

Township of Southgate

Administration Office

185667 Grey Road 9, RR 1
Dundalk, ON N0C 1B0

Phone: 519-923-2110

Toll Free: 1-888-560-6607

Fax: 519-923-9262

Web: www.southgate.ca

Staff Report CAO2020-048

Title of Report: Economic Development – Vacant Land Planning Vision for Official Consideration

Department: Administration

Council Date: August 5, 2020

Council Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Council receive Staff Report CAO2020-048 as information; and **That** Council consider these discussions related to rural lots of record at future Township Council visioning meetings and as part of the new Official Plan discussions to provide guidance for the Southgate Planner to consider when drafting future land use policies.

Background:

The CAO is providing this report as an Economic Development strategy to increase the development opportunities for existing urban industrial and rural lots of record that are not being developed in the Township for various reasons. They are larger parcels of land that either owners are not motivated to sell or because of land speculation as investment. The urban lots are privately owned and mostly in the Hanbury Industrial subdivision.

The rural parcels were created in the 60's and 70's with developers purchasing 100 and 200 acre farms that are corner lots and then subdividing them along the Concession and Sideroads to give the properties access to road allowance frontages. In 2 cases the vacant properties were created on unopened road allowance to create more lots. One of those developments resulted in the creation of Christie Street. One other property had a road allowance created in the development but was never constructed to a municipal roadway standard or opened for public use.

Many of these rural vacant lots are 5 plus acres or larger in size that could be developed and generate increased taxation but are presently sitting as vacant properties at this time.

There are some land parcels that do not have frontage on the open road allowances at the present time. Without investment in the construction of an open municipal roadway they will not be able to have access to emergency services or to construct buildings on the properties.

Staff Comments:

Staff have had an increase in industrial land inquiries in the last few months. As a result of the increased demand we are trying to contact the owners of these vacant land parcels. The urban land parcels we feel are very marketable and we will

continue to work at making contact with the property owners through mailing letters and real estate agent contacts.

At the present time, the Southgate Official Plan (OP) is under review to develop a new plan. Staff suggest that the Township should develop a policy in the new OP for discussion and approval to facilitate future uses on lots of record properties that would support the development of rural lands for small scale industrial operations on smaller parcels of lands with residential and agriculture uses included.

The consideration for allowing these site-specific zoning allowances in the new OP for existing lots of record would be to develop the larger parcels of land that could justify the developments. Some may need to be developed into a cluster development area where future development is unlikely for multiple reasons. One of the major reasons would be the cost of constructing a municipal roadway that would not be financially supported by residential only development.

This is a proposal that would need the Municipal Planner to support, ensure compliance with the Provincial Policy Statement and develop policy for approval by the County and the Province. At the present time some of these lands have sat vacant and unproductive for over 45 years. It may have been bad planning at the time when these lots were created, but today we have better policy to manage these types of developments. The question is do we leave these lands as they are presently undeveloped or do we consider specific policies that will facilitate future development on the property to increase our tax base in the Township of Southgate.

Financial Impact or Long-Term Implications

There is no financial cost to the municipality as a result of this report other than staff time to prepare the report.

The potential of this report recommendations would increase tax revenues. If we consider new policy for these lots of record it could increase the taxation on vacant 5 acre plus land parcels that are now paying a few hundreds of dollars to taxation of \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year if residentially developed or over \$10,000 in taxes per year per property if the lands were developed into same agriculture property with a small scale industrial business on the property.

Communications & Community Action Plan Impact: Order Summary

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public and to advance our Southgate CAP goals.

Goal 1 - Attracting New and Supporting Existing Businesses and Farms

Action 1: The residents and businesses of Southgate envision a growing and diverse local economy, which respects our agricultural background development, and development will be underway.

Strategic Initiatives 1-E (2019-2023): By 2023, the Township will have updated the Official Plan and zoning bylaw to provide flexibility for business, help to reduce processing requirements, and help to provide more opportunity for success.

Concluding Comments

1. That Council receive staff report CAO2020-048 as information.
2. That Council consider this report as information during the Southgate New Official Plan discussions.
3. See Attachment #1 which is map of an example property in Southgate with considerable undeveloped lots with some being land locked on an unopened and unmaintained road easement as present access to the properties.

Respectfully Submitted,

CAO approval: Original Signed By

Dave Milliner – CAO

dmilliner@southgate.ca 923-2110 x210

- Attachment 1 – Southgate Checkerboard Lot Property