

Directed to: Mayor Joe Preston and Members of City Council

Meeting Date:
April 7, 2025

Department: Planning & Building Services

Attachment
Appendix A - Planning Analysis
Appendix B - Planning Memo
Appendix C - Draft
Amendment

Prepared By: Jim McCoomb, Manager of Planning Services

Subject: Proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments – Silver Street

Recommendation:

THAT: Report PD-12-2025 relating to Proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments be received for information; and further,

THAT: Council authorize staff to prepare site-specific draft amendments to the St. Thomas Official Plan and Zoning By-law 50-88 to permit Business Employment uses on lands which may be described as Range 1 SER, Part Lot 7, Geographic Township of Yarmouth, now in The City of St. Thomas; and further

THAT: A public meeting be scheduled for May 12, 2025, in accordance with Ontario Regulations 543/06 and 545/06, as amended.

Background:

In 2023, Council approved Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments for 50 Silver Street in support of a proposal by Maxill to build a new warehouse facility. After the Maxill amendments were approved, staff did look at the remaining lands to determine if they could possibly be used for an affordable/supportive housing project. Dillon Consulting provided the attached memo (Appendix B) summarizing their analysis of the relevant planning considerations for the use of these lands for housing. These include:

- The remnant land use designation (STORC Complex) of the site warrants re-designation, however, the site is located in the area that has historically been the transition area between residential uses to the west and the employment uses to the east.
- The PPS requires the City to protect and preserve employment areas over the long term in part by considering land use compatibility and including an appropriate transition between its employment area and its non-employment/residential areas.
- Introducing sensitive land use receptors in this area could impact on the ability for industries in the Employment Area to receive an Environmental Compliance Approval.
- The City is encouraged to redesignate the Silver Street site to “Business Employment” in the Official Plan to further consolidate and solidify the land use transition area between its Employment Area to the east and the Residential Area to the west.

Staff were recently advised by EDC that they have another potential user for further warehouse space, and a portion of the Silver Street site would suit their needs. Warehousing is permitted in the Business Employment Zone and represents a type of use that is generally quiet and makes for a good transition between the employment lands and the residential uses to the west. Staff did reach out to the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities to determine if the lands still had any utility for park purposes given the current designation and zoning. However, given the significant amount of park space in the area, including 1Password Park, Donker Park, Goddeeris Luyks Park and Greenway Park, there is likely not a need for more park space in this area of the city.

Staff are recommending that Council initiate amendments to the Official Plan and By-law 50-88 to implement the recommendation of Dillon Consulting to redesignate the Silver Street lands to “Business Employment” and place them in the Business Employment Zone (BEL). An analysis of the relevant planning considerations is found in Appendix A.

Strategic Priority:

Strategic Pillar: Excellence in All We Do - Priority #2: Thoughtful, Strategic, and Sustainable Community Growth

Financial Impact:

N/A

Respectfully,

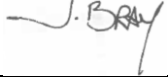


Jim McCoomb, MCIP RPP
Manager of Planning Services

Reviewed By:

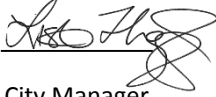


Planning



PRF

Approved By:



City Manager

Appendix A: Planning Analysis - Draft Plan of Subdivision, Official Plan Amendment & Zoning By-law Amendment Applications – Silver Street

Consultation, Complete Application and Notice:

Since this is a city-initiated application, no consultation was required, although Planning staff did discuss the proposal with the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities and the CEO of the St. Thomas Economic Development Corporation before preparing this report.

Circulation of the application and supporting documentation to external agencies, adjacent municipalities and City Staff for review and comment will be initiated on April 11th, 2025, in compliance with the *Planning Act* and Regulations.

A notice of public meeting is to be published in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act* and Ontario Regulations 543/06 and 545/06 in the St. Thomas Times Journal on April 11th, 2025, and will be mailed to property owners within 120 metres of the limits of the property. A sign will also be posted on the subject property in accordance with the trial authorized by Council.

The application, plan and supporting documentation are available on the City's website at www.stthomas.ca/living_here/notices_to_residents.

POLICY AND ZONING:

Provincial Planning Statement

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. As a key part of Ontario's policy-led planning system, the Provincial Planning Statement sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land province-wide, helping achieve the provincial goal of meeting the needs of a fast-growing province while enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians.

Policy 2.8.1.1 states that planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by, among other things, providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs. Policy 2.8.1 goes on to state that planning authorities should address land use compatibility adjacent to employment areas by providing an appropriate transition to sensitive land uses. By redesignating the subject lands to a "Business Employment" designation, Council will be establishing the appropriate transition between the Employment lands to the east and the sensitive Residential lands to the west.

Policy 2.8.1.2 provides that industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that could be located adjacent to sensitive land uses without adverse effects are encouraged in strategic growth areas and other mixed-use areas where frequent transit service is available, outside of employment areas. The Business Employment designation permits an appropriate range of small-scale warehousing, light industrial and non-retail service commercial uses that are compatible with nearby sensitive land uses.

Policy 2.8.1.3 states that on lands within 300 metres of employment areas, development shall avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate potential impacts on the longterm economic viability of employment uses within existing or planned employment areas, in accordance with provincial guidelines. The subject lands are within the 300 metre distance, and by placing them into a Business Employment designation this will avoid potential impacts to the long term viability of the Employment Lands to the east.

Policy 2.8.2.3 states that planning authorities shall designate, protect and plan for all employment areas in settlement areas by, among other things, including an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas to ensure land use compatibility and economic viability. The proposed Business Employment designation was designed to provide that appropriate transition.

Policy 2.8.2.4 states that planning authorities shall assess and update employment areas identified in official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of employment areas. In planning for employment areas, planning authorities shall maintain land use compatibility between sensitive land uses and employment areas in accordance with policy 3.5 to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas. Again, the proposed Business Employment designation for the subject lands was designed to maintain the compatibility between the Employment Areas to the east and the sensitive Residential uses to the west.

Policy 3.5.1 provides that major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures. The proposed Business Employment designation is designed to avoid land use compatibility issues between the Employment Uses and nearby sensitive Residential uses.

Policy 3.9.1 provides that healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by, among other

things, planning and providing for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities in the distribution of a full range of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources. Staff examined the feasibility of keeping the lands designated and zoned for Regional Recreational Facilities. However, it is recognized that with the development of 1Password Park this area of the city is represented by a broad choice of parks, passive trails and recreational opportunities.

St. Thomas Official Plan

The lands are designated “STORC Complex” on Schedule “A” to the City of St. Thomas Official Plan. As such, the appropriate sections of the Official Plan would apply.

The proposed “Business Employment” designation permits a range of light industrial and non-retail service commercial uses, including business offices; computer, electronic or data processing establishments; research and development facilities; commercial or technical schools; restaurant; non-retail service commercial uses; warehousing and bulk storage within an enclosed building only; scientific, technological or communication establishments; automotive service uses; and accessory uses, buildings and structures.

The Business Employment policies require that buildings and sites shall be designed to a higher architectural/landscape standard and all activities, storage of goods, operating facilities and waste disposal facilities shall be contained within wholly enclosed buildings. A more rigorous standard of building and site design, landscaping and signage control shall be applied through the implementing Zoning By-law and Site Plan Control Approval. Outdoor storage of materials, equipment, goods or refuse associated with any permitted use or any ancillary secondary use shall be prohibited.

The policies support the use of this designation as an appropriate transition between the Employment Lands and the sensitive Residential uses to the west.

St. Thomas Zoning By-Law 50-88 (as amended)

Zoning By-law 50-88 zones the lands Regional Recreational Facilities Zone (RF). The RF zone permits uses, buildings or structures for public service purposes as defined by the by-law. A zoning by-law amendment is required to implement the use of the lands for Business Employment and will place the subject lands into the BEL zone.

Wording for the draft amendment is attached as Appendix C to this report.



Memo

To: Lou Pompilii and Jim McCoomb, City of St. Thomas
From: Ron Shishido and Ashley North, Dillon Consulting
Date: December 17, 2024
Subject: Silver Street Site Review
Our File: 20-3518-9300

1.0

Introduction

The City of St. Thomas takes a proactive approach to making provision for affordable housing for its residents. They identify City-owned sites that are development ready (i.e., serviced with municipally piped water supply and sanitary sewers and “Residential” designated in the City’s Official Plan and zoned in the City’s Zoning By-law) and approach affordable housing providers to offer them as donated sites for affordable housing. The City works with the affordable housing providers to “fast-track” their projects through the development approvals process. A recent successful example is the 45-unit rental apartment with wraparound social services built by the Indwell Charity on a City-owned site at 16 Queen St.

Now with the opening of the VW/PowerCo Battery Plant slated for 2027, the City is exploring opportunities to facilitate the provision of housing that would be affordable to the plant and supply chain employees looking to both work and live in St Thomas. To kick-start this initiative, the City is looking for a City-owned property that is development ready as the candidate site for the development of a housing project that would be affordable to moderate income workers. City staff reviewed the inventory of municipally-owned sites and identified a property municipally addressed as 235 Burwell Road (herein referred to as the Silver St site) as the candidate site for this affordable housing project. The City retained Dillon Consulting to undertake an independent review of the suitability of the Silver St site for residential land uses. This Silver Street Site Review Memo is organized as follows:

- **Section 2: Silver Street Site Description** – site location, area/size, existing and planned land use on the site and surrounding lands;
- **Section 3: Need for the Affordable Housing Project** – summarizes the need for affordable housing in the City as documented in the St Thomas Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan Report dated October 2023 (Watson Assoc and Welch Consulting);
- **Section 4: Long Range Planning Context** - planning context for employment lands east of Burwell and residential west of Burwell;
- **Section 5: Review of the Suitability of the Silver Street Site for Residential** - site review applying the policies in Section 2.8.2 of the PPS 2024; and
- **Section 6: Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.**

2.0

Silver Street Site Description

2.1

Site Location and Existing Uses on the Surrounding Lands

The Silver Street site is located in the north-east part of the City, on the southeast quadrant of the Burwell Road/Silver Street intersection as shown in **Figure 1**. The 2.5 ha parcel of land is vacant. The adjacent 2.4 ha parcel to the immediate east (50 Silver Street) was recently severed off from this parcel and sold to Maxill Inc to construct a warehouse on that site to support their manufacturing operation located on Elm Street in the City. In February 2024, the City redesignated the lands in the OP from STORC Complex to Business Employment (OPA 108) and rezoned the lands to facilitate the development of the warehouse. The existing uses around the Site are shown in **Figures 2 and 3**. South of the Site is St. Thomas Fire Station No. 2 and along South Edgeware Road east from Burwell Road is a plaza with a range of business employment uses (e.g., health services, financial services), a Hydro One fleet maintenance services facility and the St. Thomas Community Recycling Centre.

To the east of the Site, on the east side of the future Maxill warehouse, is Masco Canada manufacturing plant – producing faucets, tubs, shower stalls, enclosures, and other plumbing equipment - which extends north of South Edgeware.

Existing uses north of the Site includes a plaza with business employment uses (e.g. health club, financial services), and the Lumar CNC machining and manufacturing shop. Further north of these uses is the St. Thomas Outdoor Recreational Complex (1Password Park).

In this part of the City, Burwell Road north of South Edgeware Road separates the St. Thomas Employment Area from the City's Residential Area. West of Burwell Road the residential land uses includes primarily ground-related housing (semi-detached houses, townhouses) which are oriented to local/private roads that connect to Burwell Road or have rear yards that back onto Burwell Road. About 250 metres west of the Site is a ten-storey apartment building that fronts onto Confederation Drive. Further north along Confederation Drive to and along Avon Road, are low-rise apartment buildings (3 storeys) and a mid-rise seven storey apartment building.

2.2

Planned Land Uses

The Subject Site is designated STORC Complex on Schedule "A" Land Use Plan to the St Thomas Official Plan. The STORC designation was planned as a major soccer facility and park space (OP Policy 7.3.2). Initially, the entire STORC designated lands were intended to be used for this facility; however, the area south of Silver Street was not used. This resulted in a remnant ±4.9 ha parcel on the south side of Silver Street. The east half of the parcel (± 2.4 ha) has been severed off and sold to Maxill for their planned warehouse. The remnant ± 2.5 ha parcel is bounded by Business Employment uses to the north and east, Employment and Business Employment uses to the south and is separated and isolated from the active part of the STORC Complex.

As shown in **Figure 4**, Burwell Road has historically been the boundary line that separates the St Thomas Industrial Area on the east from the St Thomas Residential Community on the west. Land uses in the Business Employment and STORC Complex designations on the east side of Burwell Road function as the land use transition between the land uses in the Employment Lands and the Residential designations.

3.0 **Need for the Affordable Housing Project**

A The City of St Thomas Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan Report (Watson Economists and Tim Welch Consulting identified the following:

- a need for an additional 7,700 housing units over the next decade (2024 to 2034);
- Of these units, 1,680 units are needed for affordable housing;
- 1,1130 units are ownership, and 550 units are rental to provide workforce housing;
- a need to focus on building high-density rental housing;
- a need to review infill opportunities including City-owned land and prioritize those opportunities to efficiently leverage existing infrastructure.

4.0 **Planning Context for Employment Lands East of Burwell and Residential West of Burwell**

The planned function of this Site has evolved over decades of long-range planning for the City of St. Thomas. Historically, the Site has been included as a part of the broader Employment Area for the City and designated for employment uses with Burwell Road as the dividing line between employment and residential areas.

In 2009, Dillon and W. Scott Morgan and Associates completed an Industrial and Commercial Land Use Review. This study concluded that parcels on the east side of Burwell Road could accommodate Light Industrial uses as part of a transition between residential uses west of Burwell Road and the heavier industrial uses to the east of Burwell Road.¹ The 2009 study recommended a change in land use designation from Industrial to Light Industrial in support of this transition.

In 2018, an Employment Lands Review was completed by Dillon and Watson. As a Comprehensive Review, this study assessed the employment land supply, forecast employment land demand to 2037, employment land conversions, and the overall policy framework. Building on the 2009 recommendation for a Light Industrial designation, the 2018 study recommended the creation of a Business Employment

¹ Light Industrial would permit uses with limited impacts on adjacent users (noise, air, odour etc.) such as general manufacturing, research and development, warehouses and wholesaling, storage, and light assembly.

designation to function as a transitional land use between industrial and residential land uses. It also underscored the need to protect the function of the broader Employment Area.

As part of the conversion requests assessed as part of this review, a site was identified by the City for consideration (Site #21 in the 2018 report). It was through this Comprehensive Review that the Subject Site was converted from Employment to a site-specific “STORC Complex” designation. While parks and recreational facilities are permitted in the Employment Lands designation, these lands were removed from the employment land supply due to the size of the site (32 ha) so to not overinflate what was available in terms of employment land supply. The 2018 conversion review completed by Dillon states that “should those [STORC] uses cease to exist; the land would revert back to an employment designation”.

With changes that have occurred since the 2018 study, it is appropriate to consider a redesignation of the Site. The following section outlines the Provincial policy context guiding this review.

5.0

Review of the Suitability of the Silver Street Site for Residential

5.1

2024 Provincial Planning Statement

When assessing the suitability of the Site for residential uses, within the context of the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement, there are three key policy themes to consider: 1. Housing, 2. Employment Areas, and 3. Land Use Compatibility.

The 2024 PPS (Section 2.2 Housing) requires planning authorities to provide an appropriate range and mix of housing options including providing affordable housing to low- and moderate-income households. The PPS requires municipalities to plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future use (Section 2.8.2.3). Under the 2024 PPS and related *Planning Act* changes, Employment Areas permit manufacturing, research, and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing and goods movement, and associated retail and office uses in Employment Areas. Commercial, institutional, office, and residential uses are now prohibited in these areas. This change underscores that Employment Areas are needed for those uses that may be more likely to potentially have adverse impacts on sensitive land uses such as residential as they relate to noise, odour, or other contaminants.

The PPS requires that municipalities provide an appropriate land use transition/separation between Employment Land uses and sensitive non-employment areas (Section 2.8.2.3) such as residential. This requires being intentional with what uses are permitted adjacent to Employment Areas to not impact the potential for these uses to operate over the long-term.

DILLON CONSULTING LIMITED

www.dillon.ca

Page 4 of 12

The PPS requires that for lands within 300 metres of Employment Areas, development (which includes a change in land use) shall avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate potential impacts on the long-term viability of employment areas (Section 2.8.1.3). This requires the selection of transitional land uses to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on adjacent residential and employment land uses.

5.2 Site Assessment based on PPS Policy

The rising cost of housing, planned growth, macroeconomic factors such as the cost of construction and high interest rates, have resulted in a very real need for more affordable housing in the City. The City is taking a proactive role in addressing this need by seeking out opportunities to support development through partnerships, donating City owned sites and reducing barriers in the planning process (i.e., completing Official Plan Amendments and/or Zoning By-law Amendments) in parallel with the processing of the development application. As part of this proactive role, the City wants to identify a site that is “shovel-ready” for development to attract an affordable housing provider to work with the City to kick-start a project. A candidate site identified by City staff was Silver Street. The Site is City-owned, vacant, has direct access to a municipal road, can be connected to the municipal water supply and sanitary sewerage systems and is suitable for re-designation from “STORC Complex” to an alternative land use designation for the reasons previously described in this memo.

The first step in the site review by Dillon was a visit to the site and the surrounding area on 23 July 2024 to confirm existing land uses, make site observations (see, listen, smell) and begin to consider the implications of introducing sensitive residential land uses in closer proximity to the existing Employment Land uses to the east and south. On this site visit in the early afternoon in July, we observed the bay doors of the Masco plant were open and production noise was heard standing at the Silver Street site. It is noted that during our site visit the bay doors of the adjacent Lumar shop were closed and no production noise was evident. We were also advised by City staff that the City has received complaints about odours experienced by soccer field users at 1Password Park.

The 2024 PPS emphasizes the importance of including an appropriate transition to non-employment areas as part the approach to protecting employment areas over the long term. Historically, Burwell Road has been the dividing line between the residential uses to the west and the Employment Area to the east. With this ‘boundary’, the City has been able to successfully manage the transition between sensitive land uses such as residential and industrial uses that may have adverse impacts. The importance of the transition is twofold: (1) to provide a high quality of life for future residents by limiting the experience of adverse impacts and (2) protecting the function of the Employment Areas by not introducing incompatible uses.

While there are certainly benefits to the site – City-owned, vacant, municipally serviced, plus 2 ha size - there are limitations to the location. Introducing sensitive land uses to this area could begin to erode the long-term economic function of the St. Thomas Employment Area. If a new Environmental Compliance Approval or update is required by an industry, with a change in permitted uses, a new sensitive land use receptor will have been introduced that is closer to the operating industry. This could further impact the

Employment Area if higher density residential is introduced within the area since height can influence how adverse impacts are experienced.

Through discussions with City staff, it is our understanding that there are other City-owned sites that could be considered and based on our preliminary reviews have less land use compatibility issues i.e. underutilized parking lots and a small remnant piece of tableland opposite Eastwood Terrace on the north side of South Edgeware Road.

6.0

Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

- Based on its most recent housing needs assessment, the City needs an additional 7,700 housing units over the next ten years. Of these units, 1,680 should be affordable.
- Macroeconomic trends make the City's proactive role in creating opportunities and providing affordable housing supply even more critical.
- The Silver Street site is City-owned, vacant, fully serviced, large, and has ready access to the arterial road network.
- The remnant land use designation (STORC Complex) of the site warrants re-designation.
- The Site, however, is located in the area that has historically been the transition area between residential uses to the west and the employment uses to the east.
- The PPS requires the City to protect and preserve employment areas over the long term in part by considering land use compatibility and including an appropriate transition between its employment area and its non-employment/residential areas.
- These policies are intended to protect residents from experiencing adverse impacts from industrial uses such as noise and odour. They are also intended to protect the ongoing employment function by having compatible uses adjacent to each other.
- Introducing sensitive land use receptors in this area could impact the ability for industries in the Employment Area to receive an Environmental Compliance Approval.
- The City is encouraged to redesignate the Silver Street site to "Business Employment" in the Official Plan to further consolidate and solidify the land use transition area between its Employment Area to the east and the Residential Area to the west.
- The City is encouraged to continue to investigate other City-owned sites to provide some affordable housing.

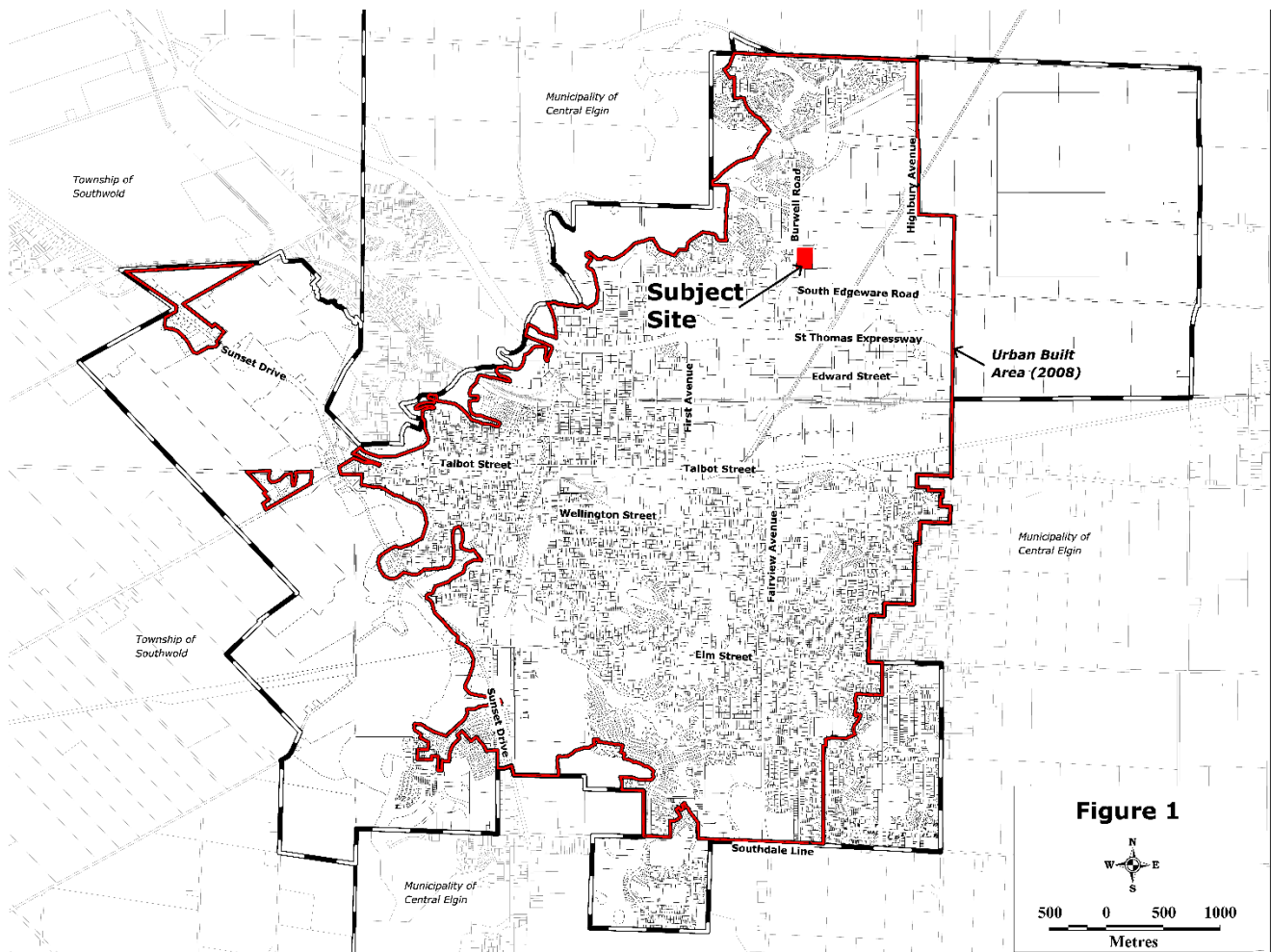
DILLON CONSULTING LIMITED

www.dillon.ca

Page 6 of 12

FIGURES

Silver Street Site



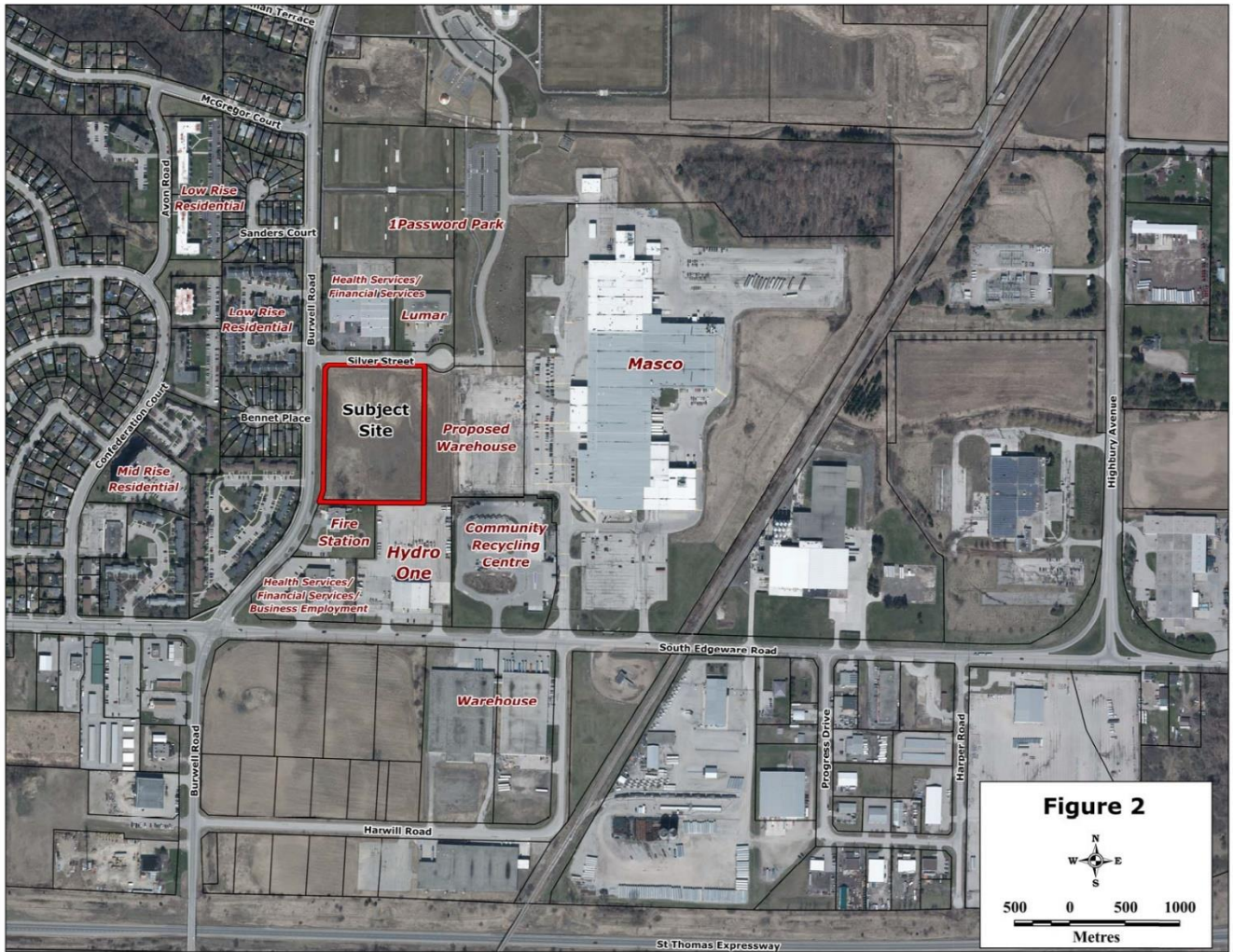


Figure 3: Photos of Existing Uses



St. Thomas Community Recycling Centre



Hydro One Fleet Maintenance Services Facility



Building containing mix of Business Employment uses



Lumar Machine and Manufacturing



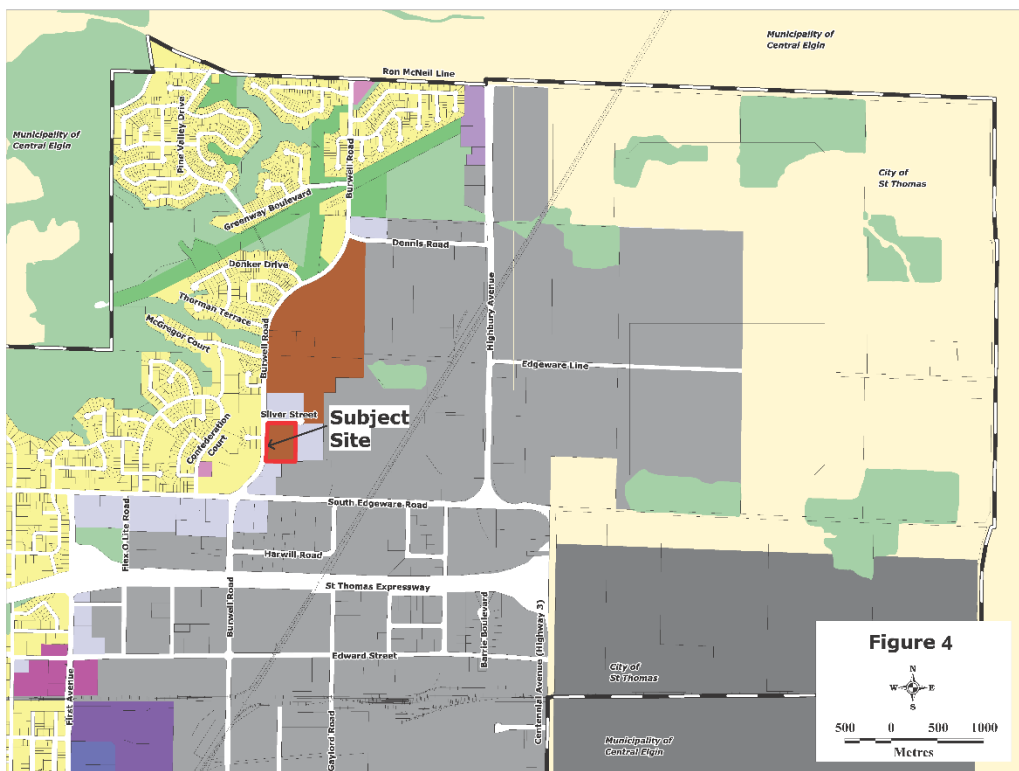
Looking southeast from the Silver St. site to the Maxill site, Masco and St. Thomas Recycling Centre



Looking west from Silver St. at residential land uses on the west side of Burwell Rd.



Looking east from Silver St. at Masco Canada Industrial Building



CITY OF ST. THOMAS

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend By-law 50-88

THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Zoning Map 3 to By-law 50-88 as amended is further amended by zoning the lands shown outlined in heavy solid lines on Schedule “A” hereto as “BEL”, and such Schedule shall be added to and form part of By-law 50-88 as amended and shall be known as “Special Zoning Map 3-18” to By-law 50-88 as amended.
2. The provisions of subsection 22.1, 22.2, 22.3, 22.4, and any other applicable provisions of this by-law applicable to lands, buildings and structures within the BEL zone shall apply to the land shown on Schedule “A” hereto.
3. In anticipation of the eventual consolidation of By-law 50-88 and all amendments to such By-law, including this amendment, Schedule “B” to this Bylaw is hereby adopted, such Schedule being Zoning Map 3 to By-law 50-88 amended to include the changes made in such Zoning Map by all amendments to By-law 50-88 to date, including this amendment.

READ a First and Second time this day of , 2025.

READ a Third time and FINALLY PASSED this day of , 2025.

Maria Konefal, City Clerk

Joe Preston, Mayor