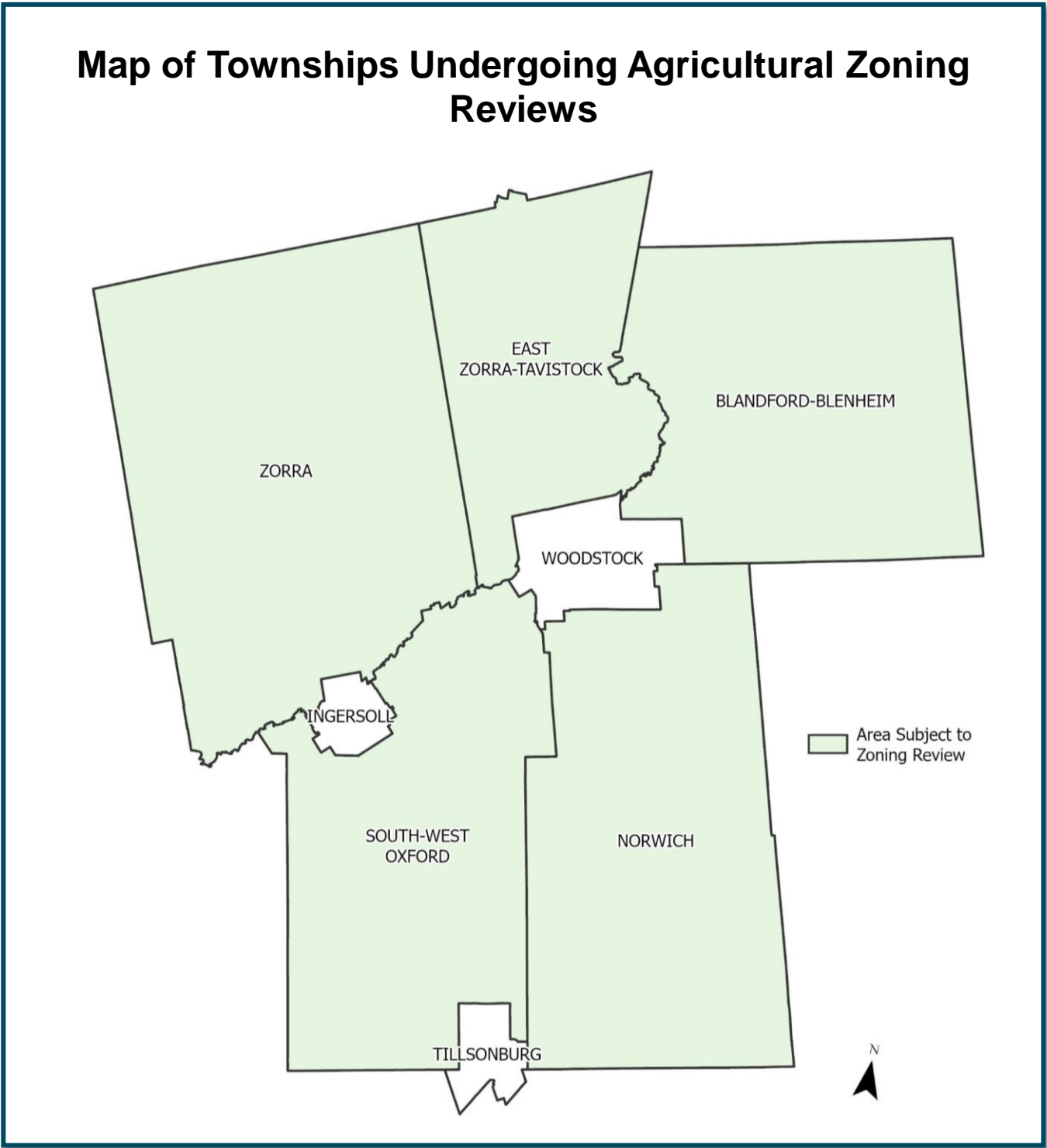


What is the Agricultural Zoning Review?

Why are Agricultural Zoning Reviews required?

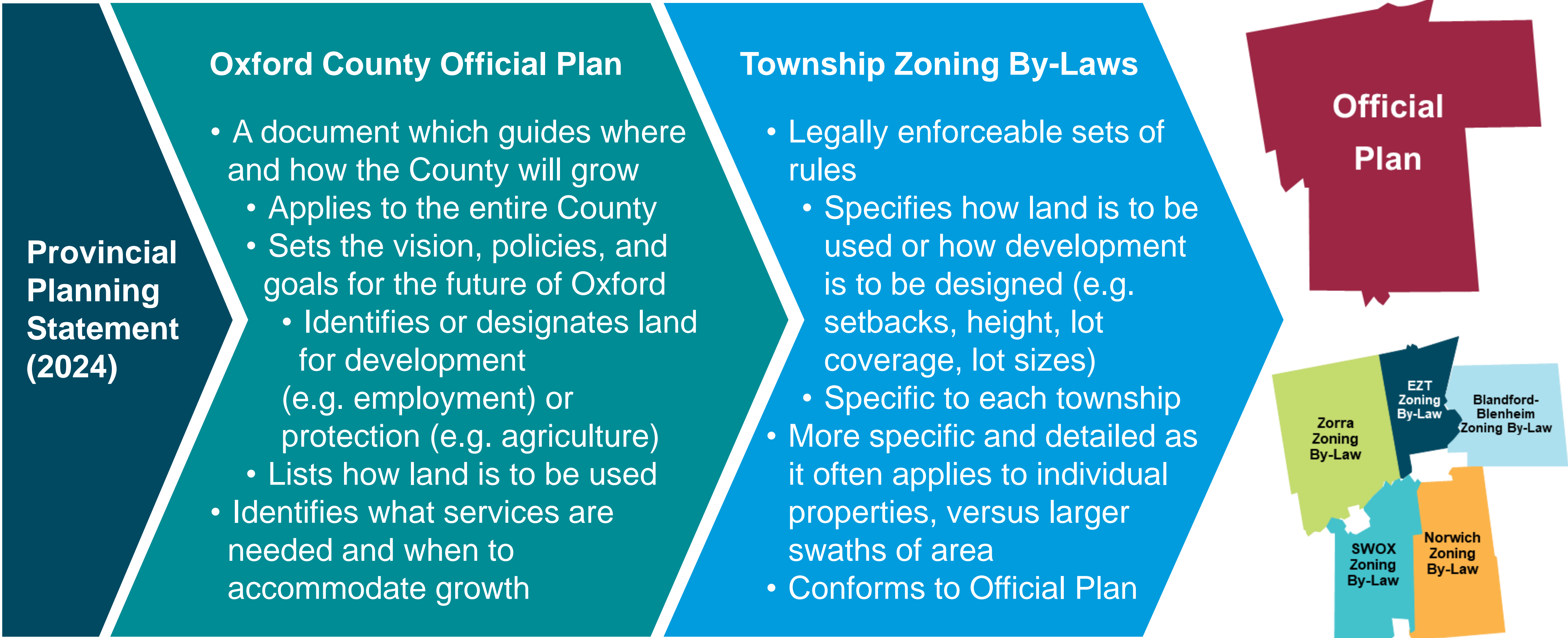
- The Province of Ontario recently approved the Agricultural Official Plan Amendment (OPA 269) for the County of Oxford in February 2024
- OPA 269 was developed over the course of 2021 and 2022 with input from a variety of stakeholders, including Oxford County farmers
- The agricultural Official Plan policies are now in force and effect for the entire agricultural area across Oxford County
- By law, the rural Townships have three years from the date of OPA 269’s approval to implement the agricultural Official Plan policies in their local Zoning By-Laws, including Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock, Norwich, South-West Oxford, and Zorra Townships



What are the Agricultural Zoning Reviews trying to achieve?

- To update the Townships’ Zoning By-Laws to align with and implement the agricultural policies in the Official Plan (OPA 269)
- The goals in reviewing and updating the Townships’ Zoning By-Laws are to:
 - Regulate new uses that are already permitted in the Official Plan, such as *on-farm diversified uses*, *agriculture-related uses*, and *rural entrepreneurial uses*
 - Protect farmland and normal farm practices while also provide opportunities to support agricultural viability and the rural economy
 - Provide more clarity within the agricultural and rural zones and to make the Zoning By-Law easier to read, use, and interpret
 - Streamline processes and requirements for development applications, where appropriate, to make applications more efficient in terms of time and resources for staff and applicants
 - Update technical matters in the Zoning By-Law (e.g. address clerical errors, changes in legislation)

What’s the difference between the Official Plan and Zoning?

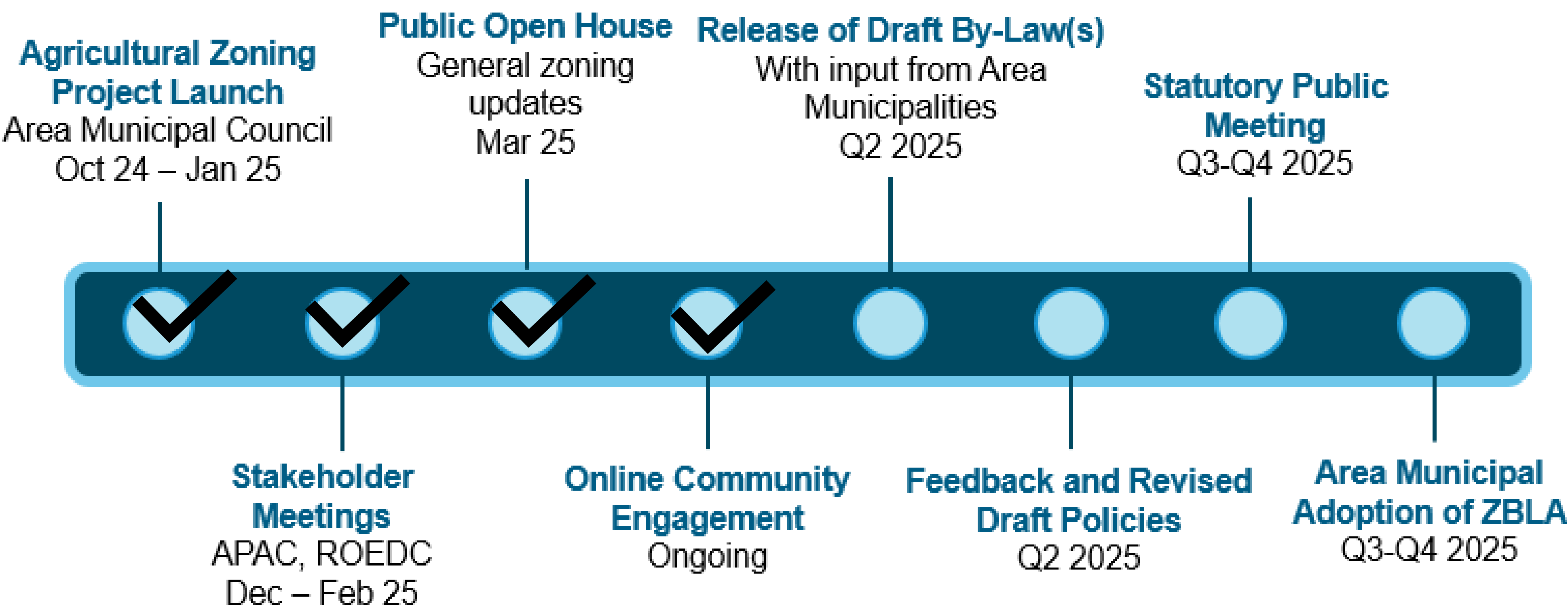


What is the Process for the Zoning Reviews?

What can I expect to occur?

- The Zoning Review process is looking to implement the County-wide Official Plan policies for the Agricultural Area into five separate Zoning By-Laws for each rural Township
- Each Zoning By-Law will look similar but potential differences in permitted uses, size and scale criteria, and process for permitting such uses in the zoning may exist between the five rural townships based on the desires and feedback from the Township's Staff, Council, and local residents
- If you have specific feedback regarding the proposed approach for your Township's Agricultural Zoning Review, please submit it to your area municipality or see how you can submit your feedback below
- Every Township will go through the Zoning Review process according to their own timelines, including timelines for release of the draft Zoning By-Laws, public engagement, statutory public meetings, and the passing of the Zoning By-Laws by the Township Council

What is the expected timeline for the projects?



How can I submit my feedback?

- Be sure to reference which Township you live in or use the file number when you choose to provide feedback so staff know which Zoning By-Law you are referring to
- You can attend your Township's Council meeting to learn more and provide feedback at the future statutory public meeting
- Sign in at today's Open House and sign up for email notifications to stay updated as the project progresses
- You can contact us directly via email or phone with your questions or suggestions

Contact Us

Emily Sousa, Policy Planner / Project Lead
Oxford County Community Planning Department
✉ planning@oxfordcounty.ca
☎ 519-539-9800 x3213

Township File Numbers

Blandford-Blenheim (ZN1-24-25)
South-West Oxford (ZN4-24-20)
East Zorra-Tavistock (ZN2-25-01)

Norwich (ZN3-25-04)
Zorra (ZN 5-24-12)

What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

Agricultural Uses

- Under the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), *agricultural uses* means the growing of crops, including nursery, biomass, and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including, but not limited to livestock facilities, manure storages, value-retaining facilities, and housing for farm workers, when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.
- The Official Plan currently permits *agricultural uses* all across the Agricultural Reserve designation in the County
- The Agricultural Zoning Review proposes to adopt this definition into all of the Townships’ Zoning By-Laws and add ‘Class I Anaerobic Digestors’ as an agricultural use, subject to criteria in the Official Plan
- Agricultural uses are currently permitted in the zoning in Agricultural Zones (A1, A2) and this is proposed to remain the same in the reviewed and updated Zoning By-Laws, with the potential to include agricultural uses in more zones (such as Agribusiness or ‘AB’)

Examples of Agricultural Uses



Crop or Pastureland



Growing Greenhouses



Livestock or Feedlots



Farm Buildings



Aquaculture



Farm Worker Housing



Nurseries (No Retail)



Horse Farms/Arenas

How might lot area impact my agricultural zoning?

- The existing A1 and A2 zones are being re-assessed to align with minimum lot sizes in the Official Plan
- In the Official Plan, undersized agricultural lots are lots less than 16 ha (40 ac) in size
- If your lot is less than 16 ha in size, your zone code will either remain the same or change to A1 to reflect the lot size requirements. If your lot is more than 16 ha in size, your zone code will either remain the same or change to A2 to reflect the lot size
- If your lot is less than 16 ha and is vacant, your zoning will change to A1-ND, meaning you will require a Zoning By-Law Amendment to build on the property, which has always been a requirement.
- Since these changes are looking to implement existing Official Plan policies, these changes will impact your zone code only – not your tax assessment or your ability to develop on your lot based on your lot area

Table Summary of Proposed Changes to A Zones

Zone Code	Zone Name (Revised)	Lot Area	Development Permissions
A1	Undersized Agricultural	16 ha or less	Permits a dwelling subject to criteria
A1-ND	Undersized Agricultural – No Development	16 ha or less	No development exists on the lot to date, requires a Zoning By-Law Amendment to permit and locate any structures.
A2	Agricultural	16 ha or greater	Farm buildings and a single detached dwelling accessory to agricultural use are permitted.

What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

New Zone for Lots Severing a Surplus Farm Dwelling

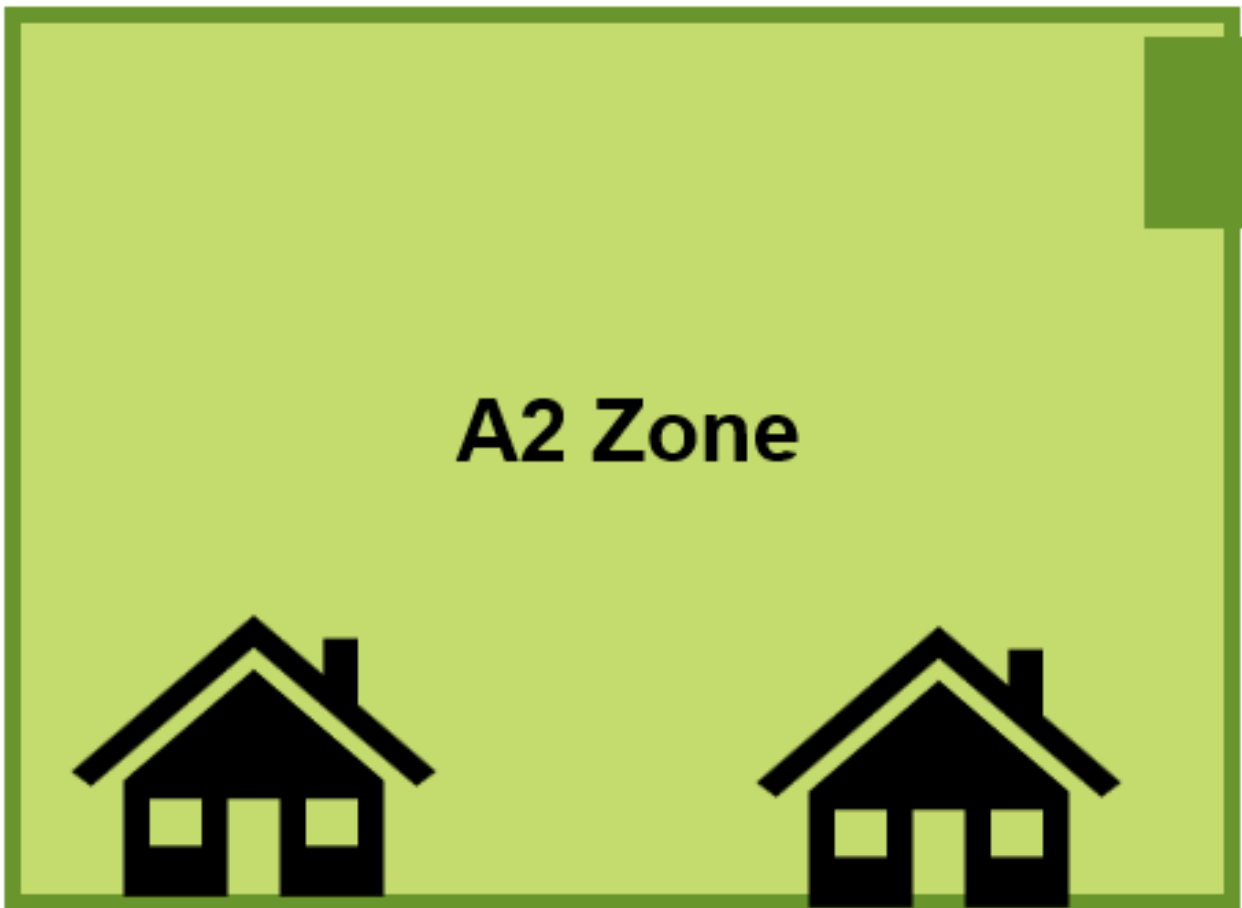
- The Official Plan now allows the ability for a farmer to sever a surplus farm dwelling through a farm consolidation of non-abutting farm parcels in instances where:
 - One parcel contains at least two (2) farm dwellings built before 1995;
 - One of the dwellings is being severed off into a new rural residential lot and will be rezoned “Rural Residential”; and
 - The retained farm parcel will keep one (1) habitable dwelling (i.e. not all the houses can be severed off).
- The Provincial Planning Statement requires the County and Townships to prohibit the construction of any **new** dwellings or residential units on the remaining agricultural parcel resulting from a surplus farm dwelling severance, including additional residential units (ARUs).
- Any existing detached ARUs existing at the time of the severance will be required to be severed with the surplus farm dwelling.
- The Agricultural Zoning By-Law Review proposes introducing a new zone category to meet this requirement: Agricultural – No New Dwelling (A3).
- Applicants who apply for a surplus farm dwelling severance under these conditions successfully will be required to rezone the retained farm property to prohibit future construction of any residential use.
- Establishing an A3 zone will make it easier for the area municipalities to implement the required Provincial restrictions without the need to establish a new site-specific zone and provisions for each approved application
- This zoning code would not be applied to surplus farm dwelling severances where the retained lands are merged with an adjacent farm.

Number of Lots Eligible for a Proposed ‘A3’ Zoning

Township	Estimated # of lots with 2+ dwellings built prior to 1995
Blandford-Blenheim	95
East Zorra-Tavistock	50
Norwich	150
South-West Oxford	100
Zorra	95



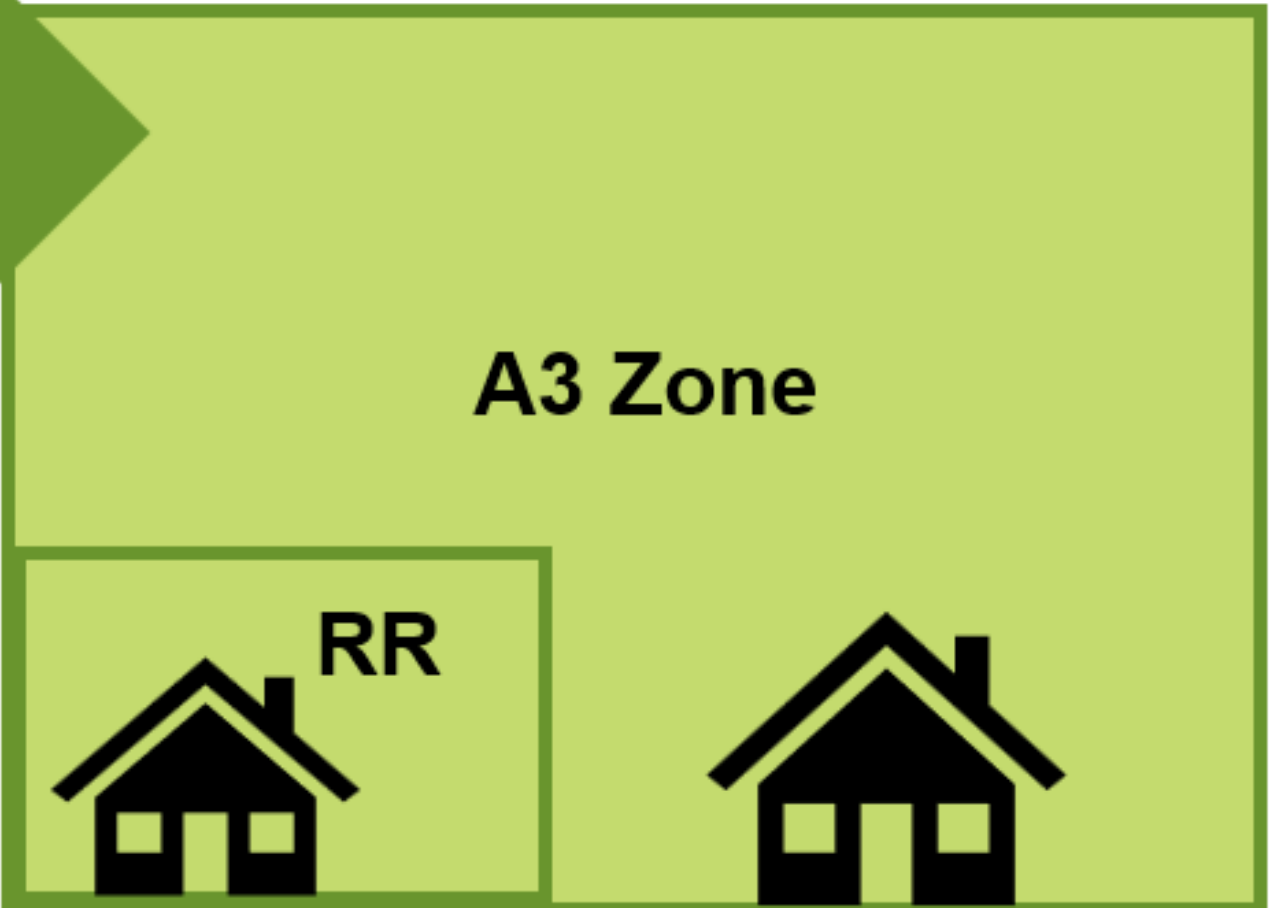
BEFORE



Applications Required

1. Consent
2. Rezoning for each lot
3. Prohibition registered on title and agreement signed with the County

AFTER



What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

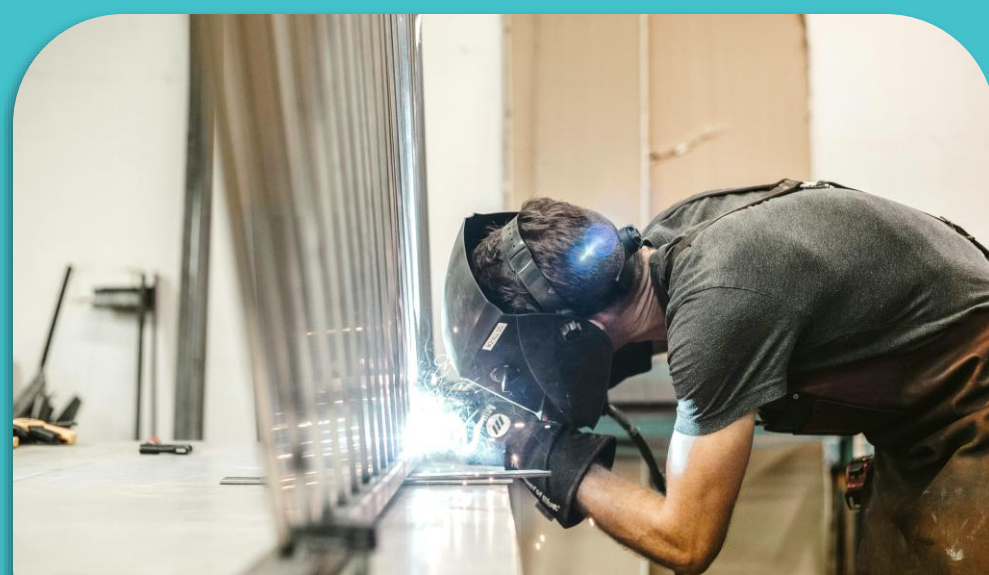
On-Farm Diversified Uses

- The Official Plan currently permits *on-farm diversified uses* all across the Agricultural Reserve designation in the County
- Under the Official Plan, *on-farm diversified uses* means uses that are small scale, secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, and limited in area. Such uses include rural home industries, farm-related tourism, value-added agricultural facilities, value-retaining facilities, smaller-scale agriculture-related uses, and the seasonal storage of boats, recreational vehicles or automobiles within an existing building
- The Agricultural Zoning Review proposes to adopt this definition into all the Townships' Zoning By-Laws
- On-farm diversified uses are meant to benefit the agricultural industry by providing farmers with an additional revenue generation stream (i.e. a side business) to supplement their income earned from *agricultural uses*
- While on-farm diversified uses are permitted, they must also limit the amount of farmland taken out of production and ensure they are compatible with the agricultural industry

Examples of On-Farm Diversified Uses



Farm-related Tourism



Home Industry



Small-Scale Solar



Cheesemaker & Shop



Bakery & Bake Shop



Winery/Brewery/Cidery



Bed and Breakfast



Seasonal Storage

Considerations for On-Farm Diversified Uses

- Townships may be more restrictive when it comes to criteria for what types of *on-farm diversified uses* they would like to see permitted in their communities. For instance, they can disqualify certain types of uses from being *on-farm diversified uses* (e.g. a wedding venue)
- Permitted in Agricultural Zones (e.g. A2) on lots that are a minimum of 16 ha or more in lot area, based on the Official Plan
- Per the Official Plan, each *on-farm diversified use* will be required to go through a site-specific Zoning By-Law Amendment for a specific use and area of the property, which can not take up more than 2% of the property to a maximum of 0.8 ha, and have no more than 6000 ft² in building area (Townships can be more restrictive)
- The Zoning By-Law Review is looking at general criteria to guide the zoning applications Townships will see for *on-farm diversified uses*, such as:
 - Determining which farm properties are eligible for *on-farm diversified uses* (such as those tied to a valid Farm Business Registration Number);
 - Limiting the amount of gross floor area that can be developed for an on-farm diversified use; and
 - Provisions for how much parking is required for the on-farm diversified use based on the type of use proposed

What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

Agriculture-Related Uses

- Under the Official Plan, *agriculture-related uses* means those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses, including *value retaining* (i.e. enhancing the value of a raw commodity) and *value-added agricultural facilities* (i.e. preventing spoilage of a raw commodity) that are directly related to farm operations in the area and are required close to farm operations, support agriculture, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity
- The Agricultural Zoning Review proposes to adopt this definition into all of the Townships' Zoning By-Laws
- The Official Plan currently permits *agriculture-related uses* all across the Agricultural Reserve designation in the County, but there are preferences for locating these uses on undersized agricultural lots and already developed lots (such as lots with underutilized commercial, industrial, or institutional uses) in order to protect prime farmland

Examples of Agriculture-Related Uses



Honey Extraction



Maple Sap Evaporation



Grain Drying/Milling



Canning & Preserving



Bulk Packaging



Commodity Cleaning



Abattoir/Butcher



Cold Storage

Considerations for Agriculture-Related Uses

- Under the Official Plan, each *agriculture-related use* will be required to go through a site-specific Zoning By-Law Amendment for a specific use and area of the property, which is to be limited in size to accommodate the specific use and service it appropriately
- There is a potential for some agriculture-related uses to be permitted outright in some zones (such as Agribusiness or AB) to incentivize locating these uses to already developed lots without the need for a development application
 - Doing so would incentivize these agriculture-related uses to locate on already developed or undersized lots, instead of further consuming farmland
- The Zoning By-Law Review proposes to include general criteria to guide the types of zoning applications the Townships will see for agriculture-related uses, including but not limited to:
 - Types of agriculture-related uses
 - Limiting the amount of gross floor area that can be developed for an agriculture-related use;
 - Considerations for size and scale of agriculture-related uses; and
 - Provisions for how much parking is required for the agriculture-related use based on the type of use proposed

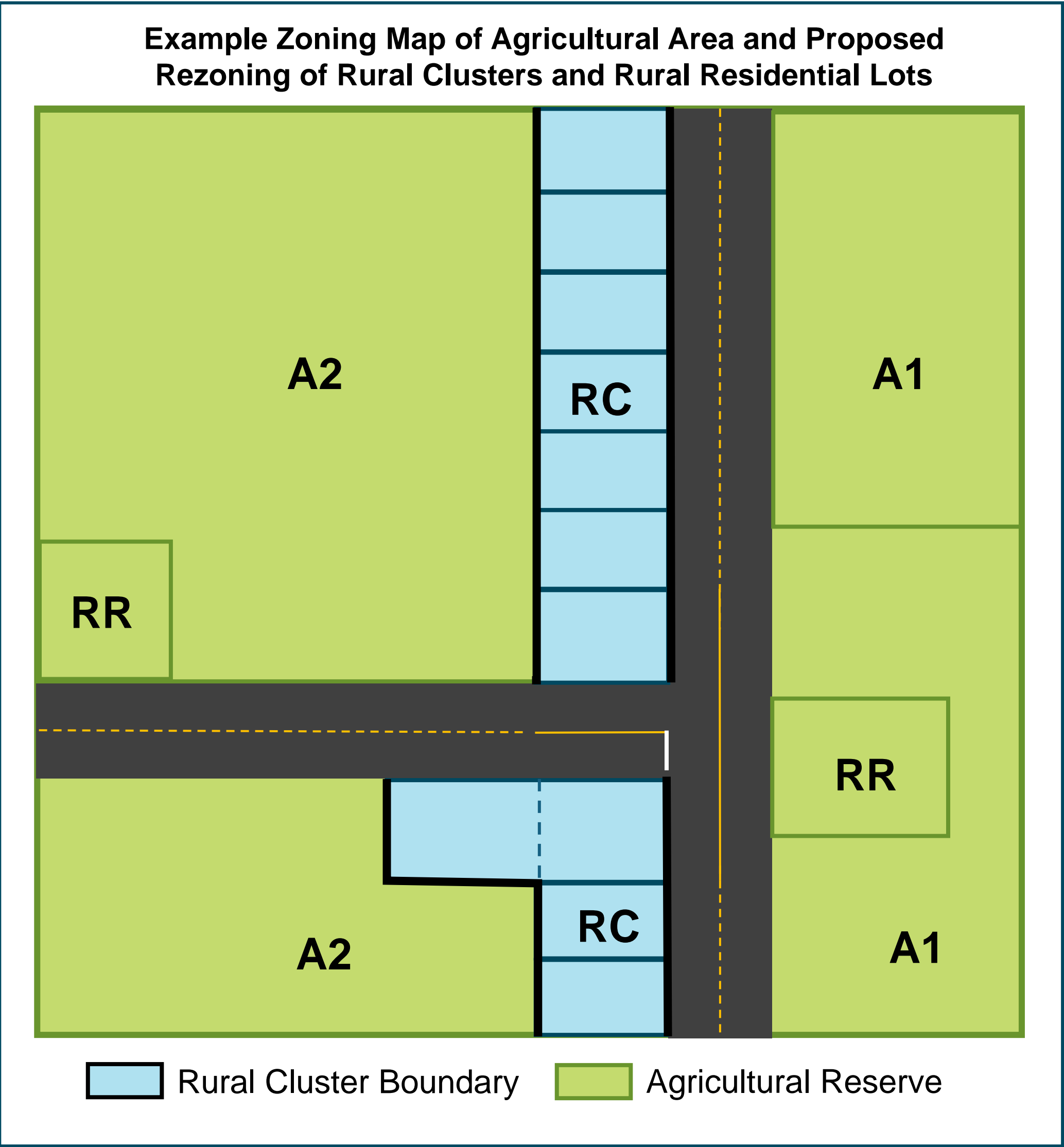
What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

Rural Residential Zone Review

- Residential zones in the agricultural area include Rural Residential (RR) and Residential Existing (RE) zones, as well as the Estate Residential (ER) zone (in East Zorra-Tavistock only).
- These zones are to be reviewed and updated as part of each Township’s Zoning By-Law.
- The main goal is to clarify which residential lots are inside or outside of a settlement area, to:
 - Reflect the Official Plan
 - Make it clearer what their development permissions are.
 - Reduce multiple rural zones that serve the same purpose (e.g., RR, RE, ER)
 - Reflect servicing levels and limitations
 - Support infill opportunities in clusters to build up rural communities by building inwards, without the need to expand and consume more farmland.
- Lots in an existing mapped rural cluster are proposed to be rezoned as “Rural Cluster” (RC) to show they are within a settlement area.
- Lots zoned as Rural Residential (RR), Residential Existing (RE), and Estate Residential (ER), outside of a settlement area are proposed to be rezoned to “Rural Residential” (RR).

Examples of Rural Clusters in Each Township

Blandford-Blenheim	East Zorra-Tavistock	Norwich	South-West Oxford	Zorra
Washington Gobles Canning	Cassel Braemar Strahallan Huntingford Valleyfield Drive	Eastwood Horn Road Greenly Line Curries Holbrook Milldale New Road Simcoe Street Mall Road Hawtrey North & South	Beachville Centreville Foldens Verschoyle Ostrander Dereham Centre Culloden Delmer	Uniondale Brooksdale Medina Sunova Lakeside Braemar Allen Street Dickson’s Corners North Town Line



Differences Between Rural Residential and Rural Cluster

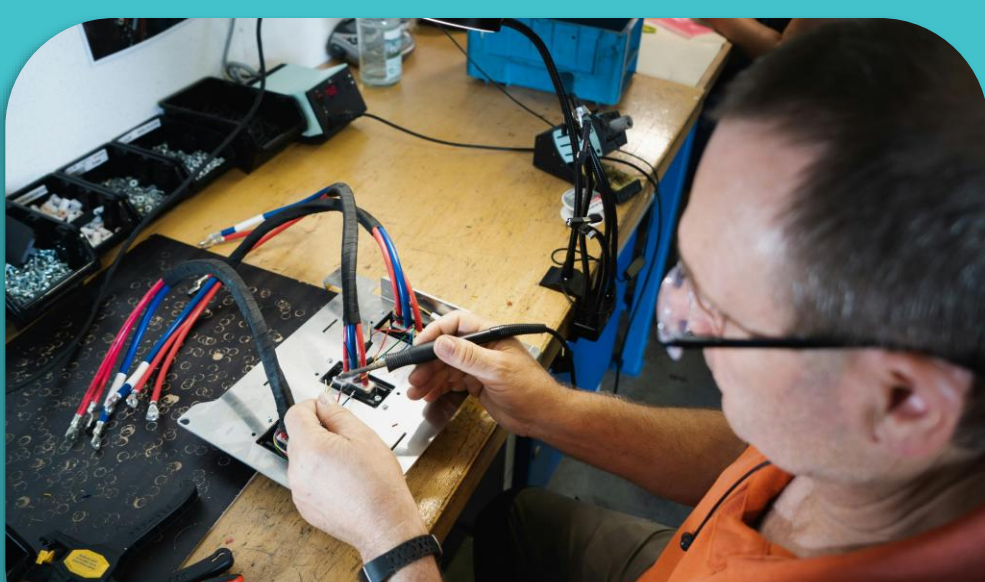
Zone Category	Severance Potential?	Located in a Settlement Area?	Permissions for Rural Entrepreneurial Uses?	Home Occupations Permitted?	Additional Residential Units Permitted?
Rural Residential (RR)	No	No	Yes, subject to criteria in Official Plan and a rezoning.	Yes, subject to size and scale.	Yes, up to two (2) ARUs subject to zoning criteria.
Rural Cluster (RC)	Yes, infill development only.	Yes	No	Yes, subject to size and scale.	Yes, one (1) ARU subject to zoning criteria.

What is Being Addressed in the Zoning Review?

Rural Entrepreneurial Uses & Home Occupations

- The Official Plan currently permits *rural entrepreneurial uses* on existing lots zoned 'Rural Residential' outside of any settlement area
 - Lots currently located within a designated Rural Cluster are not eligible for *rural entrepreneurial uses*
- Under the Official Plan, *rural entrepreneurial uses* means a small-scale business or industry, including:
 - Home occupations which exceed the permitted size and/or scale set out in the Official Plan. *Rural home occupations* are a small-scale operation or business that is clearly secondary to the residential use on the lot and include examples like a professional home office, personal services (e.g. hair styling, aesthetics or massage therapy), small-scale catering, home daycares, bed and breakfasts, or other similar uses
 - A *rural home industry* that is a small-scale business or industry that is secondary to the agricultural or residential use on a lot. They include examples like small equipment repair, small-scale vet clinics, contractor or tradesperson workshops, arts/crafts studios, or other similar uses.

Examples of Rural Entrepreneurial Uses



Small Equipment Repair



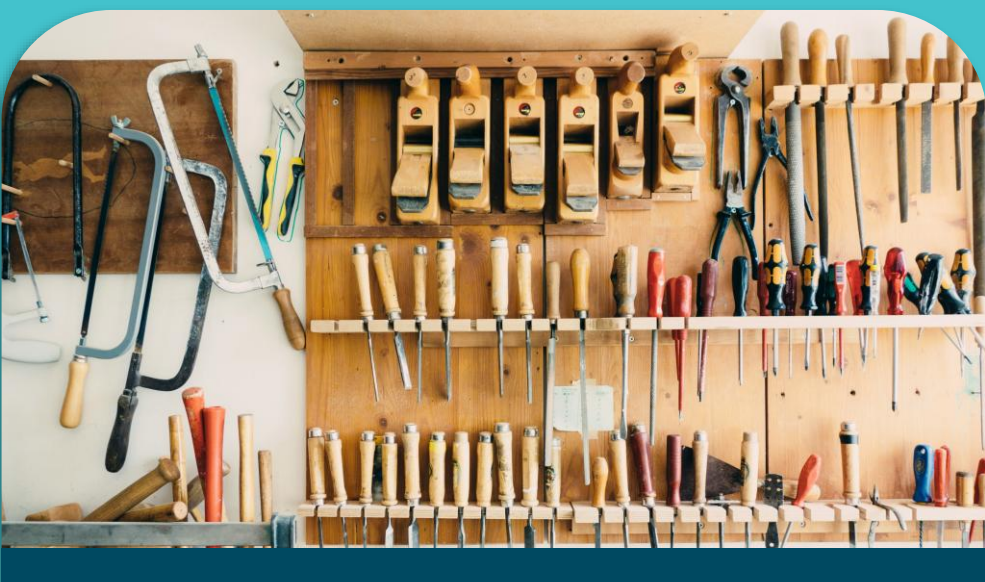
Small-Scale Vet Clinic



Home Daycare



Craftsperson Studio



Contractor Workshop



Small Professional Office



Small Catering Operation

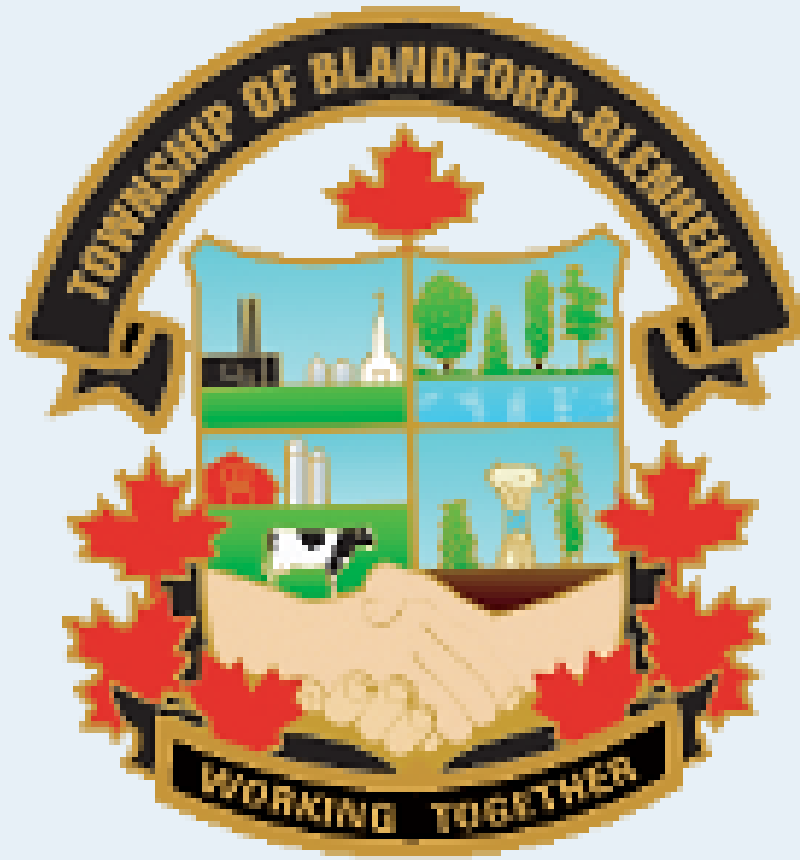


Personal Care Services

Considerations for Rural Entrepreneurial Uses

- Townships may be more restrictive when it comes to criteria for what types of *rural entrepreneurial uses* they would like to see permitted in their communities. For instance, they can disqualify certain types of uses from being *rural entrepreneurial uses* (e.g. a commercial trucking operation)
- The Official Plan allows for a maximum cumulative gross floor area dedicated to the rural entrepreneurial use to not exceed 280m² (3,014 ft²) or 10% of the lot area, whichever is lesser
 - However, townships may opt to implement stricter requirements in their Zoning By-Laws
- Each *rural entrepreneurial use* will be required to go through a site-specific Zoning By-Law Amendment for a specific use and include specific permissions for the following:
 - Restrictions on sale of goods and materials;
 - Maximum floor area;
 - Number of employees;
 - Parking and loading requirements;
 - Appropriate restrictions on signage, outdoor storage and/or display, etc.

Who can I contact with questions about my specific property?



Blandford-Blenheim

Dustin Robson, RPP MCIP
Development Planner
drobson@oxfordcounty.ca
519-539-9800 ext. 3211



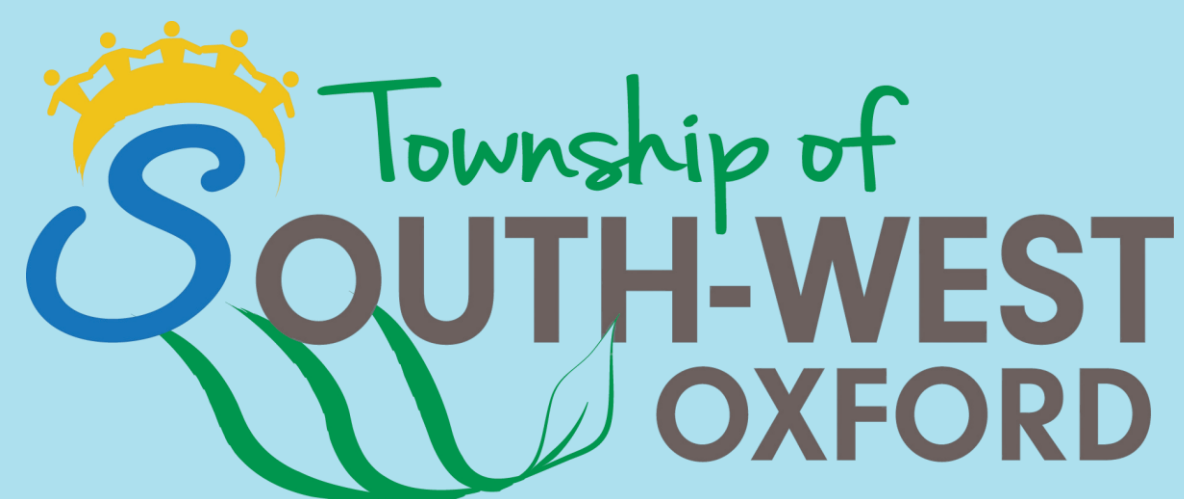
East Zorra-Tavistock

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Norwich

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