

Appendix 4: Council Input

Restricting Office Space from the 1st Floor in the Downtown Area:

Comment:

Had an interesting conversation today and got asked the following. Is it possible to zone downtown to retail specific businesses that devote a certain percentage of floor space to retail activity rather than office space? IE business that aren't devoted to a store front would be legal non-conforming and new businesses moving in would have to be open to the public for shopping. Therefore, it would increase foot traffic and drive spending downtown GV. I said I would ask but thought that it was awfully restrictive though I see the purpose (IE GV wind farms and winmar restoration) don't need buildings that aren't driving people to shop here.

Response:

...not in favour of restricting office from the 1st floor, I'm thinking there would be pushback.

I agree that this would be very restrictive. We're of the mind that an office use along the main street is better than a vacant storefront. There are other initiatives the Town could take to incentivize retail in this area or street-level activation. This could be done through a CIP or local efforts by the BIA.

We could include some language in the OP which prioritizes retail uses, identifying it as the primary permitted use. However, I would not recommend restricting office uses to the second floor in this area.

Size of Surplus Farm Dwelling Lots (Created by Severance)

Comment:

Last night (September 9, 2025) at Council I had an application for a Surplus Farm Dwelling Severance. Two Councillors were not happy and felt that the 1.1ha Surplus Dwelling Lot was too big and that it should only be 1 acre or 0.4 ha in size.

The Dufferin Federation of Agriculture also provided comments requesting the Surplus Lot be smaller, it was reduced FROM 1.3 to 1.1 ha by the Applicant.

I argued that the 1.1ha lot met Provincial, County and Town Policy because no where does it say that a Surplus Lot can only be a maximum of 1 acre or 0.4 ha, they did not agree with my response and advised that they (the 2 Councillors) wanted the Surplus lots to be as small as possible and apparently expressed that at the Public Meeting for the OP – I do not recall.

Currently as long as the Surplus Dwelling Lot is less than 1.5 ha (size of a Hobby Farm) they are in conformity with the OP.

So, my question is can we limit the size of a Surplus Farm Dwelling Lot to a MAXIMUM 0.5 ha (1.24 acres) in both the OP and ZBL?

Response:

Based on my experience, most Municipal Official Plans don't establish a maximum size for a surplus farm dwelling lot and rather include language that it needs to be limited in size. The only OP that I saw that established a minimum and maximum size was the County of Brant, which established a minimum size of 0.4 ha and maximum size of 1 hectare. I tend to look to Brant as a best practice as a couple of the planners there worked with Wayne Caldwell. I find they can be a bit restrictive, but if we want really clear ag policies, Brant is a good example to look to.

I would not recommend limiting it to 0.5 hectares in the OP as I think there could be instances where a larger lot size is appropriate.

I would recommend one of the two options:

- Following the County of Brants example and establish a maximum size in the OP but not in the ZBL.*
- Rely on language in the OP which states that the lot will be limited to a size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water service. I think this way you could rely on this policy if you feel the lot size proposed is too large.*