

Technical Memorandum #9

Institutional Zones

Zoning By-law Review

Town of St. Marys

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1. Introduction

This Technical Memorandum forms part of the overall background review for the Town of St. Marys Zoning By-law Review.

The Town of St. Marys (“The Town”) adopted a new Official Plan on April 12, 2022, and it was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) on October 9, 2024. The purpose of the Zoning By-law Review is to implement policy direction provided by the recently approved Official Plan. This Zoning By-law Review will introduce regulations that are concise, easy to understand, and provide clear direction on land use and built form while also providing flexible implementation where appropriate.

As part of this process, the Town of St. Marys is seeking to determine an appropriate approach to the use permissions and regulations for its Institutional Zones to ensure that it addresses the needs of the Town.

The purpose of this Technical Memorandum is to provide direction on updates to the Zoning By-law regarding institutional uses, and zoning permissions and standards in the Institutional Zone.

This report will evaluate the existing Institutional Zone for conformity with the existing policy framework found in the Town Official Plan, to identify gaps and challenges and determine how to address those gaps.

2. Overview

What are the Institutional Zone Categories?

The Town Zoning By-law only includes one (1) Institutional Zone. The permitted uses in the Institutional Zone include but are not limited to schools, community facilities, governmental administrative facilities, hospitals. The Town Official Plan does not include an institutional designation. However, it does permit institutional uses within various designations. The table below outlines the associated designations with the Institutional Zone.

Table 1 – Official Plan Designations associated with the Institutional Zone

Zone Symbol	Description of Zone	Associated Official Plan Designation
Institutional Zone (I)	This zone permits a range of institutional uses including schools, parks, churches, and hospitals	• Residential Designation • Downtown Designation.

3. Analysis and Proposed Changes

The following are recommended changes based policy requirements, best practices and technical issues identified by Town Staff.

3.1 Planning Act and Provincial Planning Statement

There are no changes required based on the *Planning Act* or Provincial policy.

3.2 Official Plan – Permitted Uses

There are no changes required to Permitted Uses based on the updated Town Official Plan.

3.3 Official Plan – Lot and Building Requirements

There are no changes required to Lot and Building Requirements based on the updated Town Official Plan.

3.4 Zoning and Minor Variance Trends

There are no changes recommended based on a review of Zoning By-law amendments and minor variance decisions between 2020 and 2025.

3.5 Technical Issues

Table 2 – Recommended changes to the Zoning By-law to Address Technical Matters

Section No.	Proposed Zoning By-law Change	Rationale
14.1	Delete “(j.1) a multiuse pathway;” as a permitted use.	This use should be deleted as it is captured under the definition for “passive recreational use”.
14.1	Replace the following uses with “Recreational Use”: (b) an arena; (r) a sports field, baseball diamond, curling rink; (t) a tennis court	These uses are currently not defined in the Town Zoning By-law. It is generally a best practice that all uses are defined in the Zoning By-law. However, these uses are generally captured under the use “Recreational Use.” There is also no planning rationale to identify specific Recreational Uses.

Section No.	Proposed Zoning By-law Change	Rationale
14.1	Replace the following uses with “Emergency Service Facility”: (a) An ambulance dispatch depot; (h) fire hall; (m) a police station	The following uses are not defined in the Town Zoning By-law. It is generally a best practice that all uses are defined in the Zoning By-law. However, these uses are generally captured under the use “emergency service facility” in other Zoning By-laws, therefore it is recommended that this term be used to capture all of these uses.
14.1	Replace “a church” with “place of worship.”	It is a general best practice to refer to buildings dedicated to religious worship to be refer to as a “place of worship”.
14.1	Add “Adult Day Service Facility” as a permitted use in the I Zone.	This use should be permitted in zones where a Child Care Centre is permitted.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This Technical Memorandum reviewed the existing institutional zone within the Town of St. Marys. It is recommended that the changes outlined in Section 3 be incorporated into the updated Zoning By-law to implement general best practices into the new draft of the Town Zoning By-law.

Appendix A - Correspondence of Institutional Zones with Official Plan Designations and Use Permissions

Table 3 – Correspondence of Institutional Zones with Official Plan Designations and Use Permissions

Official Plan Designations	Official Plan Permitted Uses	Institutional-related	Institutional Zones
Residential Designation	Institutional uses of land such as: • Hospitals • Churches • Schools • Parks • Senior citizen homes etc.		I
Downtown Designation	Institutional uses of land such as: • Hospitals • Churches • Schools • Parks, • Senior citizens homes etc.		I