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MEETING DATE: February 17, 2026

REPORT

TO: Council,
Township of Lucan Biddulph

FROM: Dan FitzGerald MPI MCIP RPP, Manager of Planning
Alyssa Soldo, Planner

**RE: ZBA 01-2026
Housing Accelerator Fund Zoning By-law Amendments – Housekeeping Amendment**

Purpose:

The purpose and effect of the amendment is to implement a Zoning By-law amendment to modernize existing standards, reflecting the Township's commitment to supporting a range and mix of housing options that respond to community needs and align with growth objectives. The amendment seeks to limit exclusionary zoning by introducing a variety of housing options where appropriate; proposing appropriate restrictions on residential development to enable timely and efficient housing delivery; reducing parking standards; and establishing design and implementation guidelines to support the integration of ARUs in a manner that respects neighbourhood character while increasing housing supply. These changes would be applied on a municipal-wide basis and would apply to all lands within the Township.

Background:

The Township hosted a public meeting on February 3, 2026, where staff presented proposed changes to the zoning by-law which are in alignment with stated objectives and requirements of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF2), which is administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This report to Council is to supplement the previous report provided for information, outlining the program, objectives, as well as the Provincial, County, and Township's existing guiding policy on land use planning, included as attachment 1.

As identified through the Housing Action Plan, the Township committed to the following categories to be addressed in a zoning update:

1. End Exclusionary Zoning
2. Reduce or Eliminate Parking Standards
3. Eliminate Restrictions and Add Flexibility
4. Design and Implement Guidelines for Additional Residential Units Township wide

A more comprehensive background and discussion on these topics is available in the information report included as attachment 1.

Analysis:

The following amendments are recommended to address the Township's HAF initiatives:

- Permitting up to four (4) units as-of-right in the R1 zone. The establishment of four units is limited to that of townhomes or a purpose-built multi-unit dwelling containing 4 dwelling units, such as a fourplex. It is also noted that a single detached dwelling would continue to only permit up to two (2) additional residential units as defined in the Planning Act. Note that while four units are permitted as of right, proposed developments will still be required to meet remaining zone requirements, including the provision of appropriate parking, setbacks, and lot coverage. Full municipal services with water and wastewater are also required;
- Permitting a wider range of housing forms in all residential zones, including the R1 and R2 zones, while also simplifying housing type definitions to reduce complexity;
- Decreasing the minimum lot areas and minimum lot frontages to permit more compact and affordable housing options;
- Decreasing setbacks based on more common standards of zoning and smaller lot sizes, which have been widely adopted in existing site-specific zones within the Township;
- Increasing maximum lot coverage, encouraging more compact form, which also addresses a more common variance request;
- Removing the minimum floor area provisions in alignment with changes to the Planning Act;
- Adding Addition Residential Unit (ARU) provisions to the general regulations. This includes provisions for ARUs on serviced and un-serviced lots and implements requirements of the PPS 2024, the Planning Act, and recent updates to the County of Middlesex Official Plan, particularly with respect to ARUs in un-serviced areas. Note that ARU Guidelines have also been prepared to help support those interested in building an ARU and will be made available following the approval of the ZBA;
- Conforming a two (2) ARU maximum limit with the urban serviced lands across the Township. The proposed provisions also limit the number of bedrooms to 3 across all additional residential units to ease parking concerns;
- Introduced relaxed parking standards for seniors housing and affordable housing units. Additionally, provisions are recommended allowing staff and Council to consider shared parking agreements when sites are within 150 metres of each other;

- Proposed rounding of parking stall requirements to singles, semi's, and townhouse formats of development; and,
- Introduced formal visitor parking stall requirements for townhomes, multi-unit dwellings, and apartment style units.

A formal review of the applicable policy was previously provided in the information report. I am of the opinion that the proposed amendments align well with the stated objectives of the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), Middlesex County Official Plan and Lucan Biddulph Official Plan, all of which encourage residential infill development within settlement areas, subject to servicing and compatibility.

This Amendment continues to support intensification and infill development by permitting additional as-of-right permitted uses, increased density, and establishing provisions for ARUs. The mix of dwelling types and residential lot sizes implements the Housing Action Plan initiatives and recent changes to the *Planning Act* regarding ARUs. Additionally, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment has regard for the policies of Amendment No. 4 to the County Official Plan and incorporates regulations to address the policies with the intent of minimizing the impact on agricultural lands throughout the County.

In all, these changes modernize the Township's Zoning By-law, better reflect current building practices previously implemented through site-specific zones, and support the provision of a wider range of housing options to promote more affordable formats of housing.

In conclusion, staff and MHBC are of the opinion that the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is appropriate, is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement and is in conformity with the County of Middlesex and Lucan Biddulph Official Plans. Additionally, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment implements several goals of the HAF, as required for continued federal funding.

Consultation:

Notice of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment was circulated to the required agencies and posted to the Township's website in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

Staff did not receive any comments noting concerns for internal department or external agencies.

Staff received comments at the public meeting from Council as well as the public. After the meeting, correspondence was received from the public asking questions of clarification. Answer to questions are outlined below:

1. Is the town seriously considering ending all exclusionary zoning/eliminating restrictions on all housing types/reducing/eliminating parking standards?

The proposed By-law considers providing opportunities for different types of buildings across all residential zones. For instance, the existing R1 zone only permits a single detached residence. The proposed amendment would permit single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, townhomes, or multi-unit dwellings (limited to four units in the R1 zone). However, any of the types of building can only be constructed if they meet all applicable zoning provisions such as lot sizing, setback, and lot coverage provisions.

2. Isn't it important to prevent/"ban" certain types of dwellings in some residential settings? Wouldn't some restrictions ensure the key points above (neighbourhood character, property values and privacy) stay intact and limit angry/unhappy residents?

From a planning perspective, we would generally look at the use of the lands to determine if proposed development is considered compatible. The type of building, whether it be a single-family home or a townhouse, would not be considered non-compatible as they are both residential. A non-compatible use generally would be a industrial use next to a residential use. The zoning standards proposed ensure that the lands are sized appropriately to accommodate the proposed number of units, complementing the pre-existing residential uses.

3. These bylaws were established for a reason. Do those same reasons still not exist? What has changed that requires these rules to be changed now (outside of the incentive grants) since we have MANY empty units in Lucan at present.

As a best practice, Zoning By-law provisions are created based on several factors including, but not limited to, servicing provisions, community goals, affordability, and efficiency of development. They may represent the most appropriate standards of the day when passed by Council. Over time, development practices and standards change. Updates are required to ensure Municipalities are providing housing product for all demographics and ages. Several examples can be seen within the existing community where scattered throughout you will find larger lot residential homes tucked in between or flanking more modernized zoning standards (smaller residential lots).

As the market and demands change, it is common practice for Municipality's to review and modernize zoning standards based on the policy direction of the Province. To that end, the reasons behind zoning standards are still present and inform how we make recommendations to update zoning provisions.

4. Can you explain how bans in residential areas contribute to *"unequal access, making it difficult for people to live in the community as they age"*?

Existing zoning categories are exclusionary as they only permit limited formats of housing. For instance, the R1 zone currently only permits single detached dwellings. This format of housing, as the overwhelming predominant format of housing in the Township, is also the most expensive and least efficient format of housing. The lack of more affordable housing options creates unequal access to housing.

5. *Opening up all zones to appropriate levels and options for housing,"* all is very broad and consuming – what is deemed an appropriate level? Who decides that?

The appropriate level would be established through the Zoning By-law provisions. The proposed changes to the R1 zone would permit up to a maximum of four (4) units. However, in order to achieve that number of units, any buildings would need to meet all required provisions such as setbacks, lot coverage, and provide all required parking stalls. Council holds all authority to pass By-laws to implement change.

6. Does this mean that land can be repurposed in an R1 residential area (i.e. an older home being torn down and a complex, apartment or townhouse complex built on the land where a single-family home first existed)?

The redevelopment of an existing lot would be dependent on any proposed building meeting zoning provisions. If passed permissions would exist in the R1 zone for singles, semi-detached, townhome and multi-unit dwellings. However, they would need to meet the applicable lot size for each use, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking requirements, among other zoning standards.

7. What is an “underused” lot? Can you provide an example? Does this refer to a vacant lot or one that has a preexisting structure? Who deems it as “underused”, what is that criteria”?

Underused or underutilized lots are generally defined as a property that is not developed to its highest and best potential based on current zoning, land value, and market demand. They can also be traditionally vacant parcels which may have never been built on in the past, or lots where buildings have been abandoned for various reasons. Based on zoning standards, a lot could be considered underused if it had potential for more development.

8. Does this mean that if/when the bylaw passes, council will no longer have to approve a building in someone’s backyard that directly impacts neighbours? How will neighbours be notified or find out? Will semis or apartments going up in residential areas without extra checks and balances? If so, is that responsible governing?

Any development would still be required to meet all applicable setback standards to front yard, side yards, and rear yards as established in the Zoning By-law. Only in an instance where a proposal did not meet those requirements would a notice go out for a planning application. With respect to building, applications of 10 or more units would be subject to a process called Site Plan Control and building permit reviews. Anything below is subject to build permit review.

Recommendation:

THAT Council approve Zoning By-law Amendment application Z-1-2026 and that the implementing by-law be brought forward for consideration.

Attachments:

1. February 3, 2026 Staff Report
2. Zoning By-law Comparison Chart
3. Draft Zoning By-law ZBA-01-2026