

CHAPTER 9

HOUSING POLICY

The Township is a “Rural-Small Urban” municipality with a Housing Goal of providing a broad range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future Township residents while protecting rural lands for agricultural purposes and protecting natural resources.

9.1 GENERAL HOUSING POLICIES

The Regional Official Policies Plan has designated sufficient land within the boundaries of the City and Township Urban Areas (Elmira and St. Jacobs) to accommodate the majority of forecasted Regional growth to the year 2016, with residual growth accommodated in Identified Rural Settlement Areas.

The Housing policies of this Plan recognize the need to accommodate a portion of the Region’s urban-related growth, as contained in the current household and population forecasts, primarily in the serviced Township Urban Areas. The Region and the Township have invested significantly in municipal sanitary and water infrastructure in the Township Urban Areas to accommodate the majority of this forecasted growth.

A limited amount of growth is expected within the Township’s Rural Settlement Areas. The Housing policies recognize that the Rural Land Use Area is to be protected for food production and is not expected to accommodate new non-farm related residential development.

The Township adopts the following the General Housing Policies:

- 9.1.1 The Township will provide a full range of housing types and densities to meet the needs of its residents and will provide for a controlled and limited growth of non-farm related housing to be located primarily within designated settlement areas, in accordance with the population and household forecast in the Regional Official Policies Plan.
- 9.1.2 The Township will maintain at all times at least a ten-year supply of land designated and available for new residential development and intensification. **Modification No. 75**
- 9.1.3 The Township will maintain at all times at least a three-year supply of residential units with servicing capacity in draft approved or registered plans.
- 9.1.4 The Township Zoning By-Law will be amended as necessary to implement the policies of this Section.

9.2 DENSITY TARGETS

9.2.1 The Township has established desirable target densities for Elmira, St. Jacobs and Breslau to be implemented through the Zoning By-law, approval of plan of subdivision, as well as site-specific development applications. OPA No. 1

These targets have been developed to:

- a) promote the efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities;
- b) avoid the need for unnecessary and/or uneconomical expansion of infrastructure; and
- c) encourage development appropriate to the type of wastewater and water systems, which are planned or available.

9.2.2 The Township will not approve any development applications to reduce the net residential density in areas planned for medium or high density housing, if the reduction in density will significantly impact the ability to achieve the targets established through this Section.

9.2.3 The Township will encourage the provision of new dwelling units in designated settlement areas through infill, conversion, intensification or redevelopment compatible with surrounding uses, except where infrastructure is inadequate or there are significant physical constraints. □

9.2.4 The Township will, in consultation with the Region periodically review the density targets to monitor the effectiveness of the density target policies of this plan.

9.3 RANGE AND MIX OF HOUSING TYPES

9.3.1 The Township will require the provision of a broad range and mix of housing types and tenure options in new development in the Township consistent with the density targets established through policy 9.2 and consistent with the Township's small urban character to ensure the provision of housing alternatives that meet the needs of existing and future Township residents.

9.3.2 The Township will encourage the provision of affordable ownership and rental housing to meet the varying needs of Township residents by:

- a) providing opportunities through the designation and appropriate zoning of land for a minimum of 30% new housing to be smaller-lot single detached units, semi-detached units, plexes, townhouses and apartments;
- b) encouraging innovative lot configurations, housing designs and construction techniques;
- c) providing opportunities for mixed uses in new residential developments and redeveloping areas;

- d) encouraging the construction of assisted housing, not-for-profit and affordable private sector residential units; and
- e) where appropriate, based on consideration of servicing, compatibility, environmental and transportation issues, encouraging housing intensification, including, but not limited to:
 - conversion of existing single-detached homes to multiple units;
 - conversion of industrial or commercial buildings, or portions thereof, into residential units;
 - the creation of new lots/units through infilling;
 - addition of a “granny flat” on a property; and
 - the creation of residential units above commercial uses.
 - doddy houses

9.3.3 The Township encourages the provision of housing for seniors to accommodate the needs of that portion of the Township’s population, which may include the use of “granny flats” permitted through Temporary Use By-laws.

9.4 ASSISTED AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

9.4.1 The Township will encourage new housing, which is accessible by people with challenges.

9.4.2 The Township will facilitate, where possible, the integration of group homes within all residential designations in the Township.

9.5 HOUSING POLICIES - RURAL AREA

9.5.1 The housing in areas designated Rural Land Use by this Plan will be primarily limited to farm-related residential units and such housing shall be primarily one-family detached dwellings used as the primary residence for an active and operating farmer.

9.5.2 In addition to the foregoing, provision may be made in the Zoning By-law for any or all of the following forms of farm-related residential units:

- a) a second farm-related residence located on the farm without severance to house a full-time farm employee, including members of the farm family, or to aid retiring farmers; or
- b) a trailer or portable dwelling unit located on the farm without severance; or
- c) “Doddy houses” being the conversion and/or expansion of existing farm-related residences into two dwelling units. A Doddy house is a second farm-related unit attached to an existing farmhouse on a significant operating farm and is intended to accommodate the expanded farm family. This policy is intended to permit an integrated expansion of the existing farm residence and is not intended to permit two dwelling units with the appearance of a semi-detached residential building. Notwithstanding this, separate entrances may be provided to each residential unit and no internal access connection will be required.

9.6 HOUSING POLICIES – RESIDENTIAL AND SERVICE SETTLEMENTS

The Township's Residential and Service Settlements are relatively small concentrations of predominantly rural non-farm related single-family dwellings on large lots at low density. It is not anticipated that these Settlements will be provided with a municipally operated sewage collection and treatment facility although municipal or communal sewage treatment may be required in the case of some new residential subdivisions. Water supply will, in the main, be by means of wells on individual lots although municipal or communal water supply may be required in the case of some new residential subdivisions.

9.6.1 Because of the stated and defined function of these Settlement classifications and the limitations imposed by individual septic tank sewage disposal systems, housing units will be limited primarily to one-family detached dwellings and duplex residential units on individual lots.

9.6.2 The Zoning By-law may provide for a limited number of semi-detached or duplex dwellings. Multiple unit buildings, being buildings containing more than two dwelling units, may be considered where servicing is adequate, to provide rental accommodation or to provide for the housing needs of the residents.

It is intended that multiple unit dwellings will be allowed within Rural Settlements only by means of an amendment to the Zoning By-law by means of a site-specific amendment in order to retain adequate control of location and to provide residents with an opportunity for public input prior to the introduction of multiple uses in these Settlements.

Notwithstanding this section, permitted permanent housing in Mundil, Weber, and Crowsfoot Corners Settlements shall be limited to single family and duplex residential units.

9.7 HOUSING POLICIES – TOWNSHIP URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Urban Settlements as defined in Chapter 7 of this Plan contemplate a broad range of residential uses as well as commercial, service, recreational and industrial uses. Urban Settlements frequently are served at least in part by a municipally operated sewage collection and treatment facility.

Where sewage treatment facilities exist within Urban Settlements, they are usually installed in response to concern with existing conditions and as such the capacity for future growth is limited. In addition, the capacity of the receiving streams to assimilate effluent is also limited. These limitations require careful control and monitoring of housing starts, which are to be served by a municipally operated sewage treatment facility.

In cases where Urban Settlements or portions of Urban Settlements are not served by a municipally operated sewage treatment plant, this Plan has indicated that the municipality will consider urban growth on other means of sewage treatment where such other means meet with the approval of all authorities having jurisdiction including the Township.

9.7.1 This Plan clearly establishes the intent and desire of the municipality to control and regulate the rate of growth in Urban Settlements. Within the limitations imposed by the growth staging policies adopted, various forms of housing shall be considered to provide for the housing needs of the municipality.

Within those Settlements which are served by a municipality operated sewage treatment plant, provision of new housing may be staged to reflect the desire of the municipality to control the rate of growth so as not to utilize the total sewage treatment plant capacity in the short term.

- 9.7.2 Within those parts of a defined Urban Settlement which will not be served by a municipally operated sewage treatment plant, a staged program of additional housing may be considered to meet market demand subject to satisfactory sewage treatment facilities being installed and in accordance with the policies adopted in the specific Settlement Plan.
- 9.7.3 Within the limitations imposed by the foregoing, it shall be the policy of this Plan to consider all forms of housing within Urban Settlements as may be required to meet the needs of the Township residents and as permitted by the Zoning By-law.
- 9.7.4 When considering future housing proposals, the Township shall give special consideration to the needs of the residents of the municipality as indicated by the annual Housing Market Update as prepared by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo.
- 9.7.5 In order to assure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the residents of the Planning Area, the municipality may consider any or all of the following:
 - a) participation in housing programs originated by the Provincial and Federal governments where such action is deemed appropriate;
 - b) participation with senior government levels in housing renewal and rehabilitation programs where such action is deemed appropriate;
 - c) co-operation with other municipalities and the Region in co-ordinating housing programs within the Region in order to standardize and co-ordinate procedures and policies;
 - d) co-operation where required to encourage the construction and operation of subsidized housing units where deemed appropriate;
 - e) staging of future development so that, insofar as possible, a supply of approved lots is available to meet the growth needs in the various categories of housing;
 - f) consideration of permitting pre-fabricated and/or portable manufactured housing units, which meet the requirements of the Building Code in areas where such housing is deemed, appropriate;
 - g) amending the Zoning By-law as may be required to encourage a mix of housing sizes, styles and types to meet the needs of the residents;
 - h) encouraging where possible and appropriate, lower cost lots and housing to meet the needs of Township residents;

- i) consideration where appropriate of the conversion of existing large one-family residences for two or more dwelling units, provided that the lot area is sufficient to permit enlargement of the private sanitary waste treatment system where such private servicing is used;
- j) maintain a Minimum Maintenance and Occupancy By-law for such part or parts of the municipality where such control is deemed desirable;
- k) where practical, processing Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments and Subdivision recommendations as a package and forwarding them to the Region all at one time;
- l) encouraging the construction and maintenance of a sufficient number of rental units to meet the needs of the residents;
- m) giving special consideration for the needs of accommodation for retirement housing, convalescent and nursing homes, homes for the physically and mentally challenged; and
- n) establishing through zoning, Settlement Plans, subdivision recommendations and Subdivider's agreements, a staging program aimed at assuring a sufficient number of lots to meet future housing demand.

9.8 BED AND BREAKFAST OPERATIONS

Bed and breakfast operations will be permitted within the Rural Land Use designation and in Identified Settlements, within the "principle" single-family dwelling, provided the character of the dwelling is not substantially altered and all compatibility, safety and servicing requirements are met including the provision of adequate parking. The Zoning By-law shall define a bed and breakfast operation use as distinct from a guesthouse and establish regulations addressing their establishment and operation.