



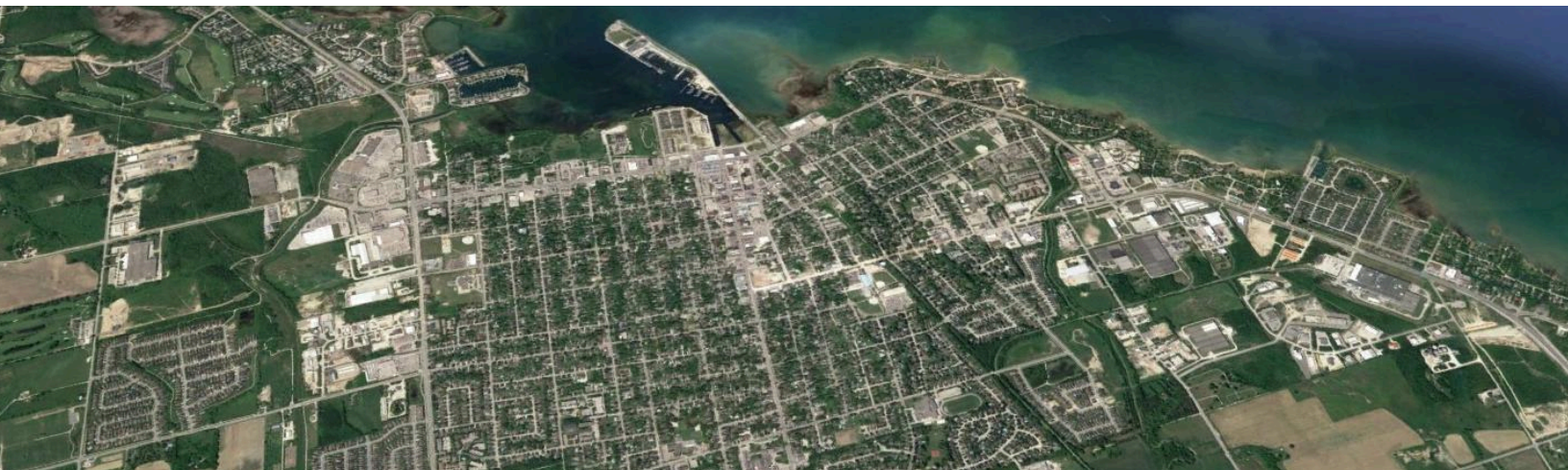
ZONE THE FUTURE
COLLINGWOOD
— NEW ZONING BY-LAW —

Official Plan and Town Standards Implementation

Technical Paper #1

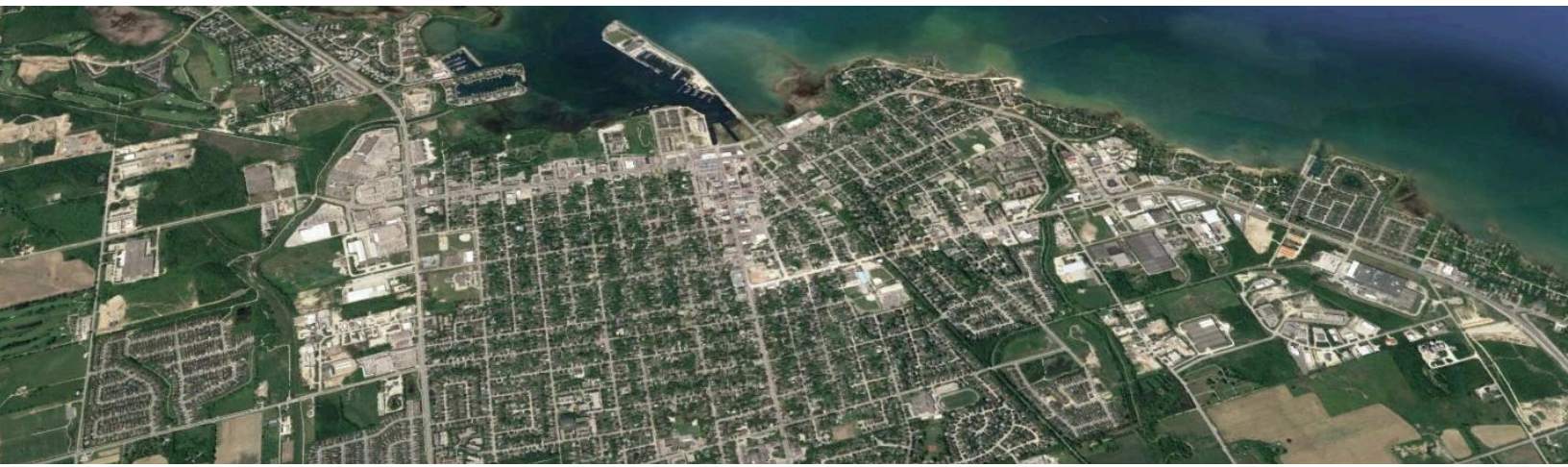
Town of Collingwood

September 2024



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Executive Summary

This is Technical Paper #1 in a series of papers that will be used to guide the community through its Zoning By-law update. Specifically, the purpose of this paper is to explore required actions to bring the new Collingwood Zoning By-law into conformity with Provincial Policy and the recently adopted local Official Plan.

Through a review of good planning practices, recent trends in zoning, and the Town's adopted Official Plan, this paper identifies a series of options and preliminary recommendations for technical updates to the new Zoning By-law and the focus of this paper has been on:

- Identifying requirements and opportunities for implementation of the Collingwood new Official Plan and other local guidelines and standards that apply.
- Establishing approvals processes that ensure conformity through some form of future development application, special planning study, or other process requirement.
- Identifying opportunities to streamline and simplify the By-law and make direct/easy to understand linkages to other policies and processes.

Preliminary recommendations for moving into the next stage of the Zoning By-law project include the following, which will be explored further through consultation with the community and may be revised based on input:

1. Implementing some policy permissions immediately—as-of-right zoning permission—or establishing conformity through an approvals process, as appropriate.
2. Consider the use of Holding provisions as one of many measures to support “conditional” approvals.
3. Consider how external standards or regulations be referenced (and not directly incorporated) into the by-law, to facilitate updating standards more frequently than the zoning.
4. A focus on built form that encourages a broad mix of land uses to nurture “complete communities” through “compatible development”.
5. Streamline and simplify the Zoning By-law, identifying opportunities to reduce the number of zones (following direction from the Official Plan).

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6. Minor technical items in definitions, consistency, and formatting, and other known “housekeeping matters” can and should be addressed through this update.

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1 Introduction

The legal framework supporting land use planning in Ontario has evolved to make zoning by-laws the primary means to implement a municipality's policy planning framework. The *Planning Act* is structured to require municipalities to develop a vision for land use in the community that has regard for Provincial expectations in several areas (referred to by the *Act* as "Matters of Provincial Interest"), is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and does not conflict with provincial plans or the public interest as defined through a local planning process.

The many expectations surrounding a municipality's vision are documented in policy documents like Official Plans. The *Planning Act* binds municipalities to ensure that their work and regulatory processes are "in conformity" with that vision and policies. This requirement is enshrined in two key Sections in the *Act*:

"24.(1) Despite any other general or special Act, where an official plan is in effect, no public work shall be undertaken and, except as provided in subsections (2) and (4), *no by-law shall be passed for any purpose that does not conform therewith*" (Emphasis added).

"26.(9) No later than three years after a revision [to an Official Plan or adoption of a new Official Plan, both through a comprehensive review] comes into effect, the council of the municipality *shall amend all zoning by-laws that are in effect in the municipality to ensure that they conform with the official plan*" (Emphasis added).

The purpose of this Technical Paper on Official Plan and Town Standards Implementation is to illustrate how the first draft of the Zoning By-law must be consistent with the Town of Collingwood Official Plan and other relevant Town guidelines and standards or creates a process for ensuring conformity through some form of future development application, special planning study, or other process requirement.

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2 What Does “Conformity” Mean?

The main operative word when preparing a comprehensive zoning by-law is “conform.” As noted in the key *Planning Act* clauses above, a new zoning by-law must conform to the official plan in effect in the municipality. This doctrine is intended to prevent a municipality from allowing development that does not meet the policies of its official plan; for example, permitting new development on hazard lands. In effect, the Province expects municipalities to develop a regulatory framework in conformity with its defined vision.

Furthermore, the Town of Collingwood Official Plan provides a working definition:

“7.2.1(a)(i) The term “conform with” when used in this Plan means to *comply with the policies or requirements of this Plan*. Conformity is a mandatory requirement of this Plan, unless otherwise modified by specific wording to the contrary” (Emphasis added).

The expectation is that conformity requires agreement, harmony, and similarity between two documents. As helpful as these descriptive words may be, they do not definitively settle the question.

Section 24 of the *Planning Act* addresses these:

“24.(2) If a council or a planning board has adopted an amendment to an official plan, the council of any municipality or the planning board of any planning area to which the plan or any part of the plan applies *may*, before the amendment to the official plan comes into effect, *pass a by-law that does not conform with the official plan but will conform with it if the amendment comes into effect*” (Emphasis added).

“24.(4) *If a by-law is passed under section 34 by the council of a municipality or a planning board in a planning area in which an official plan is in effect and, within the time limited for appeal no appeal is taken or an appeal is taken and the appeal is withdrawn or dismissed or the by-law is amended by the Tribunal or as directed by the Tribunal, the by-law shall be conclusively deemed to be in conformity with the official plan*, except, if the by-law is passed in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (2), the by-law shall be conclusively deemed to be in conformity with the official plan on and after the day the by-law was passed, if the amendment to the official plan comes into effect” (Emphasis added).

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To summarize, where a zoning by-law is in full force and effect, it is therefore deemed to conform to the official plan. This first requires the clearance of appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Staff are responsible for preparing a draft Zoning By-law along with an accompanying staff report which provides a recommendation to Council of the By-law for Council's consideration that, in its collective opinion, implements and conforms to the policies and vision of the official plan in effect.

3 How Conformity is Achieved

The easiest manner to demonstrate conformity is through “direct” or “immediate” conformity, where Town policy and other directives are implemented into the new Zoning By-law as they are written. This way, there is immediate consistency between the two documents. Two cases where direct conformity should be pursued are explored below.

- The uses permitted in the various zones (and any building standards if required) must match those permitted in the corresponding Town of Collingwood Official Plan designations. Residential uses are permitted in the Existing Neighbourhoods, Future Neighbourhoods, Downtown Core, Mixed-Use Corridor I and II, Regional Commercial District, and Rural Designations. Permitting residential uses in all zones and according to the specific provisions (e.g., low-rise, mid-rise, and/or high-rise) would represent direct conformity to the Town of Collingwood Official Plan.
- The Town of Collingwood Official Plan specifies height and density minimums and/or maximums for Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, and High-Rise Buildings, which are then expressly permitted in various land use designations. Direct conformity is achieved by writing these provisions into the Zoning By-law (in a section for general provisions, for example) following the specific metric, storeys, units per net hectare, and/or floor space index (FSI) values listed in the Official Plan.

Direct conformity results in the new Zoning By-law extending the fullest possible permissions to a particular site or property. This means that the principle of the use allowed under the Official Plan is acceptable, and the zone standards support this on review of applications.

There is no requirement for a municipality to extend all contemplated permissions in an Official Plan automatically (called “as-of-right”) to property owners. Where a permission is not included in a zoning by-law, it means that a public process is required prior to establishing the new use or building—a statutory public meeting and a subsequent decision by Council or the Committee of Adjustment. It is through the public process that Council or the Committee of Adjustment will decide on whether the proposal is good planning. This adds time or delay to a process that has already been endorsed in the Official Plan.

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There are some permissions in the Official Plan that will first require compliance with additional regulations. This can be addressed through additional zone standards or, if required, a further planning application or process. When there are other municipal standards or provincial regulations that must be complied with but are outside of the official plan, the zoning by-law can explicitly reference or (only if necessary) incorporate these external standards or regulations, ensuring that they are part of the zoning framework.

The use of Holding provisions with an accompanying Holding By-law is one example of how the new Zoning By-law may help implement the Town of Collingwood Official Plan. Holding provisions are placed on specific zoned lands and denoted in the Zoning By-law. Development may only proceed after the Hold is lifted. The removal of the Hold is contingent on the Town Council's satisfaction that a proposed development meets the provisions of the Hold and so conforms with the Official Plan. This is typically an administrative-level process. Note: currently staff have not been delegated authority to approve removal of a Hold.

The Town of Collingwood Official Plan requires or suggests the use of Holding provisions on:

- Lands within D-4 assessment areas, which comprise the Waste Disposal (D-4) Assessment Areas Overlay. Hold removal is contingent on Council's satisfaction with a D-4 Study and any other required studies. Moreover, a Holding provision is only lifted for an evaluated proposed development; additional proposed developments must undergo the same Zoning By-law Amendment application process and further studies.
- Contaminated sites where remediation is deemed necessary, with Hold removal contingent on the Town's satisfaction with proof of remediation.
- Site-specific locations related to municipal servicing infrastructure or where further technical requirements such as the approval of a development agreement are needed to confirm development rights.

The full list of circumstances whereby the Town may wish to apply a Holding provision is set out in Section 7.1.8.3 and includes the following:

- i. That adequate municipal services, including water and wastewater capacity allocation are available to service the proposed development.
- ii. That development or redevelopment is appropriately phased.
- iii. That a Secondary Plan, Block Plan, or other form of comprehensive plan for one or more parcels of land has been prepared.
- iv. That draft plans of subdivision/condominium and/or site plan agreements, where deemed appropriate, have been executed.
- v. That necessary transportation facilities are available to service the proposed development.
- vi. That necessary studies have been prepared.

In some cases, where Official Plan policies are more flexible, conformity of the Zoning By-law to the Official Plan may not be straightforward or explicit. For example, sometimes policies

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establish certain criteria that may be required to permit uses, densities, or site requirements. In these cases, Town Council and Town staff have discretion in terms of Zoning By-law implementation, and this will be explored in subsequent stages of the project. For example, in Section 3.2 j) i) the Official Plan states:

The following strategies may be considered by the Town in an effort to incentivize attainable/affordable housing:

- i. Establish alternative development standards and ensure that the provisions of the Zoning By-Law are sufficiently flexible to permit a range of innovative housing types and tenure models, including, for example, Additional Residential Units, tiny dwellings, cohousing, communal housing, and life-lease housing;

Through the Zoning By-law Update, policies that allow for flexibility, like 3.2 j) i) allow the opportunity to provide more direction in terms of requirements or flexibilities for innovative housing types and tenures and this is to be addressed in subsequent stages of the project. There is no blanket solution to address the implementation of flexible policies and this is to be addressed on a policy by policy basis as we proceed with our evaluation of Official Plan implementation with Town staff.

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4 Conformity Goals for the New Zoning By-law

The primary focus for direction on the content of the new zoning by-law is the Town's new Official Plan. Developing the new Official Plan accounted for the most important background exploration needed for the new zoning by-law. Many questions about zone structure, permitted uses, and policy-driven regulations are directly answered by the new Plan's policies.

4.1 The Official Plan as the Key Direction for Community Change

In response to these new OP policies based on forecasts and trends, as well as good planning principles, the major direction coming from the new Official Plan is to adopt a built-form-focused approach that encourages a broader mix of land uses than the status quo. The aim is to nurture "complete communities" and "compatible development":

1. To bring community needs such as homes, parks, and jobs into closer configurations so that all community members have more convenient and environmentally friendly access without the use of a personal vehicle to support public transit and active transportation modes.
2. To enable development that meets the design test of Section 3.5(e) of the new Official Plan: Compatible Development is an overarching principle of good planning and is applicable throughout the Town. Its definition needs to be clearly understood and applied in different ways and in different contexts throughout the Town.

4.2 Streamlining and Simplifying the By-law

The Town's Zoning By-law has evolved over time into a very large and complicated document, because of multiple new developments requiring a zoning by-law amendment to advance. This is not at all uncommon a practice across Ontario.

It does result in a process that is longer and potentially more contentious than planned for desired development. One typical way municipalities accomplish streamlining or simplifying the process to begin construction is to "pre-zone," to the extent possible, new forms of development within the Strategic Growth Areas (the Downtown, Corridors, and Designated Greenfield areas). Pre-zoning means applying zoning that permits the desired form of development up-front in the main by-law, relying upon Site Plan approval among other standards and guidelines to manage the details of development. Such zoning would include regulations for appropriate setbacks, landscaped area requirements, on-site amenity space, or other design matters on the applicable lands. However, per recent changes to the Planning Act, projects with 10 or fewer residential units are not subject to site plan control, unless the projects falls within areas prescribed by

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regulation, and this may require caution on the Town’s part when determining when and where pre-zoning might be considered.

Another typical approach is to consolidate down the number of zones in a By-law. This can first be achieved by applying one zone per Official Plan designation. This results in categories such as:

Table 1 – Sample Consolidated Zones based on Official Plan Designations

Name	Types of Uses and Built Form
Mixed Use Corridor 1	Expected to accommodate mixed-use, mid-rise and high-rise built forms, subject to the imposition of appropriate transitions to adjacent zones, including an angular plane. Stand-alone residential buildings are prohibited, with requirements for non-residential uses at grade.
Mixed Use Corridor 2	Expected to accommodate mixed-use, mid-rise built forms, subject to the imposition of appropriate transitions to adjacent zones, including an angular plane. Stand-alone residential buildings are permitted.
Regional Commercial District	The new Official Plan introduces permissions for mid and high-rise built forms, with a mix of uses, including residential uses in and amongst the retail/service commercial policy regime that was part of the original Ontario Municipal Board decision. Stand-alone residential uses are prohibited.
Prestige Employment	Expected to accommodate manufacturing, processing, assembly operations and research and development facilities in wholly enclosed buildings; and warehousing and distribution centres. Restrictions to stand alone non-employment accessory uses like office and commercial must be implemented. No use that is considered noxious due to materials used or produced, or methods or processes employed, that emit pollution from noise, vibration, odours, smoke, dust or any other forms of pollution is permitted. Some uses such as residential are explicitly prohibited. It is intended that development within the Prestige Employment Designation will exhibit a high standard of building design and landscaping.
General Employment	Expected to accommodate employment land employment (primarily focusing on heavy and light industrial uses and other uses that are more intensive in nature) and remain a crucial component of the Town’s economy. Office uses in stand-alone buildings may be restricted, but may be permitted if an accessory use.
Waste Management Industrial	Applies to the Simcoe County Waste Management Site as well as local active and inactive waste management sites and a former sewage lagoons.
Rural Residential	Applying to those lands in the Mountain Road West Corridor Secondary Plan Area 2 currently developed as rural residential lands.
Rural	Expected to accommodate rural development within the municipal boundary (these lands are generally outside of the Town’s built-up areas). Includes lands within Secondary Plan Areas, and other lands that may someday accommodate future urban uses over the long-term.
Environmental Protection	Applies to lands within the new Official Plan’s Environmental Protection Designation or may be determined on a site-specific basis through

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	development applications where lands have been screened as containing significant natural heritage features or functions.
Major Institutional	Applies to the locations of major public service facilities.
Parks and Open Space	Applies to both publicly and privately owned recreational lands and facilities.

There are two areas where this approach will require differentiation. The first are single-use residential areas (meaning areas or neighborhoods that are primarily designated for residential purposes, where the predominant land use is housing) which would be applied primarily within the existing, developed area of Collingwood:

- Many of the residential neighbourhoods in Collingwood are dominated by low-rise (ground contact) housing forms. A zone category can capture housing forms such as detached, semi-detached, and low-rise multiple forms (up to four units, given the Town's intentions with respect to accessory dwelling units). This can be differentiated into multiple sub-zones based on lot sizes and would cover most land in the Town.
- If desired, an additional zone could be created to cover low-rise forms of multiple attached dwelling types such as townhouses and low-rise apartments (five or more dwelling units, in the Town's context).
- A mid-rise zone would capture existing block, stacked, and street townhouses and apartments that are in stand-alone residential apartment buildings that are between 3 storeys (11 metres) and up to 8 storeys (27 metres).

Note: for buildings over that height, where permitted by the Official Plan, a mixed-use zone might be created, permitting development up to 12 storeys (45 metres) in height.

There are lands identified within the new Official Plan that are for Future Neighbourhoods. These areas could be pre-zoned with appropriate Residential Zone Categories where the uses and built forms within each parcel are known through existing Draft Plans, or any other form of development application. However, it is expected that we may need to establish a "Future Residential Neighbourhood Zone" that recognizes additional work is required prior to the application of a zone that facilitates development, and that certain development standards are met.

The second area that would benefit from differentiation is Downtown Collingwood. Downtown Collingwood is successful and evolving. The zoning strategy for Downtown Collingwood requires nuance and sensitivity to its historic context. Height is specifically limited to 6 storeys or 20 metres, with more specific height restrictions within the majority of the Downtown areas, such as the Downtown Conservation District, which is limited to 3 to 4 storeys, or 12 metres (per Section 5.3.1.3 e. of the Official Plan), reflecting the existing built form context and the rules from the Heritage Conservation District documents. However, these restrictions may be revisited in the Downtown Master Plan. Until a future Official Plan Amendment is contemplated, the updated Zoning By-law must reflect approved policy.

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The new Official Plan begins to set the stage for the future, but there needs to be some work done through the new Zoning By-law to capture the important details and set a regulatory context that protects what is valued and promotes new development that will ensure it ongoing and long-term success.

Table 2 – Sample Differentiated Downtown Zones

Name	Types of Uses and Built Form
Main Street Zone	Encompass the lands with frontage on Hurontario Street and provides a regulatory context that recognizes the key elements of the heritage-built form. Key to this zone will be the scale of redevelopment that will be appropriate in this main street context, including promoting above-grade apartments and office uses.
Opportunity Zone	Expected to identify key redevelopment opportunities and will establish a context-appropriate regulatory regime on these parcels.
Transition Zone	Recognizes the edges of the Downtown, where it interfaces with adjacent existing low-rise residential zones. The regulatory regime will focus on transition, while identifying the desirability of an ongoing evolution to a mixed-use community, at an appropriate scale.
Shipyards Zone	Recognizes the specific policies and plan for Area 9 (Shipyards) in the new Official Plan.

Importantly, the new Official Plan does identify that existing Low-Rise residential uses may be recognized in a corresponding residential zone in the Downtown—recognizing the existing context.

4.3 Community Planning Permits

To support this built-form-focused approach, the Town is considering innovative options for the new zoning by-law, in certain areas particularly, like the Downtown. One option could be a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) in place of the new zoning by-law. A CPPS is effectively similar and analogous to a zoning by-law, although it generally incorporates items related to engagement and tiers of approvals—replacing the need for minor variances and site plan approvals under a single “development permit” approval. Under a CPPS, development permits are granted to applications that meet specific criteria set out in a community planning permit by-law. The advantage of a CPPS is that it streamlines development applications that support local priorities.

The CPPS has been a tool available to municipalities under the Planning Act for decades. Over time, there has been very little uptake on this planning tool (nine total systems, most with a specific purpose; more are in process), notwithstanding that it would appear to be an excellent opportunity to streamline and simplify development approvals by combining Zoning and Site Plan Approval into one process.

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There are several fundamental issues that have frustrated the use of this tool over the years:

1. There is a tremendous amount of work to be carried out “up front”, to the point where the process to establish the CPPS is so complex and time consuming that it negates the initial reason to use it in the first place.
2. Where multiple landowners are involved, it is virtually impossible to get any level of agreement on the key technical/regulatory elements of the Permit System—what additional elements will the by-law contain, and what stays out. Certainly, where there are larger scale development opportunities with one or two landowners, it may become more feasible to implement a Permit System (e.g., an institutional campus master plan).
3. If not applied across the entire municipality, it introduces two by-law frameworks for staff administration, which overall can complicate the administration of zoning if the structures of the documents are unsynchronized.
4. One key differentiator of Community Planning Permit Systems no longer exists following the 2024 “Bill 185” Amendments to the Planning Act: third-party appeals are no longer permitted on zoning or variance applications.
5. Likewise, Councils can now delegate decision-making matters to staff, including minor Zoning By-law amendments.
6. Municipalities are no longer required to refund fees for site plan control applications if an application is withdrawn or if the municipality fails to decide within the established timeframes.
7. Currently, there is no clear advantage to the Town in giving up the existing Zoning/Site Plan Approval processes. Where there is a permissive approval regime (pre-zoning, for example) it is appropriate to retain Site Plan Approval as a separate test.

The municipalities that have moved to a complete Community Planning Permit System are generally smaller, not unlike Collingwood. These municipalities are reporting improved application processing times. These synergistic issues do not appear to be present in Collingwood—development approvals occur at a pace and volume faster and lower than larger Ontario municipalities. There are few design-based elements of a Community Planning Permit System that would not otherwise be addressed through typical zoning or site plan approvals. In cases where there are developments with fewer than 10 units, a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) would: streamline the approval process, enhance flexibility, and encourage community involvement, resulting in faster, cost-effective, and higher-quality projects that align with local planning goals. This approach also promotes diverse housing options and addresses housing shortages effectively.

The new Official Plan provided for the use of a Community Planning Permit System, in Section 7.1.8.8:

The Town may prepare a background study and enact a By-law under the provisions of the Planning Act, to establish a Community Planning Permit System within the Town as a whole, and/or to specific geographic areas within the Town. Where a Community

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Planning Permit System has been ordered by the Province, the Town may utilize the Inclusionary Zoning tool.

A Community Planning Permit System will require additional, deeper study to address matters in the enabling O. Reg. 173/16 (Community Planning Permits) such as:

- The scope of the authority that may be delegated and any limitations on the delegation, if the council intends to delegate any authority under the community planning permit by-law.
- A statement of the municipality's goals, objectives and policies in proposing a community planning permit system.
- Sets out the types of criteria and conditions for approval that may be included in the community planning permit by-law for determining whether any class of development or any use of land may be permitted by community planning permit.

Community Planning Permits are more than just a replacement for zoning, variances, and site plan approvals. The core intent is to provide an all-new system for issuing planning approvals. Decisions to choose these by-laws are often accompanied by a desire to see comprehensive or wholesale change in the administration of land use planning in a municipality. While there is strong desire to see contemporary zoning in Collingwood, the market indicates that planning in Collingwood is working as intended, at rates faster than other similar Ontario municipalities. Put another way: if not broken, why fix it? As this study progresses, more feedback could be received on choosing this alternative implementation solution—but recent changes to the Planning Act have cancelled or evened out the key procedural differences in the tools.

Therefore, while the Town of Collingwood could and should entertain the future potential for a CPPS in the future, it will be more appropriate to do so in the future under a separate review and study process that will focus specifically on needs, opportunities, challenges, etc., and would involve a more detailed discussion with the public and stakeholders.

4.4 Form-Based Zoning

The built form can be understood as the exterior/surface qualities of a building's appearance such as height, volume, and shape. Overall, form-based zoning shifts the focus from what land can be used for to how it should look and function, resulting in more coherent, attractive, and livable communities. Form-based zoning can offer flexibility in terms of land use, allowing for adaptive reuse and innovative building designs that respond to community needs while maintaining the desired aesthetic and character of the area.

There are several key emphases within the built-form-focused approach set out in the Official Plan. One is flexibility for new uses and built forms, which the new zoning by-law will be written to accommodate. Appropriately located and scaled development and intensification is another emphasis. To support this, the new zoning by-law will direct development towards Strategic Growth Areas and Greenfield Areas identified in the Official Plan in keeping with their specified

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density goals and built forms—the new Official Plan was designed with form-based zoning in mind. The Discussion Paper on intensification and green development will provide greater detail.

4.5 Technical Official Plan Amendment

Section 26(9) of the *Planning Act* requires a municipality to adopt a new zoning by-law or amend its current by-law so that it conforms to a new or updated Official Plan. It is possible that some technical issues in the Town of Collingwood Official Plan will be discovered that have an implication on the new Zoning By-law. This is not uncommon when implementing new policies and practices.

There may be merit in preparing a housekeeping Official Plan Amendment that shall advance concurrently with the draft Zoning By-law to adoption. Such an amendment will ensure that any conformity issues between the Official Plan and the developing Zoning By-law are addressed in a timely fashion. Such an amendment would be limited in scope to implementing the change required to necessitate a desired zoning outcome.

5 Summary of Recommendations

The new Official Plan has established policies that will guide how the Town of Collingwood evolves until 2051. As necessitated by the *Planning Act*, the new zoning by-law must conform with the Plan, which it can accomplish by setting provisions that uphold and align with the Plan's policies. From first draft to adoption, ensuring this conformity will be key to realizing the long-term vision aspired to in the new Official Plan. As such, the following recommendations have been identified, based on the topics explored in this paper:

1. Most municipalities use a combination of extending policy permissions immediately—as-of-right zoning permission—or establishing conformity through an approvals process, such as a Zoning By-law Amendment. Both options work to implement a municipality's policy planning framework, and it is recommended that the Town consider both approaches as options for Official Plan conformity are identified and presented throughout these reports.
3. When there are other municipal standards or provincial regulations that require compliance and/action, but are outside of the official plan, the zoning by-law can ensure they are addressed by referencing external standards or regulations, ensuring that they are part of the zoning framework. It is not recommended that these external standards or regulations be directly incorporated into the by-law, because they will change over time and a zoning by-law would be required in order to implement updates.

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4. In addressing items of conformity, the Town should explore opportunities to adopt a built-form-focused approach that encourages a broader mix of land uses than the status quo. The aim is to nurture “complete communities” and “compatible development”.
5. The Town should explore and identify options to streamline and simplify the Zoning By-law, including identifying opportunities to reduce the number of zones and definitions through consolidation and refinement of existing zones, following direction from the Official Plan.
6. The Town might wish to consider a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) to streamline the approval process, enhance flexibility, and encourage community involvement, resulting in faster, cost-effective, and higher-quality projects that align with local planning goals. However, this option will require additional analysis and consideration and is outside of the scope of the current zoning review. It is recommended that Town staff continue to monitor ideas and opportunities for use of this tool and that it be considered in a more fulsome manner to take full strategic advantage of local opportunities. For now, the focus should remain on updating the Zoning By-law to commit to another comprehensive review within the next decade.
7. Since the new Official Plan was designed with form-based zoning in mind, opportunities to implement form-based zoning to the fullest should be advanced. The Discussion Paper on intensification and green development will provide greater detail on this topic. Minor technical items in definitions, consistency, and formatting, and other known “housekeeping matters” can and should be addressed through this update.