

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Township of Woolwich was established in its present configuration by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act 1972, as amended, which created a regional government structure and established the limits of the local municipalities in the Waterloo area effective January 1, 1973.

The Township contains an area of approximately 31,912 hectares (78,854 acres) and a 1999 population of 18,100. The municipality is made up of the former Township of Woolwich, the former Town of Elmira and part of the former Township of Waterloo.

There are presently three Settlement Areas within Woolwich Township where a full range of municipal services are available to the residents, including municipal water and sewage collection and disposal facilities. These three areas are the Elmira Settlement Area, the St. Jacobs Settlement Area and the Breslau Settlement Area. In addition to these three serviced Settlement Areas, there are a substantial number of unserved and partially serviced Settlement Areas within the Planning Area. **OPA No. 1**

As can be seen from the foregoing, the Township of Woolwich is a municipality containing large areas of agricultural land and a number of relatively small serviced and unserved urban Settlement Areas. The Township has therefore a twin responsibility:

- to the residents of the agricultural lands and to the protection and preservation of these lands for food production; and
- to provide for the needs and aspirations of the residents of the small urban areas.

To reflect this twin nature of the Township, the term "Rural-Small Urban" is adopted in this Plan to describe the municipality.

In addition the Township places a high priority on the protection and wise stewardship of the municipality's environmental features and functions.

OPA No. 1 (Deleted Footnote)

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Regional Official Policies Plan (R.O.P.P.) contains the policies adopted by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo to guide and manage the pattern of settlement expected to occur in the Region to the year 2016.

The purpose of the Official Plan of the Woolwich Planning Area is to set forth general development policies intended to guide the Township's future development within the framework of those broader policies established for regional development in the Regional Official Policies Plan.

The policies established by this Plan are intended to form the guidelines and principles, which will be used by Woolwich Township Council, the Committee of the Whole, the Committee of Adjustment, the Region and other authorities when considering future growth and development proposals within the Township of Woolwich.

Of equal importance, the policies established by this Plan are intended to provide guidance to the residents of the Township concerning the municipality's intentions relative to development of the Planning Area and to provide a measure of stability and continuity in planning and development decisions.

Modification No. 2 (Deletion of paragraph)

1.3 HOW THE PLAN WILL BE USED

The Regional Official Policies Plan, as approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on December 19, 1995, applies to the Township of Woolwich Planning Area. The Official Plan of the Woolwich Planning Area therefore becomes a Subsidiary Plan to the Regional Official Policies Plan. All of the policies of the Regional Official Policies Plan apply and the provisions of the Woolwich Official Plan shall be considered to be in conformity with the Regional Official Policies Plan and are intended to supplement the Regional Official Policies Plan policies as they apply to the Township of Woolwich Planning Area.

The Plan will be used:

- 1.3.1 In conjunction with and as a supplement to the Regional Official Policies Plan by the Township of Woolwich, its Boards, Commissions and Committees as the basis for decisions and actions on matters within its jurisdiction.
- 1.3.2 To establish general policies to guide the future development of the Township of Woolwich and to encourage through these formal statements of policy a continuing and consistent direction for this development.
- 1.3.3 To provide a framework of policy reference to both public officials and residents of the Planning Area within which to make decisions concerning future land use, development and investment.
- 1.3.4 To guide the Council, the Council of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, the Committee of Adjustment and other public bodies and officials in the exercise of their powers and responsibilities particularly related to such matters as subdivision control, subdivision plan review, Zoning by-laws and land severance policies.

- 1.3.5 To establish policies which will assist in guiding the municipality toward the fulfillment of the Goals which are established and set out in Chapter 4 – Values and Goals of the Plan.

1.4 THE PLAN AS A LEGAL DOCUMENT

This Official Plan was prepared by the Township of Woolwich in accordance with the statutory powers and responsibilities vested in the Township of Woolwich by the Government of Ontario and particularly through the provisions of the Planning Act and the Regional Official Policies Plan.

In accordance with the Planning Act, this Plan must conform to the Regional Official Policies Plan; however, policies in this Plan can be more restrictive.

Interpretations of the policies in this Plan are the responsibility of Township Council.

All maps included in this plan are not to be read as scale drawings. The scales as shown are approximate only. Actual dimensions for each land use designation will be established in the implementation plan and/or by the Zoning By-law passed to implement the Official Plan policies. **Modification No. 135a**

1.5 REVIEW AND AMENDMENT TO THE PLAN

Although one of the stated purposes of this Plan is to provide a continuing and consistent guide for the future of the Planning Area, it is not intended that the policies and land use designations shall remain static.

This Plan shall be subject to continuous review in light of changing economic, social and technological circumstances. It is therefore the stated intention of the Plan that amendments will be considered as required.

Amendments to this Plan will be made to ensure conformity with the Regional Official Policies Plan and the Provincial Policy Statements. No amendment will be made to this Plan, which would not be in conformity with the Regional Official Policies Plan. The Plan will be reviewed every five years as required by the Planning Act.

It is also the stated intention of this Plan that amendment shall only be required when it is deemed desirable to change the policies as set forth in the Plan and/or Settlement maps in the Plan.