To: **Committee of the Whole**

Agenda Section: Corporate Services
Division: Engineering, Planning and Environment
Department: Planning

Item Number: **CCW - 2026-149**

Meeting Date: September 8, 2026

Subject: **Request for Approval – Town of Collingwood Official Plan Non-Decisions**

Recommendation

That Item CCW 2026-149, dated September 8, 2026, regarding Request for Approval – Town of Collingwood Official Plan Non-Decisions, be received; and

That the following Non-Decisions, with modifications outlined in Schedule 3 to Item CCW-2026-149 (September 8, 2026), be approved as modified in accordance with County Council approval of CCW-2024-221 (September 10, 2024), and County Council endorsement of CCW-2026-098 (April 28, 2026), specifically regarding Non-Decision No. 3 (Black Ash Creek).

Non-Decision No. 1:
Applies to the Town's Official Plan policies referencing the 2051 planning horizon for growth and development. The affected policies are; Purpose 1.2 a), c) i, Growth Management 4.1 a), d), e), Accommodating Projected Growth 4.3 c), and Future Community Area 5.5.1.1. a) & b).

Non-Decision No. 3:
Applies to the Black Ash Creek Subwatershed Special Policy Area, associated policies in sections 5.6.3.4 b) (partial), and 5.6.3.5, and the Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area boundary line identified on Schedule 3.1 - Natural Hazards.

Non-Decision No. 4:
Applies to the Delineated Built Boundary (MPIR 2006) shown on Schedule 1 - Growth Management Plan; and

That Notice of Decision regarding the approval of these Non-Decisions be provided in accordance with the *Planning Act.*

Executive Summary

The Town's Official Plan was adopted by Town Council on December 11, 2023, through By-law No. 2023-095, and approved by County Council as per CCW-2024-221 (September 10, 2024), subject to four (4) non-decisions.

A non-decision defers a final decision on specific policies or mapping until related planning matters are resolved. Four non-decisions were associated with the County's approval of the Town of Collingwood Official Plan:

- **Non-Decision No. 1**: Policies referencing the 2051 planning horizon.
- **Non-Decision No. 2**: Waste Management (D-4) Assessment Area policies and limits.
- **Non-Decision No. 3**: Black Ash Creek Subwatershed Special Policy Area policies and mapping.
- **Non-Decision No. 4**: Delineated Built Boundary (MPIR 2006).

County Planning staff recommend approval of Non-Decisions 1, 3, and 4.

Non-Decision No. 1

County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (COPA 7), which establishes growth forecasts to 2051, was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on April 7, 2026. As a result, the Town's Official Plan may now incorporate the 2051 planning horizon and associated growth projections.

Non-Decision No. 3

County Council endorsed updates to the Black Ash Creek Special Policy Area through CCW-2026-096. Following endorsements from the Town, NVCA, final approval on the changes to the special policy area was granted by the by Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH) and the Minister of Natural Resources (MNR) on August 7, 2026. With the Provincial approval, the revised Official Plan policies and mapping can now come into force.

Non-Decision No. 4

The Delineated Built Boundary was required under the former Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Since the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 came into effect and the Growth Plan was revoked, the boundary is no longer required and may be removed.

County Council's approval of these non-decision matters will leave only Non-Decision No. 2 outstanding. Notice of Decision will be issued in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

Background/Analysis/Options

An official plan is a general policy document that includes a statement of goals, objectives and policies for managing growth and development within a specific jurisdiction and within a specific planning horizon. It sets out a comprehensive framework for land use and resource management decision-making.

Section 17 of the *Planning Act* requires the County of Simcoe, as approval authority to make a decision regarding local official plans that conform with the County Official Plan and the various applicable provincial plans. The Town's Official Plan was adopted by Town Council on December 11, 2023, through By-law No. 2023-95, and approved by County Council as per CCW-2024-221 (September 10, 2024) (refer to Schedule 1 to Item CCW-2026-149 – Town of Collingwood Approved Official Plan). This final County approval was saved and except for four (4) non-decisions.

The non-decisions provided time for related planning processes to be completed before final decisions were made on the affected policies and mapping.

Non-Decision No. 1:

Non-Decision No. 1 applies to various sections of the Town's Official Plan that reference the 2051 planning horizon for growth and development of the plan. The specific partial policies include the following sections: Purpose 1.2 a), c) i, Growth Management 4.1 a), d), e), Accommodating Projected Growth 4.3 c), and Future Community Area 5.5.1.1. b).

At the time of County approval, the in-force version of the County Official Plan contained municipal growth forecasts to the planning horizon to 2031. Therefore, in order to conform with the County Official Plan, the final official plan approval was saved and except for a non-decision regarding various sections of the Town's Official Plan that references the 2051 planning horizon for growth and development of the plan.

On August 9, 2022, County Council adopted County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (COPA 7) as part of the County's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process, which distributed the growth allocated to the County among its 16 local municipalities to the planning horizon to 2051. On April 7, 2026, COPA 7 was approved by the province with modifications. The modifications did not include changes to the County's growth projections to the year 2051.

The growth projections now approved through COPA 7 were derived from the province's own work that distributed population and employment for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to the year 2051 and to Simcoe County as a whole. It was the County's provincially mandated role through the MCR to distribute the total growth numbers for the County and work with the local municipalities to establish individual growth projections to the year 2051. The work to disaggregate the overall growth to the local municipalities was completed through a Land Needs Assessment using provincial guidelines as a component of the MCR and completed by Hemson Consulting who was the County's lead consultant.

With provincial approval of COPA 7, the Town has the clarity it requires to plan to a 2051 horizon, allowing this non-decision to be resolved and ensuring consistency between the Town and County Official Plans.

Non-Decision No. 3:

Non-Decision No. 3 applies to the Black Ash Creek Subwatershed SPA, including the associated official plan policies in Section 5.6.3.4 b) (partial), and Section 5.6.3.5, and the Black Ash Creek SPA line identified on Schedule 3.1 - Natural Hazards.

Special policies were created for the Black Ash Creek SPA in the 1980s. These policies were subsequently updated in 2004 in the Town's Official Plan and subsequently carried forward into the 2024 official plan. The Black Ash Creek Subwatershed Study was completed by the NVCA in 2000, and channelization works were undertaken from 2002 and 2007.

Since the approval of the Town's Official Plan, and as per the Ministry's 2009 'Procedures for Approval of New Special Policy Areas and Modifications to Existing Special Policy Areas under the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 (PPS 2005), Policy 3.1.3 – Natural Hazards – Special Policy Areas', Town staff have collaborated with the NVCA and the County to follow the steps and compile the materials required by the Province to remove the Black Ash Creek SPA from the official plan and update the associated policies and mapping to reflect the current floodplain conditions.

Removal of the Black Ash Creek SPA required endorsement of the proposed policy and mapping changes by the Town, NVCA, and County as part of the provincial approval process.

Modifications to the policies and mapping of the Black Ash Creek SPA have been endorsed by the Town of Collingwood through their Report P2026-10, dated March 23, 2026, by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) through their Report 11-03-26-BOD, dated March 27, 2026, and by the County of Simcoe through our Report CCW 2026-096, dated April 28, 2026. The resolutions for these reports is attached as Schedule 4 to Item CCW 2026-149.

The MMAH and MNR have jointly approved the modifications on August 7, 2026, as per the letter identified as Schedule 5 to Item CCW 2026-149. With this final joint approval, County staff are recommending the removal of the Black Ash Creek Subwatershed SPA and approval of the associated Non-Decision. The new SPA policies and removal of reference to and delineation of the Black Ash Creek SPA on Schedule 3.1 - Natural Hazards mapping will come into effect in the Town's Official Plan.

Non-Decision No. 4:

Non-Decision No. 4 applies to the Delineated Built Boundary (MPIR 2006) line identified on Schedule 1 - Growth Management Plan of the Town's Official Plan.

The Town's Official Plan was approved at a time when the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was still in effect, and the Delineated Built Boundary (MPIR 2006) was required to calculate the intensification and density targets of the Growth Plan. As of October 20, 2024, the Growth Plan was revoked and replaced with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024. Since the Growth Plan has been revoked, the Delineated Built Boundary is no longer required and may be removed from Schedule 1 of the Town's Official Plan.

Summary

The proposed policy and mapping changes associated with Non-Decisions 1, 3, and 4 have been reviewed by Town and County staff and represent good planning. The changes are shown in Schedule 2 (track changes version) and Schedule 3 (recommended version) of Item CCW-2026-149.

County staff recommend approval of these modifications. If approved by County Council, and subject to any appeals to the Ontario Land Tribunal, the Official Plan will be in effect except for the remaining Non-Decision No. 2 (Waste Management Assessment Area). Notice of Decision will be issued in accordance with the Planning Act.

With regard to Non-Decision 2, the Town has retained a consultant to undertake a Geotechnical Review of the Inactive Local and Private Waste Management Sites within the Town. The study will determine the potential for off-site contaminant migration through an assessment of landfill gas, groundwater and surface water, and potential impacts to neighbouring properties. A central objective is a determination of whether a Guideline D-4 assessment area should apply to the inactive local and private waste management sites, and if so, what the appropriate area of influence should be for each site based upon a technical review.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this Item, however, if the County's decision is appealed to the OLT there may be legal costs associated with that process. In the event of an appeal, staff will report back seeking authority to proceed with involvement in related OLT proceedings.

Relationship to Corporate Strategic Plan

No direct relationship to corporate strategies.

Reference Documents

- CCW-2024-221 (September 10, 2024) Request for Approval – Town of Collingwood Official Plan
- CCW-2026-096 (April 28, 2026) Request for Endorsement to Update Policies - Black Ash Creek SPA

Attachments

Schedule 1 – Town of Collingwood Approved Official Plan with Non-Decisions
Schedule 2 – Town of Collingwood Approved Official Plan with Track Changes
Schedule 3 – Town of Collingwood Recommended Official Plan
Schedule 4 – Black Ash Creek Subwatershed SPA - Town, NVCA, County Resolutions
Schedule 5 – Black Ash Creek Subwatershed SPA - Joint Approval from MMAH and MNR

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Approvals	**Date**
Nathan Westendorp, Director of Planning/Chief Planner	August 17, 2026
Rob Elliott, Commissioner, Engineering, Planning and Environment	August 18, 2026
Lealand Sibbick, Treasurer	August 31, 2026
Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer	September 1, 2026