		Report No. PD-45-26
		File No.
Directed to:	Mayor Joe Preston and Members of City Council	**Meeting Date:** **August 10, 2026**
Department:	Planning & Building Services	**Attachment** Attachment "A": Residential Land Needs to Accommodate the 30-Year Housing Forecast 2021-2051 (Dillon Consulting)
Authored By:	Michelle Knieriem, Manager of Planning Services	
Subject:	Residential Land Needs 2021-2051	

Recommendation:

THAT: Report PD-45-26 relating to Residential Land Needs 2021-2051 be received for information; and further,

THAT: Council accept the report "Residential Land Needs to Accommodate the 30-Year Housing Forecast 2021-2051" by Dillon Consulting Limited.

Background:

The City of St. Thomas retained Dillon Consulting Limited to provide a residential land needs assessment as part of the Official Plan Review. The objective of this study was to assess the anticipated residential land supply required to accommodate the 30-year housing forecast (2021-2051) outlined in the "Growth Analysis Study, City of St. Thomas 2024" (Growth Analysis Study, 2024) prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (PD-18-24).

The Growth Analysis Study, 2024 projected a population of 79,500 by 2051 and a need for 15,285 housing units, with the new PowerCo. electric vehicle battery plant being one of the primary drivers for this growth. The Growth Analysis Study found that in the short term the housing market is expected to be dominated by low-density housing to accommodate the influx of new families and move-up buyers relocating for employment opportunities associated with the PowerCo. electric vehicle battery plant and supply chain. It was found that in the long term there would be a gradual shift to medium and high-density housing driven by an increase in the seniors' population and rising local housing prices.

The "Residential Land Needs to Accommodate the 30-Year Housing Forecast 2021-2051" (Residential Land Needs Report) prepared by Dillon Consulting Ltd. and appended to this report considered this growth analysis and found that the City needs 330 net hectares to accommodate this future residential growth, including 298 hectares for low density residential uses, 32 hectares for medium density residential uses, and 0.1 hectares for high density residential uses. The vacant residential greenfield land supply is 286 gross hectares. This results in a vacant residential greenfield land supply of 166 net developable hectares to accommodate future development once infrastructure, roads, parks, and community facilities are accounted for. This results in the need for 164 net developable greenfield hectares to accommodate future growth. When the gross up adjustment for infrastructure, roads, parks and community facilities is included, this results in the need for an additional 283 gross hectares of land to accommodate the City's future residential growth.

The Residential Land Needs Report recommends the following next steps to address this need for land to accommodate residential growth:

- Undertake a Growth Directions Analysis to accommodate the 283 additional gross hectares of land supply needed and assess those alternative growth directions and locations for a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion
- Document the findings, conclusions and recommendations for the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion in a Growth Directions Analysis Report

The Official Plan Update that is currently underway will consider how this future residential growth will be accommodated. As part of a new Official Plan or update to an Official Plan, the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 requires:

Policy 2.1.3: "At the time of creating a new official plan and each official plan update, 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 at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years, informed by provincial guidance.

Planning for *infrastructure, public service facilities, strategic growth areas* and *employment areas* may extend beyond this time horizon".

All land use planning decisions made by a municipality, including adopting a new official plan or official plan update, must be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.

Staff recommend that Council accept this report from Dillon Consulting Limited such that it can be used to inform the Official Plan Update and future decisions regarding residential land needs in the City.

Strategic Priority:

Strategic Pillar: Excellence in All We Do - Priority #2: Thoughtful, Strategic, and Sustainable Community Growth

Financial Impact:

There are no unbudgeted financial implications associated with Council accepting this report.

Report Approval:

This report has been reviewed and approved by: Director of Planning and Building Services.

All reports are reviewed and approved by the City Manager.