



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Criteria

November 2025



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1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Discussion Paper

1.1 What is an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is a comprehensive document, intended for long-term use, that shapes the future of a municipality by establishing how land in the community will be used. It outlines the goals, objectives, and policies for sustainable, efficient, growth within the Township of Wellesley. All land use, development, and public works in the Township must conform to the Official Plan.

The legislative ability for municipalities to enact an Official Plan arises from the Provincial Planning Act. All policies in the Official Plan must conform to this higher-order Provincial legislation. The Township of Wellesley is preparing a new Official Plan, which will guide growth and development within the Township until 2051. For the past two decades, growth in the Township has been shaped by both the Waterloo Regional Official Plan and the Township of Wellesley Official Plan. With recent provincial legislation that removed planning authority from the Region of Waterloo, the Township has the opportunity to create a “made-for-Wellesley” Official Plan. This new Official Plan will incorporate the best of our past and present Official Plan policies, while charting out the future of Wellesley to the year 2051. A new Official Plan is being created to replace the existing Township and Regional Official Plans, and to align with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.

The Township of Wellesley has one urban area with full municipal services (Village of Wellesley) and ten rural settlement areas, covering an area of 278 square kilometres with a population of about 12,371 residents. The Township includes three designated rural employment areas (the Scheider Rural Employment Area, the M.K. Martin Rural Employment Area, and the Wellesley Rural Employment Area) characterized predominantly by industrial and agricultural activities. It is projected that the Township will grow to approximately 14,191 to 17,301 residents and 6,390 to 10,070 jobs by 2051. The new Official Plan will build on the Township’s long-term vision for growth with a

renewed focus on complete communities, addressing land needs in both the urban area and rural settlement areas of the Township. The new Official Plan will address topics such as housing mix and affordability, employment and commercial opportunities, servicing options, active transportation, open space and recreation, environmental protection and management, cultural heritage stewardship, and the continued preservation of agricultural land.

1.2 Township of Wellesley New Official Plan Process

The creation of the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan will occur over a year-long period, with several opportunities for community consultation.



Phase 1 of the project included drafting and finalizing the Comprehensive Consultation and Engagement Strategy, and early conversations were held with Township residents and Council members to inform the process. A series of one-on-one conversations were held between interested members of the public and the project team to lay the foundation for the project. The Township of Wellesley project team hosted a booth at the 2025 Wellesley Fall Fair, where members of the public were introduced to the project, asked about opportunities and current challenges, and shaping the vision of the new Official Plan. Notice of the project initiation was provided to agencies, Indigenous communities, and residents. The *Planning Act* Section 26 legislative requirements were met by providing a Notice of a Special Council Meeting to local newspapers leading up to the meeting. On August 26, 2025, the Special Council Meeting was held, where the project was formally introduced and initiated. This included information regarding the

projects process and how residents and members of the public can get involved and follow along during the different phases of the project.

Phase 2 of the Official Plan involves conducting Background Research and Study Preparation, which includes the release of six draft Discussion Papers for review and comment by the public and interested parties. Based on Township, agency, Council, and public feedback, the draft discussion papers will be reviewed and finalized. Feedback from engagement on these Background Reports will inform a series of policy directions, which will inform Phase 3 of the project.

Phase 3 of the new Official Plan process is the drafting of policies and land use maps. These **DRAFT** policies and maps will be published as drafts and shared with Township residents, interested parties, and Indigenous communities for input. The Statutory Public Open House and Statutory Public Meeting will both be held to inform Phase 4 finalization. A copy of the draft Official Plan will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their review.

Phase 4 of the project involves the formal adoption of the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan by Township Council. Once Council adopts the new Official Plan, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the Minister's review and approval. After ministerial approval, the Township's new Official Plan will be in effect, replacing both existing Township and Regional Official Plans.

1.3 What are the Discussion Papers?

A series of six Discussion Papers have been prepared, which establish a foundation from which to develop policy directions for the new Official Plan. They include:

- Residential Growth, Housing, and Intensification Strategy
- Commercial Needs Assessment
- Employment Projections and Employment Lands
- Scoped Secondary Plan for New Designated Growth Areas

- Settlement Area Boundary Expansions
- Land Use Policy Review and Analysis

Each paper includes policy context of Provincial, Regional, and local documents relevant to the topic, an overview of the current state, and preliminary policy directions for the Township, key topics for discussion, and next steps. These papers represent the basis of the first phase of consultation for the project, assisting in the development of policy directions for the new Official Plan.

1.4 Purpose of this Discussion Paper

The purpose of this Discussion Paper is to review relevant policies to develop criteria when evaluating settlement area boundary expansions within the Township of Wellesley. The Township Urban Area and rural settlement areas cover an area of 278 square kilometres. The Region of Waterloo Official Plan Amendment No.6 (ROPA 6), alongside Bill 162, Get it Done Act 2024, added an additional twenty-four hectares of land to the Township Urban Area. No additional lands were added to rural settlement areas through ROPA 6 or Bill 162.

This Discussion Paper sets forth several considerations and recommendations for potential criteria when considering settlement boundary expansions within rural settlement areas and the Township Urban Area.

2.0 Legislative Overview

This section provides an overview of the Provincial legislative context which informs the basis of creating the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan.

2.1 Planning Act

The *Planning Act* is the overarching Provincial legislation which governs land use planning in Ontario. It establishes the respective roles of the Province and municipalities regarding land use planning and provides the basis for municipalities to create and use various planning tools, such as Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. The Act also sets out regulations for how planning processes are to be carried out, including mandatory dates for the completion of tasks, such as deciding on a planning application and setting the date for a public meeting.

Notably, in Section 2, the Act establishes "matters of provincial interest", which municipalities must have regard to when carrying out land use planning. These matters include (but are not limited to) the protection of ecological systems, the protection of agricultural and natural resources, the conservation of cultural history, the provision of a full range of housing, the accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the orderly development of safe and healthy communities. It is important to note that all planning decisions and policies made by a municipality (or other planning authority) must conform to the *Planning Act*, as well as Provincial plans, as outlined in Section 2.1 of the Act. Further, Section 3 of the Act requires that all planning decisions shall be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

The *Planning Act*, Part III – Official Plans sets out how Official Plans shall be created by a municipality, with respect to content and process. Specifically, this section includes direction for the inclusion of Provincial policies and restrictions on Official Plans, as well as requirements for assessment reporting, amendments to plans, and approval authorities.

Section 17 of the *Planning Act* states that “the Minister is the approval authority in respect of the approval of a plan as an official plan” and sets out a prescribed process the Township of Wellesley must follow in the preparation of a new Official Plan.

Specifically, the Township must provide for consultation and a public meeting, an open house, and adequate notice provided for each.

The creation of the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan must be done in conformity with the *Planning Act* and the legislated process outlined above.

2.2 Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (“PPS”) is a guiding policy document that provides direction on a variety of planning and land use matters in the province. The legal basis for conformity to the PPS is rooted in Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, which requires that all planning decisions be consistent with the minimum standards set out in the PPS. The Provincial Planning Statement outlines that “Official plans are the most important vehicle for implementation of the Provincial Planning Statement and for achieving comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning.”

The PPS puts forward policy regarding housing, infrastructure, resource management, and public health. Pertinent policies for the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan include, but are not limited to, adjustments to municipal planning boundaries, regulations regarding employment areas, agricultural protection, and population growth targets. Specific policy guidance is provided by the PPS as it relates to planning for people and homes.

Section 2.3.1 states that “sufficient land shall be 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, informed by provincial guidance.”

Furthermore, the PPS provides general policies for implementation and interpretation as it relates to the creation of the new Official Plan in Section 6.1.5. This section details

how Official Plans shall identify Provincial planning interests and sets out policies which implement these interests.

In order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to date with the Provincial Planning Statement. The policies of the Provincial Planning Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of an official plan.

The PPS replaces the 2020 PPS and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Municipalities no longer have to consider settlement area boundary expansions only through a municipal comprehensive review, as previously required in the Growth Plan.

Section 2.3.1 provides general policies for settlement areas. It determines where growth should be focused and prioritized, how land use patterns should promote efficient use of land, resources, and both existing and planning infrastructure. This section also promotes active transportation, transit and freight movement where appropriate, and the development of complete communities. Planning authorities must identify intensification and redevelopment targets for built-up areas and should establish density targets for designated growth areas. Planning authorities should establish and implement phasing policies to ensure development aligns with the provision of infrastructure and services. This provincial direction will be incorporated as part of the process for determining criteria to assess settlement area boundary expansion requests.

Determining an intensification target will be included in Section 4 of this report. This is consistent with Section 2.3.1.4 of the PPS, which states:

“Planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas, based on local conditions.”

Consistent with Section 2.3.1(5) of the PPS, large and fast-growing municipalities shall plan for a target of fifty residents and jobs per hectare in designated growth areas.

While the Township of Wellesley is not considered to be a large and fast-growing municipality, per the PPS, determining a residential density target is prudent for designated growth areas to support infrastructure capacity planning and to promote compact urban form, which helps to preserve agricultural land. Additionally, Section 2.3.2, New Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions, describes specific policies for the expansion of settlement area boundaries or the creation of new settlement areas. This section sets out requirements for infrastructure and support, ensuring expansion of settlement areas will be within capacity constraints.

3.0 Local Context

The following section provides an overview of the Region of Waterloo and the Township of Wellesley's policy and strategic documents that set out direction and priorities for settlement area expansions in the Township.

3.1 Waterloo Regional Official Plan, 2025

The Waterloo Regional Official Plan, 2025 ("ROP") was the Official Plan of the Region of Waterloo, which is an upper-tier municipality that encompasses a federation of lower-tier municipalities, including the Township of Wellesley. Historically, the Region of Waterloo was the approval authority for the Township of Wellesley's Official Plan, and Wellesley was required to conform to that plan.

As of January 1, 2025, the ROP became a Local Plan of the Township of Wellesley. The new Official Plan that is being created will replace the existing Township and Regional Official Plans and align with Provincial direction set out in the PPS. The Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan will incorporate the best of the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan policies, while charting out the future of the Township's growth to the year 2051.

Section 6B of the ROP establishes policies for the protected countryside areas of the Region, where expansions of Township urban areas and rural settlement areas are not to be permitted (Section 6.B.3). Minor expansions may be permitted in the protected countryside that avoid environmentally sensitive lands, and occur where the expansion supports existing employment, recreational, or institutional use. Section 7.B.23 and 7.B.24 establish similar policies for Regional Recharge Areas.

Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 6 (ROPA No. 6), approved April 11, 2023, established policy requiring future expansions of urban areas to occur within the designated Countryside Line of the ROP. Additionally, the enactment of Bill 162 in 2024 has retroactively modified ROPA No. 6 to expand the boundaries of the urban areas of all area municipalities, including the Wellesley Urban Area.

3.2 Township of Wellesley Official Plan, 2022

The Township of Wellesley has one urban centre, the Village of Wellesley, ten rural settlement areas, three rural employment areas, and one rural mixed-use/agricultural cluster. The Village of Wellesley, or Wellesley Urban Area, is the only settlement area with full servicing; the remaining settlement areas are serviced by partial services or individual/private sewage and water services (well water and septic system).

The Township Official Plan is similar to that of the Regional Official Plan as it relates to the policies that permit and restrict settlement area boundary expansions.

Section 2.7.4 permits the expansions and rationalizations of the Wellesley Urban Area through conformity with density targets, infrastructure capacity, the completion of supporting studies, and agricultural impact mitigation, among other factors. Further, it provides policies regarding the rationalization of boundaries. Justification of expansion will be provided through a land needs assessment (provided in the Residential Growth, Housing, and Intensification background report).

Section 2.8.1.7 permits minor expansion into rural settlement areas for recreational or institutional uses to accommodate future needs, but only in instances where the proposed use is not available within the urban area or rural settlement area. Sites proposing an expansion must be zoned for the specified use and minimize impacts on surrounding agricultural lands. Under Section 2.8.1.8, The Township may also rationalize boundaries, including the deletion of areas from a rural settlement area designation and the addition into another designation. However, they must maintain land use patterns, configurations, natural and constructed features, as well as avoiding an increase in developable land area, and ensuring there is no encroachment on protected countryside lands. The rationalization of boundaries must also be minor and conform with other Plan policies. Section 2.9.1.7 identifies similar policies for rural employment areas.

3.3 Township of Wellesley Official Plan Amendment No. 10, 2019

The approval of Township of Wellesley Official Plan Amendment No. 10 (OPA 10) resulted in the rationalization of lands within the Wellesley Urban Area. As part of this OPA process, rationalization recommendations were also made for lands within the rural settlement areas of Bamberg, Crosshill, Linwood, and St. Clements. While OPA 10 was implemented for the Wellesley Urban Area, it was determined that the rationalization of rural settlement area boundaries could not proceed due to complexities in the interpretation of Provincial and ROP policies. The result of this process was a Township Council resolution to remove certain lands from rural settlement areas that were never implemented in the Township Official Plan.

The OPA 10 staff report highlighted potential criteria to be considered when assessing settlement area boundary expansion requests, including:

- Whether significant development potential exists;
- If it's a logical or reasonable adjustment to the settlement boundary;
- Gaps or holes in existing settlement boundaries can be filled;
- Land use compatibility can be achieved;
- Servicing is available, especially in the Township Urban Area;
- Appropriate for both the short and long term;
- Satisfies a long-term employment need; and
- Is directed to an area planned for significant growth.

The outcome of this work resulted in a Council resolution to remove seven sites from rural settlement areas, for a total of 13.9 hectares (ha). As mentioned above, this direction was not implemented into the current Official Plan. In summary, it is recommended the seven sites be reviewed and evaluated as part of the new Official Plan process based on the current policy framework.

4.0 Key Topics for Discussion

The following section provides a review of the current settlement area boundary expansion requests, as well as considerations for identifying criteria for assessing these requests going forward.

4.1 Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Requests

Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Requests made by private landowners are permitted at any time, as per the PPS. The requests submitted to the Township to date will be reviewed and evaluated as part of the New Official Plan study process. It is important to note that since Bill 23 came into effect, the Township has not received any Official Plan Amendment applications for settlement area boundary expansions. Figure 1 presents a summary of current expansion requests for employment and residential use and the total vacant land available in the Township's settlement area.

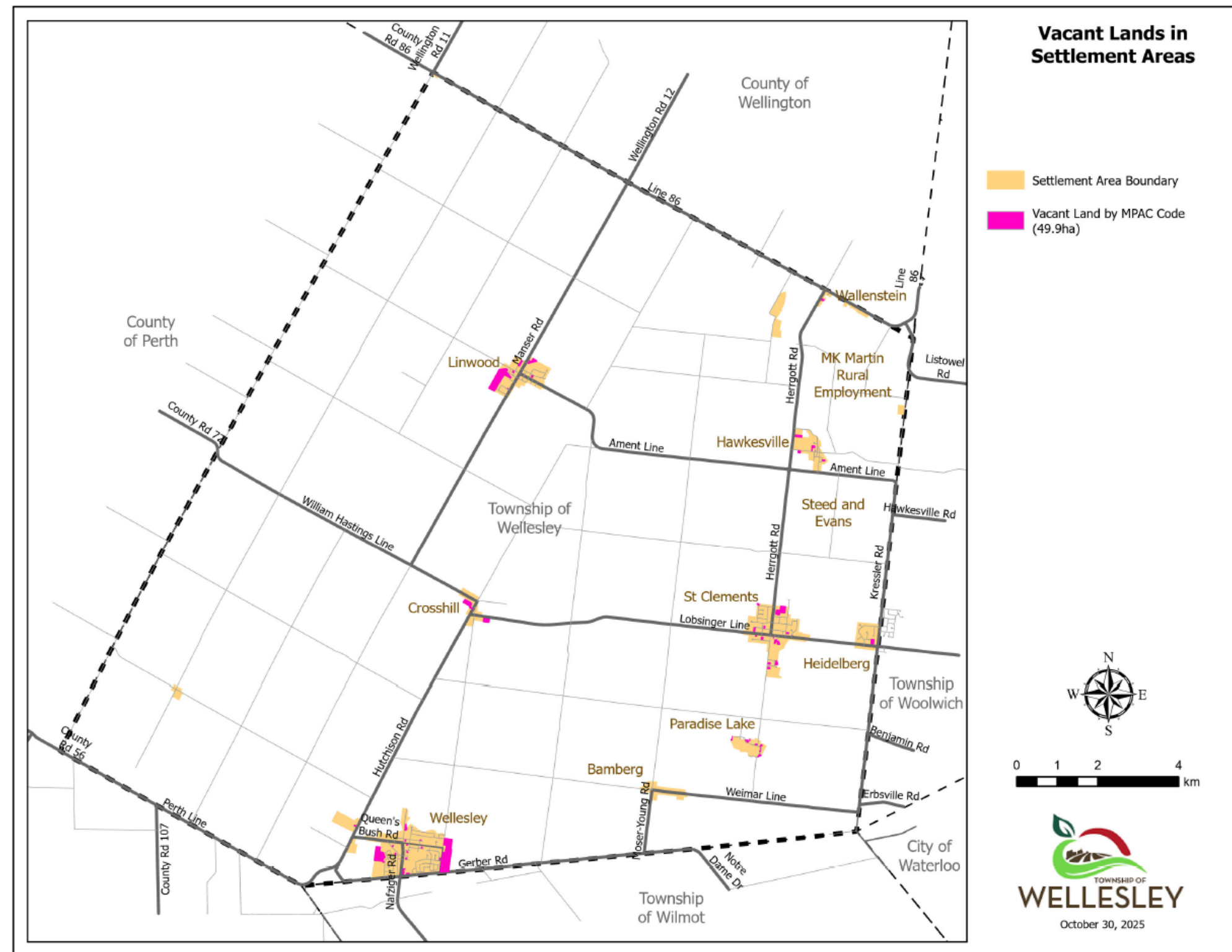


Figure 1: Current Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Requests and Vacant Land Inventory

Based on Figure 1 above, at present there is 49.9 hectares of vacant land within the current settlement area boundaries. In addition to this vacant land supply, there are fifteen current SABE requests that comprise 76.2 hectares (9.8 hectare residential and 66.4-hectare employment lands):

It is anticipated that further additional SABE requests will be made to the Township as part of the new Official Plan engagement.

Inventory of Settlement Area Boundary Requests

The following table shows a breakdown of residential and employment settlement area expansion and removal requests submitted to the Township by location, site area, proposed use for expansion, and the site's designation under the Official Plan. Maps associated with the requests in each settlement area are provided in Appendix A.

Table 1: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion and Removal Requests

Settlement Area	SABE ID #	Address	Area (ha)	Type	Proposed Use	Current OP Designation
Bamberg	10	4161 Weimar Line	1.9	Expansion Request – Residential	The proposed expansion could accommodate up to six future rural lots having frontage on Moser-Young Road.	Rural Area, Protected Countryside Hazardous Lands (flooding), Regional Recharge Area
Bamberg	6	1621 Moser-Young Rd.	5.32	Expansion Request – Residential	Boundary expansion for residential purposes.	Rural Area, Protected Countryside Hazardous Lands (flooding), Regional Recharge Area, Environmentally Sensitive Landscape

Settlement Area	SABE ID #	Address	Area (ha)	Type	Proposed Use	Current OP Designation
Crosshill	3	4862 William Hastings Line	2.8	Expansion Request – Residential	Nine lots for single-detached dwellings with frontage along William Hastings Line as well as one new lot along Hutchinson Road.	Prime Agricultural
Crosshill	3	4862 William Hastings Line		Expansion Request – Residential		
Crosshill	3	4862 William Hastings Line		Boundary Removal – Residential		Settlement Residential
Crosshill	3	4862 William Hastings Line		Boundary Removal – Residential	Removal of a portion of lands in the settlement area.	
Linwood	15	4200 Manser and 11 Lin Dunn Ln.	1.85	Expansion Request – Residential	Infill lot; Adjust settlement boundary to include new lot west of 11 Lin Dunn Lane.	Prime Agricultural Area

Settlement Area	SABE ID #	Address	Area (ha)	Type	Proposed Use	Current OP Designation
Paradise Lake	2	Wellesley Rd. 4	1.10	Expansion Request – Residential	Minor boundary adjustment to rectify property access issues.	Rural Area, Protected Countryside, Environmentally Sensitive Landscape
Hawkesville	9	15 Broadway St.	1.78	Expansion Request – Employment	Boundary expansion for employment uses/expansion of existing business.	Prime Agricultural Area
Linwood	14	1024 Alfred St., 1001 Isabella St. and 3519 Manser Rd.	2.86	Expansion Request – Employment	Boundary expansion for employment uses/expansion of existing business.	Prime Agricultural Area
Wallenstein	8	4728 Herrgott Rd.	0.20	Expansion Request – Employment (Commercial)	Boundary expansion to accommodate the expansion of the existing business.	Prime Agricultural Area

Settlement Area	SABE ID #	Address	Area (ha)	Type	Proposed Use	Current OP Designation
Wallenstein	7	4189 Temperance Rd.	0.41	Expansion Request – Employment	Boundary expansion for employment uses.	Prime Agricultural Area
Other	12	3030 Ament Line	15.07	Expansion Request – Rural Employment Area	Industrial use/subdivision.	Prime Agricultural Area
Schneider Rural Employment Area	11	1051 Siegner Lane	1.15	Expansion Request – Rural Employment Area	Boundary expansion to accommodate Dry Industrial / Commercial uses	Prime Agricultural Area
M.K. Martin Rural Employment Area	16	3950 Steffler Rd	8.8	Expansion Request – Rural Employment Area	Employment Expansion to accommodate business growth.	Prime Agricultural Area, Core Environmental Feature

4.2 Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Criteria

The PPS (Section 2), the Region of Waterloo Official Plan (Sections 2, 6, and 7), and the Township of Wellesley Official Plan (Sections 2 and 8) establish direction when considering settlement area boundary expansions for the Township Urban Area, rural settlement areas, and rural employment areas. The following table is a summary of the criteria and referenced policies.

Table 2: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Evaluation Criteria Policies

Criteria	Provincial Planning Statement	Regional Official Plan	Township Official Plan
Need for additional land, range, and mixed uses	2.3.2.1(a)		
Infrastructure and servicing capacity	2.3.2.1(b) 2.3.2.2	2.C.3.2(a)	2.7.4.1(e)
Agricultural compatibility and MDS compliance	2.3.2.1(c,d,e,f)	2.C.3.2(f,g,h) 6.G.8(c,d)	2.7.4.1(h,i) 2.8.1.7 (c,d)
Phased progression of urban development	2.3.2.1(g)		
Informed by servicing master plans		2.C.3.2(c)	2.7.4.1(e)
Natural heritage and sensitive area protection		2.C.3.2(e) 6.B.4	8.1.2.7
Sufficient size for development/integration for a complete community		2.C.3.2(k)	2.7.4.1(f)
Minor rural expansion		6.B.4,5 6.G.8,9 7.B.24	2.8.1.7(a) 3.8.4 8.1.2.18
Continued on next page			

Appropriate configuration and alignment with existing land uses and natural features	6.G.9	2.7.4.2(b) 2.8.1.8 (b,c,e,g)
Supporting technical and professional studies	7.G.2(c)	2.7.4.1(g,j) 8.4.1.3 (c)
Supports employment density target within the Wellesley Urban Area (1 job/3 residents)		2.7.4.1 (k)
Appropriate and compatible zoning		2.8.1.7(b)

The established criteria for evaluating expansion requests have been determined based on:

- **Provincially Mandated Criteria:** Fundamental requirements established by the PPS in Section 2.3.2. To be evaluated further, requests must demonstrate:

2.3.2.1 “In identifying a new settlement area or allowing a settlement area boundary expansion, planning authorities shall consider the following:

- a) the need to designate and plan for additional land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses;
- b) if there is sufficient capacity in existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- c) whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas;
- d) the evaluation of alternative locations which avoid prime agricultural areas and, where avoidance is not possible, consider reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in prime agricultural areas;

- e) whether the new or expanded settlement area complies with the minimum distance separation formulae;
- f) whether impacts on the agricultural system are avoided, or where avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated to the extent feasible as determined through an agricultural impact assessment or equivalent analysis, based on provincial guidance; and
- g) the new or expanded settlement area provides for the phased progression of urban development.

2.3.2.2 Notwithstanding policy 2.3.2.1.b), planning authorities may identify a new settlement area only where it has been demonstrated that the infrastructure and public service facilities to support development are planned or available.”

- **Local Specific Criteria:** Upon meeting all mandatory criteria determined by the PPS, requests will then be evaluated based on criteria informed by the Regional and Township Official Plans.

4.3 Intensification Potential

Section 2.3.1(4) of the PPS identifies that municipalities “shall establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas, based on local conditions.”

The Village of Wellesley is the Township’s only urban area and the only settlement area with full servicing. The Wellesley built-up area boundary is shown on Figure 2 and is the boundary for which the intensification target applies.

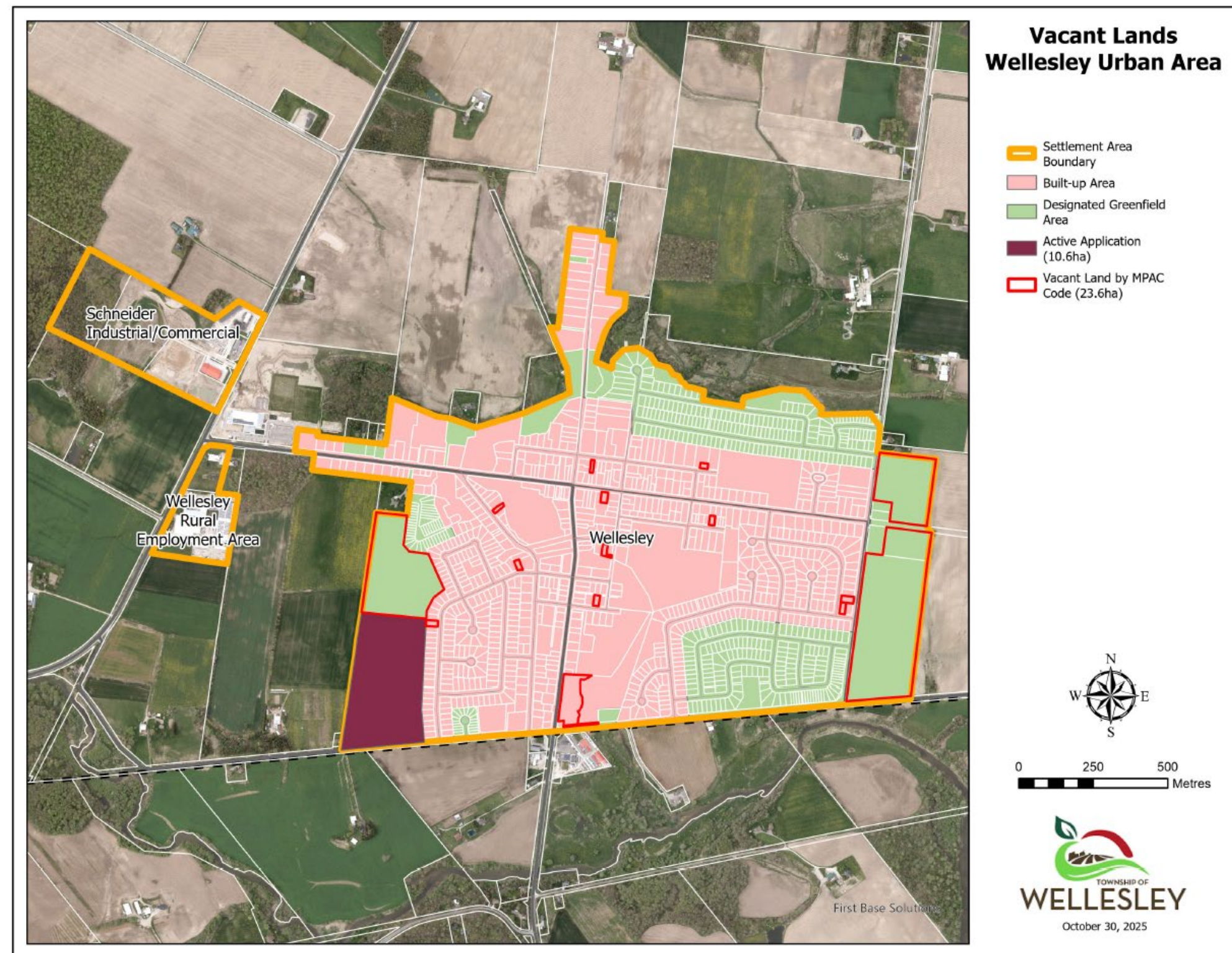


Figure 2: Vacant Lands within the Wellesley Urban Area

Based on the provincial guidance document *Proposed Updates to the Projection Methodology Guideline*, the intensification targets should reflect the Township's: objectives, conditions, and various forms of intensification, including opportunities for infill and redevelopment, infrastructure availability and capacity, market demand, availability and viability of surrounding prime agricultural areas, and environmental constraints.

Considerations in determining the intensification target and growth include:

- The Residential Growth, Housing, and Intensification Strategy Background Report identified that zoning for moderate increases to density in the Village of Wellesley built-up area could be accommodated in the form of mid-rise apartments and stacked Townhomes, while still maintaining the rural character of the Village.
- One approved yet unbuilt development within the Wellesley built-up area, comprising of 50-units at 3.04 hectares total.
- The former Wellesley Arena and Community Centre lands are located within the Village of Wellesley built-up area, of which 1.2 hectares of these lands are being reimagined as part of a separate process with the Township.
- There is 49.9 hectares of vacant land across the Township's settlement areas, with 23.6 hectares of these vacant lands located within the Village of Wellesley (1.9 hectares of which are located in the Village of Wellesley built-up area).
- One active development application within the Designated Greenfield Area, comprising of 10.6 hectares, with a planned density of 48 persons and jobs per hectare.
- The ROP identifies a minimum target of 14% representing 100 total units to be constructed in the Wellesley built-up area from 2022 to 2051. Of note, this was the

lowest target set of all the local municipalities (for comparison, the Township of Woolwich has a minimum target of 20% representing 1,620 total units).

Coupled with the large presence of environmental features and agricultural land base within the Township, the limited supply of vacant land across the settlement areas indicates a need for growth to be managed by maximizing land efficiency within the Village of Wellesley's built-up area.

Given the approved and suitable vacant sites within the Wellesley built up area, implementing a 14%- or 100-unit target is achievable and can remain the target for forecasting intensification to 2051. This target is subject to discussion and will be further explored through the consultation stage of the new Official Plan.

4.4 Preliminary Policy Directions

1. **Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Criteria:** Table 3 provides a recommended set of criteria to evaluate settlement area boundary expansion requests.

Table 3: Recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Criteria

Theme	Criteria
Growth Management and Land Need	<p>There is a need for the request as determined by a land needs assessment.</p> <p>The request addresses any prevalent gaps within existing settlement area boundaries.</p> <p>If the request is to expand the Wellesley Urban Area, it will maintain or move towards the resident to job ratio (3 residents/1 job).</p>
Servicing and Infrastructure	<p>The request can be supported by existing or planned servicing and infrastructure.</p> <p>The request is consistent with and supported by servicing support studies and Township master plans (including municipal water and wastewater systems master plans and stormwater master plans, or equivalent).</p>
Agricultural Resources	<p>The request avoids the disruption of agricultural lands and the protected Countryside (specialty crop areas, prime agricultural areas). Or, where avoidance is not possible, the site is situated on lower priority agricultural lands, is minor, and the request is justified through supported studies.</p> <p>The request complies with the minimum distance separation formulae.</p>

Theme	Criteria
Urban Development	The request provides for a phased progression of urban development.
Environmental and Source Water Protection	The request protects and avoids development within environmentally sensitive, key hydrological areas and natural heritage areas, including the Regional Recharge Area and Protected Countryside, and designated vulnerable areas such as Wellhead Protection Areas and Water Source Protection Areas where development may be restricted or prohibited.
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The request protects, conserves and avoids development within cultural heritage resources, including built heritage, cultural heritage landscapes, and archaeological sites. Further, the request complies with provincial requirements for assessment and Indigenous engagement where applicable.
Transportation	The request is supported by appropriate access and connectivity to the site.
Planning and Land Use Compatibility	The request is compatible with adjacent land uses and respects established land use patterns.
Development of Complete Communities	The request supports the development of or contribution to complete communities.

2. **Determination of Settlement Area Boundary Expansion/Removal Process:** As part of the new Official Plan, a process for the submission of boundary expansion and removal requests has been created and is outlined in Table 4. It includes:

Table 4: Settlement Area Boundary Expansion and Removal Process

Step	Process	Key Dates
Step #1	Issue a call for expansion requests, promoted through the Township's website and engagement platform.	Early November 2025
Step #2	Pre-consultation/Township meetings with interested landowners.	November–December 2025
Step #3	Tracking of requests submissions.	November–December 2025
Step #4	Township staff and the consulting team to review and evaluate expansion requests against established criteria (recommendations included in the first draft of the new Official Plan).	December 2025 – January 2026

5.0 Next Steps

This Discussion Paper is one of six papers that are being completed as part of Phase 2: Background Research and Study Preparation of the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan process.

This paper establishes a foundation from which the Township will develop policy directions. This is a starting point for generating discussion regarding settlement area boundary expansions for the future of the Township of Wellesley. Policy directions will follow out of this engagement to outline proposed changes in the new Township of Wellesley Official Plan.

5.1 What We Heard Summary

The Discussion Papers were released in **DRAFT** form to inform public engagement in fall 2025. The Township and consulting team hosted an open public session, as well as a virtual meeting with agencies, in November 2025 to present the Discussion Papers and discuss revisions that may be required. These engagements were some of several opportunities throughout this project where public input is needed and welcomed. These papers have been updated to reflect additional insights or items arising from public engagement and include thematic summaries of input received (with a companion Engagement Report also being prepared).

Through engagement, we heard about the importance of the countryside line in protecting agricultural land, and that the majority of development should occur in the urban settlement area. This approach ensures rural settlement areas remain rural, while allowing limited development based on servicing capacity and limitations.

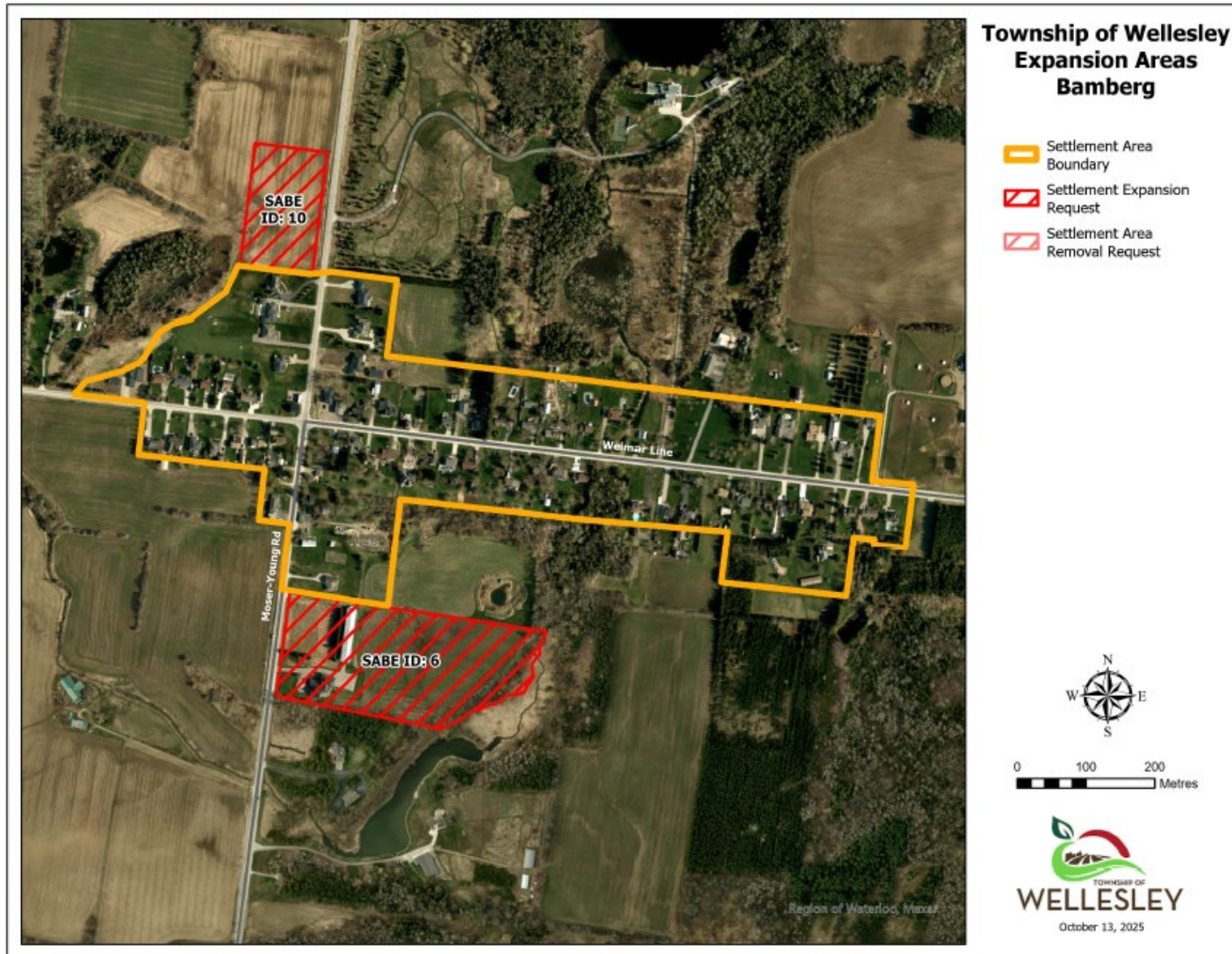
5.2 Township Council Presentation of Policy Directions

The **FINAL** reports include recommended policy directions that will inform the development of the new Official Plan. These papers will be presented to Township of Wellesley Council on December 9, 2025. The reports, together with public input, will serve as the basis for developing the Township of Wellesley's new Official Plan as part

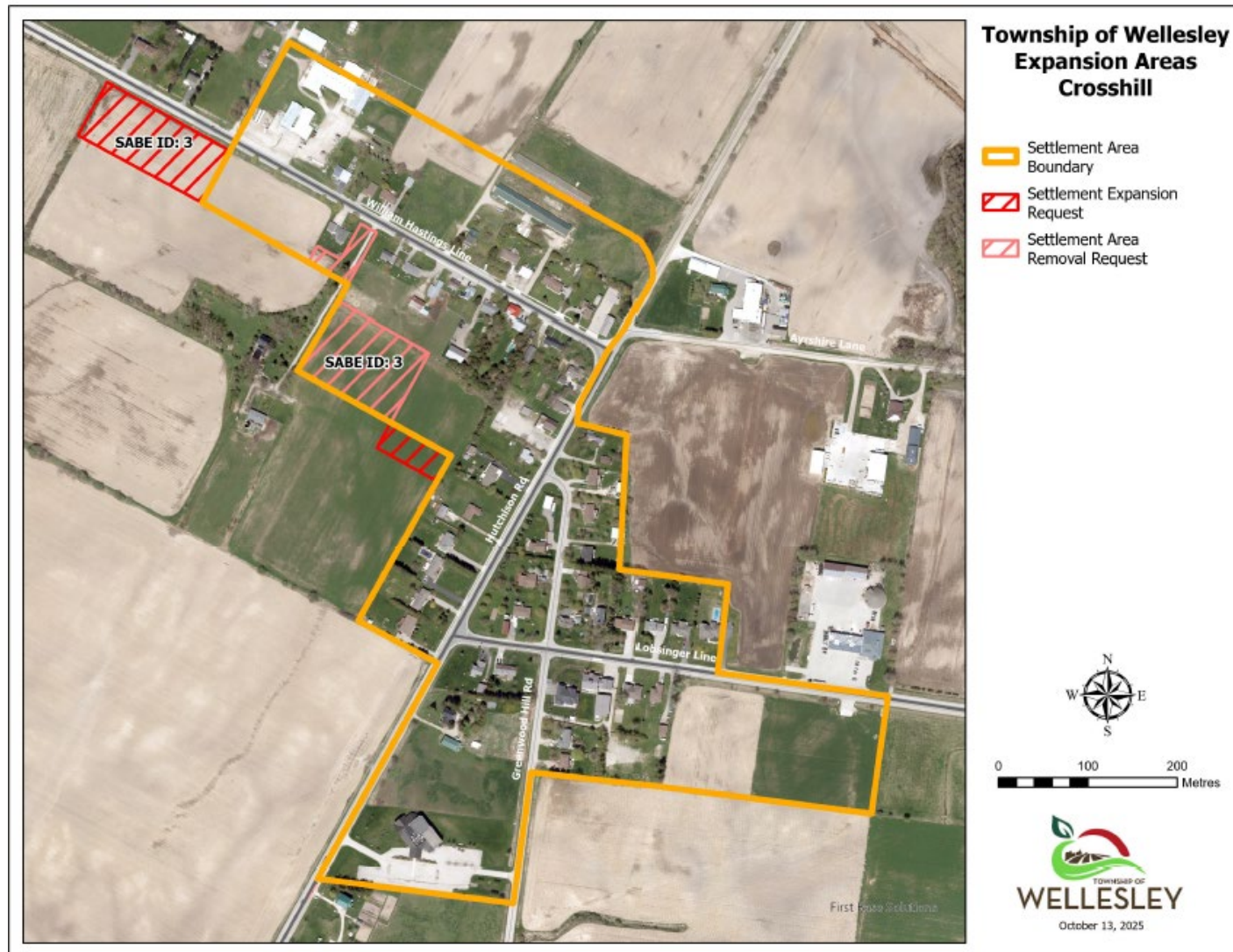
of Phase 3: Draft Policies and Land Use Maps. The **DRAFT** new Official Plan will be released for review in 2026 and includes public events in addition to the statutory *Planning Act* process.

Appendix A: Settlement Area Boundary and Employment Area Expansion Requests as of November 10, 2025

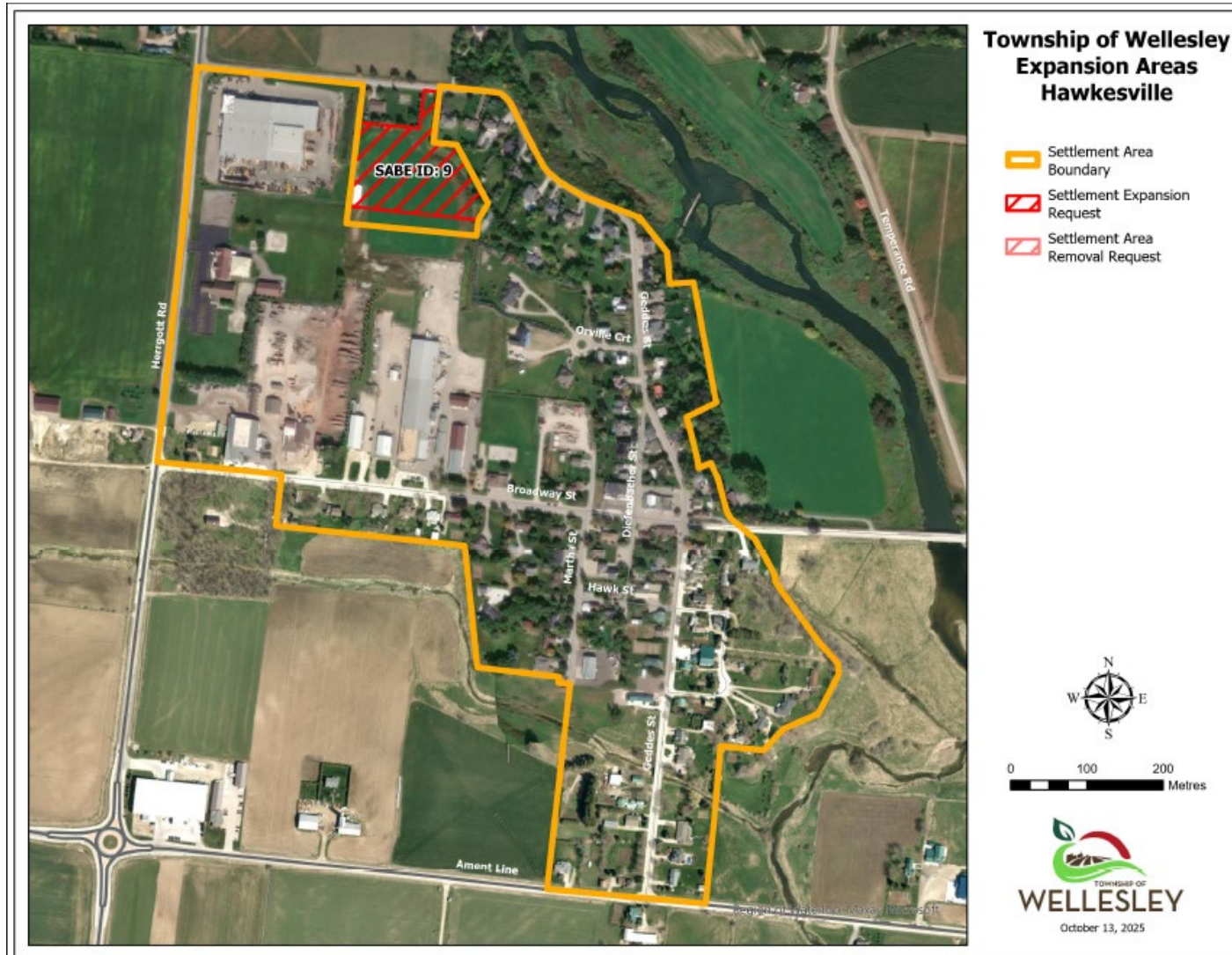
Bamberg



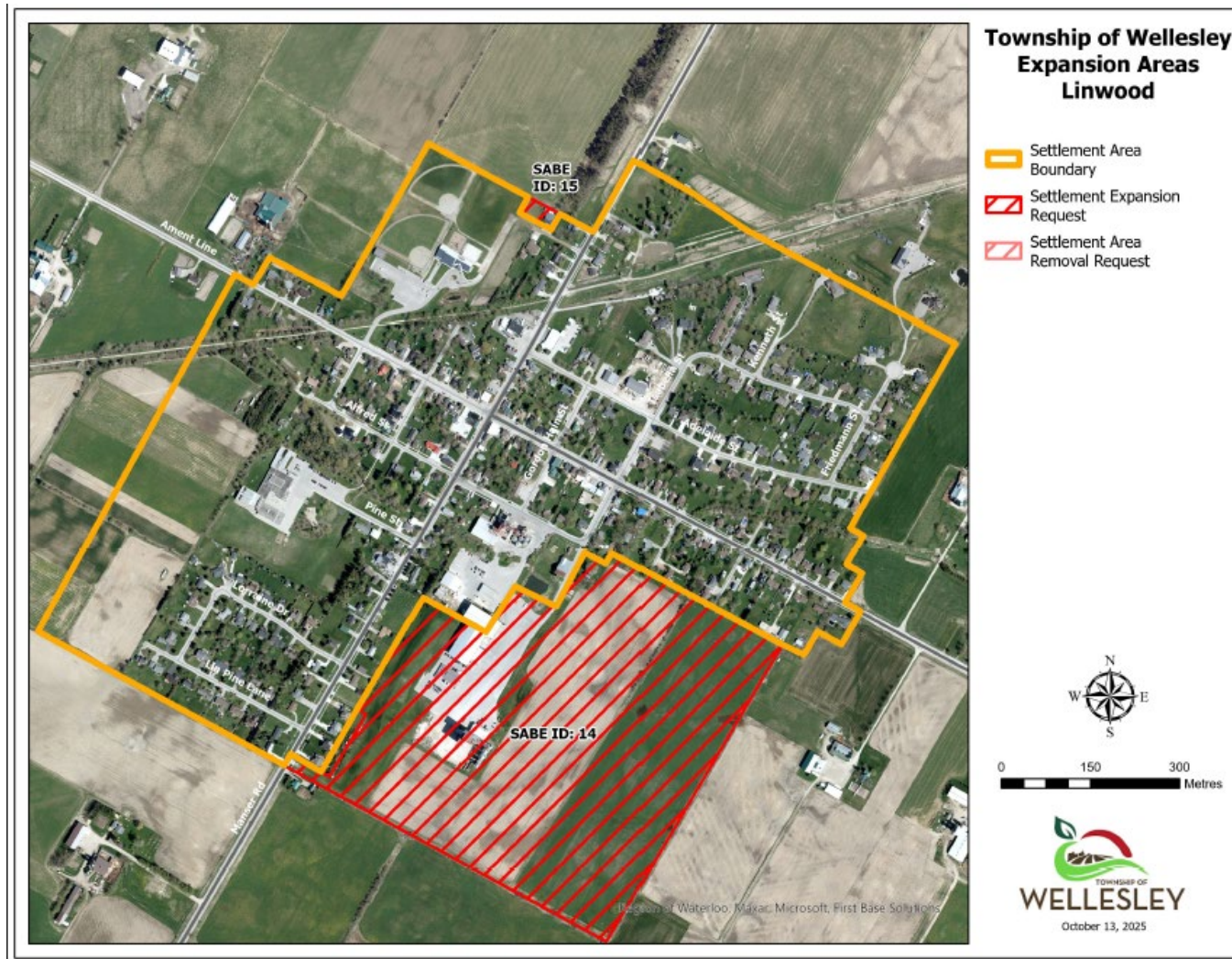
Crosshill



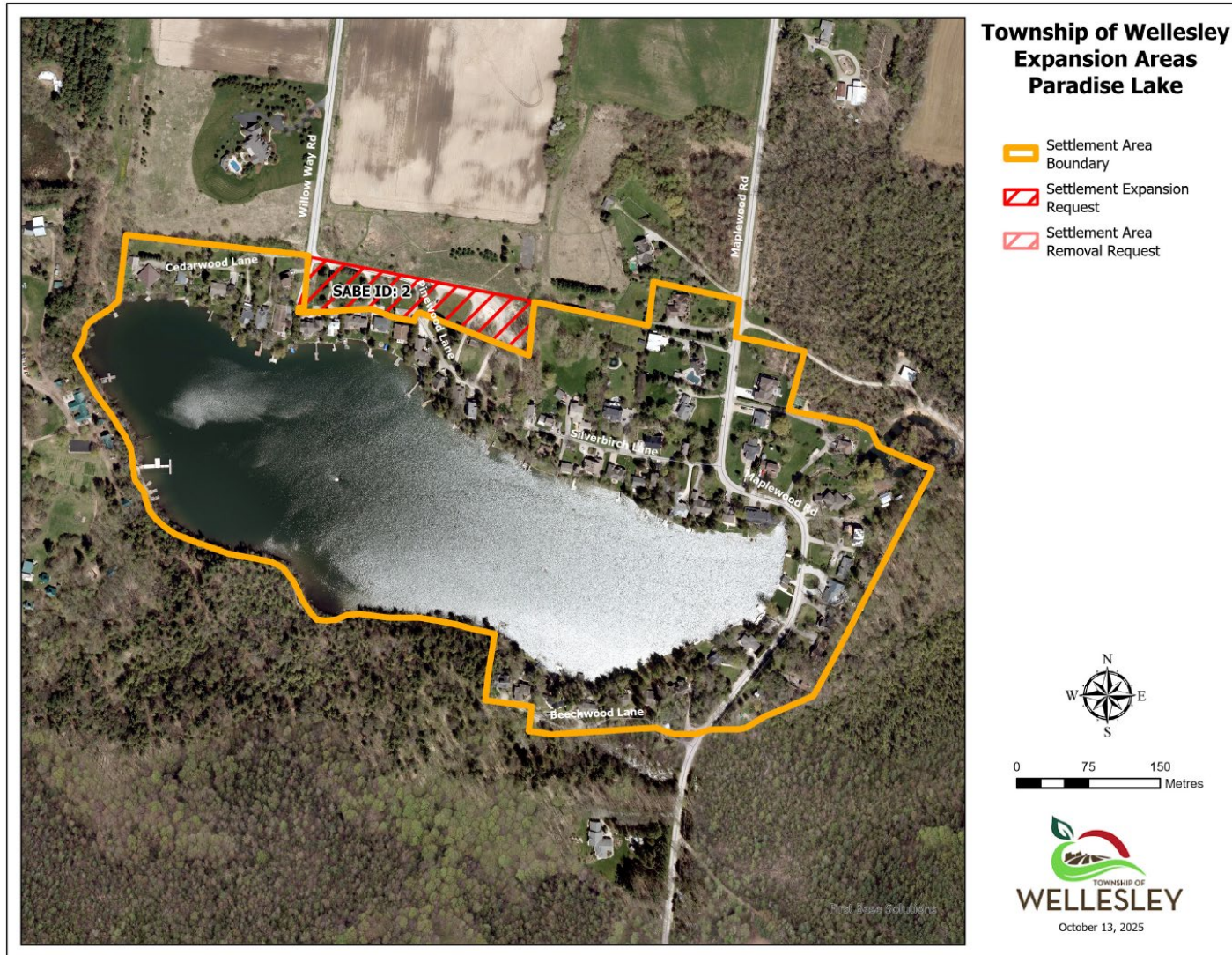
Hawkesville



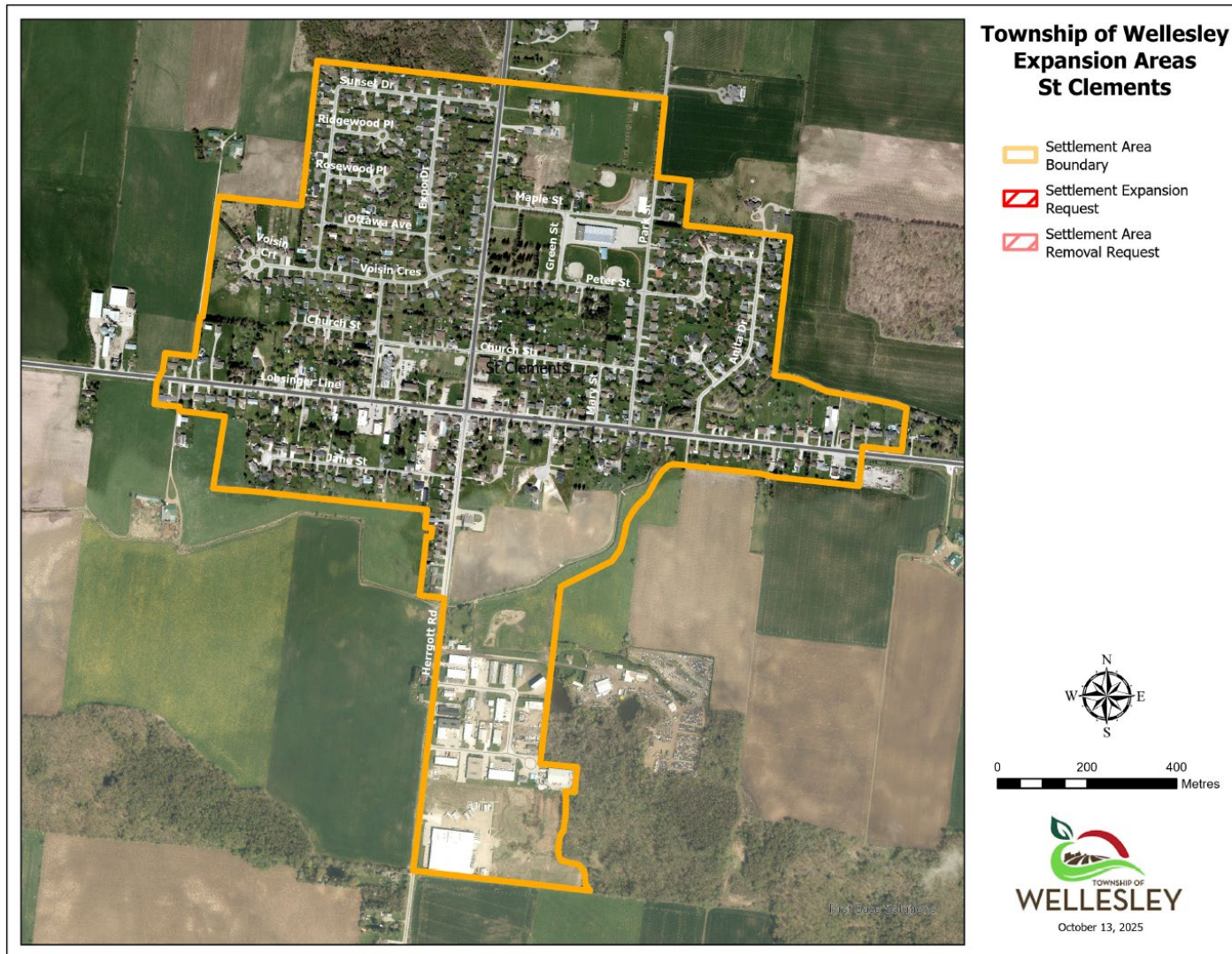
Linwood



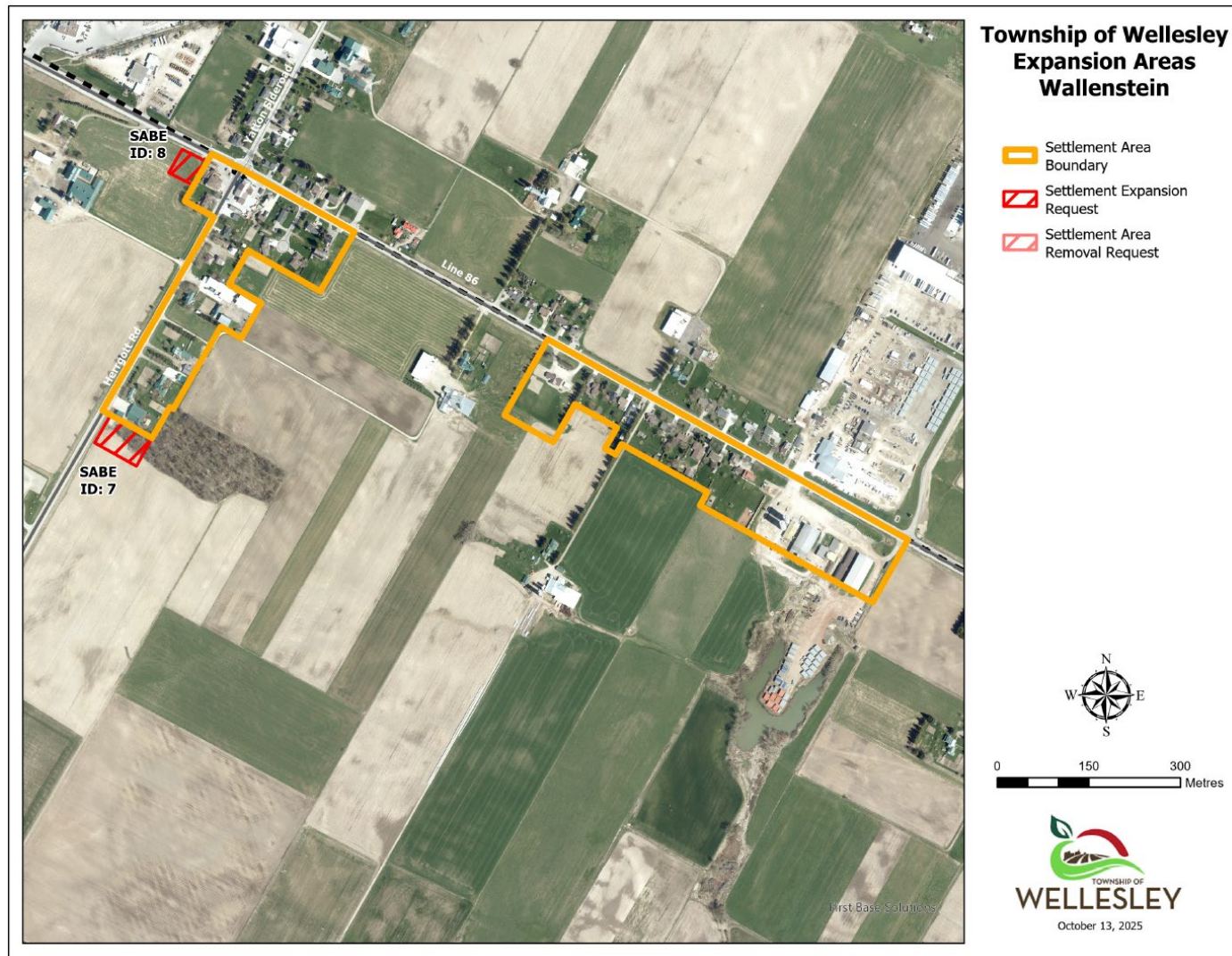
Paradise Lake



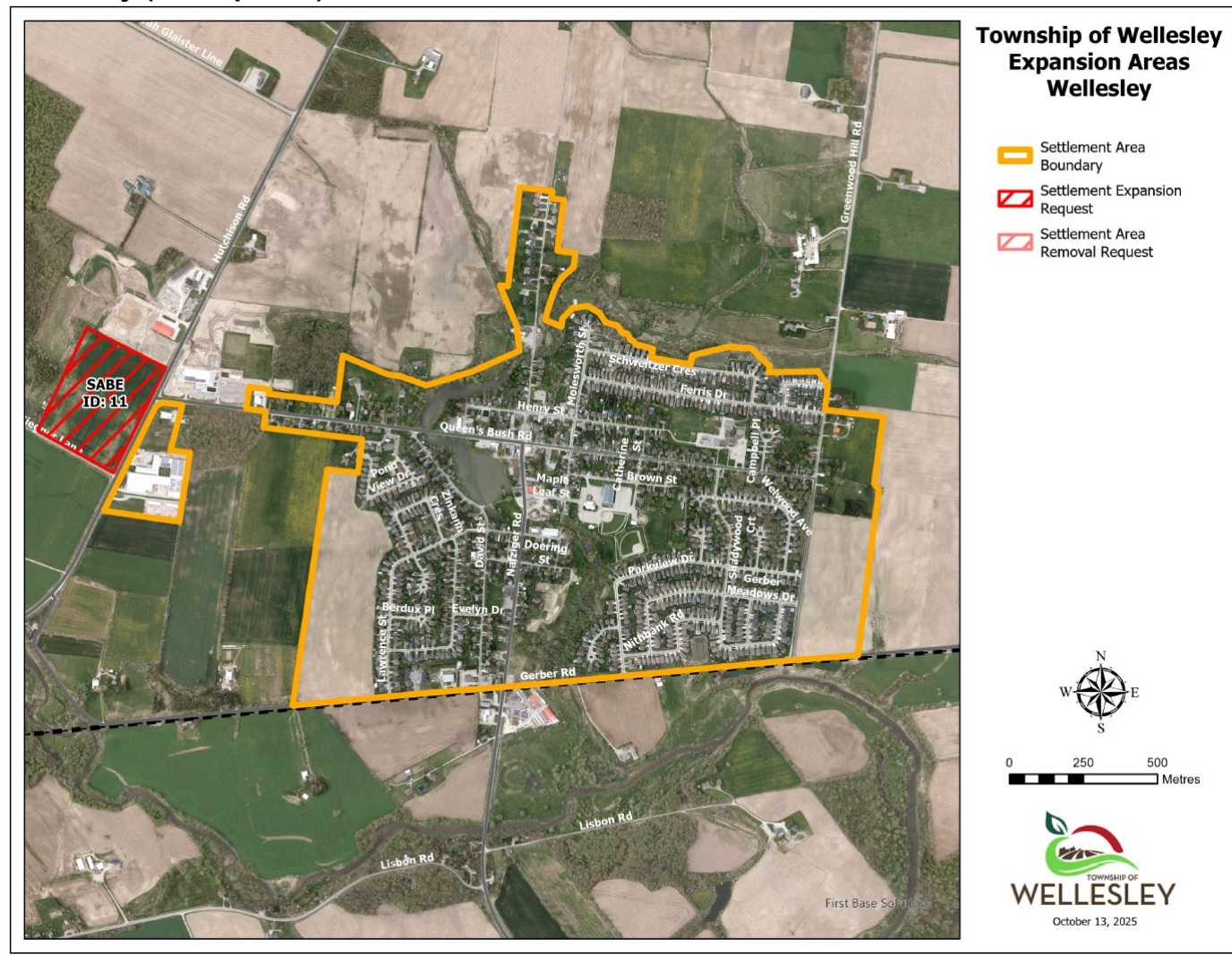
St. Clements (no requests)



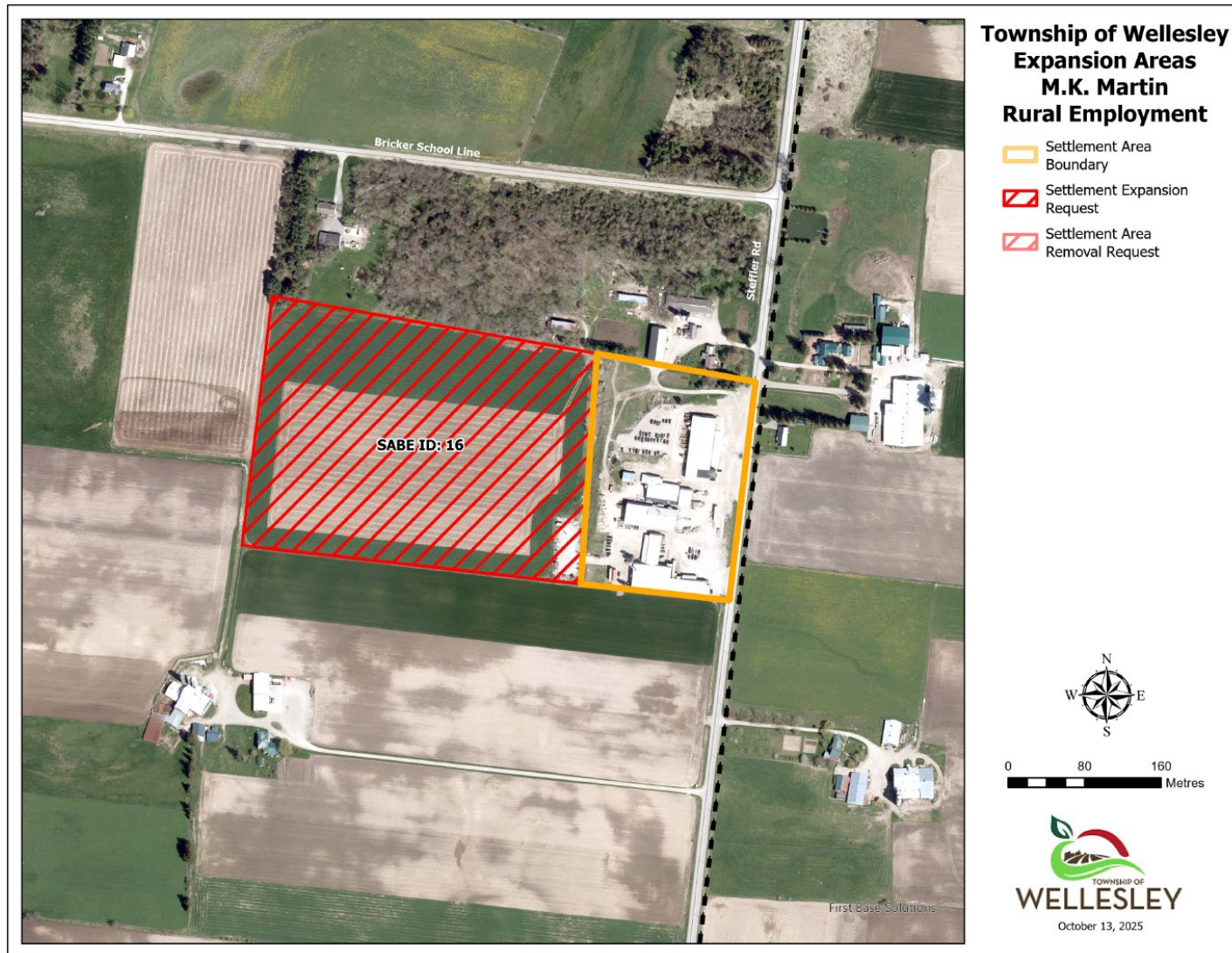
Wallenstein



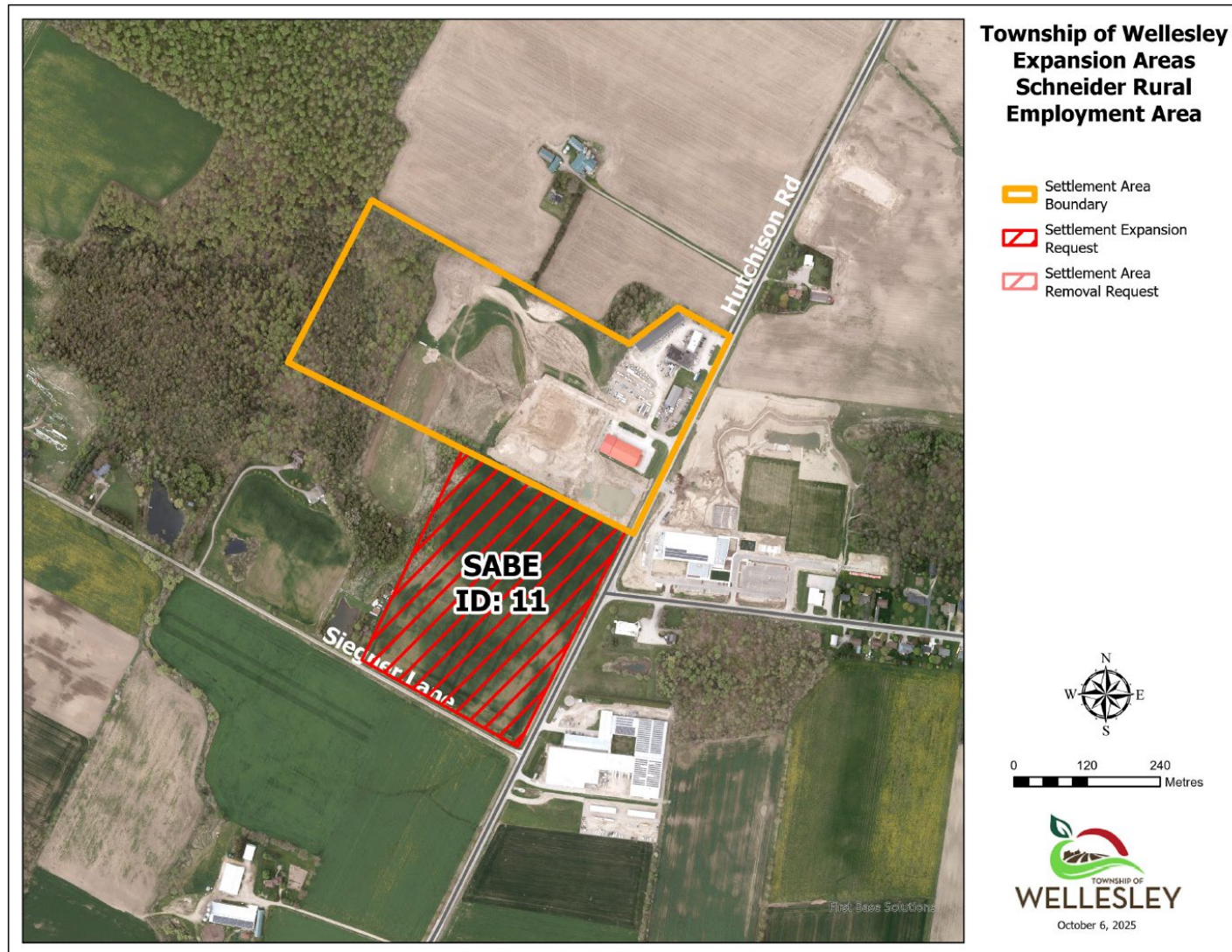
Wellesley (no requests)



MK Martin Employment Area



Schneider Rural Employment Area



Other – Steed and Evens

