

Date: June 19, 2026

To: Lesley Marshall, CAO Clerk-Treasurer, Township of Chisholm

From: Tara Michauville, Planner, J. L. Richards & Associates Ltd.

CC: Jason Ferrigan, Director of Planning, J. L. Richards & Associates Ltd.
Jessica Laberge, Admin Assistant, Township of Chisholm

Subject: DRAFT Summary of comments received from the MMAH and the Public for the Township of Chisholm Draft Official Plan Update

JLR No.: 33130-000.1

Background

In 2024 the Township of Chisholm (the Township) retained J. L. Richards & Associates Ltd. (JLR) to review and update the Township's Official Plan. The Township is obligated to submit a Draft Official Plan to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for review and comment as required by O.Reg. 543/06. The Draft OP was submitted December 22, 2025. Comments from MMAH were received April 21, 2026, with a follow up meeting between MMAH, JLR and the Township on June 4, 2026.

Comments Summary

This Memo addresses two sets of comments received; one from the MMAH (email and table), and the second received from the public (written and oral). Below are summaries of each with JLR's responses, rationale and suggested modifications, where applicable.

1. MMAH Comments

MMAH provided comments to the Draft Official Plan along with recommendations and suggested amendments to the Draft OP. Each comment has been reviewed and addressed with a response from JLR as shown in the Comment Response Tables below. The Tables will be submitted with the Final Draft OP to the MMAH for approval following adoption by Council.

	MMAH Email Question/Comment	JLR Response
1	The ministry would also like to better understand the Township's population projection of 1,705 relative to MOF's projection and the proposal for 124 new residential lots by 2051.	• The Background Report initially used MOF data as of June 2021 and was subsequently updated to use MOF data as of October 2024. A technical error did not revise the number of new homes required. This has been corrected in the Final OP to reflect 146 new homes required (instead of the previous 124). • JLR notes a moderate increasing growth rate in the Township will be able to accommodate the need for residential properties. • JLR understands that this revision will not affect Council's preference to update land division policies for the Rural Designation.

2	Additionally, we are interested in the recent vacant land absorption (uptake) in the Township. This information will be incorporated into the package that is sent to the Minister for decision.	See 4a below.
3	When submitting the Township's adopted OP, please provide a rationale for the population projection and growth.	The rationale is included in the Background Report (to be attached to Final Submission).
4	Kindly also share data from MPAC's Municipal Connects portal (which municipalities should be able to access for free) to help us better understand any key trends:	See 4a and 4b below.
4a	Year over year total numbers for each vacant residential property code (e.g. 100, 101, 110), from 2021 to 2025	The Township has provided a summary - to be attached to the Final Submission.
4b	Any corroborating residential building permit data that might help inform uptake of vacant lands	The Township has provided a summary - to be attached to the Final Submission.

The following Table was sent by the MMAH and is modified to show how JLR addressed each comment and provided a recommendation.

Revisions to Draft Official Plan Suggested to Implement the Planning Act, Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 and Provincial Plans							
	OP Policy Number	Comments/Concerns	Related Provincial Ministries	Reference to Planning Act, PPS or Provincial Plan Section or Policy	Proposed Revision	JLR COMMENTS	JLR RECOMMENDATIONS
1	2.3.3.2.3	The policy would benefit from using consistent terminology for prime agricultural areas, as opposed to prime agricultural lands, as indicated in the PPS.	OMAFRA	PPS policies 4.3.1.2 and 4.3.1.1	*blank	Agreed	Policy 2.3.3.2.3 was updated to include consistent terminology as recommended.
2	3.1.5.1	Please ensure this section of the OP references the requirement to obtain an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) and/or Permit To Take Water (PTTW) prior to the commencement of any home industrial use if applicable.	MECP	EPA, OWRA, PPS section 4.2	*blank	Agreed	Policy 3.1.5.1 was updated to include suggested comment.
3	3.1.5.10.7	Please update this policy to reflect that the administration of Ontario's <i>Species at Risk Act</i> moved from MNR to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) - Species at Risk Branch (SARB).	MNR	<i>Species at Risk Act</i> PPS 4.1.7	Modify policy 3.1.5.10.7 as follows: The Ministry of Natural Resources has been contacted where a commercial dog kennel operation is proposed in proximity to a known or suspected habitat of endangered or threatened species or species of special concern, and, if necessary, measures have been taken to address any concerns or recommendations of the Ministry of Natural Resources The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Species at Risk branch will be consulted where a commercial dog kennel operation is proposed in proximity to known or suspected habitat of endangered, threatened, or special concern species, and measures will be taken to address any concerns or recommendations	Agreed	Section 3.1.5.10.7 was updated with the proposed revised text.

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					provided by MECP/SARB under the Species at Risk Act.		
4	3.1.6	Please include a policy that ensures extraction is undertaken in a manner which minimizes social, economic and environmental impacts, as per PPS Policy 4.5.2.2. Please include a policy indicating that mineral aggregate resource conservation shall be undertaken, including through the use of accessory aggregate recycling facilities within operations, wherever feasible. Recommend that the OP include rehabilitation standards for operations on private land that are compatible with standards under the Aggregate Resources Act.	MNR	PPS policies, 4.5.2.2 and 4.5.2.3	*blank	Agreed	Policy 3.1.6 was updated to add 3.1.6.3.6 and 3.1.6.3.7 and Policy 3.1.6.5 was updated to include ARA guidelines.
5	3.1.6.3 1f)	Please update this policy for better PPS consistency. It will also help with terminology used in the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (OHA)	MCM	PPS section 8 (definitions)	Please revise policy 3.1.6.3 f) as follows: f) The built or cultural heritage of the area.	Agreed	Updated Section 3.1.6.3 f) as suggested.
6	3.2.3.9	This policy conflicts with Section 3.1.8 which states that this use will be in a Mineral Aggregate Resource One (MAR 1) Zone that permits quarries and sand and gravel extraction operations.	MNR	PPS policy 4.4.4.1	*blank	Agreed	- Section 3.2.3.9 was updated to separate 'minerals and petroleum resources' and 'mineral aggregates'. - Section 3.2.3.10 was updated to add a reference to policy 3.1.8.

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		Modify policy. 3.2.3.9 to make reference to the alternate zoning designation for consistency with PPS policy 4.4.4.1					
7	3.2.4.1	The policy for lot creation in agricultural areas would benefit from using terminology and criteria consistent with the PPS to avoid farmland fragmentation. Please eliminate reference to policies 3.2.4.1 b/d). As these policies don't appear to exist.	OMAFA	PPS policy 4.3.3.1	*blank	Agreed	• Section 3.2.4.1 was updated to align with provincial policy for farmland fragmentation. • Section references to 3.2.4.1 b) and d) were removed.
8	3.2.4.10.2	The policy would benefit from consistency with the PPS in the use of term "agricultural condition" The term agricultural condition is defined in the PPS to more specifically identify the need to be "a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture will be maintained, restored or enhanced." This will help to properly restore aggregate sites in prime agricultural areas.	OMAFA	PPS section 8.0 (definition of Agricultural condition)	*blank	Agreed	• Updated Section 3.2.4.10.2 with "where the same areas and same capability for agriculture will be maintained, restored or enhanced".

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9	3.3.1.5	Proposed new policy to ensure in water construction is compliant with federal Fisheries Act.	MNR	PPS policy 4.1.6	Add 3.3.1.5: To protect fish and fish habitat, and to comply with the Fisheries Act and associated federal guidance, the Township shall require that all in water works, shoreline works, or works occurring in or near watercourses or waterbodies adhere to restricted in water work timing windows established to protect sensitive fish life stages such as spawning, incubation, fry emergence, and migration. No in water work shall occur outside approved timing windows, which shall be determined by applicable provincial and federal regulations/requirements as well as any conservation authorities.	If implemented, this would include a 'policy' in a what is meant to be the 'objectives' section in the OP.	Section 4.2.2 (Fish Habitat) was amended to include "in accordance with provincial and federal requirements" and "shall comply with the federal <i>Fisheries Act</i>"
10	3.3.4.1	Please clarify this policy, as it is unclear if it means only one or all of the conditions 1-3 as outlined.	MNR	PPS policy 4.2.1 g)	Consider the following revision for policy 3.3.4.1 ...permitted Wasi Lake or the Wasi River, unless all of the following conditions are met:	Agreed	Section 3.3.4.1 was updated as recommended.
11	3.5.2	Recommend adding significant wildlife habitat, fish habitat to components that should be protected for greater consistency with PPS policies 4.1.5 d) and 4.1.6.	MNR	PPS policies 4.1.5 d) and 4.1.6	*blank	Agreed	Section 3.5.2 was updated to add policies 3.5.2.4 and 3.5.2.5.
12	3.5.2.1	Please update policy 3.5.2.1 for greater accuracy and PPS Consistency	MNR	PPS policy 4.1.5a)	Revise policy 3.5.2.1 to read: (1) All provincially significant wetlands identified by a wetland evaluator trained in accordance with the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System policy.	For consistency in text, the policies in this section are simplified. A Provincially Significant Wetland can only be	Updated Section 3.5.2.1 to "all provincially significant wetlands".

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						designated by a qualified wetland evaluator.	
13	3.5.5.1	Even wetlands under 2 ha may be subject to Ministry review. For example, if the wetland provides habitat or is directly associated with Species at Risk, in which case the Species at Risk Branch would need to be consulted (any development impacting Species at Risk must follow the Endangered Species Act. Please see proposed rewording for consistency with PPS policy 4.1.4 a)	MNR	PPS policy 4.1.4a)	Please revise policy 3.5.5.1 as follows: Any application for development or site alteration in a local wetland greater than 2 hectares shall be subject to a work permit issued by the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority and an evaluation undertaken in accordance with the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System by a qualified person. A 30 m buffer should be preserved from the boundary of any Provincially significant wetland and local wetland greater than 2 hectares that maintains a natural vegetated cover and may be implemented through the Zoning By-law. Any application for development or site alteration in a local unevaluated wetland shall be subject to an evaluation by a trained wetland evaluator in accordance with the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System Policy (OWES) prior to processing any planning approvals. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant wetlands. A 30 m buffer should be preserved from the boundary of any local wetland that maintains a natural vegetated cover and may be implemented through the Zoning By-law.	Agreed	Section 3.5.5.1 was updated with recommended text.
14	3.5.5.3, 3.5.5.3.1, 3.5.6.2.9	Please remove reference to the <i>Endangered Species Act</i> as it is no longer in effect having	MNR	PPS policy 4.1.7, PPS section 8 (definition of habitat of endangered	*blank	Agreed	Updated Section 3.5.5.1, 3.5.5.3.1 and 3.5.6.2.9 to "Species Conservation Act".

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		been replaced by the Species at Risk Act.		species and threatened species:			
15	4.2.4	Paragraph 2 suggests only certain circumstances where an EIS would be required prior to development adjacent to significant wildlife habitat. Policy 4.1.5(d) and 4.1.8 of the PPS direct that new development and site alteration in and adjacent to significant wildlife habitat should only be permitted if it has first been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or the ecological functions for which the area is identified. Please revise this section to reflect the PPS direction. Note that planning authorities are to use the Significant Wildlife Habitat Ecoregion Criteria Schedules and the Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide when completing an ecological site assessment.	MNR	PPS policies 4.1.5d) and 4.1.8	*blank	Agreed	Section 4.2.4 was updated to include PPS policies 4.1.5 d) and 4.1.8.
16	4.5.1	For consistency with PPS policy 5.2.6 please add a policy that prohibits institutional uses, emergency services and uses associated with	MNR	PPS policy 5.2.6	*blank	PPS policy 5.2.6 is described in Section 4.5.1.1.2.e	Policy exists. No updated needed.

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		hazardous substances in the hazardous land use.					
17	4.8	Contamination near sensitive land use is discussed but more detail could be added to the policy, including: proposed developments shall be developed in accordance with MECP policy guideline D-5-4 and shall ensure that there is no risk of contamination to potable water supply wells and groundwater resources. Proponents of industrial development shall be required to provide supporting technical studies, to assist in the evaluation of proposed developments and, where applicable, to determine influence areas, address potential impacts, and identify appropriate separation distances and other mitigation measures. Consideration may also be given to the extent to which increased site plan requirements can reduce the potential impacts.	MECP	MECP D Series Guidelines D-5-4 EPA O. Reg 153/04 PPS policy 5.3.2	*blank	Comments appear to reflect general policies to protect lands from contamination. The intent of this section is to reference specific Brownfield sites, as defined in the PPS.	Updated Section 4.8 title to "Brownfield Sites".

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18	5.1.2	More detail could be added about studies required for servicing. Consider specifying the guidelines which will support the studies, in this case the following: <i>Procedure D-5-4 Technical Guideline for Individual On-Site Sewage Systems: Water Quality Impact Risk Assessment and Procedure D-5-5 Technical Guideline for Private Wells: Water Supply Assessment.</i> A hydrogeological assessment will be required to demonstrate the long-term sustainability of a property's water supply, along with an evaluation of the site's suitability for sewage disposal to ensure the protection of the potable water supply.	MECP	MECP D-Series Guidelines PPS policies 3.6.3 and 3.6.4	*blank	We agree to add wording that allows for hydrogeological studies to be requested.	Added new policy in Section 5.1.2 stating: "All development must demonstrate that it can be adequately serviced for the long-term sustainability of a property's water supply, and the suitability for a sewage disposal system. Council may require supporting studies such as a hydrogeological and terrain assessment in accordance with Procedure D-5-4 Technical Guidance for Individual On-Site Sewage Systems: Water Quality Impact Risk Assessment and Procedure D-5-5 Technical Guideline for Private Wells: Water Supply Assessment."
19	5.2	The OP acknowledges future trails and cycling routes. The township is encouraged to reference aligning them with the Province-Wide Cycling Network (PWCN). Province Wide Cycling Network MTO iCorridor	MTO	Province Wide Cycling network PPS policies 3.2.1-3.2.3, and 3.9.1	Add a new policy in section 5.2 stating: The Township shall plan its local trail and cycling networks to align with the Province-Wide Cycling Network.	We will include a new policy on active transportation.	Added a new policy as Section 5.2.4 to address Active Transportation, current trails and the Province-Wide Cycling Network.

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20	5.2.1.6	Please update the policy for more explicit recognition of the movement of goods in Northern Ontario for consistency with PPS policy 3.2.1	MTO	PPS policy 3.2.1	Create a new policy 5.2.1.6 that states: g) <i>The Township shall protect goods movement routes and ensure new development does not compromise the safe and efficient movement of goods. Coordination with MTO will be undertaken where provincial connections are affected.</i>	There are no MTO regulated roads in the Township.	No change necessary.
21	5.2.3.5	The OP discourages future transportation use of the former CN line ("prospect of reuse is no longer realistic"), which contradicts PPS corridor protection requirements and undermines long-distance active transportation or future rail opportunities.	MTO	PPS policies 3.3.2-3.3.3 and PPS section 3.4	Please modify section 5.2.3.5 as follows Given that the tracks have been removed, the prospect of seeing this corridor used again for rail transport is no longer realistic. The Township shall protect the continuous linear corridor of the former NC rail line for potential future transportation, utility, or active transportation purposes.	Agreed	Updated Section 5.2.3.5 as recommended.

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22	5.3.1	For consistency with the Ontario Heritage Act and PPS, revised wording is suggested.	MCM	OHA PPS, 2024 – Policy 4.6 and Section 8 - (definitions of “archaeological resources”, “built heritage resource”, “cultural heritage landscape”, and “conserved”)	Council recognizes the importance of cultural heritage resources within the Township. Therefore, Council will encourage the identification, conservation, protection, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of cultural heritage resources. Cultural heritage resources include archaeological resources, built heritage resources, and cultural heritage landscapes. ...It is the intent of this Plan to: 1. Recognize that the conservation maintenance of the Township’s cultural heritage resources will contribute to the preservation of the Township’s character 2. Ensure that the nature and location of cultural heritage and archaeological resources as well as the adjacent lands to these resources features are known and considered before land use decisions are made ... 4. Consult and seek the advice of a Municipal Heritage Committee or other established heritage organizations when making decisions regarding the conservation of cultural heritage resources in the Township (see policy 5.3.2.10).	Agreed	Updated Section 5.3.1 as recommended.
23	5.3.1.5	This section about Indigenous engagement should be revised to align with PPS 4.6.5. Terminology should reflect that in the PPS, 2024 and the OHA and should be used consistently throughout the document.	MCM	PPS policy 4.6.5	5. Engage early with Indigenous communities in matters pertaining to Cultural Heritage and ensure that their interests are considered when conserving identifying and protecting archaeological resources, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes-	Agreed	Updated Section 5.3.1.5 as recommended.

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		The term 'conserved' is a broader term and is defined in the PPS, 2024.					
24	5.3.2.3	As of July 1, 2023, the municipality is required to make its municipal heritage register available on a publicly accessible website. The Register shall be updated regularly to ensure effective conservation and shall be readily accessible to the public.	MCM	PPS policies 4.6.1 and 4.6.4b OPA Part IV s.27, 39.2	...value or interest. The register will be available on a publicly accessible website and will be updated regularly to ensure effective conservation.	Agreed	Updated Section 5.3.2.3 as recommended.

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25	6.4	Please revise this OP section to ensure it reflects that planning authorities are no longer able to require early consultation. Bill 17 <i>Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter</i>, has removed the ability for planning authorities to require new complete application studies beyond what is currently identified in the OP. The township may wish to consider aligning the plan's complete application requirements with the Province's proposed regulation under the Planning Act currently posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario for public comment (ERO No. 026-0313): https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/026-0313	MMAH	Planning Act 22(5), 34(10.2) Bill 17 Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act Bill 98	*blank	Agreed	Updated Section 6.4.1 to include list of studies in ERO 026-0313
26	Schedule A	Environmental Protection should be represented using hatching or transparency such that the Agricultural area and prime agricultural area is still visible on all schedules. There appear to be additional Agricultural Areas in the	OMAF	PPS policy 4.3.1.2	*blank	LEAR info rec'd 3-JUN-2026 (being reviewed and schedules to be updated)	To follow up with revised schedules for Township and Council review

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		area south of Wasi Lake, based on the provincial agricultural land base information.					
27	Schedule B	MNR records show a broad winged hawk nesting site at 17T 644179 510729. This is not present on Schedule B mapping. Please ensure that all trout lakes are mapped accordingly. There is currently no hazard mapping included with the Official Plan. Please include appropriate mapping and recognition of known hazards, including flood elevations and/or the need to verify this at the time of an active application, in consultation with MNR.	MNR	PPS policy 4.1.6 and 4.1.7	*blank	• Broad winged hawk is shown on Schedule B. • No evidence of Lake Trout lakes in the Township • No flood hazard information from the CA or other known hazards	No change necessary.
28	Schedule C	Schedule C shows local roads and rail, but omits mapping of PWCN-aligned routes, or protection of linear corridors (including the inactive rail line). Please consider adding the following to schedule C: Province Wide Cycling Routes Protected Linear Corridor (inactive rail)	MTO	PPS policies 3.3.1- 3.3.5	*blank	PWCN is new information.	• Added PWCR • Inactive rail line is shown

2. Public Comments

Public comments were received throughout the project and consisted of written submissions in person, email submissions, and comments discussed at the Public Open House. Below is a summary of those comments and JLR's response, recommendations or acknowledgement as required.

	Comments from the public	JLR Comment	JLR Recommendation
1	Letter received 22-APR-2026 from Sara Tonks · Asked how to 'un-designate' prime agricultural lands back to rural · Concerns about financing from a bank/institution for ARUs (if they are not on their own parcel)	• A property owner can apply to redesignate lands from Agriculture to Rural per Sections 17 and 22 of the <i>Planning Act</i>. Policy 4.3.4 of the PPS permits planning authorities to remove land from prime agricultural areas for expansions of or identification of settlement areas. • Comment noted – not a land use planning issue. ARUs are not permitted on a separate parcel of land.	No changes necessary.
2	· Look into classification of agricultural uses that are not on Prime Ag designated lands (e.g. cattle). They are still areas that require protecting from rural land division policies for themselves and neighbours.	Agricultural uses are permitted on Rural designated lands and subject to policies designed to support compatibility including MDS. Updated land division in the Rural area has limits to amount of lots permitted and minimum size of lots.	No further changes necessary.
3	· Commercial development – there is no designation/area in the Township. Are there size restrictions for buildings, location, traffic, dust (on neighbouring crops), noise? Example is a business making pallets in the rural area – and potential use of transport trucks on gravel roads near farming operations.	Section 3.1.5.6 describes commercial and industrial uses and includes provisions to address land size (2 ha), road frontage, water and sewage, D-6 Series Guidelines, MDS setbacks and subject to Site Plan Control. Traffic impact studies may be required to support development applications. OFDU policies in Section 3.2.4.6 which restricts lot area (max 2% or 1 ha), GFA, compatibility, MDS.	No further changes necessary.
4	· The use of the word 'character' and current legal implications	This was discussed at the Open House presentation.	Section 3.1.5.11 was updated to reference 'existing and planned' character.
5	· How did we calculate the projected population of 393 people?	Information taken from historical Stats Canada Census Data and projected Ministry of Finance information.	No changes necessary.
6	· Fire Chief was looking for a better wildland fire map is available	Not a land use planning issue.	No changes necessary.

7	Concerns about adding policy to permit 'energy systems'.	PPS encourages energy supply opportunities in municipalities for provincial needs. As applications are submitted, they are subject to regulations, setbacks, public consultation, etc.	No changes necessary.
8	Does MDS apply to ADU's?	Yes - per MDS Publication 853.	No changes necessary.
9	On-farm worker housing – is it permitted?	Yes. – per Section 3.2.3.1 it is considered an Agricultural Use.	No changes necessary.
10	Township should consider where they would like to see residential concentrated development (top third of Township? Wasi Lake and north)	The location for new growth was considered by Township Council who elected to facilitate equal growth opportunities across the Township through a consistent approach to rural residential consents and rural commercial/industrial uses, subject to the policies of the Plan.	No changes necessary.
11	Ideally, farmland on rural land must be protected from encroaching development. Can this be achieved while still allowing some flexibility (regarding severances) for landowners?	Current rural policies for land division are subject to a limited number of severances, MDS setbacks and minimum lot sizes.	No changes necessary.
12	Realizing that increasing our tax base is one of the plan's objectives, could there be a method to encourage the increase in residential lots and adding additional residences on each lot, in the northern portion of the township, particularly on the major roadways to North Bay? Discouraging additional traffic through the southern agricultural areas would be an advantage for road maintenance in addition to those of us who farm or have come here for quiet living. Motor vehicle traffic (particularly that of the rush to and from work) is a safety concern; farmers aboard tractors or horse drawn vehicles are especially at risk. Children walk our roads to and from school. Livestock is always at some risk of finding a way onto the road.	See reply to Comment 10 above.	No changes necessary.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide responses to Public and the Ministry's comments. MMAH comment # 26 will be followed up with revised Schedules for review by staff and Council.

Should any clarification be required for the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact us below.

Sincerely,

J.L. RICHARDS & ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

Tara Michauville, MSc
Planner

Jason Ferrigan, RPP MCIP MScPI
Director of Planning

TM:jf

