

APRIL 2021

SEGUIN TOWNSHIP  
OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW:

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Report by:  
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## SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development and diversification are important goals for the Township of Seguin. Support for new and existing businesses and tourism operations, as well as the economic well-being of residents, can be encouraged through Official Plan policies.

Smaller Ontario communities are in the midst of a demographic and economic shift which requires re-evaluating how the Township addresses economic development. Going forward, it will be important to not only protect employment lands to accommodate future employment growth, but to adapt to an increasingly diverse economy.

The existing Official Plan (OP) policies provide a good basis for supporting economic development goals. The focus moving forward will be to provide additional detail with respect to the role played by the Employment Area, Airport Employment Area, Employment Corridor Area Overlay for future economic growth. Additionally, it will be important to maintain settlement areas as the focal points for commercial uses.



## IN THIS REPORT

In this report, the relevant Provincial policies and municipal documents, including the Township's Strategic Plan and the existing Township OP are reviewed and summarized to form a basis for this discussion.

# PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario provide direction on specific issues. The Township Official Plan must conform to the PPS which sets out the following policies:

## Long-term Economic Prosperity

Provincial policy provides for economic prosperity by supporting sustainable tourism development, viable local food and agri-product businesses, and promoting opportunities for investment readiness and innovation.

## Population & Employment Allocations

The Province directs growth and development to settlement areas, including a significant proportion of population and employment growth. The County strategically manages the amount of designated employment lands to accommodate a range and mix of employment opportunities and other land uses to meet projected needs.

## Diversified Economies

The Province recognizes the evolving needs of a growing workforce and a changing global economy, including evolving manufacturing, resource, and service sectors, and the creative economy. Strategies to support a growing and diversified workforce include: policies for home-based businesses, tourism and resource-based recreational activities, and wise use and management of resources, including agricultural resources.



## STRATEGIC PLAN

The Township's Strategic Plan, which is designed to align with Community Development Plans and the advancement of Seguin Township. The second, out of three strategic directions is Economic Vitality which states the following:

"Encourages and facilitate Regional employment growth of both the commercial/industrial and service sectors."

"Develop and enhance the Parry Sound Area Municipal Airport into a strong employment node within the District."



## CURRENT OFFICIAL PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Goal*

*It is the goal of this Plan to provide opportunities for economic development and diversification in a manner that fosters a positive business environment in the Township.*

### *Objectives*

- a) To facilitate opportunities to develop and distribute a range of goods and services.*
- b) To establish, maintain and enhance Employment Areas that provide a range of job opportunities and a broad range of commercial and service facilities geared specifically to meet the needs of residents of the Township.*
- c) To encourage wherever possible, through the land use planning process, the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the appropriate areas in the Township.*
- d) To ensure that a sufficient supply of employment lands is available for development at all times.*
- e) To carefully monitor local and regional trends with respect to the supply of land for employment to ensure that an adequate supply in appropriate locations is available at all times.*
- f) To encourage the development of home-based businesses provided the proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses.*
- g) To encourage the protection of the Township's natural attributes, such as its rural character and its Natural Heritage System to ensure that the recreational and eco-tourism uses that rely upon these attributes continue to thrive.*
- h) To recognize that preservation of the natural environment and character of the Township is critical to the economic health of the community.*
- i) To provide flexible land use regulation to enable business to adapt to changing conditions.*
- j) To encourage improved educational facilities and opportunities for residents of the Municipality.*
- k) To encourage businesses and economic activity that creates added value from local products, materials and resources.*

## OFFICIAL PLAN CONTINUED...

The Seguin Official Plan directs the majority of employment growth to the two main Settlement Areas of Rosseau and Humphrey. It is the intent of this Official Plan to ensure that the Township of Seguin has enough land through 2025 to accommodate expected employment growth.

Encouraging diverse economic development in the Township is also a key goal of this Official Plan. The establishment of a positive business environment that provides jobs and prosperity to Township residents is a key component of this Plan. On this basis the Plan encourages, through a flexible policy regime, opportunities for additional development in the Settlement Areas and identified Employment Areas utilizing the economic infrastructure of the Township. In addition, this Plan permits the development of additional small-scale employment uses in the rural area to provide appropriate opportunities for rural residents and to support the rural service and cottage service industries that make up a significant component of the Township's economic base.



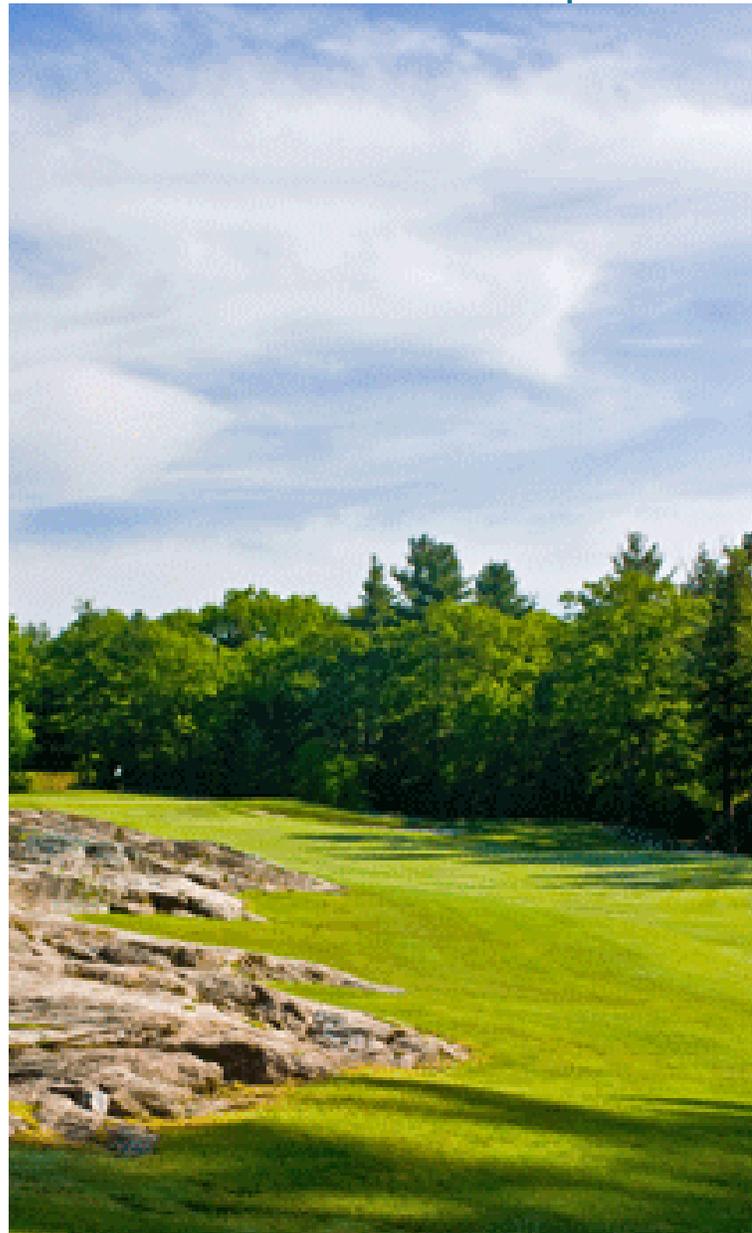
Section A of the Official Plan sets out the goals of the Economic Development in Seguin Township. The current goal states that: "It is the goal of this Plan to provide opportunities for economic development and diversification in a manner that fosters a positive business environment in the Township." (Section A.2.7.)

There are three main designations where employment areas apply: A.3.2.2 Employment Areas (A.3.2.2), Airport Employment Area (A.3.2.3) and Employment Corridor Area Overlay (A.3.2.7). It is also anticipated that more employment growth will occur in the centres and corridors identified in this Plan.

In Section C.2 Settle System there is more information about the location of the Employment Area (C.2.2) and Airport Employment Area (C.2.3) which states that principle areas should be directed primarily to existing communities or identified locations that will accommodate future growth and development in a sustainable manner. In this section of the Official Plan it also states that “all new employment uses must be appropriate to the character to the Township and the existing level of services provided.” As for the Airport Employment Area the Parry Sound Area Municipal Airport is located in Part of Lots 2 and 3, Concessions 10, 11 and 12 (Humphrey) and is considered a major anchor of the Township’s economic infrastructure and a major component of the regional economy.

Section D of the official plan includes an Employment Corridor Area Overlay (D.6) which “supports a range of existing employment uses and has certain locational attributes as an employment corridor that would lend itself to the establishment of appropriate new employment uses.”

## OFFICIAL PLAN CONTINUED...



# OVERVIEW OF POLICY ISSUES REPORT

The intent of the scoping exercise was to identify the key policy areas that will require in-depth attention as part of the review. The sections below were highlighted in the report as key policy areas which included economic development. This does not mean that this is the only opportunity to incorporate economic development and diversification but instead areas that can be improved.

## **B.8 Home Occupations and Home Industries**

- Diversification of the Township economic base is a key issue and home occupations and home industries are one of the most sustainable, responsive and attainable approaches to economic development. This offers an opportunity to review and update policies to ensure appropriate opportunities for community driven economic diversification and resilience. Consider expansion of permitted uses.
- Consider policy supporting Township-wide broadband.

## **B.11 Cultural Heritage Resources**

- Review input from MHSTCI regarding archaeological resources, Indigenous engagement, tourism and economic development

guidelines, park to park trails, water park guidelines, and short-term accommodations.

## **C.2.3 Airport Employment Area**

- Diversification of the Township economic base is a key issue. This is an opportunity to review and update policies to ensure appropriate opportunities for community driven economic diversification and resilience.

## **C.3 Lake System**

- The Lake System is integral to the identity of the community. It is valued for its ecological value, character, recreational opportunities, and tourism and economic development. There is a strong and committed community interest in protecting and restoring the lake system. Input focused on building on the current

## OVERVIEW OF POLICY ISSUES REPORT CONTINUED...

- framework and enhancing policies to ensure that the environment comes first, policies reflect the values of the lake system and policies effectively protect the lake system.

### C.1.3 Rural and Resource Area

- Review policies to ensure maximum opportunity for economic diversification and innovation.
- Diversification of the Township economic base is a key issue. This is an opportunity to review and update policies to ensure appropriate opportunities for community driven economic diversification and resilience

### Additional Consideration

- Review MHSTCI guidance with respect to economic development potential and employment opportunities created by tourism. Review tourism potential and policies which promote a range of economic development opportunities.



## PUBLIC COMMENTS

**The following are comments received to date regarding economic development.**

**Excerpt from Letter from Muskoka Lakes Association, Email, October 26, 2020:**

The MLA strongly supports Seguin's commitment to preserving 'the view from the canoe' by giving the environment the priority over economic or social development when making all land use and public works decisions.

The MJPRSC commissioned a study by the Altus Group – "Understanding the Waterfront Economy Study: An Economic Benefits Analysis 2020" – which is equally applicable to Seguin. Altus found that seasonal cottages currently dominate the waterfront economy, accounting for half to two-thirds of total economic activity, while resorts contribute between one fifth to one third of the total with year-round residences and short-term rentals accounting for the balance. Altus concluded that Muskoka has

ample current resort capacity and to meet future demand very little additional resort development will be required.

**Ann MacDiarmid, Website Forum, January 25, 2021:**

I do not agree with Seguin's current plan that limits employment and economic growth to the airport and employment corridors. I would like to see us welcome investment and economic development everywhere in the township. We do not have an adequate mix of employment lands - particularly for the tourism and building/contractor sectors. These are by far and away the largest economic engines in our township and they need to be encouraged to invest and grow. In supporting home based business we MUST deliver robust, affordable, broadband to all homes and businesses.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

**Ann MacDiarmid, Via Email,  
May 26, 2020**

Economic Growth for Seguin  
Housing

In keeping with the More Homes, More Choice Act 2019, I really want to see us make Seguin attractive for investors to build attainable homes for as many people as possible. With no public sewer and water, this means that we will likely need to use backlot properties that require wells and septic. I believe some of the lot size issues are addressed in the Provincial Policy Statement 1.1.4 and 1.15. Let's see if we can:

- Make the lot size restrictions go away as much as possible
- Make more lands in more types of locations available for urban development F.10(d) in both the settlement and rural areas
- Make it easier to build multi-unit housing throughout the township – likely not on lake front
- Make it possible to add self contained housing units (little apartments) over garages, in basements and create grannie suites

- Increase the overall housing supply and mix
- What can we do to make “youth retention” in Seguin a priority?

Tourism

- Recognize the importance of all types of tourism to the economic health of Seguin and our region
- Make it easier and attractive for existing resorts and tourism based businesses to reinvest and improve their properties
  - Consider new and innovative types of tourism – could be waterfront but maybe not once we hear from the community
  - Can we do anything in the OP to encourage redevelopment and re-defining businesses such as Muskoka Lakes Marine

**Bill Watkinson, Steering  
Committee SharePoint Site, July  
18, 2020**

As a year-round resident that has lakefront and rural property, I have concerns with section A.2.3 which directs growth to the township settlement areas. These areas have little vacant land,

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

private septic and private water. It seems like an odd plan given the vast rural area in the township. This brings me to section A.2.5.1 which basically discourages all settlement or development in rural areas. Having gone through a rural severance and being familiar with section B.12.2.5 I feel that this section needs an overhaul as it impacts landowners and families the have had large parcels of land for many decades and cant divide the property for their children/family or even to sell a few lots as a retirement. These are the hardworking people, the farmers that have made this township what it is today and they didn't make big money in their lifetime, but they have their property. Believe it or not people like living in the bush, I know that's where I want to be, so I think we need to take a look at the cut and dry guidelines that are in place to make severance in rural areas less of a discouragement and more of a encouragement.

**Excerpt from Letter by OLRA via Mario Buszynski, Email, June 3, 2020**

We are in general agreement with much of the OP policy for economic development contained in the Seguin Plan. One area that could be improved to Seguin's benefit is Section D5, the Northwest Seguin Development Area. Council passed a resolution to work with the Town of Parry Sound to develop an alternate access for the hospital along the Old Parry Sound Road which is the boundary between Seguin and Parry Sound. Having this land and some parcels in Seguin that otherwise would not be developed transferred to the Town would allow installation of municipal services by the Town along the road and significantly increase the potential for commercial and residential development which would benefit both municipalities similar to the land turned over to the Town by McDougal Township which now has the McDonalds, the Comfort Inn and the Walmart Plaza on it. Significant economic benefits would occur locally through construction as well as over the long term in terms of new jobs.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

**LD, Website Private Comment, August 31, 2020**

Local cottage industries, which can create local, sustainable jobs, should have special considerations. The Township should allow home-based businesses and permit sharing industries (e.g., ride-sharing and cottage rentals). These industries allow valuable resources to be shared while fostering economic prosperity for local residents. The Town may consider licensing cottage rentals for greater accountability.

**Brenda Mueller, Website, October 30, 2020**

Hello - i am the director of the Whispering River Music. [www.whisperingrivermusic.com](http://www.whisperingrivermusic.com). We have recently started a community music program in the West Parry Sound area with the aid of a Trillium grant, and run a very active community orchestra. We are grateful to be using the Foley Community Hall at this time - and the township has been very kind to us with that.. We would like to establish a community

music hub there that could be portable to other areas nearby, but space is a serious issue. We are looking at a couple of Heavy duty, engineered geodesic soft covered domes built to spec to withstand heavy snow loads that could be used in the Foley Fairgrounds( members of the Agricultural Society are on our board and are supportive) but are still relatively portable. I would like to know about permits for various solutions to space that we are hoping to create - and talk to someone about what requires a permit in Seguin before we dream any further! We are also wondering if there is a cultural plan for Seguin? Thank you in advance for replying to us - safety and doing things properly is a concern for us too, and we appreciate your advice and time.

**Daryle Moffat, Comments via Email, September 25, 2020**

Page A.13, A.3.2.2 why would we not cross reference “economic corridors” and “nodes ...” so that the reader can easily move to these items and read them to better understand the context.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Page C-41, third paragraph, how would Council get satisfied "... impact on the economy, the environment and ..."?

**Thor Eklund, Letter via Email, March 4, 2021**

In our Rankin Lake Property Owners' Association letter of October 18, 2020 (copy enclosed), we pointed out that "Permitting Short Term Rentals will increase the use of the cottages, septic systems, lake swimming, boating, etc". As there is no real prohibition against lending a cottage to a friend or relative, but commercial renting increases the use of a lake by speedboats, canoes, swimmers, etc. Thus the Recreational Water Quality Criteria set in the Official Plan must be readdressed and recalculated for a lake with "commercial rentable" lots. Our experience with strangers on our Lake has been, noisy music, waves from fast boats driving close to our dock, swimmers using soap, etc. Permitting Short Term Rentals will increase the use of the cottages, septic systems, lake swimming, and boating. The

number of people working year round in lake fronting houses is increasing thanks to the much improved Internet Service in the Township. I trust that you will oppose the proposed by-law for Short Term Rentals of Cottages.

**Excerpt from Letter via John Jackson, Email, July 23, 2020**

Please be advised that I represent 1636411 Ontario Inc. and the property they own at Lot 147, Concession A, in the geographic Township of Foley. This property was the subject of a secondary plan known as the North West Study Area. The subject land along with other lands were to be governed by the policies set out in Section D.5, subsection D.5.3 of the official plan. A central problem with the current policy in the requirement that any development must be connected to municipal services from the Town of Parry Sound. The problem is the difficulty of negotiating a service arrangement with a third-party municipality that is not supportive of providing services outside its border.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

In addition, several proposed uses of the lands could be serviced privately. Therefore, the polices need to be adjusted to allow for servicing that is appropriate and necessary and not requiring connection to the Town's services.

**Steven B, Website Public Forum, January 31, 2021**

If Seguin wants to see an injection of spirit and soul into the community along with some real economic development spin-offs while being competitive, the municipality should be strategizing to bring in a post-secondary institution (perhaps specialized in a discipline connected to a local industry in Seguin or Muskoka - hospitality, tourism, environment, building construction, etc.). Towns, cities and places alike reap significant benefits when young people have a presence and become an important part of the resident population - what follows is a ripple of effect of needed services, establishments, business, needed housing (i.e. more development) and jobs,

jobs, jobs! If close to a main street or walkable urban place, then suddenly life, vibrancy and synergies begin to appear ... they love this kind of local amenity because it allows for social connection and inclusivity. I have seen other municipalities big and small do this strategically as part of an economic development and planning vision and with quite a bit of success .... it doesn't happen overnight, but it sets the pendulum up to swing. Just something to think about ...



## SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**The Official Plan will be based on your vision and ideas from the community. You know what you want the future of the community to be. You also know where the current challenges and constraints are. We need your input to ensure that the policies we develop achieve your objectives and respond to your vision and needs.**

The following are examples of directions and suggestions intended to facilitate and stimulate discussion.

### **Direction #1**

It is important to be innovative and to respond to all forms of the new economy within the evolving economic context of Seguin, which includes leveraging the Township's quality of life and environmental attributes.

### **Policy Opportunities**

Establishing settlement areas as the focal points for commercial uses by:

- Establishing safe and pleasant pedestrian environments that encourage movement by all modes of transportation;
- Providing attractive streetscapes and urban design;
- Encouraging mixed uses and business innovation;
- Facilitating small and home based businesses;
- Leveraging community attributes, character and innovation to provide unique and destination oriented commercial activity;
- Encouraging local supply and shopping; and,
- Encouraging infrastructure improvements.

## SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Direction #2

The Township needs to meet the needs of employment and business opportunities of all types.

### Policy Opportunities

- Rural policies could be enhanced to consider opportunities for creative industries, diversity in home occupations and resource based commercial opportunities;
- Providing for live/work units;
- Permitted uses could be enhanced to add innovative forms of rural development that respect the rural character of the area; industrial uses that are appropriate in scale and are part of, and support the rural economy; public uses and public and private utilities; and wineries, breweries or distilleries;
- Ensuring that employment areas remain a focus for industry and economic oriented growth; and
- Supporting innovation and value added production in resource extraction industries.



## SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Direction #3

The Township should consider establishing incentives to attract employers and/or investment.

### Policy Opportunities

- Establishing a policy framework that encourages incentives and promotions to attract investment to Seguin and identify niche economic development opportunities that are unique to the area.
- Promoting the Township's employment and commercial lands through strategic planning and innovative policy efforts.
- Establishing policy that encourages building and fostering relationships with long-standing and common interest while at the same time extending this to other interest groups to develop synergies in interests and objectives (e.g. environmental protection and economic development can be integrated and are not mutually exclusive).
- Reviewing tourism and resource-based potential and policies which promote a range of economic development opportunities.



## THOUGHT PROVOKING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you think that the current policies support or restrict new and existing businesses?**
- 2. Do you think there is an adequate mix of employment lands and other land use designations, including industrial, commercial and institutional uses, to support long-term needs?**
- 3. Besides supporting the tourism/recreational sector, what other economic sectors should be supported through Official Plan policies?**
- 4. Are there any particular local industries or businesses that require special considerations?**
- 5. How should the Township support home-based businesses? How should the Township accommodate new industries, such as short-term rentals and ride-sharing (e.g. Air BnB and Uber)?**
- 6. How else can the new Official Plan support economic development, diversification, and employment?**
- 7. How should the Township consider development of lands along the major highway corridors, which are under Ministry of Transportation (MTO) jurisdiction?**
- 8. Please provide any other comments you may have for consideration in the development of new policies.**