



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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To: Mayor and Members of South Huron Council
 From: Celina McIntosh, Planner & Denise Van Amersfoort, Manager of Planning
 Date: February 11th, 2025
 RE: **South Huron Official Plan Five Year Review – Final Draft**

This report has been prepared for the regular Council Meeting on February 18th, 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- Receive the final draft of the revised Official Plan and
- Direct staff to prepare the final Official Plan Review Amendment for consideration of adoption at the March 3rd, 2025 regular Council Meeting.

BACKGROUND

Council initiated the Five Year Review of the South Huron Official Plan in March of 2024. The project was anticipated to have a one year timeline. Table 1 outlines the project timeline, milestones achieved to date and next steps.

TIMELINE TO DATE

Table 1: Official Plan Review Timeline

Milestone	Timing
Council Direction to initiate Review	February 5 th , 2024
Section 26 Meeting	March 27 th , 2024
Community Tables held to consult with the public	April, May and June 2024
Committee of the Whole Meeting to discuss potential amendment(s) for first draft based on public input and staff comments	June 12 th , 2024
First Draft of Official Plan Amendments	Received by Council on August 12 th and subsequently provided to the public.
Public Open Houses to provide public with opportunity to ask questions regarding first draft	August and September 2024
Committee of the Whole Meeting to discuss second draft	October 15 th , 2024
Statutory Public Meeting	December 16 th , 2024 and January 27 th , 2025
Adoption of Official Plan Amendment by South Huron	Tentatively March 3 rd , 2025
Approval of Official Plan Amendment by Huron County	Tentatively April 9 th , 2025

CONSULTATION AND COMMENTS RECEIVED TO DATE

A consolidated package containing public and agency comments received throughout the project was provided for Council in the December 16th, 2024 Public Meeting agenda package, as well as staff notes.

Comments received following December 16th, either in writing or verbally at the January 27th, 2025 continuation of the Public Meeting have been summarized below.

Table 2: Summary of Comments Received to Date

Individual/Agency	Comment(s)	Staff Comments
Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) c/o S. Merkel	Provided five theme areas that HPPH prioritizes when undertaking policy review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth management; 2. Social connection and well-being; 3. Environment and green space; 4. Housing; and 5. Transportation and connectivity. 	Staff have consulted with HPPH in depth throughout project and have incorporated suggested wording into policy portion of the plan where supportable.
K. Palen	Provided an overview of his history of development in Credton, including a concept plan informing proposed development of the remainder of his property at Con 6 Lot 10 RP 22R5592 Part 1. Discussed historic growth rates in South Huron, with consideration for units contributing to the Credton/Centralia Cost Recovery By-law as it pertains to the Credton sanitary sewage pumping station. Posed some questions pertaining to proposed potential development of Con 6 Lot 11 in Credton. Noted that full development of his lands and Con 6 Lot 11 would exceed allocated growth allotment for Credton as per draft Official Plan policies.	Proposed concept plan for remainder of lands or any proposal submitted in lieu would be subject to full planning approvals.
C. Baker on behalf of Tridon Group Ltd. and M. Stephan	Provided clarification that proposal for Con 6 Lot 11 in Credton will require full planning approvals in order to move forward.	Staff concur with these comments.
M. Killens	In support of proposal to bring his family’s property at 70335 Mollard Line into the Greater Grand Bend settlement area. Requesting that the entire property be brought into the settlement area (approximately 112 acres) as opposed to current proposal of just the north half of the property (approximately 56 acres).	Staff have fully considered this request; continue to recommend in favour of north half of the property (full analysis within addendum report).
J. Kurasz	Noted it is critical to preserve green space in rural Ontario. Of opinion that draft Official Plan falls short in Greater Grand Bend, specifically in that it does not promote complete communities and does not regulate impact of development on climate change.	Draft policies have increased language regarding consideration for impacts of development on climate change. Greater Grand Bend-specific development policies

		<p>speaking to consideration for surrounding development and provision of recreational spaces.</p>
<p>Oakwood Park Association c/o D. Ross</p>	<p>Provided support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning for complete communities within settlement area boundaries; - Design elements which mitigate the impacts of climate change; and - Connectivity between natural environment spaces and features. <p>Requested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordability remain front of mind in planning for housing. - Existing infrastructure be leveraged prior to development of new infrastructure. - Future development not be committed to paying for infrastructure installed now. - Municipality work with Lambton Shores to facilitate growth east of Greater Grand Bend along Mollard Line, and leave the lands north of Greater Grand Bend on Highway 21 “as is”. 	
<p>A. Barnes</p>	<p>Identified concerns with the mapping for Huron Park and Shipka.</p>	<p>Staff have connected with Mr. Barnes and have provided clarification; Mr. Barnes has confirmed he has no outstanding concerns/objections.</p>
<p>B. Dundas</p>	<p>Noted importance of preserving prime agricultural lands over the long term. Of opinion it is appropriate to direct affordable housing to settlement areas with more services in close proximity than Crediton as it pertains to proposal for Con 6 Lot 11. In objection to proposal for these lands.</p>	<p>Amendment to Section 6 of the Official Plan continues to direct affordable development to primary settlement areas, adding emphasis on availability of services, employment opportunities, public transportation options and community facilities.</p>
<p>D. and A. Cattel and M. and D. Baker</p>	<p>Provided objections for the proposal brought forward for Con 6 Lot 11 in Crediton. Submitted a number of questions pertaining to the potential servicing of that development.</p>	<p>Finalizing servicing details for the proposal for Con 6 Lot 11 would be premature at this</p>

		time. These details would be finalized at the time of formal submission for planning approvals.
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SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN FINAL DRAFT

Comments received from members of the public and agencies during the Public Meetings, as well as input from South Huron staff were considered in preparing the final draft of the revised Official Plan. Council will note that there are minor changes in the final draft compared to the draft received by Council at the first Public Meeting in December 2024. This reflects the general consensus to date on the revised Plan and the extensive public consultation work done early in the project to inform policy and mapping changes. In January of 2025, Huron County Council adopted an updated Aggregate Strategy and thus the updated direction has been reflected in the policy framework; no mapping changes were required.

The following outlines the proposed major amendments to the Official Plan by section and by Schedule & Appendix. Staff notes/impact of changes are outlined in the right column.

Table 3: Summary of Key Changes within Policy Framework

Section	Key Changes	Impact of Changes/Why They Are Good for South Huron
Section 1: Introduction	Addition of Land Acknowledgement	Reaffirms municipality’s commitment to reconciliation, as reflected in South Huron’s Indigenous Acknowledgement. Signals responsibility for early and meaningful consultation with local Indigenous communities on land use planning matters as required by the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.
Section 2: Basic Vision and Principles of the Plan	Updated to reflect feedback of residents gained throughout project.	Reflects comments received from agencies and members of the public that there is a desire for South Huron to grow into a more bike-friendly, accessible community and establishes this as a vision for plan; particularly in light of a changing climate. Recognizes that access to an array of accessible services and spaces throughout communities reflects a high quality of life for South Huron residents. Recognizes Exeter and Greater Grand Bend as those communities identified to absorb the highest degree of projected growth based on available servicing; Greater Grand Bend specifically in conjunction with Lambton Shores.

<p>Section 3: Agriculture</p>	<p>Addition of Agricultural System Approach and requirement for Agricultural Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Updated On-Farm Diversified Uses policy to incorporate home occupations and home industries.</p> <p>Clarification that Additional Residential Units (ARUs) are permitted to be severed onto the same lot as the main dwelling at the time of a surplus farm dwelling consent.</p> <p>Clarification that dwellings are permitted accessory to agriculture within the prime agricultural area.</p> <p>New policies directing Energy Projects on Prime Agricultural Lands.</p>	<p>Reflects direction of PPS, 2024 and serves to aid in protecting prime agricultural lands from incompatible uses over the long term</p> <p>Continues to provide flexibility for farmers looking to diversify their farm-based income, while ensuring that On-Farm Diversified Uses remain compatible with surrounding agricultural uses and generally directing commercial uses to occur within serviced settlement areas.</p> <p>Aids in supporting policy direction that ARUs are to be built within immediate proximity of the main on-farm residence to prevent further land fragmentation and Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) impacts on surrounding operations.</p> <p>Guidance will help ensure that potential impact(s) on agricultural lands and practices are considered at the time of a proposal.</p>
<p>Section 4: Natural Environment</p>	<p>Updated definitions.</p> <p>Addition of policies recognizing the impacts of the changing climate and importance of natural spaces in mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>Clarification of adjacent lands and when development is proposed in or near natural features.</p> <p>Prohibit, rather than discourage, extractive</p>	<p>Maintains consistency between the Plan and the PPS, 2024.</p> <p>Further recognizes the role of natural spaces in providing social and economic opportunity for South Huron residents; particularly as it pertains to the impacts of climate change in accordance with feedback received from the public during the project.</p> <p>Consistent with recent change in direction from the Province.</p>

	<p>operations in Natural Environment designations.</p> <p>New policies to address waterbodies resulting from aggregate extraction.</p>	<p>Provides more comprehensive direction for these waterbodies from a land use planning direction over the long-term and in accordance with updated direction in the PPS, 2024.</p>
<p>Section 5: Extractive Resources</p>	<p>Removal of constraint information from 2005 County Aggregate Strategy as no longer necessary.</p> <p>Clarification that designation indicates that aggregate deposit exist, not that all conditions are appropriate to allow extraction to proceed.</p> <p>Removal of information relating to the Aggregate Resources Act as it is not necessary and has changed several times in recent years.</p> <p>Clarification of rehabilitation requirements in keeping with the PPS 2024.</p>	<p>Reflects implementation of the 2025 update to the County Aggregate Strategy, as endorsed by Huron County Council.</p> <p>Aids to ensure that appropriate, context-specific studies are submitted and considered at the time of a proposal for a new or expanding aggregate operation.</p> <p>Provides better clarity that lands where extraction below the water table has occurred are not expected to be rehabilitated back to an agricultural condition.</p>
<p>Section 6: Settlement Areas</p>	<p>Substantive changes to remove duplicative policies and create clear, comprehensive direction.</p> <p>Align with new PPS direction regarding the expansions of settlement areas and changes to employment lands.</p> <p>Maintain growth allocation policy with adjustment from Lakeshore Residential to Primary Settlement Areas as the Lakeshore Residential Area is not suited to additional growth (in the absence of full services).</p>	<p>Enables the Plan to be more user-friendly.</p> <p>Removes the requirement of a comprehensive review to be submitted at the time of a proposed settlement area boundary expansion.</p> <p>In keeping with the public feedback received from lakeshore residents and reflects updated growth policies for Greater Grand Bend outside of lakeshore area. Continues to direct growth to serviced settlement areas where a minimum density of development can be achieved and which can offer a variety of housing types.</p>

	<p>Revised commercial hierarchy in Exeter with introduction of Mixed Use Commercial designation which promotes residential intensification as well as commercial and community facilities uses. This designation is located to the north and south of the Historic Core and acts as a transition space from Highway Commercial. Note: This shift has the potential to resolve the Manorwood Official Plan Amendment Appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal.</p> <p>New direction for Greater Grand Bend as a Primary I Settlement Area (in addition to Exeter) including clarification that Port Blake Park is part of the Lake Huron Elgin Area Water Supply complex.</p> <p>Further support for policies requiring minimum density thresholds and housing variety.</p> <p>Reduce square footage threshold for Highway Commercial properties from 925 square metres to 700 square metres.</p>	<p>Strategic in allowing for commercial and community facility uses to co-exist with residential uses where compatible and appropriate, while continuing to promote the Historic Core as the commercial hub of Exeter. Also provides appropriate transition between Highway Commercial lands on north and south edge(s) of Exeter and Historic Core. Assists in establishing mixed use neighbourhoods which can meet an array of residents’ needs in close proximity to home.</p> <p>Will allow South Huron to better accommodate anticipated cross-border growth in Grand Bend/Lambton Shores.</p> <p>Continues to direct growth to settlement areas where servicing is available, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allow for higher density of housing on a smaller footprint to be achieved through strategic servicing; - Allow for better variety of housing types; - Maintain goal of protecting prime agricultural lands over the long term; - Reduce pressure(s) for development in significant natural areas; and - Allow South Huron residents better access to community services in proximity to where they live. <p>Reflects the reality of available commercial spaces in the Historic Core from a size perspective.</p>
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<p>Section 7: Community Facilities</p>	<p>Removal of reference to 2009 Community Services Master Plan.</p>	
<p>Section 8: Rural- Specific Designations (Commercial, Industrial and Mobile Home)</p>	<p>This section addresses those properties that were developed historically and pre-date current planning direction. They include: former Dashwood Industries property south of Centralia, Grand Bend Motorplex/Airport, and the Bucklyn Acres Mobile Home Park.</p>	<p>Recognizes lands adjacent to Grand Bend Motorplex as employment lands for Greater Grand Bend.</p>
<p>Section 9: Recreational</p>	<p>Removal of Recreation Commercial policies.</p>	
<p>Section 10: Community- Wide Policies</p>	<p>This section combines existing and new policies to address infrastructure, servicing, flood hazard, economic development, community design, cultural heritage and archaeological resources, climate change and energy policies that apply across the entire Municipality. New policies include climate change, energy and Indigenous Nation consultation requirements for archaeological assessments.</p> <p>Addresses Section 41 of the Planning Act in noting that conveyance of lands for the extension of road allowances may be required at the time of development.</p>	<p>Provides a comprehensive, accessible list of considerations for development applications.</p>
<p>Section 11: Community Improvement</p>	<p>Broaden focus from Main Street Exeter and Huron Park Industrial Area to all of Municipality.</p> <p>Removal of reference to phasing community improvements.</p>	<p>Allows for increased flexibility as it pertains to South Huron’s updated Community Improvement Plan slated for completion in 2025.</p>
<p>Section 12: Land Division</p>	<p>Removal of requirement for demolition of barn at time of surplus farm dwelling consent.</p>	<p>In keeping with local and County direction.</p>

	<p>Removal of reference to County of Huron Land Division Committee and Huron County Health Unit.</p> <p>Removal of specific consent policies for Greater Grand Bend (formerly Port Blake).</p>	
Section 13: Implementation and Interpretation	<p>Addition of new legislative opportunities and requirements for Council delegation of various planning authorities to staff (eg. site plan approval, removal of holding zones, temporary use bylaws).</p> <p>Addition of Indigenous Community Consultation policies.</p> <p>Updated Complete Application requirements.</p>	<p>Provides Council with flexibility in the future should they seek to delegate these various approvals to staff.</p> <p>In keeping with the PPS, 2024 on updated consultation requirements as previously noted.</p>
Appendix A: Properties Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act	<p>New addition to recognize protected built heritage assets.</p>	

Table 4: Summary of Key Changes within Land Use Schedules and Appendices

Schedule	Key Changes	Impact of Changes/Why They Are Good for South Huron
Schedule “A” Base Map	No significant change.	
Schedule “B” Land Use Plan	<p>Updated to reflect proposed settlement area boundary changes.</p> <p>Updated to reflect Natural Environment Update for Huron County Technical Model Mapping.</p> <p>Mineral Aggregate designations refined to</p>	<p>Provides a more accurate delineation of boundaries between natural environment features and adjacent lands. Better mapping accuracy is beneficial for both residents and staff in ensuring compatible development.</p>

	<p>reflect where deposits have been exhausted, and licenses surrendered.</p> <p>Minor adjustment to Rural Industrial designation at Grand Bend Motorplex.</p>	
Schedule “C” Exeter	<p>Expansion of urban settlement area by 75 acres along eastern boundary to accommodate additional lands for residential purposes. Inclusion of existing, serviced community facility (church) within urban boundary.</p> <p>Shift to Mixed Use Commercial designation north and south of Historic Core in Exeter.</p>	<p>Aligns with the South Huron Water and Wastewater Master Plan (2025 draft) in planning for servicing and promotes contiguous growth adjacent to existing development and strip development along Huron Street.</p>
Schedule “D” Centralia	<p>Expansion of urban settlement area at south end to accommodate additional lands for employment purposes (15 acres).</p> <p>Recognition of Community Facilities.</p>	<p>Allows South Huron to make use of serviceable lands adjacent to existing settlement area boundary.</p>
Schedule “E” Crediton	<p>Removal of portion of lands (50 acres) from settlement area as per previous direction of Council that are not well suited to development and to better reflect the amount of land needed to accommodate future growth.</p>	<p>In keeping with the direction received at the October 15th, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting to remove a 20 acre portion of the lands located at Con 6 Lot 11 from the Crediton settlement area boundary, recognizing the servicing constraints facing this parcel and the over-designation of lands for development within Crediton (ratified at the October 21st 2024 regular Council meeting).</p>

	Recognition of Community Facilities.	
Schedule “F” Dashwood	Minor expansion of 2.5 acres at south end to accommodate rounding out. Recognition of Community Facilities.	
Schedule “G” Huron Park	Correction of the Settlement Area boundary to include the entire aerodrome property (40 acres). Recognition of Community Facilities. Recognition of Urban Natural Environment.	Reflects draft plan approval(s) granted for subdivision file #40T20001 Huron Green since the last Official Plan update.
Schedules “H1 & H2” Greater Grand Bend	Expansion to Settlement Area at north (40 acres), east and south (130 acres). Removal of Port Blake Planning Area. Change of designation from Community Facility to Highway Commercial for former public works yard at Gore Road & County Road No. 83. Correction from Agriculture to Lakeshore Residential immediately north of Gravelle Street on west	Allows for integration with planned growth along Highway 21, as well as facilitating cross-boundary development in coordinate with Lambton Shores to meet recent Grant Bend growth rate. Supplemented with provision of community-specific growth policies for Greater Grand Bend that reflect the unique characteristics and development considerations for that settlement area.

	<p>side of Provincial Highway 21.</p> <p>Removal of delineation between low, medium and high-density residential areas.</p>	<p>Delineation of density in residential areas is not common practice in Huron County at the Official Plan level; will allow for deferring to the Zoning By-law at the discretion of Council as is consistent across the municipality.</p>
Schedule “I” Shipka	<p>Minor land swap to remove land locked parcel.</p>	<p>Allows for better use of existing lands in settlement area for the purpose of infill/rounding out of development.</p>
Schedule “J” Mount Carmel	<p>Recognition of Community Facilities.</p>	
Schedule “K” Greenway	<p>No significant change.</p>	
Schedule “L” Corbett	<p>No significant change.</p>	
Schedule “M” Elimville	<p>Recognition of Community Facilities.</p>	
Schedule “N” Kirkton	<p>Minor urban boundary expansion to include community centre property at north end (10 acres).</p> <p>Recognition of Community Facilities.</p>	
Schedule “O” Woodham	<p>No significant change.</p>	
Schedule “P” Roads Plan	<p>No significant change.</p>	
Appendix “1” Agricultural Land Classification (CLI)	<p>No significant change.</p>	
Appendix “2” Significant Woodlands	<p>Updated to reflect Natural Environment Update for Huron County Technical Model Mapping</p>	<p>Implementation of most accurate data municipality has access to in order to reflect the boundaries of natural environment features for the purpose of land use planning.</p>
Appendix “3” Provincially & Locally Significant Wetlands	<p>Updated to reflect Land Information Ontario database (PSW) and Natural Environment Update for Huron County Technical Model Mapping</p>	<p>Implementation of most accurate data municipality has access to in order to reflect the boundaries of natural environment features for the purpose of land use planning.</p>
Appendix “4” Subwatershed Boundaries & Aquatic Habitat Features	<p>No significant change.</p>	

Appendix “5” Aggregate Resources	No significant change.	
Appendix “6” Sourcewater Protection	Added during 2023/2024 General Update	
Appendix “7” Petroleum Resources	New appendix.	

JUSTIFICATION OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AREA BOUNDARY EXPANSIONS

One of the stated goals of the Official Plan Review process was to ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate areas to direct growth over the next 30 years. Staff consulted extensively with members of the public and agencies on this topic and analyzed the current land use designations. As a result, there are several minor adjustments proposed to existing settlement area boundaries, as well as more considerable settlement area expansions proposed to Exeter and Greater Grand Bend specifically as part of the Official Plan Review. The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, provides new direction for municipalities when considering proposed settlement area expansions in light of the removal of requiring a comprehensive review to be undertaken. Criteria which must be considered includes:

- a) The need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses;
- b) If there is sufficient capacity in existing or planning infrastructure and public service facilities;
- c) Whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas;
- d) The evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and, where avoidance is not possible, consider reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;
- e) Whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;
- f) Whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance, and
- g) The new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.

Analysis of Criteria a)

The Population and Housing Projections prepared for the County of Huron by Watson and Associates Economists is used to inform Criteria A. As was previously discussed with Council, South Huron’s population is anticipated to grow at an annual population rate of 1.4% over the 30 year planning horizon (2021-2051) and to reach 15,700 person by 2051.

For the purpose of the Official Plan Review, the planning horizon is to 2051 (approximately 25 years); it is anticipated that 1,917 units will be required to meet projected demand during this period. The Watson report anticipates that 65% of new growth (or 1,236) will be in Exeter with the remaining 681 units located outside of Exeter.

Growth Allocation

The current South Huron Official Plan outlines in Section 7.4.1. directs that primary settlement areas (fully serviced) will be the focus of development activity over the long term.

Table 5: Current Growth Allocation Targets for South Huron

Settlement Area Type		Allocated Growth	
Primary	P1 (Exeter)	75%	70%
	P2 (Centralia, Crediton, Huron Park)	25%	
Secondary (Corbett, Dashwood, Greenway, Mount Carmel, Shipka)		15%	
Tertiary (Elimville, Kirkton, Woodham)		12%	
Lakeshore Residential		3%	

The Official Plan states that the Municipality will monitor growth and development within its settlement areas and at the time of the OP review, will report development in relationship to the growth allocation targets.

Staff have reviewed building permit, draft plan approved lots, and other planning approvals to assess how well growth and development has met the growth allocation targets. Staff’s observations are:

- Most significant growth has been seen in Exeter Settlement Area.
- Settlement area expansion in Greater Grand Bend should be reflected in the growth allocation targets.
- Minimal lot creation over the past 10 years in Crediton and Centralia. The draft plan approved lots in Huron Park do not represent growth to the same degree as the majority of the lots are already built on.
- Limited to no development in secondary settlement areas.
- No net new units in tertiary settlement areas.

It is recommended that the growth allocation targets be shifted to better reflect recent development patterns as well as underscore the importance of developing in areas where South Huron has invested in water and wastewater infrastructure.

Table 6: Revised Growth Allocation Targets for South Huron

Settlement Area Type		Allocated Growth	
Primary	P1 (Exeter)	75%	75%
	P2 (Centralia, Crediton, Huron Park)	25%	
	Greater Grand Bend*		
Secondary (Corbett, Dashwood, Greenway, Mount Carmel, Shipka)		14%	
Tertiary (Elimville, Kirkton, Woodham)		8%	
Lakeshore Residential		3%	

*Greater Grand Bend’s allocation is calculated as part of a cross-border settlement area with the Village of Grand Bend, located in Lambton Shores.

Land Base Required to Accommodate New Growth

In terms of minimum density requirements, the recommendation is for 15 units/ha within Exeter and 10 units/ha in all other settlement areas.

Exeter 1,236 units at 15 units/ha = 82 ha (203 acres)

Outside Exeter 681 units at 10 units/ha = 68.1 ha (168.3 acres)

	Land Needed to Accommodate Growth	Unconstrained Land Available
Exeter	82 ha (203 acres)	46.5 ha (164.5 acres) *pending servicing investments
Remainder of South Huron	68.1 ha (168.3 acres)	175 ha (433 acres)

The Huron County Population and Housing Projections did not account for projected growth in cross-border areas, such as the Grand Bend area. The anticipated growth for Greater Grant Bend cannot be accurately accounted for without considering the adjacent municipality, Lambton Shores.

Grand Bend has grown at a tremendous rate in recent years: between 2016 and 2021, the population increased by 12.9%, growing from 2,684 to 3,031. Within Lambton Shores, the Grand Bend Settlement Area is bordered on the west side by Lake Huron, the north side and west sides by South Huron and Pinery Provincial Park to the south. The areas that abut the South Huron border have been building out in recent years and built out to the north and planning approvals now extend to the eastern border. Further, due to the orientation of the County boundary between Lambton and Huron (and thus the local boundary between Lambton Shores and South Huron), future development lands along Mollard Line are bisected; this requires a coordinated approach to facilitate cross-border planning between the municipalities. As lands are built out on the Lambton Shores side of the border, it is anticipated that lands within South Huron will be required to accommodate growth in the general market area and the Official Plan responds with a cross-border growth planning framework and expanded settlement area.

The proposed expansion has been informed by growth projections within the Lambton Shores Development Charges Background Study (2022) as that is the most recent available projections. Between 2022-2041, Lambton Shores is projected to increased by 2,060 dwelling units. The timeline of the Official Plan extends another 10 years so staff have estimated a 50% reduction in new units between 2041-2051 to account for the natural decrease of the baby-boomer population. With a total projected unit count of 2575 units between 2022-2051, the Lambton County Official Plan Growth Strategy identifies Grand Bend and a portion of Forest as the two ‘Urban Centre’ within Lambton Shores. Neither the Lambton Shores nor Lambton County Official Plan specify growth allocation targets but generally direct to Urban Centres. If 75% of Lambton Shores growth is allocated to Grand Bend, 1,931 dwelling units will need to be accommodated.

Land Base Required to Accommodate New Growth

In terms of minimum density requirements, the recommendation is for 15 units/ha within Greater Grand Bend.

1,931 units at 15 units/ha = 129 ha (318 acres)

	Land Needed to Accommodate Growth	Unconstrained Land Available
Grand Bend & Greater Grand Bend	129 ha (318 acres)	Greater Grand Bend: 20 ha (50 acres) Village of Grand Bend: 40 ha (100 acres)

The Village of Grand Bend contains several highly sensitive environmental areas as well and lands subject to seasonal flooding. That said, it is still anticipated that at least 100 acres of future development lands can be provided within the Village of Grand Bend Settlement Area and that 50 acres is available within what is now referred to as Greater Grand Bend. Therefore, it is anticipated that an additional 170 acres is required to accommodate future growth; this review proposes to expand the Greater Grand Bend Settlement Area by 130 acres of Residential designated and an additional 40 acres to 'Urban' land. South Huron staff have discussed cross-border growth scenarios in detail with Lambton Shores staff and mutual benefits were identified.

The Provincial Planning Statement (Section 2.1.3) directs that at the time of each Official Plan Review, sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years. Planning for employment areas may extend beyond this time horizon.

Land needs assessments completed (provided in June 2024 and included as an appendix to this report) indicate that expansions to Exeter and Greater Grand Bend are necessary for residential purposes while an expansion for employment uses is required in the Huron Park-Centralia area. Further, staff outlined that the settlement area of Crediton contained too much land based on recent and projected growth.

The proposals for Exeter and Centralia have been well received by the public with no concerns expressed to date. Further detail regarding the Greater Grand Bend and Crediton adjustments is outlined in the next sections.

Greater Grand Bend

In regard to Greater Grand Bend, the settlement area boundary proposal is differentiated between a 'Residential' designation expansion to the east and south and an 'Urban' designation to the north of the existing development, along Hwy 21. This approach responds to feedback received by members of the public, landowners of affected parcels, and the Ministry of Transportation. The input of the public has been that there is a desire for Greater Grand Bend to be a complete community with a wider range of services and community facilities and that they are supportive of development east and south of Grand Bend (along County Road 81 and Mollard Line) rather than north along Hwy 21. The landowners of affected parcels at the south and east have indicated support or no objection for the proposed urban

boundary expansion, with one landowner requesting that their entire parcel be included in the expansion. The affected landowner for the lands designated Urban (at the north end) has indicated that while they do not object to the boundary expansion, they have no interest in development.

The Ministry of Transportation raised concerns regarding traffic impact from additional growth along Highway 21 north of the existing development (on the east side) and were only supportive of the 'Urban' designation approach as it requires additional planning approvals in the future which will specify the proposed uses and provide corresponding traffic analysis. The proposed settlement area expansion also allows for minimum intersection spacing requirements (800m) to be accommodated. Finally, it is recognized that the 'Urban' designated lands are constrained by the existing commercial wind turbines; the revised Official Plan clarifies that commercial wind turbines are directed outside of settlement areas and further, are not to locate within 1 kilometre of existing boundaries (excepting tertiary settlement areas).

Staff recommend the proposed boundary adjustment be approved as it:

- Facilitates cross-border growth and the development of a complete community in partnership with Lambton Shores;
- Provides sufficient growth opportunity for the next 30 years which will remove pressure from privately-initiated settlement area expansion proposals;
- Responds to landowner, agency and public feedback about where growth should be directed.

Staff are unable to support the request for the remainder of the Gill property (Concession Aux Sables East, Part Lot 3, Usborne Ward) to be brought within the urban boundary as the additional land (24.5 hectare or 60 acres) would represent more than 30 years of growth. This can be reassessed in future reviews of the Official Plan.

Crediton

The Crediton Settlement Area is recommended to be reduced; through the land needs assessment and review of recent and proposed growth, staff have concluded that the Crediton Settlement Area does not require 200 acres of designated land. A delegation from the owner of Crediton Village Centre (K. Palen) outlined the history of development in Crediton over the past 20 years and supports staff's recommendation.

Staff have identified three areas, totalling 20 hectares (50 acres) in which the designation would be changed from 'Urban' to 'Agriculture'. The two areas west of King Street do not have frontage on an open municipal road and are not included within the servicing design for Centralia. Portions immediately along Victoria Avenue West and King Street South will be maintained in the south-west quadrant (see Schedule E, Centralia).

Originally, staff were in favour of a larger de-designation north of Victoria Avenue, east of King Street; the lands were identified as having substandard road access (being the undersized Eilber Street) and not being included entirely within the Crediton servicing design. Representatives for the landowner and prospective purchaser have responded with proposals outlining how road access can be achieved both to King Street and additionally to Victoria Avenue East; this resolves the access concerns. The draft 2025 Water Wastewater Master Plan includes total population growth of 1,091 persons in Crediton

resulting from the development of 42.3 hectares and approximately 345 units. The calculations are further detailed as follows (page 39):

- 33.6 ha with 337 units (and proposed population of 775) for the Crediton Village Centre lands;
- 1.3 ha with 8 units (and proposed population of 18) for the Morrisey lands; and
- 7.4 ha of land with no set units and proposed population of 298 for the Stephan lands.

Council previously directed staff to include an 8 hectare (20 acre) reduction on the Stephan lands which is what is currently depicted on Schedule E, Crediton). As currently outlined, 19 ha (48 acres) remain designated Urban while the Water Wastewater Master Plan only accounts for 7.4 hectares (18 acres). Additional details regarding servicing constraints associated with this parcel are included in the 2025 Water Wastewater Master Plan (pg 39).

The planning considerations for removing lands north of Victoria Avenue (Stefan), rather than south of Victoria Avenue (Palen) include:

- Approved and recent development activity on the parcel south of Victoria Avenue;
- Existing servicing stubs installed along south side of Victoria Avenue;
- Opportunity for de-designated lands to form viable agricultural parcels for cropping on northern lands as a portion (20 ha or 50 acres) of the parcel is already outside of the urban boundary and currently cropped. The de-designation of a portion of the Palen lands would result in an undersized agricultural parcel with no means of access other than through the residential development.

Should Council wish to leave both the Stephan and Palen lands within the settlement area to facilitate future development, it should be noted that: 1) the overall size of the Crediton Settlement Area is not supported by projected population growth or recent development trends; 2) there is insufficient capacity within existing Crediton infrastructure to service both properties to the extent of the existing designations; and 3) the Municipality does not have an allocation policy in place regarding servicing capacity and operates on a 'first come first served' basis.

It is recommended that the Crediton Settlement Area be reduced as outlined on Schedule E.

Analysis of Criteria b) and g)

Criteria B and G are informed by South Huron's Water and Wastewater Master Plan project that is ongoing. The Water and Wastewater Master Plan (2025 draft) has informed where settlement area boundary adjustments would align with existing and planning infrastructure, specifically as it relates to east of Exeter, north of Greater Grand Bend, and in Crediton. The expansions proposed in Greater Grand Bend and Exeter reflect contiguous urban growth adjacent to fully serviced and developed areas and will reflect the highest use of existing servicing. In Greater Grand Bend, this includes planned servicing infrastructure as outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan along Highway 21, and coordinated planning with Lambton Shores along Mollard Line and County Road 81. In Exeter, this includes the use of the William Street pumping station in the interim, as well as new water tower anticipated to service east Exeter in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan in the medium to long term. Another example of utilizing existing infrastructure is the settlement area adjustment in Centralia: in this case, the proposed expansion connects the existing urban boundary with a historically

developed rural industrial property (former Dashwood Industries) and allows for efficient development for employment uses on a property along which a sanitary main is already built.

South Huron is not identified as containing a speciality crop area as defined by the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 as it pertains to Criteria C.

Analysis of Criteria d)

There is no opportunity to avoid lands within a prime agricultural area for the settlement boundary expansions as the entirety of Huron County is defined as a prime agricultural area. In terms of whether the boundary expansions could locate on lands with lower agricultural classification, the agricultural lands within South Huron are nearly all Classes 1-3, making it difficult to avoid lands with high capability for agriculture.

In the area surrounding Greater Grand Bend, the lands are uniformly Class 2 and therefore there was no opportunity to propose the expansion on lower capability soils.

For Exeter, the surrounding agricultural area is nearly all Class 1, with a small pocket of Class 2 at the south end. While the Class 2 location was assessed and was considered a high candidate, there are presently more opportunities for infrastructure optimization north of Huron Street (the recommended location of the expansion).

For Crediton, the lands proposed to be designated Agriculture are all Class 1.

For the employment area expansion to Centralia, the goal was to cluster the new employment area with existing employment uses and as such, alternatives were explored adjacent to Huron Park and the Rural Industrial designation (former Dashwood Industries property). The lands immediately north of Aerodrome are Class 2 lands. The recommended parcel, located between the current Centralia settlement area boundary and the former Dashwood Industries parcel, is Class 1 lands. The recommended parcel was chosen as it was: a) more appropriately sized (15 acres), b) already impacted by urban development on the north and south and most significantly, c) servicing infrastructure exists along Victoria Drive which could be optimized.

In summary, the proposed settlement area boundary adjustments have considered reasonable alternatives to locate on lower priority lands within the prime agricultural area.

Analysis of Criteria e)

All proposed settlement area expansions comply with Minimum Distance Separation Formulae.

Analysis of Criteria and f)

Criteria f) is addressed in Appendix B – Agricultural Impact Assessment.

SUMMARY

Official Plan Reviews task municipalities with examining Official Plan goals, objectives and policies to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community over the planning horizon. The revised Official Plan responds to current social and economic needs while maintaining the balance of

protecting South Huron’s natural assets over the long term, as informed by extensive community consultation.

It is recommended that Council:

- Receive the final draft of the revised Official Plan and
- Direct staff to prepare the final Official Plan Review Amendment for adoption at the March 3rd, 2025 regular Council Meeting.

Sincerely,

‘Original signed by’

Celina McIntosh, Planner

‘Original signed by’

Denise Van Amersfoort, Manager of Planning

Appendix A - Land Needs Assessment

The following summarizes the land supply within each settlement area by first assessing how much land is vacant, and then of those lands, to what extent are there constraints to development. Constraints could include factors such as flood prone areas, significant natural heritage features, railway buffers, fragmented parcels, etc.

Current Settlement Area Land Analysis, not including Employment Areas

Settlement Area	Vacant Lands	With Development Constraints	Net*
Primary			
Exeter (PI), residential lands only	103.5 ha (255.5 acres)	37 ha (91 acres)	66.5 ha (164.5 acres)
Centralia (PII)	21 ha (51.8 acres)	5.3 ha (13 acres)	15.7 ha (38.8 acres)
Crediton (PII)	86.5 ha (213.9 acres)	5.1 ha (12.7 acres)	81.4 ha (201.2 acres)
Huron Park (PII)	15.9 ha (39.4 acres)	8.4 ha (20.6 acres)	7.5 ha (18.8 acres)
Secondary			
Corbett	0.4 ha (1 acre)	0	0.4 ha (1 acre)
Dashwood	5.1 ha (12.7 acres)	0.8 ha (2 acres)	4.3 ha (10.7 acres)
Greenway	2.2 ha (5.4 acres)	0	2.2 ha (5.4 acres)
Mount Carmel	6 ha (14.8 acres)	0.08 ha (0.2 acres)	5.9 ha (14.6 acres)
Shipka	6.1 ha (15.1 acres)	1.5 ha (3.8 acres)	4.6 ha (11.3 acres)
Tertiary			
Elimville	0.5 ha (1.2 acres)	0	0.5 ha (1.2 acres)
Kirkton	20.3 ha (50.2 acres)	12.2 ha (30 acres)	8.2 ha (20.2 acres)
Woodham	1.3 ha (3.2 acres)	0	1.3 ha (3.2 acres)
Former Port Blake Planning Area			
Greater Grand Bend, residential lands only	23 ha (58 acres)	3 ha (8 acres)	20 ha (50 acres)
Lakeshore Residential	1.4 ha (3.5 acres)	0	1.4 ha (3.5 acres)

*Does not include those lands which have draft plan approved units (ie. Windemere, Buckingham Estates and Soulhaven Phase 1 are not included).

Appendix B – Agricultural Impact Assessment

Background

The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement provides new direction for planning authorities to assess the agricultural impacts of development. Section 2.3.2. directs that in allowing a settlement area boundary expansion, planning authorities must consider whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible.

Introduction

The South Huron Official Plan is undergoing a Five Year Review process; at this time, the Provincial Planning Statement directs that a municipality must ensure it is appropriate lands available for development including sufficient lands for at least 20 years but not beyond 30 years. In completing that review, various adjustments (expansions and reductions) of settlement area boundaries are recommended. The purpose of this assessment is to consider the agricultural impacts of said boundary adjustments.

The Agricultural Impact Assessment is prepared for adjustments to the following settlement areas:

1. Exeter
2. Greater Grand Bend
3. Centralia
4. Crediton

The information for this study was gathered through various methods including:

- review of aerial photography (1955 to 2020), agricultural land classification mapping, municipal drain mapping, and parcel fabric;
- visits to each of the study areas and specific properties; and
- discussions with municipal staff and some landowners.

1. Exeter Boundary Expansion

The lands subject to the proposed boundary expansion total 75 acres and represents the western half of two, distinct properties. The land is vacant of buildings.

Surrounding Land Uses: Urban Settlement along West and South, Golf Course to North and Agriculture to East

Road Access: Access onto Morrison Line will be preserved for both properties. A new field entrance may be required for the southerly property.

Agricultural Land Classification: Class 1

Recent Crops: Beans (2023), Corn and Wheat rotation

Municipal Drain: Shapton Drain is immediately east of proposed designation. Could act as possible outlet for urban stormwater management.

Livestock Facility within 1000m: None

Agricultural Commercial Industrial use within 1000m: None

Impact to Agricultural System

The proposed expansion represents the permanent loss of 75 acres of Class 1 lands over the long term. The impact to the agricultural system is minimized in that these lands are immediately contiguous to an urban settlement area on two sides which leads to efficient urban development. The lands are designated for growth projected to 2051 and it is possible that the lands will not develop in the immediate future. In the meantime, both landowners indicated that they would continue to farm the land.

2. Greater Grand Bend Boundary Expansion

The lands subject to the proposed boundary expansion total 170 acres of Class 2 lands in two distinct areas.

Along Hwy 21: addition of 40 acres of 'Urban' designation

Along County Road 81 and Mollard Line: addition of 130 acres of Residential designation

Surrounding Land Uses: Urban Settlement and Agriculture

Road Access: Hwy 21 and Mollard Line

Agricultural Land Classification: Class 2

Recent Crops: Beans, Corn and Wheat rotation

Municipal Drain: Crediton Drain A services the property east of King Street.

Livestock Facility within 1000m: One small horse barn exists on the subject parcel.

Agricultural Commercial Industrial use within 1000m: Dark Horse Winery

Infrastructure: There is an existing communication tower on the lands subject to the expansion along Mollard Line. There are existing commercial scale wind turbines in proximity to the proposed Urban designation.

Impact to Agricultural System

The proposed boundary expansion represents the permanent loss of 170 acres of Class 2 land over the long term. The impacts to the agricultural system are mitigated in that the proposed expansion facilitates connected cross-border growth, minimizes fragmentation of the agricultural land base over the long term and

3. Centralia Boundary Expansion

The lands subject to the proposed boundary expansion total 15 acres. The land is vacant of buildings.

Surrounding Land Uses: Urban Settlement (North) Agriculture (East and West), Industrial Development (South)

Road Access: Victoria Drive

Agricultural Land Classification: Class 1

Recent Crops: Beans, Corn and Wheat rotation

Municipal Drain: Crediton Drain A services the property east of King Street.

Livestock Facility within 1000m: All existing barns appear to be used for storage purposes.

Agricultural Commercial Industrial use within 1000m: None

Infrastructure: There are three phase power lines along east and west property boundaries.

Impact to Agricultural System

The proposed boundary expansion represents the permanent loss of 15 acres of Class 1 land over the long term. The impact to the agricultural system is minimized in that the size of the parcel is considered small for the common type of agricultural practices in the area (minimum lot size is +/- 100 acres), is fragmented from surrounding agricultural parcels by urban development and roadways and allows for efficient urban development.

4. Crediton Boundary Reduction

The lands subject to the proposed boundary reduction total 50 acres. The land is vacant of buildings.

Surrounding Land Uses: Urban Settlement, Agriculture, Commercial Scale Wind Turbines (to west)

Road Access: Parr Line/King Street and Victoria Avenue

Agricultural Land Classification: Class 1

Recent Crops: Beans, Corn and Wheat rotation

Municipal Drain: Crediton Drain A services the property east of King Street.

Livestock Facility within 1000m: None

Agricultural Commercial Industrial use within 1000m: None

Impact to Agricultural System

The proposed boundary reduction represents the restoration of 50 acres of Class 1 land for long term agricultural use. The lands have been used for agricultural purposes for approximately the past 200 years. The removal of the Urban designation will reduce the MDS impact for neighbouring farms, removes fragmentation of the agricultural land base and promotes protection of agricultural land for the long term.