



Working together with our community

Council Meeting – October 28, 2025

Subject: Application ZNPL2025074 to amend the Zoning By-law to change the zoning of 711 Schafer Side Road, Norfolk County
Report Number: CDS-25-069
Division: Community Development
Department: Planning
Ward: Ward 2
Purpose: For Decision

Recommendation(s):

That application ZNPL2025074 affecting the lands described as MID CON 1 NTR PT LOTS 181 AND RP 37R10593 PARTS 1 2 AND 4 REG Norfolk County, to amend the Norfolk County Zoning By-Law 1-Z-2014 from Agricultural (Temporary Use For Special Needs Housing) to Agricultural (Special Provision For Emergency/Transition Shelters) with special provisions, **be approved**, as shown in Attachment D to Report CDS-25-069; and

Further That all public input received for this application was considered as part of the decision, as outlined in staff report CDS-25-069.

Executive Summary:

Purpose of the Report: The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a recommendation concerning the proposed Zoning By-law amendment application.

Background and Context: Proposed Zoning By-law amendment to amend the Norfolk County Zoning By-Law 1-Z-2014 from Agricultural (Temporary Use For Special Needs Housing) to Agricultural (Special Provision For Emergency/Transition Shelters) with special provisions.

Key Findings and Analysis: The approval would make the proposed use permanent as it has been a temporary use for some time.

Options: To approve or refuse the proposed Zoning By-law amendment.

Conclusions: Planning staff is recommending approval.

Discussion -

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a recommendation concerning the proposed Zoning By-law amendment application.

The applicant is proposing to use a former government research building as temporary and transitional shelters for refugees and people experiencing homelessness, on a permanent basis. This has been a temporary use on the subject lands for several years. The applicant is seeking to make this use permanent.

Site Context:

The subject lands are approximately 40 hectares (100 acres) in area and are located on the west side of Schafer Side Road in the geographic township of Middleton. The property is actively farmed and contains several buildings clustered together, encompassing approximately 4 hectares (10 acres).

Existing Buildings:

- Former Agricultural Research Station (now temporary use as special needs housing emergency/transition shelter).
- Several underutilized buildings that used to serve the research station:
 - Former weather station
 - Greenhouses
 - Maintenance building
 - Storage buildings

Surrounding land uses:

North – existing agricultural land

South – existing agricultural land

East – existing agricultural land

West – existing agricultural land and significant woodlot



Figure 1: View of the subject property from Schafer Side Road

Proposal Summary:

The applicant is proposing to rezone a portion of the subject lands zoned Agricultural (Temporary Use for Special Needs Housing) to Agricultural with a special provision that includes:

- Use of the lands as an emergency/transition shelter with a site-specific definition of this use; and,
- Parking Ratio: 1 space for every 4 units.

The following studies have been submitted in support of the proposed applications:

- Traffic Impact Brief – F.R. Berry and Associates (November 30, 2021)
- Planning Justification Report – G. Douglas Vallee (March 7, 2025)

No other studies were submitted.

Consultation(s) -

Technical Comments / Analysis:

No significant concerns were raised by any departments or agencies through the circulation. See Attachment A for the complete technical comments.

Regard for Public Input and Statutory Public Hearing Committee Meeting:

The application was circulated to surrounding addresses within 120 metres of the subject lands.

The Statutory Public Meeting for the development application(s) was held at the July 22, 2025 Public Hearings Committee (of Council).

One public submission was received. The letter questioned conformance with the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw.

See Attachment B for the complete public comments.

Planning Considerations:

Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, which is intended to be complemented by local policies addressing local interests. The PPS promotes healthy, livable and safe communities through the efficient use of land throughout the Province of Ontario.

The application is consistent with the housing policies of the PPS.

Norfolk County Official Plan

The Norfolk County Official Plan (the Plan) provides the essential tool to direct future growth, development and change in the County and to create the community envisioned by Norfolk's residents. This Plan responds to the uncertain nature of the future with clear and resilient principles and policies. It ensures that the planning framework and processes are clearly identified to ensure that Norfolk County remains a healthy, safe and successful community with a rich agricultural base and a strong economy, a diverse natural environment, and a great place to live.

The subject lands are currently designated Agricultural. The buildings exist on the site; no new development is being proposed. The applicant proposes continuing the previously approved temporary use on the subject lands. Emergency and transitional housing is supported by the Plan.

See Attachment C for a detailed review of the policy and zoning considerations and planning comments.

Finance Comments:

There are no direct financial impacts of re-zoning the subject lands. However, upon rezoning, if future renovations are completed to accommodate the intended change in use it would result in increased building permit revenues for the County. Furthermore, it may lead to a positive impact on assessment growth and tax revenues, however the amount of growth would be dependent on the change of assessment of properties by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

Strategic Plan Linkage:

This report aligns with the 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priority Empowering Norfolk - Putting the tools and resources in place to ensure our business' and residents' success.

Explanation: The proposed development would provide additional housing options for residents of Norfolk County.

Conclusion:

Planning staff are recommending approval of the proposed Zoning By-law amendment.

Attachment D contains the recommended Zoning By-law Amendment.

Attachment(s):

Attachment A – Technical Comments
Attachment B – Public Comments
Attachment C – Planning Consideration Review
Attachment D – Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment
Attachment E – Planning Justification Report

Approval:

Approved By:
Bill Cridland, General Manager, Community and Development Services

Reviewed By:
Alisha Cull, BES, MCIP, RPP, Ec.D., Acting Director, Planning and Realty Services

Prepared By:
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