



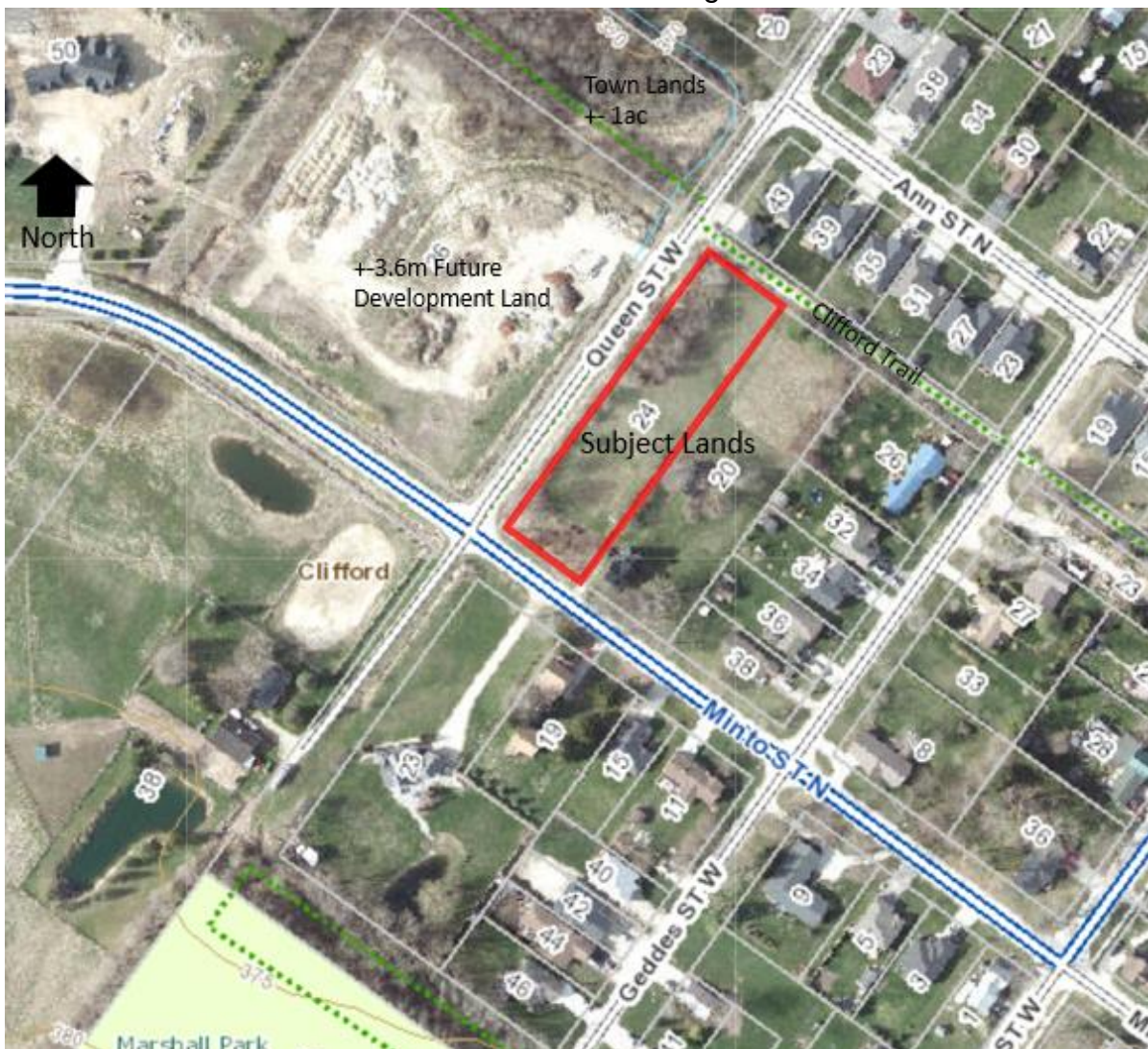
**TRITON
ENGINEERING
SERVICES
LIMITED**
Consulting Engineers

Memorandum

DATE:	December 10, 2023
TO:	Josh & Alf Thiessen
FROM:	Bill White, Senior Planner
RE:	Proposed Rezoning, 16 Street Townhomes., Queen St. W., Clifford, Town of Minto
FILE:	P2023-03 Thiessen Rezoning

Introduction:

Triton Engineering Services Ltd. is providing planning advice to Joshua Thiessen (and family) on a proposed rezoning to allow up to 16 Street Townhomes on a 0.4 hectare property at Queen Street West in the former Village of Clifford, Town of Minto. The property shown in the map below has 120.7 meters frontage on Queen Street West, 33.5 meters of depth along Minto Road North and abuts the Clifford Trail to the northeast. The 16 Street Townhomes would be built in four unit clusters on each of four blocks of land to be created through future severance.



Subject and Surrounding Lands:

The subject lands are vacant and slope about one meter along the lot frontage, and 1.5 to one meter along the lot depth. There are trees and scrub bushes on sections of the lot frontage on Minto and Queen Street. Queen Street asphalt surface is poor condition with no curb and gutter. A small section of 150mm diameter watermain is situated northeast of the site. The nearest sanitary sewer is on Ann Street, where residential development occurred in the last 5-10 years.

Across from the subject lands on Queen Street is a +-3.6 acre undeveloped rural site containing one single family home with some fill, and hay storage, along with a private drive to a large home to the north on Queen Street. Across from the Clifford Trail on Queen Street the Town owns a one acre parcel (not including unopened road allowances). At the corner of Ann and Queen Street there is a small four unit rental apartment building.

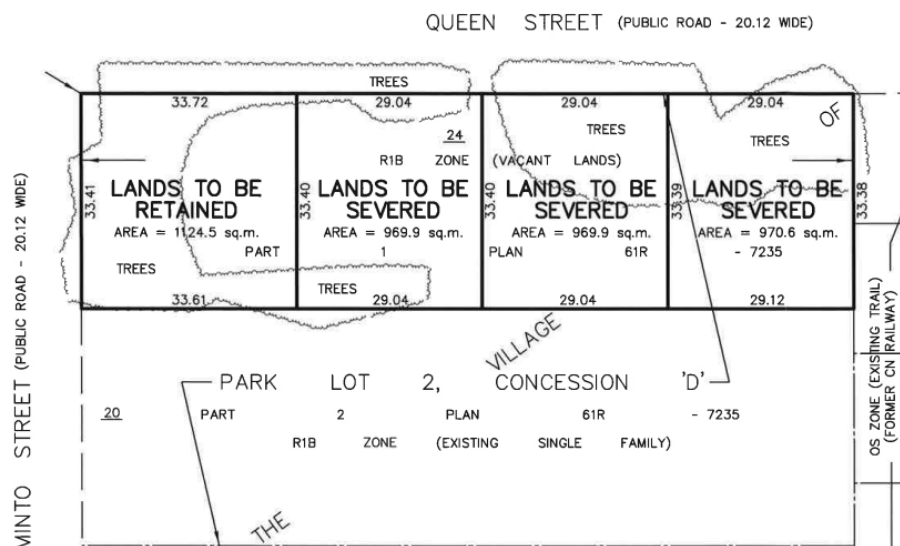
To address the poor road condition and plan for future development, preliminary design to reconstruct Queen Street from Ann Street to Minto Road was prepared. Road reconstruction would allow the subject lands, the Town property and 3.6 acre site across Queen Street West to be developed with full municipal services. The Town's 2024 budget does not specify Queen Street capital work, but there are funds planned for future development Clifford in 2025. For work to occur in 2024, a front-ending agreement could be considered where the applicants finance their share of the cost with terms for benefitting owners to contribute.

Abutting the subject lands to the south is a long narrow lot, similar in area to the subject lands, containing a residence with access to Minto Road North. West of the intersection of Queen Street West and Minto Road North are two undeveloped rural farm properties located within the urban service boundary of Clifford. At the end of Queen Street there is a tree covered natural area just under 4 acres in size named Marshall Park.

Proposed Development:

The proposed 16 unit street townhouse project would be built on four blocks of land to be created by severance as illustrated in the adjacent sketch.

The applicants propose bungalow units with building envelopes 62 feet (19 m) depth, 21 feet (6.5 m) wide and a maximum ground floor area of 1103 square feet (102.5 square metres). This increases lot coverage above 42% on each of the four blocks. The 16 units on-site represent a density of 43 units per hectare.



Below is a preliminary layout for the site showing four blocks, driveways and building envelopes.



Ontario policy and legislative initiatives also impacting this proposal include:

- [Bill 23 the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022](#) (Royal Assent November 28, 2022)
- [Bill 97 Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act](#) (Royal Assent June 8, 2023)
- [Proposed Provincial Policy & Growth Plan Consolidation](#) (Review closed August 5, 2023)

Provincial policies broadly encourage “efficient use and management of land and providing housing to meet changing needs”, while “protecting farmlands and natural resources including wetlands and woodlands”. Policies protect prime agricultural lands and natural areas by directing most development to settlement areas with municipal water and sanitary sewer servicing.

Municipal water and sewer are the “preferred form of servicing for settlement areas” to protect the environment and minimize risk to human health and safety. In settlement areas with municipal water and sewer, intensification and redevelopment are promoted to optimize the use of services.

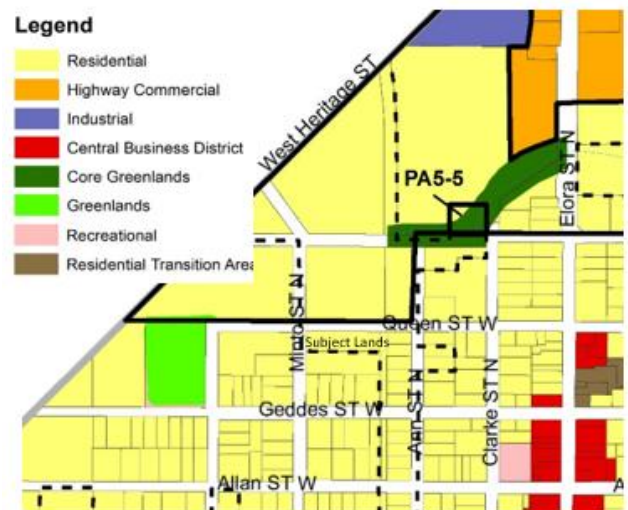
After the spring 2022 Provincial Housing Task Force Report, Ontario set a goal of building 1.5 million homes in 10 years. Key legislative and policy initiatives to meet the goal began with Bill

109 More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022 (Royal Assent April 14, 2022), followed by [Bill 23 the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022](#). Bill 23 amends the Planning Act, and several other Acts, to encourage new home building through initiatives like allowing up to three units on urban lots, reduced appeal rights (Ontario Land Tribunal) for some planning applications (including severances) and removing approvals from some upper tiers if proclaimed (not Wellington County).

Fall 2022, the Province began a [Review of A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement](#), aiming to streamline policies to reduce duplication, delays, or burden in developing housing. April 6, 2023 a [Draft Provincial Planning Statement 2023](#) was released merging the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 and the Growth Plan into “a single, provincewide, housing-focused land use planning policy document.” The proposed Planning Statement, likely to be approved in early 2024, continues to direct most development to settlement areas with full municipal services.

Official Plan

The proposed development of the subject lands is assessed against [Wellington County Official Plan](#), [the North Clifford Secondary Plan \(Amendment 113\)](#) and [Official Plan Amendment 119](#). Provincial approval of boundary adjustments in the amendment are now under review. The subject property is inside the Clifford urban service boundary and like most nearby parcels, designated Residential in the County Official Plan. The North Clifford Secondary Plan applies to property north of Queen Street West.



Residential lands are to be developed for a range of housing types to ensure a supply of variety of accommodations based on these general policies:

- “Anticipates” semi-detached, townhouse and apartment dwellings will increasingly be needed to meet upwards of one-quarter of housing needed in most urban centers.
- Medium density townhouses are to be built at a density of less than 35 units per hectare, while apartment housing is below 75 units per hectare. The proposed development at 43 units per hectare more closely reflects medium density.
- Intensification of residential areas allows for development:
 - compatible in scale, setbacks, orientation and built form that can “co-exist” with surrounding uses and minimize impact on adjacent properties
 - provides transition between planned and existing development
 - maintains lotting pattern consistent with the area
 - adequate infrastructure to service development
 - protects the streetscape and where feasible municipal street trees

In October 2020 Official Plan Amendment 113 established the North Clifford Secondary Plan Area with following general policies to guide development above Queen Street north to West Heritage Street on both sides of Elora Street:

- Set a preliminary road pattern with Minto Road North is as a collector street
- Access to the +-3.6 acre parcel across from the subject lands proposed from Queen Street West with a local road cul-de-sac servicing the lot interior from the north.
- Confirms Clifford Trail behind as an active transportation link through the area.
- Set Planning Area-12 (PA-12) requiring a “Village Feel” for development along Elora Street
- Establishes Planning Area-11 (PA-11) to promote efficient infrastructure use, mix land use development (parks, trails etc.) and a compact form of development.
- PA-11 requires “proponents of development enter into cost sharing servicing agreements with the Town” to ensure cost recovery for infrastructure improvements.

Although not designated in the North Clifford Plan, Queen Street functions as a collector road carrying traffic between Elora Street to Minto Road.

In 2020 the County began an official plan review combined with the Provincially mandated municipal comprehensive review. Through the combined process the County adopted population and employment projections, density targets for infill development, and began to identify settlement area boundary expansions for its 12 urban areas. Pending approval, the new Provincial Planning Statement eliminates the mandated comprehensive review. The County is continuing its official plan review process, but decisions on settlement boundary expansions and other restrictive policies required by the comprehensive review are pending.

Official Plan Amendment 119 was the first policy change resulting from the County review process. Approved by the Province April 11, 2023, the amendment states Primary Urban Centers are to be the focus of growth where full municipal water and sanitary sewer services are available. Clifford is designated as a Primary Urban Centre along with 11 others in the County. Although not in the amendment adopted by the County, the Province approved an urban boundary expansion at the south end of Clifford near Park Street to support proposed residential development (Cachet). The Minister has since rescinded boundary adjustments pending further review by impacted municipalities, including the Cachet urban boundary expansion which is now under County review.

Draft Land Needs in the chart below suggests the Clifford urban boundary could be expanded up to six hectares to meet future residential and employment land needs.

Town of Minto
D.G.A. Community Area Land Needs to 2051

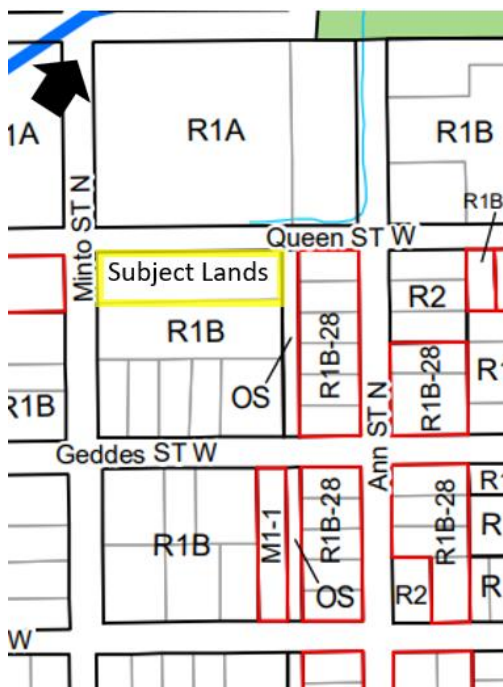
	Harriston	Palmerston	Clifford	Urban Area
Designated Greenfield Area				
Population, 2051	1,100	3,800	400	5,300
Housing Units, 2051	400	1,260	150	1,810
Community Area DGA Jobs, 2051	100	600	133	833
Community Area DGA Jobs Ratio (DGA Residents per 1 job)	11	6	3	7
DGA People and Jobs, 2051	1,200	4,400	533	6,133
People and Jobs Density (people and jobs/gross ha)	32	33	26	32
Total DGA Land Demand, gross ha	38	133	21	191
Designated Greenfield Area Land Supply, gross ha	34	51	26	112
Land Needs, gross ha	-3	-81	6	-79
Future Development Lands, gross ha	8	48	5	61
Excess/(Expansion Required)	5	-33	10	-18

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

Amendment 120 was the second policy change out of the combined official plan review process. It contains County growth projections from its Phase 1 review with the following relevant factors:

- Minto is expected to grow by 2,060 households between 2021 and 2051.
- Clifford accounts for 190 new households or 9.2% of total projected residential growth
- 15% of Minto housing will be provided through intensification, or about 10 units per year
- Clifford projected to supply 60 units through intensification through to 2051
- Additional units now permitted in most existing homes will supply very limited infill housing.

October 6, 2023, the County circulated [Official Plan Amendment 123](#) which, among other provisions makes “minor” changes “to the Medium Density Development policy” to “modernize” it to “appropriately address modern forms of townhouse development, such as stacked and back-to-back townhouses”.



Zoning

As shown in the adjacent map, the subject lands are zoned Residential 1B and the 3.6 acre parcel across Queen Street is zoned R1-A. Both zones permit one single detached home plus certain accessory uses, although R1A zones apply to unserviced lands while R1B is for serviced lands. Site and building regulations for the R1B zone require 20.1 meter lot frontage and 650.3 square meter lot area for a single detached home.

Modifications on the R1B zones apply to several areas near the subject property.

On the southeast corner of Queen Street West and Ann Street a Residential-2 zone applies to an existing apartment building. The R2 Zone permits single, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, fourplex, three or four unit street townhouses and accessory uses. The Clifford Trail is zoned open space as is Marshall Park to the west.

The chart below assesses Blocks A, B, C and D in the preliminary site plan against typical Residential 2 zone requirements for street townhouses. Exceptions are needed in the R2 zone for minimum lot area per dwelling unit for Blocks B, C and D, otherwise the development set out in the preliminary site plan meets R2 site and building regulations.

R2 ZONE		BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	BLOCK D
6.1 Lot Area/Minimum/dwelling unit	280m ²	✓	243.7m ²	242m ²	242.8m ²
6.2 Lot Frontage, Minimum/dwelling unit	6.5m	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3 Lot Frontage, Minimum corner lot	13.6m	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
6.4 Front Yard, Minimum	6m	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.5 Exterior Side Yard, Minimum	6m	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
6.6 Interior Side Yard, Minimum	1.2m	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.7 Rear Yard, Minimum	7.6m	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.8 Building Height, Maximum	10.5m	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.9 Floor Area, Minimum per unit	70m ²	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.27.8 Table 3 Parking	1/unit	✓	✓	✓	✓

Planning Analysis:

The applicant's proposed rezoning was evaluated based on the following key considerations:

1. Provincial Policy and Official Plan Compliance
2. Municipal Servicing
3. Land Use compatibility
4. Housing Supply and Need

1. Provincial Policy and Official Plan Compliance

The proposed 16 unit street townhouse project is consistent with Provincial Planning Policy based on the following points:

- provides a mix of housing densities supporting diverse and growing population and workforce
- encourages efficient use and management of land providing housing to meet changing needs
- directs development to full municipal services, encourages infrastructure investment supporting complete communities
- directs housing to settlement areas away from prime agricultural and natural areas
- creates a net increase in residential units through redevelopment of new housing options

The development is compatible with the Wellington County Official Plan in the following key areas:

- provides townhouses increasingly needed to meet up to one-quarter of area housing needs
- encourages density of 43 units per hectare close to medium density standard and well below high density standard of 75 units per hectare (Official Plan Amendment 123 will modernize medium density provisions recognizing new forms of housing being proposed)
- offers a compatible layout in scale, setbacks, orientation with built form in the area with minimal impact on adjacent properties
- acts as a transition between existing single detached and low density homes on Ann Street and planned development within and beyond the North Clifford Planning Area
- results in four unit blocks, street townhouse lots compatible with the character with the area
- provides a significant financial contribution to water, sewer, road, and drainage infrastructure needed to develop lands on Queen Street, including Town property, and beyond to Minto Road
- provides for safe street access and maintains any viable municipal street trees
- results in compact development form required in Planning Area-11 (PA-11) to promote efficient infrastructure use and a mix of land use nearby existing parks and trails
- establishes potential for a front-ended cost sharing servicing agreement with the Town to ensure cost recovery for infrastructure according to Provincial Legislation

2. Municipal Servicing

During its official plan review, the County completed a [Municipal Service Analysis](#) that assessed water and sewer capacity in the 12 urban areas including Clifford. The County's analysis confirmed Minto's urban areas have enough water and sewer "plant" capacity to meet short term growth needs. According to the County, Clifford was the only urban area that did not need major long-term capacity improvements to accommodate projected growth up to 2051,

Minto's [Municipal Water and Sewer Servicing Strategy](#) prepared by Triton Engineering provides more detailed direction for the Town's infrastructure planning ([full study](#)). The Clifford Water System was identified as having capacity, system storage, pressure, and fire flows to support development through to 2051. The Strategy recommends any watermain under 150mm diameter be replaced as roads are reconstructed and improvements made. The strategy noted areas where watermain extensions will be needed to support future development. Queen Street West should be a priority project in the Town's roadway reconstruction program due to its poor condition and potential cost sharing options available to upgrade the infrastructure.

The Clifford wastewater collection network has capacity to support future growth projected to 2051. Some of the original ultra-rib trunk sanitary sewers may need replacement where multiple lot connections are proposed. When Queen Street West reconstruction is considered, the Town can plan for future connections to match development form proposed by the applicant and other parcels that benefit from servicing.

The density of the applicant's 16 unit street townhouse development is needed to make viable the anticipated cost of Queen Street reconstruction while supplying needed housing at an attainable cost. The increased density proposed would not impact on water and sewer availability and capacity in Clifford. Investing in infrastructure to support much needed housing construction is encouraged by the Province, the County and Town, although it is understood development pressure in the community can impact Council capital spending priorities. In its November capital budget session, Council has allocated fund to future development in 2025 which could be available for Queen Street reconstruction if approved at next year's budget deliberations.

3. Land Use Compatibility

The proposed 16 unit townhouse project places medium density housing on a collector road badly in need of reconstruction due to its poor condition. The subject lands sit between recently developed lands along Ann Street and larger un-serviced rural parcels west and north of the subject lands, including those within the North Clifford Planning Area. There is a four unit apartment building just east of the subject lot characteristic of an R2 medium density use.

The applicant prefers a bungalow style for the proposed street townhouse units to be built on four blocks of land to be created through the County Land Division process. Once blocks of four townhomes are under construction, an application to remove part lot control would be proposed to temporarily suspend Planning Act rules restricting lot conveyance without a severance. The bylaw would be used by the applicant's lawyer to transfer the units to new homeowners and to create any private easements needed to access back yards for interior units.

Access to reconstructed Queen Street West for the 16 townhomes is proposed through 8 driveways from proposed attached garages within each unit. The driveways are located with safe access to the reconstructed street. A six meter side yard setback to Minto Road from the most westerly unit ensures the street townhouse driveway is well back from the intersection. The private driveway to each garage is six meters long, wide enough to allow a vehicle to be parked in front

of the garage. This provides two spaces for each street townhome, discouraging street parking along the collector road.

Each street townhouse would have outdoor living space in the back yard of its proposed individual lot. Easements over end townhouse units will be created so that lawn equipment and such for interior townhouse units can access the back yard without going through the home. Triton assessed preliminary grading options for the 16 street townhouses and confirmed grading will work with a rear yard catch basin and storm system to convey drainage from the back of the proposed lots to Queen Street.

The rear yard catch basin and storm system will require easements to convey stormwater across back yards and between units to proposed new storm sewer on reconstructed Queen Street. The final storm system design on-site may require minor changes to building envelopes. The applicants may choose to add lofts, or partial second stories to the bungalow units. Once the zoning is in place, the applicants can commission detailed grading and drainage to fit final unit design into the boundary survey.

The applicant believes most of the trees along the lot frontage are diseased ash which will be taken down to accommodate driveways and service connections. Eight smaller diameter common native species can also be removed to accommodate the project. Remaining trees are less than 10cm, at chest height. New trees can be planted in private back yards or in front yards to help integrate the housing development with the current streetscape. The 6 meter side yard in Block A can also accommodate some tree retention and replacement.

The Clifford Trail east of the subject lands provides active transportation opportunities for future homeowners within the townhomes. Marshall Park to the west provides naturalized open space.

Overall, the proposed layout is compatible with the neighbourhood, and can be properly serviced with municipal water, sanitary and storm sewers from the Queen Street reconstruction. The medium density housing is nearby active transportation and natural open space. Tree replacement and preservation will be practices as appropriate.

4. Housing Supply and Need

Infill townhomes such as proposed by the applicants is a chance to provide attainable housing on full municipal services within an existing neighbourhood. This is an opportunity to create what is often referred to as “missing middle” housing. The Province aggressively encourages housing unit creation as proposed by the applicants. Along with Bill 109, 23 and 97, the Province initiated a new Planning Statement to create a new policy framework to encourage 1.5 million new homes in the next 10 years.

The current R1-B zoning allows only six one family homes based on the required lot frontage of 20.1 meters. Preliminary cost estimates for the applicant's share of Queen Street West reconstruction suggest over \$100,000 per lot just to service one of the six homes. Medium density

housing makes servicing more viable as costs can be spread over additional units. For 16 townhomes the cost is reduced to \$37,500 per lot servicing. Lower servicing costs will help with pricing new townhomes that are more attainable.

Provincial policy initiatives to increase housing supply were recently followed up by Ontario's Housing Accelerator Program to encourage local municipalities to "submit a pledge to the Province to show how they will accelerate construction of new homes to meet their target". In reviewing this program, the County estimated Minto's share of the 1.5 million new homes in the next 10 years would be about 87 units per year (higher than 66 units/year in growth projections done during the official plan review). In the future once the Province sets a target for smaller rural municipalities, Minto and others may have an opportunity to apply for additional annual funding if Ontario's housing target of 87 units per year could be met. A Provincial funding commitment of over \$200,000 annual funding to municipalities like Minto shows how critical it is that viable housing projects move forward quickly.

To meet projected need, the Town's continued support of housing unit creation is encouraged.

Conclusion

The proposed rezoning to 16 units of street townhouses on the subject lands would be consistent with current and proposed Provincial Planning policy and the County Official Plan, and makes efficient use of future municipal water, sewer, and road infrastructure. The proposal represents an appropriate use of land and proper planning practice providing much needed housing options for the community.

The applicant's respectfully request the Town initiate a zoning bylaw amendment to rezone the subject lands from Residential 1B to a Residential 2 Zone with exceptions to allow 16 street townhouses split between four blocks to be constructed.

Bill White MCIP RPP
Senior Planner, Triton Engineering