



CORPORATE REPORT
The Corporation of the Town of Wasaga Beach
Meeting Date: 11/27/2025

DATE: 11/19/2025

SUBJECT: Adoption of New Official Plan including West Wasaga Secondary Plan Policies

CONTACT: Matt Ellis, Senior Planner
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REPORT NUMBER: 2025/11/27-38

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the report titled: Adoption of New Official Plan including West Wasaga Secondary Plan Policies, to the Council meeting of November 27, 2025, be received;
2. **THAT** Council enact a By-law to adopt the new Official Plan, attached as Appendix 1; and
3. **THAT** Council authorize Staff to make application to the County of Simcoe for review and final approval of the Town of Wasaga Beach Official Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Official Plans, as required by the Planning Act, are an overall visionary and policy document that provides high-level land use planning direction over a 25 - 30 year horizon.
- The Town's current Official Plan was approved in 2004 and needs updating to:
 - address strong continued growth and to better reflect the community's changing characteristics and priorities; and,
 - reflect changes to Provincial and County legislation/regulations and policies, including new population and employment forecasts.
- Work to produce a new Official Plan commenced in 2017 and has included ongoing engagement with community stakeholders and extensive analysis by Town staff and the Town's lead consultant for the project (GSP Group).
- The new Official Plan:
 - prioritizes community residential and commercial growth into six Strategic Growth Areas located across the Town at key intersections;
 - provides infill and intensification opportunities where compatibility with existing neighbourhoods can be achieved;
 - incorporates new planning policies for the West Wasaga Secondary Plan area;
 - provides urban design guidance to integrate development into the community; and,
 - continues to protect natural areas and promote sustainability.

- It is the opinion of Town Planning staff that the new Official Plan is:
 - consistent with/conforms to applicable Provincial legislation/regulations and policies;
 - is consistent with the County of Simcoe Official Plan;
 - celebrates, preserves and builds on the Town's history and natural beauty as the world's longest freshwater beach; and,
 - facilitates the community's ongoing transformation to a more complete, sustainable and vibrant place that reflects the aspirations and needs of residents, tourists and businesses.
- Once adopted by Council, next steps include providing Notice of Adoption to agency and community stakeholders and forwarding the new Official Plan to the County in recognition of their role as the provincially delegated approval authority.

BACKGROUND:

An Official Plan, as mandated in the *Planning Act*, is a forward looking policy document that helps to lay out a long-term vision for community growth and improvement over typically 25 to 30 years, with requirements for periodic review and updating. An Official Plan identifies where, when and how different types of growth will occur and prescribes policies and criteria that are to be considered in the review of development as well as other projects.

Specifically, an Official Plan provides direction related to:

- Growth management - population and housing;
- Employment, tourism and economic development;
- Public infrastructure;
- Natural environment and resources; and,
- Public health and safety.

Importantly, Town by-laws and public works projects are required to conform to the Official Plan.

The Town's current Official Plan was approved over 20 years ago (2004) and needs to be replaced with one that addresses the challenges and realities that are driving Wasaga Beach forward:

- Strong continuing growth – the Town's population increased from 15,029 in 2006 to 24,862 in 2021 - an increase of 65.4% (census data) and the County is forecasting that by 2051 the Town's population and employment will reach at least 38,090 and 8,510 respectively;
- A higher percentage of year round residents that want a more complete community with mix of land uses, amenities and opportunities and higher quality urban design closer to home;
- An aging population with a need for age-friendly development and accessible design;
- An increased need for more affordable and diverse housing options;
- Recognition of the infrastructure and capacity in place (e.g. water and sewer) and that needed (e.g. high schools) to support future growth;
- An increased need for more affordable and diverse housing options;

- A desire for a revitalized, sustainable and well designed Downtown that serves residents and tourists and businesses;
- Recognition of the importance of sustainability and climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- The continued role of tourism and shifts in the local and regional economic landscape; and,
- The evolution of communications technology and planning best practices.

Additionally, extensive changes have also been made to the Provincial legislation and planning policy framework that impact on how development and redevelopment applications are evaluated and what content goes into an Official Plan.

Background information for the new Official Plan project since it commenced in 2017 is documented and can be accessed on the Official Plan Review page of the Engage Wasaga website via the following link- [Official Plan Review | Engage Wasaga](#).

The Town's new Official Plan occurred over two phases (shown in **Figure 1** below). Phase 1 work consisted of a series of community engagement initiatives, background research and completion of topic-specific Discussion Papers. Phase 2 work includes drafts of the new Official Plan and corresponding community engagement to solicit and respond to feedback, a statutory Public Meeting and now presentation of a final draft new Official Plan to Council for adoption. Once adopted, Phase 2 work continues with the new Official Plan being sent to the County of Simcoe for approval.

Figure 1
New Official Plan Process



Discussion papers were completed in 2017 and 2018 as part of Phase 1 work addressing such matters as Community Engagement and Consultation, Growth Management and Commercial, Retail and Tourism. The community engagement component of Phase 1 work consisted of the following events:

- First Nations Consultation – Huron Wendat Nation (May 2017)
- County of Simcoe and Provincial Agencies Consultation (May 25 and September 26, 2017)
- Stakeholder Focus Groups Consultation (June 20, 2017), covering: Business & Economic Development, Arts, Culture & Tourism, Community Health & Recreation and the Environment
- Town of Wasaga Beach Staff Consultation (June 27-28, 2017)

- Public Meeting (June 27, 2017)
- Drop-In Public Information Session and Visioning Workshop (June 28, 2017)
- Youth Centre Consultation (August 17, 2017)
- Inflate-a-Fest Pop-up Booth Consultation (September 2, 2017).

A first draft new Official Plan was posted on its Engage Wasaga website in May 2024. More community engagement continued with Planning staff attending the My Wasaga Days Community Services Event (May 23 and 24, 2024) so the public could provide more input or ask questions. The first draft new Official Plan was also circulated to Town Departments/external agencies for weekly review meetings during the summer of 2024.

Resulting feedback was then considered and a refined second draft Official Plan was then posted on the Town's Engage Wasaga page on October 9, 2024. This second draft served as the basis for statutory Open House and Public Meetings, held October 10th and 23rd, 2024 respectively, as required under the Planning Act. Associated presentations by Planning staff were also posted online.

Planning staff note that throughout the Phase 1 and 2 work, upwards of 900 written and oral comments were received from over 60 community stakeholders. This level of engagement demonstrates a strong community interest in the Town's growth and proper planning over the coming decades.

All feedback received up to October 30, 2025 has been reviewed and summarized in the comment matrices, (see **Appendix 3** to this report). In response to comments, significant revisions were made as part of the final draft of the Official Plan. A copy of the new Official Plan is provided in a clean version, as **Appendix 1** and tracked-changed version is provided as **Appendix 2**.

THE NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

What We Heard

Based on the above-noted extensive public engagement, the following themes emerged:

- ***Pursue More Housing Options*** – the community is seeking an increased range of housing options for first-time buyers, workers, families and older adults. This includes a desire for more rental options and additional dwelling units.
- ***Pursue Compact, Mixed-Use Communities*** – the community is seeking more mixed-use opportunities within walkable and complete neighbourhoods.
- ***Protect the Environment*** – the community is seeking to protect the beach, rivers, woodlands, wetlands and other natural treed areas for future generations/visitors to enjoy.
- ***Enhance Public Space Opportunities*** – the community is seeking new indoor and outdoor venues for events, classes, trails and other community activities. Recreational and community facilities should be equitably distributed among neighbourhoods.

- **Pursue Transportation Options** – Pursue compact development to minimize the need to travel long distances for daily needs. Short trips should be convenient on foot, bicycle and transit via a well connected network. Longer trips should be by transit or private automobile.
- **Pursue Employment Uses** – Flexible designations in nodes should be encouraged to support economic diversification and job creation.
- **Pursue Year-Round Tourism Attractions** – Expanded tourism experiences and attractions are desired, with support infrastructure such as quality hotels for overnight/longer term stays.

It is noted that any additional feedback received after this point will be collected by the Town and forwarded to the County of Simcoe, the approval authority for the Town’s Official Plan once it has been adopted by Council. Town staff will work together with the County to revise the new Official Plan, if needed and as appropriate, through their review and approval process.

The following section of the report provides an overview of the structure of the new Official Plan, the approach taken for its policy language and then outlines the vision and major policy content – largely from the perspective of the key drivers and themes identified from public consultation.

1. Structure

The Town’s new Official Plan is organized into nine sections- Sections 1 through 8 contain the text and Section 9 consists of the Schedules, as illustrated in **Figure 2** below. The first sections deal with “Why We Plan for Wasaga Beach”, “Where Wasaga Beach Will Grow” and “How Wasaga Beach Will Grow” while later sections deal with more technical or area-specific matters such as implementation, policies for specific areas and interpretation of the Official Plan.

**Figure 2:
New Official Plan Structure**

Section 1: Why We Plan for Wasaga Beach
Section 2: Where Wasaga Beach Will Grow
Section 3: How Wasaga Beach Will Grow
Section 4: How We Will Protect Wasaga Beach’s Natural & Cultural Heritage
Section 5: How Development Will Be Designed

Section 6: How the Official Plan Will Be Implemented
Section 7: How We Plan for Specific Areas
Section 8: How to Interpret the Official Plan
Section 9: Schedules

These sections consist of a wide range of community-oriented goals, objectives and policies that provide guidance and direction to landowners, prospective investors, developers, builders and other community stakeholders. It is noted that the new Official Plan is also supported by various master plans, standards, guidelines and other policy documents that typically provide more detailed direction for matters affecting growth and development. These items are also integral considerations when making growth and land development related decisions.

2. Policy Language

Wording for policy goals, objectives and actions in the new Official Plan varies in strength depending on the importance of the matter and how it is to be achieved (described in detail in Section 1.5.2 – “How to Interpret Policy Language”). While not an exhaustive list, the most common words used in the new Official Plan are “*may*”, “*shall*” and “*should*”.

The term “*may*” provides a person with permission to do something without requiring them to do it. It can be thought of as identifying a matter for consideration or encouragement under the right circumstances. In other cases, the term “*may*” is used to indicate permission provided that certain criteria are met, such as policies that permit residential redevelopment in an area provided that municipal services are available or that it fits with the existing neighbourhood.

In contrast, the term “*shall*”, means that whatever is stated in the policy has to be done – it is mandatory. For example, a certain type of development shall be designed in a manner that is accessible to people with disabilities or minimizes health and safety issues for pedestrians. Other uses of the term “*shall*” indicate that a certain approval authority (such as Council, NVCA or applicable Provincial bodies) is required for a land use specific use to be permitted. For example, some policies include phrases such as “...***shall be to the satisfaction of the Town and any other applicable approval authority***”.

The term “*should*” is interpreted as lying between “*may*” and “*shall*” meaning that what needs to be done is done; unless it is impractical to do so or it conflicts with a higher priority. In other words, this is stronger than a recommendation, but not as stringent as being absolutely required. Examples of this are policies that describe elements that should be included as part of a development or

redevelopment of the property, but there is room for flexibility to exclude such elements where circumstances prevent absolute compliance.

3. Major Policy Direction

The following section summarizes how the policies of new Official Plan reflect the most common themes of feedback received from community stakeholders in response to the drafts of the new Official Plan.

Growth Needs to be Focused and Balanced to Create Complete and Existing Neighbourhoods should be Preserved for Low Density Uses

Comments received expressed concern about the impact that medium and high density residential development may have on existing neighbourhoods while also indicating a desire for mixed-use, more walkable and complete neighbourhoods. The new Official Plan responds to these concerns, as well as Provincial planning priorities, by focusing where and how growth is to occur and trying to minimize the effects of urban sprawl and other associated costs of growth.

Direct Growth and Intensification to Strategic Growth Areas

The new Official Plan directs the majority of growth to six identified Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) generally spread out across the community from east to west that can address Provincial planning objectives and the desires of Town residents for identifiable and complete neighbourhoods. These areas reflect where mixed-use development, such as commercial activity and higher density residential land uses, have grouped together and can continue to intensify in the future. This overall approach also helps to make better use of existing services and infrastructure, reducing the need for costly new expansions and supporting public transportation. Additionally, the focusing growth in SGAs and to a lesser extent in existing neighbourhoods also helps to reduce the expansion of the community into agricultural, rural and natural areas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by lower levels of vehicle usage and pollution from stormwater runoff that enter waterbodies.

Provide Balanced Opportunities for Infill and Intensification in Existing and Future Lower Density Neighbourhoods

Some opportunities for infill and intensification will be allowed in existing and future lower density neighbourhoods but only if they are located, designed and constructed in a way that maintains compatibility with the surrounding community. The criteria that medium to high-density residential uses in the Neighbourhood designation are required to meet include:

- location adjacent (or reasonably close) to an Arterial Road or Collector Road or SGA;
- compatibility with lawfully existing land uses on adjacent properties;
- provision of Town water and wastewater services;

- location within a reasonable distance of public service facilities and commercial uses that address residents' daily needs (particularly retail and service commercial uses);
- The proposed development will provide for adequate vehicle parking and traffic circulation, and;
- Surrounding traffic infrastructure is adequate, including transit and active transportation facilities for the proposed use.

Planning staff note that the Town's Comprehensive Zoning By-law and Site Plan Control By-law will also be updated and used to help achieve development and redevelopment that is compatible with existing neighbourhood and uses. These considerations include such matters as what uses are permitted "by right", building setback, lot coverage, building height, landscaping, minimum parking and buffering to existing development.

To clarify, lower density residential development typically has less than 30 dwelling units per hectare consisting of buildings such as single and semi-detached houses. Medium density is considered as having 30-65 units per hectare and typically includes townhouses and apartments with up to four storeys. High density is viewed as having more than 65 units per hectare and typically includes townhouses, stacked/back-to-back townhouses and apartments that are 4 to 6 storeys in height unless specifically permitted.

Supports a Multi-Modal Transportation System

Various transportation-related comments were received identifying a need to shorten trip distance and travel time and expand transportation options. The new Official Plan builds upon the existing Official Plan policy, the 2008 Active Transportation Plan, the 2017 Transportation Study update and the 2019 Roads Needs Studies Update for road classifications and specific policies.

The new Official Plan includes significantly improved policies supporting complete streets, active transportation (e.g. walking and cycling) and transit that will inform the preparation of any new transportation policy documents led by Town Public Works and Engineering staff. Such initiatives may consist of a comprehensive review of the Town's multi-modal transportation network that includes roads, transit and active transportation facilities, strategies for resolving local problem areas within the Town's broader transportation network and policies for effective management of the transportation system.

Building on the urban structure that consists of transit-supportive development discussed above, the new Official Plan paves the way for an integrated multi-modal transportation network that gives people and businesses a number of ways to get around, including walking and cycling, and move goods to and from the community.

In addition to an improved environment due to lower levels of vehicle emissions a transportation system that facilitates active transportation, contributes to healthy lifestyles for all ages and abilities and along with public transit also helps residents unable to drive to complete their daily work, education, shopping and recreational activities

Environmental Policies Should be Stronger

Environmental policies encompass a wide array of interrelated topics that are addressed throughout the new Official Plan. Such topics include, but are not limited to protection of natural heritage and natural hazards, tree preservation, and climate change resilience. The new Official Plan is reflective of a comprehensive approach to these matters, including the approach to growth outlined above such as SGAs and opportunities for infill and intensification.

Protects the Natural Heritage System

The new Official Plan identifies the Town's unique and complex natural heritage system (e.g. Greenland Areas shown on Schedule "G") consisting of natural heritage features, areas and linkages that are key to supporting natural processes/functions, biodiversity, viable wildlife habitat and overall healthy ecosystems. Policies reflect the need to preserve these areas from development and where appropriate reduce the impacts of development and informed by science. Areas susceptible to natural hazards (i.e. flooding, erosion, etc.) are also identified and protected from development, thereby ensuring public safety.

Supports Sustainable Development Standards

The new Official Plan includes policies that promote energy efficiency and sustainable development standards such as Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED) and similar rating systems. It is important to note, however, the Town is prevented from acting beyond its authority under legislative mechanisms to require sustainable development standards beyond the minimum requirements of the *Ontario Building Code*. However, the Town may promote the participation of landowners and businesses in programs that incentivize investment in green technologies.

There is a Need for More Diverse and Affordable Housing

The new Official Plan aims to diversify its current housing stock that is dominated by a high rate of owner-occupied, single-detached housing. Diverse housing options include different types of form (single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, townhouses, multiple-unit residential buildings, and mixed-use development) and tenure (rental, land lease, condominium and full ownership) to meet the needs of current and future residents.

As such, the policies in the new Official Plan includes opportunities to introduce medium-density and high-density residential development in appropriate areas, as discussed earlier, where these forms have historically been absent as well as additional residential units (attached secondary residential apartments and detached "garden suites") to further enhance the variety of housing options available, while reasonably maintaining neighbourhood character and mitigating impacts to adjacent/surrounding residents.

In addition to increasing the *types* of available housing, the new Official Plan aims to improve housing affordability. As per the Housing Affordability policies of the new Official Plan, the Town will utilize the tools at its disposal and to the fullest extent of its legislated authority to ensure at least 10% of all new dwelling units created annually are affordable residential units. Measures the Town will employ in pursuit of the above-mentioned target include, but are not limited to:

- Allowing the creation of additional residential units, subject to applicable Official Plan policies and Comprehensive Zoning By-law provisions;
- Considering surplus Town lands or considering the opportunity to acquire suitable lands when/where appropriate for the creation of affordable residential units;
- Considering various grants and incentives for the creation of affordable residential units;
- Discouraging the conversion of existing rental housing into condominiums or to short-term accommodation uses;
- Considering the implementation of a Community Benefits Charges Strategy to encourage the creation and maintenance of affordable residential units; and
- Negotiating agreements with the public/private sectors to address the provision of affordable residential units through the development approval process (i.e. arranging for a certain percentage of new units within a Plan of Subdivision being medium or high-density units that could accommodate affordable residential units).

Short Term Accommodation Needs to be Better Managed

Short Term Accommodations (STAs) are considered as the rental of an entire dwelling for commercial purposes for a period of time that does not exceed a set number of consecutive days. Typically, the owner of the dwelling is not present on the property during the rental period. The new Official Plan recognizes this type of accommodation can supplement other forms of tourist accommodation, support a variety other local tourist experiences and when used on an intermittent basis, provide homeowners with another means of income to offset ownership expenses during the time the homeowner is not present.

At the same time, STAs without appropriate restrictions can result in adverse impacts for adjacent and surrounding residents (i.e. noise, reduced privacy, on-street parking, etc.) and an over-proliferation of STAs can result in a shortage of rental housing; or occur where such uses are not legally permitted. Planning staff received comments both in favour and against STAs. STA-focused policies enable the Town's new Comprehensive Zoning By-law and Business Licence By-law to enact reasonable and appropriate restrictions that maintain a healthy residential rental market and protect surrounding residents from negative impacts.

The new Official Plan includes permissions for STAs in the SGAs (which are predominately designated as Mixed Use).

Reversing Current Out-Commuting Trends

A common issue identified in the comments and verified by data from Statistics Canada is the shortage of diverse and higher paying employment opportunities within the Town's boundaries. As mentioned in the new Official Plan Update Report dated April 11, 2024 (Report Number 2024/04/11-01), approximately 70% of the Town residents leave the Town every day to work in area municipalities such as Collingwood, Barrie, Clearview, Essa and in some cases the Greater Toronto Area.

Furthermore, employment opportunities with the Town tend toward lower wage jobs in retail, accommodation and food services and construction rather than higher wage opportunities in education, professional, scientific and technical services and advanced manufacturing. The new Official Plan seeks to reverse these trends is by requiring Official Plan Amendment applications that seek to re-designate lands within the Business and Commerce designation to include a Planning Justification Report or Market Impact Analysis which demonstrates the requested re-designation is warranted.

Site-Specific Landowner Requests

Planning staff received and reviewed requests from landowners (or their Agents) to re-designate their properties or include policy revisions that would support the development of their properties. If the nature and/or impact of the request was determined to be minor, the request would be considered as part of the new Official Plan. If the request was determined to be major, the request would not be considered as part of the new Official Plan. Responses to each of these requests are included in **Appendices 3 and 4** (Comment Response Matrices).

Indigenous Engagement

As noted in the Community Engagement & Consultation Summary Report (Section 3.2), the Town reached out to First Nation Communities throughout the new Official Plan process and received interest and comment from the Huron-Wendat Nation (HWN), the Hiawatha First Nation and the Beausoleil First Nation. As a result, the new Official Plan recognizes the importance of First Nation, Inuit and Metis communities with inclusion of a land acknowledgement and historical background section and policies recognizing their important continuing role in consultation activities and the review of development and policy matters. Notably, policies have been included which speak to working with First Nations, Inuit and Metis around the conservation and management of archaeological and cultural sites and realizing opportunities for education and appreciation of cultural heritage resources.

West Wasaga Secondary Plan (WWSP)

The new Official Plan also incorporates recent work undertaken to provide more detailed land use planning guidance for the west end of Town. The new Official Plan and the WWSP have progressed

to the point that allows incorporation of WWSP policy now into the new Official Plan. Thus, the policy guidance resulting from the West Wasaga Secondary Plan project is included in in the new Official Plan under Section 7 “How We Plan for Specific Areas”.

A Secondary Plan is a part of the broader Official Plan focused on a specific area of the municipality that provides policy guidance on a more granular and contextually appropriate scale regarding land use, transportation, parks and other community features. The project for the West Wasaga Secondary Plan (WWSP) was initiated in September 2021 and led by Town’s lead consultant WSP, as well as sub-consultants UrbanMetrics, SHS Consulting, and Toole Design Group. The background reports, summary memorandum from the public charrette held between June 10 and 13, 2024 and land use concept memorandum are summarized in **Table 1** and can be found online at the Engage Wasaga website - [West Wasaga Secondary Plan - Engage Wasaga](#)

Table 1
WWSP Project Background Reports

Date	Discussion Paper
June 2023	Baseline Transportation Conditions Report
July 24, 2023	Market Analysis (Urban Metrics)
August 2023	WWSP Background Report (WSP)
July 12, 2024	Summary Memorandum of the Ideas Generated at the Four-Day Charette, June 10-13, 2024 (Toole Design Group)
November 27, 2024	West Wasaga Beach Secondary Plan Land Use Concept Memorandum (WSP)

A first draft of the WWSP was released on its Engage Wasaga website in December 2024 and the statutory Public Meeting held on January 16, 2025. A corresponding comment response matrix for the first draft of the WWSP is also appended to this report as **Appendix 4**.

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY ANALYSIS

Planning at the Municipal level occurs within a Provincially led hierarchy, as depicted in **Figure 3** below, that provides a legislative and policy framework to ensure that Provincial and regional matters of public interest are considered.

Figure 3: Provincial and Regional Policy Framework



A detailed analysis of how the new Official Plan is consistent with this Provincial/Regional policy framework is provided in **Appendix 5**.

Overall Conclusion

In consideration of the preceding, Planning staff are of the opinion that sufficient community engagement has occurred over the past number of years to effectively inform all aspects of the Town's new Official Plan. The Town's new Official Plan is consistent (or does not conflict) with all applicable and County land use planning legislation and policy and is reflective of good planning. Town Planning staff, therefore, recommend that Council consider the Town's new Official Plan for adoption.

NEXT STEPS

Notification and County Approval Process

Once the new Official Plan is adopted, a Notice of Adoption will be circulated to affected stakeholders as prescribed by the *Planning Act*. The new adopted Official Plan and accompanying municipal record will be sent to the County for approval. The County has 120 days to review and either approve, approve with modifications, or refuse to approve the Official Plan or parts thereof. It is noted that broad powers under the *Planning Act* also rest with the Minister where matters of Provincial interest may be impacted. While an outright refusal to approve the new Official Plan is not expected, some minor modifications are not uncommon.

Potential Appeals

Upon approval (or approval with modifications) by the County, the new approved Official Plan is subject to a 20-day appeal period. Although appeals to the entire Official Plan (referred to as global appeals) are not permitted under the *Planning Act*, appeals are possible to parts of the new Official Plan. In this event, any section(s) of the new Official Plan under appeal would not come into force or effect until after the appeals are resolved or withdrawn. It is noted that any outstanding appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal to the Town's current Official Plan would also still need to be resolved.

Zoning By-law Update

Also, the *Planning Act* requires the Town to amend its Zoning By-law so that it conforms to the new Official Plan within three years. As Zoning By-laws are complex and long-term projects in accordance with legislative requirements, the Town is already well positioned as a new Zoning By-law is already underway. A new Town Zoning Bylaw expected to be completed in 2026.

Urban Design Guidelines and specific Strategic Growth Area Plans

Other major planning-led policy projects associated with completion of the new Official Plan include Town-wide Urban Design Guidelines and potential individual Strategic Growth Area Plans. Town-wide Urban Design Guidelines will address matters regarding massing, site orientation, connectivity, landscaping, etc. implemented through various review processes, such as Site Plan Control. While specific Strategic Growth Area Plans would supplement related Official Plan goals, objectives and policies and assist with their implementation and realization.

Evolving Issues

It is important to note that an Official Plan is a living document and its policies may occasionally need to be changed to address evolving research, best practices, legislative and policy changes as well as periodic changes to community priorities. Accordingly, future amendments to address evolving issues should be anticipated. Such amendments, if done properly, can further the new Official Plan's goals and objectives without compromising continuity in its policies or its overall integrity. While not exhaustive, these evolving issues are summarized in **Appendix 6**.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Impacts

New Official Plan

The budget to complete the new Official Plan was initially approved by Council in 2017, entailed entering into a contract with GSP Group Inc., as the lead consultant to undertake the work, and

generally was carried forward as an approved operating budget item in subsequent years. The total monies allocated for completion of the project total \$318,882.

New WWSP

The budget to complete the WWSP was initially approved by Council in 2021, entailed entering into a contract with WSP, as the lead consultant for undertaking the work, and was carried forward as an approved operating budget item in subsequent years. Total expenses for the WWSP projects are estimated to be \$132,937.

As noted above, if appeals to the new Official Plan, including the incorporated WWSP work, are received, then Town staff would anticipate financial impacts with the retention of legal counsel and consultants as well with staff involvement. While funds for appeals are allocated in the 2025 and draft 2026 operating budgets additional funds may be required, depending on the scope and number of appeals received.

Term of Council Priorities (TOCPs)

Upon review of the Term of Council Priorities (TOCPs), the new Official Plan is broadly consistent with the identified strategic pillars of change and supportive of the implementation actions. More specifically, most of the priorities under the following categories are applicable:

- D. Pursue Complete Streets,
- F. Improve Community Parks & Recreation
- H. Pursue Housing for All
- O. Grow Tourism
- W. Improve the Public Realm
- X. Pursue Green Initiatives

CONCLUSION:

The new Official Plan envisions creating a healthy/resilient and complete, community where the Town's existing and future residents and businesses can thrive. Accordingly, it is an aspirational document that sets the stage for sustainable growth and development through appropriate high level and specific policy guidance.

In the opinion of Planning staff, the new Official Plan that is presented for adoption is consistent with applicable legislation and policy, responds to a rapidly evolving Provincial planning framework, has considered input from community stakeholders (landowners, businesses, public bodies, community interest groups and indigenous communities) and is reflective of good planning.

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Appendices:

- Attachment 1: New Official Plan (Clean Version)
- Attachment 2: New Official Plan (Tracked Changes Version)
- Attachment 3: First Draft and Second Draft Comment Matrices
- Attachment 4: West Wasaga Secondary Plan Comment Response Matrix
- Attachment 5: Provincial/Regional Policy Framework Analysis
- Attachment 6: Evolving Issues Summary