

The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills

By-law No. 2026-013

A By-law to adopt an Amendment to the Official Plan of The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills Regarding Policies to Support Smaller Farm Parcels

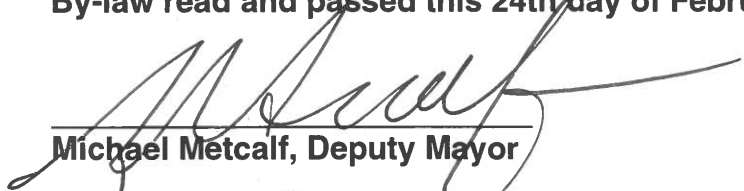
Whereas, pursuant to motion THC-260224-22, Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills has been considered and recommended for adoption by the Municipality of the Trent Hills Council;

And Whereas, a Public Meeting on the proposed amendment was held on November 4th, 2025, and again on December 2nd, 2025, pursuant to the requirements of Section 17 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended;

Now Therefore, the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills in accordance with the provisions of Section 17 and 21 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills, consisting of the attached explanatory text is hereby adopted.
2. That Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills is exempt from the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing pursuant to Section 17(9) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended and Ontario Regulation 525/97.
3. That Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan will become final and take effect on the day after the last day for filing of appeals has passed and provided that no appeals are received in accordance with the provisions of Section 17 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended.
4. This by-law shall come into force and take effect on the final passing thereof.

By-law read and passed this 24th day of February, 2026.



Michael Metcalf, Deputy Mayor



Karen Frigault, CAO/Clerk

Municipality of Trent Hills

Official Plan Amendment No. 13

Increased Options for Lot Creation in Prime Agricultural
Lands Designation
OPA No. 13

February 24th, 2026

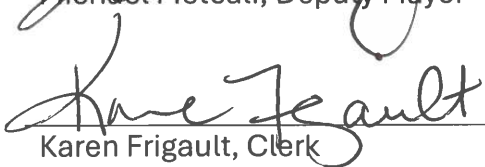
Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

The attached explanatory text, constituting Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills, was prepared by the Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills under the provisions of Sections 17 and 21 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended.

The amendment was adopted by the Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills by By-law No. 2026-12 in accordance with Sections 17 and 21 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13, as amended, on the Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Amendment No. 13 is exempt from further approval by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing pursuant to Section 17(9) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 and Ontario Regulation 525/97. The decision of the Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Hills is final pursuant to Section 17(27) of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13 if no appeals are received against Amendment No. 13 within the time allowed for appeal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 17 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 13.


Michael Metcalf, Deputy Mayor


Karen Frigault, Clerk

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

1. Introductory Statement

The following text constitutes Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved the Official Plan in 2001.

2. Purpose and Effect of the Amendment

The purpose of Amendment No. 13 is to:

- Add policies which provide direction and criteria for the consideration of lot creation for agricultural use within the Prime Agricultural Designation of the Trent Hills Official Plan.

The effect of the Amendment will be to:

- Allow for the creation of new 35-hectare farm parcels, in cases where through lot consolidation larger farm parcels have been created.
- To allow for the potential for smaller farm parcels to be created under specific circumstances, where the lots will remain in use for agricultural or agricultural-related uses.
- To set out policies and conditions for a Residence Surplus to an Agricultural Operation, when in the Prime Agricultural Area
- Update the wording of Consents in the Rural Policy Area and providing the uses for which general lot creation within the Rural Areas are permitted.
- Bring some of the wording into conformity with the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.

3. Location of the Amendment

This Amendment is to be applied to all lands within the Municipality of Trent Hills.

4. Basis of the Amendment

a) Support for the Agricultural Sector

From its founding, agriculture has been the most important economic sector to the towns, villages, hamlets, and countryside which now forms the Municipality of Trent Hills. The Traditional Lands of the Anishinabek and Haudenosaunee peoples, the lands were first open for settlement by the Gunshot Treaty of 1787, which came at a time when the British were eager to settle United Empire Loyalists after the American War of Independence and to shore up their colony of Upper Canada. As was the case across Ontario, once a Treaty had been “agreed” upon, surveyors would be able to draw up concessions and lots into Townships and grant the land for British sailors and soldiers once they retired from the military.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

Low-ranking soldiers or sailors were typically granted 100 acres (40 hectares) and across most of Ontario this became the standard size for a fully functioning farm. Higher ranking officers were granted more land – 500 acres for captains, 800 acres for majors, and 1000 acres for Lieutenant-colonels. These parcels would either be rented out to those who did not receive land, could be split up for inheritance, or were turned into settlements. For a local example, The Campbell family assembled roughly 3000 acres of land around a ford on the Trent River to form the new settlement of Campbellford.

Most planning documents have continued to use the 100-acre lot as the ideal farm parcel. The Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, and the Oak Ridges Moraine plans all refer to a minimum lot size of 100 acres for a sustainable farming operation – with the exception of speciality crop areas, which shall be covered below in paragraph c). This is despite the changes that automation has brought to farming, allowing fewer people to do more work in less time. Agriculture as a whole has continued to become a smaller portion of the Canadian economy as it continues to be eclipsed by manufacturing, services, and digital products. Since 1997, agriculture has decreased from 2.44% of the Canadian GDP to 1.94%; during the same time, professional, scientific and technical services have increased from 3.34% to 5.67% of the Canadian GDP¹.

Within Trent Hills, there are a mix of farm sizes and operations. Some traditional farming families have hundreds of acres farmed across multiple generations and related families, while others are limited to a single parcel. Some farmers have been consolidating larger farm parcels, purchasing adjacent farms from those retiring from the industry, and who have no need for an extra farmhouse. A policy to support the conveyance of a surplus farm dwelling existed in the current Official Plan, but the requirements and policies for severing and conveying a Residence Surplus to an Agricultural Operation have been expanded on and brought into the Prime Agricultural Designation section from the Rural Policy Area.

On the other hand, the rise in farm sizes, to be discussed further in paragraph d), will lead to an affordability crisis for new farmers who try to enter the profession. It can be either the children of farmers looking to get experience on a farm of their own before taking over their family's farm, or it could be someone interested in farming for the first time, pursuing a specialty or smaller scale farming operation who may not yet be ready to take on 100 acres of farming. If this trend persists, it is possible (if not here already) for there to be an affordability crisis in the agricultural sector, much like the ongoing housing crisis.

¹ Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0434-03 Gross domestic product \(GDP\) at basic prices, by industry, annual average \(x 1,000,000\)](#)

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

b) Rising Prices for Farmland

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is a federal Crown corporation responsible for monitoring the agricultural sector, including the average price of farmland per each region, as well as the Farmland Affordability Index (FAI), which determines how affordable farmland is based on its potential output.

Northumberland and Peterborough County are part of the Ontario Central East Region, which in 2024 had an average farm value per acre of \$13,100. For comparison, farmland in the Central West region (which includes the GTA, Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo and Oshawa) is valued at \$31,700 per acre. To purchase a full, 100-acre farm parcel in the Northumberland area would cost \$1.3 million. This average price would not include equipment, structures, livestock, the farmhouse, or any other of the required implements to run an agricultural business. Looking at historical data from 1997, the average price of farmland in the region was \$1,250, meaning that farmland has increased in value by ~1000% in that 28-year period. There is more to farmland than just the value, which is where FAI comes into play.

The FCC looks at the affordability of farmland through the economic productivity of the land. The FAI is based on dividing *the annual farmland purchase cost per acre* by *the returns on each acre of land* to determine how much can be produced. This Index is a better metric of affordability than raw land values, as it considers inflation, interest rates, population demands, production costs, and how productive the land is when it comes to cash receipts for crops and animal produce. The FAI is essentially a ratio between the productivity of the land and its real estate value as farmland – the lower the ratio, the more affordable farmland is. Conversely, a high FAI means that land is more unaffordable. At certain index thresholds, buying farmland for farming is cost prohibitive; at even higher thresholds the only “valuable” use of the land may be to sell it for real estate development.

Canada experienced its worst year for the FAI in 1981, as a combination of high interest rates and poor crop yields led to an FAI of 217. It quickly fell over the following years to a sub-100 FAI, before spiking back up to 123 in 1990. Low interest rates and decent crop yields meant the FAI was stable between 1991 and 2020, hovering in the high 90s. Over the past few years, the FAI has continued to rise year after year, reaching 138 in 2024. Ontario in particular has a higher FAI than most other provinces, climbing over 150 in 2024².

The result is that farmland (and specifically purchasing farmland for the purposes of remaining farmland) is increasingly unaffordable for those looking to consolidate farm parcels or to begin farming. This puts an increased pressure on farmers and rural landowners to sell land for real estate development, as it becomes a more “valuable” use of the land – from a purely short-term

² Shepherd, J. (2025, March 26). *Canadian farmland affordability trending down*. Farm Credit Canada. Retrieved September 18, 2025, from <https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/knowledge/economics/farmland-values-report>

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

economic standpoint. Per the 2021 Census of Agriculture, Ontario is already losing ~300 acres of farmland per day due development pressure, sprawl, and the increased emphasis on real estate as an economic activity over the production of food and animal products.

A rising trend for farmland purchase is investment companies³. An article by the CBC highlights how investment firms have been purchasing farmland from farmers and then renting the land back to be farmed. The investment firm is able to park capital in a safe, long-term investment, while the farmer gets immediate funds to upgrade their remaining farming operation. Larger and larger farm parcels are created through consolidation and a reduction in the number of farmers; it may reach a point where only large investment companies are financially capable of purchasing farmland.

c) Small-scale Farm Operations

Per the Statistics Canada Census, farms are divided into several industries; beef cattle ranching and farming, dairy cattle and milk production, hog and pig farming, poultry and egg production, sheep and goat farming, oilseed and grain farming, vegetable and melon farming, fruit and tree-nut farming, greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production. Looking at the data for Northumberland County, the majority of farm operations are a part of the following three industries:

1. Oilseed and grain farming (29%) – cash crops that are typically not sold directly to consumers, including soy, canola, wheat, rye, oats, etc.
2. Other Types (25%) – this is a catch-all category for most other farm types, or types of uses that may be only one part of a farm operation. For plants, it primarily consists of hay farming, but sugar bushes and tobacco farming are also included. For animals, bees and horses make up the majority of cases, but mixed-livestock farms are also included in the category.
3. Beef cattle ranching and farming (23%) – self explanatory, these are agricultural operations that grow cattle for beef products and would also include those used for breeding stock.

These three types of farm operations make up 77% of all farm operations within Northumberland County. These uses are typically land-intensive, and benefit from large fields or pastures in prime agricultural lands. Combines and harvesters are typically designed to harvest cash crops and make it easier for a few farmers to harvest much larger fields than was possible during the early days of settlement within Trent Hills. Hay & straw production also benefit from larger fields, with several types of machinery able to cut, bail, and move hay.

³ Butler, C. (2024, June 3). *Big investors want what farmers have. here's how it's reshaping the future of Agriculture* | CBC News. CBCnews. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/ontario-farmland-real-estate-investment-1.7218435>

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

Specialty crops, on the other hand, such as vegetables, fruit, niche market agricultural products (i.e. organic), typically have more specialized and expensive requirements for automation. This is partially reflected in the policies found within the Greenbelt, Niagara Escarpment, and Oak Ridges Moraine Provincial Plans, which allow specialty crop farms to have a minimum lot size of 50 acres (20 hectares). Specialty crop areas can be more dependent on soil type, soil quality, exposure to sun, and other factors where a reduced lot size may be beneficial to the overall agricultural food approach. Doing so could improve local food networks and allow a wider range of farm products to be available to the public. Under current policies, these types of agricultural operations would only be permitted in the Rural Policy Areas, which typically have reduced quality of soil compared to the soils of the Prime Agricultural Designation. At the same time, the purpose of this amendment is to create a policy for somewhere in between Specialty Crop Areas and the traditional lot sizes currently found in Prime Agricultural Areas.

Another case where small-scale farm operations may be beneficial is its potential role in succession planning. Historically, farms were passed down through the generations and were either equally divided to all children or fully granted to the eldest child, depending on the policies of lot creation at the time. According to StatsCan, in 2001 there were 346,195 farm operators, while in 2021 this had decreased to 262,455. During this period, the majority of farm operations have remained under family operations, indicating that the consolidation of farm parcels is primarily being carried out by other family farm operations. A small portion of the lands held by the farm operators purchased by non-family corporations (investment companies, agricultural companies for seed and crop testing, land trusts, etc.).

Based on the 2021 Census of Agriculture, succession planning is becoming a more common tool to manage changes to farm ownership. In Northumberland census region, 10.47% of farm operations had a succession plan in place (Canada wide, 12%), while 22% had a verbal succession plan for a family member to take over (Canada wide, 21.8%)⁴. A succession plan lays out how someone will take over the operation, confirm the viability of the agricultural operation, develop a takeover plan (phased or otherwise), and address the requirements for the legal and financial takeover of the farming operation. It could be that the current farm operator is looking to scale down but not leave the farm altogether. In this case, it may be preferable to create smaller farm parcels to allow a successor to start their own farm operation, gain additional experience, and build up an independent credit rating. An alternative version of this may be where a farm operation has no immediate successor within the family and wishes to downsize their farm operation and allow another farm operator to gradually take over the land. It is precisely this type of scenario that has led to a re-examination of policies for lot creation within the Prime Agricultural Areas.

⁴ Statistics Canada. [Table 32-10-0244-01 Succession plan for the agricultural operation, Census of Agriculture, 2021](#)

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

d) Policy Review

A Policy Review had been conducted by the County of Northumberland on this topic; the information of which was shared with Trent Hills during the initial circulation of the amendment. Most municipalities have maintained the historic 40-hectare/100-acre minimum lot size for parcels within the Prime Agricultural Area. Few municipalities have slightly reduced minimum lot sizes, in the range of 35-38 hectares. This likely reflects any historic surplus farm dwelling applications or geographic limitations to ensure most existing farm parcels conform to the local Zoning By-laws.

In Southern Ontario, Leamington stands out as the municipality with the smallest minimum lot size for prime agricultural land, with a minimum lot size of 10 hectares (24.7 acres). Close to being Canada's most southern point, Leamington has a warm climate ideal for agriculture and also boasts a significant number of greenhouses. Leamington falls into Ecoregion 7E per the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, which means a longer growing season and a slightly higher annual rainfall than Trent Hills, which falls under the slightly drier and cooler Ecoregion 6E.

The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, & Glengarry (UCSDG) is another municipality that has adopted a reduced size for prime agricultural lands below the common 40 hectares (100 acres). 3 of the lower-tier municipalities in the UCSDG have reduced the minimum lot size to 30 hectares (75 acres), while 2 of them have further reduced this to a 20-hectare (50 acre) minimum. Looking at the original surveys for the UCSDG region, the lots tended to be long and narrow, prioritizing access to the river. Parcels in Trent Hills tend to be closer to a square in shape, but in both cases were originally drawn up as 40 hectare lots. UCSDG is within Ecoregion 6E, and overall has a similar growing period, climate, and history to Trent Hills.

Overall, few municipalities currently permit a reduced minimum lot sizes for farm parcels within Prime Agricultural Areas. However, given the comparable agricultural conditions, parcel patterns, and regional context between Trent Hills and the lower-tier municipalities of UCSDG, their reduced-lot-size approach offers a practical precedent. Adopting a similar standard in Trent Hills would help respond to contemporary farming realities and support the long-term viability of diverse agricultural operations in Trent Hills.

Applicable Land Use Policy

1. Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS)

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, is the primary document to express Provincial goals, interests, and policies for planning and land development within Ontario. Chapter 4: Wise Use and Management of Resources contains policies for protecting natural heritage, water, and relevant to this amendment, agriculture (Section 4.3).

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

The subsections of Section 4.3.1 states that planning authorities are to take an *agricultural system* approach, based on provincial guidance, in order to enhance and maintain a geographically continuous land base to support the long-term economic prosperity and productive viability of the agri-food network. The PPS defines the agricultural system as both preserving prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas, and supporting rural lands to create a continuous land base for agriculture, and to support an agri-food network, which includes agricultural operations, infrastructure, services, and assets that the agri-food sector depends on. It also requires that prime agricultural lands, and specialty crop areas, are identified and protected for long-term agricultural operations, with specialty crop areas being granted the highest level of protection. These general policies highlight the importance of agricultural lands to both the economic health and to maintain the quality of the food supply for future generations.

Section 4.3.2 lists the permitted uses for agricultural lands, which recently has been expanded to include on-farm diversified uses. In the text of the Trent Hills Official Plan, on-farm diversified uses were not listed under permitted uses in Prime Agricultural Areas, but through the PPS had been supported by staff following the Provincial recommendations. The following paragraph then states that within the prime agricultural areas, all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses* and *normal farm practices* shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards. The PPS provides no specific size requirement for these, and often planners have turned to the Provincial Plans with its requirement of 40 hectares being used as the “provincial standard.” This policy does not directly refer to these provincial plans, and could provide support for smaller, scoped farm operations where they would still be viable and in accordance with other sections of the PPS.

Section 4.3.3 lists the policies for lot creation, stating that lot creation in prime agricultural areas is discouraged, and may only be permitted for agricultural uses, agricultural related uses, infrastructure, and for surplus farm dwellings. The proposed amendment is consistent with this section of the PPS, as these will be only permitted lots under the new policy. Paragraph a) states that agricultural uses are permitted so long as they are of an appropriate size are sufficiently large enough to maintain flexibility for future changes to farm operations. For agricultural-related uses (which can consist of value-added uses, such as grain drying, processing, or packaging), the new lot must be kept to a minimum size for the operation of the use and with the requirement that there is enough capacity for water and sewage services, in the same vein as a residential lot. In both cases, there is no strict requirement to the size of the lot required, and support for whether the lot is sufficient size will need to be demonstrated in the Agricultural Report or Farm Business Report to be submitted alongside any application.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

The PPS for prime agricultural areas does thoroughly encourage the protection of farmland for the purpose of farming. Farmland has always been under significant pressure to be developed, with most of Ontario's best farmland now resting under the most developed parts of the Greater Toronto Area. Farmland needs to be preserved for future generations and to allow the agri-food network to feed our communities. Smaller farm parcels have the potential to assist in this endeavour, provided that they are not later turned into housing or estate lots, which can be managed through Comprehensive Zoning By-laws.

2. Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017)

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan is one of the Province's provincial plans for protecting farmland and natural land from development. Its main goal is protecting the ecological and hydrological integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine Area but also provides policies for protecting farmland within the countryside areas as defined in the Plan. Section 32 of the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan outlines the policies for lot creation within the countryside designation and sets a limit of 100 acres as the minimum size for both the severed and retained lots when the land will be used for agricultural uses.

Only a small portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan is located within Trent Hills, with most of it being in the countryside designation. As this is a specific provincial plan, the policies within this amendment will not apply to properties inside the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

3. Northumberland County Official Plan

The Northumberland Official Plan is the upper-tier plan for the County, and by-and-large focuses on policies for lands outside of the settlement areas for its member municipalities. This includes permitted uses for the agricultural area, and policies for lot creation, as well as specific policies for each type of use permitted in the agriculture area.

Currently, the section C3.4 (to be updated to D3.4 once an amendment passes) Lot Creation on Lands in the Agricultural Area Designation is only permitted to create new farm parcels where both the severed and retained are about 40 hectares (100 acres), which is the existing requirement in the Trent Hills Official Plan. Currently, the County is undertaking Official Plan Amendment No.3, which focuses on changes to Agricultural Policies, including an update to Prime Agricultural Area designations and more rules for agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. Lot sizes are not part of this upcoming amendment, which has recently entered the public consultation phases.

The proposed amendment is not currently in accordance with the policies of the Northumberland County Official Plan.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills

4. Trent Hills Official Plan

The Trent Hills Official Plan was initially adopted in 2001 following amalgamation of the municipalities of Campbellford-Seymour, Percy Township, and the Village of Hastings. Several amendments have been passed since 2001, including a major amendment in 2010 to bring the Official Plan in-line with the Places to Grow Act and updates terminology from previous Provincial Policy Statements.

The Trent Hills Official Plan provides specific information and policies relating to agriculture as a result of the important role farming has played in the history of the Trent Hills area. The proposed amendment remains consistent with the purpose of the Official Plan by balancing the long-term economic growth of the agricultural sector with the demands of a growing population, while still preserving the natural environment. The proposed amendment will provide more flexibility to farm operations where appropriate to the long-term sustainability of agriculture within Trent Hills.

The Municipality of Trent Hills is in the midst of preparing a new Official Plan to guide the future of the municipality out to 2050. The new Official Plan will contain and potentially expand on these policies if the amendment is approved.

5. Details of the Amendment

The following table shows minor changes, additions, and removals added to parts of Section 2.4.2 Agricultural Land.

Section #	Existing	Proposed
2.4.2.2.3	The Prime Agricultural Lands shall be restricted to agriculture and farm-related uses.	The Prime Agricultural Lands shall be restricted to agriculture, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

2.4.2.2.5	Within the Prime Agricultural Lands, the fragmentation of agricultural parcels of land and the creation of non-viable farm operations will not be permitted. The creation of parcels of land for agriculture and farm-related uses of less than 40 hectares (100 acres) shall not be permitted. Non-farm severances of the agricultural land base will not be permitted, with the exception of an existing farm dwelling rendered surplus as a result of the consolidation of two or more farm parcels.	Within the Prime Agricultural Lands, the fragmentation of agricultural parcels of land and the creation of non-viable farm operations will not be permitted. Lot creation shall only be permitted in specific scenarios per 2.4.2.3.
-----------	---	--

A new section has been added, immediately following 2.4.2.2.11, to provide new policies for lot creation within the Prime Agricultural Area. No other sections are renumbered as a result of this addition.

New Proposed Section

2.4.2.3 Lot Creation in Prime Agricultural Lands

2.4.2.3.1 Lot Creation in the Prime Agricultural Lands Designation is generally discouraged and may only be permitted in further support of the agricultural system approach.

2.4.2.3.2 Lot Creation in Prime Agricultural Lands shall be permitted for the following purposes:

- a)Agricultural Uses;
- b)Agricultural Related Uses;
- c)Residence Surplus to an Agricultural Operation;
- d)Infrastructure;

2.4.2.3.3 Where an existing farm parcel is greater than 75 hectares (185 acres) in size; lot creation may be supported to create two new farm parcels of at least 35 hectares (86 acres) in size each. Lot creation of farm parcels less than 35 hectares (86 acres) will generally be discouraged, unless it meets the criteria under subsection 2.4.2.3.4.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

2.4.2.3.4 The following shall be met when considering the creation of any lot less than 40 hectares in the Prime Agricultural Area:

- a) A consent of one new lot may be permitted, provided that the original farm parcel of record is a minimum of 40 hectares (100 acres) in size, provided the subject lands have not been subject to a historic consent application. Both new farm parcels shall be a minimum of 20 hectares in size.
- b) The minimum lot area for a new farm parcel shall not include lands zoned Environmental Protection (EP), except where the proposed parcel will contain an on-farm diversified recreational use. In such cases, approval from the municipality and the appropriate Conservation Authority is required.
- c) An Agricultural Report or a Farm Business Report shall be required to support lot creation. The Report shall be prepared by a qualified individual, which may include an agronomist, an agronomist land use planner specializing in agricultural practices, or a professional with a degree in agricultural business. The Report shall be to the satisfaction of the Municipality's Planning Department.
- d) The use of both the severed and retained portion shall remain for agriculture or agriculture-related uses. The viability of the severed and retained parcels for agricultural purposes shall be maintained. On-farm diversified uses will be permitted on both properties, following the Provincial Guidelines for area requirements.
- e) It shall be demonstrated that there are nearby lots of similar size and farm capability, that exist as sustainable and viable farm operations. It shall also be demonstrated that these lots are not available or suitable for the intended use of the new lot.
- f) It shall be demonstrated that both the severed and retained lots remain of sufficient size to permit a change to the agricultural product produced, and adjustment in the scale of operation, or a diversification.
- g) Both the severed and retained lots shall comply with the Provincial Minimum Distance Separation Formulae (MDS).
- h) Lot creation may be supported as a part of succession planning, or the establishment of a new speciality farming operation.
- i) When necessary, zoning regulations may be applied to protect the severed and/or retained lots to protect agricultural uses. This may include removing a residential dwelling from being a permitted use but will not prevent the construction of agriculture-related structures where deemed necessary and appropriate to the farm operation of that Parcel.
- j) A site-specific Official Plan Amendment will be required to exempt the property from the minimum lot size requirements of the Northumberland County Official Plan, until such a time that the size requirement is removed from Northumberland County's Official Plan.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

- k) The parcel must not be located within lands subject to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017).

2.4.2.3.5 Lot adjustments in the Prime Agricultural Lands designation may only be permitted for legal or technical reasons.

2.4.2.3.6 New residential lots in Prime Agricultural Areas are not permitted within the Prime Agricultural Lands designation, with the exception of a Residence Surplus to an Agricultural Operation, per 2.4.2.3.2.c). The following additional conditions shall apply when considering whether lot creation of this type can be supported:

- a) The owner of the lands to be severed must be an active or *bona fide* farmer with a farm business registration number. As an alternative, a condition of the consent application is that the farmed portion of the lands shall be sold to a *bona fide* farmer;
- b) The land to be severed around a *Residence Surplus to an Agricultural Operation* must be kept to a minimum, including the farmhouse, additional residential units, and any accessory buildings, such as an unused livestock facility;
- c) Unless the retained farmland shall be merged with an adjoining farm parcel with an existing residence, the property shall be applied an Agricultural Exception (A*) Zone to prohibit the construction of residential dwellings of any type;
- d) The Surplus Farm Dwelling shall comply with the Provincial MDS Formulae. For the purposes of this section, only livestock facilities on the farm parcel from which the surplus farmhouse is being severed, shall be used in determining compliance with the MDS Formulae; and,
- e) The existing dwelling to be declared Surplus shall be habitable at the time the application is submitted.

2.4.2.3.7 Where a property is located partially in the Prime Agricultural Lands designation and another designation, lot creation may be permitted in the area outside of the Prime Agricultural Lands, subject to the policies of that Designation.

Under Section 5, Rural Policy Area, minor changes have been made to consents. Policies for surplus farm dwellings in prime agricultural areas were originally located under the Rural Policy Area, and the section was used as a catch-all location for policies on consents. This has now been split up between the Prime Agricultural Area and the Rural Policy Area sections. Changes/Additions to the Existing Text are shown in **Bold** lettering.

Existing 5.4.2 c) Consents

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

The creation of a limited number of residential lots may be permitted in the Rural Policy Area by individual consent.

- i. Consents may be permitted for the following purposes:
 - 1) Easements and Correction of Lot Boundaries: Consents may be granted where required to provide easements or to correct lot boundaries, provided a new, separate lot is not created.
 - 2) Infilling: Infilling may be permitted between two (2) existing non-farm residential dwellings, not separated by more than 100 metres (328 feet) and located on the same side of a public road that is maintained year- round.
 - 3) Conveyance of Agricultural Land: Consents may be granted for the conveying of agricultural land to be added to a contiguous existing farm operation provided that the land is used for farm purposes, the viability of any farm is not jeopardized, and the size of the remaining parcel conforms to the provisions of the Zoning By-law.
 - 4) Splitting of Original Farms: Consents may be granted for the splitting of original farms but shall only be considered if it can be established that both the severed and retained parcels would be viable agricultural units each with 40 hectares or more.
 - 5) Surplus Farm Dwellings: An existing farm residence may be considered surplus to a farming operation as a result of farm consolidation, provided that no new residential dwellings will be permitted any vacant remnant parcel of farmland created by the severance.
 - 6) Agriculture-related Uses: the consent to permit an agriculture-related use maybe permitted provided that any new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services.
- ii. In determining whether a plan of subdivision under the Planning Act is necessary where an applicant is proposing a number of consents in close proximity to each other, generally, two additional lots may be considered as the maximum number of divisions by severance. For three lots or more, the submission of a draft plan of subdivision will be required.
- iii. A consent may be permitted, provided it is in accordance with the following conditions:
 - 1. The subject lot shall not be located on lands designated as Prime Agricultural Lands, Primary Mineral Aggregate Resources, environmentally sensitive lands in the Greenlands System or on hazard lands such as steep slopes.
 - 2. The size of the lot shall be of a size consistent with the intended use of the property to be created. Lot size shall be consistent with the topography, lot sizes in the general area and other appropriate site characteristics.
 - 3. All new lots shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formula.
 - 4. Any new lot shall front on an existing public road that is maintained year-round and shall not compromise the design and function of the road.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

5. All new lots created by severance shall be serviced with an individual private waste disposal system and a private well.

Proposed 5.4.2 c) Lot Creation

The creation of a limited number of residential lots may be permitted in the Rural Policy Area by individual consent.

- i. Consents may be permitted for the following purposes:
 - 1) **General Lot Creation: A maximum of two (2) lots may be created from an original lot of record for residential, commercial, or resource-based recreational uses. Staff will determine what constitutes an original lot of record.**
 - 2) **Easements and Correction of Lot Boundaries:** Consents may be granted where required to provide easements or to correct lot boundaries, provided a new, separate lot is not created.
 - 3) **Infill:** The Creation of Infill Lots may be supported between two (2) existing non-farm residential dwellings, not separated by more than 100 metres (**328 feet**), and located on the same side of a municipally maintained all-year road.
 - 4) **Conveyance of Agricultural Land:** Consents may be granted for the conveying of agricultural land to be added to a contiguous existing farm operation provided that the land is used for farm purposes, the viability of any farm is not jeopardized, and the size of the remaining parcel conforms to the provisions of the Zoning By-law.
 - 5) **Splitting of Original Farms:** Consents may be granted for the splitting of original farms but shall only be considered if it can be established that both the severed and retained parcels would be viable agricultural units each with 40 hectares or more.
 - 6) **Agriculture-related Uses:** the consent to permit an agriculture-related use maybe permitted provided that any new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services.
- ii. In determining whether a plan of subdivision under the Planning Act is necessary where an applicant is proposing a number of consents in close proximity to each other, generally, two additional lots may be considered as the maximum number of divisions by severance. For three lots or more, the submission of a draft plan of subdivision will be required. **Plans of Subdivisions shall not be permitted within the Rural Policy Area without an amendment to the Official Plan. Plans of Subdivisions are encouraged and preferred with the Urban Settlement Boundaries.**
- iii. A consent may be permitted, provided it is in accordance with the following conditions:
 - 1. The subject lot shall not be located on lands designated as Prime Agricultural Lands, Primary Mineral Aggregate Resources, environmentally protected (EP) lands in the Greenlands System or on hazard lands such as steep slopes.

Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the
Municipality of Trent Hills

2. The size of the lot shall be of a size consistent with the intended use of the property to be created. Lot size shall be consistent with the topography, lot sizes in the general area and other appropriate site characteristics.
3. All new lots shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation formula.
4. Any new lot shall front on an existing public road that is maintained year-round and shall not compromise the design and function of the road.
5. All new lots created by severance shall be serviced with an individual private waste disposal system and a private well, **unless existing municipal services are located along the public road.**

6. Implementation and Interpretation

The implementation and interpretation of Official Plan Amendment No. 13 shall be in accordance with the respective policies of the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Hills.