced at a later date.

#### **Comments/Analysis:**

Based on the information provided, it is questionable whether this program would be beneficial for the Township. Staff have reviewed the program details and current approved DC Background Study and Projects. Many of the large projects identified in the last study have been completed or in progress (Talbotville Firehall, Public Works Facility, Additional Trackless, Fire Equipment, Road Projects). As well, the Township's Development Charges do not include water and wastewater fees, which are one of the primary drivers to enable housing development.

The Township's Development Charges are also relatively low compared to other urban, high growth areas. The DCRP places significant emphasis on the total value of development charge reductions provided to development. This directly affects scoring under the program, which prioritizes both the magnitude of reductions and the number of units benefiting.

The Development Charge Reduction Program is intended to support municipalities where development charges represent a significant component of housing costs and where large-scale infrastructure investment is required to support growth.

Based on the Township's:

- Relatively low development charge rates
- Development charge structure excluding water and wastewater services
- Limited availability of forward-looking growth-related capital projects

Participation in the program is unlikely to produce a net financial or strategic benefit.

Without a clearly defined, growth-enabling infrastructure project and a demonstrable positive financial outcome, participation would result primarily in:

- Reduced development charge revenue
- Increased financial risk to the municipality

Participation in the Development Charge Reduction Program may be viewed by the development industry as a positive step toward improving housing affordability by reducing upfront costs.

As a result, a decision not to participate could be perceived as:

- A missed opportunity to reduce development costs
- A lack of alignment with provincial housing objectives
- A reluctance to support additional housing growth

In particular, developers operating in multiple municipalities may compare Southwold's approach to jurisdictions that choose to participate in the program.

However, several local factors can help to mitigate this perception:

- The Township's development charge rates are already relatively low (approximately \$10,000 per unit), meaning:
  - The potential savings from participation are modest (approximately \$3,000–\$5,000 per unit)

- Development charges represent a smaller proportion of overall development costs in Southwold compared to larger urban municipalities
- Other factors—such as market demand, servicing capacity, and overall project economics—are likely to have a greater influence on development activity
- The Township has recently completed several major growth-related capital projects, which has already supported the availability of serviced land for development

While there may be some expectation from the development industry that municipalities participate in the program, the Township's current development charge structure and financial context require a cautious approach to ensure that any participation does not result in unintended financial impacts on the municipality or existing taxpayers.

**Financial and Resource Implications:**

Participation in the program would require the Township to reduce development charge revenue while taking on additional administrative, financial, and reporting responsibilities. Given the limited potential funding benefit and the Township's current staffing capacity, the overall impact would likely be a net financial and operational burden.

**Strategic Plan Goals:**

The above recommendation helps the Township meet the Strategic Plan Goal of:

- Managed Growth
- Welcoming and Supportive Neighbourhoods
- Economic Opportunity
- Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Jeff Carswell  
CAO/Clerk

**Jeff Carswell**

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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2026 6:36 PM  
**To:** Jeff Carswell  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program Launches

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged



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## AMO Policy Update – Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program Launches

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### Announcement Highlights

Today, the federal and Ontario governments announced details of the [Canada Ontario Development Charge Program](#), aimed at reducing the province's development charges (DCs). Municipalities remain committed to increasing housing supply and affordability, and we welcome this federal–provincial effort to lower housing construction costs and boost to construction sector employment.

Because growth patterns, infrastructure capacity, and DC bylaws vary, the program's financial impact will be uneven across municipalities. AMO encourages municipalities considering participation to assess potential DC revenue losses, weighing housing supply priorities against long-term fiscal impacts as they develop applications and negotiate funding agreements with the province.

AMO will continue working with the province to clarify outstanding questions and support members interested in participating in the program. We remain committed to helping municipalities make this initiative a success for the developers and taxpayers in their community.

Responding to AMO's calls for fair access to Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build, the province committed to also making funding available for rural, small and northern municipalities, with more details to be announced at a later date.

## Top Insights

- The Canada-Ontario Development Charge Reduction Program launched today. Municipalities have until June 19, 2026 to submit projects for funding consideration. Final transfer payment agreements between individual municipalities and the province will lock in a 3-year development charges reduction and secure federal/provincial funding to offset a portion of the lost revenue.
- The province committed to also making Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build funding available for rural, small and northern municipalities.

## Program Details

The Ontario and federal governments announced today detailed program parameters for the [Canada-Ontario Development Charges Reduction Program \(DCRP\)](#). The \$8.8 billion application-based program is available to the over 200 municipalities that levy development charges.

The program's design responded to AMO advocacy by recognizing the differing infrastructure needs of communities by providing funding for both housing enabling and community infrastructure, such as new roads and water systems as well as transit. The promised carve out for rural/small/northern also responds to AMO's call for fair access to new funding, as these communities face different infrastructure needs than their faster growing peers.

There are some open questions on program design, including:

- How offset funding will be determined
- How past voluntary DC reductions will count towards the new 3-year DC reduction requirement, and
- If municipalities will get credit for having suppressed DC rate growth

The program has a short program intake window, from June 1 to June 19. AMO anticipates transfer payment agreements to be finalized as soon as this summer. This timeline was set to align DC reductions with the one-year

provincial HST vacation for new homebuyers to increase market demand for unsold housing inventory and spur housing starts.

Many of the high-level program parameters first announced in March are unchanged. For example, participation is voluntary, municipalities will have to cut their DC rates by 30 to 50% for three years, and program funding is paid out over 10 years.

Today's announcement provided greater clarity on eligible housing enabling infrastructure projects, eligible project costs, cost-share ratios, and assessment criteria. Eligible projects include roads, water/wastewater, and transit. Municipalities will be required to fund at least 10% of project costs and these can include soft costs such as front-end engineering and design work. The size of municipal contribution along with the level of DC reduction and number of housing units enabled are the main criteria that will be used to assess applications.

AMO will provide additional guidance to help members evaluate the program's cost-benefit to their community.

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*An online version of this Policy Update is also available on the [AMO Website](#).*

\*Disclaimer: The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is unable to provide any warranty regarding the accuracy or completeness of third-party submissions. Distribution of these items does not imply an endorsement of the views, information or services mentioned.

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

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155 University Ave Suite 800 | Toronto, ON M5H 3B7 CA

June 3, 2026

To our Municipal Clients,

In our continued efforts to keep you informed of matters related to development charges (DC), we want to inform you of the June 1 announcement regarding the Development Charges Reduction Program (DCRP). The following provides a brief summary of the information, as well as some key sources of further information to assist you in the coming weeks:

- Funding Announcement: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1007531/ontario-and-canada-open-applications-for-new-development-charge-reduction-program>
- Funding Program Details: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/development-charges-reduction-program>
- Program Guidelines: <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2026-06/mmah-dcrp-application-guidelines-and-faq-en-2026-06-01.pdf>

Applications for funding are **due by June 19, 2026** through Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON): <https://www.tpon.gov.on.ca/tpon/psLogin>

## Overview

The provincial and federal governments announced \$8.8 billion in funding over 10 years, to be delivered through the Build Communities Strong Fund's Provincial and Territorial stream. The intent of the funding is to provide housing-enabling infrastructure to support housing development in Ontario. To obtain this funding, municipalities will be required to commit to reducing their respective residential DCs by 30% to 50% and provide funding for at least 10% of the eligible growth-related project costs.<sup>[1]</sup> The Program Guidelines document (summarized below) provides further details regarding the program, including eligible projects, the application process, how projects will be assessed, and other relevant items. Note that joint submissions between municipalities may be accepted, subject to the requirements in the Program Guidelines.

## Key Requirements

- Municipalities must commit to reducing DCs for all residential development by 30% to 50% to be eligible for funding.
  - It appears that a commitment to reducing DCs is required; a reduction in DCs in advance of receiving funding does not appear to be necessary.
  - It appears no reduction for non-residential development is required.
  - DC reductions must be inclusive of area-specific DCs.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Note that eligible growth-related costs do not include the Benefit to Existing and Post-period Benefit shares of DC projects.



- DC reductions must total 30% to 50%, but municipalities can choose to reduce certain service categories more than others.
- Reductions in DCs will be measured against the rates in effect as of March 30, 2026.
  - Note that there was no mention of indexing in relation to estimating the DC relief. Further clarification of this matter may be required in preparation of your applications.
- Municipalities will be required to maintain any rate reductions for a period of at least three years.
- DC reductions would take effect immediately upon entering into the Transfer Payment Agreement and would be retroactive to building permits obtained after March 30, 2026.
  - When preparing amending by-laws to reduce the DC rate, municipalities may need to include wording to provide for the reduced rate to apply retroactively to building permits issued after March 30, 2026. Where DCs have already been paid, refunds may be required, which may add to the administrative burden.
- Municipalities must make a commitment to fund at least 10% of the eligible (growth-related) project costs from non-DC sources. Note that for assessment purposes only, soft costs can be used to estimate the municipal contribution.
  - As the guidelines state “for assessment purposes only,” it is assumed that the municipality would be responsible for 10% of the “eligible costs,” which excludes soft costs.
- Municipalities will be responsible for all cost over-runs and financing costs related to the projects.
- Applicants should request funding amounts that are reflective of the estimated amount of DC relief provided and the municipal contribution for each project.
  - Funding from other provincial and federal programs may be stacked towards the eligible project costs, subject to conditions of previous agreements and that the funding is not from housing-enabling infrastructure programs. These amounts cannot be used towards the municipal contribution.

### **Application Requirements**

- A reasonable estimate of the number of housing units enabled by the proposed project(s).



- An estimate of the number of housing units that will benefit from the reduced DCs and the resulting amount of the reduction provided.
  - This will entail a projection of anticipated housing development for the period of the proposed reduction, for which the DC rates and reduced DC rates can be applied to estimate the overall reduction provided.
  - Note that this may be audited by the Province.
- Identification of the project, or projects (up to five), that would be eligible for the grant.
  - Projects must be included in your most recent DC background study and capital budget/plan.
    - Note that for municipalities without multi-year capital budgets, reference to a master plan or other study that identifies the capital needs may be required. Municipalities may need to seek clarification as part of the application preparation.
  - For municipalities that reduced DCs prior to March 30, 2026, they can choose projects in their capital plan that are not in the DC background study.
  - Smaller projects may be grouped together for the purpose of the application.
  - Where multiple projects are identified, prioritization of the projects with the rationale is required.
  - Multiple applications can be submitted if more than five projects are identified.
  - Projects can be parts of larger projects.
  - Projects must begin construction by July 31, 2030 and be completed by October 31, 2035.
    - Projects cannot be those already under construction, except where they started after March 30, 2026 and where DC rate reductions have been applied in advance.
- Municipalities must commit to complying with the Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada's Buy Canada Policy or the Municipal Buy Ontario Procurement Directive.
- Applications must include a clearly defined scope of work, schedule, and list of dependencies to enable a comprehensive understanding of the project (financial, technical, risk, etc.).
- Applications are required to include a copy of the applicable Official Plan schedules and Zoning By-law maps with anticipated housing clearly delineated.



## Eligible Projects and Costs

- Projects that enable housing will be given priority.
  - Projects cannot include life cycle replacement projects, but may include expansions of existing infrastructure that increase capacity, size, scope, or reach to accommodate growth.
- Eligible service categories are:
  - Water, wastewater, stormwater, fixed transportation, and transportation rolling stock – these projects will be given priority.
  - Public Safety and Emergency Services and Community Infrastructure – these projects will be considered.
  - A full list of eligible asset types is provided in the Program Guidelines.
- Municipalities must own the infrastructure and/or confirm they will own the assets upon a specified date.
- Eligible Project Costs include:
  - Land acquisition costs (from the provincial share of the funds only).
  - Hard costs (including costs of construction, labour, materials, and equipment).
  - Environmental Assessment and Duty to Consult costs incurred after February 26, 2026.
  - As stated above, for assessment purposes only, soft costs can be used to estimate the municipal contribution. It is assumed that municipalities will be required to fund their portion of the actual eligible costs.

## Ineligible Projects and Costs

- Projects that have started construction prior to a Transfer Payment Agreement being executed.
- Planning and design work as stand-alone projects.
- Projects for rehabilitation and/or repair of existing municipal infrastructure.
- Any share of a project that is identified as Benefit to the Existing Development or Post-period Benefit.
- Ineligible Project Costs include:
  - Soft costs, including those related to design, engineering, legal fees, and permitting and insurance.
  - Costs incurred after October 31, 2035.
  - Costs incurred for cancelled projects.
  - Any overhead costs, salaries, and other employment benefits of any employees of the applicant, any direct or indirect operating or administrative costs, and costs related to planning, engineering, architecture, supervision, management, and other activities normally carried out by the applicant's staff.



- Note that this appears to imply that chargebacks to capital projects for municipal staff time would likely not be eligible for funding.
- Sales tax.
- Any costs eligible for rebates.
- Costs for operating expenses, including maintenance.
- Costs related to furnishings and non-fixed assets that are not essential for the operation of the asset.

### **Timelines and Key Dates**

- Applications are due by June 19, 2026.
- Transfer Payment Agreements must be executed by August 15, 2026.

### **Evaluation of Applications**

- Funding will be provided as determined by the Province, with priority given to applications with:
  - Deep DC rate reductions and a large number of housing units that would benefit from the DC relief.
  - Greater proposed rate reductions and/or municipal contribution (e.g., more than 10%).
  - Capital projects that are further in the shovel-ready process.
    - Shovel-readiness indicators include:
      - Completed Environmental Assessment;
      - Land acquisition;
      - Conceptual Engineering;
      - Detailed Engineering;
      - Planning and Design; and
      - Tender/contract award (without commencement of construction).
- Availability of dedicated DC reserve funds towards the project will be considered in determining shovel-readiness of the project.
  - It is assumed that this is in relation to cash-flowing the project while funds are distributed from the Province.

### **Other Matters for Consideration**

- Projects should have a financial plan in place to manage ongoing operating costs.
- Projects should be considered in the next update to the municipality's asset management plan.
- Where the duty to consult Indigenous communities is triggered, the municipality must confirm that consultation has been undertaken.



- Projects must meet or exceed the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.
- Payments will be made to municipalities on a milestone basis as set out in the Program Guidelines.
- There appears to be no funding maximum.
- Municipalities approved for funding will be required to provide reports to the Ministry as set out in the Program Guidelines document.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The intent of this program is to provide grant funding for housing-enabled projects that provide the greatest DC relief. As such, this program is designed such that municipalities will submit applications to compete for a defined pool of funds. Moreover, it incentivizes municipalities to provide DC reductions and municipal contributions beyond the minimum requirements set out in the Program Guidelines.

Given the intent of the program, it appears that a larger share of the funds may be provided to municipalities with higher levels of growth and higher DCs, as the reductions may have a larger impact in these areas.

As the application requirements include a commitment to reduce DCs, it is recommended that municipalities do not reduce DCs in advance of entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement in case grants are not awarded, unless DC reductions are provided for policy matters not related to receiving the grant funding.

The funding received for projects may not offset the revenue foregone from reducing DCs and funding at least 10% of project costs from municipal sources. An analysis should be undertaken to assess the financial benefit of receiving funding before applying or entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement.

If you have any questions regarding the DCRP, the preparation of applications, or the implications of this program for your municipality, we would be pleased to assist you. Feel free to contact any of the undersigned at your convenience.

Yours very truly,

WATSON & ASSOCIATES ECONOMISTS LTD.

Peter Simcisko, BA (Hons), MBE, Managing Partner  
Sean-Michael Stephen, MBA, Managing Partner  
Daryl Abbs, BA (Hons), MBE, PLE, Managing Partner  
Byron Tan, BA (Hons), MBE, PLE, Managing Partner



# Corporation of the Municipality of Calvin

## Council Resolution

**Date:** May 27, 2026

### **Request for Provincial Review of CVA-Based Apportionment for Shared Municipal and Provincially Mandated Services**

**Resolution Number:** 2026-173

**Moved By:** Mayor Gould

**Seconded By:** Councillor Manson

WHEREAS many provincially mandated services, shared municipal services, and board-imposed levies are apportioned among municipalities using Current Value Assessment (CVA) or weighted assessment formulas; and

WHEREAS CVA-based apportionment formulas are intended to reflect municipal assessment capacity, but often do not adequately account for population, service access, geographic isolation, infrastructure constraints, or the differing realities of small and rural municipalities; and

WHEREAS municipalities with significant industrial assessment, utility corridors, resource infrastructure, protected lands, seasonal properties, or large geographic areas may experience disproportionately high per-resident levy impacts despite limited local services and lower resident incomes; and

WHEREAS some municipalities contribute substantially toward regional services such as long-term care, policing, conservation authorities, social services, and other provincially mandated boards and agencies, while residents may have limited local access to those services due to geography, travel distance, or service availability; and

WHEREAS increasing levy pressures are creating significant financial strain for small and rural municipalities and their residents;

NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Council of the Municipality of Calvin requests that the Province of Ontario, including the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Finance, undertake a review of policies, legislation, and regulations governing the use of Current Value Assessment (CVA) and weighted assessment as the basis for apportioning provincially-mandated levies and shared municipal service costs;

AND THAT the Province consider developing fairer and more balanced apportionment models which may include:

- hybrid formulas incorporating both CVA and population;
- consideration of service access and service availability;
- household count or permanent population metrics;
- ability-to-pay considerations for small and rural municipalities;
- rurality and geographic isolation factors; and
- measures to limit disproportionate per-resident levy impacts on smaller municipalities; and

AND THAT the Province work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), rural municipalities, municipal service boards, and regional service providers to develop best practices and model apportionment frameworks for shared municipal services and provincially mandated boards;

AND THAT this resolution with the mayor's report attached, be circulated to:

- the Premier of Ontario;
- the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing;
- the Minister of Finance;
- The Minister of Rural Affairs
- the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO);
- the Rural Ontario Municipal Association
- local Member of Provincial Parliament;
- all Ontario municipalities;
- and relevant municipal service boards and associations for consideration and support.

**Result: Carried**

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of  
Resolution No. 2026-173 passed by the Council of  
The Corporation of the Municipality of Calvin  
on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.



Trish Araujo  
Deputy Clerk



Report to Council by: Mayor Richard Gould Date: May 26, 2026

Subject: Request for Provincial Review of, and Change to CVA-Based Apportionment

The purpose of this report is to provide background information and supporting rationale for the attached resolution requesting that the Province of Ontario review the use of Current Value Assessment (CVA) and weighted assessment formulas as the basis for apportioning costs for provincially-mandated services, regional boards, and shared municipal services.

The report focuses on the growing financial impacts that CVA-based apportionment can have on small and rural municipalities, particularly where assessment values do not accurately reflect resident income levels, service access, or local municipal capacity.

Many shared municipal services and provincially-mandated boards in Ontario allocate costs among participating municipalities using Current Value Assessment (CVA) or weighted assessment formulas.

Examples include: Long-Term Care facilities; District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB); policing costs; conservation authorities; health and social service boards; and School boards and other regional service arrangements.

Under these formulas, municipalities with higher assessment values contribute a larger percentage of overall costs.

The intent of the current CVA-based apportionment is only a reflection of the municipalities "ability to pay." However, in many rural municipalities, assessment values do not accurately represent:

- or the actual level of services available within the municipality
- resident income levels;
- local economic strength;
- access to services;
- population density;
- transportation challenges.

As a result, some rural municipalities experience disproportionately high levy impacts on a per-household or per-resident basis.

#### Rural and Northern Municipal Realities

Small rural municipalities often differ significantly from urban centres in both geography and service availability.

In many cases:

- residents must travel substantial distances to access healthcare and government services;
- municipalities may lack public transit;
- municipalities may not have local hospitals, long-term care homes, or other major services;
- populations may be older and more geographically dispersed;
- infrastructure costs may be high due to large geographic areas and low population density.

At the same time, rural municipalities may contain:

- pipelines;
- hydro corridors;
- industrial infrastructure;

- protected lands;
- provincial parks;
- seasonal properties;
- or large acreages.

These features can substantially increase municipal assessment values while providing little indication of the financial capacity of local residents. This creates a disconnect between the assessed property value; and actual household ability to absorb increasing levy costs.

The Municipality of Calvin is a small rural municipality with approximately 230 households.

A significant portion of municipal assessment is influenced by industrial infrastructure, including a major pipeline corridor. The municipality also contains multiple provincial parks and large acreages, much of which limits future residential or commercial development opportunities.

Many residents live on inherited rural properties and have fixed or modest incomes. While assessment values may appear significant on paper, they do not necessarily reflect disposable household income or enhanced municipal service levels.

The Township has no hospital, no long-term care facility, no public transit, and limited local health and social service infrastructure.

Despite these limitations, the Township contributes toward many regional services through CVA-based apportionment formulas.

#### Cassellholme Capital Cost Example

The attached Appendix "A" illustrates the distribution of Cassellholme redevelopment capital costs among participating municipalities using:

- the current CVA formula;
- a household-based formula; and
- a hybrid formula combining CVA and household count.

The analysis demonstrates substantial differences in per-household impacts between municipalities.

Under the current CVA model:

- Calvin households contribute approximately \$393.89 per household;
- South Algonquin contributes approximately \$377.48 per household;
- Mattawan contributes approximately \$283.74 per household.

By comparison:

- Mattawa contributes approximately \$94.50 per household;
- Chisholm contributes approximately \$193.18 per household;
- North Bay contributes approximately \$203.56 per household.

Under a purely household-based model, the contribution would be approximately \$209.09 per household across all municipalities.

The analysis suggests that CVA-based formulas can create substantial disparities in per-household costs between municipalities, particularly in smaller rural communities where industrial or resource-based assessment inflates municipal valuation figures.

## Hybrid and Alternative Models

The report recommends that the province review whether the current reliance on CVA alone remains the most equitable method of apportionment in all circumstances.

Alternative approaches could include:

- hybrid formulas combining CVA and household count;
- formulas incorporating permanent population;
- service availability considerations;
- rurality and geographic isolation factors;
- ability-to-pay considerations;
- or mechanisms to limit disproportionate impacts on smaller municipalities.

The attached example demonstrates that even a partial hybrid approach can reduce extreme disparities while still recognizing assessment capacity.

## Broader Provincial Relevance

This issue extends beyond the Municipality of Calvin.

Many rural Ontario municipalities face similar circumstances where; industrial assessment; utility corridors, hydro infrastructure, pipelines, resource lands, or protected lands, increase municipal assessment values without proportionally increasing local service access or household financial capacity.

As provincial and regional levy pressures continue to rise, concerns regarding the fairness and sustainability of existing apportionment models are likely to become increasingly significant for rural municipalities across Ontario.

## Conclusion

The current use of CVA and weighted assessment formulas was developed to reflect municipal assessment capacity. However, the growing divergence between assessment values and the realities facing many rural municipalities suggests that a provincial review is warranted.

The Municipality of Calvin is requesting that the Province of Ontario review the use of CVA-based apportionment for provincially-mandated and shared municipal services and consider more balanced approaches that better reflect:

- household impacts;
- rural realities;
- service access;
- and municipal capacity.
- The attached resolution seeks to initiate that broader provincial discussion.
- Recommendation:

That Council adopt the attached resolution requesting a provincial review of Current Value Assessment (CVA)-based apportionment formulas for shared municipal and provincially-mandated services.

Appendix A:

Distribution of Capital cost for Cassellholme construction:

This chart shows the distribution of costs based on current CVA, Per Household, and a Hybrid of 75% per household and 25% CVA.

Municipality	Households	Current CVA			Per Household			Hybrid 75/25		
		Current CVA Pct	Current CVA Annual	Per household	Household based PCT	Household Based Annual	by household only	Hybrid PCT	Hybrid Annual	hybrid by household
North Bay	23470	79.187%	\$4,777,615.40	\$203.56	81.34%	4,907,375.69	209.09	80.8000%	4,874,935.62	207.71
East Ferris	1890	7.742%	\$467,100.64	\$247.14	6.55%	395,182.79	209.09	6.8480%	413,162.25	218.60
South Algonquin	530	3.316%	\$200,065.32	\$377.48	1.84%	110,818.45	209.09	2.2066%	133,130.17	251.19
Bonfield	890	3.237%	\$195,298.99	\$219.44	3.08%	186,091.37	209.09	3.1225%	188,393.27	211.68
Papineau-Cameron	405	1.726%	\$104,135.33	\$257.12	1.40%	84,682.03	209.09	1.4842%	89,545.35	221.10
Chisholm	510	1.633%	\$98,524.33	\$193.18	1.77%	106,636.63	209.09	1.7338%	104,608.55	205.11
Calvin	227	1.482%	\$89,414.00	\$393.89	0.79%	47,463.75	209.09	0.9605%	57,951.31	255.29
Mattawa	860	1.347%	\$81,269.00	\$94.50	2.98%	179,818.62	209.09	2.5721%	155,181.22	180.44
Mattawan	70	0.329%	\$19,861.73	\$283.74	0.24%	\$14,636.40	209.09	0.2642%	15,942.73	227.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28852</b>		<b>\$6,033,284.73</b>		<b>99.99%</b>	<b>\$6,032,705.73</b>	<b>209.09</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>6,032,850.48</b>	

Totals      65693                      \$6,033,284                      \$6,033,333                      \$6,033,333

Total Capital rebuild cost is and estimate of \$121,000,000 plus \$110,000,000 interest, minus the \$50,000,000 arranged by the province to be divided in each of the first years of the loan. This is a Total of \$181,000,000. Divided over the next 30 years this equals \$6,033,333 per year.

Drainage By-law Number 2026-28

A by-law to provide for a drainage works in the Township of Southwold  
in the County of Elgin.

Whereas the council of the Township of Southwold has procured a  
report under section 78 of the *Drainage Act* for the improvement  
of the Bowlby-Futcher Drain 2025 drain;

And whereas the report dated 2025/12/19 has been authored by Mike DeVos  
and the attached report forms part of this by-law;

And whereas the estimated total cost of the drainage work is \$875,200.00 ;

And whereas \$864,180.00 is the amount to be contributed by the Township  
of Southwold for the drainage works;

And whereas (Complete this clause only if other municipalities are being assessed a share of the cost of the project.);

\$11,200.00 is being assessed in the County of Elgin  
\_\_\_\_\_ is being assessed in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is being assessed in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is being assessed in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

And whereas the council is of the opinion that drainage of the area is desirable;

Therefore the council of the Township of Southwold  
pursuant to the *Drainage Act* enacts as follows:

**1. AUTHORIZATION**

The attached report is adopted and the drainage works is authorized and shall be completed as specified in the report.

**2. BORROWING**

The Corporation of the Township of Southwold  
may borrow on the credit of the Corporation the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ being the amount necessary for  
the improvement of the drainage works.

This project may be debentured.

6. CITATION

This by-law comes into force on the passing thereof and may be cited as the " Bowlby-Futcher Drain 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ by-law".

First reading 2026/04/13

Second reading 2026/04/13

Provisionally adopted this 13 day of April, 2026

Name of Head of Council (Last, First Name) <i>Deputy</i> <u>Pennings, Justin</u>	Signature Original signed by <u>Justin Pennings</u>
--	--

Name of Clerk (Last, First Name) <u>Carswell, Jeff</u>	Signature Original signed by <u>Jeff Carswell</u>
---	--

Third reading \_\_\_\_\_

Enacted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Head of Council (Last, First Name)	Signature
--	-----------

Name of Clerk (Last, First Name)	Signature
----------------------------------	-----------

I, \_\_\_\_\_ clerk of the Corporation of the Township of Southwold, certify that the above by-law was duly passed by the council of the Corporation and is a true copy thereof.

Name of Clerk (Last, First Name)	Signature
----------------------------------	-----------





May 22, 2026

RE: A New Identity for Regional Water

Dear Municipal Partners,

Since 2000, both the Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System and the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System have relied on a common management group to administer and oversee the respective water systems. Many of our partners have informally known us as Regional Water. During that time, we have managed all aspects of system planning and the delivery of high-quality drinking water to more than 15 municipalities and communities in the greater London area of Southwestern Ontario. We look forward to continuing this relationship for years to come.

As the region continues to grow, so has our organization, and the role we play in ensuring sustainable growth and development across both regional water systems. After operating largely in the background for more than 25 years, we felt it was time to put a name to an organization that serves nearly 650,000 people and supplies industrial and commercial partners of all sizes.

**Huron Erie Water** is now the common public-facing identity of these two public water utilities – each with its own lake, its own benefiting communities, and its own facilities, operating together under one organization.

In delivering on our mandate, the team behind **Huron Erie Water** remains the same, as does our commitment to rigorous standards, accountability and ensuring both regional water systems remain among the best in Canada.

Each system will continue to have an autonomous Board of Management governing the respective water system while overseeing **Huron Erie Water's** administration and management.

As a valued partner in operating our water supply systems, nothing will change regarding any agreements or contracts you have with either the Lake Huron or Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System. Those agreements remain valid and will continue to be between the interested party and the respective regional water system.

**Huron Erie Water** will act as a facilitator of those agreements and be your point of contact.

Moving forward, when you hear from us, you will hear from **Huron Erie Water**. When you need us, **Huron Erie Water** will be there.

Should you have any questions, please reach out to Andrew Henry: [ahenry@huroneriewater.ca](mailto:ahenry@huroneriewater.ca) or Jess Bechard: [jbechard@huroneriewater.ca](mailto:jbechard@huroneriewater.ca)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J-B", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jess Bechard, MBA  
Senior Manager, Business Administration  
Huron Erie Water (formerly Regional Water)

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MAY 2026



## YOUR MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES

Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Engages Provincial Leaders at Queen's Park on Key Regional Priorities



The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) met with provincial leaders at Queen's Park to advance its 2026 advocacy priorities, with a focus on the infrastructure needed to support housing growth, strengthen homelessness response, and advance regional transit solutions for rural and small urban communities across Western Ontario.

Read the [press release](#)

## Western Ontario Warden's Caucus and Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Formalize Partnership



The Western Ontario Warden's Caucus (WOWC) and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) have formalized a new partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding to address shared regional challenges such as water quality and climate change, while advancing economic growth across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region.

Read the [press release](#)

## Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Calls for Action on Emergency Room Wait Times, Supports Finlay's Law

The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) is calling on the Province of Ontario to take immediate action to address growing pressures on emergency rooms (ERs) and improve access to timely care, particularly for children.

At its April 10, 2026 meeting, the WOWC Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution in support of Finlay's Law on Emergency Room Reform, a proposed framework aimed at strengthening pediatric emergency care across the province.

Emergency departments across Ontario continue to face increasing demand, staffing shortages, and longer wait times. Data from Health Quality Ontario indicates that patients requiring hospital admission are waiting, on average, up to 20 hours, while high-acuity patients are waiting close to five hours to see a physician. These pressures are being felt in communities of all sizes, including across Southwestern Ontario.



[Read Full Press Release](#)

### WOWC Submission to Federal 2026 Pre-Budget Consultation



The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) has submitted its recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance as part of the federal government's 2026 pre-budget consultation process. Representing 15 upper and single-tier municipalities and more than 1.6 million residents, the submission emphasizes the critical role Western Ontario plays in powering Canada's economy through manufacturing, agriculture, energy production, and trade.

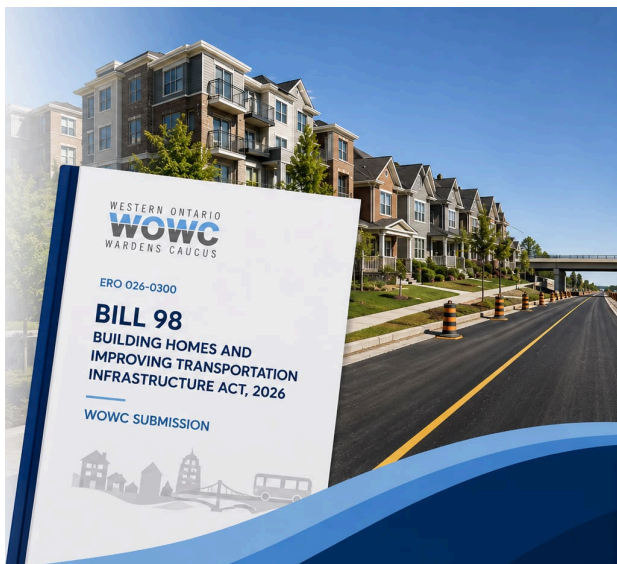
The WOWC calls on the federal government to make targeted investments that recognize the unique realities of rural and mid-sized communities, particularly as municipalities continue to face growing pressures related to housing, infrastructure, workforce shortages, and economic competitiveness.

Key recommendations in the submission include expanded infrastructure funding for housing-enabling projects, increased support for regional and rural transit systems, investments in workforce development and skilled trades, and enhanced economic development tools to strengthen supply chains and attract investment to rural Ontario. The submission also highlights the importance of supporting trade-exposed sectors amid global economic uncertainty and tariffs, while ensuring municipalities have the resources necessary to support continued growth.

Through this submission, the WOWC reinforces its message that strategic federal investment in Western Ontario is essential to strengthening Canada's broader economic resilience and long-term prosperity

[Read Submission](#)

### WOWC Submission on Bill 98: Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026



The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) has submitted comments to the Province of Ontario regarding Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026.

In the submission, WOWC expressed support for the Province's goal of accelerating housing development and improving transportation infrastructure, while emphasizing the need for practical implementation measures that reflect the realities of rural and mid-sized municipalities.

The submission highlighted several key themes, including the importance of Municipal Consultation and Collaboration, ensuring municipalities remain active partners in the development and implementation of legislative and regulatory changes impacting local planning and infrastructure systems.

Western Ontario continue to face significant pressures related to servicing capacity, infrastructure funding, workforce shortages, and regional connectivity. The Caucus also emphasized that successful housing growth requires parallel investments in roads, transit, water, wastewater, and community infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability and economic competitiveness.

Through the submission, WOWC reinforced its commitment to advocating for collaborative solutions that support responsible growth and stronger communities across Western Ontario.

WOWC stressed that municipalities across

### Read Submission

## WOWC Advocates for Local Governance and Rural Representation in Response to Bill 100



The Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) has submitted comments to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy regarding Bill 100, the Better Regional Governance Act, 2026. In its submission, WOWC expressed concerns about proposed governance reforms that could weaken local decision-making and reduce municipal autonomy across Ontario.

While the legislation currently applies to specific regions, the Caucus emphasized that the proposed changes signal a broader provincial direction that could have long-term implications for counties and rural municipalities throughout Western Ontario.

The submission focused on several key themes, including Maintaining Locally Elected Leadership, Recognizing Differences Between Municipal Structures, Reflecting Rural and Regional Realities, and Ensuring Collaborative Municipal-Provincial Partnerships. WOWC

stressed that counties operate differently than large urban regions, relying on collaborative two-tier governance systems that reflect local needs and balanced representation.

The Caucus urged the Province to ensure future governance reforms are developed in partnership with municipalities and continue to support local accountability, effective service delivery, and strong regional collaboration. Through the submission, WOWC reinforced its commitment to protecting local governance structures while continuing to advance shared priorities related to housing, infrastructure, and economic growth across Western Ontario.

## Read Submission

### Economic Development for Elected Officials



Economic  
Developers  
Council  
of Ontario

The Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) has launched a new professional development initiative for elected officials and senior municipal leaders titled Investing in Our Future: Why Economic Development Matters. The half-day sessions are designed to provide municipal decision-makers with a practical understanding of economic development and the important role local governments play in shaping long-term community prosperity.

Participants explore how municipal policies and decisions influence business growth, investment attraction, workforce development, and overall community vibrancy, while also gaining insight into the shared responsibility economic development requires across departments and leadership teams.

For more information and to register click [here](#).



### Ontario Welcomes \$100 Million Investment in the Agri-food Sector

The Ontario government is welcoming an investment of over \$100 million from Sunrise Farms, a family-owned Canadian poultry business, to build a new state-of-the-art processing facility in Woodstock. This major expansion builds on the company's strong foundation in the Canadian poultry industry, while strengthening the resilience, competitiveness and self-reliance of the province's agri-food supply chain by creating 100 new, good-paying jobs in Woodstock and supporting 248 existing positions across Ontario.

[Link here](#)



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

### Innovative Solutions Canada launched three new funding opportunities!

Innovative Solutions Canada (ISC) is a federal innovation funding program designed to help Canadian businesses develop, test, and commercialize new technologies and solutions. Through its two core streams — the Challenge Stream and the Testing Stream — the program provides funding to innovators to solve real-world government and industry challenges while supporting economic growth and commercialization opportunities. The Challenge Stream supports early-stage research and prototype development, while the Testing Stream allows companies to test late-stage innovations in operational, real-life environments with government partners before bringing products to market.

[Link here](#)

## New PodCast Alert!



### New podcast alert: The Local Edge

The **Saugeen Economic Development Corporation** has launched The Local Edge, a new podcast highlighting the people, projects, and ideas shaping local communities. The first episode drops this Friday, May 8, 2026, with new episodes coming every couple of weeks—an easy add to your playlist if you care about economic development and community impact.

Take a listen and share it with your network

[YouTube](#)  
[Spotify](#)  
[Apple Podcasts](#)

Western Ontario Wardens Caucus | 789 Broadway St Box 3000 | Wyoming, ON N0N1T0 CA

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## **THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD**

### **BY- LAW NO.2026-43**

**Being a by-law to confirm the resolutions and motions of the Council of the Township of Southwold, which were adopted on June 8, 2026.**

**WHEREAS** Section 5(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001, Chapter 25, provides that a municipal power, including a municipality's capacity, rights, powers and privileges under section 8, shall be exercised by by-law unless the municipality is specifically authorized to do otherwise;

**AND WHEREAS** it has been expedient that from time to time, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Southwold should enact by resolution or motion of Council;

**AND WHEREAS** it is deemed advisable that all such actions that have been adopted by a resolution or motion of Council only should be authorized by By-law;

### **NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That the actions of the Council of the Township of Southwold at the Regular Meeting of Council held on June 8, 2026; in respect to each report, motion, resolution or other action passed and taken by the Council at its meetings, is hereby adopted, ratified and confirmed, as if each resolution or other action was adopted, ratified and confirmed by its separate by-law.
2. That the Mayor and the proper officers of the Corporation are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action, or obtain approvals, where required, and, except where otherwise provided, the Mayor and the Clerk are hereby directed to execute all documents necessary in that behalf and to affix the Corporate Seal of the Township of Southwold to all such documents.

**READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME, CONSIDERED READ A THIRD TIME, AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 8<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JUNE, 2026.**

---

Mayor  
Grant Jones

---

CAO/Clerk  
Jeff Carswell