

Town of Saugeen Shores

Community Planning Permit System

Official Plan Amendment

Draft for Revision A – 2026-06-09

Our project number: P0085-00



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1 Purpose

This Amendment adds policies to the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan to implement the Core Commercial designations in Port Elgin and Southampton as a community planning permit system (CPPS) area, and that all new development in this area shall be regulated by a community planning permit (CPP) by-law. Additional policies are also included to update the existing implementation policies that enable, and describe the goals for, the use of a CPPS within the Town.

2 Background

CPPS is a planning tool enabled under Section 70.2 of the *Planning Act*, for use by municipalities to streamline development approvals. The features of a CPPS, which are different from a conventional development application submission, review, and approval process, include:

- Combined by-law: permitted uses, development standards, and approval criteria are included in a single CPP by-law.
- Combined applications: replaces the current zoning by-law amendment, minor variance, and site plan control processes.
- Faster decision period: a 45-day decision period begins once an application is deemed by the municipality to be complete.
- Adaptable approach: permit classes are designed to create a process and requirements that match the scale, complexity, and potential impact of each application. In doing so, municipalities may allow a controlled degree of variation from development standards.
- Conditions and requirements: approvals may come with conditions attached, including tree replacement, affordable housing provision, or the provision of other public benefits.
- Community input simplified: public notice and consultation are not required, although a CPP by-law may include notice and consultation requirements for specific application classes as defined by the municipality.
- No third-party appeals: only the applicant can appeal a decision on a CPP application to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Section 6.31 of the Official Plan enables the use of a CPPS for a specific area or properties throughout the Settlement Area or the entirety of the Settlement Area, the detailed implementation of which is included in Section 6.31.3. The Town currently does not have a CPP by-law in effect, as permitted by the *Planning Act* and enabled by the Official Plan.

3 Basis

In response to the housing crisis, and with funding granted to the Town through an agreement with the Government of Canada and its Housing Accelerator Fund program, the Town, in April 2025, initiated a study to identify nodes and corridors for which a CPPS could be implemented.

The nodes and corridors study led to the drafting of a CPP by-law for the Core Commercial Area as a first step in streamlining the review and approval process for new housing development in the cores of Port Elgin and Southampton.

This Amendment implements the recommendations of the nodes and corridors study, and the direction of the draft CPP by-law, by:

- Specifying that the Core Commercial Area in Port Elgin and Southampton will be designated as a new CPP area;
- Adding policies pertaining to the Core Commercial Area designation to include the application of a CPP by-law;
- Addressing compatibility between existing and new development; and
- Clarifying the intent and application of the CPP By-law relative to the Official Plan.

4 The proposed Amendment

The Town proposes to amend the Official Plan to enable the use of a CPPS in the Core Commercial Area. To assist readability and to detail the proposed amendments:

- Amended text will be separated in a box to clarify the limits of the proposed changes;
- Text in black is the unamended, existing Official Plan text;
- Text in red is to be added to the existing Official Plan text; and
- Text in red and struck out is to be deleted from the existing Official Plan text.

The Official Plan is hereby amended by:

1. Revising Section 3.10 Core Commercial Designation by:
 - a. Adding language to Subsection 3.10.1 Purpose;
 - b. Adding a new policy to the end of the Subsection; and
 - c. Making grammatical cleanup revisions.

3.10.1.1: The Core Commercial designation represents the historic commercial downtown core within the Port Elgin and Southampton communities. The designation applies to those parts of Port Elgin and Southampton where it is recognized that commercial activity has customarily and historically taken place and where infrastructure has been developed to serve this purpose. It is the intent of the Plan to foster the general business function and encourage the expansion of retail, office, ~~and~~ public uses, ~~and additional housing~~ in the Core Commercial Areas.

3.10.1.2: The Core Commercial designation will continue to provide the commercial, business and institutional focal points for the Town; ~~while encouraging additional housing~~. All development and redevelopment will be directed toward retaining and improving the economic viability of land uses within the Core Commercial designation.

3.10.1.3: Lands designated Core Commercial designation is a Community Planning Permit Area consistent with the Section 6.31 Community Planning Permit System implementation policies of this Plan. The Town's planning and development objectives for the Core Commercial Area will be advanced by streamlining the application process for proposed developments that are consistent with the objectives of this Plan.

2. Further revising Section 3.10 Core Commercial Designation, within Subsection 3.10.4.1 Development Form, by amending policy 3.10.4.1.1 to emphasize compatibility between the character of existing and new development.

3.10.4.1.1 It is the intent of this Plan that the Core Commercial designation remains compact in order to create a pedestrian environment and to achieve strong commercial nodes. New development shall be encouraged in the existing Core Commercial designation provided it ~~the scale, density and character~~ is in keeping ~~with the character of development in~~ the area. The expansion of the commercial uses to adjacent residential areas shall be discouraged.

3. Further revising Section 3.10 Core Commercial Designation, within Subsection 3.10.4.2 Downtown Improvement by:

- a. Replacing policy 3.10.4.2.2;
- b. Replacing all references to “zoning” in policy 3.10.4.2.4 to make appropriate references to a community planning permit by-law; and
- c. Further revising policy 3.10.4.2.4 by deleting sub-policy e), and making related format changes, because building height variations are addressed in the CPP By-law.

3.10.4.2.2: ~~The establishment of Community Planning Improvement Areas, the study of these areas, and the implementation of improvement initiatives shall be considered by Council. The study and/or establishment of community improvement plans and/or community planning permit systems may be considered by Council to improve the local economy and housing options.~~

3.10.4.2.4: The historical character of the Core Commercial designation will be enhanced by:

a) ensuring that public improvements are sensitive to the heritage character of the area;

b) ensuring that essential heritage features are conserved, incorporated or maintained when new uses or development are proposed to a heritage feature;

c) supporting bonus zoning provisions or transfer of density provisions authorized under the Planning Act as an incentive to the private sector for heritage conservation; ~~and~~

d) ensuring that the ~~Zoning By-Law~~ **community planning permit by-law** imposes both minimum and maximum heights and setbacks in order to maintain compatible and complementing streetscape characteristics within the core and, in particular, adjacent to established buildings of traditional two and three-storey construction at the building line. ~~;~~ **and;**

~~e) ensuring that the Town considers the following when reviewing Planning Act applications that propose to increase the height of a building: that the proposed building would be compatible and complementary to the streetscape within the core; that the proposed height increase is in-keeping with the character of the surrounding area; that the proposed height can be adequately serviced by emergency service equipment; that shadows from the building will not impact neighboring property owners or the streetscape.~~

- 4. Revising Section 6.31 Community Planning Permit System by adding a policy to the end of policy 6.31.4, pertaining to development types exempt from a community planning permit application, and making grammatical cleanup revisions.

6.31.4: A permit shall not be required for the following:

- a) Any development consistent with a site plan agreement pursuant to the Town's Site Plan Control By-law, approved on or before the date of the passing of this By-law;
- b) Any maintenance, repairs or interior renovations to existing development provided that there is no change in use or intensification; and
- c) Any infrastructure and other municipal works including, but not limited to, water and sewage services and related structures.

5. Revising Section 6.31 Community Planning Permit System by adding a new policy 6.31.9, and renumbering the subsequent policies in this Section, pertaining to internal review and evaluation criteria to be used by the Town to classify and/or evaluate community planning permit applications.

6.31.9: The following shall be used by the Town in determining the permit class of, and for reviewing, a community planning permit application:

- a) The proposal is appropriate for the lands;
- b) The proposal considers the unique characteristics of the property;
- c) The proposal is compatible with, and sensitive to, the planning context and area character;
- d) Any potential off-site impacts area identified and mitigated to the extent possible;
- e) The proposal is consistent with the intent of the Community Planning Permit By-law;
- f) The proposal is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement and all applicable provincial plans, policies and legislation;
- g) The proposal conforms to this Plan and the Bruce County Official Plan;
- h) The proposal is consistent with the intent of applicable municipal guidelines;
- i) The proposal is consistent with municipal standards and by-laws; and
- j) For proposals for a property designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, or adjacent properties, the proposal conserves the heritage values, attributes and character of the designated property and mitigates visual and physical impact on it.

6. Revising Section 6.31 Community Planning Permit System by adding a new policy, policy 6.31.13, to the end of the Section, pertaining to interpretation.

6.31.13: Where interpretation is unclear, any specific requirements for an application made under a Community Planning Permit By-law shall prevail over those from this Plan.