

TOWNSHIP OF MACHAR

STAFF REPORT

TO: Angela Loney,
Clerk Administrator, Township of Machar

FROM: Jamie Robinson, BES, MCIP, RPP
Patrick Townes, BA, BEd
MHBC Planning Limited

DATE: November 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Application for Zoning By-law Amendment
Part Lot 16, Concession 5, Machar, Part 2, 42R5097
Riding Ranch Road (c/o Jagadish and Kalpana
Mandi)

Recommendation

THAT Council receive the Planning Report dated November 10, 2025 regarding the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application for the subject property legally known as Part Lot 16, Concession 5, Machar, Part 2, Plan 42R5097, located on Riding Ranch Road; and

THAT Council authorizes the passing of By-law No. 15-25 being a By-law to amend the Township of Machar Zoning By-law 45-12, as amended.

Proposal / Background

The Township of Machar has received a Zoning By-law Amendment application, submitted by Jagadish and Kalpana Mandi. The application affects lands located on the west side of Riding Ranch Road, Part Lot 16, Concession 5 Machar, Part 2, Plan 42R5097.

The owner's original proposal was to develop a tourist commercial use on the subject property, consisting of six geodesic dome structures to be used for overnight accommodation, an accessory dwelling unit, and a hobby farm.

The Township held the Statutory Public Meeting on September 8, 2025, for the purposes of seeking public input on the application. A copy of the Report that was prepared for the Statutory Public Meeting is included as Attachment 1.

Following the Statutory Public Meeting on September 8, 2025, Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution 121-25

THAT we receive the Planning Report dated Sep 8, 2025, regarding the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application for the subject property legally known as part Lot 16, Con 5, Machar, Part 2, Plan 42R5097, located on Riding Ranch Road; and

THAT Council directs staff to prepare a Recommendation Planning Report to review and respond to the comments that are received on the application at the Statutory Public meeting, to be presented at a Subsequent Council Meeting.

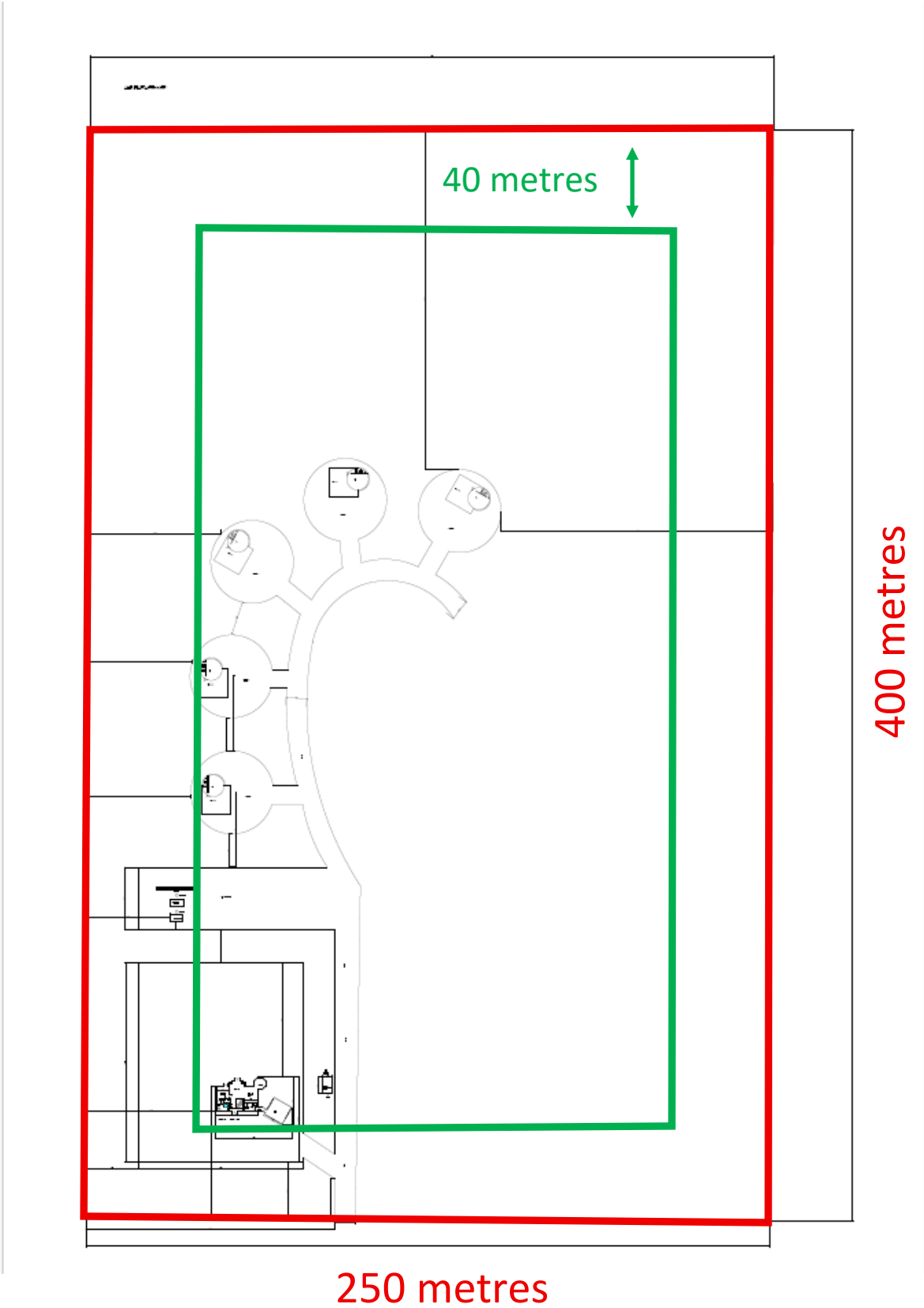
This report was prepared to provide Council with a Recommendation Planning Report that provides a land use planning analysis for the relevant policies and responds to the comments that were provided on the application.

Following the Statutory Public Meeting, the owner has submitted a revised development plan that includes the reduction in the number of geodesic dome structures from six to five. For the purposes of the proposed tourist commercial use, staff have determined that a site-specific use and associated definition for a “Glamping Establishment” is the most effect way to describe the use.

The owner also contacted the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority for the purposes of receiving comments on the proposed servicing and septic system that would be required to service the proposed use.

A copy of the revised development plan is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Revised Development Plan



Policy Review

Provincial Planning Statement

All applications made under the *Planning Act*, must be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS). The subject property is considered as Rural Lands in the context of the PPS. Section 2.6.1 establishes permitted uses for Rural Lands within municipalities. Section 2.6.1 g) identifies other rural land uses are being permitted on Rural Lands, which includes tourist commercial uses. The proposed use is considered a permitted use on the subject property in the context of the PPS.

Section 3.6.4 of the PPS states that individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts. The owner has indicated that there is a septic system proposed on the subject property. Comments have been received from the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. Based on site inspection, the Conservation Authority has no concerns with the ability to site a septic system to service the proposed development.

Section 4.1 of the PPS provides for the long-term protection of Ontario's natural heritage features, including wetlands, significant woodland, significant wildlife habitat, significant areas of natural and scientific interest, fish habitat, and habitat of endangered and threatened species. There are no natural heritage features or areas identified on the subject property however the owner retained an environmental consultant to complete a Species at Risk Assessment. Mitigation measures are provided in the Assessment to ensure there are no impacts to Species at Risk, including timing windows for tree removal on the subject property.

Based on a review of the material submitted, the Zoning By-law Amendment application is consistent with the PPS.

Township of Machar Official Plan

The Township of Machar Official Plan provides direction pertaining to growth within the Township. The subject property is located within the Rural designation in the Official Plan. Permitted uses in the Rural designation include, but are not limited to, agricultural production, commercial tourist camps, and residential dwellings. A tourist commercial use is permitted in the Rural designation, subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment. The proposed use is to establish a tourist commercial camp consisting of five geodesic dome structures to be used for overnight accommodation, an accessory dwelling unit, and a hobby farm.

Section B1.5.6 of the Official Plan outlines policies regarding commercial tourist camps. The proposed use would be considered as a commercial tourist camp in the context of the Official Plan, and these types of development are permitted subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan Control. Council shall discourage the expansion or development of commercial tourist camps near residential uses and shall ensure that such uses are well buffered from surrounding lands, uses and roadways.

The subject property has a lot area of approximately 10 hectares (25 acres) and has a lot frontage of 250 metres on Riding Ranch Road. Access is proposed off Riding Ranch Road. The proposed development plan shown in Figure 1 indicates where the proposed geodesic domes are to be located in addition to the proposed accessory dwelling unit. The size of the subject property provides an opportunity for the proposed use to be setback from the lot lines beyond that of the required minimum setbacks and to provide areas for vegetation retention to provide buffering between surrounding properties.

The closest geodesic dome location is located 38 metres (125 feet) from the southern lot line which abuts a property to the south that contains an existing dwelling. The proposed accessory dwelling is located 40 metres (130 feet) from the eastern lot line that abuts Riding Ranch Road. It is recommended that the proposed uses be located generally in the centre of the property, to maximize setbacks from all lot lines. On this basis, it is recommended that a minimum vegetation buffer area of 40 metres be required from all lot lines (with the exception of a driveway along the eastern property line that abuts Riding Ranch Road) and a minimum setback for all buildings and structures of 50 metres be required from the side lot lines and the rear lot line, and 40 metres for the from the front lot line. This is an increase from what the owner has proposed.

Policies are included in the Official Plan regarding hobby farms and are included in Section B1.5.8. Council recognizes that hobby farming is a use that is in keeping with the character of the rural area. A hobby farm is defined as a farm with a residence where a limited number of domestic animals are kept primarily for recreational purposes and where buildings related to the hobby farm are clearly subordinate and incidental to the residential use. Uses including hobby farms are permitted in the Rural designation, provided the minimum lot size is 2.0 hectares.

Site Plan Control shall be required, and the owner would be required to enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the Township for the proposed use. It is recommended that the subject property be rezoned to a Commercial Zone, so that Site Plan Control can be utilized under the respective Township By-law. Staff are also recommending that the accessory dwelling be constructed prior to operation of the tourist commercial camp to ensure that the owner of the property is present to oversee the operation. Staff are also recommending that a new definition be added to the Zoning By-law to define the use and specify that the presence of staff/management is required when the site(s) are occupied.

Township of Machar Zoning By-law

The subject property is located within the Rural (RU) Zone. There is a small portion of the subject property that is located within the Environmental Protection (EP) Zone.

The proposed tourist commercial use is not permitted by the Zoning By-law. A Zoning By-law Amendment and is required to permit the use. As part of the amendment a new definition is proposed to be added to the Zoning By-law and site-specific development standards are proposed.

It is recommended that the site-specific zoning permit the following:

- A Glamping Establishment - An overnight accommodation use consisting of a maximum of five (5) Accommodation Units used by the travelling or vacationing public, which include washroom facilities. The owner/operator must be on-site in a dwelling or office to oversee the operation. Accessory buildings and structures, such as attached decks, saunas, hot tubs, are also permitted.
- Accommodation Unit - A building or structure, including a room or rooms used or maintain for the accommodation of the travelling or vacationing public, which does not contain a kitchen.
- Maximum Accommodation Unit size of 50 square metres and 5.5 metres in height.
- Require increased setbacks from lot lines.
 - Require a 50-metre setback for accommodation units and all buildings and structures.
- Require vegetation retention areas along property lines.
 - Require a 40-metre natural vegetative buffer area adjacent to all lot lines with the exception for a driveway.
- To permit the other uses of the Rural (RU) Zone.

A copy of the draft Zoning By-law Amendment is included as Attachment 2 to this Report.

Summary of Comments

A number of comments from residents were received throughout the application process. Concerns raised with the proposed use included the following:

- Management of human waste and septic systems;
- Concerns over noise associated with the proposed use;
- Increase of traffic;
- Risk of forest fires;

- Noted other established areas that exist for camping;
- Use does not fit the rural area;
- Potential for environmental impacts;
- Concerns over land use compatibility; and,
- On-site management.

Response to Comments

All the comments that have been reviewed and responses to the comments have been provided below:

Noise

The Township of Machar has a By-law to regulate noise within the Township. By-law No. 47-11 is a By-law to prohibit and regulate certain noises within the Township of Machar. Section 2(2) states:

No person shall emit or cause or permit the emission of sound resulting from an act listed herein, and which sound is clearly audible at a point of reception: (2) the operation in the municipality between 11:00 p.m. in the evening and 10:00 a.m. in the morning of any electronic device or group of connected electronic devices incorporating one or more loudspeakers or other electro-mechanical transducers, and intended for the production, reproduction or amplification of sound.

Occupants would need to follow the restrictions outlined in By-law No. 47-11.

On-Site Management

It is recommended that a dwelling be constructed prior to the glamping establishment being operational. The owner/operator would be present to oversee the site and to regulate the occupants on the site.

Waste Management/Septic Systems

The owners are responsible for garage on the subject property. The North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority has provided comments that based on an initial review, there is adequate space to service the proposed use with a septic system.

Privacy/Setbacks/Screening

It is recommended that increased setbacks and vegetation screening be implemented in the site-specific zoning. These measures will ensure that buildings and structures are

located a minimum distance from the lot lines on the subject property and that the proposed use would be screened from view from the road and adjacent properties.

Traffic

Due to the limitations of five geodesic domes on the subject property, the proposed use does not appear to be a large traffic generator and there appears to be sufficient areas for parking available.

Forest Fire Risk

The applicant should consult with the FireSmart program and incorporate the mitigation measures that are applicable to the development. This can be reviewed further through the site planning process.

Environmental

There are no wetland or environmental features and areas identified on the subject property. The owner submitted a Species at Risk Screening and mitigation measures are recommended such as timing windows for tree removal. These mitigation measures will be incorporated into the Site Plan Control Agreement.

Summary

Planning staff have reviewed the application and the comments that have been received. It is recommended that a site-specific use be permitted on the subject property and that a dwelling or office be required to be erected as part of the proposed Glamping Establishment to provide an opportunity for on-site management by the owner/operator.

Additional considerations have been included to increase the minimum setbacks from lot lines to provide an opportunity for buffering between adjacent properties, which is a policy consideration in the Official Plan when evaluating these types of development proposals through the completion of a Zoning By-law Amendment.

Subject to the provisions included in the draft Zoning By-law Amendment, it is recommended that Council approve and pass the Zoning By-law Amendment. The application is consistent with the PPS and conforms to the Township's Official Plan.