



Staff Report

To: Development Services Committee
From: George Vadeboncoeur, Manager, Planning Special Projects
Meeting Date: April 1, 2026
Report No.: DS2026-042
Subject: Zoning By-law Review Update
Type: Requires Action
Motion No.:

Recommendation

It is recommended:

1. That Report No. DS2026-042 be received and adopted.
2. That Development Services Committee approve the recommended list of priority items for review and recommendation as outlined in this report.

Background

In August 2021, staff initiated the Official Plan Review to be followed with a review of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

The Township's new Official Plan was adopted by Council on October 5, 2022, and approved by the County of Simcoe on November 14, 2023.

The Planning Act stipulates that municipalities must update their Zoning By-law within three (3) years of Official Plan approval to reflect new policies and regulations, and to address emerging trends and issues (s. 26(9)). In early 2023 staff initiated the Zoning By-law review process and presented an overview of the anticipated workplan highlighting the Communications Engagement Strategy to Development Services Committee. A copy of the January 4, 2023 staff report can be found [here](#).

Due to the complexity and size of the project it was determined that additional staffing resources would be required for this project and similar special projects. The Zoning By-law Review was put on hold pending the recruitment of a Policy Planner. A new Policy

and Special Projects Planner was hired in August 2024 and was assigned to the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review file along with other projects. The Policy Planner brought forward an [Update Report](#) to Development Services Committee in October 2024 that outlined the new Oro-Medonte Zoning By-law is expected to:

- Implement the policies of the updated Official Plan;
- Reflect new policy initiatives and regulations;
- Increase the clarity, intent and ease of understanding of the Zoning By-law;
- Update land use zones and performance standards;
- Correct any technical errors in both the by-laws text and schedules; and,
- Address emerging themes in community planning, such as additional residential units, on-farm diversified uses, etc.

Work completed to date includes research on Zoning By-law best practices, a cursory review of the Zoning Schedules (Maps), and the release of a Zoning By-law review survey. The [Zoning By-law Review | Township of Oro-Medonte](#) web page was also updated.

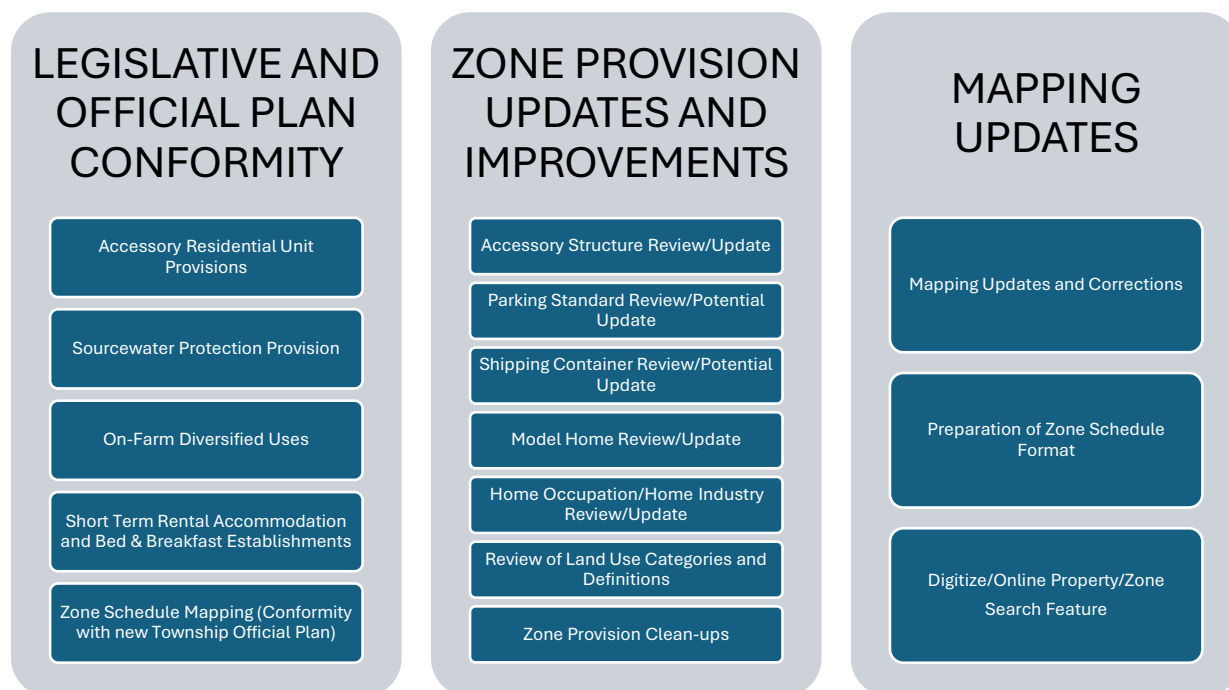
The project stalled in the fall of 2025 due to staffing changes. Early in the New Year Development Services Department Senior Leadership met to discuss options on how best to move the new Zoning By-law project forward. After consideration, the Manager, Planning Special Projects was asked if they would lead the project.

Dedicated staff are required to manage the Zoning By-law update project required to conform with legislation and the Township's new Official Plan. The Manager, Planning Special Projects will be the lead on the Zoning By-law update and the Planning Division Team along with other Township Departments will be required to assist through a collaborative Team approach.

A team approach will be instrumental to ensure that the Zoning By-law update reflects corporate standards, best practices, continues to advance forward and also ensures that ongoing files within the Manager, Planning Special Projects portfolio continue to move forward as well.

General Work Plan

The general work plan for the project is divided into three categories to compartmentalize the project and establish attainable milestones. The depiction below provides the general structure and milestones to be achieved as the project is expected to take approximately 2 years.



Legislative and Official Plan Conformity

Legislative and Official Plan Conformity relates to work that needs to be completed to align the Zoning By-law with overarching land use policy guidance from the Province, County and the Township’s new Official Plan.

Zone Provision Updates and Improvements

Zone Provision Updates and Improvements is a review of the existing provisions within the by-law that require improvement. The measure is to review them for practicality and operability.

Mapping Updates

Mapping updates include work to update zoning schedules on a Township-wide basis which upon completion, would include digitization and an online search feature to provide enhanced access to zoning information for the user.

Next Steps

In addition to ongoing research on best practices and updating Zoning By-law Schedules, planning staff have determined that certain zoning provisions should be reviewed, updated and considered by Council prior to the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law being brought forward for consideration. Some existing provisions are inconsistent with recent provincial policy directives and policies in the new Township

Official Plan and are generating multiple Zoning By-law amendment and Minor Variance applications. There are also gaps in the Zoning By-law that should be addressed.

The following is a list of specific provisions that staff have identified for review in order of priority:

1. Accessory Residential Units in designated Settlement, Shoreline and Rural areas
2. Accessory Structures
3. Source Water Protection Provisions
4. On-farm diversified uses
5. Shipping Containers
6. Home Occupations/Home Industry
7. Parking Standards
8. Model Homes
9. Bed and Breakfast Establishments
10. Short Term Rental Accommodations**

(**Subject to OLT decision on Official Plan Appeal)

It is intended that each of these topics be the subject of a separate report outlining options and proposing zoning provisions for consideration. Statutory public meetings would be held by Development Services Committee to receive input on the recommended approach. Based on feedback and input from members of Council and the public, a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) would be prepared and recommended for approval. Subject to workload, Staff are proposing to bring forward one or two topics per month for Council's consideration.

Once a ZBA is approved and the appeal period concluded, the new provisions would be incorporated in the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. Staff are recommending that this process be followed so that each subject can be researched, provisions developed and brought forward individually for consideration rather than considered as part of the overall Zoning By-law update. This provides an opportunity for Council and the public to focus on individual issues while other aspects of the new Zoning By-law are being prepared.

It is intended that the Zoning By-law Review web page be updated regularly with the topics being reviewed. The public will be invited to provide comments at any time throughout the process using the project email address (zoningbylawreview@oro-medonte.ca).

Section 34(12) of the Planning Act requires that at least one open house and public meeting is held for a Zoning By-law update. In addition to the statutory requirements, it is proposed that at least one working session be held with Development Services Committee to go over in detail the various provisions of the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law and receive input prior to proceeding to a public meeting. The working sessions,

open house and statutory meetings will be scheduled in due course and published on the Zoning By-law Review web page.

Please note this work plan may be subject to change as the review progresses and feedback/comments are received and new priorities arise.

Financial/Legal Implications/ Risk Management

This information report does not have any direct financial or other implications at this time. There are potential financial and legal implications should future decisions on the Zoning By-law be appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) and Council chooses to defend the decisions. Further implications, if any, will be assessed as the review proceeds.

Policies/Legislation

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13
Provincial Planning Statement, 2024
County of Simcoe Official Plan
Township of Oro-Medonte Official Plan

Corporate Strategic Priorities

In December 2023, Council adopted the Township's Corporate Strategic Plan 2024-2027. The application is consistent with the following Plan priorities:

- Community Engagement
- Employment Lands
- Well Planned Development

Consultations

Consultations will be held with Development Services Staff, other Oro-Medonte staff, key stakeholders, external agencies, and the public and will be ongoing throughout the Zoning By-law Review process.

Conclusion

The Zoning By-law Review is a priority of the Township of Oro-Medonte due to legislative requirements to bring it into conformity with the Township's new Official Plan and the various policy changes implemented by the provincial government. There is also a need to modernize the By-law in certain areas such as Additional Residential Units (ARUs), Accessory Buildings and Employment Zone provisions.

Staff will continue to update Council and the public throughout the course of the project, as milestones are reached.

Respectfully submitted,

George Vadeboncoeur, Manager, Planning Special Projects

March 26, 2026

Approvals:

Andy Karaiskakis, Manager, Planning Services

Brent Spagnol, Director, Development Services

Date of Approval

March 26, 2026

March 26, 2026