

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# Application for Official Plan Amendment OP 25-04-7 – KerMar Holdings Inc.

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Community Planning

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. That Oxford County Council approve Official Plan Application OP 25-04-7, submitted by KerMar Holdings Inc. for the lands described as Part of Lot 1, Plan 41M-103, Part 2 of 41R-5579 in the Town of Tillsonburg, to establish a special site specific development policy to permit a 'dollar store' as an additional permitted use in the Service Commercial designation applying to the subject lands;
2. And further, that Council approve the attached Amendment No. 343 to the County of Oxford Official Plan and raise the necessary by-law to approve Amendment No. 343.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- The application for Official Plan Amendment proposes to modify a special policy area to permit a 'dollar store' as an additional use on the subject property.
- The 'dollar store' is proposed to be approximately 864 m<sup>2</sup> (9,300 ft<sup>2</sup>) and located within an existing multi-unit plaza (Northgate Plaza), which is located at 671 Broadway.
- A Market Impact Study concluded that the proposed floor space for the dollar store on the subject lands would be beneficial to the community with minimal risk to the overall health and vitality of the Central Area of Tillsonburg.
- Planning staff are recommending that the application be supported, as it is generally consistent with the policies of the Provincial Planning Statement and maintains the intent and purpose of the Official Plan with respect to development within Service Commercial Areas and protecting the vitality and planned function of the Central Area of Tillsonburg.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

These applications will be implemented in accordance with the relevant objectives, strategic initiatives and policies in the Official Plan.

### Financial Impact

The approval of this application will have no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year's budget.

### Communications




In accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act, notice of complete application regarding this proposal was provided to surrounding property owners on May 20, 2025 and notice of public meeting was issued on June 30, 2025. At the time of writing this report, no comments had been received.

## 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report supports the following strategic goals.

### Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
<b>Promoting community vitality</b>	<b>Enhancing environmental sustainability</b>	<b>Fostering progressive government</b>
Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being		

See: **Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan**

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

**Owner:** KerMar Holdings Inc.  
8104 Evans Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 5R8

**Agent:** Robert Koppert  
55 Broadway, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 4H5

### Location:

The subject lands are described as Part of Lot 1, Plan 41M-103, Part 2 of 41R-5579 in the Town of Tillsonburg. The lands front onto the west side of Broadway, between North Street West and the municipal boundary with the Township of South-West Oxford, and are known municipally as 671 Broadway, Tillsonburg.

### County of Oxford Official Plan:

Existing:

Schedule "T-1"	Tillsonburg Land Use Plan	Service Commercial, with Special Policy permitting Medical Offices, Day Care and Pharmacy
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Proposed:

Schedule "T-1"	Tillsonburg Land Use Plan	Service Commercial, with Special Policy permitting Medical Offices, Day Care, Pharmacy, and a Dollar Store
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### Proposal

The purpose of the Applications for Official Plan Amendment is to permit 'dollar store' as an additional use on the subject lands.

The subject property is approximately 1.68 ha (4.15 ac) in area. The applicant is proposing to include an 864 m<sup>2</sup> (9,300 ft<sup>2</sup>) dollar store in a portion of an existing multi-unit plaza (Northgate Plaza). The plaza has an overall gross leasable commercial floor area of approximately 4,459 m<sup>2</sup> (48,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) and currently contains a variety of commercial uses, including a drug store, 2 restaurants, and a grocery store.

In support of the applications, a Commercial Market Review was completed by urban Metrics. This review concluded that a dollar store on the subject site would be beneficial to the community with minimal risk to the overall health and vitality of the Central Area of Tillsonburg.

Surrounding land uses include Service Commercial to the north, east and south, 'Future Development' to the northeast, 'Open Space' to the southwest and residential uses to the west.

Plate 1 – Location Map and Existing Zoning illustrates the location of the subject property and the existing zoning in the immediate vicinity.

Plate 2 – 2020 Aerial Map, provides an aerial view of the subject lands.

Plate 3 – Applicant's Sketch, provides the dimensions of the subject lands and the location of the two plaza buildings.

## **Comments**

### **2024 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)**

The Provincial Planning Statement is a policy statement issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act that came into effect on October 20, 2024. The following outlines the key PPS policies that have been considered, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Chapter 1, Introduction, states that a prosperous and successful Ontario will also support a strong and competitive economy that is investment-ready and recognized for its influence, innovation and diversity. Ontario's economy will continue to mature into a centre of industry and commerce of global significance. Central to this success will be the people who live and work in this province.

Chapter 2 focuses on fostering sustainable, inclusive and competitive communities by ensuring well planned growth that meets the needs of current and future populations. Section 2.1 establishes the importance of maintaining sufficient land for housing and employment growth, supporting diverse land uses, and creating complete communities that are accessible and equitable.

Section 2.3.1, General Policies for Settlement Areas, directs that Settlement Areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Further, land use patterns within Settlement Areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- a) efficiently use land and resources;
- b) optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- c) support active transportation;
- d) are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and,
- e) are freight supportive.

Section 2.8.1 Supporting a Modern Economy, outlines that Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs. It also encourages intensification of employment uses and compatible, compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of complete communities.

### Official Plan

The subject lands are designated 'Service Commercial' on the Land Use Plan for the Town of Tillsonburg, with a special site-specific policy that allows a medical centre, day care, and pharmacy as additional uses within the Service Commercial designation on that site.

Section 8.3.3 establishes that areas designated Service Commercial are intended for a broad range of commercial uses that, for the most part, are not suited to locations within the Central Area because of requirements for site area, access, or exposure, or, due to compatibility conflicts with residential development.

In 2023, County Council passed Amendment Number 309 which included a site-specific policy for the subject property to allow a medical centre, daycare, and pharmacy as additional permitted uses within the broader Service Commercial land use designation.

New uses permitted within the Service Commercial designation include: hotels, motels, hotel/conference facility, automotive sales and services, furniture warehouses, farm implement sales, personal services, convenience commercial uses, video rental establishments, automobile service stations, gas bars, car wash facilities, retail sales of automobile supplies, automated teller machines or kiosks, tourism information outlets or kiosks, recreation and entertainment uses, restaurants and fast food outlets, retail food stores, uses which require large areas for on-site storage of goods or vehicles and other types of commercial uses that offer service to the travelling public, business and industry.

The scale of uses within a Service Commercial designation generally range from 325 m<sup>2</sup> (3,500 ft<sup>2</sup>) to 4,645 m<sup>2</sup> (50,000 ft<sup>2</sup>). Uses of less than 325 m<sup>2</sup> (3,500 ft<sup>2</sup>) are encouraged to locate in the Central Area, consistent with the vision for the Central Area as articulated in the Official Plan, with uses larger than 4,645 m<sup>2</sup> (50,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) requiring a major review of the commercial policies for the Tillsonburg Trade Area and a Major Official Plan Amendment to be considered.

Section 8.3.2 in the Official Plan states the vision for the Central Area and the strategic approach for how to manage growth of the Central Area in accordance with the desired vision. The Central Area Vision, in Section 8.3.2.1 of the Official Plan, intends that the Central Area of the Town of Tillsonburg remain as the most functionally diverse area of the Town, and that it will serve as the primary business, cultural, and administrative centre. The Central Area will be a multi-functional core with complementary sub-areas which will increase the functional diversity of uses and activities in the core, which in turn, will increase the number of people living and working in the Central Area over the long term. It is intended that the retail function of the Central Area is to be promoted and protected by continuing to permit a full range of uses in the commercial core, operationalized through the Zoning By-Law, and limiting the type, size, and scale of retail uses which are permitted outside the commercial core.

Section 8.3.2.2.1 establishes that the Central Area will be the priority location for shopping area facilities and other uses that serve the primary trade area. New commercial development should, where feasible, be in the Central Area to complement the existing commercial structure of the Central Area. Further, new or expanded retail developments outside the Central Area requiring a planning approval will be subject to planning and market impact studies in accordance with Section 8.3.3.1.

In accordance with Section 8.3.3.1, new or expanding retail developments outside of the Central Area requiring a planning approval will be subject to planning and market impact studies which show to the satisfaction of the County and the Town of Tillsonburg, that the type and size of proposed facilities are warranted, that no suitable Central Area locations are available for such facilities, and that the planned function of Tillsonburg's Central Area will not be significantly prejudiced or impacted.

#### **Town of Tillsonburg Zoning By-law**

The subject property is currently zoned 'Special Service Commercial Zone (SC-29)', according to the Town of Tillsonburg Zoning By-law. The 'SC-29' zone permits the standard list of service commercial uses as well as a medical centre, a day care, and a pharmacy. This application proposes to amend the existing provisions to include a dollar store as a permitted use.

#### **Agency Comments**

The Downtown Tillsonburg BIA (DTBIA) indicated support for this application conditional on the developer paying a defined fee to the DTBIA to support marketing and promotion fee to the downtown core area.

Town of Tillsonburg Engineering Services, The Ministry of Environment and Culture, Tillsonburg Hydro, Species at Risk, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Southwestern Public Health, Thames Valley District School Board and Oxford County Public Works indicated no comments or concerns.

With regard to the comments of the DTBIA, staff notes that it is our understanding that an agreement has been reached between the two parties.

#### **Town of Tillsonburg Council**

Town of Tillsonburg Council recommended support of the proposed Official Plan Amendment and approved 'in principle' the proposed Zone Change Application at their July 14, 2025 meeting.

#### **Planning Analysis**

The application for Official Plan Amendment proposes to permit a dollar store as an additional permitted use on the subject property on a site-specific basis. A Commercial Market Review was completed in support of the application.

The subject lands are designated as 'Service Commercial', with a special policy area. In 2023, through Amendment 309, County Council approved a medical centre, daycare, and pharmacy as additional permitted uses in the Service Commercial designation that applies to the subject property.

The policy direction in the Official Plan is to direct professional, retail, and business offices to the Central Area as a first priority and only permit such uses in Service Commercial areas where it has been demonstrated that the Central Area is clearly not a viable location in terms of available land or building areas in the Central Area. Where new retail uses are proposed within Service Commercial areas, a retail market impact study is required to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the County and the Town of Tillsonburg, that the type and size of proposed facilities are warranted, that no suitable Central Area locations are available for such facilities, and that the planned function of Tillsonburg's Central Area will not be significantly prejudiced or impacted. In this regard, a review of the findings of the market impact study prepared in support of this application is provided below.

The Service Commercial designation permits uses such as hotels/motels, automotive businesses, warehouses, convenience commercial uses, service stations, retail food stores, gas bars and other uses which can be easily accessed by the travelling public. The subject application is requesting amendments to the site-specific policies on the property to permit the dollar store as an additional use within the Service Commercial designation.

The scale of uses within the Service Commercial areas will generally range from 325 m<sup>2</sup> (3,500 ft<sup>2</sup>) to 4,645 m<sup>2</sup> (50,000 ft<sup>2</sup>). In this case, the proposed dollar store is approximately 864 m<sup>2</sup> (9,300 ft<sup>2</sup>) in size. Staff are satisfied that the proposed dollar store fits within the scale permitted for uses in the Service Commercial designation and based on the conclusions of the Commercial Market Review, it is not expected that the use will have negative impacts or detract from the long-term prosperity of the Central Area.

The Commercial Market Review for this proposal was completed by urban Metrics in May 2025. This study found that with a population 20,000 persons, the two dollar stores in the Tillsonburg area represent a supply of approximately 0.88 square feet per capita, which is at or slightly below average for municipalities in Ontario.

It also noted that Downtown Tillsonburg is the largest commercial node in the Town and has been bolstered since the relocation of Walmart in 2013. In addition to the Walmart Superstore, downtown Tillsonburg also contains a Canadian Tire, a Metro supermarket, and a wide range of other retailers and services that serve the Town and surrounding area. There appear to be few vacancies and the number of anchor tenants and branded retailers in the core suggest a significant degree of strength and resilience.

Further, the study notes that a 9,300 ft<sup>2</sup> dollar store would require a site of approximately one-acre to accommodate as a free-standing store with surface parking. There do not appear to be any existing units available to accommodate a store of approximately 9,300 ft<sup>2</sup> within the downtown, nor are their available sites of approximately one-acre. There is already a Dollar tree store in the downtown core, so a new store in the downtown would have to compete directly with this established store.

In conclusion, a dollar store on the subject site would serve to complement the local serving function of the subject plaza, as well as the combined function of the subject site and 670-680 Broadway across the street. It would also provide an additional discount store option for the residents of Tillsonburg, and particularly those in the north end.

A dollar store on the subject site would not be inconsistent with the level of per capita supply of such retail found in other communities and, given the existing strength of the downtown core, could be added to the subject site without negatively impacting the planned function of the downtown area.

From a market perspective, the addition of the permission for a dollar store on the subject site would be beneficial to the community with minimal risk to the health of the downtown.

In light of the foregoing, planning staff are of the opinion that the policy tests in the Official Plan for the establishment of new retail uses in service commercial areas have been satisfactorily addressed and recommend that the application be approved.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

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Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposal is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Planning Statement and supports the strategic initiatives and objectives of the Official Plan with respect to service commercial areas and protecting and maintaining the vitality and planned function of the Central Area of the Town of Tillsonburg and can be supported from a planning perspective.

## **SIGNATURES**

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### **Report author:**

Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_

Amy Hartley  
Development Planner

### **Departmental Approval:**

Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_

Eric Gilbert, MCIP, RPP  
Manager of Development Planning

Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_

Paul Michiels  
Director of Community Planning



**Approved for submission:**

Original Signed By \_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin R. Addley  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Plate 1, Location Map with Existing Zoning  
Attachment 2 – Plate 2, Aerial Map (2020)  
Attachment 3 – Plate 3, Applicant's Sketch  
Attachment 4 – Official Plan Amendment, OPA 343