



The Corporation of the Township of King Report to Council

From: Growth Management Services Department – Planning Division

Report Number: GMS-PL-2025-016

Date: Monday, May 26, 2025

Title: **Zoning By-law Amendment – Proposed Agricultural Event Venue (On-Farm Diversified Use)**

Address: 14855 Highway 27, King, ON
Part of Lots 17 and 18, Concession 8

File Number: Z-2024-10

Owner: 1000029174 Ontario Inc.

Agent: Blackthorn Development Corp.

Recommendation

1. That Report Number GMS-PL-2025-016 be received.
2. That Zoning By-law Amendment Application Z-2024-10, submitted by 1000029174 Ontario Inc. regarding the lands located at 14855 Highway 27, to rezone the subject property from 'ORL'- Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area and 'ORF'- Oak Ridges Moraine Feature Protection to 'ORL- 147' – Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area ,Exception Section 147, and 'ORF'- Oak Ridges Moraine Feature Protection, to facilitate the conversion of the existing barn and use of the property as an event venue as a permitted on-farm diversified use, **BE APPROVED**.
3. That the draft implementing Zoning By-law, attached as Appendix A, be enacted at a future council meeting.

1. Report Highlights

- The subject Application submitted to the Township by 1000029174 Ontario Inc. concerns the property municipally known as 14855 Highway 27, located on the east side of Highway 27, north of 16th Sideroad, and south of 17th Sideroad.
- The subject property has an area of approximately 50 hectares. The frontage along Highway 27 is approximately 155 metres. The subject property is currently occupied by a residential dwelling, agricultural barn and accessory structures thereto. As noted by the applicant approximately 10.1 hectares of the subject property is actively being farmed for crops.

- The Zoning By-law Amendment Application proposes to rezone the subject property from 'ORL'-Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area and 'ORF'-Oak Ridges Moraine Feature Protection to 'ORL- 147' Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area – Exception 147 and 'ORF'- Oak Ridges Moraine Feature Protection to permit an agricultural event venue as a permitted on-farm diversified use.
- The Planning Division recommends that the Zoning By-law Amendment Application be approved, and that the implementing Zoning By-law be enacted by Council at a future council meeting.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to provide a detailed review and recommend approval of the subject Zoning By-law Amendment Application.

3. Background

The subject property is located on the east side of Highway 27, north of 16th Sideroad, and south of 17th Sideroad. The subject property has an area of approximately 50 Hectares and has approximately 155 metres of frontage on Highway 27. The subject property currently contains one single detached dwelling with a driveway access onto Keele Street.

The Application proposes to amend the Township of King's Zoning By-law for the Countryside Area, Zoning By-law No. 2022-053, on a site-specific basis to permit an on-farm diversified use being an agricultural event venue which is proposed to accommodate up to 190 guests, making use of the existing Barn, together with a temporary tent which is proposed to vary in size and have a maximum size of approximately 560 square metres. The temporary tent is to be located on top of an existing concrete pad near the existing barn, during events. Catering will be undertaken during events by means of utilizing temporary or portable kitchen preparation equipment. 15 portable and temporary restrooms are to be provided on-site during events. Access is proposed to be maintained via the existing driveway from Highway 27 with the existing gravel area accommodating up to 95 vehicular surface parking spaces including three accessible parking spaces. The nature of events are proposed to include: weddings, personal celebrations and corporate events, all of which will be hosted seasonally during the spring through fall months. The size and scale of the on-farm diversified operation, and the parking standard requirements are proposed to be controlled through site-specific exceptions of the Zoning By-law, as detailed later in this Report.

Should the Application receive Approval, the proposal will also be required to obtain approval of a Site Plan Development Application for the property to facilitate the proposed development and to provide for a further detailed review of the site servicing, and other detailed design matters (i.e. grading and drainage).

A Statutory Public Meeting of Council was held on January 13th, 2025, to present the Application to Council and the Public and obtain comments. No comments pertaining to the proposal have since been received from the Public. Council directed that the proposal be referred to Staff for further technical review of the application and to return to Council at a later date with a recommendation report.

4. Analysis

Provincial Policy and Plans

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest relating to land use planning and development. The subject property is within the Agricultural System and is designated as part of the Prime Agricultural Area as defined by the PPS. The PPS includes policies related to: building homes and strong communities; infrastructure and facilities; wise use and management of resources; and public health and safety. The PPS requires that Planning authorities use an agricultural system approach to maintain and enhance a geographically continuous agricultural land base and to support and foster the long-term economic prosperity and productive capacity of the agri-food network. These lands are to be designated and protected for long-term agricultural uses. Permitted uses as identified within the PPS include on-farm diversified uses that are compatible with and do not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria for these uses are further outlined in provincial guidance documents and Township Official Plan policy and Zoning By-law provisions.

The subject property is located within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) area. The ORMCP (2017) provides land use and resource management direction for properties within the Moraine. The subject property is located within the “Natural Linkage Area” and “Natural Core Area”. The proposed development contains Key Natural Heritage and Hydrologic features as classified by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (i.e. Significant Woodland, Unevaluated Wetland, Watercourse, Fish Habitat, and Area of Natural Scientific Interest (Earth Science), and Significant Wildlife Habitat). The proposal is solely located within the Natural Linkage Area. Natural Linkage Areas protect critical natural and open space linkages between the Natural Core Areas and along rivers and streams. On-farm diversified uses within the Natural Linkage Area are only permitted within those lands which are also designated as Prime Agricultural Areas. The proposal will not have an impact on Key Natural Heritage and Hydrologic Features as it is located outside of the Minimum Vegetation Protection Zone and buffers of these environmental features.

The proposal is in conformity with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017).

York Region Official Plan, 2022 (ROP 2022)

The York Region Official Plan, 2022 (ROP 2022) designates the subject property as both “Rural Area” and “Agricultural Area” within the “Agricultural System” to Map 1A – Land Use Designations. The “Agricultural System” supports a productive agricultural and rural land base and agri- food network. Within the Agricultural Area, Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and Rural Area, normal farm practices and a full range of agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses are supported and permitted. The ROP 2022 provides policy direction that encourages on-farm diversified uses to promote the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector. On-farm diversified uses are permitted in accordance with Provincial Guidelines, and local Official Plan policies. Proposed on-farm diversified uses shall be compatible with and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. They are defined as uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the

property and are limited in area. The subject proposal conforms to the policies of the York Region Official Plan.

Our King Official Plan

The Township's Official Plan, "Our King" (2019) designates the subject property as "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area" and "Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core Area" with a "Prime Agricultural Area Overlay". On-farm diversified uses are permitted within the Natural Linkage Area, subject to the policies of the Official Plan. The proposed agricultural event venue use meets the intent of the Official Plan and the definition of an on-farm diversified use as detailed below.

In accordance with the Township of King Official Plan *"In determining whether the use is permitted, the Township will consider the Province's Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas within the Agricultural designation, including the following considerations:*

- a.) The amount of land devoted to the on-farm diversified use should be only a small proportion of the amount of land devoted to the principal agricultural use;*

The overall lot area of the subject property is approximately 50 Hectares. Approximately 10.1 Hectares of the subject property is being actively farmed for crops. Overall, the on-farm diversified use is to occupy approximately 0.3 Hectares. The proposed development is to utilize existing structures and disturbed areas. The amount of land taken out of agricultural production to support the technical considerations of the application (i.e. grading, drainage, services, etc.) is anticipated to be minimal.

- b.) The size of the building accommodating the on-farm diversified use should not exceed the sizes of building(s) accommodating the principal agricultural use;*

The overall area of the: existing barn which is currently vacant is approximately 250 square metres; the proposed temporary tent structure is approximately 560 square metres. The use and the building associated with the agricultural event venue will be secondary in both size and scale to the operation of the principal agricultural use. There are no agricultural structures associated with the principal agricultural use.

- c.) The nature of the on-farm diversified use itself and whether the use is operated by the owner/tenant of the property;*

The on-farm diversified use is defined as an Agricultural Event Venue (corporate events, weddings, personal celebrations) with the proposed operation to occur seasonally (between April to October) and predominantly during weekends. The proposal is to be operated by the owner of the property.

- d.) The number of people employed by the on-farm diversified use;*

A limited number of individuals (approximately 12) are to be employed by the proposed on-farm diversified use (i.e. cooks, vendors, servers) when events are occurring. Those employed will be predominantly seasonal workers. Overall, the scale of the operation is to be minor in nature.

e.) The extent to which retail sales occur as a component of the on-farm diversified use; and,

There will not be any retail sales associated with the on-farm diversified use.

f.) The amount of traffic generated by the on-farm diversified use in relation to the principal use on the property

A Traffic Impact Study submitted with the Application states that the proposal is expected to cause minimal impact on the road network, that there is to be sufficient access with minimal service delays, and adequate parking would be provided to accommodate those utilizing the site. This is based on the typical anticipated capacity for the events, however, the Township's peer reviewer factored in maximum capacity events. Staff note that this approach is sufficient and highlight that the maximum capacity is not to be reached for each event. It is important to note that these impacts would only occur during the times when events are being held. The Study has been reviewed, and found acceptable, to the Township of King's peer reviewer.

In accordance with the Township's Official Plan "*On-farm diversified uses shall:*

a. Not hinder surrounding agricultural operations;

The proposed event centre is to maintain reasonable noise and traffic levels. Limited lighting is being proposed. The adjacent lands which contain agricultural operations will continue to be utilized for such purposes and the proposed use provides adequate separation and buffering to the neighbouring agricultural operations to mitigate potential impacts from noise and lighting.

b. Be appropriate to available rural services and infrastructure;

The operation is to make use of the existing barn which has existing services (sanitary, electrical, and septic). The servicing of the tent, kitchen and restroom facilities are to be of a portable and temporary nature and will be further assessed through the subsequent Site Plan application review process. The installation of any additional private services or upgrades, if required, is not anticipated to have an impact on the subject property as it does not require significant servicing, and there is sufficient area on-site to accommodate such. There is to be minimal regrading and there are to be adequate stormwater management measures undertaken as noted within the Stormwater Management Brief. The Stormwater Management Brief has been reviewed, and found acceptable, to the Township of King's peer reviewer. Detailed comments are to be assessed through the Site Plan Application. Both measures will ensure that the surrounding agricultural lands are not impacted by the proposed development.

c. Maintain the agricultural/rural character of the area;

The agricultural/rural character of the site is to be maintained as the proposal seeks to utilize existing agricultural structures as part of the on-farm diversified use. The rural and agricultural nature of the lands are to be maintained as the majority of the land is to remain undisturbed and is either being utilized for agriculture or protected as it contains Key Natural Heritage and Hydrological Features.

- d. Meet all applicable policies regarding protection of natural heritage and hydrological features, in accordance with Section 4 of this Plan; and*

A Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conformity Plan has been undertaken to ensure that the natural heritage and hydrological features are protected. Planning staff is satisfied in this regard.

- e. Be limited in size and intensity to avoid cumulative impacts that may undermine the agricultural nature of the area.*

The overall size of the on-farm diversified use represents less than 1% of the total land area. The on-farm diversified use will make use of the entrance, driveway, gravel parking area, concrete pad, and barn, all which presently exist. All structures and parking areas are located in a relatively compact area in close proximity to each other thus limiting the impact of the development on the surrounding agricultural lands. The proposed development is to provide minimal regrading other than to meet Township standards. The proposal seeks to accommodate an average of approximately 90 guests with the maximum capacity of the structure to be approximately 190 guests. The operation is seasonal and to occur through the months of April to October with most of the events being hosted on weekends. In consideration of the size and scale of the operation, minimal site disturbance required due to the utilization of the existing barn, tent-pad, and disturbed parking area and the seasonality, and frequency of operations, any impacts will not undermine the surrounding agricultural operation.

Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposed development achieves the objectives of the On-Farm Diversified Use designation while also having appropriate regard with respect to compatibility with other agricultural land uses in the area. Overall, the on-farm diversified use is a land use that is secondary to the principal use on a farm property that is actively in agricultural operation. Planning Staff is satisfied that the proposed development conforms to the provisions of the Official Plan “Our King” (2019).

Zoning By-law 2022-053 (a.a), Zoning By-law for the Countryside Area

The subject property is currently zoned ‘ORL’ – Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage and ‘ORF- Oak Ridges Moraine Feature Protection to Schedule A17 of Zoning By-law #2022-053, as amended.

The proposed development is located solely within the ORL Zone and therefore, the ORL provisions are to apply to the proposed development. Planning staff note that the lands identified as ORF and the provisions of such zone as noted in Section 8 of Zoning By-law are to remain. The ORL Zone permits a single-family detached dwelling and its related accessory structures and uses, as well as agricultural uses and on-farm diversified uses. Where

permitted, on-farm diversified uses are subject to the Special Provisions outlined within Section 3 of the Zoning By-law. The provisions of 3.29 provide further provisions regarding the regulation of on-farm diversified uses within the Township.

The Applicant is proposing to introduce site-specific amendments to the ORL Zone of the subject property to permit an Agricultural Event Venue as an on-farm diversified use. An Agricultural Event Venue as defined by the Zoning By-law: *means a premises used as a recurring private place of assembly for hosting weddings and similar type events, and which may occur within a building or structure used as part of a principal agricultural use.* The use is excluded from the list of permitted On-Farm Diversified Uses within the By-law. The intent in doing so is to have applicants demonstrate that the proposal complies with Provincial, Regional and Municipal Guidelines and introduce site-specific provisions that are not otherwise captured by the general provisions for On-farm Diversified uses based on the characteristics of the specific proposal. The intent is to enable a site-specific review process through the Zoning By-law Amendment application to ensure that the use is appropriate for the subject lands and is compatible with surrounding uses and environment.

As part of the application to amend the Zoning By-law, the proposal seeks to introduce the following to the Zoning By-law:

All provisions of the ORL zone shall apply, except that:

- i) Notwithstanding the permitted uses of Table 8-2 an Agricultural Event Venue shall be permitted as an On-Farm Diversified Use and shall be located outside any Natural Heritage Feature and their respective Minimum Vegetation Protection Zone.*
- ii) Notwithstanding parking space requirements of Table 4-1, Parking, a minimum of 95 parking spaces shall be provided including up to 25 temporary spaces on a grassed area*
- iii) Notwithstanding Section 3.29 b) i), a maximum of one (1) tent structure associated with the On-Farm Diversified Use shall be permitted and shall have a gross floor area of no greater than 560 square metres.*

Planning Staff note that as per Section 3.29 b) i), of Zoning By-law it is stated that the “*maximum gross floor area of all buildings and structures shall be 20% of the area of operation provided no single building or structure shall have a gross floor area greater than 500.0 square metres*”. The proposed tent development which is to vary in size and have a maximum size of 560 square metres is to exceed this requirement by 60 square metres. Furthermore, Planning Staff note that the proposed parking requirements of Table 4-1 identifies that a total of 1 parking space is required for every 40 square metres of Gross Floor Area (GFA). In consideration of the existing barn and proposed tent which are to have a maximum GFA of 780 square metres, and therefore a required number of 19 spaces, the site-specific zoning by-law amendment seeks to increase the parking requirements to a maximum of 95 spaces to accommodate the maximum number of guests.

Planning Staff is satisfied that the proposed amendments are appropriate. The intent is to ensure that the Agricultural Event Venue is secondary to the principal agricultural use. Provisions related to parking requirements are provided based upon the demand of the proposed use as recommended by the Traffic Impact Study. The proposed development is to have a footprint of more than 500 square metres; however, Planning staff note that the proposal is to accommodate a temporary tent which will be constructed during the event season and removed during the winter months. To mitigate concerns with such structure, Staff have requested a Stormwater Management Brief which has been reviewed and deemed satisfactory for the purposes of the Zoning By-law Amendment. Additional detailed comments pertaining Stormwater Management and Grading are to be provided as part of the detailed design review during the Site Plan Application.

A copy of the Draft Zoning By-law is included within Appendix A for further reference.

Planning Discussion

OMFARA Guidelines on Permitted Uses

The *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas* are intended to assist municipalities interpret the policies related to uses identified by the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (PPS, 2014). Planning Staff note that although the PPS, 2014 is no longer in effect, the Guidelines remain relevant in assisting with interpretations of these matters.

The Guidelines identify the following criteria for a use to be considered an on-farm diversified use. These criteria form the basis for the similar policies of the Township's Official Plan:

1. *Located on a farm;*
2. *Secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property;*
3. *Limited in area;*
4. *Includes, but is not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses and uses that produce value-added agricultural products;*
5. *Shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.*

The proposal meets all of the above criteria for on-farm diversified uses. Staffs review has also taken into account the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance's Position Paper on Event Barns and provides the following considerations in further detail.

Compatibility to Existing Neighbourhood

The subject lands are surrounded by Rural Residential, Agricultural, Open Space and Commercial Uses. More specifically the subject property is adjacent to a dwelling to the south with a home occupation (real estate office), and agricultural lands directly to the north, west and east. The proposal is not to result in further alteration to the rural and agricultural landscape of the area.

An assessment of the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) policies has been provided in the Planning Justification Report (PJR) submitted by the Applicant in accordance with the

Township of King Official Plan. As per the PJR, screening of the study area in proximity to the Subject Lands was undertaken, noting two parcels with livestock including an equestrian facility and a meat distributor. The equestrian facility is located 1.6 kilometres from the proposed Agricultural Event Venue and the meat distributor is located approximately 3.1 kilometres from the proposed Agricultural Event Venue. The proposal is in compliance with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Formulae and Guidelines for Livestock Facility and Anaerobic Digester Odour Setbacks (e.g., Publication 853).

Natural Heritage / Ecology

The applicant submitted a Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Conformity Report to the satisfaction of Planning Staff. As per the findings of the Report, the construction of the vehicle parking and gravel pad have resulted in minimal vegetation and tree removal with no removal or alteration to any natural heritage features. No natural features are proposed to be removed, altered or impacted by the proposed portable structures (i.e. kitchen, and washroom facilities). The findings of the Report also state that no Key Natural Heritage Features or Hydrological Features were identified within the study area

Traffic and Parking

The applicant submitted a Traffic Impact Study which was reviewed to the satisfaction of the Township's Peer Review Engineer. The Study focused on the proposed development's impact on traffic generation to the surrounding road network, access connections, and parking supply. Overall, the proposed use is anticipated to operate at an acceptable level of service with minimal delays. The existing access to the event venue from Highway 27 is provided via an unsignalized T-intersection with all approaches consisting of a single lane. Access is expected to operate acceptably for current and future conditions assessed in the Traffic Study. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to amend the parking ratio requirement that is applicable to the subject property. As per Zoning By-law #2022-053, the minimum number of parking spaces required is 1.0 spaces per 40.0 m² of gross floor area. The proposal does meet the parking requirement as required by the Zoning By-law, however, based on the use and findings of the parking study, one vehicle should be provided for every two visitors. The amendment seeks to implement a minimum number of 95 parking spaces, three of which will be barrier free (accessible), based on the maximum capacity of the proposed use. York Region has reviewed the application and raised no traffic related concerns.

Noise

The outdoor tent element of the proposed use will be generally used for weddings or personal celebrations, seasonally which results in the potential for additional noise. The proposed development is surrounded by existing residential developments to the south and west which are located at approximately 160 metres or greater. There are vacant lands to the north and east with nearby residential development being located a minimum of 400 metres away. A Noise Impact Assessment was provided to present an analysis of the anticipated future sound levels from the development. Identified noise sources include road traffic, and stationary noise sources such as emergency generators, fans, delivery trucks and loudspeakers/music. The findings of the Noise Impact Assessment state that all on-site noise sources are expected to

be compatible with the surrounding environment and at acceptable levels. To minimize impacts from the noise sources, the following control measures are recommended by the applicants Noise Consultant:

- 1.) Restrictions are applied for use of audio, outdoor speakers to be operated higher volumes until 11 PM and lower volumes until 1 AM;
- 2.) Any speakers should be contained within the proposed tent area and not pointed in the direction of the nearest neighbouring properties to the south and west. The generator is to be located at the northeast corner behind the washrooms, and mechanical equipment is to be located at the north and northeast corner of the tent; and
- 3.) Implementation of a speaker volume control device.

These noise mitigation measures are to be implemented through a Site Plan Agreement and the applicant will be required to obtain a Noise Exemption Permit.

5. Financial Considerations

The property on 14855 Highway 27 is currently assessed at \$1,502,000 FTEP Farmland and \$1,414,800 RTEP Residential as of May 13, 2025, the account is current.

The original barn would have not paid development charges as it would be considered exempted if used for the farm or farm related businesses. By converting the barn to a commercial business for weddings or events would trigger commercial development charges. The cost for non-residential development charge with unserviced areas is \$650.67 per square metre as of today's rates. A change of use building permit would be required which would trigger the development charges payable.

All associated fees have been submitted in addition, any external costs incurred by the Township through the processing and review of this application will be recovered by the applicant in accordance with the Township's standard practice and the acknowledgement through the application form.

6. Alignment to Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) was adopted by Council on June 12, 2023. The CSP reflects the priorities of upmost importance to the community and defines the obligations and commitments of the Township of King to its citizens and to the public. The CSP is aligned with the Townships long-term vision defined in the "Our King" Official Plan. The CSP also aims to ensure that staff initiatives focus on and work towards supporting King's Vision, Mission and Values.

This report is in alignment with the CSP's Priority Area(s), and/or associated Objective(s) and/or Key Results(s):

Priority Area: Complete Communities

Objective: Enrich community well-being and make King the ideal place to live, work and play.

Staff's review of this Application has taken these objectives into consideration as part of the overall planning and design of the development and through consideration of input received throughout the review process.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this Report is to provide recommendations to Council with respect to the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment Application to permit an agricultural event venue as a permitted accessory, on-farm diversified use and adopt site-specific zoning permissions to facilitate the proposal. Planning Staff is satisfied that the review has sufficiently advanced, with further detailed design review to occur as an element of Staff's review of the Site Plan Application that is to be submitted should the proposal be approved. The Application is consistent with the objectives of the Provincial Planning Statement, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Region of York's Official Plan, and the Township's Official Plan. Planning Staff respectfully recommend that Council support the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment Application.

8. Attachments

Appendix A - Draft Zoning By-law

Appendix B - Site Plan

Prepared by:

Alexander Gambin

Planner, Planning Division

Recommended by:

Stephen Naylor

Director of Growth Management Services

Approved for submission by:

Daniel Kostopoulos

Chief Administrative Officer