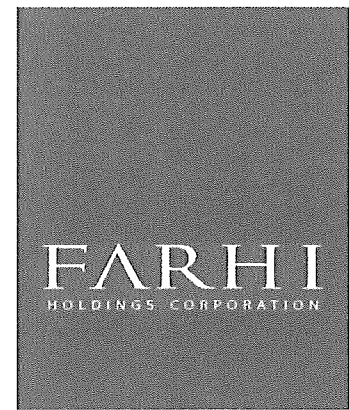


November 4th, 2021

Middlesex Centre Municipal Council
10227 Ilderton Road
Ilderton, Ontario, N0M 2A0

Delivered via email only



Re: Middlesex Centre Official Plan Review 2021

Dear Members of Council,

Middlesex's population has surged in recent years thanks to an influx of families from the Greater Toronto Area and neighbouring urban centres. This has put pressure on the housing market in Middlesex and has resulted in a major housing shortage.

A recent report by the Smart Prosperity Institute analyzed housing demand in Ontario over the next 10 years based on Ontario Ministry of Finance projections. It concluded that Ontario would need to build 1 million net new homes due to the formation of new households.

Middlesex Census Division is expected to build 35,871 net new homes out of which 28,215 of these will be in low and medium density housing units.¹ If Ontario Ministry of Finance population projections prove accurate, the level of new family formation in low and medium-density housing will be more than **double that of generational turnover.**

At Farhi Holdings Corporation (FHC), we believe that we can contribute as a housing provider in a manner that assists the Municipality of Middlesex Centre in addressing the surging demand for housing. That is why we have been an active and a deeply engaged participant in the Municipality's Official Plan Review process.

With this in mind, and after carefully reviewing our own land assets in relation to the Poplar Hill-Coldstream Settlement Area, **we are requesting that you consider the inclusion of our property (located at the northwest corner of Ilderton Road) within the Settlement Area.** Specifically:

- 24499 Nairn Road: Concession 9, Part of Lots 11 and 12 (Lobo); Roll No. 393900004013000

¹ <https://institute.smartprosperity.ca/publications/growing-number-households>

- Unaddressed Parcel: Concession 9, South Part of Lt 10 (Lobo); Roll No. 393900004012900

The purpose of this Settlement Area inclusion request is to demonstrate the strategic alignment between an eastern extension of the Poplar Hill-Coldstream Hamlet Settlement Area to Nairn Road and the guiding objectives of the Official Plan Review.

FHC is supportive of an expansion to this Settlement Area boundary to include properties situated on the north side of the Ilderton Road corridor. In this respect, our representatives have had related discussions with municipal staff and project consultants regarding development opportunities within this area. Through this dialogue, we have emphasized that sustained, significant housing market demand in Middlesex Centre warrants additional development opportunities in the vicinity of Poplar Hill-Coldstream. **We have also clearly expressed that our lands would be designed in a manner that helps accommodate this growth pressure, supports local community services and public facilities, and promotes a compact, efficient land use pattern.**

FHC has plans to develop a community that exhibits 80 homes, generally located in the southern portion of the subject lands, oriented to the internal lake features giving homeowners spectacular views. **The design includes open and green space areas to promote pedestrian oriented, passive recreation and naturalization opportunities that will be distinctive and opportunities for community interaction.**

The planned community **will protect the environmental integrity of the site and adjacent lands.** The proposed project also facilitates the possibility of **linking the new subdivision to the beautiful trail system within the Coldstream Conservation Area** which is widely known. The features will generate a cohesive, attractive, well-connected, and safe neighbourhood.

Merits for the Settlement Inclusion Request:

Based on our preliminary review of the development strategy for the aforementioned FHC lands, we have identified several key merits for including these properties within the Poplar Hill-Coldstream Hamlet Settlement Area:

- The proposed 80 single detached dwelling units would **generate \$845,360 in Development Charges (DC) for the Municipality**, based on the Rural Area (unserved) charge applied to the 2021 DC schedule. It is estimated that the development will **generate \$960,000 in annual property taxes for Middlesex Centre**. Substantial revenue would also be realized locally through this development, in part, by home construction activities and building permit fees.

- Design concepts being developed for these lands are intended to integrate a mix of residential types, recreational areas, public amenities, and open space. It is fully **envisioned that the residential forms intended for these lands will be compatible with the surrounding development character and reflective of low-rise residential types found in Poplar Hill-Coldstream;**
- In support of efficient land use, typical residential lots will be designed to the size needed to accommodate individual water/wastewater facilities (including contingency areas). The internal street layout will also be designed to **promote a compact development pattern.** Multiple-unit housing (e.g., semi-detached dwellings, street townhouses) could also be integrated into the site design to (1) help realize further land use efficiencies and (2) broaden housing choice within the Poplar Hill-Coldstream community. Regardless of the mix of housing provided, we are fully confident that the naturalized setting of this project will be highly attractive to future residents and will help satisfy local market demands;
- **Based on preliminary comments from SBM, it is anticipated that a servicing strategy can be developed to accommodate the proposed residential dwellings on private services.** The design layout for these lands will be informed by technical studies addressing servicing requirements (e.g., hydrogeological assessments, stormwater management analyses). It is anticipated that these lands can be serviced for low density residential development in an efficient, orderly manner, taking advantage of existing municipal infrastructure where available. It is also anticipated that infrastructure required to accommodate the FHC proposal can be provided in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner, and in accordance with municipal standards;
- Historically, the FHC lands have predominantly been used for aggregate extraction. These resources are largely depleted, and aggregate extraction has ceased on the properties. **Further, most of these lands are not actively cultivated and have not been used for agricultural purposes for several decades. Integrating these properties into the settlement area boundary would therefore take only a minimal amount of agricultural land out of production.** Moreover, these lands form part of a cluster of non-agricultural development within the Coldstream East development area that includes primarily rural residences, passive recreational areas, and open space. By contrast, lands south of this development area fronting Ilderton Road are more representative of the agricultural resource described in the Preamble to Section 2.0 of the Middlesex Centre Official Plan. In this regard, these lands south of Ilderton Rd are comprised primarily of large farm properties under active cultivation;

- Development proposals for the FHC lands will be informed by environmental studies evaluating natural heritage system features and functions within, and in proximity to, these properties;
- Development of the subject lands would occur in a phased approach to ensure that new development advances in a coordinated, contiguous, and efficient manner.
- The housing types and open space features planned for the FHC lands will contribute to, and benefit from, the range of community-oriented facilities and local amenities within Poplar Hill-Coldstream. **Additionally, development of these lands will support existing public service facilities within the community, most notably Valleyview Central Public School which has been reported to be under capacity.** In light of this, we fully expect that this development will integrate effectively with the existing development setting and will further enhance this complete community;

At a time when Middlesex is experiencing a crisis-level housing shortage and when, post-Covid, people are looking for home ownership opportunities outside of large urban centres, this project offers several excellent advantages for Middlesex Centre.

A recent Royal LePage survey revealed that 37% of boomers — those born between 1946 and 1965 — are considering purchasing a new property within the next five years. More than half — 59% — said they would purchase a detached house if they were to buy, and only 19% said they would choose a condominium. **Fifty-six percent said they would consider moving to a rural or recreational region.** And 25% said they would consider purchasing a larger home than the one they currently have.²

According to a study conducted by RE/MAX, **32 per cent of Canadians no longer want to live in urban centres, choosing instead to live in rural or suburban communities.** Based on the findings, 44 per cent of respondents said they would rather have a home with more space for personal amenities, such as a pool, balcony, or a large yard.³

“We’ve seen a lot of anecdotal evidence since the summer that **households are considering significant lifestyle changes by relocating to less-dense cities and neighbourhoods,**” says Christopher Alexander, Executive Vice President and Regional Director, RE/MAX of Ontario-Atlantic Canada. **“This has sparked unprecedented sales this year in suburban and rural parts of Canada, and we expect this trend to continue...”**⁴

Supply of large estate lots within planned communities in the region are low. There is a real

²<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/royal-lepage-survey-3-2-million-boomers-in-canada-considering-buying-a-home-within-the-next-five-years-862285853.html>

³<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/one-third-of-canadians-no-longer-want-to-live-in-urban-centres-survey-finds-1.5072905>

⁴ <https://blog.remax.ca/toronto-housing-market-outlook/>

yearning for country living and there is real demand from prospective home buyers who are looking for a unique opportunity to build their new home in Middlesex Centre.

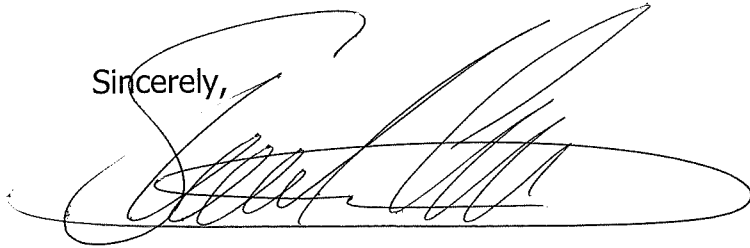
FHC has already received several expressions of interest from home builders in the region for the proposed development in Coldstream.

In light of these considerations and our own, more detailed assessment of local market conditions, servicing considerations and planning matters, we are confident that the FHC lands discussed in this letter should be included within the Poplar Hill-Coldstream Hamlet Settlement Area as part of the Official Plan review.

We also would like to emphasize that FHC is committed to advancing development on these lands in the **near-term**.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments relating to the Official Plan Review and welcome future discussions and dialogue respecting our request to include the subject lands within the Poplar Hill-Coldstream settlement boundary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shmuel Farhi', written over a horizontal line.

Shmuel Farhi
President, Farhi Holdings Corporation