



MEMO

TO: Council of the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock
FROM: WSP
SUBJECT: **SABE and Secondary Plan Project Update**
DATE: **March 19, 2025**

1.0 SUMMARY

This memo is intended to provide an update on the East Zorra-Tavistock Secondary Plan project and outline proposed next steps. The project has been temporarily put on pause as certain changes have taken place and new information has been identified by the Project Team.

Section 2.0 below provides an overview of the current project status, while section 3.0 outlines next steps for the project.

2.0 PROJECT STATUS

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW & TIMELINE

WSP was retained by the Township in March 2022 to assist with the evaluation and selection of options for Settlement Area Boundary Expansions for Tavistock and Innerkip. This work was required after it was determined during the County's Phase 1 Comprehensive Review process that East Zorra-Tavistock did not have sufficient lands within its existing settlement areas to accommodate growth to 2046.

The Project was initiated in March 2022 and was originally intended for a Fall 2022 end date. Due to delays in the project timeline (further outlined below), the project has been extended beyond what was originally intended. It is estimated at this time that the project will be extended for an additional 3-4 months. Phase 1 of the project included a review and analysis of background documents and data to better understand the existing conditions and requirements. During Phase 1, the Project Team also developed evaluation criteria for identifying the Focused Study Areas (FSA), which are the areas under consideration for inclusion in the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion. The outcome of Phase 1 was the selection of preliminary Focused Study Areas for both Tavistock and Innerkip, which were presented during the June 15th, 2022, meeting of Council. Council endorsed the Focused Study Areas during this meeting, and the Project Team proceeded with Phase 2 of the project.



Phase 2 involved the analysis of the preliminary Focused Study Areas, which included a series of technical evaluations intended to identify the most appropriate lands for inclusion in the SABE(s). Delays in the project timeline arose during Phase 2 as the Project Team needed to wait for key pieces of information to be prepared before finalizing the recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion in Phase 2. After completing the technical evaluations, the Project Team brought forward the recommended SABE, which was endorsed by Council on December 20th, 2023.

Phase 3 has included the development of a Secondary Plan for the expansion lands, as well as public and stakeholder consultation to inform the development of the Secondary Plan. It was intended that the final Secondary Plan and Planning Justification Report would be brought before Council in June of 2024, but the project was put on pause as new information and policy changes which would impact the project required further review. This included updated information related to the Agricultural Impact Assessment, new Provincial Policy changes (i.e., the release of the Provincial Planning Statement), as well as updates to the County growth forecasts. These changes are likely to impact the location and amount of land needed for the expansion.

2.2 UPDATED COUNTY GROWTH FORECASTS & LAND NEED

The County has undertaken the process of updating growth forecasts from the original forecasts prepared for the Phase 1 Comprehensive Review in 2020. This exercise will provide new growth forecasts for the County as a whole, as well as local municipalities, including East Zorra-Tavistock. The forecasts will be prepared in alignment with the policy changes implemented through the new Provincial Planning Statement (PPS, 2024), which took effect on October 20th, 2024.

The PPS (2024) now allows municipalities to plan for growth over a 20–30-year planning horizon (compared to a 25-year planning horizon in the previous Provincial Policy Statement). In addition, it requires that municipalities base population and employment forecasts on the Ontario Population Projections published by the Ministry of Finance (this was not a requirement under the previous Provincial Policy Statement).

Over the course of the project timeline, lands within the existing settlement boundaries of Tavistock and Innerkip have been consumed as new development applications have been submitted and projects have been built out. This means that the land supply within the existing settlement boundaries has also been reduced since the project was initiated.

The combination of the updated growth forecasts, planning for a longer (30-year) planning horizon and the reduced land supply could result in a larger expansion area than was previously identified in the Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, which was endorsed by Council in December 2023.



2.3 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)

As noted above, the Province has introduced a new Provincial Planning Statement to replace the existing Provincial Policy Statement (2020). The Provincial Planning Statement is a consolidation of the Province of Ontario’s land use policies, outlining Provincial planning goals and objectives and giving specific direction on how to achieve them. The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act, and every municipal planning decision in Ontario must be consistent with the PPS.

The final version of the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS, 2024) was released on August 20th, 2024 and came into effect on October 20th, 2024. In addition to the changes related to planning for growth, the PPS (2024) makes some key changes that impact the settlement area boundary expansion process.

These changes are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary of Key Changes and Impacts from the New PPS (2024)

KEY CHANGE	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
Settlement area boundary expansions can be undertaken at any time.	Under the 2020 PPS, settlement area boundary expansions could only be undertaken during a Comprehensive Review process. Under the new 2024 PPS, they can be undertaken at any time. This does not impact the current project as it is already underway. But future settlement area boundary expansions could occur at any time under this policy framework.
Allows for third party applications for settlement area boundary expansions.	Settlement area boundary expansions could only be undertaken during a Comprehensive Review process and was typically an exercise led by the municipality under the previous policy framework (similar to this process). However, third parties could apply for an expansion during a Comprehensive Review. Under the 2024 PPS, third parties can apply for settlement area boundary

	<p>expansions at any time. Like other planning applications (i.e., Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, etc.), these applications will need to be reviewed by staff and brought forward to Council for a decision.</p> <p>This may impact the project as third parties may begin submitting applications for settlement expansion in parallel with this process.</p> <p>This makes it even more critical that the Township completes this process as it represents a statement by Council on where and how the Township is to grow over the next 30 years.</p>
<p>Provides more flexibility for conditions required to permit a settlement area boundary expansion</p>	<p>The previous policy framework had more stringent conditions that were required to be met in order to permit a settlement area boundary expansion.</p> <p>The 2024 PPS still contains similar conditions (i.e., accommodate a range and mix of land uses, demonstration that lands can be serviced, minimize impacts to agriculture uses, etc.), but states that a municipality must “consider” these conditions, rather than requiring them.</p> <p>These conditions have already been demonstrated through the work completed in Phase 2 of this project, which was conducted under the previous requirements of the 2020 PPS.</p> <p>Following the more stringent conditions of the 2020 PPS still achieves the requirements of the 2024 PPS, and at a higher standard than what is required by the 2024 PPS. Therefore, it is still</p>



	<p>recommended that the County and Township proceed with this process and this heightened standard to ensure that the process is comprehensive and defensible.</p>
<p>Planning horizon has been extended from 25 years to 30 years</p>	<p>The 2020 PPS required that municipalities planned for sufficient land to accommodate growth for a 25-year planning horizon. The 2024 PPS requires that municipalities plan for a minimum of 20 years to a maximum of 30 years.</p> <p>This increase in the planning horizon (assuming the Township and County Plan for a 30 year planning horizon) could result in a larger land need for the Township. This means that a larger expansion area may be required based on the updated land need.</p>
<p>Requires that municipalities base population and employment growth forecasts on Ontario Population Projections published by the Ministry of Finance. However, municipalities may modify these projections as appropriate, and may continue to forecast growth using population and employment forecasts previously issued by the Province for the purposes of land use planning.</p>	<p>While the County and Township are required to base population and employment forecasts on the Ministry of Finance projections, other data sources may still be used to prepare and refine the forecasts.</p> <p>The County is currently working to prepare updated forecasts which will consider the Ministry of Finance projections, as well as other sources to determine an appropriate and defensible growth forecast for the Township.</p>

2.4 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

A public open house was held on June 20th, 2024, at the Township office in Hickson. During this meeting, the Project Team received feedback from landowners and members of the public which warranted further review and consideration. This feedback will be incorporated into the updated Settlement Area Boundary Expansion and Secondary Plans.



2.5 AGRICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT & MINIMUM DISTANCE SEPARATION

It was identified during Phase 3 that there was an omission in the original Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) conducted for Tavistock. This information was used in the identification of the Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion that was endorsed by Council at the end of Phase 2. A seasonal hog barn located on the south side of Highway 59 was missed in the initial assessment. The Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) requirement associated with this barn would significantly impact the area to the southwest of Tavistock's existing settlement area boundary. The lands in this area made up a large portion of the Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, and were proposed to be designated for residential uses within the draft Secondary Plan.

The MDS Guidelines published by the Province do allow for industrial uses to exist within the setback from a livestock operation, but does not permit residential uses within these setbacks. This means that the areas proposed for industrial uses in the draft Secondary Plan could remain as is, but the residential uses will need to be accommodated on alternate lands than what was originally presented in the Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion. The Project Team will need to review the available options and feedback received through the June 20th, 2024, public open house to determine a revised Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, and bring this forward to Council for endorsement.

2.6 PROJECT IMPLICATIONS

Given the additional information that has been presented and the changes occurring at Provincial and County levels, the Project Team has re-evaluated the work program and identified a recommended path forward to address these changes, and to bring the project to completion. This includes:

- **Reassess the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Tavistock based on updated forecasts:** As noted above, the Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion will need to be updated based on the updated forecasts and land need provided by the County. The proposed expansion area for Innerkip represents all the growth that can be accommodated based on Innerkip's current water servicing capacity. Therefore, the Innerkip expansion area will not be modified any further as part of this process. The modifications based on the new information identified will only apply to the Tavistock Settlement Area Boundary Expansion. This will include identifying the size of the proposed expansion area based on the County's updated forecasts, land need and extended planning horizon, as well as the revised location of the expansion area due to the constraints presented by the revised AIA. Some of the technical reports prepared



as part of Phase 2 will also need to be updated to address the updates to the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, changes to the Provincial Planning Statement and County forecasts. After the updated Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion has been prepared, it will be brought forward to Council for endorsement.

- **Developing a Secondary Plan for Tavistock and Innerkip:** The original work program contemplated one Secondary Plan that would include both the Tavistock and Innerkip expansion areas. It is the Project Team's recommendation to prepare one Secondary Plan for both Tavistock and Innerkip, once the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Tavistock has been approved by Council.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

Based on the proposed work plan, the Project Team anticipates the following next steps for the project:

- Reassess the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Tavistock, and update associated technical studies and Phase 2 Summary Report based on new information;
- Update the Planning Justification Report for the Settlement Area Boundary Expansions (for both Tavistock and Innerkip);
- Bring forward the new SABE for Tavistock for Council endorsement;
- Prepare a Secondary Plan for Tavistock and Innerkip,
- Hold an additional in-person Public Open House for Tavistock to present the updated Secondary Plan and land use concept and receive public feedback;
- Finalize the Secondary Plan for Tavistock and Innerkip based on feedback received from the Public Open House; and,
- Bring forward the final Secondary Plan to County Council for endorsement.

Once the Secondary Plan for Tavistock and Innerkip have been endorsed by Council, the County will prepare the Official Plan Amendment which will be brought before County Council for adoption.

Should Council have any additional questions related to the East Zorra-Tavistock Secondary Plan project or the proposed workplan, we ask that Council please notify Township or County staff as soon as possible.