

2022 Amaranth Election
Public Presentation and Discussion
of Chris Gerrits Mayoral Platform



Presentation Outline;

6:30pm – Welcome Remarks

6:35pm – Presentation of Platform

7:00pm – Question Period

7:30pm – Conclusion of Meeting

Welcome!

- Long time Amaranth resident and taxpayer
- Grew up on a farm (not a farmer) north of 20 sideroad on 10th Line
- Went to elementary school and high school in Shelburne, University in Guelph
- I have owned and operated small/medium businesses in the Township and my wife and I have raised 3 children here

My Platform

“A Contract with the People”

- My platform should be considered a list of priorities
- I will work with Council as a whole to identify our collective priorities at the start of the term
- No single member of Council has the ability to implement their platform without debate and agreement of Council
- My platform should be considered a living document. It can and will change over time as the situation changes within the Township.

Fiscal Responsibility

- Council has a duty to spend tax dollars wisely.
 - Council must behave in a manner that doesn't result in expensive claims for their behaviour.
- Staff have always worked to ensure Amaranth is making the most of grant opportunities.
 - Most of our capital projects in the last 8 years have been partially funded through grants.
- Council needs to ensure that engineering has been completed on 1-2 projects in advance as grants are often given to 'shovel ready' projects.
- Council needs to make sure there are reserve funds set aside to cover the portion of the projects not covered by grant monies.

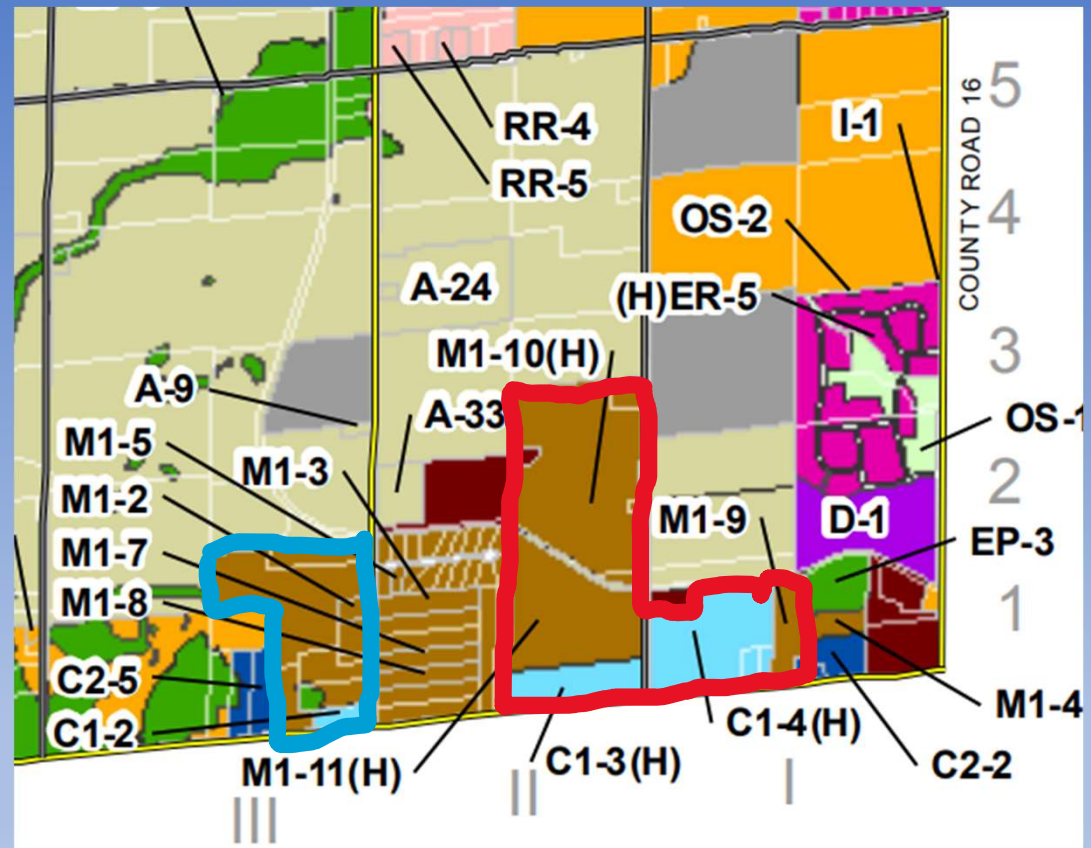


2022 BUDGET

Approved February 24, 2022

Growing the Tax Base

- Best way to grow the tax base is through commercial/industrial development
 - Commercial/Industrial tax rate is approximately 2.2x the tax rate of residential, often without the same increase in our fees to outside boards and committees.
- Residential growth in currently designated growth areas is fine as people need to live somewhere.
 - Residential development cannot be seen as a silver bullet solution to grow the tax base.
- There is a large amount of commercial/industrial zoned lands in the Farmington Area
 - Council should prioritize working with developers to ensure these developments can come online as soon as possible to generate taxes.
- There is a large acreage of currently undeveloped lands owned by OPTrust (red outline) as well as the West side of County Road 11 (blue outline) owned by others.



Growing the Tax Base (pt 2)

- Ground breaking at OPTrust Lands
 - KalTire will occupy a 410,000 sq ft facility being constructed by Blackwood Partners & OPTrust
- Council has worked with the developer to remove all the conditions for a second Global Auction House to also relocate the to site (Official Announcement forthcoming)
- Amaranth staff's work with the developer on this can be used as a template for other large developments within the Township;
 - Staff coordinate a weekly development meeting with the developer, staff, 3rd party consultants and the County (at the cost of the developer) to go over issues in near real time.
- These two developments alone will generate \$800,000 in additional annual taxation revenue and \$1.5 million in one time Development Charges for the Township
- Full buildout of the OPTrust lands could bring nearly \$2 million in additional annual taxes. Further development in the Farmington area could bring that number to over \$3 million in additional annual tax revenue.



Transparency and Community Engagement

- These two are linked to one another. If you have a truly active and engaged community then you have no choice but to be transparent.
 - When I ran in 2014 I identified Community Engagement and Youth Engagement as two things I wanted to increase.
 - Over the last two terms I, with Council approval, been able to add two new committees to the Township at no cost which has given 25 members of the community, including 6 youth members under the age of 18, the chance to provide input into the direction of the Township.
- There are areas that have historically been “under engaged” in the Township, specifically the North Amaranth area around Shelburne including Sylvanwood Estates, Devonleigh Estates and Country Meadows.
 - I would like to create a North Amaranth Committee group to meet on a regular basis (at no cost to the Township) to allow for residents in that area to bring forth questions/concerns/ideas to Council specific to their area.
 - Similarly I would like to create a Committee for South Amaranth which would include residents within Laurel and the Crago Rd subdivision as well as rural residents.
- As our Township ages it is important to look at ways to support seniors in their homes so they can stay in their homes as long as possible. While not focussing on health care (Provincial matter). I would like to create a Senior Advisory Committee.
 - Committee will provide input to Council on matters important to the aging population.
- Council does not go into closed session an excessive amount but I would move to only see matters strictly required to be addressed in closed session (i.e. legal matters including tax sales, LPAT/OLT negotiations as well as HR matters).

Transparency and Community Engagement (pt 2)

- No discussion of Council matters prior to the meeting resulting in a block of members predetermining the outcome of a matter prior to debate in the public eye. This has happened far too much in the past and is undemocratic and runs counter to the Municipal Act.
- In the past I pushed for and received support from Council to hold a final budget meeting to present the budget to the public as a special meeting.
 - Council also agreed to do the same the next year due but that was cancelled due to restrictions.
 - I would like to see an evening final budget meeting included in our list of annual meetings and not as a “special meeting” which allows members of Council to charge the taxpayer additional costs if they choose.
- Community Outreach
 - If elected, I will hold a minimum of three (3) Mayoral Town Hall meetings per year.
 - Why 3?
 - Location?
- Youth
 - I would create an Amaranth Youth Committee comprised of teens and young adults aged 15 – 25 to provide input on matters within the Township important to their demographic.
 - I see this group “charting their own course” and advising Council what is important to them rather than having Council provide a mandate to this Committee.
 - Over the last two terms I have volunteered over 1,000 hours of my time providing an opportunity for the youth of Amaranth to have recreational opportunities.
 - Rented the gym at Laurelwoods (at my own cost) 2- 6 hours per week to allow for drop in recreation and teen drop in basketball (and sometimes volleyball).

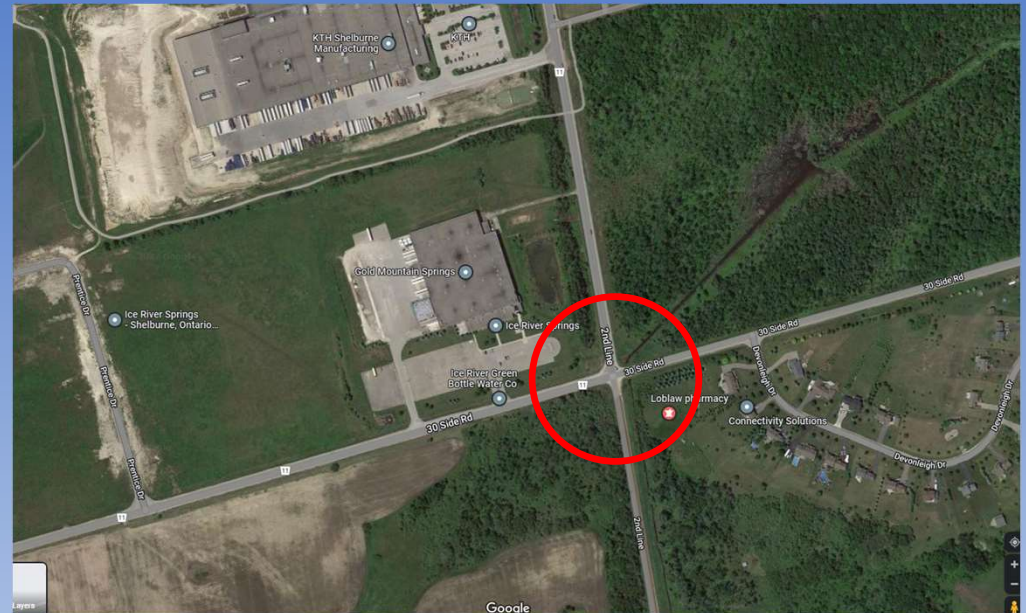
Traffic Management & Safety



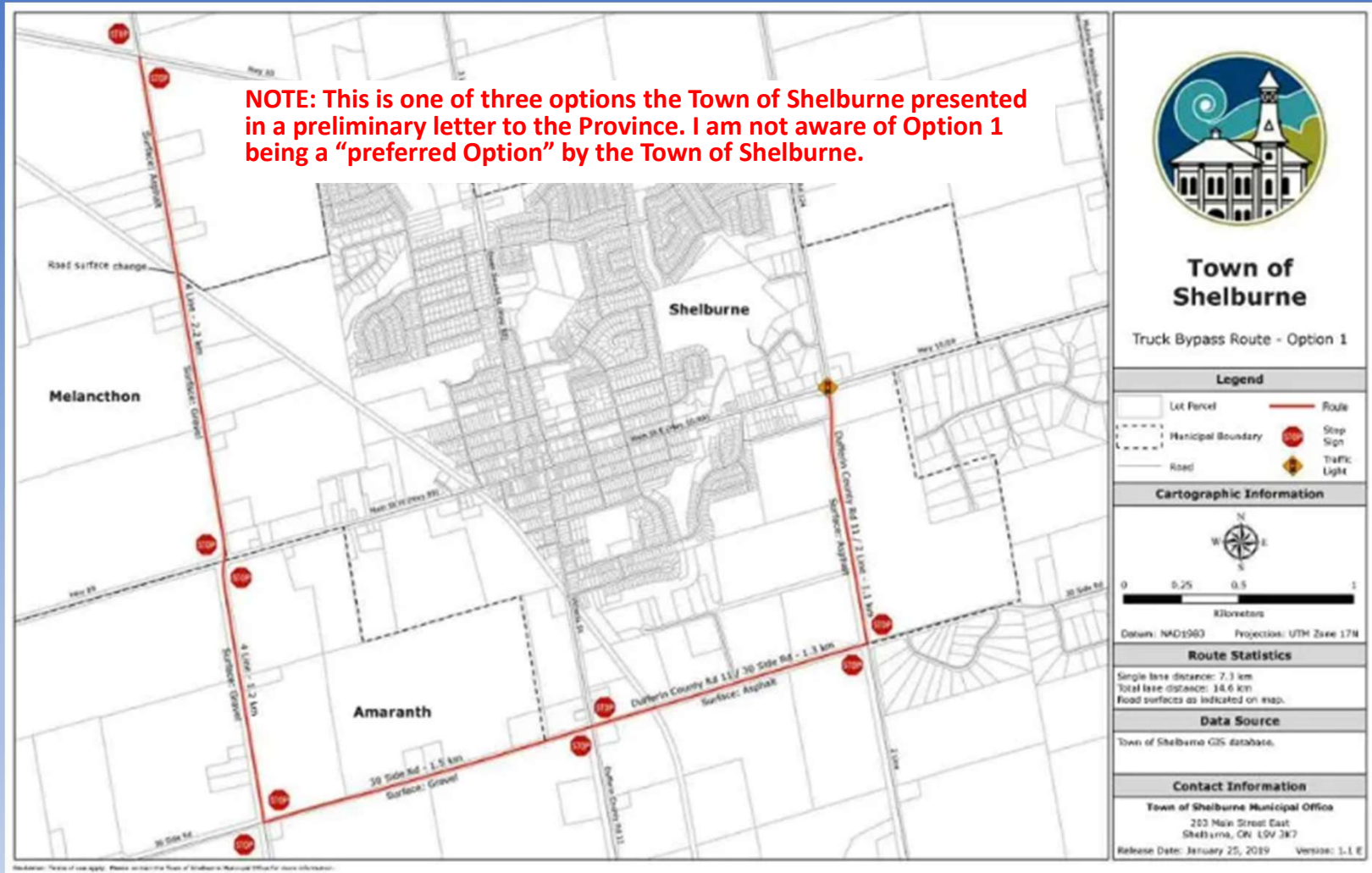
- A lot of discussion at candidate meetings about traffic management and safety concerns.
- One intersection in particular (Cty Rd 12 and 20 Sdrd) has a lot of 'near misses' and some fatalities.
 - Council has added the overhead flashing lights and additional street lights to illuminate the intersection.
 - Problem persists, council has sent a request to the County to install sign to make this a 4-way intersection

Traffic Around Shelburne

- There have been concerns in the past with traffic at the 2nd Line & 30th Side Rd/Cty Rd 11 intersection
 - Many trucks using this route to get around Shelburne
 - Intersection is a 2-way stop in the E-W direction.
 - Concerned from residents approaching intersection from the south with trucks not stopping at the intersection
 - Additional concerns for bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Council approached the County to get additional traffic control.
 - County indicated it wasn't warranted at the time.
 - I would like to revisit this and make it a 4-way stop for safety.
- This problem will only be exacerbated if the Town of Shelburne is successful in their attempt to locate a bypass along this route.

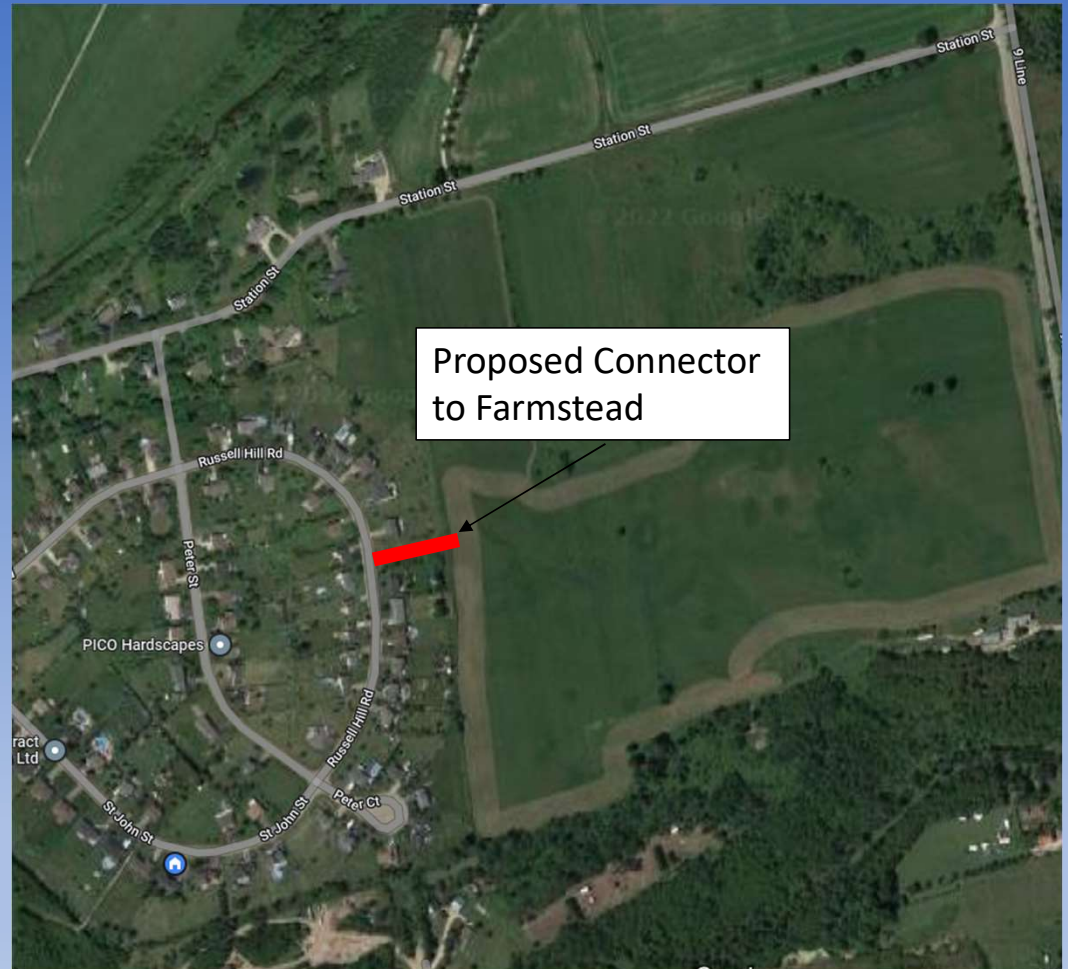


Proposed Shelburne Bypass Route Option #1

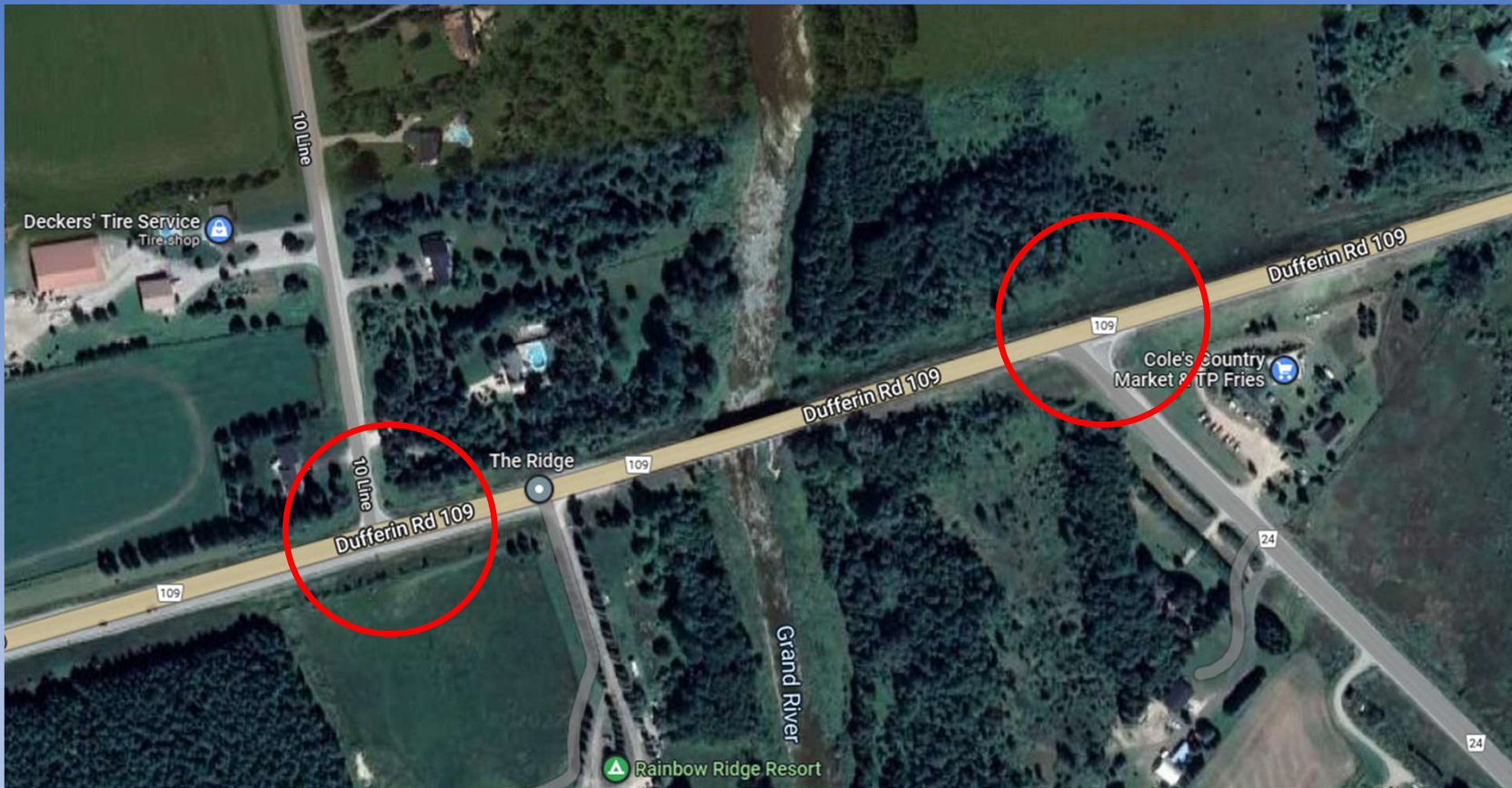


Traffic Around Waldemar

- As development occurs around Waldemar there will be additional traffic concerns to deal with.
- CONCERN – Speed. I have been trying to have physical traffic calming measures (i.e. speed bumps) installed to reduce speed along Station Street and Mill Street in Waldemar.
- SOLUTION – I will continue to work with emergency services on a speed bump solution that works for them and also meets the needs of the community.
- CONCERN - Connector road will cause a 'short cut' for traffic from 9th line to Station Street (see map)
- SOLUTION – I have asked the developer if they can proceed without the connector road and that is up to the discretion of Council.

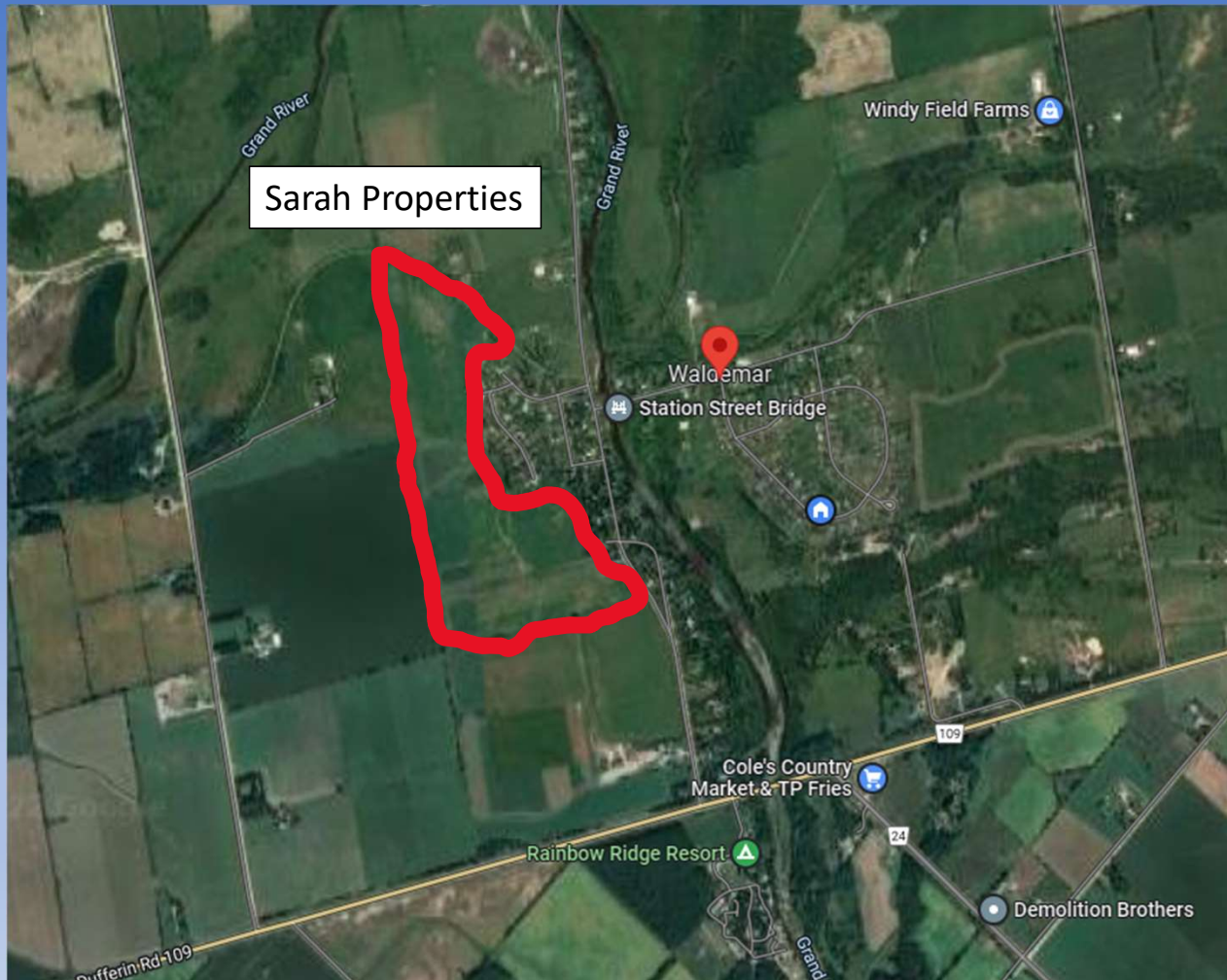


Traffic Around Waldemar



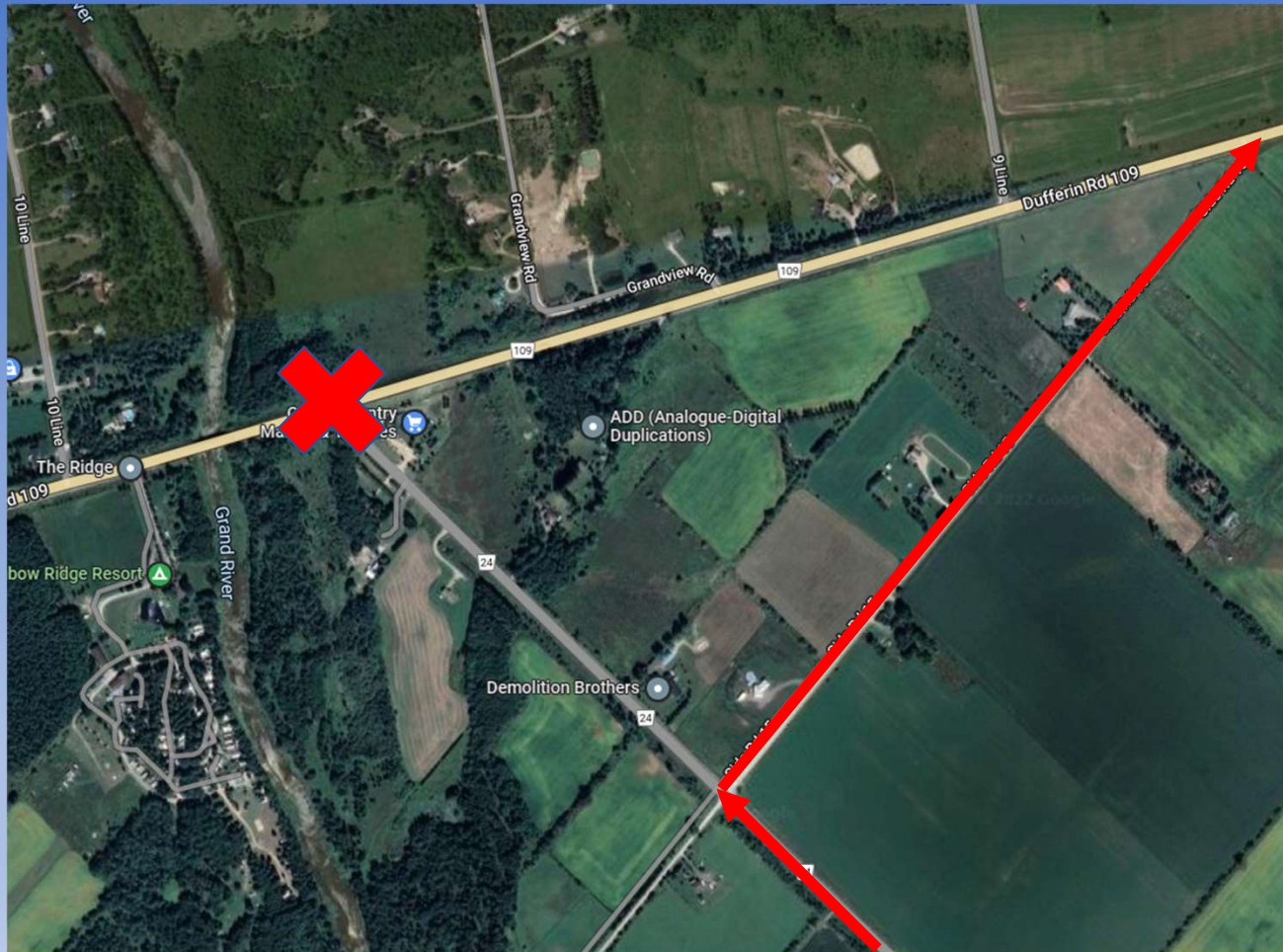
- Access to 109 from 10th Line is dangerous and will only get worse
- Access to 109 from the South at 24 is also dangerous

Waldemar Traffic



- Development of the Sarah property lands (regardless of final unit count) will increase traffic flow through Mill Street and eventually to 109 access at 10th Line.
- CONCERN – Poor sight lines and increased volume at 109 & 10th Line will increase problems at an already dangerous intersection.
- SOLUTION – Grand Valley is developing most of the lands on the West of Townline and have expressed the desire to improve the Townline & 109 access. I would like to work with the Town of Grand Valley and the County to see if there is a way to find a solution that will direct traffic from the new development and possibly existing traffic to the west to access 109 at a safer location than 10th Line
- CONCERN – 109/24 intersection is also unsafe. On County Council I will look for alternatives to improve that intersection as well.

Waldemar Traffic



- One possible solution would be to close the current intersection and convert East Garafraxa Side Road 15 to an extension of 24 to access 109 East of 9th line where site lines are significantly better.
- There could also be an option through that work to align it with 9th line and possibly put in a signalized intersection

NOTE: This is not something I have discussed with Amaranth staff or Council nor have I discussed with the County or East Garafraxa.

Planning

- In order for a municipality to grow reasonably and responsibly we need a robust and enforceable Official Plan
 - Our current OP was developed in 2004
 - Minor edits were made over the years as recently as 2018
 - A full review has not been completed in nearly 19 years
 - A review was commenced this term and then cancelled when nearly completed by Council
- There are a number of issues that have been identified with the OP that can be remedied with an OP review;
 - Surplus farm dwelling severances. This is currently a right under the OP despite the majority of Council and a large portion of the public not agreeing with the policy.
 - MDS I – this is a policy that impacts old severances and renders them undevelopable. This can be remedied through an OP review.
 - The taking of road allowances. There have been a number of people vocally opposed to giving up road allowance during the severance process. One way to change that practice is through an OP review if the will of the public and Council deems it necessary.

OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF AMARANTH



OFFICE CONSOLIDATION
JUNE 2018

This Office Consolidation has been prepared for the purposes of convenience only. Please refer to the Official Plan and any amendments to the Official Plan as approved by the Minister and/or the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board as the case may be to ensure complete accuracy.

Protection of Agricultural Land & Promotion of Agri-Business

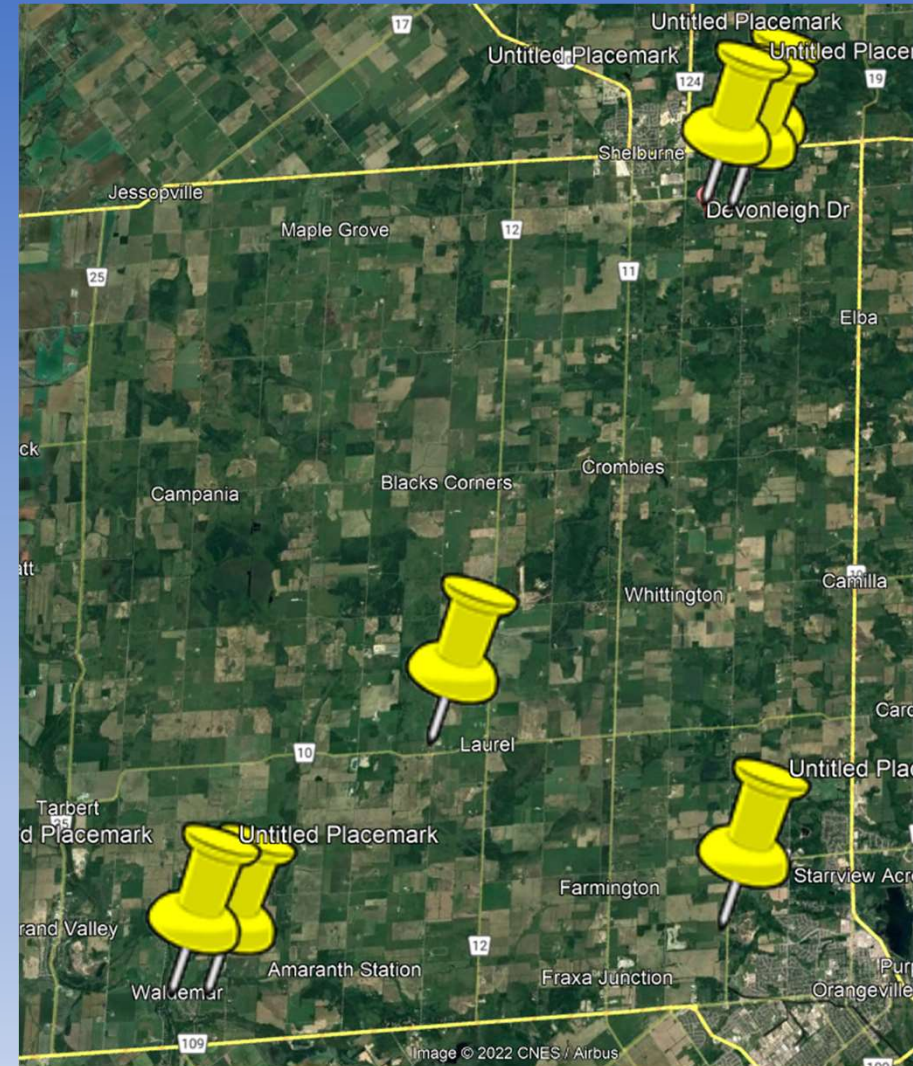
- As mayor I would like to have a delegated representative from Council attend the Dufferin Federation of Agriculture regular meetings.
 - As a delegated representative they would be able to comment on Amaranth policies and bring back reports and communication from DFOA.
- Surplus farm dwelling severances.
 - As mentioned previously this is currently allowed under our OP but has the unintended consequence of reducing the amount of live/work farm properties available creating a barrier to entry for the next generation of farmers.
- Develop a plan to maintain roadside ditches
 - In conversation this past term with the DFOA I asked them what one thing the Township could do to help out farmers and agri business and the answer was “maintain ditches”.
 - Currently our ditches (not municipal drains) are cleaned out on an ad hoc basis without a real plan in place.
 - I would like to see Council and staff develop a plan to identify how much ditch cleaning can be accomplished in house during any given year and develop a 10 year plan for ditch cleaning.
- Agricultural Impact Assessments
 - During this term Council moved to include an Agricultural Impact Assessment as a requirement for severance in the rural area of Amaranth (at the cost of the applicant). This takes the interpretation of impacts on agriculture out of the hands of Council and into the hands of industry leaders.
 - I would like to see this practice continue through the next term of Council and possibly solidify the parameters for what is to be included in an AIA.



Photo Credit Bennington Hills Farm

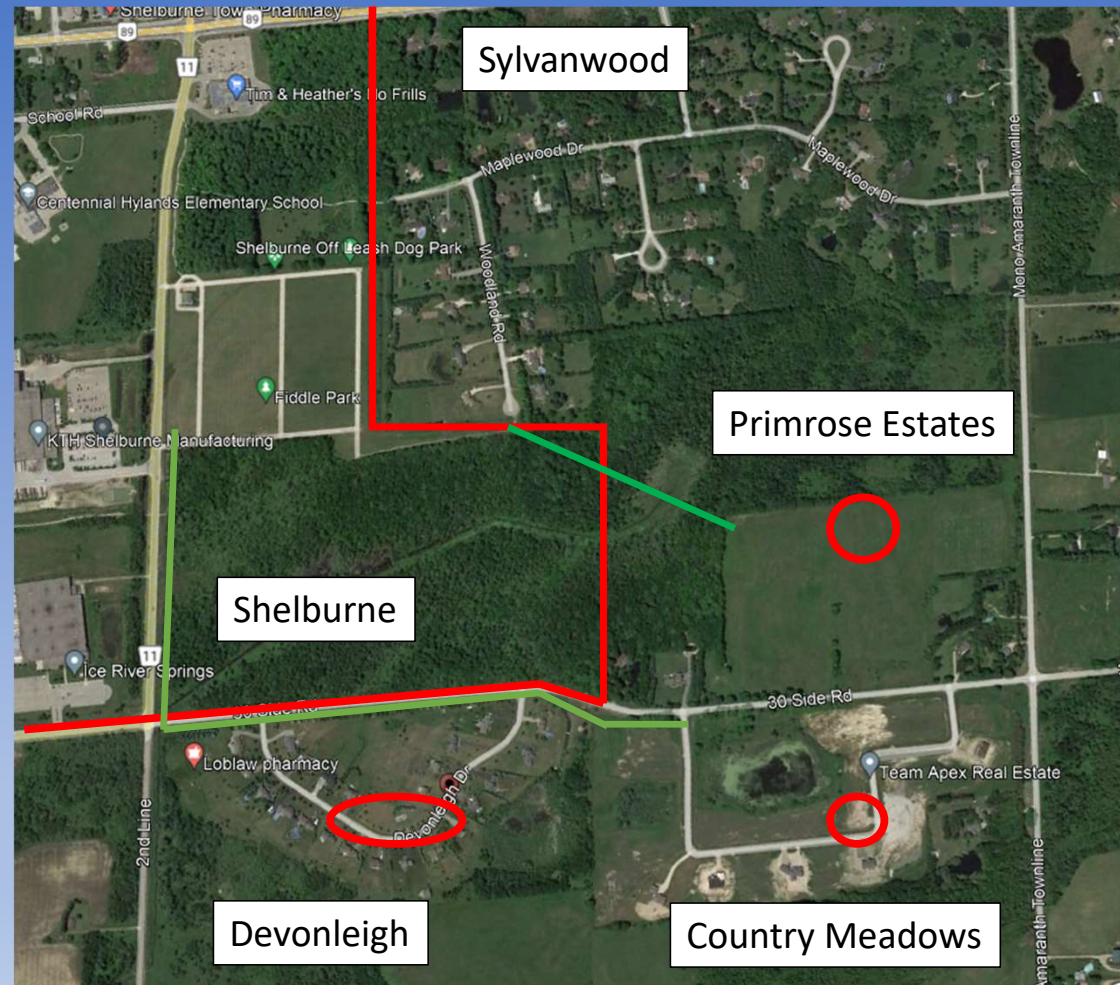
Parks & Recreation

- We currently have at least seven (7) Parks and Recreation spaces within the Township (built and in construction)
 - We have minimal budget allocation for maintenance beyond grass cutting and no budget for improvements.
 - There has been no long term planning when looking at Parks.
- A lot of the spaces are disjointed and disconnected from anything else.
 - Great space at the Amaranth Township Hall
 - Probably under utilized due to location



Parks & Recreation

- Amaranth North
 - Three park spaces (2 built, 1 under construction)
 - All 3 disjointed, no interconnection
- Active Transport/Trails
 - Also no way to safely travel to Shelburne from Devonleigh, Country Meadows and future Primrose Estates
 - Sylvanwood has access to Fiddle Park via trail system.
- I would like to strike a North Amaranth Parks & Recreation Committee to provide input on what the community would like to see for the area.
- It doesn't make sense to develop certain things when services available adjacent (i.e. dog park).
 - Work with Town to develop a trail connector to Fiddle Park so people can access Town without walking or biking on the very busy road
 - Will allow for safer access for teens, youth, adult and the elderly to Town services



Parks & Recreation

Through a request from a local resident (Kerry Gillard), I was granted approval for form a Waldemar Parks Committee in 2017. A call for volunteers was issued in the Spring of 2017 and the Committee was formed and began working on a plan to improve the park.

A report was submitted and presented to Council on April 18th, 2018 by the Committee and outlined a number of proposed short and medium term goals were laid out. They included;

- Improve drainage along trail (completed)
- Replace playground mulch (completed)
- Trim trees along trail (completed)
- Remove some trees at the front of the property to improve sight lines from the road.
- The installation of a covered pavilion which could be used for a skating pad in the winter and for community events in the Spring/Summer/Fall.
- Improvement of the parking area which would include expansion of the parking area to the north by removing trees and filling a small area.
- Upgrade the backstop and fencing around the ball diamond.
- Additional facilities such as a baseball net and a beach volleyball court.
- Surrounding the play structure with rubberized material

The report even provided cost estimates and suggestions for grants that could be applied for. Unfortunately there has never been Council buy in for park improvements.

Waldemar Parks Committee Report to Council April 18th, 2018



Parks & Recreation - Funding

- We need to plan for park reserves to fund future park maintenance and upgrades
- The Township can also leverage relationships with developers to fund park developments
 - I suggested to Council that we should go with a reduced park block which allowed us to negotiate a \$140,000 payment from the developer of the Farmstead subdivision.
 - In my opinion this should be utilized for Park improvements.
- Similarly, we negotiated a significant cash payment from the developer of Primrose Estates on the north side of 30 sideroad at Mono-Amaranth Townline in exchange for a reduced park space in their development (amount TBD).
 - I will propose that this money be set aside for park improvements in that area. Specific improvements will be sought from the public but some suggestions include a basketball court that can be used for skating in the winter and a trail connection to Fiddle Park so that people can safely walk or bike into Shelburne without having to utilize the busy roads.

Other?

- Parking bylaw/Tow bylaw?
 - We currently do not have a mechanism to tow people parked on road allowances
- Property standards?
 - We have seen a sharp increase in people 'hoarding' or storing junk on their properties.
- Home occupation?
 - We have an allowance for home occupation but the definition could be tightened to prevent businesses operating in areas where they are not compatible with other land uses.

Final Thoughts

- It is important to remember that this is an overview of my opinion on what I think is important based on discussions with various tax payers.
- One member of council doesn't have the ability to implement policies without the majority of council in agreement.
- Four years is also a long time and there will obviously be the need to change or refocus which is the reason for the Mayoral Town Hall meetings in increased community engagement.
- Decisions and direction will always be made with the best interests of the Township in mind in consultation with tax payers.

Thanks for coming!



QUESTIONS?