



For immediate release
December 18, 2009

Owen Sound

MEDIA RELEASE

Updated "Rules" for Land Development Draft New Zoning By-Law Nearly Complete

Have you ever wanted to build a shed, a house, a restaurant? Have you ever wanted to open up a business? Have you ever wondered what might become of that vacant lot down the road? If so, then you should check out the City's New Zoning By-law at: www.owensound.ca/planning/newzbl

A comprehensive zoning by-law controls the development of the land in the City by stating how land can be used and the required standards. These standards include lot size and dimensions, setbacks from property lines, building location, building type and parking requirements. A zoning by-law is a legal document and before development occurs on a property it must conform with the applicable zoning by-law. In order to reflect current policies, including the City's own Official Plan, it is necessary to develop a new comprehensive Zoning By-law.

In spring of 2009 Owen Sound launched the start of the new comprehensive zoning by-law process. Through local media releases, articles in local newsletters, local radio programs, the City's website, and a public open house in June the City has sought and received input from the public and agencies. A second draft zoning by-law document is now available and the City is looking for public input once again.

WHAT'S NEW IN DRAFT TWO?

The draft by-law is less cumbersome than the current by-law with fewer zones and easy to compare regulations. Definitions have been updated to reflect the ways in which land is used in the new millennium. New mapping has been produced with more accuracy which will assist land owners in identifying their property. Due to the unique landforms of the escarpment, ravines and harbour which we enjoy in this City there are areas which pose a risk for development. As part of the process to simplify the zoning by-law, Hazard Land mapping and policies have been updated to reflect a single hazard zone that complies with the direction of provincial policy and the City's Official Plan.

Copies are also available for viewing at City Hall and the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library during their respective business hours.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The **Second Public Open House** is scheduled for **January 25, 2010 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**. This is a great time to come out and discuss your thoughts with staff and the consultants. The Open House will be followed by a formal **Public Meeting** during the January 25th meeting of Council at **7:00 PM**. Both events will be held in **Council Chambers at City Hall, 808 2nd Avenue East**.

*For more information check out the City's website or contact:
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BACKGROUND

Comprehensive Zoning By-law

What is a Comprehensive Zoning By-law?

A comprehensive zoning by-law is the City's way to legally manage the development of the land within the City by stating how land can be used and the required standards for development. These standards include lot size and dimensions, setbacks from property lines, building location, height, and parking requirements.

For more information on zoning by-laws refer to the Province of Ontario Citizen's Guide to Land Use Planning (<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page338.aspx>)

Developing a New Comprehensive Zoning By-law

The City's existing Zoning By-law was approved in 1985. Since that time the City has grown and the way development happens has changed. There have also been changes to the relevant provincial and local policies and standards that guide development. The new comprehensive zoning by-law would be developed in consideration of:

- The City of Owen Sound Official Plan, adopted in 2006. The Official Plan is Council's contract with the Community and describes the vision for the type of community where we want to live and how it will grow and develop.
- Existing provincial planning policies including the Provincial Policy Statement and Niagara Escarpment Plan;
- Updated mapping; and
- Public input.

The format of the new zoning by-law is intended to be clear, and easy to understand and use by City staff and citizens.

Proposed Timeline

The new comprehensive zoning by-law is proposed to be presented for Council approval in early 2010. Following a first public open house in early June, public input and direction from the Community Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee has contributed to a second draft document now available for review.

A second public open house and formal public meeting are anticipated for January 2010. Following the public meeting, the consultants will consider any final modifications through the Community Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee before presenting a final by-law for consideration by Council.

More information on the process and development of the by-law will be available on the City's website: www.owensound.ca/planning/newzbl

For more information contact:

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