

TOWN OF COBALT OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE



BACKGROUND SCAN

**MUNICIPAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS
NOVEMBER 2021**

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this Environmental Scan is to provide an overview of those factors that influence the future of the Town of Cobalt. The Environmental Assessment Act defines the Environment as:

- “environment” means,*
- (a) air, land or water,*
 - (b) plant and animal life, including human life,*
 - (c) the social, economic and cultural conditions that influence the life of humans or a community,*
 - (d) any building, structure, machine or other device or thing made by humans,*
 - (e) any solid, liquid, gas, odour, heat, sound, vibration or radiation resulting directly or indirectly from human activities, or*
 - (f) any part or combination of the foregoing and the interrelationships between any two or more of them,*

Cobalt is a unique community in the true sense of the word ‘unique’. To guide the future of the community, we must understand the past and present. The following provides an overview of those conditions.

Figure 1 provides a base map of the Town.

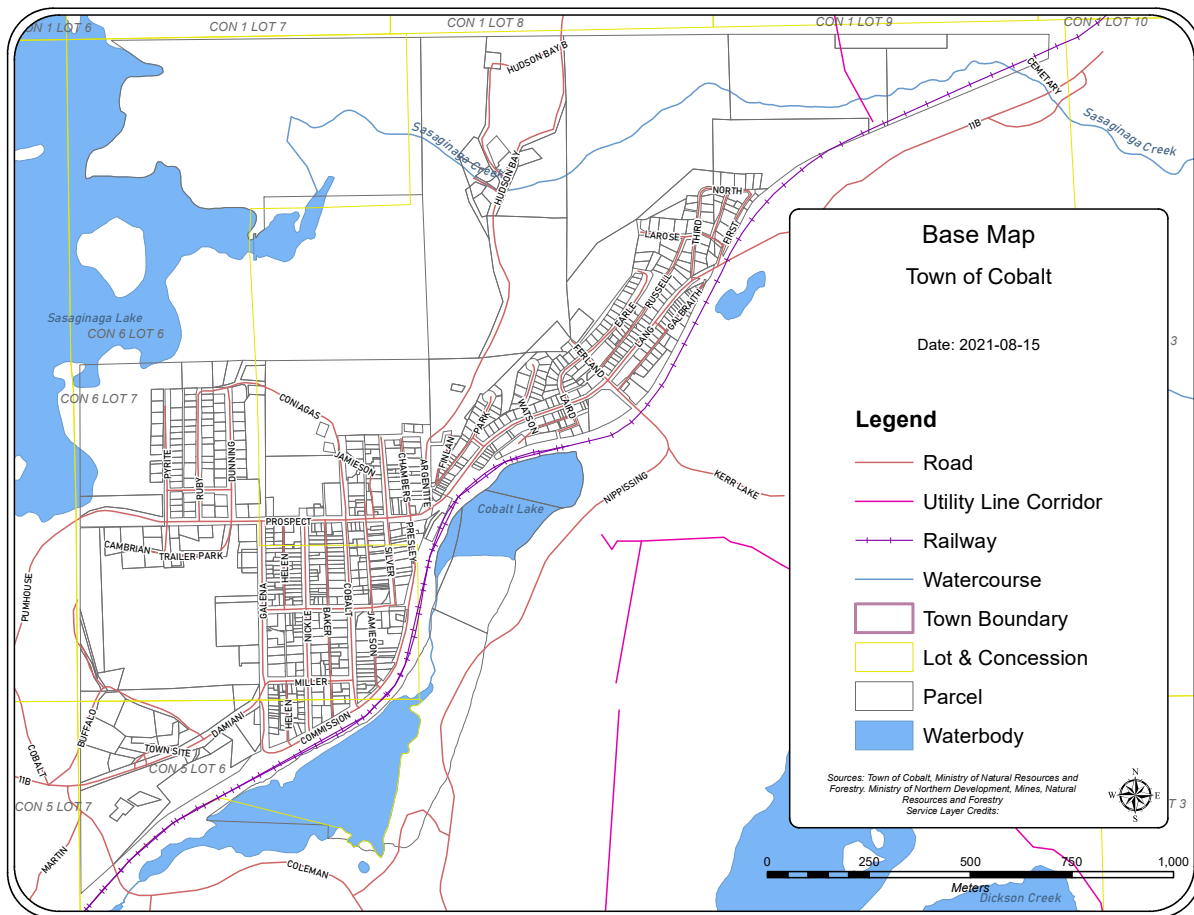


Figure 1: Base Map

2.0 History of Settlement

The Town Cobalt grew out of the mining activity occurring in the Temiskaming District in the early 1900s. While constructing the railway through what is now the Town of Cobalt silver was discovered in 1903. This led to a mining rush that rivaled the Klondike gold mines in the late 1800s. The Town grew around the mining areas within, what at the time was the Township of Coleman. The history of Cobalt written by Carson Brown contains the following description:

“The Town of Cobalt itself sprang into existence on the bare rock in the middle of the mining area it grew entirely without planning and wherever a flat outcropping big enough to support a building could be found there was the site of a miner's home. Cobalt with its erratically curving streets and its generally haphazard construction still bears the marks of its pioneer heyday aesthetically Cobalt may not be the community planners ideal - but never should that be whispered to its loyal residents who

claim with complete justification that there has never been and never will be another Cobalt and there never will be"

By 1905 there were 16 mines operating in what is now Cobalt and the annual shipments of ore valued in the range of \$1.3 to \$3.7 million (1905 value) over the years until 1920. Since then, mining activity has occurred sporadically. In the 1950s where their secondary searches for silver and other precious metals through the re-excavation of mines and mine tailings. Cobalt lake in the center of the Town has twice been dredged to refine silver from the tailings that lie at the bottom of the lake. The lake is now contaminated through arsenic resulting from the local mining operations.

Mining activity continues in the Temiskaming Area, although not in Cobalt at the present time. As technologies for refining ore improve there have been attempts to access more silver in Cobalt, however the costs to refine the material must be supported by a high price in the market. Currently, mining activity focused on raw materials for batteries, lithium and cobalt, is showing some promise in the area.

In 2002 the Cobalt Mining District was designated a national historic site of Canada because:

- it is a rare cultural landscape consisting of vestiges and buildings associated with the evolution of hard rock mining in Canada; and
- it reflects an important period of hard rock mining in Canada, between 1903 and the late 1920s, that established a more secure investment environment for mining speculation and created financial capital for large-scale Canadian mining development in the first half of the 20th century.

Source: Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Minutes November 2001; Commemorative Integrity Statement

Today the Town is a small community with a population of about 1200 people there is a small main street. Vacancy rates are high. New housing starts have been extremely limited and there is little employment directly within the Town itself. The following sections will provide a more detailed review of the social and economic factors that affect planning for the town today

3.0 Planning History

The current Official Plan for the Town was adopted by Council in 2009 and was intended to serve the Town until 2011. The Plan included a population projection of 1200 persons for 2009, about what it is today. The Plan was updated in 2006 to include mapping of mine hazards (OPA #1) to reflect more recent mapping of hazard areas from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

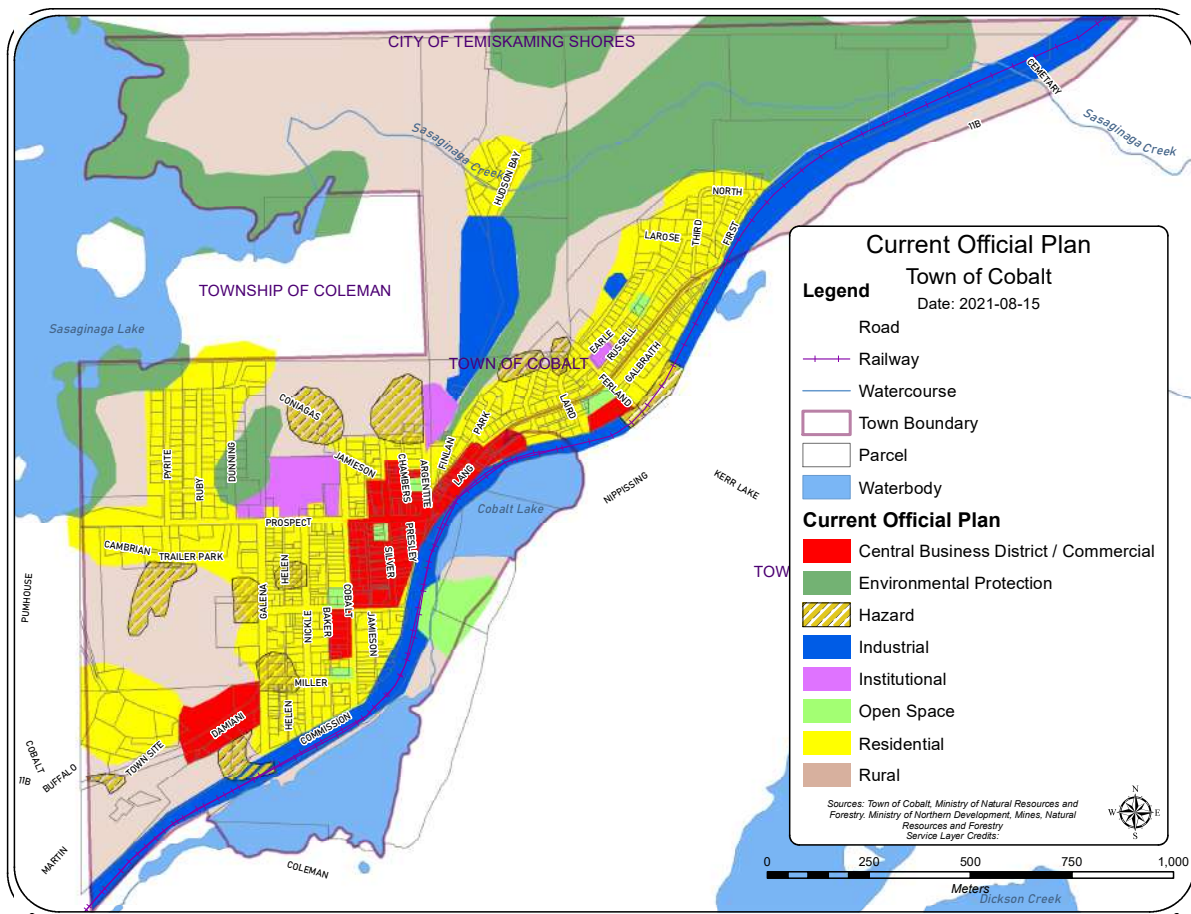


Figure 2: Current Official Plan Schedule A

While dated, the current Official Plan contains many policies that are relevant today including encouragement for infill and intensification, Community Improvement policies and Heritage Conservation policies. The policies include appropriate land division and servicing policies. Current designations include:

Residential
Institutional

Central Business District
Industrial

Open Space
Rural

Environmental Protection
Hazard

The document is not available in a digital format and the mapping has been overlaid onto Ontario Base Maps without parcel fabric.

The Town's Comprehensive Zoning By-law, By-law 2006-013 was enacted by Council in March 2006. It is a relatively standard by-law, typical for its era. The Zones include:

Residential (R1 – R4)	Railroad Industrial (M3)
General Institutional (I)	Disposal Industrial (M4)
Downtown Commercial (C1)	Open Space (OS)
Neighbourhood Commercial (C2)	Environmental Protection (EP)
General Industrial (M1)	Hazard (HZ)
Extractive Industrial (M2)	Rural (RU)

Like the Official Plan, the By-law is not currently available in a digital format. Mapping is overlaid on Ontario Base Maps with no parcel fabric. This makes the mapping very difficult to read and interpret. As part of this project new digital base mapping is being provided.

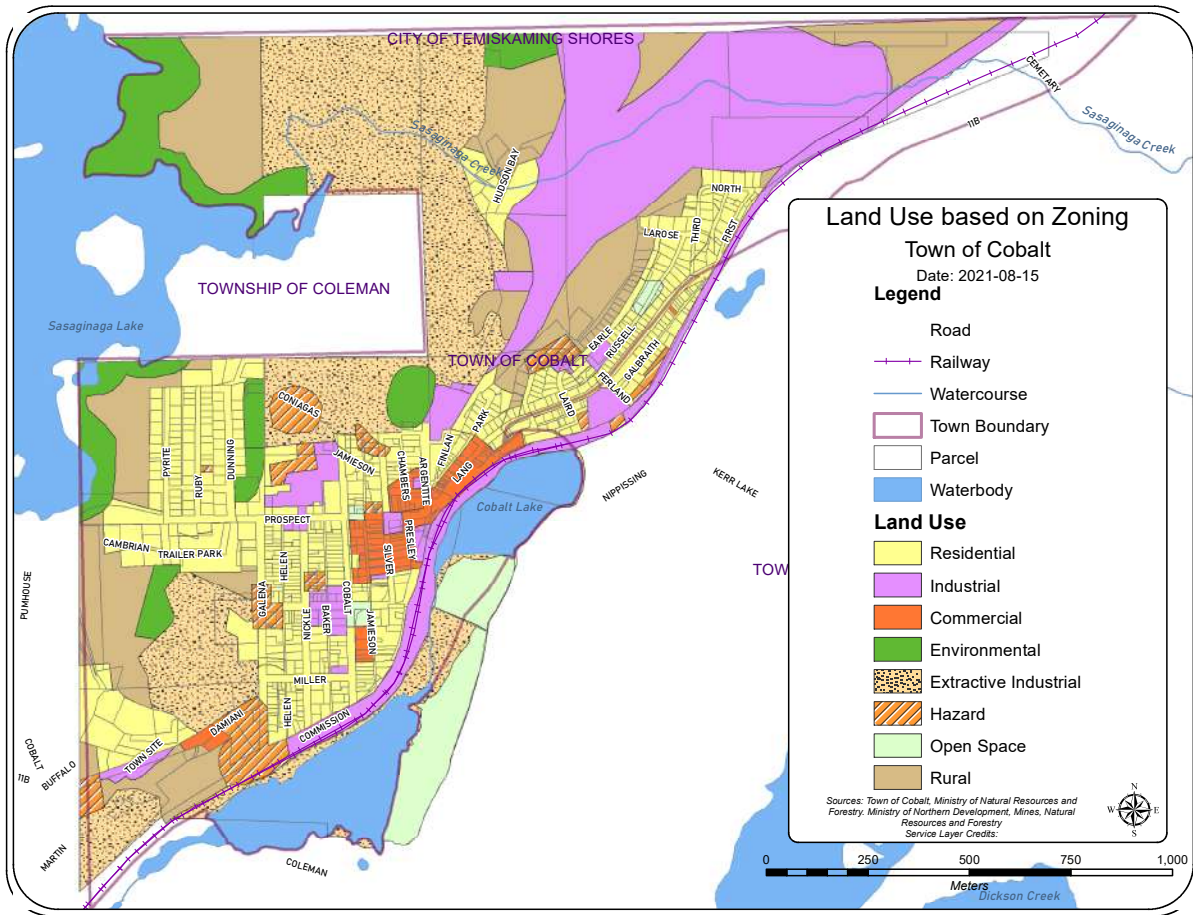


Figure 3 – Current Land Use and Zoning

Our recent work in the Town has also shown that the By-law is dated from the perspective of permissions for housing forms within the same zones. There is no need for four Residential Zones in a Town the size of Cobalt. The range of uses permitted in the commercial zones is also very limited – especially in the Downtown Commercial Zone where the vacancy rate is very high.

4.0 Population, Housing and Employment

Statistics Canada for 2011 and 2016 show that the population and development in Cobalt has remained static since their 2011 census was taken. The following is a summary of facts to consider in future planning for the Town:

- population - 1130
- occupied dwellings - 624
- household size - 2.1

- age of residents 50 plus - 50%
- average personal income - \$31,650
- average household income - \$56,550
- percent population classified as low income 50%
- immigration between 1981 and 1990 - 10 persons
- total immigrants within population - 25 persons
- identify as aboriginal 140 persons
- identify as visible minorities 30 persons
- housing stock (total 530) - 260 constructed before 1960 - 220 after 1980
- 10 new houses since 2011 (two new houses in last five years (both replacements)
- average value single detached dwelling \$116,320
- 42% of renters spend more than 30% of income on housing
- labor force in industry (total 470) - primary occupations construction (55), retail (90), healthcare (70), architectural/engineering (35)

5.0 Municipal Services and Infrastructure

Cobalt is a fully serviced urban settlement area. Figure 4 Illustrates the fully serviced urban areas of the Town.

The municipal sewage treatment system is a bio-engineered wetland that treats raw sewage effluent by exfiltrating the sewage through a constructed wetland before the effluent is discharged into the natural environment. Monthly reports provided by OCWA, who operate the system indicate that the wetland is achieving treatment levels equivalent to full mechanical sewage treatment systems.

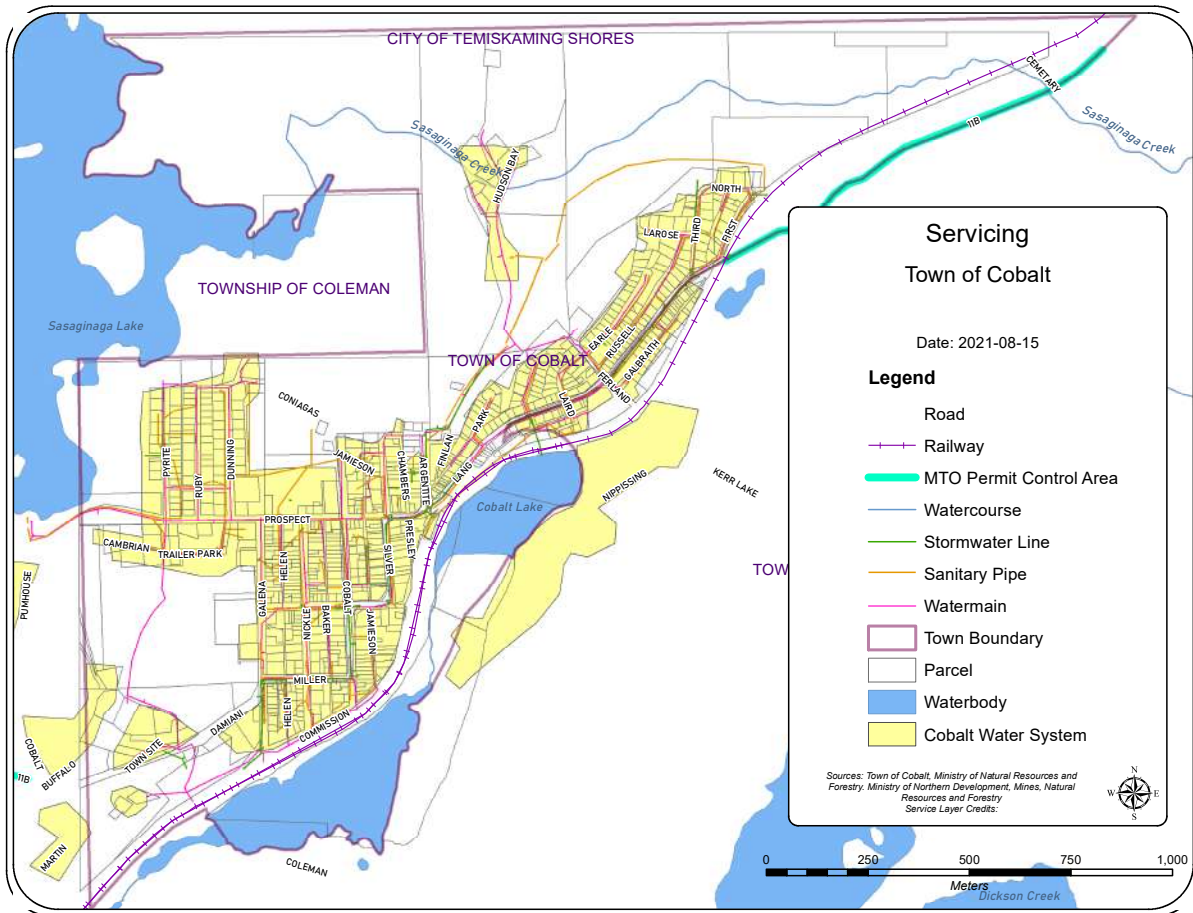


Figure 4 Servicing and Transportation

Municipal water is drawn from nearby Sasaginaga Lake in Coleman Township. The system's Permit to Take Water allows the municipality to withdraw a maximum volume of 3,974 cubic meters each day. A review of the raw water flow data indicates that the system never exceeded this allowable limit having a maximum volume of 1,681 m³. The Permit also allows a maximum flow rate of 2,760 L/minute. The system provides water to a portion of Coleman Township as well as Cobalt. As noted it is operating at less than one half its rated capacity.

In addition to administrative services, the Town also provides the following services:

- Fire Protection – volunteer, mutual aid with Coleman Township and Temiskaming Shores
- Policing – OPP
- Library
- Museums – the Town contributes to 3 museums

- Social Services and Housing – Temiskaming District Services Area Board
- Building and By-law – Temiskaming Municipal Services Association
- Solid Waste and Recycling – Temiskaming Shores Landfill site.

In 2019 and 2020 a total of nine building permits were issued in Cobalt with a total construction value of about \$80,000.

6.0 Municipal Finances

The following information is based on a review of the 2019 Municipal Financial Statements. The figures are not significantly different from the 2021 Financial Information Return files with the Province.

REVENUES

Total Revenue	- \$4.75 M
Main Sources of Revenue:	
Provincial Grants	- \$3M
Taxes	- \$570,000
Water and Sewage	- \$550,000
Policing	- \$370,000

EXPENDITURES

Total Expenditures	- \$3.1M
Main Expenditures:	
General Government	- \$611,000
Fire and Police	- \$507,000
Transportation (Roads)	- \$730,000
Sewage/Water/Waste	- \$770,000

The Town is typical of most small municipalities where over 80% of all expenditures go toward the four main services listed above. However, with taxes and municipal services fees accounting for only 25% of the revenues, the municipality is highly dependent on grants, primarily from the Provincial government.

7.0 Consultation with the Province

The Official Plan for the Town of Cobalt must be approved by the Minister of Municipal and Housing. That Ministry acts as a 'one window' agency through which other Provincial Agencies are consulted in the planning process. At the initiation of this project the

Ministry of Municipal Affairs arranged a pre-consultation meeting with various branches of provincial agencies that have an interest in planning for the Town. A number of agencies provided supporting documentation. Including mapping. The pre-consultation meeting occurred virtually on July 13, 2021. The following is a summary of the Provincial input at the early stages of the project. Rather than repeat all the Information that has been provided, correspondence from the province is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Provincial Policies are set out in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and the Official Plan for the Town of Cobalt must be consistent with those policies. In the approval process for the Official Plan, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and housing must be satisfied that the relevant policies of the PPS have been considered and are reflected in the Plan. To assist in this process, relevant sections of the PPS have been identified in Appendix 2. This appendix will be used as a checklist to confirm that the PPS has been implemented at the local level.

Consideration should also be given to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (2011). This Plan is structured around six theme areas: economy, people, communities, infrastructure, environment and Aboriginal peoples. While this Plan is focused on strategic actions that the Province will take with respect to, the policies in the Cobalt Official Plan should be consistent with the strategies outlined in the Provincial Plan.

Ministry of Transportation (MTO).

The Ministry noted that portions of Highway 11B through the Town remain under MTO jurisdiction as a Category 4B highway (See Figure 4). As such permit from the Ministry are required for changes in land use and entrances within 45 m of the road and 180 metres of any intersection with the highway. MTO also controls signs within 400 m of the highway.

Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)

The Ministry has provided detailed comments to the Town dated July 28, 2021 and attached as Appendix 3. MECP's interests in planning in Cobalt include:

- servicing (including potable water, sewage disposal, stormwater management, and solid waste management);
- water quality and quantity (including surface drainage);
- air quality and climate change;

- land use compatibility (including noise, vibration, dust, and odour);
- contaminated sites;
- provincial parks and conservation reserves; and
- species at risk considerations.

Provincial Policies related to these matters are outlined in the PPS Checklist attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

One of the key considerations related to these interests are contaminated lands. Historic mine tailings within the Town are considered contaminated and render the lands undevelopable unless it can be demonstrated that the site can be remediated to Provincial Standards and a Record of Site Condition has been provided to the Ministry by a qualified engineer. Mapping of contaminated lands is included in Figure 3 and should be brought forward into the Official Plan.

Another factor of consideration in Cobalt is the effect of the rail line running through the Town. This raises issues of noise and vibration that need to be considered when planning for development in proximity to the rail line.

Northern Development and Mines Natural Resources and Forestry

This Ministry is a recent combination of the former Energy, Northern Development and Mines and Natural Resources and Forestry Ministries.

The former ENDM interests include ensuring the protection of mineral resources for future extraction. The Ministry notes that the entire Town is located in an area of High Mineral Resource Potential. These areas would be precluded from development if they were rural and undeveloped. However, the Ministry acknowledges that in an urban environment that protection is not possible.

Key information provided by ENDM includes mapping of former mine sites and mine hazard areas. These areas are considered hazards and those areas and appropriate buffers should not be developed without detailed engineering investigations within 1000 m of the sites. This puts serious constraints on development in Cobalt. Figure 5 illustrated former mine sites in the area based on Provincial mapping ENDM is currently working with the Town to provide detailed digital mapping of these sites. A number of the sites were identified through Official Plan Amendment #1.

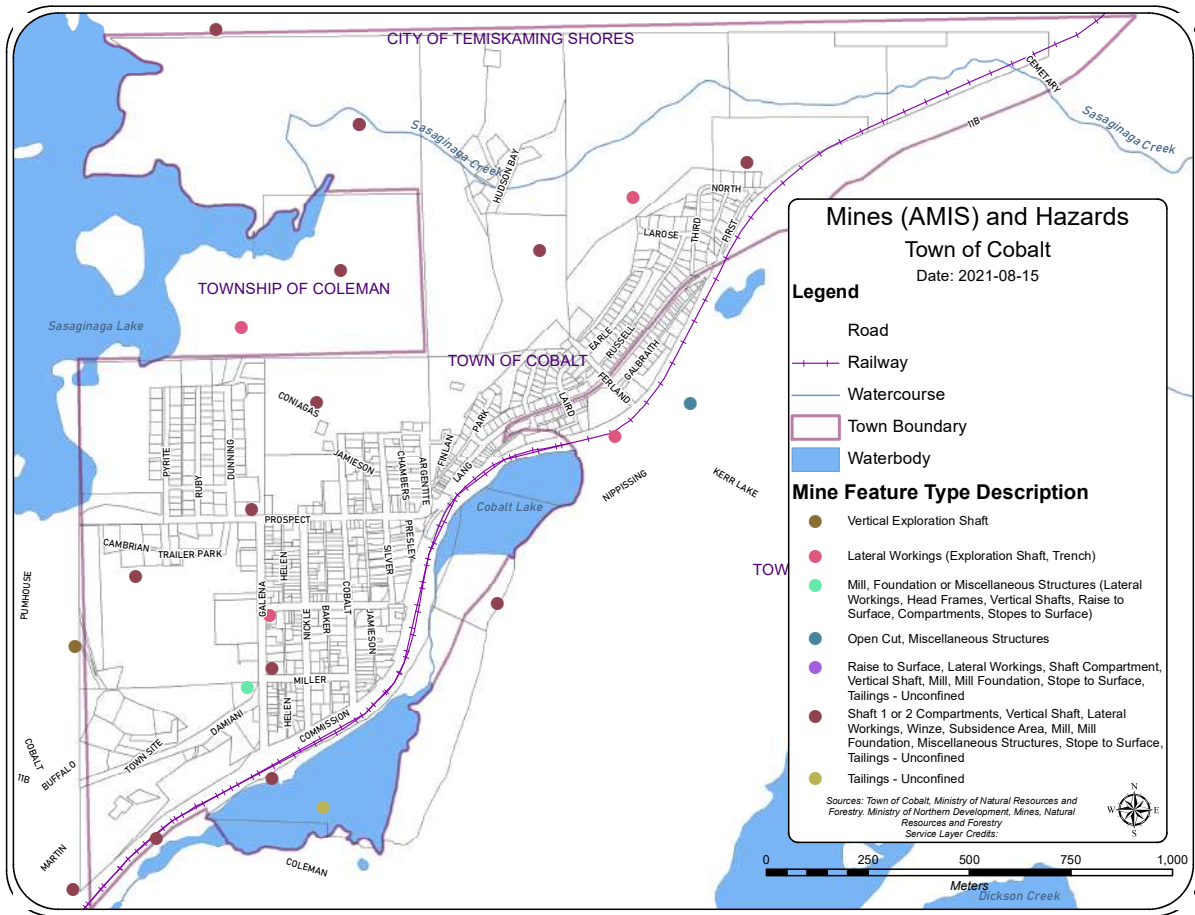


Figure 5 – Mine Locations

The former MNR branch of the Ministry interests include hazard lands (Flooding and Fire) natural features, including wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat and species at risk. Figure 6 illustrates provincial mapping of wildland fire risk in the Cobalt Area. Policies in the Official Plan need to recognize this risk and implement policies to prevent and mitigate that risk wherever possible. No flood risk issues have been identified.

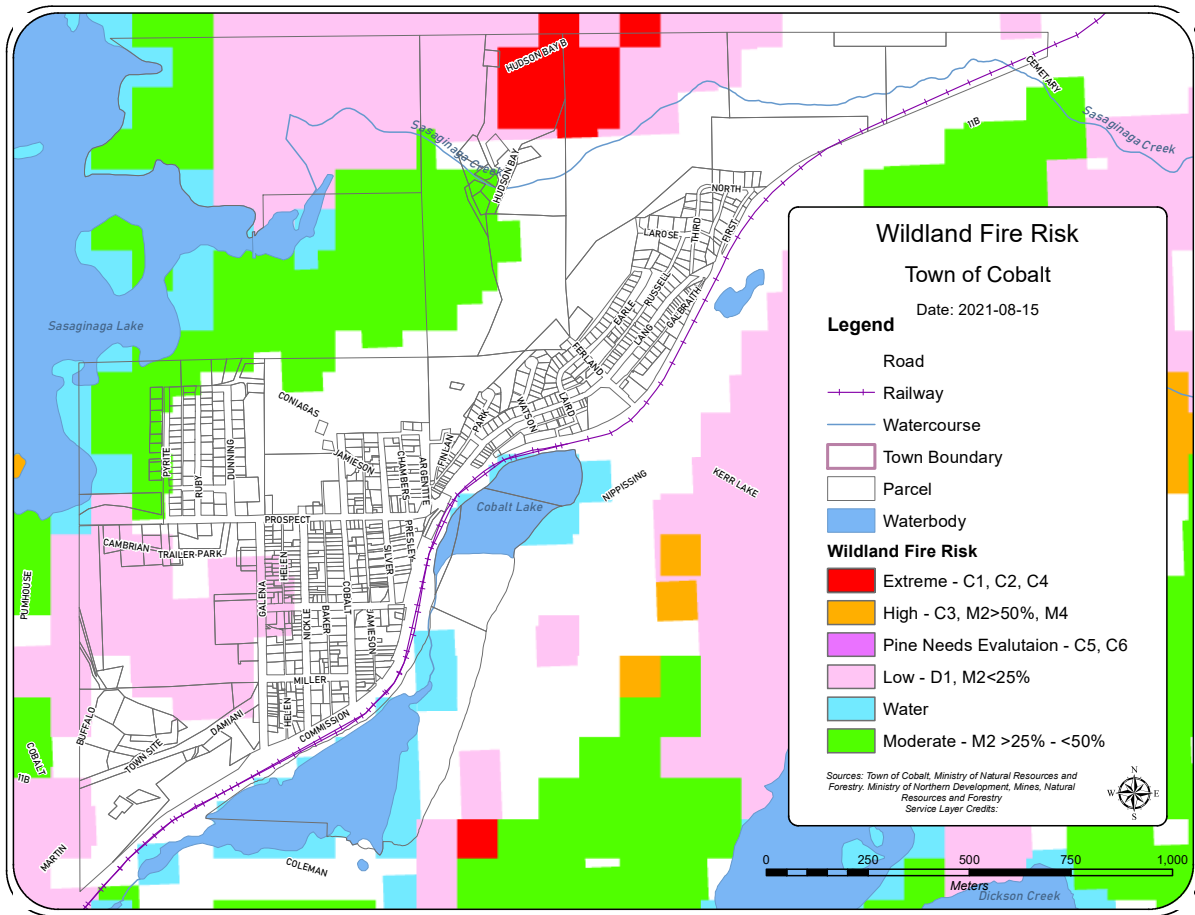


Figure 6 Wildland Fire Risk

Provincial mapping does not indicate any known habitat of rare, endangered or species at risk. There have been sighting of Blanding turtle in the area and this potential should be recognized. Otherwise, there has been no identification of any key natural heritage features within the Town. Figure 7 Identifies know features, including local wetlands.

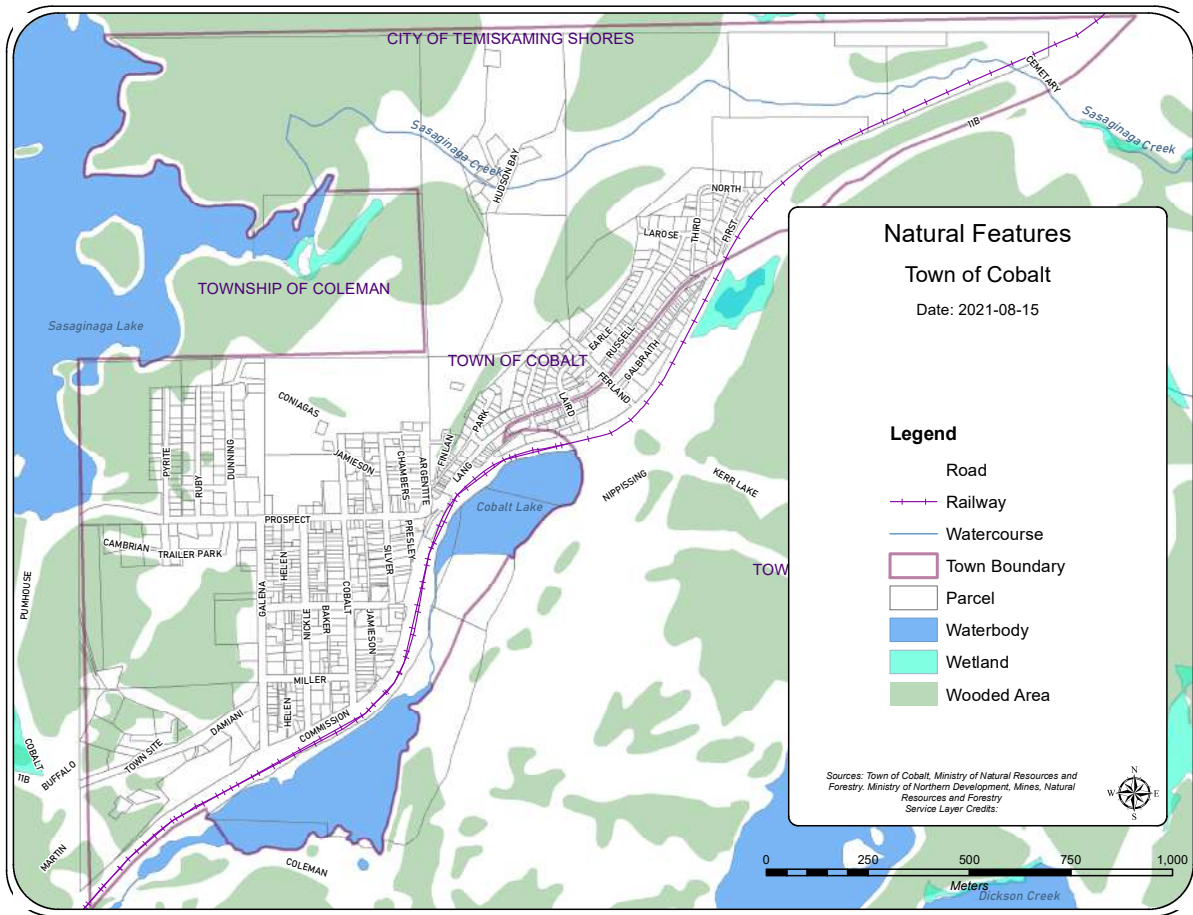


Figure 7 Natural Heritage Features

Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture

This Ministry has two principal interests in Cobalt, tourism and heritage. The Ministry has resources available to assist the Town in seeking to improve its tourism resources and marketing and the Town has utilized these resources in the past. Branding the Town as a significant tourism attraction is on-going.

The Culture Branch of the Ministry is responsible for the identification and conservation of culturally significant buildings, properties, and sites in the Town. Currently there are 25 designated sites of cultural significance. These sites are identified on Figure 8. Provincial policies encourage the preservation of existing cultural resources. This approach works well in conjunction with the promotion and branding of the Town as a tourist destination but adds another constraint to developing some sites.

The Ministry also has data on archaeological site however this information is not made available to the public. It is suspected that, had there been sites of significance in the Town, they would likely have been removed or damaged as mining exploration occurred in the early 1900's.

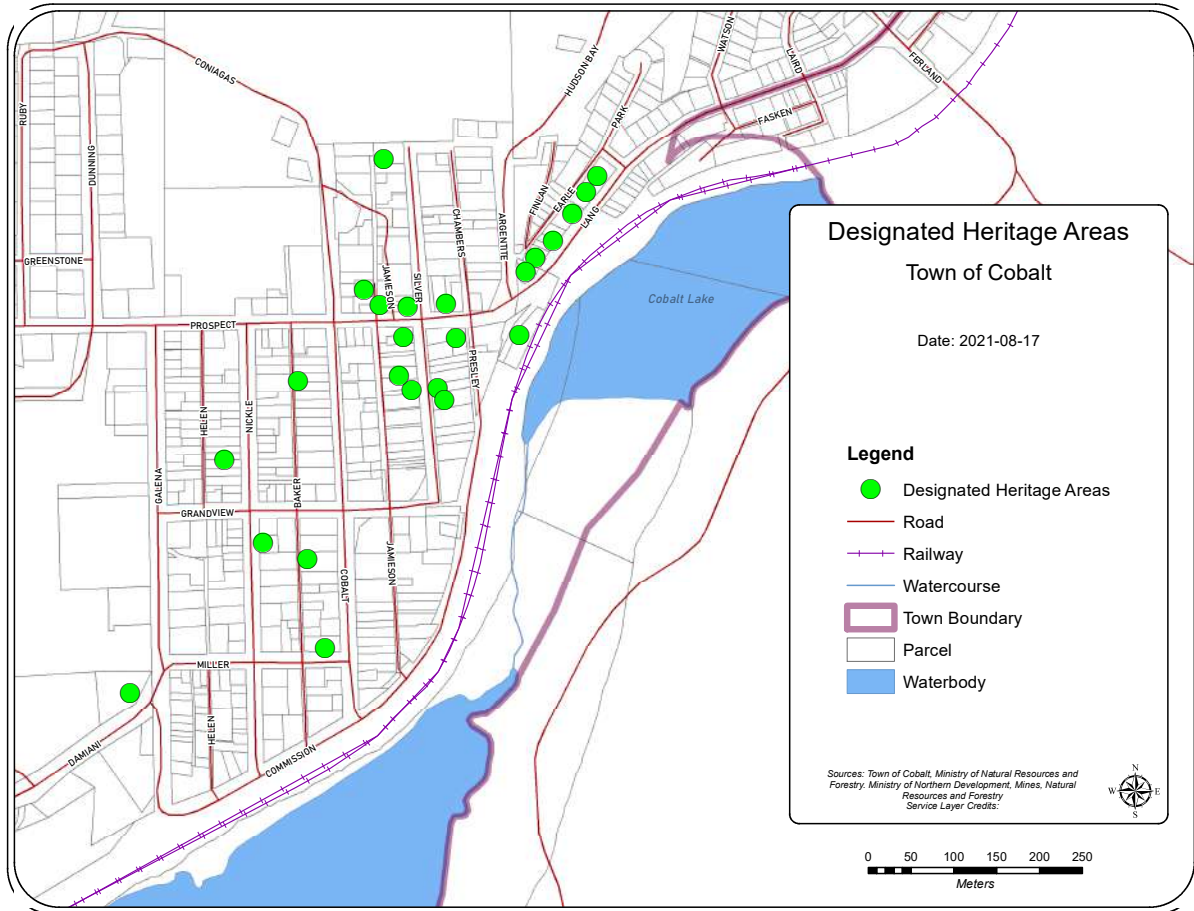


Figure 8 – Lands and Buildings of Cultural Significance

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

As noted, this Ministry acts as the ‘one-window’ agency for representing provincial interest in planning. The Ministry ensures that Provincial Policy, in this case the PPS and Northern Ontario Growth Plan, are reflected in the local Official Plan in a manner that is consistent with the provincial policy. The Ministry is also responsible for housing policy and programs in the Province.

As noted, Appendix 2 provides a checklist of applicable policies from the PPS that need to be considered as part of this Official Plan. The Ministry notes that key elements of the policy include developing complete communities with adequate opportunities for housing, employment, recreation and open space. Communities need to be accessible for persons with all levels of abilities and enable the development a range of housing that is affordable and makes efficient use of municipal infrastructure and services.

The Housing Branch of the Ministry identifies the need to provide a supply of and available for housing and a need to provide for all forms of housing including group homes, housing for the homeless and affordable rental housing all within the residential areas of the Town. Bill 108 now enables the establishment of both a secondary unit within a residential building and an accessory unit in a separate building. These opportunities need to be included in the Official Plan and eventually the Zoning By-law.

The Town recognizes the need to provide for housing of an aging population. It is noted that the Town is currently considering ways to address housing condition and the establishment of poorly maintained rooming houses within the community.

8.0 Consultation with First Nations

The Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System for Ontario identifies two aboriginal communities that may have an interest if planning for the Town of Cobalt. They are:

- Temagami First Nations (Bear Island)
- Timiskaming First Nations (Quebec)

Through this process the Town will reach out to the communities to discuss aboriginal interests and future consultation.

9.0 Public Consultation

Exploratory Interviews

At the initiation of the project the consultant interviewed a few individuals in the Town to begin to understand the planning issues and opportunities facing Cobalt in 2021. These interviews assist in the early discovery stages of the study and assist in scoping the key local issues that need to be investigated and addressed as part of the Official Plan. Common themes of these interviews included:

- There are opportunities for low cost housing
- Increased working at home due to COVID demonstrates that with good internet people can live anywhere
- Expect continued demand for housing from persons moving out of Southern Ontario
- Opportunities for retirement living and young families
- Few opportunities to develop, given hazard lands and Town being out of land (surrounded by Coleman Township).
- Mining prospects in the area but none left in Town itself
- Need more than just tourism based on mining history to support the Town
- Opportunities for cultural hub
- Business' need assistance to survive and improve – commercial taxes are high
- Need higher quality housing
- What goods and services are not available in Town, are available nearby.

Public Meetings

At the time of completion of this report, two public consultation sessions have been held they were:

November 4, 2021 - Introductory Open House (live and virtual)

November 23, 2021 - Special Meeting of Council under Section 21 of the Planning Act

Six members of the public attended the Open House session live, three others joined virtually. Follow-up conversations were held with a number of attendees. One person made a presentation to Council at the Section 21 meeting. Issues discussed at those meetings included:

- recognize the significant heritage and cultural attributes of the community
- encourage new investment by encouraging new business' in the arts and creative industries
- provide new housing opportunities in underutilized buildings – especially former schools
- ensuring property standards are maintained to provide decent housing
- encourage tourism through events linked to heritage, culture and the arts
- promote low cost housing and ability to work remotely
- encourage young families to move to the community
- need to provide accommodation to support tourism

- develop Cobalt as a destination for specialized cottage industries
- many options for re-development of the train station
- consider establishing a land trust to enable affordable housing to be developed

One written submission was received from David Brydges. It is attached as Appendix 3

**Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks**

**Ministère de l'Environnement,
de la Protection de la nature
et des Parcs**

Environmental Assessment
Branch

Direction des évaluations
environnementales

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July 28th, 2021

Caitlin Carmichael, Planner
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Municipal Services Office – N (Sudbury)
159 Cedar Street, Suite 401 | Sudbury ON P3E 6A5
Tel: 705-564-6845
E-Mail: caitlin.carmichael@ontario.ca

Dear Caitlin:

**RE: Official Plan Review for the Town of Cobalt
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Areas of Interest Input**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the area wide OP review for the Town of Cobalt. Further to the July 13th, 2021 pre-consultation meeting with yourself; James Dymont, Municipal Planning Consultant; Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI) Joseph Harvey; Ministry of Northern Development Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) Pierre Bousquet and Houda El Sidawi; Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Carla Riche; Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) Steve May and myself from MECP. I am pleased to provide you with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) areas of interest for the area wide Official Plan. I trust that you will share these comments with the Municipality and their consultant to assist in writing their updated Official Plan.

MECP Areas of Interest in Official Planning

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) is responsible for ensuring clean and safe air, land, and water in Ontario; the care and management of Ontario's provincial

parks and conservation reserves; and protection of Species at Risk in the province. These responsibilities contribute to ensuring healthy communities, ecological protection, varied recreational opportunities, and sustainable development for present and future generations of Ontarians. In providing input to, and reviewing official plans, it is the ministry's intent to protect and improve the quality of the environment; support environmental sustainability, human health and safety; and maintain ecosystem health and biodiversity while encouraging Ontario's economic prosperity.

The ministry's interests in land use planning are contained in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). These include:

- servicing (including potable water, sewage disposal, stormwater management, and solid waste management);
- water quality and quantity (including surface drainage);
- air quality and climate change;
- land use compatibility (including noise, vibration, dust, and odour);
- contaminated sites;
- provincial parks and conservation reserves; and
- species at risk considerations.

Each of these topics is explained further below by providing key excerpts from the 2020 PPS along with related commentary and points to consider for the OP update.

MECP has developed guidelines to assist in achieving the policy outcomes of the PPS and these are included under the heading of "Additional resources". Links to the relevant documents are listed for each topic area.

I might also remind you of the D-Series Land Use Compatibility Guidelines that have been updated were available for comment on the ERO until July 3, 2021. Messaging to municipalities should be mindful of these. I have the following to offer and please feel free to provide this to the Town of Cobalt.

Future MECP Guideline Updates – Land Use Compatibility Guideline

- The MECP is proposing a Land Use Compatibility Guideline (LUCG) to update and replace several existing D-series guidelines, including D-6, that planning authorities use when making land use planning decisions.
 - This proposal is currently posted on the Environmental Registry for comment until July 3, 2021 at: [Land Use Compatibility Guideline | Environmental Registry of Ontario](#)
- The proposed LUCG supports and provides clearer/updated direction on how to implement the policies of PPS Section 1.2.6, which are already in effect and land use planning decisions must be consistent with.

- While the Town's new OP is to be in accordance with the current guidelines in place (i.e. existing D-series), it is important to note that the proposed updates in the LUCG if approved, will have an impact on future planning decisions. As such, it is within the best interest of the approval authority to also have consideration for how the proposed LUCG may impact or apply to land use planning in this area. For example:
 - The LUCG now proposes 5 classes of major facilities with increased Areas of Influence (AOI) and Minimum Separation Distances (MSD) as compared to the existing 3 classes in D-6. These are based on an analysis of 10 years of MECP complaint data.
 - Under the LUCG, MSDs for the proposed 5 classes of major facilities range from 100 m to 500 m while AOIs from 400 m to 2,000 m.
 - The LUCG provides clear direction that compatibility studies addressing noise, dust and odour are required for proposals within the AOI of a major facility.
 - Within the MSD, adverse effects and compatibility issues are highly likely to occur. Planning authorities should not allow sensitive land uses within the MSD. Where a sensitive land use is proposed within the MSD, a demonstration of need, and discussion of alternative locations, is required in accordance with PPS Policy 1.2.6.2.
 - In infill and intensification scenarios, compatibility still needs to be addressed and key direction and recommendations of the LUCG should be followed, which include consideration of cumulative impacts of development. For example, considering whether there are cumulative effects from multiple major facilities on the proposed land use.
- To the fullest extent possible, land use compatibility issues should be reconciled at the Official Plan and zoning stage, and for this reason it is important to consider potential future implications of updates to MECP's guidelines.

Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mira Majerovich
Regional Environmental Planner – Northern Region
Program Review Unit, Environmental Assessment Branch MECP

c: Lauri Ste Jacques, Senior Environmental Officer North Bay Area Office, DWECD, MECP
File No.: EP 03 OP Town of Cobalt Areas of Interest Letter 2021

Appropriate Servicing of Growth and Settlement (PPS Sections 1.1, 1.2, and 1.7)

1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns

1.1.1 Healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:

- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;
- e) promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, *transit-supportive* development, *intensification* and *infrastructure* planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
- g) ensuring that necessary *infrastructure*, and *public service facilities* are or will be available to meet current and projected needs;
- h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity;
- j) preparing for the regional and local impacts of a changing climate.

1.1.3 Settlement Areas

1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within *settlement areas* shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- a) efficiently use land and resources;
- b) are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion;
- c) minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency;
- d) prepare for the *impacts of a changing climate*.

1.1.4 Rural Areas in Municipalities

1.1.4.1 Healthy, integrated and viable *rural areas* should be supported by:

- e) using *rural infrastructure* and *public service facilities* efficiently.

1.1.5 Rural Lands in Municipalities

1.1.5.4 Development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted.

1.1.5.5 Development shall be appropriate to the *infrastructure* which is planned or available, and avoid the need for the unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion of this *infrastructure*.

Coordination

1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards including:

- d) *infrastructure, multimodal transportation systems, public service facilities and waste management systems*;

1.7 Long-Term Economic Prosperity

1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

- c) optimizing the long-term availability and use of land, resources, *infrastructure*, and *public service facilities*;

Sewer, Water, and Stormwater Servicing (PPS Section 1.6)

1.6 Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities

1.6.1 *Infrastructure* and *public service facilities* shall be provided in an efficient manner that prepares for the impacts of a changing climate while accommodating projected needs.

Planning for *infrastructure*, and *public service facilities* shall be coordinated and integrated with land use planning and growth management so that they are:

- a) financially viable over their life cycle, which may be demonstrated through asset management planning;
- b) available to meet current and projected needs.

1.6.2 Planning authorities should promote *green infrastructure* to complement *infrastructure*.

1.6.3 Before consideration is given to developing new infrastructure and public service facilities:

- a) the use of existing *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* should be optimized;

1.6.6 Sewage, Water and Stormwater

1.6.6.1 Planning for *sewage and water services* shall:

- a) accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing:
 - 1. *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services*; and
 - 2. *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services*, where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are not available or feasible;
- b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
 - 1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;
 - 2. prepares for the impacts of a changing climate;
 - 3. is feasible and financially viable over their lifecycle; and
 - 4. protects human health and safety, and the natural environment;
- c) promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- d) integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
- e) be in accordance with the servicing hierarchy outlined through policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5. For clarity, where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are not available, planned or feasible, planning authorities have the ability to consider the use of the servicing options set out through policies 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4, and 1.6.6.5 provided that the specified conditions are met.

1.6.6.2

Municipal sewage services and *municipal water services* are the preferred form of servicing for *settlement areas* to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety. Within settlement areas with existing *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services*, *intensification* and *redevelopment* shall be promoted, wherever

feasible to optimize the use of the services.

1.6.6.3

Where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are not available, planned or feasible, *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services* are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot *development* to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety.

1.6.6.4

Where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* or *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services* are not available, planned or feasible, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no *negative impacts*. In *settlement areas*, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* may be used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development.

At the time of the official plan review or update, planning authorities should assess the long-term impacts of *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* on the environmental health and the character of rural *settlement areas*. Where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality should work with lower-tier municipalities at the time of the official plan review or update to assess the long-term impacts of *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* on the environmental health and the desired character of rural *settlement areas* and the feasibility of other forms of servicing set out in policies 1.6.6.2 and 1.6.6.3.

1.6.6.5

Partial services shall only be permitted in the following circumstances:

- a. where they are necessary to address failed *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* in existing development; or
- b. within *settlement areas*, to allow for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development on *partial services* provided that: site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no *negative impacts*.

Where *partial services* have been provided to address failed services in accordance with subsection (a), infilling on existing lots of record in *rural areas* in municipalities may be permitted where this would represent a logical and financially viable connection to the existing *partial service* and provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no *negative impacts*. In accordance with subsection (a), the extension of *partial services* into rural areas is only permitted to address failed *individual on-site sewage* and *individual on-site water services* for existing development

1.6.6.6

Subject to the hierarchy of services provided in policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5, planning authorities may allow lot creation only if there is confirmation of sufficient *reserve sewage system capacity* and *reserve water system capacity* within *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* or *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water*

services. The determination of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity shall include treatment capacity for hauled sewage from private communal sewage services and individual on-site sewage services.

1.6.6.7

Planning for stormwater management shall:

- a) be integrated with planning for *sewage and water services* and ensure that systems are optimized, feasible and financially viable over the long term;
- b) minimize, or, where possible, prevent increases in contaminant loads;
- c) minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through the effective management of stormwater, including the use of green infrastructure;
- d) mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment;
- e) maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces; and
- f) promote stormwater management best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency, and low impact development.

Hierarchy of Servicing Preferences, Confirmation of Capacity (PPS 1.6.6.2 – 1.6.6.6)

Development should be serviced by full municipal sewage and water services wherever feasible. Where full municipal sewage and water services are not provided, and where site conditions permit, multi-lot/unit development should be serviced by communal sewage and water services. Where municipal services or communal services are not provided, individual on-site sewage and water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services, and provided that there would be no degradation to the quality and quantity of water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their related hydrologic functions, due to single, multiple or successive development.

Development on partial services will only be permitted where they are necessary to address failed individual on-site sewage and water services in existing development, or within settlement areas to allow for infilling and rounding out of existing development on partial services, provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts.

Lot creation may be permitted only if there is confirmation of sufficient reserve sewage and water system capacity within either municipal sewage and water services or within communal sewage and water services. Where development is to be serviced by individual on-site sewage and water services, or by communal sewage services, the determination of sufficient reserve sewage system capacity includes treatment capacity for hauled sewage from these systems.

Policies of the Official Plan should reflect the servicing hierarchy as outlined in the PPS, identify when servicing options statements are required, require confirmation of sufficient available reserve capacity prior to approving new lots, and address lot sizes for development to be supported by individual private services.

The policies should require all new lots be of adequate size and have suitable conditions to be able to support the proposed development on the services proposed. There should be information submitted with the Official Plan program to detail general site conditions, particularly the hydrogeological conditions that are present in the rural areas of the municipality to justify any minimum lot sizes. In absence of this information, MECP recommends that minimum lot sizes be large enough to accommodate adequate separation between drilled wells and individual septic systems. MECP Guideline D-5-4 states:

“For developments where the lot size for each private residence within the development is one hectare or larger, the risk that the boundary limits imposed by these guidelines may be exceeded by individual systems is considered acceptable in most cases. Developments consisting of lots which average 1 hectare (with no lot being smaller than 0.8 ha), may not require a detailed hydrogeological assessment, provided that it can be demonstrated that the area is not hydrogeologically sensitive. In such circumstances, it is the responsibility of the proponent to obtain a professional analysis from a qualified consultant that the area is not hydrogeologically sensitive.

It is assumed that attenuated processes within a one hectare lot will be sufficient to reduce the nitrate-nitrogen to an acceptable concentration in groundwater below adjacent properties. It should be noted that sufficient attenuated processes may not be present in hydrogeologically sensitive environments, or where there is little water surplus available.”

Additionally, municipalities are encouraged to prepare a Multi-Year Servicing Plan to support their Official Plans. Multi-Year Servicing Plans should include recommendations for the resolution of existing problems; consideration of efficiency measures; projections of growth; determination of implications of existing infrastructure and available uncommitted capacity; identification of constraints to development and the need for new infrastructure; adoption of a servicing hierarchy; and conclusions. These plans should also consider whether development should take place outside the serviced area and if so, servicing options can be evaluated and areas investigated, classified and targeted for development. With this information, development proposals can be comprehensively reviewed with respect to servicing.

The ministry is concerned with surface and groundwater quality and quantity. Stormwater has the potential to affect these parameters. Where there are applications for development, particularly for larger commercial, industrial, institutional, or multi-lot/unit residential developments, or developments close to waterfront areas, it should be a policy requirement that a stormwater management and a construction-mitigation plan be prepared.

Additional Resources:

Sewage and Water

- D-5 Series Guidelines available at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/environmental-land-use-planning-guides>
 - D-5 Planning for Sewage and Water Services
 - D-5-1 Calculating and Reporting Uncommitted Reserve Capacity at Sewage and Water Treatment Plant
 - D-5-2 Application of Municipal Responsibility for Communal Water and Sewage Services
 - D-5-3 Servicing Options Statements
 - D-5-4 Technical Guideline for Individual On-site Sewage Systems: Water Quality Impact Risk Assessment
 - D-5-5 Technical Guideline for Private Wells: Water Supply Assessment

Stormwater

- Understanding Stormwater Management: An Introduction to Stormwater Management Planning and Design available at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/understanding-stormwater-management-introduction-stormwater-management>
- Stormwater Management Planning And Design Manual 2003 available at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/stormwater-management-planning-and-design-manual>
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Handbook 2001 available at <https://archive.org/details/std01076383.ome>
- Stormwater Best Management Practices for Camp Owners in Northeastern Ontario (attached)

Waste Management Systems (PPS Section 1.6)

1.6.10 Waste Management

1.6.10.1 *Waste management systems* need to be provided that are of an appropriate size and type to accommodate present and future requirements, and facilitate, encourage and promote reduction, reuse and recycling objectives.

Waste management systems shall be located and designed in accordance with provincial legislation and standards.

Municipalities should ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the municipal landfill site(s) to accommodate the waste generated by existing and future anticipated development over the time horizon of the Official Plan. Policies in the plan should specifically address this point, indicating how the need for additional landfill capacity will be addressed if there is insufficient capacity available. Should additional landfill capacity be required, the project will need to be planned under the applicable environmental assessment process and will need to obtain approval under the *Environmental Protection Act*.

Official Plan policies should also identify how the municipality will facilitate, encourage, and promote reduction, reuse, and recycling objectives, in accordance with Ontario's Waste Free Act.

The ministry requires that any land used currently or previously for the purposes of waste disposal be designated in the Official Plan such that development is not allowed on the site in accordance with the requirements of Section 46 of the *Environmental Protection Act*, and to restrict development on adjacent lands unless it is demonstrated that there would be no adverse effect on the proposed use or the landfill. The purpose of this provision is to reduce adverse impacts to the health and safety of individuals and the environment.

Policies of the plan should require the completion of technical studies for all proposed new or expanded developments within 500 meters of the fill areas of open or closed landfill sites, to demonstrate that there will be no negative impacts (such as negative effects on the water supply, or leachate, methane gas, rodents, vermin, or other related impacts).

Additional Resources:

- D-4 Series Guidelines available at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/environmental-land-use-planning-guides>
 - D-4 Land Use On or Near Landfills and Dumps <http://www.ontario.ca/document/d-4-land-use-or-near-landfills-and-dumps>
 - D-4-1 Assessing Methane Hazards from Landfill Sites <http://www.ontario.ca/document/d-4-1-assessing-methane-hazards-landfill-sites>
 - D-4-2 Environmental Warnings/Restrictions <http://www.ontario.ca/document/d-4-2-environmental-warningsrestrictions>
 - D-4-3 Registration of Certificates and Provisional Certificates (see: <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/environmental-land-use-planning-guides>)
- Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Waste Management Projects <https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/guide-environmental-assessment-requirements-waste-management-projects>
- Landfill Standards: A Guideline On The Regulatory And Approval Requirements For New Or Expanding Landfilling Sites <https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/landfill-standards-guideline-regulatory-and-approval-requirements-new-or>
- Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/strategy-waste-free-ontario-building-circular-economy>

Water Quality and Quantity (PPS Sections 2.2, 2.1.8, and 1.2)

2.2 Water

2.2.1 Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the *quality and quantity of water* by:

- a) using the *watershed* as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development;
- b) minimizing potential *negative impacts*, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-*watershed* impacts;
- c) evaluating and preparing for the *impacts of a changing climate* to water resource at the watershed level;
- d) identifying water resource systems consisting of *ground water features, hydrologic functions* and *natural heritage features and areas and surface water features* including shoreline areas, which are necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the *watershed*;
- e) maintaining linkages and related functions among *ground water features, hydrologic functions* and *natural heritage features and areas and surface water features* including shoreline areas;
- f) implementing necessary restrictions on *development* and *site alteration* to:
 - 1. protect all municipal drinking water supplies and *designated vulnerable areas*; and
 - 2. protect, improve or restore *vulnerable* surface and ground water, *sensitive surface water features* and *sensitive ground water features*, and their *hydrologic functions*;
- g) planning for efficient and sustainable use of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality; and
- h) ensuring consideration of environmental lake capacity, where applicable; and
- i) stormwater management practices minimize stormwater volumes and contaminant loads, and maintain or increase the extent of vegetative and pervious surfaces.

2.2.2 *Development* and *site alteration* shall be restricted in or near *sensitive surface water features* and *sensitive ground water features* such that these features and their related *hydrologic functions* will be protected, improved or restored.

Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to protect, improve or restore *sensitive surface water features, sensitive ground water features, and their hydrologic functions*.

Shoreline Development (PPS Section 1.2.1, and 2.1.8)

1.2 Coordination

1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and within other orders of government, agencies and boards including:

- c) managing natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral, and cultural heritage and archaeological resources;
- e) ecosystem, shoreline, watershed, and Great Lakes related issues;

2.1 Natural Heritage

2.1.8 (for protection of fish habitat)

Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas identified in policies 2.1.4, 2.1.5 and 2.1.6 unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.

The ministry recommends that development along shorelines protect, improve or restore the water quality by adhering to best management practices, such as minimum 30 m setbacks, larger lot sizes, vegetated buffers, reducing lot grading, and using stormwater management techniques such as grassed swales/vegetated filter strips and other measures to control runoff. MECP also recommends that municipalities participate in any septic re-inspection programs that may be available to them.

This **Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook** was developed to provide guidance to municipalities and other stakeholders responsible for the management of development along the shorelines of Ontario's inland lakes within the Precambrian Shield. It represents the Province's approach to achieving the policy outcomes of section 2.2 of the PPS. The policies of the Official Plan should require the application of the Handbook for shoreline development.

Where official plan policies provide for shoreline development supported by individual on-site sewage and water services, the plan should include policies requiring the completion of a Lakeshore Capacity Assessment prior to lot creation or further development where lake capacity represents a potential concern. Where inland lakes take in lands in two or more adjacent municipalities, neighbouring municipalities should work together to coordinate policies for shared lakes and watersheds and to allocate remaining capacities of those lakes.

In order to gain a better understanding of the status of those lakes that support existing shoreline development, residents should be encouraged to participate in the **Lake Partner Program**. The information collected through the Program allows the early detection of changes in the nutrient status and/or the water clarity of lakes due to the impacts of shoreline development, climate change and other stresses.

Source Water Protection

The Official Plan should recognize the importance of protecting the municipal water supply and implement any aspect of the local Source Protection Plan (SPP) that impacts the municipality. Source water protection vulnerable areas should be identified. Consultation with the appropriate Conservation Authority/Source Protection Authority (CA/SPA) to discuss potential considerations and policies in the SPP that apply to the Official Plan is recommended.

Additional Resources:

- Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook, 2010 <https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/lakeshore-capacity-assessment-handbook-protecting-water-quality-inland-lakes>
- Policies Guidelines Provincial Water Quality Objectives http://agrienvarchive.ca/download/water_qual_object94.pdf
- Lake Partner Program <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/lake-partner-program>
- See earlier Resource listing for Sewage, Water and Stormwater Servicing

Air Quality and Climate Change (PPS Sections 1.1, 1.7, and 1.8)

1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns

1.1.1 Healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:

- h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity.

1.1.3 Settlement Areas

1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within *settlement areas* shall be based on:

densities and a mix of land uses which:

- c) minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change and promote energy efficiency.

1.7 Long-Term Economic Prosperity

1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

- k) minimizing negative impacts from a changing climate and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature.

1.8 ENERGY CONSERVATION, AIR QUALITY and CLIMATE CHANGE

1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate through land use and development patterns which:

- f) promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating effects of vegetation and *green infrastructure*; and
- g) maximize vegetation within *settlement areas*, where feasible.

In order to recognize climate change and mitigation, it is recommended that there be policies in the Plan encouraging energy efficient design at the single lot and multi-lot/unit development levels.

The Official Plan could incorporate policy such as the following:

“In order to reduce energy use through shading and sheltering, the municipality will encourage tree planting, such as the development or protection of trees, and innovative green spaces, such as green roofs, in new and existing development. The use of permeable surfaces and pervious pavement in areas such as parking lots and sidewalks will be promoted.

The municipality will encourage the planting of native or non-native non-invasive tree species and vegetation that are resilient to climate change and provide high levels of carbon sequestration through new development and on municipally-owned land. The planting of gardens on public and private lands will be promoted to reduce surface water run-off.”

Renewable Energy

Bill 34 “An Act to repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Environmental Protection Act, the Planning Act and various other statutes” (i.e. the Green Energy Repeal Act) received royal assent December 2019. One of the purposes of the Green Energy Repeal Act was to restore municipal planning authority related to the siting of renewable energy undertakings, allowing local governments to accommodate renewable energy proposals as willing hosts where proposals align with local planning objectives. The MECP, the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing have proposed regulatory changes which are aimed at complying with the requirements resulting from the Green Energy Repeal Act, 2018. A comment period for these proposals occurred from December 4, 2018 to January 18, 2019. The results from consultation on this proposal are being considered.

To view what was made available for comment regarding these proposed regulations please refer to the following Environmental Registry of Ontario postings:

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing proposed regulation: 013-4265 <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4265>
- Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines regulation amendments: 013-4288 <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4288>
- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks amendment of the Renewable Energy Approvals Regulation: 013-4040 <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4040>

Additional Resources:

- Green Energy Repeal Act: <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-34>
- MECP Climate Change Site: <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/climate-change>

- Mapping Tools: <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/climate-change-regions-and-districts>
- Expert Panel on Climate Change Adaptation Report:
- <http://news.ontario.ca/ene/en/2009/12/report-from-the-expert-panel-on-climate-change-adaptation.html>
- Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources (OCCIAR): <http://www.climateontario.ca/>
- OCCIAR Publications: <http://www.climateontario.ca/publications.php>
- OCCIAR – Adapting to Climate Change: An Introduction for Canadian Municipalities: <http://www.climateontario.ca/doc/publications/0006-e.pdf>
- Ontario Climate Change Date Portal : <http://onlinercm.org/ontario/>

Land Use Compatibility (PPS Sections 1.1, 1.2.6, and 1.6)

1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns

1.1.1 Healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:

- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns.

1.2.6 Land Use Compatibility

1.2.6.1 *Major facilities and sensitive land uses* shall be planned and developed to avoid or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential *adverse effects* from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of *major facilities* in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

1.6.8 Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors

1.6.8.3 Planning authorities shall not permit *development* in *planned corridors* that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified. New *development* proposed on *adjacent lands* to existing or *planned corridors* and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purposes of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts on and from the corridor and transportation facilities.

1.6.9 Airports, Rail and Marine Facilities

1.6.9.1 Planning for land uses in the vicinity of *airports, rail facilities and marine facilities* shall be undertaken so that:

- a. their long-term operation and economic role is protected; and
- b. *airports, rail facilities and marine facilities and sensitive land uses* are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other in accordance with policy 1.2.6.

1.6.9.2 *Airports* shall be protected from incompatible land uses and development by:

- a. prohibiting new residential *development* and other sensitive land uses in areas near *airports* above 30 NEF/NEP;
- b. considering redevelopment of existing residential uses and other sensitive land uses or infilling of residential and other sensitive land uses in areas above 30 NEF/NEP only if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the long-term function of the *airport*; and
- c. discouraging land uses which may cause a potential aviation safety hazard.

It is the policy of the ministry to recommend the separation of incompatible land uses to minimize risks to public health and safety, prevent or minimize adverse effects, and to ensure the long-term viability of major facilities, such as industries, resource extraction activities, and infrastructure corridors.

There is an influence area around certain facilities or land uses, subject to emissions usually of a nuisance nature, where exposure of residents and other sensitive uses should be minimized. Necessary environmental control measures, such as separation distances and buffers between emissions sources and residential or sensitive land uses, should be applied to supplement practical emission controls, but not to take the place of such controls.

Official Plans should have policies to ensure that residential areas, and other uses of similar sensitivity, such as hospitals, nursing homes, educational facilities, and day care centres will be protected from situations of undesirable air quality and excessive noise/vibration through good land use planning, site plan control, and building control. The policies should also do the reverse: protect existing industries and facilities from new incompatible uses such as residences. Many of these industries or facilities have existing Environmental Compliance Approvals (ECAs – formerly known as Certificates of Approval) that require certain setbacks or standards be met. Introducing new sensitive land uses close to these facilities may put them into non-compliance, subjecting them to orders or fines.

Official Plan policies should reference the various classes of industry and other major facilities that require separation from sensitive land uses, as well as the associated potential influence areas requiring studies, and the applicable minimum separation distances. The policies should specify that development proponents may be required to carry out technical studies, such as noise and/or vibration assessments and determine control measures to ensure that the Ministry's recommended sound and vibration limits will be met, and the proposed development will not result in adverse effect. Policies should provide protection for both sensitive land uses and major facilities. Where required, studies should be prepared by qualified individuals according to applicable provincial guidelines, to the satisfaction of the municipality.

Additional Resources:

- D-1 Land Use Compatibility

- D-1-1 Procedures for Implementation
- D-1-2 Specific Applications
- D-1-3 Definitions
- D-2 Compatibility between Sewage Treatment and Sensitive Land Use
- D-3 Environmental Considerations for Gas or Oil Pipelines and Facilities
- D-4 Land Use On or Near Landfills and Dumps
 - D-4-1 Assessing Methane Hazards from Landfill Sites
 - D-4-2 Environmental Warnings/Restrictions
 - D-4-3 Registration of Certificates and Provisional Certificates
- D-6 Compatibility Between Industrial Facilities and Sensitive Land Uses
 - D-6-1 Industrial Categorization Criteria
 - D-6-3 Separation Distances
 - D-6-4 MCCR Bulletin No. 91003 “Environmental Warnings/Restrictions”
- These are available at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/environmental-land-use-planning-guides>
- NPC-300: Environmental Noise Assessment Guideline – Stationary and Transportation Sources – approval and Planning (Note updated August 2013)
<http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/environmental-noise-guideline-stationary-and-transportation-sources-approval>

Contaminated Sites (PPS Section 1.1 and 3.2)

1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns

1.1.1 Healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by:

- c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

3.2 HUMAN-MADE HAZARDS

3.2.1 Development on, abutting or adjacent to lands affected by *mine hazards; oil, gas and salt hazards; or former mineral mining operations, mineral aggregate operations or petroleum resource operations* may be permitted only if rehabilitation or other measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are under-way or have been completed.

3.2.2 Sites with contaminants in land or water shall be assessed and remediated as necessary prior to any activity on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be no *adverse effects*.

Municipalities are encouraged to identify known or suspected areas of soil or groundwater contamination on the land use schedules of the Official Plan. These areas of potential contamination will require appropriate studies and, if necessary, prior to the granting of a planning approvals. Common examples of potentially contaminated sites include former gas stations or industrial sites.

A Record of Site Condition (RSC) documents the restoration process and the final site conditions as determined by a Qualified Professional and indicates to the planning authority that restoration has been undertaken to the standard acceptable to permit the proposed reuse of the site. Therefore, an RSC is submitted to the ministry and filed on the Brownfields Environmental Sites Registry after site clean-up has been completed.

Once site restoration is complete, an RSC should be submitted to the municipality or planning board to indicate the final site conditions. Where there is potential for contamination, it is recommended that the municipality make final approval of development applications conditional on receipt of an MECP acknowledgement confirming the submission and filing of an RSC on the Brownfields Environmental Site Registry.

Please note that under requirements of the *Building Code Act*, even sites that do not need planning approvals could also trigger the requirement for an RSC at the building permit stage. For example, a conversion of a commercial use to a residential use that triggers only a building permit (both uses may be permitted in the zoning by-law) would require an RSC.

Following extensive public consultation, the ministry has finalized the new “**On-Site and Excess Soil Management Regulation**” (Excess Soil Regulation 406/19) which is being phased in, as well as associated Brownfields-related regulatory amendments to the Record of Site Condition Regulation.

The Excess Soils Regulation recognizes properly reused excess soil as a resource instead of waste. It sets clear reuse rules that are protective of human health and the environment and sets clear reuse planning requirements for sites generating excess soil. Clarified rules will support greater reuse of excess soil which can save proponents soil management costs and reduce the amount of soil ending up in landfill.

Additional Resources:

- Records of Site Condition: A Guide on Site Assessment, the Cleanup of Brownfield Sites and the Filing of Records of Site Condition:
<https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/guide-site-assessment-cleanup-brownfields-filing-records-site-condition>
- Contaminated Sites RSC Registry:
http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/subject/brownfields/STDPROD_075742.html
- [On-Site & Excess Soil Management Regulation O. Reg 406/19](https://www.ontario.ca/page/handling-excess-soil)
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/handling-excess-soil>

Species at Risk/ Endangered Species (PPS Section 2.1)

2.1 Natural Heritage

2.1.7 Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in habitat of endangered species and threatened species, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

As of April 1st, 2019, the MECP has taken on responsibility for Species at Risk and Endangered Species in Ontario. At this time inquiries regarding this requirement can be sent to SAROntario@ontario.ca.

The Ontario government is currently undertaking a review of the Endangered Species Act to improve protections for species at risk, consider modern and innovative approaches to achieve positive outcomes for species at risk, as well as to look for ways to streamline approvals and provide clarity to support economic development. Consultation on the proposed policy was open from January 18, 2019 to March 4, 2019 when the proposal was posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

Additional Resources:

- Environmental Registry of Ontario posting: https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4143?_ga=2.71139929.898926265.1554297260-2083796511.1553707014
- 10th Year Review of Ontario's Endangered Species Act: Discussion Paper: <https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2019-01/ESA-10thYrReviewDiscussionPaper.pdf>
- MECP Species at risk resource: https://www.ontario.ca/page/species-risk?_ga=2.128552517.898926265.1554297260-2083796511.1553707014

Protected Areas (PPS Section 1.5)

1.5 Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails and Open Space

1.5.1 Healthy, active communities should be promoted by: d) recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.

The mandated responsibility for Ontario's provincial parks was migrated to the MECP from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in November of 2018. As of April 1, 2019, responsibility for conservation reserves has also moved to MECP. At this time inquiries regarding direction related to provincial parks and conservation reserves should be directed to the appropriate Provincial Parks Zone Office.

Additional Resources:

- Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006:
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06p12>
- Provincial Park Management Direction: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-park-management-direction>
- Contacts for Provincial Parks Zone Offices:
<http://intra.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/home.html#orgProfile/-204/en>

Attachments

- Stormwater Best Management Practices for Camp Owners in Northeastern Ontario (attached)
- Client's guide to Preliminary Screening for Species at Risk (attached)

Ontario Geological Survey

Commission géologique de l'Ontario

5520 Hwy 101 E., OGC, E-wing
South Porcupine, ON P0N 1H0
Tel.: 705-235-1615
Fax.: 705-235-1620

5520 Route 101 E., OGC, E-wing
South Porcupine, ON P0N 1H0
Tél. : 705-235-1615
Télééc. : 705-235-1620

Jim Dymont
President,
Municipal Planning Consultants Inc.
Toronto, Ontario

July 5, 2021

Dear Mr. Dymont:

Subject: **Town of Cobalt Official Plan Review**

Thank you for the opportunity for the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) to provide input to the Town of Cobalt Official Plan review.

The subject Official Plan was checked for mining land tenure, mineral resources/mineral potential and mine hazard sites. The following technical information is related to NDMNRF's planning interests including the protection of long-term mineral resource supply (Section 2.4 PPS) and the protection of human health and safety (Section 3.2 PPS).

Technical Information:

- NDMNRF's Abandoned Mines Information System (AMIS) database was verified for mine hazard sites; there are thirty-nine (39) AMIS sites within or within 1 km from the Town of Cobalt. More detailed reports of these sites are in attachment, including a description of type and class.

AMIS Site Number	Site Name
02225	Cobalt Lake Tailings
03415	McKinley
03416	Cobalt Townsite
03417	Cobalt Lake
03418	Right of Way
03421	Nancy
03422	Buffalo

03424	O'Brian
03425	Hudson Bay
03426	Chambers-Ferland NW
03427	Chambers
03429	City of Cobalt
03431	Nipissing 406
03433	Nipissing 402 E.Part
03434	Nipissing 401 Parcel
03435	Nipissing 404
03437	Little Nipissing
03438	Princess
03439	Silver Queen
03441	Trethewey
03443	Sycee
03449	West Little Nipissing
03450	St. Lawrence Cobalt
03463	Silver Bird
03464	Coleman 2 (2)
03466	Bucke 3
03467	Genesee North East
03468	Bucke 2
03469	Bucke 1
03651	Genesee
03705	Sasaginaga Lake
03706	Timleck, L.A.
03707	Wright
03708	Cobalt Paymaster
03709	Clear Lake
03843	Coniagas
08676	Silver Refinery Site
10051	Hudson's Bay West
10156	Right of Way South

The abandoned mines information system (AMIS) dataset is current to November 2018. As always, the information provided in the AMIS database has been compiled from various sources and the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) makes no representation and takes no responsibility that such information is accurate, current or complete. The user is warned to undertake his or her own independent investigation to validate the information.

Although a review of the mine hazards was completed, it was not extensive, therefore, it is advised that the municipality requests a more detailed review from an NDMNRF Mine Hazards Technical Specialist where a mine hazard is identified

within 1 km of a proposed development or activity, even if the AMIS site is outside the limits of the municipality.

Please note that where a rehabilitated mine hazard is identified within 1 km of a proposed development, written consent of the Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry is required prior to the disturbance of any rehabilitated mine hazard feature.

- NDMNRF's Mineral Deposit Inventory (MDI) was checked for mineral occurrences; there are ten (10) mineral occurrences within the boundaries of the Town of Cobalt. There are additional mineral occurrences within a 1 km buffer zone around it. The MDI sites are mainly associated with silver and cobalt.

MDI Types	# of MDIs
Occurrence	1
Developed Prospect without Reserves	1
Past Producing Mine without Reserves	8

Commodity Types (Listed as Primary Commodity)	# of MDIs
Silver	10
Cobalt	9

Please see the included Mineral Deposit Inventory and Bedrock Geology map for MDI record distribution and deposit status (e.g. Past Producing Mine with Reserves, Occurrence, etc.).

- The Town of Cobalt is underlain by the siltstone, argillite, sandstone and conglomerate of the Huronian Supergroup (2.2 Ga to 2450 Ma); Cobalt Group (Type 21) in the east. In the west, it is underlain by mafic to intermediate metavolcanics rocks (Type 5; 2.5 to 3.2 Ga). The geology map in attachment is derived from 1:250 000 Scale Bedrock Geology of Ontario (Ontario Geological Survey Miscellaneous Release – Data, Revision 1).
- The Town of Cobalt is favored with its geology and has a long history of mining. The intrusion of the Nipissing diabase created the source and the Cobalt Group the trap for mineralization. Thus, the score of 90-100 (Maximum: 100) on the Metallic Mineral Potential Evaluation Tool (MMPET) is for silver-cobalt vein deposits (map in attachment).
- There are two-hundred eighty-nine (289) individual assessment files that have been filed with NDMNRF that overlap Coleman Twp, which includes the Town of Cobalt.

Exploration in the Town of Cobalt or its vicinity is active due to the presence of cobalt mineralization and current exploration trends.

- Land tenure in the Town of Cobalt consist of patents and leases and unpatented mining claims. Most Crown Land available for staking is readily taken due to the mineral potential.

Land tenure information can be viewed on the attached Land Tenure and Abandoned Mines Information System map.

- The surficial geology for the Town of Cobalt consists of bedrock with a thin layer of drift and glaciolacustrine deposits, made of silt and clay, minor sand, basin and quiet water deposits. See attached Surficial Geology map, with information from Ontario Geological survey 2000, 1:1,000,000 scale Quaternary geology, seamless coverage of the Province of Ontario: Data Set 14 – Revised.

No Aggregate Resource Inventory Papers (ARIP) covers the Town of Cobalt.

Official Plan Comments:

The following is a list of comments regarding the current Official Plan, based on the information above:

- Provide a mention of section 2.4 of the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 regarding Minerals (2.4.2.1 and 2.4.2.2) and Rehabilitation (2.4.3.1) in the Minerals section of the OP.
- The Town of Cobalt in its entirety is high mineral potential. The mapping should show the location of Mineral Deposit Inventory sites in the schedule. Proximity to these sites is a trigger for consultation with NDMNRF during review of a proposed development. The fact that the metal cobalt is among the commodities covered under the Ontario Critical Minerals Strategy makes Cobalt a potential hotspot for exploration.
- Identify the AMIS sites in the schedule, with a 1 km radius circle around them to support what will be written in the Official Plan. Again, project development within 1 km of these sites is a trigger for consultation with NDMNRF during review of a proposed development.

The information provided here is publicly available for viewing or free download through the Geology Ontario portal at, <http://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/> and OGSEarth at <https://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/en/mines-and-minerals/applications/ogsearth> . Official mining claim information is available through the MLAS Map Viewer application which is updated daily, and can be found at, <https://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/en/mines-and-minerals/applications/mlas-map-viewer> .

NDMNRF has no further comments regarding this review. If you have any questions in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Pierre Bousquet, M.Sc., P.Geo.
Regional Land Use Geologist – NE Region
Resident Geologist Program
Phone: 705-465-0369
Pierre.Bousquet@ontario.ca

Cc: MMAH
Emilie Trottier

Att: AMIS Disclaimer
AMIS Reports
AMIS Table
AMIS Site Type and Description
Land Tenure and AMIS Map
MDI and Bedrock Geology Map
MMPET Map
Surficial Geology Map

July 9th, 2021

Sent by Email Only

John Hodgson
Clerk Treasurer
18 Silver Street, Box 70
Cobalt Ontario, Canada P0J 1C0

Dear Mr. Hodgson,

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF), North Bay District, is pleased to have an opportunity to provide information to support The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt in the preparation for the Municipality's upcoming Official Plan Review.

The enclosed report includes a general, high-level summary of natural heritage features within the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt boundary, references to technical guidance documents developed by NDMNRF to support the implementation of the policies of the PPS, and official plan considerations.

The NDMNRF's vision is to maintain a healthy and naturally diverse environment that enables and contributes to sustainable development in Ontario. Further, our mission is to manage natural resources in an ecologically sustainable way to ensure that they are available for the enjoyment and use of future generations.

The NDMNRF is responsible for:

- Fish & Wildlife Management – sustainably managing Ontario's fish and wildlife resources
- Land & Waters Management – leading the management of Ontario's Crown lands, water, oil, gas, salt and aggregates resources, including making Crown land available for renewable energy projects
- Forest Management – ensuring the sustainable forest management of Ontario's forests and facilitating economic opportunities for the forest and wood products sectors
- Forest Fire, Flood and Drought Protection – protecting people, property and communities from related emergencies
- Geographic Information – developing and applying geographic information to help manage the province's natural resources

- Mineral Management- overseeing and promoting Ontario's mineral sector to be a healthy, competitive and sustainable sector
- Northern Development- promoting Northern Ontario's economic and community development

The purpose of this information report is to provide pertinent information on the NDMNRF's interests in municipal land use planning, which are outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and include:

1. Natural Heritage Features and Information (PPS Policy 2.1)
2. Provincially Significant Wetlands (PPS Policy 2.1.4 a and 2.1.5 a)
3. Significant Wildlife Habitat (PPS Policy 2.1.5 d)
4. Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (PPS Policy 2.1.5 e)
5. Fish Habitat (PPS Policy 2.1.6)
6. Mineral Aggregate Resources (PPS Section 2.5)
7. Natural Hazard – Wildland Fire, flood elevations and high-water marks (PPS Section 3.1)

I look forward to the opportunity to share this information with the Municipality and to discuss the content further if there are any questions. I can be reached at (705)492-0365 or by email at Houda.Elsidawi@Ontario.ca

Sincerely,

Houda El Sidawi, MEnvSc
A/ District Planner
North Bay District

Cc:

Caitlin Carmichael, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Julie Robinson, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry

Enclosed by email:

- I. Information Report
- II. Wildland Fire Risk Assessment and Mitigation – Guidebook
- III. Wildland Fire – Generalized Hazardous Forest Type Mapping (2021)

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Resource Information Report Official Plan Update The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt

North Bay District
July 9, 2021

Preface

The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt is preparing an update to its Official Plan. This provides the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) with an opportunity to identify a number of interests that the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 directs that municipal planning decisions “shall be consistent with.” The PPS was approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, under Section 3 of the Planning Act, and came into effect on May 1, 2020. The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 replaced the earlier Provincial Policy Statement issued April 30, 2014.

The information provided in this report is the most up-to-date available at this point in time. It is provided with reference to the PPS 2020 and relevant NDMNRF technical manuals.

It is recommended that the information in this report be considered in accompaniment with a full values-update initiated by the Municipality. This would include attaining updated data from Land Information Ontario (LIO) and the Natural Heritage Information Centre. This information is subject to change and it is the responsibility of the Municipality to seek updated information.

Guidance Documents

Table 1.0 NDMNRF guidance documents to support planning authorities in implementation of the PPS

Title	Date	Access
<i>Non-Renewable Resources Training Manual</i>	1997	NDMNRF can provide hard copy if Requested
<i>Natural Heritage Reference Manual 2010 (NHRM)</i>	2010	https://www.ontario.ca/document/natural-heritage-referencemanual
<i>Understanding Natural Hazards 2001</i>	2001	http://www.kettlecreekconservation.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/1_Understanding_Natural_Hazards.pdf
<i>Technical Guide - River and Stream Systems: Flooding Hazard Limit</i>	2002	http://www.renaud.ca/public/Environmental-Regulations/MNR%20Technical%20Guide%20Flooding%20Hazard%20Limit.pdf
<i>Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide</i>	2000	https://www.ontario.ca/document/guide-significant-wildlife-habitat
<i>Significant Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Support Tool</i>	2014	https://www.ontario.ca/document/significant-wildlife-habitatmitigation-support-tool
<i>Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook</i>	2010	http://www.ontario.ca/document/lakeshore-capacity-assessmenthandbook-protecting-waterquality-inland-lakes-ontariosprecambrian
<i>Wildland Fire Risk Assessment and Mitigation: A Guidebook in support of the Provincial Policy Statement 2014</i>	2017	https://www.ontario.ca/page/wildland-fire-risk-assessment-and-mitigation-reference-manual
<i>The Crown Land Use Policy Atlas</i>	2020	http://www.qisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/CLUPA/Index.html?site=CLUPA&viewer=CLUPA&locale=en-US

Other helpful resources:

Land Information Ontario`s Data Warehouse

https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/LIODataWarehouse/DDS_Index.html?site=DDS&viewer=DDS&locale=en-US

Land Information Ontario`s Metadata Management Tool:

<http://www.javacoeapp.lrc.gov.on.ca/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home?uuid=5de4f50f-262f-4051-bcfa-a822513f2a93>

NDMNRF- Make a Topographic Map

http://www.giscoeapp.lrc.gov.on.ca/matm/Index.html?site=Make_A_Topographic_Map&viewer=MATM&locale=en-US

NDMNRF – Make a Natural Heritage Map

http://www.giscoeapp.lrc.gov.on.ca/Mamnh/Index.html?site=MNR_NHLUPS_NaturalHeritage&viewer=NaturalHeritage&locale=en-US

NDMNRF – Fish Online

<https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/FishONLine/Index.html?viewer=FishONLine.FishONLine&locale=en-US>

NDMNRF - Watershed Flow Assessment Tool

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/watershed-flow-assessment-tool>

NDMNRF- Forest Fire Info and Map

[Forest fires | Ontario.ca](#)

Ontario GeoHUB

[Ontario GeoHub \(gov.on.ca\)](#)

RESOURCE INFORMATION

1) Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Natural heritage features and areas provide numerous economic, environmental and social benefits. Collectively, they contribute to the conservation of biological diversity (biodiversity) and to the maintenance of the quality of our air, land and water. The benefits of conserving natural heritage occur at local, regional and broader scales.

Natural heritage features and areas provide ecological functions that are critical to the survival of all species, including humans. These ecological functions include the provision of habitat, hydrological functions, nutrient and energy cycling and storage, succession and disturbance functions, reproduction and dispersal, and landscape linkages. Locally, these areas help to sustain a way of life that attracts people to live, work and carry out recreational activities in the Town.

Section 2.1 of PPS 2020 provides direction for the protection of natural heritage features and areas. In the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt natural heritage resources include the habitat of a species at risk.

1.1 Provincial Significance

The PPS addresses the concept of *significance* as central to the identification of most natural heritage features and areas. An exception is that fish habitat is protected under the federal *Fisheries Act* regardless of significance.

With respect to wetlands, to be considered “significant” a wetland or wetland complex must be evaluated and scored according to criteria outlined in the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES). Anyone who has successfully taken the OWES training course can evaluate a wetland, but NDMNRF is ultimately responsible for confirming the significance.

For significant wildlife habitat, the responsibility for identifying potential habitat areas and confirming significance rests with the Town. However, NDMNRF is taking this opportunity to provide information and make recommendations to you, and we are available to offer technical advice and support.

Section 4.0 of the PPS speaks to the implementation and interpretation of the Provincial Policy Statement. A sub-section to Section 4.6 states that “official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. To determine the significance of some natural heritage features and other resources, evaluation may be required.” Prior to development or site alteration approval, it may be appropriate for planning authorities to require wetland evaluation in accordance with provincial evaluation procedures to determine the significance of unevaluated wetlands. This policy also serves to encourage municipalities to evaluate, or require the evaluation of, the significance of wildlife habitat.

1.2 Adjacent Lands

Section 2.1.8 of the PPS addresses the concept of adjacent lands to a natural heritage feature or area. The intent of this policy is to ensure that there is consideration of the potential negative impacts of development in areas adjacent to natural heritage values, based on evaluation of the ecological functions of these areas. “Adjacent lands” must be addressed in the OP and defined in the local

context to ensure that development does not negatively impact the features or functions of values to be protected.

“Adjacent lands” are areas where the compatibility of a development proposal must be considered, and any potential negative impacts addressed. Generally, adjacent lands are those areas that are contiguous to a specific natural heritage feature or area where development or site alteration may have a negative impact. The extent of these areas may be based on recommendations by the province (i.e., NDMNRF’s Natural Heritage Reference Manual (NHRM), Table 4-2, page 42) or on other approaches applied by the Municipality that achieve the same objectives. The concept of adjacent lands must be addressed for each natural heritage feature and area, except for the habitat of endangered species and threatened species under the PPS 2020.

1.3 Site-specific Evaluation

While recorded natural heritage values are accessible through Lands Information Ontario, it is important to note that not all significant natural heritage features are known. The NDMNRF generally recommends that the Municipality require an appropriate level of ecological site assessment before new planning approvals are granted for lands where natural vegetation or landscape features remain, or where other conditions may provide for natural heritage values (significant wildlife habitat or fish habitat). Such an assessment would enable the Municipality to be consistent with the full range of natural heritage and natural hazard policies of the PPS.

Site-specific assessment should generally include a preliminary ecological assessment by a well-rounded biologist, who would determine whether more detailed site evaluation is warranted. For certain values, detailed assessment can only be adequately carried out by a specialist (e.g. botanist, herpetologist, wetland specialist, hydrological engineer).

Where values are identified, ecological site assessment should be followed by site-specific **impact** assessment, which would identify the values, potential impacts from the proposed development and site alteration, and proposed avoidance and/or mitigation measures to protect the values.

Section 13.0 of NDMNRF’s NHRM provides more information on the NDMNRF’s recommendations for site assessment.

1.4 Official Plan Considerations

NDMNRF recommends that the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt consider the following in its updated O.P:

1. Where the O.P refers to the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), please amend this to reflect the change from MNR, to Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF).
2. Maintain the confidentiality of habitat and/or species locations for endangered and threatened species identified through site evaluations. For further information regarding how to best incorporate considerations for species at risk into this plan, please contact the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks at SAROntario@Ontario.ca
3. The town may want to consider providing more specific direction within the official plan and zoning by-law to ensure site plan control are addressed and acceptable shoreline erosion control structures or maintenance practices (e.g. dredging for private boat access) are included to maintain the natural shoreline environment and alleviate concerns of “shoreline hardening” on locally significant waterbodies.

4. Maintain a policy requiring an appropriate level of ecological site and site-specific impact assessment before development or site alteration is permitted for lands where conditions may provide for natural heritage values such as significant fish or wildlife habitat, or areas of natural or scientific interest.

2) Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW):

2.1 Importance of Wetlands

Wetlands are an important natural resource. The ecological, social and economic benefits that can be attributed to wetlands are substantial. Wetlands maintain and improve water quality; help control flooding; provide habitat for fish and wildlife; provide conditions for a wide variety of vegetation (including rare and unusual species); and contribute to the substantial social and economic benefits such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and appreciation of nature in general.

Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) are wetlands identified as significant by the NDMNRF through the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES). The OWES course is delivered or authorized by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, and is required for anyone conducting, reviewing and approving wetland evaluations. Trained OWES evaluators help municipalities, Ontario government, conservation authorities and others with land use planning. The wetland evaluation system was created to inform Ontario's land use planning process.

3.2 Implementation of the PPS as it relates to PSWs

PPS Policy 2) directs that the diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term *ecological function* and biodiversity of *natural heritage systems*, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among *natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features*. PPS Policy 2.1.4 a) directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant wetlands in Ecoregion 5E, 6E and 7E. PPS Policy 2.1.8 directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it had been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the PSW or its ecological functions. For reference, the Town of Cobalt is within the Lake Temagami Ecoregion 4E.

NDMNRF's Natural Heritage Reference Manual 2010 (NHRM) recommends that "adjacent" lands generally be considered those lands within 120 metres of significant wetlands. We anticipate that the upcoming supplement to the *NHRM* will also recommend an adjacent land width of 120 metres for unevaluated wetlands.

A person qualified to assess the ecological function of adjacent lands and evaluate potential negative impacts on wetland features or their ecological functions would be an ecologist or biologist who has successfully completed the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES) training course.

PPS Section 4.6 states that "Official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. To determine the significance of some natural heritage features and other resources, evaluation may be required." For wetlands, this means that if an unevaluated wetland is identified and/or encountered while planning for a development activity, the wetland should be evaluated using the procedures set out in the *Ontario Wetland Evaluation System – Northern Manual* to determine its significance.

Part III of the PPS acknowledges that the policies of the PPS represent minimum standards. Within the framework of the provincial policy-led planning system, planning authorities and decision-makers may go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of importance to a specific community, unless doing so would conflict with any policy of the Provincial Policy Statement. The ecological, social and economic values of wetlands in general should be considered. Given the range of values that wetlands provide, including flood attenuation, habitat for endangered and threatened species, species of special concern and other wildlife, NDMNRF strongly encourages planning authorities to protect all wetlands from development and site alteration, although not required by the PPS.

There are circumstances where activities may impact PSWs, wetlands or shoreline environment but a *Planning Act* approval is not required. To ensure that appropriate wetland and aquatic habitat protection under such circumstances, we encourage municipalities to use their powers under the Municipal Act, 2001 (Section 142) to pass a site alteration by-law prohibiting or regulating the placing or dumping of fill, the removal of topsoil such as peat, and the alteration of the grade of land. Also, given that wetlands are generally not suitable locations for development from a natural hazards perspective, all wetlands should be depicted in an OP Schedule.

3.3. PSWs in the Town of Cobalt

Within the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt, none of the wetlands in the Town of Cobalt have been evaluated for provincial significance.

3.4 Zoning By-Law Considerations

As PSW could be identified through subsequent planning processes, NDMNRF recommends the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt to consider the following in its Comprehensive Zoning By-law:

- 1) Provincially significant wetlands should be placed in a zone that prohibits new development and site alteration, including the placement of fill.
- 2) We recommend that the town consider placing all wetlands in a zone that prohibits development and site alteration. We recognize that in some cases wetlands will be placed in the same zone that deals with flood hazards or other development constraints.
- 3) Consideration for the need for a policy that addresses the need for an impact assessment and/or 'no negative impacts' test for proposed site alteration adjacent to PSWs.

4) Significant Wildlife Habitat:

4.1 Importance of Significant Wildlife Habitat

The provision of wildlife habitat is one of the primary ecological functions of natural heritage features and areas. The protection and management of wildlife habitat is fundamental to the maintenance of self-sustaining populations of wildlife and to biodiversity. The fragmentation of wildlife habitat through indiscriminate development lessens the value of the habitat and also results in the loss of wildlife related opportunities, such as recreational viewing. Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH) is a matter of provincial interest and is addressed in the PPS.

SWH is defined as areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific wildlife habitats of concern may include areas where there are:

- Seasonal concentrations of animals (e.g. moose late winter habitat, heronries, waterfowl concentration areas);
- Rare vegetation communities and specialized habitats for wildlife;
- Habitats of species of “special concern” and other significant wildlife habitat (provincially rare plants, reptiles, amphibians and birds, as well as nests of raptors such as osprey and red-shouldered hawk)
- Animal movement corridors.

4.2 Implementation of the PPS as it relates to SWH

PPS Policy 2.1.5 d) directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in SWH. Further, PPS Policy 2.1.8 directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to SWH unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it had been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the SWH or on their ecological functions. NDMNRF recommends that “adjacent lands” lands generally be considered to be those lands within 120 metres of SWH.

The PPS definition of “significant” advises that criteria for determining the significance of significant wildlife habitat are recommended by the Province, but municipal approaches that achieve or exceed the same objective may also be used.

4.3 SWH Identification

Based on our current mappings, there are no known SWH within the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt. However, the threatened species Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) has been detected within the town. Therefore, this area is likely to support other wildlife habitat, including reptile, amphibian, turtles.

Other SWH to consider:

- Turtle Winter Area - For most turtles, wintering areas are in the same general area as their core habitat. Water has to be deep enough not to freeze and have soft mud substrates. Over-wintering sites are permanent waterbodies, large wetlands, and bogs or fens.
- Reptile Hibernaculum – For most turtles, wintering areas are in the same general area as their core habitat. Water has to be deep enough not to freeze and have soft mud substrates. Over-wintering sites are permanent waterbodies, large wetlands, and bogs or fens. This category also includes thermoregulation locations like talus, barren rock, or cave sites. Species will congregate at these sites in the early spring and autumn.
- Waterfowl nesting areas – in wetland areas and 120m from the edge.
- Amphibian Breeding Habitat: Woodlands – Identify areas that have the presence of at least three frog species.

SWH may be identified through an assessment or impact study completed in support of a Planning Act application. Please refer to Section 9.0 of the NHRM for NDMNRF's recommendations to assist

the Municipality in ensuring consistency with PPS Policy 2.1.5 and 2.1.8 and to ensure long term protection of SWH values.

A number of natural heritage planning resources are available that provide detailed information for identifying and confirming significant wildlife habitat in Ontario. For example, NDMNRF's *Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide* can be accessed online through the following link: <http://www.ontario.ca/document/guide-significantwildlife-habitat>. This document is highly recommended for planning authorities. It provides advice and recommendations on how to mitigate impacts to wildlife habitat during a development process. It supports the *Significant Wildlife Habitat Ecoregion Criteria Schedules* and the *Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide*.

You can learn more about Ecoregion 4E, which is relevant to the Town of Cobalt, on here <https://files.ontario.ca/mnrf-ecosystemspart1-accessible-july2018-en-2020-01-16.pdf>. Additionally, there is *Significant Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Support Tool*. It is available here: <http://www.ontario.ca/document/significant-wildlife-habitatmitigation-support-tool>.

This document is highly recommended for planning authorities. It provides advice and recommendations on how to mitigate impacts to wildlife habitat during a development process. It supports the *Significant Wildlife Habitat Ecoregion Criteria Schedules* and the *Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide*.

As per Section 9.0 of the NHRM, planning authorities approve the identification of SWH within municipal boundaries. The NDMNRF will provide updated SWH information as it becomes available but generally, the NDMNRF does not collect SWH data on private lands.

5) Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI):

Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) are areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education.

PPS Policy 2.1.5 e) directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in significant areas of natural and scientific interest. PPS Policy 2.1.8 directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to an ANSI identified unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it had been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the ANSI or its ecological functions. NDMNRF recommends an adjacent lands width of 50 metres for earth science ANSIs and 120 metres for life science ANSIs.

No ANSIs have not been identified within the Town of Cobalt, however there might be potential for ANSIs to be identified in the future.

6) Fish Habitat

6.1 Importance of Fish Habitat

Fish Habitat, as defined in the *Fisheries Act*, means spawning grounds and any other areas, including nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which *fish* depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes.

Lakes, rivers, streams, ponds and many wetlands provide fish habitat. Intermittent and seasonally flooded areas can also provide important habitat for some fish species at certain times of the year.

In addition, in-water structures such as logs, stumps and other woody debris, pools and riffle areas, riparian and aquatic vegetation and ground water recharge/discharge areas also provide habitat. Fish habitat also includes the watercourses that act as corridors for fish to move from one area to another.

When development is proposed near fish habitat, proponents should complete a self-assessment to determine if their project requires review under the Fisheries Act. The self-assessment tool can be found here: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/review-revue-eng.html>

6.2 Implementation of the PPS as it relates to Fish Habitat

PPS Policy 2.16 directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in fish habitat except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements. PPS Policy 2.1.8 directs that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to fish habitat unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it had been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts to the fish habitat.

NDMNRF recommends an adjacent lands width of 120 metres for development proposed adjacent to fish habitat. Please refer to Section 11.0 of the NHRM for NDMNRF's recommendations to support decision making that is consistent with PPS Policy 2.1.6 and 2.1.8 and the protection of fish habitat.

6.3 Fish Habitat within the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt

The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt lies within the Township of Coleman. Anima Nipissing Lake, First Justin Lake, Sasaginaga Lake and Kitt Lake are among the waterbodies that contain Lake Trout within the Coleman Township. Anima Nipissing Lake, First Justin Lake and Sasaginaga Lake are naturally reproducing populations ('Natural' lakes), while Kitt Lake is a Put-Grow-Take lake. The Corporation of the Town of Cobalt borders the Sasaginaga Lake.

NDMNRF recommends that generally there be no new lot creation or other planning approvals for new or more intense residential, commercial or industrial development within 300 metres of the waterbody where one of the preceding methods has determined a lake trout lake to be at capacity for shoreline development, as noted in the Natural Heritage Reference Manual (NHRM). This recommendation is made to safeguard the water quality of the lake in terms of dissolved oxygen levels. Exceptions to the recommendation may apply in the circumstances described in the Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook, which can be found: [Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook: Protecting Water Quality in Inland Lakes | Ontario.ca](#). Planning authorities should discuss potential exceptions and implementation requirements with their local district and The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) offices.

Fishing and fish resources in the Corporation of the Town of Cobalt are managed by Fisheries Management Zone 11. The Management plan for Fisheries Management Zone 11 can be found here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/management-plan-fisheries-management-zone-11>. Fisheries management planning is a key component of managing recreational fisheries in Ontario.

7) Mineral Aggregate Resources:

7.1 Importance of Mineral Aggregate Resources

Mineral aggregates are a non-renewable resource. There are no substitute resources that are available in the same quantity or at a similar reasonable cost. All municipalities in Ontario possessing mineral aggregate resources share a responsibility for ensuring that the use of the mineral aggregate deposits in their jurisdiction is not impeded by inappropriate land use development. Aggregate resource extraction should be considered an interim land use; if appropriate rehabilitation measures are used, sites of extraction can be returned to a subsequent productive use compatible with surrounding land uses.

7.2 Implementation of the PPS

Policy 2.5 of the PPS requires municipalities to recognize and protect mineral aggregate resources and existing operations. The term “mineral aggregates” refers to gravel, sand and various types of bedrock that are suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes.

Generally, the intent of PPS Policy 2.5 is to ensure that developed and undeveloped mineral aggregate resources and existing extraction operations will be protected from land uses that could interfere with the current or future development of these resources. Municipalities must ensure that incompatible land use development does not occur in areas of significant mineral resources or adjacent to existing operations, so that they remain available to meet immediate or future needs.

PPS Policy 2.5.1 directs that mineral aggregate resources shall be protected for long-term use and, where provincial information is available, deposits of mineral aggregate resources shall be identified.

PPS 2.5.2.5 directs that known mineral aggregate deposits be protected from incompatible uses in or adjacent to these deposits. NDMNRF’s *Non-Renewable Resources Training Manual* (1997) recommends that areas considered “adjacent to” bedrock deposits should extend at least 500 metres from the outside boundary of the deposit; lands considered adjacent to sand and gravel deposits should extend at least 300 metres from those deposits.

7.3 Land Use Compatibility

Municipalities must consider the impact of planning decisions that may affect existing mineral aggregate operations. In areas adjacent to existing aggregate operations, setback distances should be maintained for other land uses that may be incompatible with extraction operations. The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks’ *Guideline D-6 - Compatibility between Industrial Facilities and Sensitive Land Uses* applies to pits and quarries where, in the absence of site-specific studies, sensitive land uses (including residential uses) are proposed near an existing pit and/or quarry. The guidelines recommend applying the following:

- a potential influence area (i.e. area within which adverse effects may be experienced) of 1000 metres from an existing pit or quarry within which potential impacts should be assessed before new approvals are granted; and
- a recommended minimum separation distance of 300 metres between existing pits and quarries and new sensitive land uses.

7.4 Mapping Aggregate Deposits

To identify aggregate resources in the area:

Northern Ontario Engineering Geology Terrain Study (NOEGTS) – Districts of Nipissing and Parry Sound

<http://www.geologyontario.mndmf.gov.on.ca/mndmfiles/pub/data/imaging/NOEGTS101/NOEGTS101.pdf>

7.5 Aggregate Resources Act

Effective January 1, 2007, changes to the *Aggregate Resources Act* require that producers operating on private land are now required to operate under the authority of an Aggregate Resources Act (ARA) license. The issuance of licenses, and the administration of the ARA legislation, is delivered by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

To identify aggregate licences or permits issued under the Aggregate Resources Act:

Ontario Pits & Quarries Online

<http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/find-pits-and-quarries>

Aggregate resources policies and procedures:

<http://www.ontario.ca/rural-and-north/aggregate-resources-policies-and-procedures>

Application standards for proposed pits and quarries:

<http://www.ontario.ca/rural-and-north/application-standards-proposed-pits-and-quarries>

9) Natural Hazard -- Wildland Fire

9.1 Importance of Public Safety

There is an inherent risk to the public when changes to the landscape occur, such as encroachment of development into hazardous forest types for wildland fire, and changes resulting from climate change (e.g., changes in weather patterns resulting in increased frequency and severity of drought). In Ontario most wildland fires that occur within three kilometers of our communities are attributed to human activities and have the potential to damage property and infrastructure, and put the health and safety of the public at risk. Informed land use planning and hazard mitigation measures can reduce the potential for public cost or risk to residents and augment traditional wildland fire suppression efforts in Ontario.

9.2 Wildland Fire Generalized Mapping

The NDMNRF has generalized wildland fire hazard data available based on forest resource inventories. This information is available through LIO. The name of the data set is “Fire – Potential Hazardous Forest Types for Wildland Fire”. This data does not confirm the presence of hazardous forest types but gives an idea of potential fire risk and is a starting point for a more detailed assessment.

Maps of hazardous forest types for wildland fire are general indicators of areas with the greatest risk. A Potential Forest Hazard Classification for Wild Fires map has been generated for the Town of

Cobalt (enclosed). Assessment of risk and determination of any needed mitigation measures can only be done with confidence on a site-specific basis

9.3 Implementation of the PPS as it relates to Wildland Fire

The PPS 2020 defines hazardous forest types for wildland fire as forest types assessed as being associated with the risk of high to extreme wildland fire using risk assessment tools established by the NDMNRF. This means that under dry conditions, should a fire ignite, these forests would likely exhibit high to extreme wildland fire behaviour. They are generally treed or forested areas of certain species and conditions. Forest vegetation, or fuel types, that are associated with the risk of high to extreme wildland fire include: natural conifer forests and unmanaged conifer plantations that can include spruce (black or white); jack pine and balsam fir tree species; immature red and white pine; and mixed-wood forests with more than 50 per cent conifers (jack pine, spruce, balsam fir and immature red or white pine). Forest conditions that are associated with the risk of high to extreme wildland fire include vegetation that has sustained storm or insect damage or is diseased, trees that are close to one another (high density) within conifer forests, and an abundance of ground fuel accumulation (e.g., large amount of woody debris, branches and or needle litter on the ground).

Per PPS policy 3.1.8, development shall generally be directed to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for development due to the presence of hazardous forest types for wildland fire. This is the same approach that has been applied to other types of natural hazards, such as flooding. Development may; however, be permitted in lands with hazardous forest types for wildland fire where the risk is mitigated in accordance with wildland fire assessment and mitigation standards.

'Wildland Fire Assessment and Mitigation Standards' means the combination of risk assessment tools and environmentally appropriate mitigation measures identified by the NDMNRF to be incorporated into the design, construction and/or modification of buildings, structures, properties and/or communities to reduce the risk to public safety, infrastructure and property from wildland fire.

The NDMNRF has developed a guidebook to support the wildland fire policies of the PPS 2020. We encourage the Town to consider the information and recommendations within the guide (enclosed).

9.4 Other natural hazards within the Temagami area

Due to the extensive historical mining landscape within the Town, there is a mining hazard on the landscape as well as un-rehabilitated mining properties. Based on our current mapping, there are no other known natural hazards. However, hazards can be assessed on a site by site basis.

To ensure all hazards are considered when making Planning Act decisions, you may refer to the 'Understanding Natural Hazards' guide: http://www.kettlecreekconservation.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/1_Understanding_Natural_Hazards.pdf

10) Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves:

The delegated authority for Provincial Parks (PP) and Conservation Reserves (CR) granted through *the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* was transferred from NDMNRF to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) in 2018. PP and CRs are areas of crown land that have been established to protect provincially significant natural heritage, cultural heritage and recreational values.

11) Invasive Species:

Invasive species are a concern for environmental, social and economical reasons. Where possible the Municipality should make efforts to prevent or limit the spread of these invasive species. More information on invasive species in Ontario and what municipalities can do to prevent the spread of invasive species can be found at: www.ontario.ca/page/invasive-species-ontario

Town of Cobalt Official Plan Update
Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
Implementation Checklist

PPS Policy	Implementation
1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:	
1.1.2 Sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years,	
1.1.3.1 <i>Settlement areas</i> shall be the focus of growth and development.	
1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within <i>settlement areas</i> shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:	
1.1.3.3 Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for accommodating a significant supply and range of <i>housing options</i> through <i>intensification</i> and <i>redevelopment</i>	
1.1.3.5 Planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for <i>intensification</i> and <i>redevelopment</i> within built-up areas, based on local conditions.	
1.1.5.2 On <i>rural lands</i> located in municipalities, permitted uses are: a) the management or use of resources; b) resource-based recreational uses (including recreational dwellings); c) residential development, including lot creation, that is locally appropriate; d) <i>agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses</i> and <i>normal farm practices</i> , in accordance with provincial standards; e) home occupations and home industries; f) cemeteries; and g) other rural land uses.	

<p>1.2.6.1 <i>Major facilities and sensitive land uses</i> shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential <i>adverse effects</i> from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety,</p>	
<p>1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:</p>	
<p>1.3.2.2 At the time of the official plan review or update, planning authorities should assess <i>employment areas</i> identified in local official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of the <i>employment area</i>.</p>	
<p>1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of <i>housing options</i> and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the <i>regional market area</i> by:.....</p>	
<p>a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is <i>affordable to low and moderate income households</i> and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans.</p>	
<p>1.6.6.1 Planning for <i>sewage and water services</i> shall: a) accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing: 1. <i>municipal sewage services</i> and <i>municipal water services</i>; and</p>	
<p>1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:...</p>	
<p>1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for the <i>impacts of a</i></p>	

<p><i>changing climate</i> through land use and development patterns which:...</p>	
<p>2.1.1 Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.</p>	
<p>2.1.5 <i>Development and site alteration</i> shall not be permitted in: a) <i>significant wetlands</i> in the Canadian Shield north of Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E₁; unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no <i>negative impacts</i> on the natural features or their <i>ecological functions</i>.</p>	
<p>2.1.8 <i>Development and site alteration</i> shall not be permitted on <i>adjacent lands</i> to the <i>natural heritage features and areas</i> identified in policies 2.1.4, 2.1.5, and 2.1.6 unless the <i>ecological function</i> of the <i>adjacent lands</i> has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no <i>negative impacts</i> on the natural features or on their <i>ecological functions</i>.</p>	
<p>2.2.1 Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the <i>quality and quantity of water</i> by: a) using the <i>watershed</i> as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development; b) minimizing potential <i>negative impacts</i>, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-<i>watershed</i> impacts;</p>	
<p>2.2.2 <i>Development and site alteration</i> shall be restricted in or near <i>sensitive surface water features</i> and <i>sensitive ground water features</i> such that these features and their related <i>hydrologic functions</i> will be protected, improved or restored.</p>	
<p>2.4.2.1 <i>Mineral mining operations</i> and <i>petroleum resource operations</i> shall be identified and protected from</p>	

<p><i>development</i> and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.</p>	
<p>2.4.2.2 Known <i>mineral deposits</i>, known <i>petroleum resources</i> and <i>significant areas of mineral potential</i> shall be identified and <i>development</i> and activities in these resources or on <i>adjacent lands</i> which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) resource use would not be feasible; or b) the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and c) issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed. 	
<p>2.6.1 <i>Significant built heritage resources</i> and <i>significant cultural heritage landscapes</i> shall be <i>conserved</i>.</p>	
<p>2.6.3 Planning authorities shall not permit <i>development</i> and <i>site alteration</i> on <i>adjacent lands</i> to <i>protected heritage property</i> except where the proposed <i>development</i> and <i>site alteration</i> has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the <i>heritage attributes</i> of the <i>protected heritage property</i> will be <i>conserved</i>.</p>	
<p>3.1.8 <i>Development</i> shall generally be directed to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for <i>development</i> due to the presence of <i>hazardous forest types for wildland fire</i>.</p>	
<p>3.2.1 Development on, abutting or adjacent to lands affected by <i>mine hazards</i>; <i>oil, gas and salt hazards</i>; or former <i>mineral mining operations</i>, <i>mineral aggregate operations</i> or</p>	

<p><i>petroleum resource operations</i> may be permitted only if rehabilitation or other measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are under way or have been completed.</p>	
<p>3.2.2 Sites with contaminants in land or water shall be assessed and remediated as necessary prior to any activity on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be <i>no adverse effects</i>.</p>	

Cobalt's Official Town Plan Presentation November 23/021

At the first official plan workshop, there was support for arts and culture mixed with history initiatives to grow tourism, house them in town, and build a residential quality of life community. So, let's imagine some future possibilities.

The first PoeTrain tour in 2012 was a success earning the Temiskaming Shores & Area Chamber of Commerce Hospitality award. When the Northlander passenger train returned in 2024, Spring Pulse Poetry Festival leased a train car, picking up 30 poets and musicians in Toronto for another PoeTrain tour. This time there were options for staying in town.

Cobalt's mid-July summer streets have a hot vibe. Buskers play music as crowds pack the downtown core. A group riding rented e-bikes are off to see the Silver Trail. Local shops do a brisk business, setting up street stalls for those attending the *"Cobalt Rocks Music Festival."* Friday and Saturday afternoon, local musicians performed in the Dr. Pollard Poetry Park. Charlie Angus and Grievous Angels band headlines Friday night at the Miners Tavern. The festival ends Saturday night with a Classic Theatre sold-out concert featuring the Jerry Cans.

A trend began with the COVID-19 pandemic when urbanites relocated north. Hundreds over the years relocated to Cobalt since the town plan was created, fortifying the town's tax base. Phenomena captured in author David Brydges's book *"The Rise of the Rural Creative Class"* where a whole chapter showcases the town's vibrant art/cultural community and its transplanted beauty prospectors of artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers. In comparison, Cobalt's mining history and immense silver wealth are world-class and well-known. Its above-ground cultural tourism wealth attracted those who wished to experience this mining town's revitalized renaissance.

Cobalt had an artist in residence program to encourage the creation of new works of art, help organize events, do workshops, be social media active, and visit local schools. Several decided to stay after their residency had ended, making Cobalt their permanent home.

I've been recently contacted by the founder of the Ontario Poetry Society for the location of "*The Canadian Poetry Emporium*." Cobalt "*Canada's Small Town Poetry Capital*" is being considered with some seed funding and a donation of a 3000-poetry book collection for a space for year-round literary events, workshops, library, and art gallery.

The Cobalt Train Station was sold, and a new café opened in the most elegant event space in Northern Ontario. Weddings, celebrations of life ceremonies, company parties, and small conferences enjoyed this Neo-gothic landmark's historic ambience.

Cobalt hosted the Global Mural Conference. Old murals were restored, and new ones were painted from Cobalt's vast heritage database. One paid homage to Group of 7 artists Franklin Carmichael and A. Y. Jackson, painting in the 1930s, plus friends Sir Frederick Banting, Yvonne McKague Housser, and several women friends. The above artists and locals were represented on ten historic art plaques, primarily downtown, making for a unique cultural infrastructure not seen elsewhere in the north.

Plans are for the most extensive retrospective of Canadian mining paintings using 15 venues in Cobalt and Haileybury. A week festival is celebrating Cobalt through the eyes of artists, with walking tours, lectures, and exhibitions.

The concrete wall across from the train station became a story map. The first mural with indigenous artists showed how 2 thousand years ago, silver was harvested and traded on Cobalt Lake, which initially had an Algonquin name called (Mesinowahganigwahghaning) translated as "*the lake with the soft rock which can be written upon*." It was the first discovery of silver mined by Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Accommodation for residents and visitors was a key challenge. The town realized it needed to have some skin in the game. Bylaws were tweaked to allow more homestay alternatives.

A once seasonal camper trailer park was converted into a tiny home park beside the Cobalt Golden Age Club. The town collected rent and invested in two of their own that became tourist season options and later were rented to students at Northern College. Cobalt Public School property ownership was

finally resolved, and a local home building company developed it into a subdivision.

Empty home lots in town were given an incentive of receiving 90% of their purchase price if built within two years. Another northern town used this incentive as part of its community improvement plan. Several historic buildings were also repurposed for accommodation redevelopment and not torn down unless structurally unsafe.

In Cobalt, the future always has roots in the past. Here is an excerpt of a poem written by E. C. Hunter in the 1925 Rotarian Magazine.

WHERE THE NORTH BEGINS

*The north is not a country
Measured in terms of land,
The Real North is a spirit,
That you must understand*

We living in the north represent this understanding. Now it's time to share the story of how Cobalt, its first "silver city," played a pivotal role in developing the past north and today is passionately poised to welcome newcomers and visitors to mine a motherlode of creative opportunities to "live a life and then some."

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