



Staff Report

Planning & Building Services – Planning Division

Report To: COW - Operations, Planning and Building Services
Meeting Date: December 9, 2025
Report Number: PBS.25.083
Title: Report in response to the deputation of Paul Reale to outline the consultation process to begin a Future Secondary Plan for Thornbury West
Prepared by: Shawn Postma, Manager of Community Planning

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report PBS.25.083, entitled “Report in response to the deputation of Paul Reale to outline the consultation process to begin a Future Secondary Plan for Thornbury West”;

AND THAT Council support Option 1 of Staff Report PBS.25.983 that reaffirms the current Future Secondary Plan policy framework, and direct staff to continue to monitor designated land supply, growth allocations, and servicing capacity, and report back prior to the next Official Plan Review with recommendations to initiate /not initiate any Secondary Plan(s).

B. Overview

The purpose of this report is to provide a follow up to the September 8, 2025 deputation by Paul Reale who requested that Council initiate the process to begin a Secondary Plan for the Thornbury West area. This report provides an overview of the deputation materials, Council discussion, resolution of Council and options on next steps.

C. Background

Location

The Thornbury West Future Secondary Plan Area is located in the north-west area of the former Town of Thornbury. The area is generally bounded by Highway 26 in the north, Grey Road 113/10th Line in the west, Victoria Street in the south, and the Little Beaver River in the east.

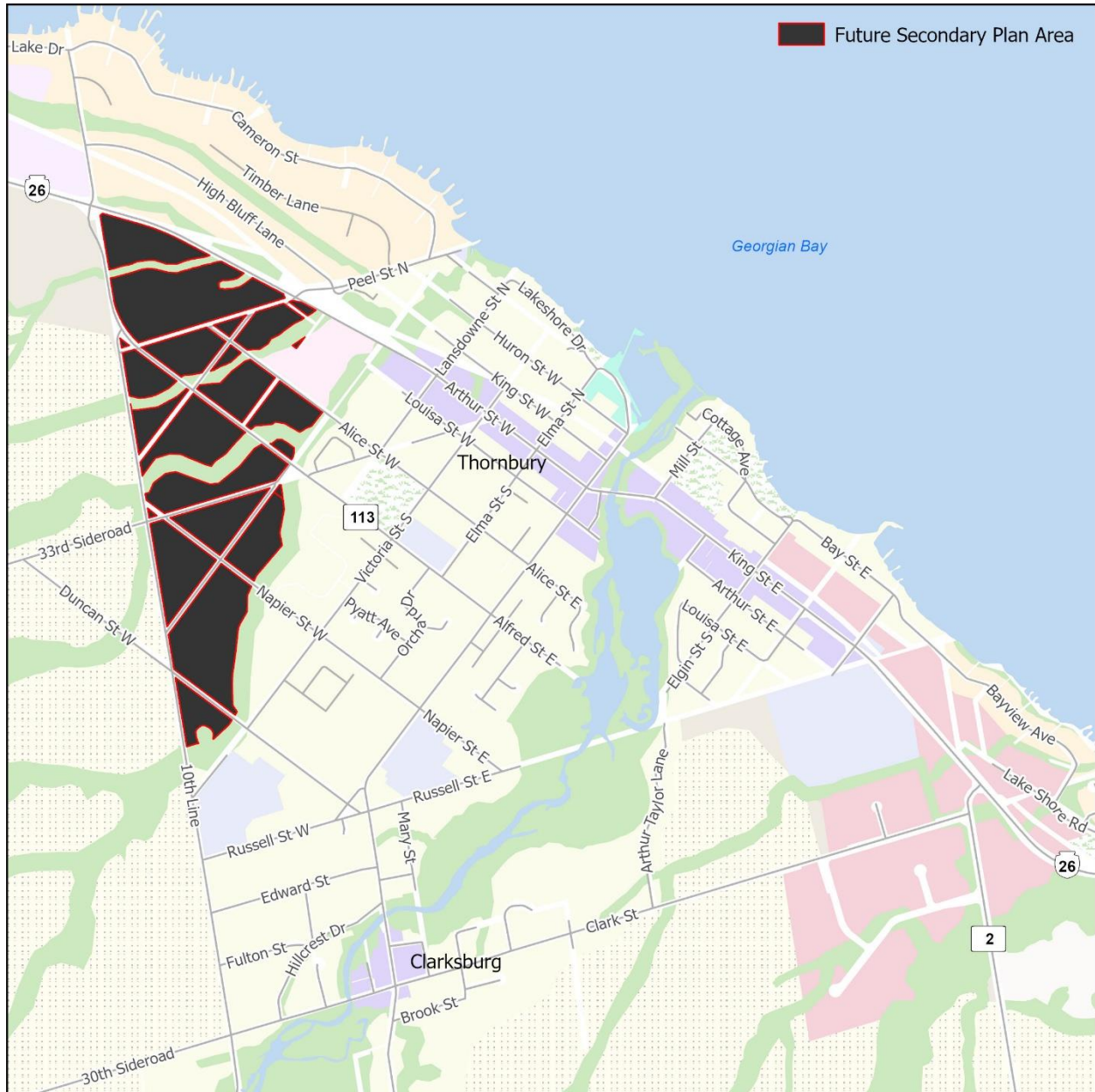


Figure 1: Thornbury West Future Secondary Plan Area

The Thornbury West Future Secondary Plan Area has existed since the first Official Plan was prepared for the Town of Thornbury in 1986. Originally this area was recognized for the significant active apple farms in the Town, with the Official Plan at that time prioritizing these lands for continued agricultural production for as long as practically possible and to direct growth and development to other areas of the Town. Through the amalgamation of the Town of Thornbury and Township of Collingwood in 1998 a new Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan was started and ultimately approved in 2007. The 2007 Official Plan recognized these lands as a Future Secondary Plan Area as sufficient development lands remained available in the Town to accommodate the expected growth over the 20 year planning period. The Official Plan has been updated twice since, with the 2016 Blue Mountains Official Plan (in effect) and

the 2025 Blue Mountains Official Plan (adopted but not approved). Through both of those Official Plan updates, Growth Studies were completed to understand the expected growth over the planning period and the existing inventory of lands designated for development. In both cases, those studies confirmed that sufficient land remains available to accommodate growth and that redesignating Future Secondary Plan lands for development was not required.

It is noted that the Town has three Future Secondary Plan Areas: Thornbury West, Swiss Meadows, and Craigleith South.

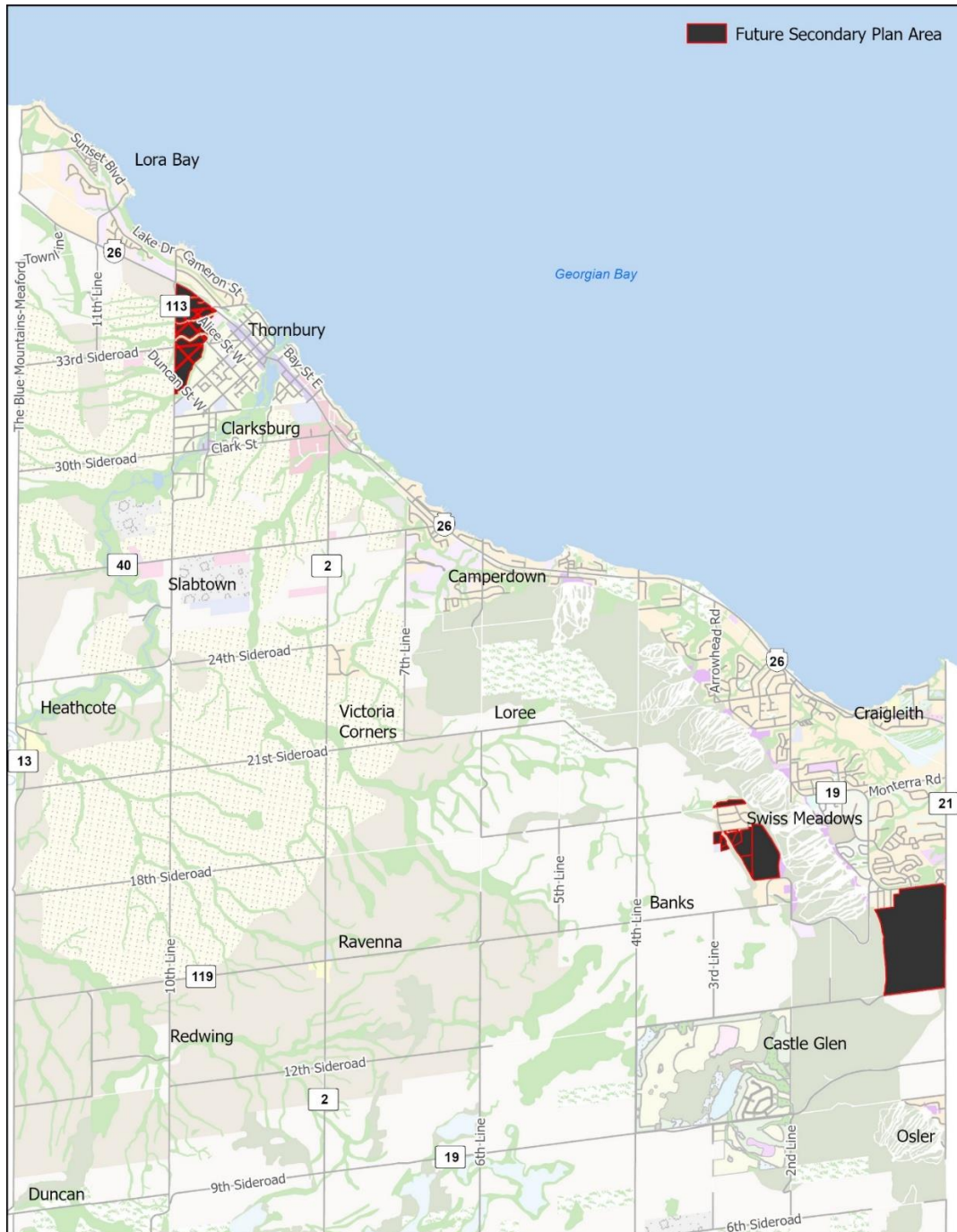


Figure 2: The Blue Mountains Future Secondary Plan Areas: Thornbury West, Swiss Meadows, and Craigeith South

Deputation

During the September 8, 2025, deputation, Planning Staff received seven main points to initiate the process of a Secondary Plan for the Thornbury West area:

- 1- Town is ready to develop this area. The Campus of Care and now Home Opportunities is pushing growth into the Secondary Plan Area.
- 2- Need to be proactive with land use planning and infrastructure servicing
- 3- Need to take a wholistic approach for Parks and Trails, Schools, etc.
- 4- Worried about unintended consequences in piecemeal planning
- 5- Decisions can be made about traffic/roads, establishing collector roads, and where traffic should be directed
- 6- Need clarity for development in this area
- 7- Need to start the process early, to include public involvement, to be ready for when growth and development is proposed

Council received the deputation noting: support on the request; concerns on what may happen on the Secondary Plan lands without a Secondary Plan in effect; and that with the market slowdown that the planning for the Thornbury West, (as well as the other Secondary Plan Areas including Craigeith and other areas) be looked at now.

The discussion led to some debate on the scope of a Future Secondary Plan exercise. Comments received include if the Secondary Plan should only include Thornbury West, or if the other Secondary Plan Areas should also be considered. Can community character be incorporated into the foundation of the Secondary Plan. What does the Future Secondary Planning process look like including: budget implications, warrants to initiate, and public consultation requirements. At the conclusion of the discussion, Council passed the following motion:

Motion - Majority (Voted), Recorded		
1	Moved:	Councillor Porter
	Seconded:	Councillor Ardiel
	Result:	The motion is Carried
THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives the deputation of Paul Reale, Resident, regarding Response to Staff Report PBS.25.061, "Report in Response of Deputation of Richard Lamperstorfer";		
THAT Council direct staff to provide a staff report outlining the consultation process, including the budget implications, required to undertake secondary plans for the purpose of guiding the future growth and development within the Town of The Blue Mountains		
Yes - 7 No - 0		

Figure 3: Council Resolution

Future Secondary Plan Policy Review

Lands designated for a Future Secondary Plan (FSP) are identified on Figure 2 above. The intent of the FSP designation is to retain all FSP lands primarily in their original state until such time as a comprehensive review can be completed for the entire FSP designated area. Only limited small scale development under strict control (such as an individual lot severance) can be considered where it can be demonstrated that a proposal would not create any long-term impacts on future development of the area. Consideration for larger scale development should only occur after a comprehensive review is completed. A comprehensive review can be done by way of an Official Plan update (such as the latest Official Plan 5-year review process), or through a Secondary Planning exercise. A Secondary Plan must consider all FSP parcels in the area and must meet the policy criteria outlined in Sections E3.1 and E7 of the Official Plan.

The Town of The Blue Mountains already has a Secondary Plan in effect for the Castle Glen area. Approved in the early 2000's, the level of policy detail and mapping requirements would be a suitable example of how the Secondary Plan Area for other areas of the Town could be implemented.

The Town has confirmed through the Official Plan 5-Year Review process that sufficient lands remain available to accommodate growth beyond 2046 (See Official Plan Growth Allocations Paper). Growth patterns are reviewed at the municipal level with every Official Plan 5-year review cycle, and the inventory of designated lands against our expected growth projections will be completed again no later than 2030. It is noted that the County and the Province also prepare their own growth projections that are evaluated against Town policy and Town growth estimates as they are received. The Town also completes other growth estimates for other Town Studies such as the Development Charges Background Study, and others.

Prior to starting a secondary planning exercise, it should be demonstrated that additional lands are needed for development. Once it is identified that there will be insufficient land to meet the growth needs in the 25-year planning period, the Town will be best positioned to initiate the Future Secondary Plan process. This may start by examining where growth pressures are located, and which Future Secondary Plan Area(s) should be activated.

A Secondary Plan is adopted by Council through a local Official Plan Amendment and approved by the County of Grey as the approval authority.

Ontario Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS)

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024 identifies provincial priorities and establishes provincial policy direction on land use planning and development ensuring consistent and integrated planning decisions across the province. Municipalities must set their own planning framework including Official Plans and Secondary Plans to be consistent with the PPS. Section 2 to the PPS focuses on building strong communities and identifies that municipalities shall ensure that sufficient land is made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years but not more than 30 years. (Provincial Planning Statement 2024, Section 2.1(3)). These strict timeline limits appear to ensure sufficient long-term planning is completed, and to recognize that planning for growth beyond 30 years (other than for infrastructure servicing, public facilities, strategic growth areas,

and employment areas) can be unpredictable and likely subject to changes in overall community needs. The latest 2025 Blue Mountains Official Plan is based on a 25-year planning period and has confirmed that sufficient lands are available to accommodate community growth for the next 25 years. This growth period is re-reviewed every 5 years as part of the Official Plan 5-Year Review process. At this time, it would appear premature to activate any of the Future Secondary Plan Areas, as community and growth needs beyond 25 years may be substantially different than what can be anticipated today.

Existing Studies

It is noted that a number of major studies and master plans have been completed by the Town with only basic assumptions made on future growth within Future Secondary Plan Areas. The Official Plan, Master Water/Wastewater Servicing Plans, Traffic Management Plans, Commercial/Industrial Needs Study, proposed Parks Master Plan and others are based on growth occurring within designated areas and not yet within Future Secondary Plan Areas. These Master Plan level studies may also need to be updated in order to consider the integrated and planned growth for the Future Secondary Plan Areas.

Initiating a Future Secondary Plan process

The process to undertake the Future Secondary Plan will be determined by Council, and the process may be similarly compared to the recent Official Plan 5-year review process. The key differences are that the Official Plan 5-year review provides a broader look and broader policy level for community growth, while the Secondary Plan provides a more localized look and specific policy level for the area of growth. Similar to the Official Plan, the following steps can be considered:

1. Initiate a preconsultation with the County of Grey
2. Confirm the need to complete a Secondary Plan at this time, and which Secondary Plan Area(s) should be evaluated and considered in the Plan
3. Create a project steering committee
4. Develop a project Terms of Reference including a Public Engagement Plan
5. Initiate broader public engagement
6. Compile a complete list of existing studies and how each may be utilized and/or updated to also include the Secondary Plan Area(s).
7. Complete the relevant background studies (boundaries for new growth, population and employment targets, range/mix/density/height of land uses, environmental constraint analysis, community design, transportation, water/wastewater servicing, stormwater management, phasing of development, compact pedestrian orientated strategies, compatibility and integration with adjacent lands, fiscal impact study, market impact assessment, and any other reports/plans/studies that may be identified as part of a Terms of Reference for a new Secondary Plan.
8. Prepare a 1st Draft of the Secondary Plan(s)
9. Host the Public Open House and Public Meeting to receive feedback on the Secondary Plan(s)
10. Prepare a Recommendation Report and Final Draft of the Secondary Plan(s)

11. Council Adoption
12. County of Grey Approval
13. Respond to Ontario Land Tribunal Appeals (if received)

Other Options

Should Council wish to direct more growth to the Thornbury West area, Planning Staff could also examine the process to swap out lands designated for development from other areas of the municipality and move those development permissions to Thornbury West. This has not been examined in detail, however, there may be some vacant undeveloped lands elsewhere in the municipality that could be reallocated. It is noted that Castle Glen remains an outlier that is designated for development, however it has not been included in the 25-year growth studies as these lands are subject to major servicing constraints and further background studies before development can occur.

Council Options

Option 1: Retain Future Secondary Plan Areas until the next Official Plan Review (do nothing)

This option: ***(Recommended Option)***

- 1- Reaffirms the Future Secondary Plan Area policies to retain the lands largely in their current state until additional lands are needed to accommodate future growth.
- 2- Is supported by the Provincial Planning Statement which requires municipalities to plan for at least 20 years and not more than 30 years.
- 3- Avoids reopening many master plans that may require updating.
- 4- However, this option does not immediately respond to the deputation request.

Sample Motion: ***(Recommended Motion)***

THAT Council reaffirms the current Future Secondary Plan policy framework, and direct staff to monitor designated land supply, growth allocations, and servicing capacity, and report back prior to the next Official Plan Review with recommendations to initiate /not initiate any Secondary Plan(s).

Option 2: Authorize a Pre-Secondary Plan Study

This Option:

- 1- Completes a more detailed assessment for a future secondary plan that: will determine whether additional development land is needed within the 30-year planning horizon, which Secondary Plan Areas are most appropriate to activate, and to define what background studies and master plan updates are required.
- 2- Allows Council to consider the need for the Future Secondary Plan prior to committing to a full secondary plan exercise.

- 3- Requires formal preconsultation with the County of Grey who are the ultimate approval authority of local Official Plan Amendments and Secondary Plans.
- 4- Can establish a general framework and understanding of what is required to complete a full Secondary Plan for one or more areas of the Town and can allow for early background work to be completed to help inform future planning studies.

Sample Motion:

THAT Council direct staff to undertake a Pre-Secondary Plan Warrant and Scope Study, including pre-consultation with the County of Grey, to confirm need, candidate area(s), scope, engagement, budget and resource requirements, and that Staff report back with recommendations for Council Consideration.

Option 3: Authorize the initiation of the Thornbury West Secondary Plan

This Option:

- 1- Generally follows a similar process that the Official Plan 5-year review followed, with the main differences being that the Future Secondary Plan focuses on a smaller area and provides more detail on policy direction and future growth.
- 2- Requires formal preconsultation with the County of Grey who are the ultimate approval authority of local Official Plan Amendments and Secondary Plans.
- 3- Requires the preparation of a detailed project scope including list of required studies and project framework.
- 4- Directly responds to the seven points raised by the deputation and discussion items raised by Council by providing clear policy framework for future community growth.
- 5- May be considered premature based on previous studies completed for the recently adopted 2025 Official Plan 5-Year Review, and the uncertainty of community needs at the time additional lands are required for development.

Sample Motion:

THAT Council direct staff to initiate a Thornbury West Secondary Plan including pre-consultation with the County of Grey, the development of a project Terms of Reference, Public Engagement plan, list of Required Studies, project Timeline, anticipated Budget, and that Staff report back with recommendations for Council Consideration.

Option 4: Explore the reallocation of designated development lands to Thornbury West

This Option:

- 1- Considers the relocation of some development permissions from other areas already designated but undeveloped such as Lora Bay, Camperdown, and/or Craighleith into Thornbury West.
- 2- Still requires the completion of a Secondary Plan as outlined in Option 3, however it may be consistent in meeting the Provincial Planning Statement requirement of not planning for growth beyond 30 years.
- 3- Requires broader Official Plan Amendments to reallocate Development permissions from existing designated lands to Thornbury West.
- 4- May be subject to significant objections from Developers who may have development project concepts underway on designated lands,
- 5- May be subject to future Ontario Land Tribunal appeals, as decisions on Official Plan Amendments can be appealed by landowners.

Sample Motion:

THAT Council direct staff to assess the feasibility of preparing a Secondary Plan for Thornbury West and associated Official Plan Amendment(s) to reallocate development permissions from selected designated areas to Thornbury West, including pre-consultation with the County of Grey, the development of a project Terms of Reference, Public Engagement plan, list of Required Studies, project Timeline, anticipated Budget, and that Staff report back with recommendations for Council Consideration.

D. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

E. Environmental Impacts

Not assessed at this time

F. Financial Impacts

Financial Impacts are based on preliminary assumptions only, and anticipate:

Option 1: Nil

Option 2: \$50,000 to cover costs associated with a Warrant and Scope Study to provide a high-level understanding and project framework prior to initiating a full Secondary Planning Exercise.

Option 3: approximately \$300,000-\$500,000 to cover the required specialized background studies and updates to existing Master Plan documents. It is noted that Town Staff will be used for portions of the project, and that external expert consultants will be required to complete the more specialized studies.

Option 4: same costs as Option 3 plus an additional \$50,000-\$100,000+ to assess the relocation of designated lands within the municipality and costs associated with potential future appeals.

G. In Consultation With

Tim Murawsky, CBO, Acting Director of Planning and Building Services
Adam Smith, CAO

H. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Shawn Postma, planning@thebluemountains.ca

I. Attached

1. Nil

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Postma
Manager of Community Planning

For more information, please contact:
Shawn Postma
planning@thebluemountains.ca
519-599-3131 extension 248

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	PBS.25.083 Report in response to deputation of Paul Reale to outline the .docx
Attachments:	- PBS-25-083-Attachment-1.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 26, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tim Murawsky - Nov 26, 2025 - 12:18 PM