



Report No.
PD-45-25

File No.
3-05-25

Directed to: Mayor Joe Preston and Members of City Council

Meeting Date:
October 6, 2025

Department: Planning & Building Services

Authored By: Brandon Sloan, HAF Coordinator

Attachment
Appendix A –
Recommended OPA

Subject: City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Community Planning Permit System

Recommendation:

THAT: Report PD-45-25 relating to City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Community Planning Permit System be received for information.

Background:

Part of the commitment to the City receiving Housing Accelerator Funds (HAF) through a federal program aimed at accelerating and permitting new housing development is to implement a new Community Planning Permit System (CPPS). The first step is to add policies to the City of St. Thomas Official Plan to enable a CPPS and a future process would be to create a Community Planning Permit By-law for a specific geographic area.

The CPPS is a land use planning tool available to municipalities in Ontario that combines Zoning By-law Amendments, Minor Variances and Site Plan Applications into one single application and alternative development approval process.

Report CMO-37-25 along with the Purpose and Basis of the Amendment sections of the Official Plan Amendment (OPA), attached to this report as Appendix B, contains the intent and reasons for adding the over-arching framework policies for a Community Planning Permit System within the Official Plan. The recommended OPA includes policies regarding the overall objectives, future potential location types, criteria for implementing a CPP By-law, information required in an application, ability to apply conditions, agreements, amendments and the approval authority. A future CPP By-law could be applied city-wide or it could be used for specific areas of the city, such as with a Secondary Plan, downtown, brownfield or new intensification area. This provides a tool to help increase housing supply, options, and affordability, along with shaping development to provide fit and benefit to the community.

Comments and Response:

With respect to the one written submission received from the Statutory Public Open House (attached as Appendix A) along with any comments as part of the circulation, and Statutory Public Meeting, staff offer the following:

Comment	Response
What are the cons?	While there are many benefits, the cons may include that it is a second system of zoning and process for the municipality to set up, maintain and it is new. Although the City already has an efficient development process, it could lead to an even more streamlined approach and quick timelines for these types of applications.
The benefits are good like housing diversity and high-quality sustainable design and environmental protection.	These are examples of potential overall, high-level goals/objectives for a community as it relates to new development. They are similar to other municipal examples.
Concerns if replacing zoning for affordable housing could lower value of neighbourhood and bring out people who are NIMBY	Noted. One of the potential community benefits for the overall area is additional affordable housing, or at least a portion of any

	new development as 'affordable'. Depending upon the geographic location used for a CPPS, the community objectives and benefits can be defined and specific to that area/bylaw. This may or may not include affordable housing. A CPP Bylaw does not necessarily need to dictate that all new development in an area would be 'affordable'. However, a CPP Bylaw is one of the few tools that a municipality can use to actually require or allow for height and density of new development in exchange for inclusion of some affordable dwelling units.
Community Planning Permit By-law Questions: where could it be used, how discretionary uses are identified and allowed, are the community benefits specified or negotiated, how do the classes or variations work, etc.	The initial intent is to review the potential for a CPP Bylaw in a new development area, such as a new greenfield or redevelopment Secondary Plan, or vacant intensification area. A full public process would be undertaken along with review and decisions through Council to develop a bylaw for a specific area. Currently, the over-arching policies for the Official Plan are the main considerations. The policies provide the ability to undertake a CPP Bylaw in the future but general enough that there are no commitments to a specific area.

There were no technical comments or issues received from departments/agencies. No changes are recommended to the draft OPA that was provided at the August 11, 2025, Council meeting and presented at the September 8, 2025, Public Meeting.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff are satisfied that the City-initiated amendment (Application No. 3-05-25) has regard to matters of provincial interest, is consistent with the relevant policies of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, conforms to the remainder of the City of St. Thomas Official Plan, and is sound land use planning. Staff are recommending approval of the updated Official Plan Amendment as attached to this report as Appendix A.

Strategic Priority:

Strategic Pillar: Excellence in All We Do - Priority #5: Housing for Everyone

Financial Impact:

There are no direct financial impacts associated with the Official Plan Amendment. Any costs associated with notification and preparing the amendment are covered through the Housing Accelerator Fund.

Report Approval:

This report has been reviewed and approved by: Manager of Planning Services and the Director of Planning and Building Services

All reports are reviewed and approved by the City Manager.

OFFICIAL PLAN

of the

CITY OF ST. THOMAS

AMENDMENT NO. ____

PREPARED BY

CITY OF ST. THOMAS

PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES DEPARTMENT

THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS

BY-LAW NO. _____

The Council of the Corporation of the City of St. Thomas, pursuant to Section 17(22) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That Official Plan Amendment No. ____ to the City of St. Thomas Official Plan, including the attached Explanatory Text, is hereby adopted.
2. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of the final passing thereof.

Enacted and passed this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Joe Preston, Mayor

Maria Konefal, City Clerk

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STATEMENT OF COMPONENTS

PART A - THE PREAMBLE - does not constitute part of this Amendment.

PART B - THE AMENDMENT - the following text constitutes Amendment No. ____ to the Official Plan of the City of St. Thomas.

Also attached is **PART C – THE APPENDICES** – which do not constitute part of this amendment. The appendices contain the supporting documentation for the amendment and the record of public involvement associated with this amendment.

I, Lou Pompilii, Director of Planning & Building Services of the Corporation of the City of St. Thomas, do hereby certify that the following (Part B) is a true copy of Official Plan Amendment No. ____ adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the City of St. Thomas (By-law No. #-2025).

Lou Pompilii
Director of Planning & Building Services

PART A – PREAMBLE

1. LOCATION

The Amendment is to add framework policies in the Official Plan that could be applied city-wide with certain potential priority areas identified that could have a Community Planning Permit By-law prepared and enacted.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Amendment is to establish policies in the Official Plan for a Community Planning Permit System framework, objectives, potential locations, criteria for an implementing Bylaw for an area, information required, conditions, authority, and amendments.

3. BASIS

The basis of this Amendment is as follows:

- 3.1 The Province of Ontario provides a legislative tool through the development permit system, now Community Planning Permit System, to allow municipalities the option of regulating and managing development in a more streamlined, flexible manner.
- 3.2 The Provincial Government has introduced numerous Bills and enacted legislative and policy changes with the intent of facilitating the construction of a significant number of homes over a 10-year period to help address the housing crisis.
- 3.3 The City is working to increase housing supply, housing options and affordability. The City received federal funding through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to fast-track the creation of new housing. The City is committed to achieving several housing-enabling initiatives, including the adoption of a Community Planning Permit System.
- 3.4 This Amendment is to provide the framework and enabling policies for a Community Planning Permit System and implementing By-law. It is one of the tools that the City can use to plan and support growth in specific areas, shape development to fit within the existing community through incorporating design standards, allow for buildings with higher density or heights in certain locations if affordable housing and/or other community needs are provided, and streamline the development approval process in these areas.
- 3.5 This Amendment is consistent with PPS, 2024 as it relates to housing, complete communities, intensification, strategic growth areas, infrastructure, natural and cultural heritage, and implementation.

- 3.6 This Amendment provides the required enabling Community Planning Permit System policies in accordance with the Planning Act and Ontario Regulation 173/16.
- 3.7 A public open house was hosted by the City and a public meeting was hosted by Council to present the Official Plan Amendment to the public for comments.

PART B - THE AMENDMENT

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

All of this part of the document entitled “Part B - the Amendment” consisting of the following text and schedules constitutes Amendment No. ____ to the Official Plan of the City of St. Thomas.

2. DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENT

The Official Plan is amended as follows:

Item 1: Subsection 10.11.2 is amended by adding “applications for Community Planning Permit or amendment” to the list.

Item 2: Add new subsection 10.11.13 as follows:
“10.11.13 Applications for a Community Planning Permit will comply with the complete application submission requirements identified in Schedule 1 of Ontario Regulation 173/16, including the information required in Policies 10.11.3 and 10.11.4, unless it is determined through a pre-consultation with the City that certain studies, plans, drawings and reports are not required as part of a complete application.”

Item 3: Section 10 – Implementation is amended by adding the following new subsection 10.12 as follows:

“10.12 Community Planning Permit System

10.12.1 The City may identify one or more areas as a Community Planning Permit Area and enact a Community Planning Permit By-law, including the entire City boundary, without amendment to this plan. The locations identified as a proposed Community Planning Permit Area may include secondary plan areas, large brownfield areas, intensification areas, and employment areas as specifically directed by resolution of council.

10.12.2 The overall goals and objectives for Community Planning Permit Areas is to establish the specific criteria whereby development or redevelopment may proceed in a streamlined, alternative development application process while still adhering to the planned vision, objectives, requirements and procedures specified within a Community Planning Permit By-law for each area.

10.12.3 Within an area that a Community Planning Permit By-law has been enacted, the Zoning By-law shall not apply, nor shall site plan control if applicable.

10.12.4 If a Community Planning Permit By-law is enacted, the use and development of land must comply with the permitted uses, standards and criteria set out in the Community Planning Permit By-law as demonstrated by the issuance of a Community Planning permit, unless the proposed use or development is expressly exempted from a permit as indicated in the Community Planning Permit By-law. Where existing site plan agreements are already registered on a property, those agreements may be amended as long as such agreements comply with the applicable provisions of the Community Planning Permit By-law.

10.12.5 A Community Planning Permit By-law will:

- i) Contain a description of the area to which the by-law applies, which must be within the boundaries of the area identified in the Official Plan;
- ii) Set out and define the permitted and discretionary uses;
- iii) Establish development standards with specified minimum and maximum standards;
- iv) Identify any internal review for permit decisions;
- v) Describe notification procedures for decisions;
- vi) Establish criteria for determining whether a proposed use or development is permitted;
- vii) Confirm classes or types of development or uses that are exempt from the requirement for a permit;
- viii) Describe the process for amending community planning permits, agreements and any pre-existing site plan agreements;
- ix) Outline any conditions of approval that may be imposed; and
- x) Identify the scope of delegated authority, including any limitations.

10.12.6 A Community Planning Permit By-law may require an applicant to enter into and register on title an agreement with the City in order to address some or all of the conditions of approval imposed on a Community Planning Permit.

10.12.7 A Community Planning Permit By-law may require an applicant to provide financial security in a form satisfactory to the City in order to ensure the satisfaction of any condition imposed on the Community Planning Permit, including the completion, maintenance and on-going monitoring of the development.

10.12.8 The Community Planning Permit By-law may include details for the provision of community benefits, or cash contribution thereof, proportionate to and in exchange for the height and/or density of the development, such as affordable housing requirements.

10.12.9 The Community Planning Permit By-law may include any condition or requirement that may be imposed pursuant to sections 34, 40, 41, and 42 of the Planning Act and to implement the City's Urban Design Guidelines or any criteria and requirements in the area-specific Community Planning Permit By-law.

10.12.10 Where a Community Planning Permit By-law has been enacted, Council may delegate its decision-making authority with respect to Community Planning Permit applications and its authority to execute, amend and release Community Planning Permit agreements to a Committee, or body appointed by Council or an employee of the Corporation of the City of St. Thomas as outlined in the Community Planning Permit By-law.

10.12.11 Any City-initiated amendment or an application to amend the Community Planning Permit By-law must be considered in the context of the planned vision and objectives for all lands within the area subject to the By-law.

An application to amend the Community Planning Permit By-law must be supported by:

- i) A comprehensive Planning Needs/Justification Report;
- ii) Area studies and information as identified within the complete application requirements of section 10.11 of this Plan, supporting the proposed amendment; and
- iii) Details of community engagement, involving the City and the community impacted by the proposed amendment.

City-initiated amendments or an application to amend the Community Planning Permit By-law will be considered by Council only after the completion of the comprehensive planning rationale, any areas studies and information supporting proposed amendment applications, has been submitted and the community engagement has been completed.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

The implementation and interpretation of this Amendment shall be in accordance with the respective policies of the City of St. Thomas Official Plan.

PART C - THE APPENDICES

Appendix I: Notice of Public Open House and Notice of Public Meeting

Appendix II: Minutes of Public Meeting

Appendix III: Planning Reports to Council

APPENDIX I:
NOTICE OF PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE
AND
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

APPENDIX II:
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

APPENDIX III:
STAFF PLANNING REPORTS TO COUNCIL