

**Memo from the Township of Manitouwadge Planning Department  
regarding Rezoning and Addressing Social Media Posts**

Throughout the Fall of 2021 and Spring of 2022, the Township of Manitouwadge undertook the process to update the Township's Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw. These documents are required by the Province of Ontario for all municipalities and the last update for the Township was done in 1985. There were many public consultations and surveys to receive input from residents and interested parties. The opportunities made available to comment on the process can be viewed under the archived pages of MyManitouwadge: <https://mymanitouwadge.ca/official-plan-and-zoning-bylaw-update-2021>

The updated Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw were approved by Council on October 26, 2022. In August 2024, the Province approved the Township's new Official Plan.

These documents can be accessed by clicking on the links below:

Zoning Bylaw: <https://manitouwadge.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/4888/?preview=20154>

Official Plan: <https://manitouwadge.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/4888/?preview=10929>

**How to Change a Property's Zoning:**

A Zoning Bylaw Amendment (ZBA), also known as a rezoning, is a process where a property owner requests changes to the zoning regulations for their property, allowing them to develop or use it in a way that deviates from the current zoning rules. Essentially, it's an application to modify the existing zoning bylaw to suit a specific development or use plan for a particular property.

In simpler terms, the Township has rules about what can be built on different types of land (like residential, industrial, etc.). A ZBA allows a property owner to ask Council to change those rules for their specific property, potentially allowing them to build something different (like a gas station).

**Pre-consultation:**

Staff at the Township has received information from two property owners that they are interested in rezoning their property to allow for a gas station. In the Township's Zoning Bylaw, gas stations are permitted in the Corridor Mixed Use zone. Upon having a pre-consultation meeting with staff to discuss the proposed ZBA, staff then contracted with a registered professional planner (RPP) for a pre-consultation opinion. The RPP reviews the property information, including the current zoning and the proposed use, and they advise what information is required to submit with the rezoning application for Council's review and consideration.

In the case of rezoning a residential or industrial property to Corridor Mixed Use, the following information has been provided from the RPP to both property owners:

*“In my opinion, the proposed use which includes a gas station would not be appropriate in this location. The primary reasons include the fact that the OP designation clearly directs service stations (gas stations) to Corridor Mixed Use (on a major road) due to the potential adverse effects.*

*While there is nothing stopping a person from seeking Planning Act approval for amending Official Plans and Zoning By-laws, etc., the fact that the draft OP and CZBL are so new, indicates Council's up to date position (and the community's); and there are policies and zones which are specific to gas stations. They are not supportive in this location - but certainly are in other locations.*

*Also, I should note that the Corridor Mixed Use Designation and Zone are not suited to site-specific implementation. They are intended for entire corridors as the name suggests.*

*I've cut and pasted the most relevant OP policies and ZBL regulations below.*

*If this did go forth as an application, the applicant would need to include:*

- *a Planning Justification Report*
- *a detailed site plan*
- *clarify unity of ownership*
- *an engineering study from an Ontario P.Eng showing how access, traffic circulation, and parking can be achieved*
- *spill containment to TSSA standards*
- *a grading and drainage plan including a stormwater management study*
- *an area traffic study including noise and vibration impact assessment*
- *a servicing options study*
- *a public consultation strategy*
- *address proximity to lake/ lift station/wells*
- *address proximity to adjacent apartments/residents*
- *address proximity to the Village Centre and Official Plan designation addressing vibrancy/feel*
- *address location not being on a major transportation route*

*Due to recent provincial legislation, the pre-consultation process is a draft circulation of the full application package, so that when the Planning Act "clock" starts for a complete (formal) application, all input from relevant agencies is complete and Council can make an informed decision.*

*I will note that some of the issues do not have a remedy within the control of the applicant; so I highly discourage this going forth as an application (for a gas station here on the subject property), even with all the studies (above).”*

To date, the Township has not received a complete rezoning application from either party. We are aware that one party is in the process of completing the reports and studies identified by the RPP in order to submit a complete rezoning application.

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For further information regarding building and planning, please contact:

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