


THE BLUE PRINT

OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW



Commercial and Employment Background Paper

Table of Contents



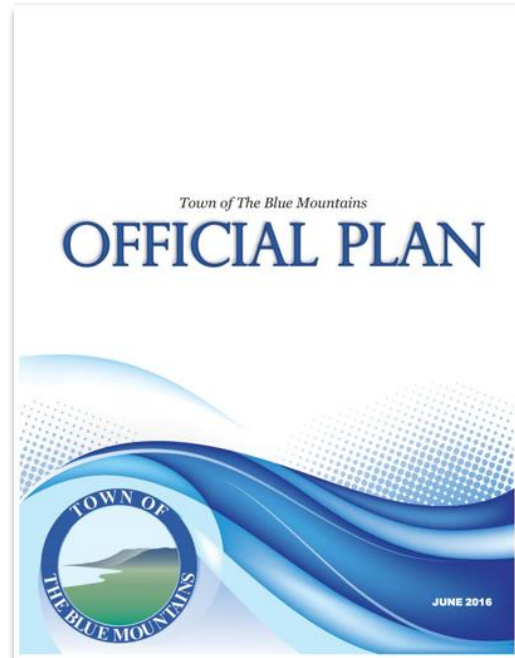
1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose.....	1
1.2	Report Structure.....	1
2	Provincial and County Direction	3
2.1	Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.....	3
2.2	County of Grey Official Plan	4
3	Economic Development Goal and Strategic Objectives.....	7
4	Employment Area Policy Framework and Opportunities.....	9
4.1	Urban Employment Areas	9
4.2	Rural Employment Lands	11
4.3	Employment Area Opportunities and Recommendations	13
5	Commercial Area Policy Framework and Opportunities.....	15
5.1	Downtown Area.....	16
5.2	Bruce/Marsh Street Commercial Corridor.....	21
5.3	Commercial Corridor.....	21
5.4	Craigeith Village Commercial	25

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Town of the Blue Mountains is updating its Official Plan. The Blue Mountains Official Plan is the primary planning document that will direct the actions of the Town and shape growth and development. It establishes a unified vision for the future, land use structure for the Town and policies guiding growth and development.

Over the past years, the Town has been experiencing unprecedented growth which is expected to continue due to demographic changes, technological advances and the physical attraction of the Town. The Official Plan sets the foundation for where and how growth is to occur while ensuring it is balanced to protect the unique rural, environmental and community characteristics of the Town.



The purpose of this Commercial and Employment Lands Background Paper is to consider updates to the Town's Commercial and Employment Area designation policies in alignment with current Provincial direction and the new County of Grey Official Plan in support of a strong local economy. This Background Paper also provides recommendations in alignment with the Growth Allocations and Fiscal Impact Report completed as part of Phase 1 of this Official Plan Review to ensure commercial and employment lands in the Town are readily available and appropriately suited for development.

1.2 Report Structure

This Commercial and Employment Lands Background Paper is structured as follows:

Section 1 – Introduction: Provides an introduction to the Background Paper and its purpose.

Section 2 – Provincial and County Policy Direction: Provides an overview of the applicable Provincial and County policy direction relating to employment areas and economic development.

Section 3 – Economic Development Goal and Strategic Objectives: Provides an overview of the Town’s economic development goal and strategic objectives as set out in the onset of the Official Plan.

Section 4 – Employment area Policy Framework and Opportunities: Provides an overview of the Town’s existing employment area designations and sets out opportunities to be incorporated into the Official Plan update.

Section 5 – Commercial Area Policy Framework and Opportunities: Provides an overview of the Town’s existing commercial area designations and sets out opportunities to be incorporated into the Official Plan update.

2 Provincial and County Direction

2.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

Section 1.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides direction for employment and economic development within municipalities. Section 1.3.1 notes that planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) Providing for an appropriate range mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed-uses to meet long-term needs;
- b) Providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;
- c) Facilitating the conditions for economic investment by identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;
- d) Encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities; and
- e) Ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.

Section 1.3.2 of the PPS sets out policies for Employment Areas. Planning authorities are directed to plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and future needs (Section 1.3.2.1). Specifically, at the time of official plan reviews or updates, municipalities should assess employment areas identified to ensure the designations are appropriate for the planned function of the employment area (Section 1.3.2.2).

Employment areas planned for industrial and manufacturing uses shall provide for separation or mitigation from sensitive land uses to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas (Section 1.3.2.2). Additionally, within employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses, municipalities shall prohibit residential uses and prohibit or limit other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment uses in order to maintain land use compatibility (Section 1.3.2.3). Industrial or manufacturing employment areas should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas (Section 1.3.2.3).

Planning authorities may plan beyond a 25-year planning horizon for the long-term protection of employment areas, provided lands are not designated for development beyond the 25-years (Section 1.3.2.7).

2.2 County of Grey Official Plan

Section 3: Develop Grey of the County's Official Plan sets out development supportive policies to encourage sustainable economic growth and an investment-ready environment across the County.

Economic Objectives

Section 3.2 of the County Official Plan sets out ten economic objectives as follows:

1. Ensure the County's natural and cultural resources and environment are protected and developed in a balanced approach to support the tourism and recreation sector, and for the benefit of citizens.
2. Economic development and planning policies should be flexible and adaptive to support an open and competitive investment climate and encourage an entrepreneurial spirit.
3. Encourage a diverse economy while recognizing and promoting economic specialization in areas such as tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, retail, etc.
4. Support a wide range of business activities, including business activities that are adaptive to new technologies and the sharing economy.
5. Ensure available lands, services, and zoning policies are in place to attract a wide range of investment and businesses.
6. Support infrastructure and its renewal, since it is necessary to support long term economic growth which includes traditional infrastructure like roads, bridges, gas, electricity but also new and emerging technologies (i.e. telecommunication, broadband, drones, and autonomous vehicles).
7. Consider energy conservation when assessing private and public sector proposals.
8. Direct businesses requiring municipal water and sewer services to commercial and business areas that have those services available.
9. Encourage and promote opportunities to work with the First Nations and Metis in seeking mutually beneficial and socially and environmentally sustainable economic development opportunities.

10. Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.

Encouraging Economic Growth

Section 3.2.1 of the County Official Plan encourages and directs economic growth through the following policies:

1. The County will work with local municipalities to meet the physical needs of businesses, which include working towards:
 - a. Flexible and diverse zoning and serviced sites are available to support a range of industrial and commercial activities;
 - b. All of Grey County is adequately served by telecommunication and broadband facilities; and
 - c. Industrial areas are designed in a way so that future development lands can support expansions, have access to major transportation routes, and have full services including hydro, sewage and water, gas, telecommunication and broadband.
2. The designation of new lands for industrial and commercial purposes will be done in such a way to ensure the new uses are compatible with existing development and do not detract from existing areas of economic activity.
3. The County will plan for the maintenance and improvement of modern infrastructure systems including roads, railways, airports, harbours, pipelines, telecommunications and broadband networks to service existing and future employment centres.
4. Home-based work is recognized as an important component of the local economy that needs to be better integrated into communities. Local municipalities are encouraged to ensure that land use regulations do not unreasonably limit the ability of residents to operate small, appropriately sized businesses from their homes.
5. Enhancing the economic base of the Countryside is encouraged through local policies that provide for suitable and compatible commercial and industrial activity.
6. The County, together with local municipalities and stakeholders will continue to explore opportunities to establish and promote recreation and tourism throughout the County.

Supply of Lands

According to Section 3.2.2 of the County Official Plan, Grey County will ensure that sufficient land is designated and available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses) to meet future demand for up to 25 years. In accordance with the PPS, the County and local municipalities may plan beyond 25 years for the long-term protection of employment areas, provided lands are not designated for development beyond the 25-year planning horizon.

Policy 3.2.2.2 specifies an adequate supply includes maintaining a range of various sizes of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, taking into account the needs of existing and future businesses.

Variety of Employment

Policy 3.2.4.1 of the County Official Plan encourages a variety of employment opportunities in various appropriate locations including industrial, commercial and recreational activities. The majority of opportunities are directed to settlement areas where full municipal services are available. Other locations, including lands within the countryside, will be considered where advances to businesses are offered such as larger sites, compatibility, proximity to resources or major transportation facilities, or the development of uses prohibited in settlement areas.

Policy 3.2.4.2 directs lands to be set aside in settlement areas to provide employment opportunities that keep pace with residential growth.

Countryside Employment Opportunities

Section 3.2.5 of the County Official Plan recognizes the main employment generator in rural areas as resource based industries, such as tourism, agriculture, aggregate operations, forestry and on-farm diversified uses. Properties in the Countryside provide opportunities for employment with their larger lot sizes, their proximity to rural resources and access to major roads. Businesses required to serve agriculture are permitted, where needed, in close proximity to farms. The Countryside may also contribute employment opportunities through the development of tourism and recreation.

3 Economic Development Goal and Strategic Objectives

Section A3 of the Town's Official Plan sets out a series of goals and strategic objectives which are intended to work together in support of a sustainable balance between the environment, society, culture and the economy. The Town's goals and strategic objectives were analyzed in Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review and recommendations for updates were provided. A number of updates and additions were made to the following strategic objectives in order to achieve the Town's Economic Development goal, which is to provide opportunities for economic development and the creation of jobs:

- 1) To create an innovative and resilient local economy and diversified workforce and foster a competitive and positive business climate in the Town where entrepreneurs can thrive.
- 2) To foster the development of a sustainable community and support long term residency through strengthened quality of life factors and social wellbeing.
- 3) Provide for the broadest range of employment and commercial uses to encourage growth in all economic sectors including emerging and specialized industries and provide and flexible development standards, where appropriate.
- 4) Pre-zone lands and streamline development reviews for employment and commercial uses wherever possible and appropriate.
- 5) Facilitate the provision of a range of goods and services to the public within the Town by ensuring that the land use planning framework is supportive of development, as appropriate.
- 6) Encourage opportunities for a range of job opportunities and a broad range of commercial and service facilities geared specifically to meet the needs of residents and visitors to the Town.
- 7) Ensure that a sufficient supply of 'shovel ready' employment lands are available and serviced for development at all times and in appropriate locations.
- 8) Support the continued growth and expansion of the arts and culture industries.
- 9) Encourage wherever possible through the land use planning process the retention of existing businesses in the Town.

- 10) Protect lands that have the potential of being used for agricultural purposes from incompatible development and ensure that farming operations can operate with the maximum degree of flexibility and efficiency.
- 11) Encourage the development of home-based businesses and home industries provided the proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses.
- 12) Encourage the protection of the Town's cultural heritage resources in order to maintain and enhance economic development and tourism opportunities.
- 13) Ensure a balance between the demand for development and associated capital facilities and other municipally funded activities.

The above strategic objectives cover a number of important elements from the PPS and Grey County Official Plan for local economic development and planning for employment and commercial areas in the Town. This includes providing for an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities to support a diversified economic base, as well as identifying and planning for market/shovel-ready sites that are suitable for development and flexible in nature to support a range of industrial and commercial uses.

4 Employment Area Policy Framework and Opportunities

The Town’s Official Plan identifies two Employment Area designations: Urban Employment Area and Rural Employment Area. Lands designated Urban Employment Area are located in the northeastern end of the Thornbury/Clarksburg Primary Settlement Area, as shown on **Figure 1** below. Lands designated Rural Employment Area are located outside of, but in proximity to, the Thornbury and Clarksburg Settlement Area, within the Town’s rural area. Lands designated Rural Employment Area are shown on **Figure 2**.

4.1 Urban Employment Areas

Section B3.2 of the Town’s Official Plan sets out policies for Urban Employment Areas. The Urban Employment Area designation applies to lands on full municipal services in the Thornbury/Clarksburg Settlement Area, which are currently developed and planned to be developed for urban employment uses.

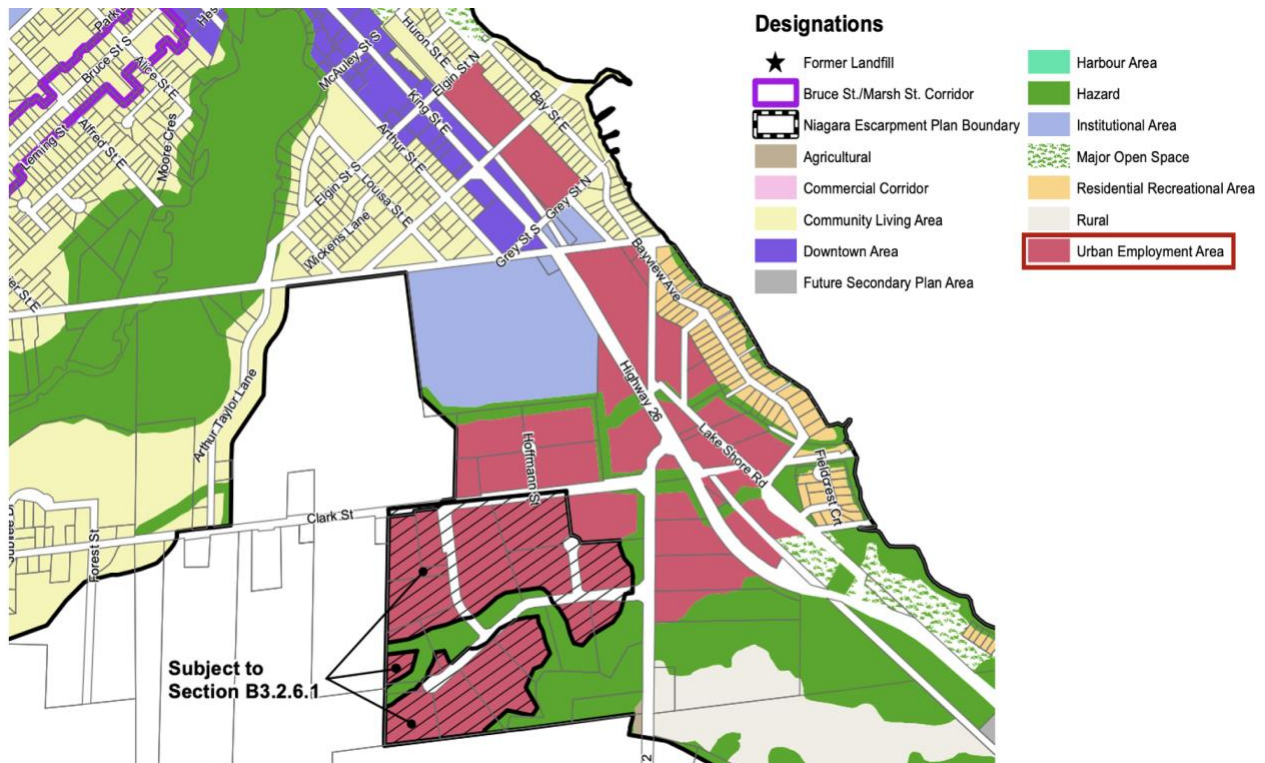


Figure 1. Official Plan Schedule A-2: Land Use Plan – Thornbury and Clarksburg

Objectives

According to Section B3.2.1 of the Official Plan, objectives for the Urban Employment Area are to:

- Provide lands for the creation of diverse employment opportunities at strategic locations;
- Ensure new industrial development occurs in an orderly manner in conjunction with appropriate water and wastewater services; and
- Provide an area where existing and new businesses can grow and develop within the Town.

Permitted Uses

Section B3.2.2 of the Official Plan sets out the following permitted uses:

- a) Manufacturing, assembly, processing and/or fabrication;
- b) Office uses;
- c) Storage and/or warehousing uses;
- d) Wholesaling establishments; and
- e) Similar uses.

Accessory commercial units, such as sales outlets, are also permitted provided they occupy only a limited amount of the gross floor area and are clearly accessory and incidental to the main/primary use.

A limited amount of ancillary uses may also be permitted, provided they are designed to primarily serve the businesses in the Urban Employment Area. Collectively, ancillary uses should not exceed 20% of total employment in the designation. Proposals for ancillary uses must demonstrate that the planned function of the Urban Employment Area is not undermined.

Adult entertainment establishments are permitted in the Urban Employment Area designation subject to the general policies and criteria for the use set out in Section B2.1 of the Official Plan.

Development Policies

All new uses are subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and may be subject to site plan control. Redevelopment or expansion of existing uses may also be subject to site plan control. In considering a re-zoning application and/or site plan approval, Section B3.2.4 of the Official Plan sets out the following matters that Council shall be satisfied of:

- a) Adequate parking and loading facilities are provided on the site;

- b) The proposed buildings are designed to blend in with their surroundings and with other buildings in the area;
- c) The proposed buildings or structures on un-vegetated sites incorporate landscaping to *enhance* the site and surrounding area;
- d) Outdoor storage areas are substantially screened from view from passing traffic;
- e) The proposed use can be serviced with an appropriate water and wastewater services; and
- f) Where a proposed use abuts or is in close proximity to an existing or planned residential, open space or recreational use, fencing, landscaping, berming or a combination of these features are utilized to ensure that there is adequate screening between the uses.

The above set of policies resemble the development policies for the Town’s Rural Employment Lands designation, as addressed in Section 4.2 of this Paper below.

Site Specific Policies

The lands identified in **Figure 1** above as subject to Section B3.2.6.1 relate to a set of site-specific policies for the Cedar Run Horse Park. The Horse Park ceased operations in 2014 and therefore it is recommended to remove the site-specific policies for this property from the Official Plan and the corresponding identification on Schedule A-2. There is an active Official Plan Amendment application for the property to develop a Wakeboard and Waterski Park which is currently under review by the Town under a separate process to the Official Plan Review.

4.2 Rural Employment Lands

Section B4.6 of the Town’s Official Plan sets out policies for Rural Employment Lands, which are delineated on **Figure 2** below. The Rural Employment Lands designation applies to existing industrial and commercial sites in the Town’s rural areas.

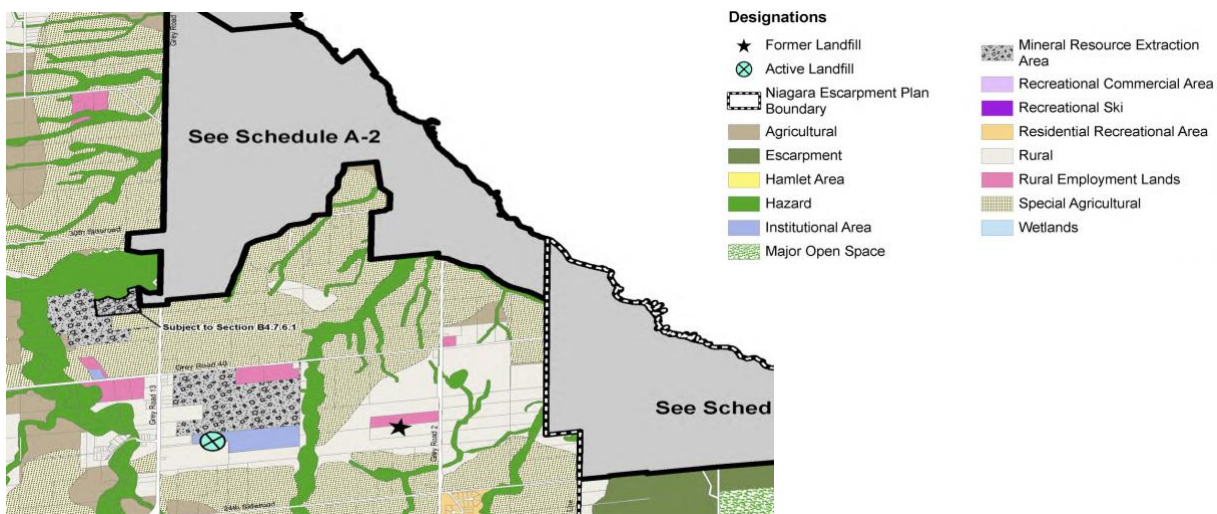


Figure 2. Official Plan Schedule A: Land Use Plan

Objectives

According to Section B4.6.1 of the Official Plan, the intent of the Rural Employment Lands designation is to:

- Identify lands for industrial/commercial purposes in the rural area of Town; and
- Ensure compatible and appropriate development on lands currently designated for these purposes.

Permitted Uses

Section B4.6.3 of the Official Plan sets out the following permitted uses:

- a) Warehousing, processing and packaging of agricultural produce, and other uses which are related to and supportive of agricultural operations;
- b) Certain compatible space extensive industrial uses;
- c) Commercial and industrial uses which may conflict with residential or other uses in an urban centre or require their location in the rural area; and
- d) Other uses may be permitted to locate in the Rural Employment Lands designation provided that they are compatible in function and do not interfere or conflict with the satisfactory development and operation of the area for industrial uses. Such uses may include:
 - i. Commercial uses, which are incidental and accessory to a permitted use such as commercial outlets dealing in the products made on the site;
 - ii. Contractors yards, welding shops, auto body and repair (excluding gas stations) and transportation terminals and other similar uses; and
 - iii. Open space uses, parks or recreational facilities whether public or private.

Uses are restricted to those appropriate for rural areas. Any industrial or commercial uses which are more appropriately located within settlement areas, the Official Plan directs towards the Town's urban designations. All commercial and industrial uses are also required to be of a dry nature (i.e., not using large amounts of water or generating large amounts of sewage).

Development Policies

Applications within Rural Employment Lands are subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and site plan control. Section B4.6.4 sets out development matters Council shall be satisfied of, which are similar to the development requirements of Section B3.2.4 for Urban Employment Areas:

- a) Adequate parking and loading facilities are provided on the site;
- b) New or redeveloping uses incorporate landscaping to enhance the site and surrounding area;
- c) Outdoor storage areas are appropriately screened from view from public roads;

- d) The proposed use can be serviced with an appropriate water supply and means of sewage disposal;
- e) Where the proposed use abuts or is in close proximity to an existing residential use, fencing, landscaping, berming or a culmination of these features are utilized to ensure that there is adequate screening between the uses; and
- f) The uses require accessible sites to serve their market area.

4.3 Employment Area Opportunities and Recommendations

The following provides a summary of the preliminary opportunities to update the Town's Urban Employment Area and Rural Employment Lands policy framework based on Provincial and County policy direction, the Growth Allocation and Fiscal Impact Report prepared as part of Phase 1 of the Official Plan review and best practices.


- Both the PPS and County Official Plan focus on ensuring there is sufficient land designated and available to accommodate a range and mix of industrial, commercial and institutional uses. According to the Growth Allocation and Fiscal Impact Report, the Town has a surplus.
- As part of providing an adequate supply of employment lands and opportunities, the County specifies that this includes maintaining a range of various sites of suitable sizes which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses. While the Town has ample non-residential lands for future employment uses, update to the Official Plan should focus on ensuring new lands are market-ready/shovel-ready in order to encourage more employment, and commercial, development on available sites. This may include the direction for pre-zoning commercial sites, encouraging the improvement of access into existing sites, as well as additional measures outlined below.
- It is common for other local official plans to categorize their employment areas into light/prestige employment and heavy/general employment designations. Prestige employment area designations typically permit lighter manufacturing, warehousing, business and office uses and prohibit outdoor storage. These areas typically front public roads (general employment areas may be located behind) and are closer to residential or sensitive uses where the public realm and streetscape design are of importance. Site and building design is held to a high standard, where parking, loading and storage areas are screened or located away from the street. General employment areas typically permit heavier manufacturing and warehouse uses, as well as outdoor storage.

While separate employment designations may not be warranted, update to the Official Plan could include directing more prestige employment uses to lands fronting major travel routes, particularly the Highway 26 Corridor in order to ensure a higher quality built form of employment uses, and require a high-level of building design and landscaping where employment uses front onto the public

realm or a more sensitive use. To ensure the mitigation of more general employment uses, these should be directed away from sensitive uses, such as residential, and require appropriate separation distances.

- Based on policy direction for employment areas from the Province and County, the Town's development policies for industrial and manufacturing uses should place a stronger emphasis on appropriate separation, transition and mitigation from sensitive land uses, specifically within the Urban Employment Area and in proximity to the existing residential areas in Thornbury and Clarksburg.
- As most of the Town's Urban Employment Area lands are located along or in proximity to the Highway 26 Corridor with have prime exposure, additional urban design policies could be introduced which require a high standard of built form, architectural detail, landscaping and signage for sites.
- The development policies for both the Urban Employment Area and Rural Employment Lands designations require employment uses to be serviced with appropriate water and wastewater services. This requirement may be onerous for development sites that may want to be used simply for storage, contractors yards, certain packaging operations or other similar uses. It is recommended to encourage the full servicing of sites for employment uses, however allow this to be assessed on a site and use basis as necessary and develop criteria where dry uses can be developed, without an amendment to the Official Plan.
- There may be opportunities to add or expand Rural Employment Lands adjacent to or near existing rural employment uses, especially for properties and uses that do not need to be fully serviced. The addition of specific lands could be further assessed through this Official Plan Review or on an as-needed basis through an Official Plan Amendment, based on new criteria.

5 Commercial Area Policy Framework and Opportunities



The Blue Mountains Official Plan comprises of several different mixed-use, commercial and recreational designations across the Town. This Background Paper focuses on the Downtown Area designation in Thornbury and Clarksburg, the Commercial Corridor designation in Thornbury and Craigleith and the Craigleith Village Commercial designation. These areas are specifically intended to provide commercial and service commercial uses to residents and visitors of the Town.

The Official Plan additionally contains several recreation and tourism-focused commercial designations comprised of outdoor recreational uses and resort development, the following of which are not assessed as part of this Background Paper:

- The Recreational Commercial Area designation, applying in Camperdown and Lora Bay;
- The Resort Commercial designation, applying in Craigleith, the Blue Mountain Village Area and the Castle Glenn Secondary Plan Area.
- The Blue Mountain Village Resort Area Core, applying in the Blue Mountain Village Area; and
- The Village Commercial designation, applying in the Castle Glenn Secondary Plan Area.

5.1 Downtown Area

Section B3.3 of the Official Plan sets out policies for the Downtown Area designation, which applies to lands along Highway 26 in Thornbury, as well as the traditional Thornbury and Clarksburg Downtowns (**Figure 3**).

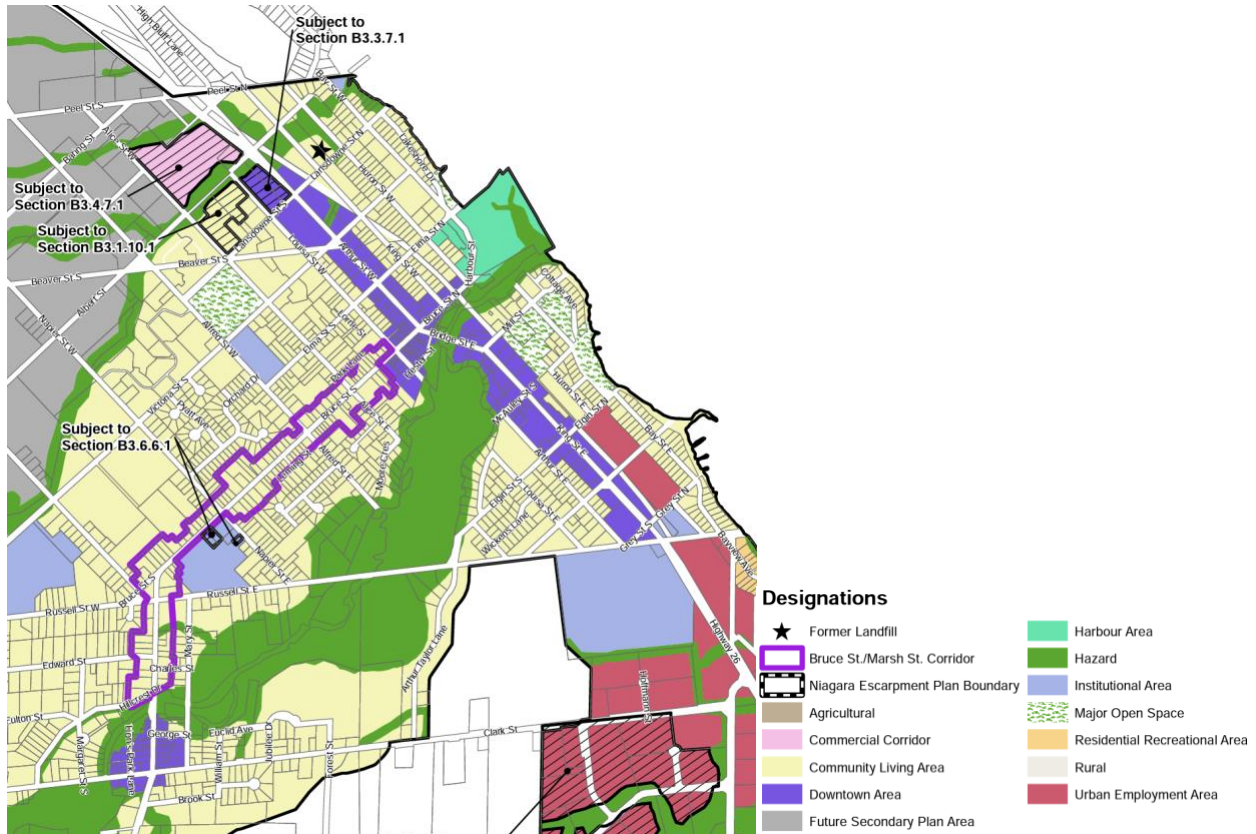


Figure 2. Official Plan Schedule A-2: Land Use Plan – Thornbury and Clarksburg

Objectives

As set out in Section B3.3.1 of the Official Plan, objectives for the Downtown Area designation are to:

- Maintain and promote Downtown Thornbury and Downtown Clarksburg as the focal points for commerce in the Town, for residents, businesses and the traveling public;
- Encourage the development of a mix of uses to enhance the character of the Downtowns;
- Encourage streetscape and façade improvements that revitalize the cultural and historic character of the Downtowns;
- Improve connections between the two Downtowns and the Harbour area; and
- Protect the residential character of the areas adjacent to the Downtowns.

Permitted Uses

Section B3.3.3 of the Official Plan sets out the following permitted uses:

- Retail uses;
- Supermarkets;
- Service uses;
- Business offices;
- Banks and financial institutions;
- Hotels, motels, inns and related conference and convention facilities;
- Bed and breakfast establishments;
- Recreational facilities;
- Parks;
- Entertainment uses;
- Day nurseries;
- Commercial fitness centres;
- Private and commercial schools;
- Places of worship and other institutional uses;
- Medical offices;
- Restaurants and take-out restaurants;
- Residential uses (as part of a commercial building or multiple unit apartment);
- Funeral homes; and
- Uses intended to serve the travelling public such as automobile service centre or car wash may be permitted along the highway 26 corridor via site specific zoning by-law amendment and site plan control.

Vision for the Downtown Areas

According to Section B3.3.4, the Downtowns are intended to continue to function as focal points for commerce in the Town, accommodating a mix of commercial, residential, cultural and social uses. Section B3.3.4 directs that the scale and location of new development or redevelopment should maintain and/or enhance existing character, which will be accomplished by:

- a) Encouraging the development of diverse, compatible land uses in close proximity to each other;
- b) Encouraging the maximum use of existing buildings in the Downtowns to accommodate a wide range of uses, with an emphasis on using upper level space for offices, residential and accommodation uses;
- c) Encouraging the establishment and maintenance of a streetscape that is geared to the pedestrian;
- d) Limiting the height of new buildings to a maximum of three storeys, in order to maintain consistent facades;
- e) The preservation and enhancement of the cultural and historic features that exist in the Downtowns, which may include requirements for the restoration and enhancement of building facades in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - i. Original architectural details and features should be restored;

- ii. Where an existing building lacks significant architectural detail or a new building is to be built on a vacant lot, the façade should be representative of or consistent with adjacent architectural styles;
- iii. Building materials such as steel and vinyl siding which are not in keeping with the architectural character of the Downtowns will be discouraged;
- iv. Traditional signage and lighting is preferred rather than fluorescent sign boxes and corporate signage; and
- v. The façade should incorporate broad window treatments at street level to maintain an open, pedestrian friendly environment.

New Development

Section B3.3.4.1 of the Official Plan sets out the following criteria Council shall consider for new development applications:

- a) Adequate on-site parking facilities are provided for the use with such parking being provided in locations that are compatible with surrounding land uses;
- b) The use will not have a negative impact on the enjoyment and privacy of neighbouring properties;
- c) The use will have minimal impacts on adjacent properties in relation to grading, drainage, access and circulation, and privacy;
- d) Any loading and storage facilities that are provided are buffered so as to minimize disruption and the enjoyment of neighbouring residential properties;
- e) Vehicular access points to multiple uses on the lot are coordinated and consolidated;
- f) The road and/or municipal infrastructure is able to provide water and wastewater service, waste management services and fire protection;
- g) The lot has sufficient lot frontage, depth and area for the siting of proposed uses;
- h) Improvements to the streetscape, such as soft landscaping, lighting fixtures, benches and public art, are part of the overall project design;
- i) New buildings are designed to present their principal building facades with an appropriate building design and fenestration to the public road;
- j) Roof top mechanical units are organized and screened with complementary materials, colours and finishes as necessary to provide a skyline with desirable visual attributes;
- k) New buildings on corner lots are located in close proximity to the public road rights-of-way and are designed and located to emphasize their important community presence by employing appropriate strategies for major landscape treatments as well as building massing and articulation that emphasize the corner condition;
- l) The majority of the first storey wall of buildings located along public roads where a strong pedestrian environment is encouraged are the site of openings;
- m) Barrier free access for persons using walking or mobility aids are provided in all public and publicly accessible buildings and facilities and along major pedestrian routes;

- n) Display areas are designed to make a positive contribution to the streetscape and the overall site development;
- o) All lighting will be internally oriented so as not to cause glare on adjacent properties or public roads;
- p) Site and building services and utilities such as waste storage facilities, loading, air handling equipment, hydro and telephone transformers and switching gears and metering equipment, are located and/or screened from public roads and adjacent residential areas or other sensitive land uses, in order to buffer their visual and operational effects; and
- q) Waste storage areas are integrated into the principal building on the lot and where waste storage areas are external to the principal building, they are enclosed and not face a public road.

New Lots Created by Consent

Policy B3.3.5.1 sets out the permission for the creation of new lots by consent, provided it is in keeping with the objectives of the Official Plan and does not unduly fragment the land base of the Downtown Areas, making it more difficult to accommodate usable building space. Consents which will result in the demolition of buildings that are historically or culturally significant should not be permitted. The creation of new lots in the Downtowns shall also comply with the general consent policies of this Plan.

Residential Uses

Section B3.3.5.3 of the Official Plan notes the planned function for the Downtowns includes a strong residential component, intended to benefit the overall safety, vibrancy and vitality of the area by providing ongoing support for local retailers, service providers and the cultural and entertainment sector. Along King/Bridge/Arthur Street and Bruce Street and Marsh Street, new residential uses are directed to the upper floors of buildings, to ensure commercial uses are the focal points for these areas (B3.3.5.3.1).

Policy B3.3.5.3.2 permits new street townhouses, free-standing multiple unit buildings, apartments and small scale inns and bed and breakfast establishments at street level on side streets, subject to a rezoning and site plan approval and provided Council is satisfied that:

- a) The proposed use will enhance commercial and/or business activity;
- b) Parking areas for the use are generally not located at the front of the building;
- c) The proposed use is pedestrian in scale; and
- d) The building is designed to blend in and complement adjacent buildings.

Site Specific Policies

The lands identified in **Figure 2** as subject to Section B3.3.7.1 relate to an old set of site-specific policies for the development of a commercial resort hotel complex, which never came to fruition. The site specific policies should be removed. It is also noted

that the Downtown Area's existing list of permitted uses already permit uses similar to a commercial resort hotel.

5.1.1 Official Plan Opportunities

- As part of this Official Plan Review, the Town is considering the permission for buildings taller than 3-storeys. The policies for the Downtown Area limit the height of new buildings to a maximum of 3-storeys, which would need to be updated based on further consultation and final recommendations as part of the Official Plan review. It is recommended to update the policies of the Downtown Area designation to further emphasize the importance of accommodating intensification as the Town's focus for growth and mixed-use development. In order to promote commercial development, the policies already require any residential buildings along Highway 26, Bruce Street and Marsh Street to have commercial uses at the ground floor. Ground floor commercial units are typically well suited for small retail shops and service commercial uses, which would contribute to the mix of existing commercial uses in the Downtown Area.
- The existing criteria for new development provides a strong foundation to ensure the character of both the Thornbury and Clarksburg Downtowns, as well as the Highway 26 Corridor, is both reflected and enhanced. The Town's Community Design Guidelines are being updated concurrently with this Official Plan Review, which will consider and recommend additional criteria and provide examples for built form, public realm and streetscape design and site design.
- To further encourage new commercial development, redevelopment and the development of vacant sites for commercial and employment uses, especially along the Highway 26 Corridor, it is recommended that the Official Plan emphasize the importance of providing a range of commercial uses that will serve the daily needs of residents, as well as visitors, to avoid the need to travel elsewhere. The Official Plan should also provide language that encourages maximizing the development potential of sites within the Downtown Area and accommodating a mix of both commercial and residential uses.
- As addressed through other Official Plan Review Background Papers, development within the Downtown Area should prioritize affordable and attainable housing, specifically in proximity to existing and new commercial and service uses. Permissions and requirements for affordable and attainable housing development are being further analyzed as part of the Official Plan Review and should be prioritized within the Downtown Area, specifically within denser and/or mixed use development through policy updates.

5.2 Bruce/Marsh Street Commercial Corridor

Within the Community Living Area designation, which encompasses Thornbury and Clarksburg's residential areas, Policy B3.1.8 sets out additional permissions for appropriate, small-scale businesses and commercial uses in existing single detached residential buildings within the identified Bruce Street/Marsh Street Commercial Corridor on Schedule A-2 (**Figure 2** above). The intent of this policy is to support the connection between the Thornbury and Clarksburg Downtowns while maintaining the character and built form of the area and complementing the mixed use, pedestrian oriented focus of the Downtowns.

Section B3.1.8 specifies that small-scale uses, such as home occupations, medical offices, retail and service commercial uses and art galleries, may be permitted provided the primary residential character of the area and property is maintained. The Zoning By-law shall define and regulate these uses, which shall also be subject to site plan control.

5.2.1 Official Plan Opportunities

While there are already a few service commercial businesses within existing dwellings along Bruce Street and Marsh Street, limited existing properties have been converted to introduce commercial uses since the implementation of Official Plan Policy B3.1.8. The policy provides a good opportunity for small-scale commercial uses to develop within existing buildings to connect commercial uses between Thornbury and Clarksburg while preserving the street's existing character. The Official Plan could also permit home-based businesses in order to encourage some of these dwellings to serve both a residential and commercial purpose.

5.3 Commercial Corridor

Section B3.4 of the Official Plan sets out policies for the Commercial Corridor designation, which applies to one undeveloped site in Thornbury subject to Site Specific Policy B3.4.7.1 (**Figure 3**) and existing commercial sites along Highway 26 in Craigeith (**Figure 4**). It should be noted that the wording of Section B3.4.2 generally applies the Commercial Corridor designation to lands abutting the Highway 26 connecting link through the west end of Thornbury (Site Specific Policy B3.4.7.1) and does not recognize the few existing Commercial Corridor designated properties along Highway 26 in Craigeith. The policy should be updated to reflect all designated lands.

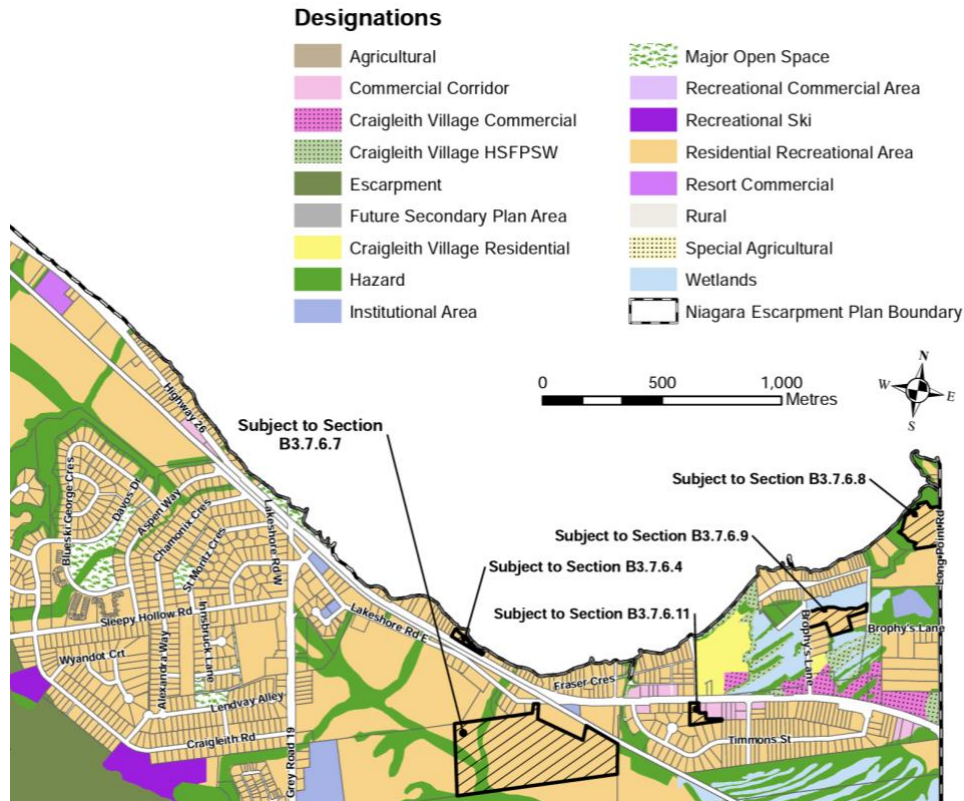


Figure 4. Official Plan Schedule A-4: Land Use Plan – Craigeleith

Objectives

According to Section B3.4.1, the objectives for the Commercial Corridor designation are as follows:

- Recognize existing linear commercial development that has occurred along Highway 26;
- Provide commercial lands in appropriate locations in the Town to primarily serve the traveling public and tourists to the area, and which complement the Downtown Areas and uses which by their nature cannot reasonably be located in the Downtown Area designation;
- Encourage the consolidation, intensification and expansion of certain commercial uses in these areas;
- Ensure that access to new or expanding corridor development in the Town is coordinated and safe;
- Ensure that new development occurs in an orderly manner and is provided with appropriate water and wastewater services; and
- Ensure that new uses are attractively designed and foster a more pedestrian-oriented environment.

Permitted Uses

Section B3.4.3 sets out the following permitted uses:

- Automotive commercial;
- Restaurants;
- Retail uses;
- Department stores;
- Supermarkets;
- Wholesale establishments;
- Institutional uses;
- Service uses;
- Business offices;
- Veterinary clinics;
- Small scale commercial resort accommodation uses, including hotels, motels commercial resort unit complexes, and associated retail and convention facilities; and
- Golf driving range and miniature golf courses.

Large-scale commercial uses are also permitted subject to Section B2.3, which specifies commercial use development may require a Traffic Impact Study and a Commercial Market Study for floor areas exceeding 2,000 m².

Form of Development

According to Policy B3.4.4, development shall be comprehensively planned to ensure that servicing and access can be adequately addressed. New uses shall be connected to municipal water and sewer servicing and shall be planned in conjunction with other uses to minimize direct access onto Highway 26.

Development Policies

As set out in Policy B3.4.5, all new uses are subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and site plan control. Redevelopment or expansion of existing commercial uses may also be subject to site plan control. In considering new applications, Council shall be satisfied of the following:

- a) Adequate parking and loading facilities are provided on the site;
- b) New or redeveloping uses incorporate landscaping to enhance the site and surrounding area;
- c) Outdoor storage areas are substantially screened from view from passing traffic;
- d) All options respecting shared access from the road are reviewed and implemented, if feasible;
- e) Parking areas are oriented to the rear or side of the lot so the primary building can be brought closer to the road;
- f) The proposed use is serviced with full municipal water and wastewater services; and,
- g) Where a proposed use abuts or is in close proximity to an existing residential use, fencing, landscaping, berming or a combination of these design elements will be utilized to ensure that there is adequate screening between the uses.

Site Specific Policies

The lands identified in **Figure 2** above as subject to Section B3.4.7.1 relate to a set of site specific policies for a commercial resort hotel complex, which did not come to fruition. The site specific policies should be removed. It should also be considered whether the Commercial Corridor designation is still appropriate for these lands, given their vacant status and separation from adjacent lands due to hazard areas. As there are no other Commercial Corridor designated lands within Thornbury and no current development plans for the lands, update to the Official Plan could consider including these lands as part of the surrounding Future Secondary Plan Area designation until such a time that this property is developed. Another option would be to designate these lands as Downtown Area, which would present the broadest opportunity of future uses and encourage the development of mixed uses along Highway 26 in this area.

5.3.1 Official Plan Opportunities

- Overall, the purpose and intent of the Town's Commercial Corridor designation needs to be reassessed through the Official Plan Review. The description in Policy B3.4.2 only applies the Commercial Corridor designation to lands abutting the Highway 26 connecting link through the west end of Thornbury. However, as noted above, these lands are subject to old site specific policies for a commercial resort hotel complex that never developed. Policy B3.4.2 and others should be updated to recognize that lands within this designation apply to existing commercial properties along Highway 26 in Craigleith. Future commercial development should also be encouraged along Highway 26 in Craigleith to serve surrounding residents and the travelling public as needed.
- The intent of the Community Commercial and Craigleith Village Commercial designations in Craigleith should be made clear within the Official Plan. Generally, lands designated Community Commercial are intended to serve a more convenience and service commercial purpose for travellers by automobile along Highway 26, while lands within the Craigleith Village Commercial designation are envisioned to redevelop into a centralized, pedestrian friendly mixed use area.
- The objectives set out in Section B3.4.1 seek to provide commercial lands in appropriate locations which complement the Downtown Areas and uses and which, by their nature, cannot reasonably be located in the Downtown Area designation. This direction is also focused on Thornbury and its Downtown Area designation, although there is only one Commercial Corridor designated site, which is subject to a site specific provision, which is recommended for redesignation and removal. This direction should be updated to more generally note that lands and uses within the Commercial Corridor designation should generally connect downtown, mixed use and resort areas, while providing for

traditional commercial and convenience uses that will serve surrounding residents and the travelling public.

- It should be noted that Policy B3.4.5 a), b), c), f), and g) above are all the same as the Urban Employment Area and Rural Employment Lands designation development policies. There is the opportunity to introduce more commercial and community design based criteria for new commercial uses or expansions within the Commercial Corridor designation, which could reflect some of the existing requirements for the Downtown Area or Craigleith Village Commercial designations.

5.4 Craigleith Village Commercial

Section B3.12 of the Official Plan sets out policies for the Craigleith Village Community, which recognizes the existing community to be redeveloped into a sustainable compact village with mixed uses and intensification, while protecting the surrounding area character. As part of this, the Craigleith Village Commercial designation is intended to integrate residential, commercial and institutional uses in a location both within walking distance of the shorefront and other recreational amenities, as well as readily accessible to the travelling public and surrounding residential population. As identified in **Figure 4** above, the Craigleith Village Commercial designation applies to mostly undeveloped lands at the east end of Craigleith along Highway 26.

The Craigleith Village Community area has been divided into three sub-areas: East Sub-area, Central Sub-area and West Sub-area.

As part of the overall Craigleith Village Community Plan, the Craigleith Village Commercial designation is intended to function as the primary commercial centre. As set out in Official Plan Policy B3.12.3.1, space extensive commercial uses which are not primarily related to the overall resort community shall be directed to locations outside the Escarpment Recreation Area of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. As referenced below, the Craigleith Village Community area has been divided into three sub-areas: East Sub-area, Central Sub-area and West Sub-area.

Permitted Uses and Policies

Section B3.12.3.1.1 of the Official Plan sets out the following policies for the Craigleith Village Commercial Designation:

- a) The predominant use shall be all commercial forms that serve the community of Craigleith, as well as the travelling public along the Highway 26 Corridor.

Commercial uses may include retail, food service and licensed establishments, retail stores, business or professional offices, a branch of a bank or financial institution, personal service shops, civic and institutional uses, health clinics,

commercial schools and studios and other similar uses that are consistent with an overall village theme.

- b) A senior's retirement home shall be permitted on the western portion of the Craigleith Village Commercial designation located in the East Sub-area.
- c) Small scale resort accommodations may be permitted in accordance with Section B2.2 of the Official Plan.
- d) Residential dwelling units may be permitted in the upper portion of mixed-use buildings, attached dwellings or stacked multi dwelling unit buildings.

Live-work units shall be permitted in the East Sub-area.

- e) The maximum number of residential dwelling units and live-work units on lands designated Craigleith Village Commercial shall be 74 dwelling units and/or live/work units comprised of:
 - i. The West Sub-area shall be limited to 14 dwelling units.
 - ii. The Central Sub-area - N/A.
 - iii. The East Sub-area shall be limited to 60 residential dwelling units and/or live-work units. In addition, a maximum of 130 residential dwelling units or rooms shall be permitted within an Institutional building with such building to accommodate a home for the aged, care facility, retirement residence or seniors' building.
- f) A variety of building heights shall be encouraged in order to improve the visual effect, variety and community identity. In this regard, buildings within the Village Commercial designation shall not exceed three storeys, generally eleven metres, except for a senior's residential building, which shall not exceed four storeys, generally 13.0 metres in height.

Notwithstanding the above, and subject to a Visual Impact Assessment and a Massing/Shade Analysis that demonstrates to the satisfaction of Council that there are no negative impacts on views or vistas and no negative shadowing on surrounding land uses, the public realm or negative impact on significant environmental (features) and functions, the height of the senior's residential building may be permitted to be five storeys, generally 15.5 metres.

- g) Within the Craigleith Village Commercial designation, commercial uses shall be provided at a scale and time as demanded by market forces based on a Commercial Market Study completed in accordance with Section B2.3 of this Plan for floor areas that exceed 2,000 m².

Notwithstanding the recommendations of the Commercial Market Study, the total commercial floor space shall not exceed 9,100 m² and the maximum residential

unit yield in the Craigleith Village Commercial designation shall not exceed 78 units. Further, the maximum non-residential floor area within an individual building shall generally be 1,625 m² save and except one non-residential building which may have a maximum floor area of 2,300 m².

The subject lands shall be limited to a single branch of a bank or financial institution. The gross floor area of such use shall not exceed 600 m².

- h) The implementing Zoning By-law shall establish appropriate parking standards that reflect the shared nature of the various uses contained within the Craigleith Village Core area.
- i) Access to the Craigleith Village Commercial node from Highway 26 shall be limited to Blue Mountain Drive and Long Point Road intersections along with internal private and/or public streets that provide optimum traffic flow through the Village Commercial node.
- j) The character, scale, appearance and design features of buildings and their sustainable design shall be controlled through Site Plan Approval and in this regard the proponent shall prepare Design Guidelines for approval by the Town in accordance with the Site Plan Control requirements of the Planning Act. Alternatively, the Town may incorporate guidelines recommended as part of a Community Improvement Plan.

The following Design Guidelines shall apply:

- i. Streets and buildings shall be designed and developed to ensure attractive streetscapes, and to promote social interaction, transit usage and safety.
- ii. Components of streetscapes shall consist of street trees, lighting, street furniture, signage, built form and landscape features. The design of these streetscape elements shall be coordinated in order to:
 - a. Communicate the image and character of the Community;
 - b. Reinforce the street network;
 - c. Promote an urban relationship between built form and public spaces; and
 - d. Achieve a pedestrian-scaled environment for the public domain that is safe and comfortable.
- iii. Community image and identity shall be conveyed through the detailed design of the built form and entrance features. The design shall include orienting the primary buildings to face the intersection/corner, and the use of special architectural elements and landscape features.

- iv. Enhanced building elevations shall be required for those portions of the building, which are exposed to the public domain.
- v. Service facilities shall be integrated into the design of buildings to minimize disruption to the safety and to promote attractiveness of the adjacent public realm.
- vi. Parking and loading areas/facilities shall be appropriately screened by way of landscaping features so as to minimize the visual impact on the public realm.
- vii. The safety and security for all persons in public places including streets, parks and amenity areas shall be promoted through the design and siting of buildings, entrances, walkways, amenity and parking areas to provide visibility and opportunities for informal surveillance.

5.4.1 Official Plan Opportunities

- The policies for the Craigleith Village Commercial designation set a strong foundation for future commercial development, encouraging a mix of uses and building forms. It is noted however, the majority of designated lands have not yet been developed. Development of this commercial area will be a strong driving force for the additional planned residential development as part of the Craigleith Community Plan, as well as provide resources for the surrounding Craigleith area. The Town should continue to encourage development within the area in alignment with the policies of the Official Plan, including potentially pre-zoning certain lands.

The planned intent of the Craigleith Village Commercial designation is similar to that of the Downtown Area designation, particularly in Thornbury, through linear mixed use development along Highway 26. The vision and permissions for the Downtown Area designation would align with creation of a central commercial and mixed use core in Craigleith, with walkable development permitted at a higher density to serve the existing and planned surrounding residential areas. While the Craigleith Village Commercial designation policies set out a number of specific built form and community design provisions, these could be combined or added to the policies for the Downtown Area designation. Redesignation of the Craigleith Village Commercial lands to Downtown Area could be considered as part of the Official Plan Review, which would work towards encouraging this as a priority area for residential, commercial and mixed use development of higher densities. While some policies are currently only applicable to Thornbury and Clarksburg, the policies for the Downtown Area designation could still set out specific requirements for this area of Craigleith.



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