

Town of Huntsville Official Plan Review - POLICY BACKGROUND PAPER

Servicing our Residents – Municipal Water Supply & Sanitary Sewer Services

BACKGROUND:

- Municipal water supply and sanitary sewage treatment facilities refer to piped water and sanitary sewer services that are connected to a centralized water or sanitary sewage treatment facility and owned and operated by the District of Muskoka.
- A significant public investment has been made throughout Muskoka in order to locate and develop municipal water supply and sanitary sewage disposal systems. The efficient and effective use of this public investment is a fundamental principle of planning for development within Muskoka.
- In Huntsville, these systems are located within the Urban, as well as the Hidden Valley Settlement Areas and are intended to service development within them. The ultimate goal is that all development within these areas will be connected to full municipal services for environmental and system efficiency reasons.
- The District operates a water treatment facility on Highway No. 60 and two sewage treatment facilities (Mountview and Golden Pheasant) along with several pumping stations and distribution and collection systems.
- The District owns and operates a municipal well in Port Sydney, which provides municipal water services to approximately 50 homes.
- The water and sewage capacity within these plants is a finite and public resource. To identify to the development community and the public how the remaining capacities in plants will be used with maximum benefits and efficiency, the District and the Town have traditionally jointly prepared a Capacity Allocation Strategy. This document contains an estimation of capacity and identifies a process to guide the allocation of this capacity in a fair and equitable way. This approach has been helpful to managing growth in the Urban Settlement Area.
- At present, the Servicing Boundary schedule for the Urban Settlement Area, the Hidden Valley Settlement Area and the Port Sydney Settlement Area is found in the Town's Official Plan. The servicing boundary is synonymous with the urban boundary.

POLICY CONTEXT:

Provincial Policy Statement (2014):

1.6 Infrastructure - Sewage, Water and Stormwater

1.6.6.1 Planning for sewage and water services shall:

- a. direct and accommodate expected growth or development in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing:
 1. municipal sewage services and municipal water services; and

2. private communal sewage services and private communal water services, where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available;
- b. ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
 1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;
 2. is feasible, financially viable and complies with all regulatory requirements; and
 3. protects human health and the natural environment;
- c. promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- d. integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
- e. be in accordance with the servicing hierarchy outlined through policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5.

- 1.6.6.2 Municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas. Intensification and redevelopment within settlement areas on existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services should be promoted, wherever feasible.
- 1.6.6.3 Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not provided, municipalities may allow the use of private communal sewage services and private communal water services.
- 1.6.6.4 Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services or private communal sewage services and private communal water services are not provided, individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts. In settlement areas, these services may only be used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development.
- 1.6.6.5 Partial services shall only be permitted in the following circumstances:
- a. where they are necessary to address failed individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services in existing development; or
 - b. within settlement areas, to allow for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development on partial services provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts.
- 1.6.6.6 Subject to the hierarchy of services provided in policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5 planning authorities may allow lot creation only if there is confirmation of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity and reserve water system capacity within municipal sewage services and municipal water services or private communal sewage services and private communal water services. The determination of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity shall include treatment capacity for hauled sewage from private communal sewage services and individual on-site sewage services.

Current Muskoka Official Plan & Policy Directions Report:

- D.5 Substantial development will proceed on municipal water & sewage services
- H.6 Development in urban centres shall connect to municipal services, with some exceptions
- H.7 Substantial development not permitted on single services
- H.8 Single service areas are anticipated in the future to be fully serviced
- H.10 Allocation strategies will be maintained/prepared to provide means of allocating capacity for development
- H.11 Servicing schedules for each urban area may be in the Area or District Ops
- H.13 Extension of services outside of schedule area not permitted without amendment to OP
- H.14-19 Development near municipal sanitary sewage disposal facilities discouraged, with development within 1km of intake or outfall areas not permitted unless it can be shown to have no impact on the municipal system.
- H.21-26 Policies speak to restrictions regarding private potable water and sewage disposal facilities

First Draft Muskoka Official Plan:

B13.1a. Planning for sewage and water services shall:

- i) Direct and accommodate expected growth or development in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing:
 - 1. Municipal sewage services and municipal water services;
 - 2. Private individual on-site services where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available.
- ii) Ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
 - 1. Can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;
 - 2. Is feasible, financially viable and complies with all regulatory requirements; and
 - 3. Protects human health and the natural environment.
- iii) Promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- iv) Integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
- v) Be in accordance with the servicing hierarchy outlined through Sections B13.1 b), B13.1 c) and B13.2.f).

- b. Municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for Urban Centres. Intensification and redevelopment within Urban Centres on existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services should be promoted, wherever feasible.

B13.2 DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SERVICES

- a) The District of Muskoka is responsible for municipal sewage services and municipal water services.
- b) For each Urban Centre, the boundaries of municipal sewage service areas and municipal water service areas, along with Single Service and Future Service Areas are shown on Schedules _____. An Amendment to this Plan shall be required if an expansion to one or more of the service areas is proposed.
- c) It is the intent of this Plan that Single and Future Service Areas will ultimately be provided with full municipal services over time.
- d) The District may require that an economic/fiscal impact analysis be completed in support of a proposal that has the effect of expanding the boundaries of existing municipal sewage service areas and/or municipal water service into future service areas as determined by the District. This analysis shall be coordinated between the District and the affected Area Municipality and shall include but not be limited to:
 - i) The impact on operating and capital budgets, and the financing implications related to the impact on tax levy, user rates and development charges; and,
 - ii) The ability to financially and technically provide for the required servicing infrastructure in order to allow the development to proceed on a timely basis.
- e) Where municipal services are required to service a vacant land or common element condominium description and where such services will provide service to more than one lot, unit or parcel of tied land, they will be owned, operated and maintained by the District.
- f) Development adjacent to sanitary sewage disposal facilities including sewage lagoons will be discouraged. Where such development is proposed it will generally be limited to passive recreation and open space uses. Setbacks from municipal systems are detailed in Table 6 and are to be measured from the footprint of the facility with a reasonable future expansion considered:
- g) Where a change in land use is proposed adjacent to any municipal sanitary sewage disposal facility the onus will be on the proponent to demonstrate that the use is not sensitive to odour. Where necessary, separation distances and other mitigative measures, potentially including warning clauses registered on title, will be required to adequately address any compatibility concerns.

- h) Municipal water supply and sanitary sewage capacity allocation strategies will be prepared for all municipal water supply and sanitary sewage disposal facilities in order to provide a clear method of identifying and allocating capacity for development. Servicing capacity allocation strategies shall:
 - i) Ensure the conditions under which capacity will be allocated are equitable and maximum public benefits;
 - ii) Ensure that planning approvals align with the capacity available for a range of uses and that an appropriate amount of capacity is retained for necessary public service facilities or other uses that in the public interest;
 - iii) Ensure that capacity allocations are utilized within reasonable periods of time so that reasonable opportunities exist for development to occur on multiple properties within the same time frame; and,
 - iv) Maximize efficiencies and support conservation efforts wherever possible.
- i) Holding provisions in Area Municipal zoning by-laws may be required to manage the allocation of servicing capacity, ensure the availability of municipal services or facilitate the phasing of development. The District will require that the necessary agreements be entered into before consenting to the lifting of holding provisions that provide for logical and orderly development.

B13.3 OTHER SERVICING POLICIES

- a) Infrastructure corridors (existing and proposed) that have been or will be identified through an Environmental Assessment process shall be protected to support growth.
- b) The approval authority may allow lot creation in Urban Centres only if there is confirmation of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity and reserve water system capacity within municipal sewage services and municipal water services. The determination of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity shall include treatment capacity for hauled sewage from individual on-site sewage services, where appropriate.
- c) The extension of municipal sewage services and/or municipal water services beyond the boundary of an Urban Centre may only be considered to address failed services and/or public health concerns or to facilitate installation for works that have been determined to be in the public interest.
- d) Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not provided in an Urban Centre, Community Area, Waterfront Area or Rural Area, individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts, provided that treatment capacity for hauled sewage from individual on-site sewage services exists, and provided that such services do not generally provide service on more than one legally conveyable lot, parcel of tied land (POTL) or vacant land unit in accordance with the following:

- i) In a Community Area, these services may only be used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development;
- ii) In an Urban Centre, these services will only be used where the development represents limited infill in an established built up area or development of an existing vacant lot of record where municipal services are not immediately available or available in the foreseeable future;
- iii) In both Urban Centres and Community Areas, private individual on-site services will only be permitted where development represents a low intensity use(s) and no immediate or foreseeable supply, health or environmental issue would be created or further compounded; and
- iv) In all designations except the Waterfront Area Designation, a hydrogeological assessment will generally be required where:
 1. Private groundwater and sanitary sewage disposal services are proposed for more than five lots or units, where all or some of the lots are less than 1.0 hectare in area; or
 2. Any use is proposed which would generate an effluent flow of greater than 5,000 litres per day;
 3. Any use is proposed in areas of known or suspected water shortage or water quality concerns; or
 4. Any development is proposed on a lot less than 1.0 hectare in area where cumulative impacts of private water and sewage services in the area are deemed of significant concern.
- e) Partial services shall only be permitted in an Urban Centre where they are necessary to address failed individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services in existing development or to support development of an existing lot of record where the extension of municipal sewer services or municipal water services is not required.

B13.4 SETTLEMENT CAPABILITY STUDY

- a) In cases where a Settlement Area Capability Study is required by this plan, such a study shall be prepared to the satisfaction of the Area Municipality and the District to determine whether the settlement area can adequately accommodate additional development on the basis of individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services without having a negative impact on ground water use for drinking purposes and/or the ability of the soils in the area to assimilate effluent.
- b) Other factors, such as the potential impacts of new development on the road network, the natural environment and community facilities (public service facilities may also be considered). Such a Settlement Area Capability Study will provide the technical foundation on which individual Plans of Subdivision or Consent will be evaluated, subject to the requirements of the appropriate agencies.

B15 PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT

- a) It is the intent of this Plan to encourage the timely provision of infrastructure as urban development occurs. On this basis, the identification of infrastructure upgrades and service delivery requirements should be carried out early in the planning process in new development areas.

- b) This long range planning should take the full build out of the Urban Centres or Community Areas into account and attempt to rationalize how long it will take for the area to be developed.
- c) External factors should also be considered, most notably the capacity of water and sewer infrastructure and of transportation systems located within, adjacent to and in the vicinity of the development area as well as the proximity to the built-up area. In addition, population and employment forecasts should also be considered.

B16 ASSET MANAGEMENT

- a) Asset management planning is the process of making the best possible decisions regarding the building, operating, maintaining, renewing, replacing and disposing of infrastructure assets. The objective is to maximize benefits, manage risk, and provide satisfactory levels of service to the public in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner.
- b) Asset management requires a thorough understanding of the characteristics and condition of infrastructure assets, as well as the service levels expected from them. It also involves setting strategic priorities to optimize decision-making about when and how to proceed with investments. Finally, it requires the development of a financial plan, which is the most critical step in putting the plan into action.
- c) The District and the Area Municipalities are encouraged to prepare asset management plans, the intent of which is to state how a group of assets are to be managed over a period of time. The asset management plan should describe the characteristics and condition of infrastructure assets, the levels of service expected from them, planned actions to ensure the assets are providing the expected level of service, and financing strategies to implement the planned actions

Town Strategic Documents:

Strategic Plan

Roads and Infrastructure

GOAL #2 Ensure Town infrastructure and service levels respond to the needs of a prosperous and progressive community

Unity Plan

Goal #2 Municipal Operations and Infrastructure: Huntsville will strive to be a model sustainable community , by reducing its impact on the environment, and planning for climate change adaptation by following best management practises in all municipal operations and infrastructure projects and leading by example.

Huntsville Official Plan:

2.4.8 Municipal Infrastructure

- 2.4.8.1 An extensive and efficient system of municipal infrastructure is critical to maintaining the quality of life in Huntsville. These include water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, roads, storm water, solid waste disposal and utilities.
- 10.1.1.1 Water and sewage capacity allocation strategies will be prepared and maintained, in conjunction with the District Municipality of Muskoka, for all areas in Huntsville identified on Schedules B-1, B-2 and B-3 in order to monitor the approved and proposed developments in terms of allocations of existing plant capacities.
- 10.1.1.2 Where rezoning would permit uses that would require a significant allocation of sewer and water capacity, a holding by-law may be used in order to facilitate phasing of development and to defer final allocation until construction is to proceed. The holding provision will be removed upon confirmation of servicing capacity by the District Municipality of Muskoka and appropriate agreements or other approvals have been entered into.
- 10.1.1.3 Water supply for fire protection shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Fire Department.
- 10.1.1.4 Development on private services shall be limited to low effluent producing uses which do not generate large quantities of liquid effluent or create discharge which would be an environmental hazard to ground water.
- 10.1.1.5 Implementing zoning by-laws will not permit “as of right” high water users or sewage generators on private services.
- 10.1.1.6 Conservation measures that will result in the most efficient use of water and sewage facilities will be promoted and encouraged.
- 10.1.1.7 Implementing zoning by-laws may prohibit the development of land unless municipal water and sanitary sewer services as required for the development and detailed herein are available.
- 10.1.1.8 Extension of municipal water and sewer services outside of the areas identified on Schedules B-1, B-2 and B-3 or the extension of single service areas shall not be permitted except where such works are undertaken as a municipal project, or to remedy a health hazard or an environmental concern.
- 10.1.1.9 The establishment of new single service areas shall not be permitted.
- 10.1.1.10 The extension of services for reasons identified in 10.1.1.8 above, shall not confer, or be deemed to confer, development rights for abutting properties and further extensions from such services to surrounding properties shall not be permitted, except as permitted by this Plan.

- 10.1.1.11 The Town will encourage programs to provide full services to partially serviced areas to encourage intensification and increased density.
- 10.1.1.12 Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Plan, the servicing of development shall be subject to the requirements of the District of Muskoka, including, amongst other matters, the determination of availability and capacity of such services and the requirement for connection to such services.

10.1.2 Huntsville Urban Area

- 10.1.2.1 Development shall proceed on the basis of full municipal water and sewage disposal services within the area designated for full Urban Services on Schedule B-1.
- 10.1.2.2 The availability and extension of municipal water and sewer services will be a principal factor in establishing the phasing of development within the Huntsville Urban Area.
- 10.1.2.3 Some areas of Huntsville are presently serviced with a single municipal service. The extension of full municipal services to existing single municipal service areas is encouraged.
- 10.1.2.4 Where full municipal water and sewer services are not yet available within the area identified for Full Urban Services, development should not occur until services are available. However, development of existing lots of record or infilling or lot creation of a limited nature may be permitted, where the extension of the service is not feasible, practical or available in the foreseeable future, and subject to the following:
 - a) the uses are restricted to those of a 'low effluent producing nature';
 - b) the use does not preclude the eventual connection to full services when they become available or does not preclude future urban intensification;
 - c) as a condition of development approval, an agreement is entered into with the Town or the District to require the connection to full services when they become available;
 - d) minimum lot standards for new lot creation shall be double those for the development if it were on full municipal services, and the lot shall be designed in such a manner as to be able to be split in the future when full services are available;
 - e) a private sewage disposal system (if required) can be accommodated on the lot;
 - f) private individual sewage systems should be located within the yard adjacent to the street or in the side yard, where possible, in order to facilitate future connection to municipal sewers; and
 - g) subject to such conditions as the District of Muskoka deems necessary respecting servicing.

- 10.1.2.5 For the purposes of this section, infill or lot creation of a limited nature means the creation of a lot or lots between two existing lots of a similar nature and which are located on the same side of the road and are not more than 60 metres (200 feet) apart.
- 10.1.2.6 Areas identified on Schedule B-1 as “Future Service Area” include lands that have been developed and which are not presently serviced with full municipal water and sewage disposal facilities. This Plan contemplates the eventual servicing of these areas with both municipal water and sewage disposal facilities. In the meantime, the provisions of Section 10.1.2.4 apply to any development in this area.
- 10.1.2.7 Where development is permitted on private services, lots shall have sufficient and suitable area to adequately accommodate such services, and shall satisfy the authority having jurisdiction with respect to the approval of private water supply or private sewage facilities. Class V (Holding Tanks) shall not be permitted except to remedy a problem or situation on an existing developed lot that would be unsuitable for any other system.
- 10.1.2.8 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Plan, no new development is permitted on Scott Point in Lot 16, Concession 1, Chaffey Ward, in Fairy Lake, without full municipal sewer and water services.
- 10.1.2.9 New development shall be setback from the Huntsville Water Treatment Plant in accordance with the requirements of the District of Muskoka.

10.1.3 Hidden Valley

- 10.1.3.1 Development shall proceed on the basis of full municipal water and sewage disposal services within the area designated for full Urban Services on Schedule B-2, except in extenuating circumstances as approved by the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Town.
- 10.1.3.2 The availability and extension of municipal water and sewer services will be a principal factor in establishing the phasing of development within Hidden Valley.
- 10.1.3.3 The extension of full municipal services to existing un-serviced or single municipal service areas is encouraged.

10.1.4 Port Sydney

- 10.1.4.1 Existing development in Port Sydney is presently serviced by private water and sewage disposal systems. One development (43 lots) is serviced by a piped municipal water system only.
- 10.1.4.2 Due to servicing costs and constraints, Port Sydney will not be serviced by an expanded municipal water supply and/or sewage disposal system in the foreseeable future. Outside of the area designated as Water Service Area on Schedule B-3, new development shall proceed with private individual water supply and sewage disposal services.

10.1.5 Highway 60 Corridor

- 10.1.5.1 Development shall proceed on the basis of full municipal water and sewage disposal services within the Highway 60 Corridor Service Area, as shown on Schedule B-2, except as specifically provided in Section 7.
- 10.1.5.2 New development shall be setback from the Huntsville Sewage Treatment Plant in accordance with the requirements of the District of Muskoka.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Due to the relatively small economy of scale related to the operation of multiple small facilities over a large geographical area, the cost per household for municipal water supply and sewage disposal services are amongst the highest in the province.
- The approach of inclusion of servicing schedules in Area Municipal official plans which have boundaries that are synonymous with the urban boundaries, together with a lack of strong phasing and intensification policies/incentives, has resulted in some cases with low density development approvals which are difficult to service.
- The latest allocation strategy numbers indicate that if all lots available for building permits were to build out, both the water and sewage treatment plants would be over capacity.
- Recently, District staff have proposed a new District-wide capacity allocation approach (as compared to individual area municipal strategies) that will allow a better understanding of infrastructure, asset and growth-management related matters across Muskoka. Part of the new strategy being proposed would be to develop performance based criteria to close inactive subdivisions to free up capacity.
- The Port Sydney Groundwater Management Study recommends that a wellhead protection zone (WHPZ) be included in both the MOP as well as the Huntsville Official Plan. This WHPZ should restrict certain land use activities in order to ensure that future development does not reduce groundwater recharge or deteriorate groundwater quality.
- The draft Muskoka Official Plan proposes that servicing schedules will be included within that document and identifying portions of the existing built-up areas and designated growth areas identified as “full service”, “single service” or “future service” areas.

SUMMARY:

A review of best practices from other municipalities across Muskoka has revealed that the following policy approaches may assist in addressing some of the considerations:

- As the MOP will identify the extent of the urban service area in each of the Urban Centres and include policies that require the optimization of existing services before considering the extension of services as a first principle, the Town Official Plan will need to include policies that conform with this intent. The inclusion of a servicing boundary as a schedule in the Town's OP would not be required as it would simply just duplicate the MOP. Further collaboration with the District as to the interplay of municipal servicing policies within the Town Official Plan and MOP is required.
- Define/designate the WHPZ in Port Sydney and provide policies which restrict land uses within that area.