



MEMO

To:	Mayor and Council
cc:	Nicole Martin, Holly Boardman
From:	Pierre Chauvin, Nick Bogaert, Chelsea Brooks
Date:	October 2 nd , 2026
File:	Amaranth Official Plan update, MHBC File "23368 B"
Subject:	Review of remaining questions from September Council Meeting

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide additional information and discussion regarding the matters raised at the September 16th, 2026 Council Meeting. These include comments from the Town of Shelburne / industrial landowners raising concerns about designating additional estate residential lands abutting Shelburne, comments raising concerns regarding the Laurel settlement area changes, as well as comments from Council raising concerns about continuing to permit surplus farm dwelling severances.

Proposed residential lands adjacent to Shelburne

As noted in the MHBC correspondence provided for the September 16th Council Meeting, the version of the Official Plan recommended for adoption reflects the Council direction to maximize the opportunity for additional estate residential lands adjacent to Shelburne. MHBC had added the permission through a Special Policy Area (SPA), which would also require further information be prepared in support of any application to establish estate residential uses within the SPA 1 area. The policy would require preparation of a land use compatibility report, demonstrating that potential impacts to industrial uses / lands are mitigated in accordance with Provincial requirements, preparation of a noise study demonstrating compatibility, preparation of an Agricultural Impact Assessment, as well as demonstration of compatibility with Provincial Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) guidelines.

Comments received from the Town of Shelburne and adjacent industrial landowners (i.e. Ice River Sustainable Solutions, KTH Shelburne Mfg. Inc.) raised concerns about the introduction of estate residential uses immediately south of Shelburne. MHBC previously recommended to Council that boundaries as shown in the July 2026 Draft Official Plan be retained, or alternatively that boundaries



remain as indicated in the original Official Plan until such time as County staff complete their further boundary rationalization / growth allocation exercise. This would allow for the most up to date information to be available, as well as potentially provide for further analysis to demonstrate need for employment uses, which would be more well-suited adjacent to Shelburne's employment area. MHBC cautioned that there was not policy support for further estate residential uses abutting Shelburne. However, given Council's direction, we have included the Special Policy Areas abutting the Shelburne settlement area.

Surplus farm dwelling severances

Discussion occurred at the Council Meeting regarding the appropriateness of the proposed policies related to surplus farm dwelling severances. The direction provided to MHBC was that Council requested to remove the ability to create surplus farm dwelling severances.

MHBC has reviewed this request further. Removing the ability to create surplus farm dwelling severances would not be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) and would not conform to the direction within the Dufferin County Official Plan. The result of this change would require an applicant to apply for an amendment to the Amaranth Official Plan if such a severance is requested, which would in-turn be approved because the application is consistent with the PPS and would conform to the County Official Plan. Introducing such a process would be inefficient, time-consuming and unnecessary. This approach is not recommended and as such, surplus farm dwelling severances have not been removed from the Official Plan.

Removal of lands within Laurel

In response to comments received from a property owner with lands removed from the Laurel settlement area, MHBC has further reviewed the LEAR study approach and results. The LEAR study previously completed by MHBC (dated May 2025), did not include settlement areas (such as Laurel) in the analysis.

Notwithstanding the above, concerns have been expressed by one of the owners of vacant agricultural lands within the Laurel settlement boundary regarding the lack of justification to return these lands to an agricultural designation. Therefore, we have reviewed the background data which supported the LEAR study to confirm the appropriate land use designation should these lands not remain in the settlement boundary.

Based on our review, all lands in and around the Laurel settlement are, except for the southeast quadrant of Laurel, classified as Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Class 1 and 2 lands, which are considered prime agricultural soils. Given the contiguous nature of these parcels with abutting agricultural lands and their CLI classification, these lands would have exceeded the minimum threshold score to be considered part of the Prime Agricultural Area. Given the lower capability soils in the southwest quadrant portion of Laurel, these lands would be deemed 'Rural'. Therefore, we

believe the proposed redesignation of the lands to Agriculture and Rural as part of the boundary rationalization of the Laurel settlement area is appropriate and justified.

Additional comments received after Council Meeting

Following the September 16th, 2026 Council Meeting, further comments were received by GSAI on behalf of a landowner abutting the Farmington settlement area. The landowner requested inclusion of their property as part of the 'rounding out' of Farmington that is being proposed as part of the Official Plan update. After review, MHBC recommends that the boundaries remain as currently proposed and the inclusion of these lands should be revisited following completion of the updated Dufferin County land needs assessment process.

An updated copy of MHBC's comment tracking table is being prepared for information. It is anticipated that County staff and County Council would further consider the community and agency comments when making a final decision regarding the updated Official Plan.

MHBC Recommendation

Based on the foregoing, MHBC recommends the following to Council:

Recommendation to Council

It is recommended that Township of Amaranth Council adopt the updated Official Plan as previously provided at the September 16th Council Meeting.

It is further recommended that Council direct Township staff to forward the Official Plan to Dufferin County for final review and approval.

It is further recommended that Council direct Dufferin County staff to make any necessary amendments to the County Official Plan, which would implement the updated direction of the Township Official Plan. This includes Schedule B & C, which identify the updated settlement areas and rural / agricultural lands.

Closing

The Official Plan update undertaken by MHBC has been a thorough and comprehensive process, resulting in appropriate updates and revisions being made to the Official Plan. The outcome is a modern policy document, which will guide future land use changes within the Township for the coming decades. We look forward to working with Township and County staff as the Official Plan is finalized and approved.