

[REDACTED]

From: Clerks
Sent: April 13, 2026 2:50 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: URGENT - Brant County Official Plan Amendment

Good Afternoon, Joanne and John,

Thank you for your comments. They have been received by both Council and staff and will be included with the agenda for tomorrow's Council meeting.

I want to clarify that the County already permits on-farm diversified uses, as directed by the Province. The purpose of this Official Plan Amendment with respect to these uses is not to expand permissions, but rather to add clearer guidance and stronger controls around how they operate. Since 2020, the County has applied restrictions that go beyond provincial minimums for these uses. For example, we require a valid farm business registration number and regulate these activities through site plan control to limit scale, manage access and parking, and ensure alignment with zoning permissions. These tools are intended to address precisely the kinds of impacts you've described and to better manage uses that may evolve over time.

The proposed amendments related to home-based businesses serve a similar purpose by adding clearer expectations and improved enforceability. These directions will also be carried forward into the new Zoning By-law currently under development. Council retains authority over the Official Plan and Zoning By-law framework, while staff-administered tools are used to implement Council-approved policies consistently, transparently, and in accordance with established standards.

I apologize that you only became aware of the project this week. The proposal has been under discussion since mid-2025, including presentations to Council, advisory committees, Provincial agencies, and stakeholder groups such as the Brant County Federation of Agriculture. Information on this and other ongoing Official Plan updates is available at www.engagebrant.ca/OPHousekeeping, for your reference.

We share your concern about the long-term protection of prime agricultural land. The amendments are being brought forward in part to respond to that pressure and to improve tracking, oversight, and compliance of uses in the agricultural areas. It is also important to note that many existing rural uses were established under earlier policy frameworks and have changed or expanded over time, which can make regulation more complex and often requires enforcement or compliance tools rather than new policy changes alone. This is an issue that is not unique to the County of Brant, and we are working to address it through ongoing policy refinement and implementation mechanisms.

I hope this helps provides some clarity, and I'm happy to follow up if you have any additional questions. Thank you again for submitting your comments.

Kind regards,

Brandon Kortleve BA, CPT, RPP, MCIP (he/him)
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 12:13 PM
To: Joanne Fuller [REDACTED]; Ella Haley <Ella.Haley@brant.ca>; David Bailey <david.bailey@brant.ca>; [REDACTED] Alysha Dyjach <alysha.dyjach@brant.ca>; Dan Namisniak <dan.namisniak@brant.ca>
Cc: John Lane [REDACTED]; John Lane [REDACTED] Jeremy Vink <Jeremy.Vink@brant.ca>
Subject: URGENT - Brant County Official Plan Amendment

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Good day,

Please accept my apologies for the late notice. I only became aware of this proposed amendment this morning.

I understand it is scheduled to be heard tomorrow.

My family lives on Highway 54 in the hamlet of Middleport, and we have farmed in this area alongside many of our neighbours for generations. Over the years, the neighbourhood’s demographics have changed as is to be expected.

My concern relates to the on-farm diversification currently underway across the County, and specifically in my neighbourhood. I agree that farms need diversification. However, I am concerned that the scope of what is being considered “on-farm” is expanding beyond what was intended.

Within one mile of our farm, the following goods and services are available:

1. Flowers, pumpkins, and honey—none of which originates from the property where it is sold.
2. Sheds of various sizes and configurations, currently placed on prime agricultural land and built in a neighbouring farm building.
3. Shipping container storage (e.g., “FutureStorage.ca”), where containers are delivered to residents, filled, and then returned to Middleport for storage on prime agricultural land.
4. Seasonal storage for boats, RVs, and other large items not permitted in residential areas, again within an agricultural building.
5. A guided recreational boat cruise on the Grand River.
6. An assortment of meats (beef, chicken, pork, etc.) sold directly from local farms.
7. HVAC sales and installation services.
8. Moving boxes, available for delivery or pick-up.
9. Field driveways that were previously used only occasionally are now serving as commercial access points, contributing to collisions, injuries, and near misses.

Some of these activities may appropriately support and diversify an existing farm operation. Others, however, appear to be industrial or retail uses located on prime farmland—sometimes on properties that do not appear to have an active farm registration number. I am also concerned about the growing number of corporately owned properties that benefit from agricultural tax treatment while operating commercial enterprises.

In my view, this trend risks undermining the long-term protection of prime agricultural land. I respectfully urge the County to preserve farmland for agriculture and to direct commercial, industrial, and retail operations to areas that are appropriately zoned and serviced to support them.

Based on the attached staff report(s), I understand that the County of Brant Planning Division is recommending that the attached Official Plan Amendment (OPA) be read, approved, and passed at the April 14 meeting.

Based on the staff reports attached it is the direction of the County of Brant, Planning Division that the attached OPA be read, approved and passed at the April 14th meeting. Please see below and attached.

READ a first and second time, this 14th day of April, 2026.

READ a third time and finally passed in Council, this 14th day of April, 2026.

THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF BRANT

David Bailey, Mayor

Spencer Pluck, Deputy Clerk

Both my spouse and I are municipal employees in planning and economic development, and we understand the relevant processes and timelines. That said, many community members are no longer notified of proposed changes in the way they once were, and recent governance changes (including Strong Mayor Powers) have shifted—or at least changed the interpretation of—the balance of decision-making authority.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you reconsider approving this Official Plan Amendment as currently written, particularly where it would concentrate approval/denial authority for the related by-law among a small number of decision-makers. In my view, these decisions require a clear understanding of agriculture, prime farmland, and the intent of terms such as “accessory to.”

The link to the agenda is below for ease of access, please refer to items 10.1 and 10.3.

[County of Brant Council - April 14, 2026](#)

Unfortunately, we are unable to attend tomorrow's scheduled meeting. We would greatly appreciate it if our concerns could be heard by all those in attendance.

Respectfully,

John Lane and Joanne Douglas-Lane

