



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

### OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

***Mission Statement:*** As stewards of the Town of Amherstburg, we strive to improve the quality of life of all residents through the delivery of effective, efficient, and affordable services.

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| <b>Author's Name:</b> Melissa Osborne              | <b>Report Date:</b> July 7, 2025      |
| <b>Author's Phone:</b> 519 736-0012 ext. 2137      | <b>Date to Council:</b> July 17, 2025 |
| <b>Author's E-mail:</b><br>mosborne@amherstburg.ca | <b>Resolution #:</b>                  |

**To:** Mayor and Members of Town Council

**Subject:** Rezoning Howard Industrial Lands

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#### **1. RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

The report **BE RECEIVED** for information

#### **2. BACKGROUND:**

As part of the actions being taken to create opportunities for industrial development and job creation in Amherstburg the Howard Industrial Park District Secondary Planning Area bounded between North Town Line Rd, Howard Ave, North Side Rd and Concession 8 has been a focus area. In 2022, the area was identified in the Official Plan as Heavy Industrial, however zoning for the vast majority of the area remained agricultural, and with some light and heavy industrial zones. The challenge with this was that this significant area did not have any plans to outline how it should be developed to heavy industrial and how to manage that transition respecting the residential and agricultural uses on properties surrounding it. Consideration of the feasibility of heavy industrial in the area also needed to be revisited given the area is on septic rather than Town wastewater.

At the August 8, 2022 Council meeting direction was provided to complete a Secondary Plan for the Howard Industrial Park District, CR202208080-10. On December 5, 2022 Council approved in Interim Control By-Law, which effectively ensured that redevelopment in the area would be more controlled within a specific set of rules until such time as the full Secondary Plan was finalized and adopted by Council. This ensured limited risk of development of lands which would not be consistent with the final plans for the area.

The Statutory Public Meeting was held on August 14, 2023 and the final report brought back and adopted by Council on November 27, 2023. There was an appeal received and as such it was not until February 12, 2025 in which Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) rendered their decision on the matter, thereby confirming approval of the Secondary Plan into the Town's Official Plan.

The rezoning of the lands will rezone to an industrial zoning with a holding provision, while specifically permitting existing uses to continue. All properties will be zoned either light industrial or space extensive industrial. This will allow for any industrial developers to have reduced timelines on properly zoning the property and would allow them to seek grant funding which is available for industrial properties.

### **3. DISCUSSION:**

It had been Administration's intention to bring forward the rezoning of the Howard Industrial Lands as soon as the Secondary Plan was approved. Given that approval was delayed to 2025 due to the appeal, Administration felt that including that rezoning with the larger Town wide Zoning By-law update would be appropriate. That idea however did not anticipate the Official Plan Update project timeline delays.

More specifically:

1. June 5, 2025 – Royal Assent for Bill 17 and 5
2. June 27, 2025 – confirmation of changes by MMAH on County Official Plan Update

The reason these are significant is because the Town's Official Plan Update must be reflective of the Provincial Planning Statement, which includes legislative changes impacting the Planning Act, and must be reflective of the County's Official Plan as well. Given these changes, it is expected that the Town's objective of having the Updated Official Plan completed and approved before the end of 2025 is not likely. Since the Town wide Zoning By-Law update must be reflective of the Official Plan the ZBL rewrite project is now on hold.

This created an issue for our economic development efforts with Howard Industrial lands for the following reasons:

1. There are property owner(s) ready to proceed with their investments and the rezoning is necessary for them to proceed;
2. Parties interested in the lands are waiting on the rezoning;
3. Grants which the Town can apply for to assist in developing these lands would have a strong submission if the lands are rezoned;
4. Discussion around areas for industrial lands in Windsor Essex continues and this is the next step in order to bring these lands into those discussions.

There has been a great deal of background work done on the rezoning for these lands as it is informed by the Secondary Plan as well as Excess Soil and Site Alternation strategies already approved outside of the full Official Plan update. As such Administration is proceeding with rezoning for the Howard Industrial Lands in order to avoid any further delays. The Statutory Public Meeting on the matter will be August 11<sup>th</sup>, for which notices in accordance with the Planning Act will be sent out so the public can provide their written or verbal comments on the matter.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS:**

There is no risk in receiving this report.

There is a risk that new concerns may be raised during the Statutory Public Meeting. This risk is deemed low as the majority of residences issues, such as no truck traffic on Concession 8, removal of heavy industrial uses, requirements for barriers and protection for sensitive areas, were addressed in the Secondary Plan and Excess Soil Strategy policies. Should there be something unexpected it will be reviewed and included in Administration's report back to Council with our Professional Planning recommendation on the matter.

#### **5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

There are not financial matters for this report.

#### **6. CONSULTATIONS:**

Chris Aspila – Manager of Planning

Jen Ibrahim – Manager of Economic Development and Tourism

#### **7. CORPORATE STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:**

***Vision: Preserving our past while forging our future.***

| <b>AMHERSTBURG COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2026</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p><b>PILLAR 1</b><br/><b>Deliver Trusted &amp; Accountable Local Government</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Improve trust between council and staff, and residents, by strengthening governance and internal accountability structures.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Deliver transparent and efficient financial management.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase effective communication and engagement with residents.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop our staff team, resources, and workplace culture.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to deliver strong core municipal services.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Amherstburg is an inclusive accessible and welcoming community committed to reconciliation.</li></ul> | <p><b>PILLAR 3</b><br/><b>Encourage Local Economic Prosperity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Encourage development of commercial and industrial lands.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to promote local tourism industry, especially overnight accommodation.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to facilitate downtown development for residents and visitors.</li><li>✓ Continue to leverage partnership opportunities with other provincial, federal, and local governments, agencies, and organizations.</li></ul> |
| <p><b>PILLAR 2</b><br/><b>Invest in Community Amenities and Infrastructure</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>PILLAR 4</b><br/><b>Shape Growth Aligned with Local Identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Define and communicate a vision for the Town's future and identity.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain safe, reliable and accessible municipal infrastructure and facilities.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to recreation opportunities for all ages.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Finalize and execute plans for town-owned lands (e.g. Duffy's site, Belle Vue)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Create public access to water and waterfront<br><input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize opportunities to reduce environmental impacts of Town operations and increase Town resilience to climate change. | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote and plan for green and "climate change ready" development.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Review and implement policies that promote greater access to diverse housing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Protect the Town's historic sites and heritage.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preserve the Town's greenspaces, agricultural lands, and natural environment. |
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## 8. CONCLUSION:

This report is to provide the EDAC with updated information as it relates to the Howard Industrial lands which they have been a part of since 2022.




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Melissa Osborne  
**Deputy CAO/ Director of Development Services**

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