

MEASURING FARMLAND LOSS

Quantifying the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Land
To Non-Farmland Uses Across Southern Ontario

Volume II
County and Regional Summaries

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**ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN
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Volume II

County and Regional Summaries

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Introduction

This study aims at tracking the conversion of prime agricultural land¹ to non-agricultural uses through Official Plan amendments (OPA) between 2000 and 2017 across 36 counties across Southern Ontario. Volume I of the study presented the overall provincial and regional trends of prime agricultural land loss. As mentioned in volume I, local municipalities across Southern Ontario adopt different land designation systems in their local Official Plans, and thus prime agricultural lands could be included in various land designations such as *Agriculture, Prime Agriculture, Rural, Recreational, Good Tender, and Restricted*.

This volume of the report introduces each county and region's agricultural land use designation in more details. It also describes the data collection methods in each county and region, their local trends in prime agricultural land conversion, and their conformity with provincial land use planning policies. The OPAs included in this report meet the following criteria:

1. The OPA must have been approved by the municipal/county government or OMB/LPAT between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2017.
2. The land involved must be identified as 'prime agricultural land' by the Official Plan or as Class 1-3 soil on OMAFRA's soil classification map where a prime agricultural land designation does not exist.
3. OPA's were included that added special policies that while leaving the land "called" agriculture added a new use/policy that effectively removed the lands from agricultural production.

The majority of OPAs captured in this report were provided by county/regional planning departments with support from planning staff. For the counties/region/cities that did not have a county/regional Official Plan throughout the applicable time frame, data was collected from the lower-tier municipalities. Electronic documents were either sent to the research team by planners or retrieved from the municipalities' online information portals such as a By-Law registry. Physical documents were primarily collected in person at local planning offices. Further information of collected OPAs area listed in volume III of the study. The research team has made its best effort to ensure the accuracy of this report and denote when their own calculations or judgements have been made.

¹ The 'prime agricultural land' in this study refers to the agricultural lands with the soil classified as classes 1, 2 and 3 by the Canada Land Inventory (CLI)

County of Brant



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 84, 325 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 64,220.8 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)¹: 66,882.40 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)¹: \$253.5 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm:
 \$3,789.55
 Population (2016)¹: 36, 707
 Growth Rate 2006-2011: 3.6%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	63.5 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	63.5
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.09%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the Brant County Official Plan (OP) and Official Plan Amendments (OPA). In Brant, the files which document OPAs adopted and approved by the county and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were compiled by Brant County Planning staff and accessed during a meeting with staff at the Brant Customer Service Office in Paris, Ontario. The assistance of staff at Brant County is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as county OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Brant County

Prime agricultural lands are captured in the Brant County Official Plan under the *Agriculture* designation. This designation specifically applies to Canada Land Inventory class 1, 2 and 3 soils and is intended to permit only those uses that will ensure prime agricultural land is protected.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Within the time frame, five amendments were permitted to convert land within the *Agriculture* designation to a development use. Of these, two were approved for residential development, one was approved for employment use, and the remaining two amendments converted agricultural lands for commercial and industrial uses. The conversion of agricultural lands through OPA 12b to the “Heavy Industrial” was the largest conversion at 36 ha and also permitted the expansion of the South Paris Settlement Area Boundary. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 1.1.

Rural Designation: Brant County does not use a rural land use designation to define areas not considered prime agricultural lands but where agriculture remains the primary use. This type of amendment was not seen in Brant County, and zero OPAs were captured under category 2 of Table 1.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policies were not used in Brant County’s OP to permit additional uses in areas in the *Agriculture* designation. No amendments were captured under category 3 of Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Brant County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of County OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	1	3.3	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	2	7.6	0	0
2006	1	36	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0

2014	0	0	0	0
2015	1	16.6	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	5	63.5	0	0

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Brant County was not covered by the Greenbelt Plan³ at the time of conducting this study. As such, no amendments were captured that demonstrated the effect of this provincial land use plan.

County of Bruce



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 409,020 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 225,958 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 247,449 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$566.1 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,505.33
 Population (2016)¹: 68,147
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.2%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3.1%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	43.18 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	92.89 ha*
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	136.07 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss in Relation to Census Farm Area 2001	0.05%

**Note: this includes 25 OPAs that were used to facilitate severances*

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Bruce County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Bruce County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Bruce County was first approved by County Council in 1997, the Minister of Municipal Affairs in 1998, and the Ontario Municipal Board in 1999. Bruce County has eight lower-tier municipalities: the Town of Saugeen Shores; the Municipality of Kincardine; the Municipality of Brockton; the Town of South Bruce Peninsula; the Township of Huron-Kinloss; the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie; the Municipality of South Bruce; and the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula. Each of the lower tier municipalities within the County have their own local Official Plan which apply generally only to the primary and secondary communities, though the Town of South Bruce Peninsula and the Township of Huron-Kinloss's OP extend to all other lands within the Municipalities as well. Each of these lower tier OPs conform with Bruce County's Official Plan and the County remains the signing authority. Staff at the Bruce County Planning Department generously provided data for the entire county and the consolidated Official Plan served as the primary reference.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributions to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features. Likewise housekeeping has not included any OPAs regarding aggregate operations. Many of the OPAs captured in Bruce County were used to facilitate a severance, however whether these new parcels remain in agricultural production. These OPAs were recorded as a separate category so they be considered or disregarded as appropriate.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Bruce County

In Bruce County, agricultural designations are intended to permit primarily agricultural uses, supportive uses, and non-farm development by the severance of surplus dwellings. The primary use of agriculture is for livestock though there are also cash crops. Bruce County is unique in its encouragement of a range of farming sizes with the belief that the variety will ensure agriculture remains a long-term sustainable economic activity and allow new farm businesses to be established. They maintain a minimum farm size of 40 hectares (100 acres) and consider severances on the basis if the parcel to be retained is appropriate for the long-term application of agriculture and location proposed. Bruce County’s OP prioritizes prime agricultural soils preservation in compliance with Section 2.3.5 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, three OPAs were captured that redesignate agricultural land to a development designation, totaling 43.18 hectares captured in category 1 of Table 2.1.

Rural Designation: No amendments of this nature have been captured in Bruce County under category 2 of Table 2.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were used in Bruce County on seven occasions during the course of the study to allow additional uses within the Prime Agricultural Area. These uses totaled 180.57 hectares. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Bruce County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
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2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	3	0	0	3.83*
2008	2	0	0	8.44*
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	3	0	0	2.76*
2011	4	0	0	7.53*
2012	4	40.34	0	1.89*
2013	4	0	0	11.79*
2014	2	0	0	7.12*
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	4	2.04	0	3.91*
2017	9	0.8	0	65.37*
Grand Total	35	43.18	0	92.89

**Includes OPAs that were used to facilitate a severance. It is unclear whether all of these OPAs removed agriculture from production. **Totals may not add due to rounding*

Municipality of Chatham-Kent



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 247,052 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 223,549.2 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 238,905 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$654,138,783
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,738
 Population (2016)¹: 102,042
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -4.2 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: -2 %

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	73.5 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	58 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	131.44 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.059%

Municipality’s Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Chatham-Kent during the years 2000–2017. Chatham-Kent has been a single-tier municipality since the 22 municipalities that comprised the City of Chatham and the County of Kent were amalgamated in 1998. The first Official Plan for the municipality was adopted by council in 2005, and later approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2008.

Data was collected in Chatham-Kent using electronic copies of OPAs, which were provided by staff at the Municipality’s Planning and Development Division. Relevant OPAs from 2000–2007 were identified by staff using archived Council Reports. Please note that this method potentially impacted the accuracy of the data, as the OPAs captured within this timeframe were not the final by-laws. The assistance of staff at Chatham-Kent’s Planning Services Department are appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Chatham-Kent’s Official Plan states that over 91% of the land base is cultivated agriculturally and considered to be primarily prime agricultural lands. This definition of prime agricultural land is consistent with the Canadian Land Inventory system and includes Class 1–3 soils and specialty crop areas. Identified prime agricultural lands are included in the *Agriculture Area* designation land use designation. These lands are noted to surround all of the growth centres, including the Primary and Secondary Urban Centres and Hamlets.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, ten amendments were captured which converted 73.5 hectares of prime agricultural lands to a development designation. Three of these OPAs converted agricultural lands to a commercial use. Three of them redesignated agricultural lands for residential use, and the other four converted land to industrial, public facility and natural heritage use. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 3.1.

Rural Designation: There were no relevant rural designations in Chatham-Kent’s Official Plan therefore no OPAs were captured in category 2 of Table 3.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Seven site-specific amendments affecting agricultural lands were captured which added special policies to 58 hectares of agricultural lands. Two OPAs allowed for severances on subject lands, two added polices to permit institutional and public facilities, one permitted a parking lot on existing church, one permitted commercial use (a Go-Cart racing track), and the final one permitted a marijuana operation for medical purposes. In 2016, OPA 42 was used both to facilitate the protection of a Provincially Significant Wetland, and to permit an existing dwelling to be severed from those lands for continued residential use. This OPA demonstrates that though designated Agricultural, these special policies are not necessarily removing land that was in production. These amendments were captured in category 3 of Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Chatham-Kent By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	3	7	0	4.9
2004	2	17.8	0	0
2005	2	6	0	1.5
2006	0	0	0	0

2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	2	5.6	0	23
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	1	0.9	0	0
2014	2	24	0	0.9
2015	1	0	0	6.5
2016	2	12.15**	0	21.2
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	16	73.5	0	58

**Totals may not add due to rounding. **Note, this OPA did not take any land out of production but instead was used to reflect existing land use and could therefore be interpreted as a housekeeping amendment. Though this land is identified by OMAFRA as Class 2, the majority of the parcel contains a provincially significant wetland.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Chatham-Kent's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Chatham-Kent does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Dufferin



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 148,644 ha
 Area of Census Farm (2001)²: 78,169.9 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 63,370.94 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 27,523 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 18.52%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$157.50 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,485.30
 Population (2016)¹: 61,735
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 4.5%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 8.5%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment)	59 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses	187.8 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	246.8 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.32%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Dufferin County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Dufferin County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Dufferin County was approved in 2015, and as such, data for the County was collected from the eight lower-tier municipalities within the County, each with their own respective Official Plan. The lower-tier municipalities within Dufferin County are the Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon, and Mulmur and the Towns of Grand Valley, Mono, Orangeville and Shelburne. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was provided by staff at each of the individual planning departments. The assistance of planning staff is appreciated in making this research possible⁶.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Dufferin County

Agricultural land use designations vary across the lower-tier municipalities in Dufferin County. In the townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon and Mulmur, an *Agricultural* and a *Rural* designation are used. The *Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural land and specialty crop areas with highly productive class 1, 2 and 3 soils. The *Rural* designation is used for areas with lower capabilities for agriculture and class 4 to 7 soils. The town of Grand Valley also uses the *Agricultural* designation, but does not have a *Rural* designation. In the town of Mono, prime agricultural lands were not designated in the Official Plan until 2017; all agricultural lands were classified as Rural. In Orangeville and Shelburne, there are no areas designated for agriculture. For this study, lands designated as *Agricultural* were considered. As well, those lands designated *Rural* in the town of Mono were compared to the Canada Land Inventory, and then determined to be relevant if in Class 1, 2 or 3 soils.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Three amendments converting prime agricultural lands to a development designation were tracked in Dufferin County from 2000–2017. These amendments permitted a settlement area boundary expansion, golf course construction and the development of a private school. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 4.1.

Rural Designation: No amendments converting prime agricultural lands to a rural designation occurred in Dufferin County over the study period. This is reflected in the column for category 2 of Table 4.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific amendments occurred five times throughout the study period in Dufferin County. The largest site-specific amendment permitted the lands to be developed for the Dufferin Eco Energy Park, which to date has not been developed. Other site-specific amendments permitted an existing explosive storage facility, outdoor storage and auto wrecking, development of a golf course, and the severance of a surplus farm parcel. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 4.1.

Table 2.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Dufferin County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	35.9	0	0
2001	1	4.1	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0

2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	0	0	18
2010	2	0	0	124
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	0	0	7.4
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	19	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	0	0	38.4
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	8	59	0	187.8

**Totals may not add due to rounding.

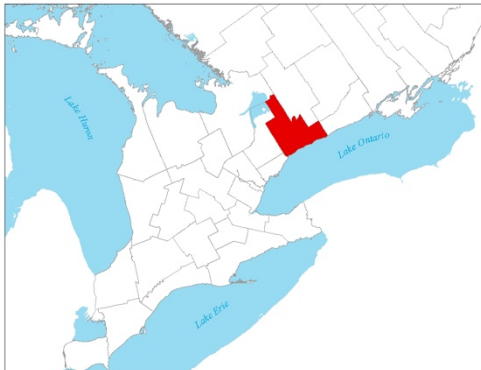
Provincial Land Use Plans: In Dufferin County, nearly 19% of the lands are protected under the Greenbelt Plan³. The conversion of prime agricultural lands in the county, organized by OPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt is captured in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Dufferin County By Application Date & Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime agriculture area redesignated to a development or rural designation (ha)	35.9	19	4.1	0	59
Prime agricultural area with site-specific policies allowing additional uses (ha)	0	169.8	0	18	187.8
Total	35.9	188.8	4.1	18	246.8

**Table 4.1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 4.2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

County of Durham



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 252,380 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 133,662 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 118,498 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 208,036 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 82%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$321.7 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,715
 Population (2016)¹: 645,862
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 8.4%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 6.2%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1,619 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	56 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	18.1 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	1693.11 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	1.27%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the Durham Regional Official Plan (ROP) and Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPA). In Durham, the ROPAs that were adopted and approved by the Region and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were compiled and provided electronically by staff at the Region’s planning department. The assistance of staff at the Durham Region Planning and Development is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Durham Region

During the course of the study period, land use designations for agricultural land underwent a substantial revision in Durham Region. Prior to 2008, agricultural land was designated as either *Permanent Agricultural Reserve* or *General Agricultural Area*. The *Permanent Agriculture Reserve* designation captured farmland of the highest quality in the region and its policies restricted uses to agricultural and farm related uses. In the *General Agricultural Area* designation, agriculture and farm related uses were defined as the primary use, with compatible non-agricultural uses, such as equestrian uses, kennels, allotment gardens and fur and sod farms, also permitted⁶.

Following the direction of the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, Amendment No. 114 to Durham's Regional Official Plan, approved by the OMB in 2008, adopted a new land use designation for *Prime Agricultural Areas*. Lands formerly designated in the *Permanent Agricultural Reserve* became the *Prime Agricultural Areas*, while lands in the *General Agricultural Area* underwent further study before being re-categorized as either a *Prime Agricultural Area*, or as *Major Open Space*.

The *Major Open Space* designation is intended to serve as a conservation designation, but which also includes prime agricultural lands and lands of lesser agricultural significance⁷. The Durham ROP also defines *Dufferin's Rouge Agricultural Preserve*, identifying lands intended to be protected for agricultural use in perpetuity, as part of the Central Pickering Development Plan. These lands were formerly intended to be developed in conjunction with a federal airport. The *Permanent Agricultural Reserve* and the *Prime Agricultural Area* designations were considered in this study for the conversion of prime agricultural lands.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, two ROPAs pertained to the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas*. ROPA No. 128 redesignated 1,610 hectares of *Prime Agricultural Areas* to *Living Areas* and *Employment Areas* as part of the Region's conformity exercise with the *Provincial Growth Plan*, adopted by Regional Council in 2009 and approved by the OMB in 2010. Through ROPA No. 128, a deferral was lifted on lands formerly identified as *Differed Living Area* – these lands have been included in the total. Also as part of ROPA No. 128, an additional 48 hectares of land formerly designated as *Living Area* in the Region's 2004 Official Plan were returned to the *Prime Agricultural Area*.

ROPA No. 128 converted a net 1,562 hectares of prime agricultural land to a development designation. Following the recommendations of a 2002 study, which identified the need for additional employment lands for the long-term economic vitality of the community, ROPA No. 129 was approved. ROPA No. 129 redesignated 57 hectares of *Prime Agricultural Area* to *Living Area* and *Employment Area* in order to expand the Beaverton Urban Area and create additional employment lands. The net total of 1,619 hectares of prime agricultural land redesignated to a development designation through these ROPAs is captured in category 1 of Table 5.1.

Rural Designation: During the study period, there were two ROPAs that redesignated land from a prime agricultural designation to a more rural designation. As part of ROPAs No. 128 and No.129, 26 and 30 hectares respectively, of *Prime Agricultural Land* were redesignated to the *Major Open Space* designation in order to recognize natural heritage features. The predominant use of lands within the *Major Open Space Areas* is conservation, however, a range of agricultural, and non-agricultural uses are permitted. These land use changes are captured under category 2 of Table 5.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were used in Durham Region on three occasions during the course of the study to allow additional uses within the *Permanent Agricultural Reserve* and the *Prime*

Agricultural Area. These site-specific uses totaled 18.1 hectares and included an existing wood working shop, a driving range, and a Paramedic Station. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through ROPAs In Durham Region By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption Or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	1	0	0	1.1
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	2	57	30	16.5
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	1	1,562	26	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	0	0	0.5
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	5	1,619	56	18.1

**In 2010, through OPA 128, a deferral was lifted on lands which were shown in Durham's 2004 Regional Official Plan as Deferred Living Area. The same amendment saw 48 hectares of land designated as Living Area returned to the Prime Agricultural Area designation. The net area of prime agricultural area converted to a development designation through ROPA 128 is listed for 2010. **Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Within Durham Region, the Greenbelt Plan, including the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, covers 208,036 hectares or 82% of the Region's land area³. Prior to the adoption of the Greenbelt Plan, ROPA No. 91 permitted an additional site-specific use on lands that eventually became part of the Greenbelt Plan area. After the Greenbelt Plan took effect on December 16, 2004, two amendments in Durham Region were approved pertaining to the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas* within the Greenbelt Plan area. Planning studies pertaining to ROPA No. 129 commenced prior to adoption of the Greenbelt Plan and as such, the amendment was subject to previous land use policies. One further amendment was made after the adoption of the Greenbelt Plan to allow a site-specific driving range use in the Greenbelt Area; again, this application commenced in 2003, and was not subject to the policies of the Greenbelt Plan. The conversion of prime agricultural land, organized by ROPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt Plan is captured in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Durham Region By Application Date & Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime agriculture area redesignated to a development or rural designation (ha)	0	1,588	87	0	1,675
Prime agricultural area with site-specific policies allowing additional uses (ha)	0		17.6	0.5	18.1
Total	0	1,588	104.6	0.5	1,693.1

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000—2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments was evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

County of Elgin



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 188,103 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 154,907 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 152,675 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$432.6 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,833.47
 Population (2016)¹: 88,978
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 2.5%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.7%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	241.81 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	241.81 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.16%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Elgin County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Elgin County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Elgin County was approved in 2013 and the County became the approval authority in 2014. As such, data for the County was collected from the seven lower-tier municipalities within the County for the years 2000–2014 and the upper tier for the years 2014–2017. The lower-tier municipalities within Elgin County are the Municipality of Central Elgin, Township of Malahide, Town of Aylmer, Municipality of Bayham, Municipality of West Elgin, Township of Southwold, and the Municipality of Dutton Dunwich. The City of St. Thomas is a single-tier municipality located within the geographic boundary of Elgin County. Their land use planning has still been captured within this summary as the City continues to have a planning services agreement with Central Elgin. Staff at Planning and Archival departments across Elgin County provided data at the upper and lower tier. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Elgin County

Elgin County protects its prime agricultural area under the *Agricultural Area* designation. This designation applies to all lands outside the Settlement Area, which are considered to be the County’s prime agricultural area. There are some discrepancies between the upper and lower tier Official Plans where some lands outside of settlement areas have been designated for non-agricultural development at the lower tier. In these cases, the lower tier Official Plan designations take precedent and these areas are deemed to not be prime agricultural areas.

The lower-tier municipalities of Southwold, West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, and Aylmer all reported zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural land during the 2000–2014 time period. The captured OPAs reflect land use changes in the lower-tier municipalities of Bayham, Central Elgin, the City of St. Thomas, as well as Elgin County as a whole from 2014–2017.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Seven OPAs were captured that converted prime agricultural land in the Agricultural Area designation within the 2000–2017 timeframe. These OPAs were used to move land from an agricultural designation to a residential (hamlet, rural, and urban development respectively) or industrial designation. Aside from being catalyzed by a Boundary Adjustment (OPA 3, 16, & 66) or a Five Year Official Plan Review (OPA 10), the purpose of the remaining OPAs were to facilitate the establishment of a golf course (OPA 3), accommodate an existing salvage yard and recycling depot (OPA 1). OPAs of this kind are captured under category 1 of Table 6.1.

Rural Designation: Elgin County does not use a rural land use designation to define prime agricultural area. No amendments of this kind were captured, as reflected in category 2 of Table 6.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were not used in Elgin County within the time frame permit additional uses within the Agricultural Policy Areas. No amendments were captured under category 3 of Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Elgin County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	13.57	0	0
2001	1	3.8	0	0

2002	1	2.3	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	23.74	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	10.7	0	0
2010	1	182.5	0	0
2011	0	5.2	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	5.2	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	7	241.81	0	0

**Totals may not add due to rounding

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Elgin County does not fall into the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, nor the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Official Plan Amendments in Elgin County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

Essex County



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 185,090 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 135,214 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 141,728 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$1,056,448,369
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$7,454.1
Population (2016)¹: 398,953
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -1.2%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 2.6%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Essex County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017. Essex County, an upper-tier municipality, had its first Official Plan (OP) adopted in 2002 and approved in 2005. This OP sets the framework and guidelines for the lower-tier municipalities that comprise Essex County. These lower-tier municipalities include the Town of Amherstburg, the Town of Essex, the Town of Kingsville, the Town of Lakeshore, the Town of LaSalle, and the Town of Tecumseh. During data collection, planners at Essex County confirmed that zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural soils had been approved in the timeframe of this study. Their assistance in making this research possible is greatly appreciated.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Essex County

Essex County's OP highlights that agriculture is one of the predominant features of the county. The OP states that approximately 90 percent of the land within Essex County is considered to be prime agricultural land, whereas 80 percent of the County's land area is used as farmland. Essex County's definition of prime agricultural land is consistent with the Canada Land Inventory system, and includes specialty crop areas and/or Class 1–3 soils. Prime agricultural land is designated in Essex as *Agricultural* and includes everything outside of *Settlement Areas* and *Natural Environment* areas.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Zero approved OPAs affecting prime agricultural land were captured in this study. Possible explanations include historically permissive policies regarding severances. Essex County also has smaller farm lot sizes that originate from the original land survey system. Essex County continues to have a productive and profitable agricultural sector. In fact, data on the area of census farmland from 2001 to 2016 suggests a 4.8% growth rate in the total amount of farmland in Essex.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Essex County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Essex County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Frontenac County



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 378,776 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 83,179 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 61,896. ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$43,805,645
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$707.73
Population (2016)¹: 150,475
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 4.1%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 0.5%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Frontenac County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017. Frontenac County is an upper-tier municipality that adopted its first Official Plan (OP) on October 15, 2014. It was later approved in 2016 by Ontario’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs. Frontenac’s OP recognizes and emphasizes lower-tier municipal land use priorities and places them within a broader framework with a particular focus on long-term sustainability. Though lower-tier municipalities must now conform to Frontenac County’s OP, land use such as *Settlement Areas* are first established within lower-tier Official Plans. Local municipal Official Plans complement the Frontenac County Official Plan by providing detailed strategies, policies, and land use designations for planning and development at the local level.

The lower-tier municipalities that comprise Frontenac County include the Township of Central Frontenac, the Township of Frontenac Islands, the Township of North Frontenac, and Township of South Frontenac. During data collection, planners from the lower-tier throughout Frontenac County confirmed that zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural soils have been approved within the County during the timeframe of this study. The assistance of planning staff is greatly appreciated in making this research possible.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Frontenac County

Agricultural Resource Lands are determined in lower-tier OPs and are protected through local and County level policies. These areas were identified based on the presence of prime agricultural soils according to the Canada Land Inventory system (Classes 1–3), or in recognition of a concentration of farms that have been in long-term production that may also include Class 4–7 lands. Land fragmentation and conflicting land uses in the area were also taken into account when identifying *Agricultural Resource Lands*. Agricultural uses and prime agricultural soils may also be present and permitted in the *Rural* designation in lower-tier Official Plans. When development is proposed on said *Rural* lands, the Township of Drummond-North Elmsley’s OP, for example, states that the policies of the Agriculture designation will be considered and may instead be applied by Council.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

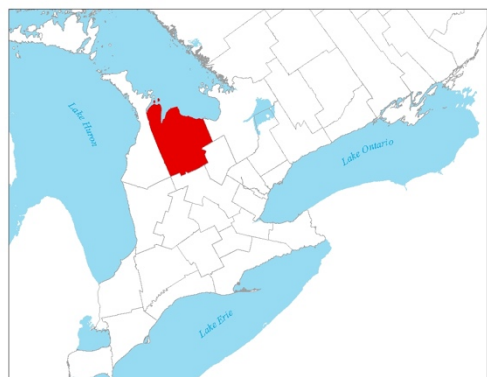
Zero approved OPAs affecting prime agricultural land from 2000–2017 in Frontenac County were captured in this study. Both Frontenac County’s and the lower-tier’s OPs have included some flexibility that may help to serve as an explanation. Farm related residential severances and additional uses that may result in a dwelling

being made surplus are permitted in circumstances of farm consolidation. There is also an ability to reduce the minimum lot area in instances where specific specialized agricultural operations do not require large lot areas such as garlic farms, apiaries or aquaculture. Frontenac County's OP does however report a decline in the number of farms and increasing challenges to the agricultural sector, as identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs⁶. The OP has included strategic objectives to address this decline such as building supports for the agricultural tourism sector, rehabilitating and enhancing agricultural land, and preparing for technological changes in agricultural food production.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Frontenac County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement. However, Frontenac County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Grey



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 451,350 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 240,027 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 200,514 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt⁶: 64,187.88 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 14.22%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$463.7 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,312.56
 Population (2016)¹: 93,830
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 0.2%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.4%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	0 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	107.2 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	28.6 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	135.8 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per 2001 Census Farm Area)	0.06%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Grey County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Grey County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Grey County and Owen Sound was approved in 1981, and later updated and replaced by the County of Grey Official Plan in 2000. These plans were prepared for the entire County including the nine lower-tier municipalities that comprise the County. The lower-tier municipalities within Grey County are the Township of Chatsworth, Township of Georgian Bluffs, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Town of Hanover, Municipality of Meaford, City of Owen Sound, Township of Southgate, Town of The Blue Mountains, and the Municipality of West Grey. Access to data for the County provided by staff at Grey County’s Planning Department. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Grey County

Grey County designates prime agricultural under the three agricultural designations. *Agricultural* areas denote prime farmland, *Special Agricultural* denotes microclimates and specialty crop areas, and *Rural areas* are where farming is permitted but may not be the primary land use. In addition to prime agricultural soils, the *Agricultural* designation also includes large swaths of land that have been in long-term production but may not be considered prime under the Canadian Land Inventory. Grey County identified its *Agricultural* land through mapping exercises in the mid-1990’s and early 2000’s that combine Provincial mapping layers with local knowledge.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Zero OPAs were captured in Grey County that moved agricultural land to a development designation. This is reflected in category 1 of Table 8.1.

Rural Designation: Three OPAs were captured that moved prime agricultural land from an *Agricultural* designation to a *Rural* designation in Grey County. The first was OPA 4, which redesignated 22 hectares in order to facilitate the development of a golf course. The second, OPA 48, redesignated 9.4 hectares in the historic settlement area of Plumeville in order to reorganize existing lots into a configuration that was more developable, resulting in an overall decrease in the number of lots. OPA 66 redesignated 75.8 hectares in the Township of Southgate, however, not included in this study is the corresponding amount of land that was moved from *Rural* to *Agriculture* as a part of OPA 80. The result of the two OPAs, which took place as a result of a 5-Year OP review, was a net increase of land designated Agricultural. These OPAs are captured under category 2 of Table 8.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: The majority of OPAs captured in Grey County used site-specific special policies to add additional uses onto agricultural land. There were twelve in total, which were used to permit a range of additional uses primarily involving lot creation, as well as to support agricultural related industrial uses such as establishing an abattoir, machine repair, and garden nursery. The size of these amendments vary but average at 2.38 hectares. These OPAs are captured under category 3 of Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Grey County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	0	22	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	1	0	0	3

2003	1	0	0	2.5
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	1	0	9.4	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	2	0	75.8*	0.5
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	0	0	3.3
2010	2	0	0	3
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	2	0	0	2.9
2013	1	0	0	1
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	2	0	0	3
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	1	0	0	9.4
Grand Total	15	0	107.2	28.6

**Does not include OPA 80 which resulted in an overall net increase of Agricultural land designated in Grey County's OP **Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Within Grey County, the Niagara Escarpment covers 64,187.88 ha or 14.22% of the County's land area⁶. This land is protected under the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), which was established in 1985. The NEP is further situated within the Greenbelt however NEP lands are governed by the requirements of NEP and are not subject to the polices of the Greenbelt Plan⁷. That being said, the two policies underwent a coordinated review in 2015. Development applications within this defined region are processed by the Niagara Escarpment Commission. No amendments relevant to this study were approved within the NEP during this study's timeframe.

County of Haldimand



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 125,154 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 90,000.47 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 86,908.67 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$295.92 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$3,404.94
 Population (2016)¹: 45,608
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -0.7%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.6%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment)	71.3 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses	213.1 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	284.4 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.32%

County Methods in Brief

This study involved the examination of the Official Plans (OPs) and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved during the years 2000 to 2017 for Haldimand County. The current OP for Haldimand County was adopted in 2006, and as such, the OPs and OPAs for the former Towns of Dunnville and Haldimand and the former City of Nanticoke were also examined. For data collection in Haldimand, the original files that document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during study timeframe were provided by staff at the Clerks Division and Planning and Development Division. Files were provided electronically where available, while physical copies were provided at the Haldimand County Cayuga Administration Building. The assistance of Haldimand County staff is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Haldimand County

Haldimand County recognizes prime agricultural lands in their official plans under the designation *Agricultural*. The *Agricultural* designation covers areas where Class 1–3 soils predominate, but may also include some Class 4–7 lands that are a part of the broader prime agricultural area.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, six amendments occurred in Haldimand County that converted prime agricultural lands from the *Agricultural* designation to a non-agricultural designation for development purposes. Each of these amendments was for the purpose of residential development, the majority of which facilitated new lot creation under the *Resort Residential* designation. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 9.1.

Rural Designation: No amendments occurred in Haldimand County during the study period that converted prime agricultural lands to a rural designation.

Site-Specific Amendments: Fifteen OPAs occurred in Haldimand County from 2000–2017 that enabled site-specific uses on prime agricultural lands. The purpose of the site-specific amendments varied greatly, including permissions to establish places of worship, daycares, and garden centres. Many of the site-specific amendments were small in size, however one OPA that permitted motorsports and trailer camping accounted for 150 of the total 198 ha repurposed through special policies. Category 3 of Table 9.1 captures these amendments below.

Table 9.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Haldimand County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year Of OPA Adoption or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	0.6	0	0
2001	1	0	0	0.8
2002	1	0	0	150
2003	1	27.4	0	0
2004	2	0	0	2.4
2005	1	0	0	1.9
2006	1	0	0	0.4
2007	1	0	0	9.4
2008	2	0	0	4.6
2009	2	0	0	26.4
2010	1	1.3	0	0
2011	1	33	0	0

2012	0	0	0	0
2013	1	5.5	0	0
2014	2	3.5	0	1.9
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	2	0	0	15.3
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	21	71.3	0	213.1

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Haldimand County does not fall into the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, nor the Niagara Escarpment, and as such OPAs in Haldimand County are not subject to the policies of these provincial plans. Haldimand County is covered by the *Places to Grow Plan*, in particular the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. An amendment occurred in 2009 that brought the Haldimand County Official Plan into conformity with the *Growth Plan*. This OPA was largely focused on intensification in urban areas, and agricultural land loss was not captured.

Region of Halton



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 96,405 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 39,965.9 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 27,792 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 52,558 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 54.5%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$143.8 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$5,174.21
 Population (2016)¹: 548,435
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 14.2 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 9.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	2,656 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	281.95 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	2,846.95 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	7.12%

Region Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Halton’s Regional Official Plan (ROP) and Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPAs). In Halton, the files that document ROPAs adopted and approved by Regional Council and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were compiled and provided electronically by staff at the Region’s planning department. The assistance of staff at Halton Region Planning Services is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but no limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural uses are also conducted within portions of the Escarpment Rural Areas, however, the intent of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) is not necessarily to preserve agricultural land. Land use amendments within the NEP are subject to consideration by the Niagara Escarpment Commission and are not within the scope of this study.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Halton Region

Prior to ROPA No. 38, agricultural land in Halton Region was designated *Agricultural Rural Area* and prime agricultural areas were generally defined as lands below the Escarpment Brow⁶. Through the ROPA No. 38 process, the agricultural designation was renamed to *Agricultural Area* and a new Agricultural System policy framework, including mapping and associated policies for *Prime Agricultural Areas*, was introduced. These policies were adopted by Regional Council in 2009 and approved, with modifications, by the OMB in 2017.

For this study, applications made to redesignate *Agricultural Rural Area* lands prior to 2009 were scrutinized to determine the parcel’s location relative to the ROPA No. 38 *Prime Agricultural Areas* mapping and their position above or below the brow of the Niagara Escarpment. Every effort was made to exclude lands that were not prime agricultural lands. Upon the introduction of the *Prime Agricultural Areas* mapping through ROPA No. 38, only applications to redesignate lands within that area were considered. ROPA No. 38 mapping of the Agricultural System also identifies *Agricultural System outside the Prime Agricultural Area*.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period only one amendment redesignated prime agricultural land to an urban use. ROPA No. 38 redesignated 2,780 hectares of *Agricultural Rural Area* below the brow of the Niagara Escarpment to *Urban Area* as part of the Region’s exercise to conform with the *Provincial Growth Plan* (adopted by Regional Council in 2009 and approved by the OMB in 2013). Of the 2,780 hectares, 124 hectares were subject to site-specific policies permitting additional uses, adopted prior to ROPA No. 38 and were documented under category 3 of this study, discussed below. The remaining 2,656 hectares redesignated to a development designation are captured in category 1 of Table 10.1.

Rural Agriculture: Since the introduction of the *Prime Agricultural Area* “constraint to development”, through ROPA No. 38, there have been no subsequent amendments to remove the constraint which would leave the lands as *Agricultural System Outside the Prime Agricultural Area*. No amendments of this nature have been captured in Halton Region under category 2 of Table 10.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were used in Halton Region on ten occasions during the course of the study to allow additional uses within the *Prime Agricultural Area*. These uses totaled 287 hectares and included churches, institutional and recreational uses. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 10.1.

Table 3.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through ROPAs In Halton Region By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
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2000	2	0	0	10.9
2001	1	0	0	32.8
2002	1	0	0	40
2003	1	0	0	40
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	1	0	0	80
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	2	0	0	21
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	0	0	4.2
2013	2	2656*	0	53
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	11	2,656*	0	281.95

*In 2013, 2,780 hectares of land were redesignated as urban and employment areas as part of ROPA No. 38. 2,656 hectares reflects the area redesignated through ROPA No. 38 minus 124 hectares of land within the ROPA 38 expansion area that was already under site-specific policies permitting additional uses prior to ROPA No. 38

Provincial Land Use Plans: Within Halton Region, the Greenbelt Plan covers 52,558 hectares or 54.5% of the Region's land area³. After the Greenbelt Plan took effect on December 16, 2004, three amendments in Halton Region were approved pertaining to the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas* within the Greenbelt Plan. All three of these applications were initiated prior to the adoption of the Greenbelt Plan and as such, these amendments were subject to previous policies. The remainder of the ROPAs approved after 2005 pertain to lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan. The conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas*, organized by OPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt is captured in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Halton Region By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	0	2,656	0	0	2,656
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific	95.1	57.2	129.7	0	282

Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)					
Total	95.1	2713.2	129.7	0	2,938

**Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the amendments was evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

City of Hamilton



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 111,729 ha
 Area of Census Farm (2001)²: 56,202 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 52,015.06 ha
 Area Within the Greenbelt³: 87,560 ha
 Percent Within the Greenbelt: 78.37%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$259.91 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$4,996.81
 Population (2016)¹: 536,917
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 3.1%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	34.5 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	151.7ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	186.2 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.33%

Please note that in the case of the City of Hamilton, data from the planning department was only available from 2012–2017 due to special circumstances surrounding policy formation related to prime agricultural and specialty cropland designations in the City. The data from 2000–2011 were collected from the City’s online By-law archive, however the By-law documents did not include the planning reports and the findings as a result do not present a complete picture of land use changes occurring across the region. As such, the methods for this summary are not considered by any means exhaustive and the findings are not directly comparable to other municipal jurisdictions within the context of the study. This partial summary may instead be used to independently indicate directional trends regarding the conversion of prime-agricultural land within the City of Hamilton.

Methods in Brief

The City of Hamilton is comprised of the amalgamated communities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Hamilton, and Stoney Creek. Over 2000–2012, the City completed a Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) study during this time that formed the basis for new policy that consolidated the official plans of the former independent municipalities, brought the City into compliance with provincial regulation (primarily the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 and the Greenbelt Plan, 2005), and standardized existing uses and policies across the rural areas. The new official plan policy was adopted by City Council in 2006, however it was not effective pending Ontario Municipal Board decisions that were made in 2012. All Official Plan amendments

between 2000–2011 were based on these former townships’ own official plans. Data during this period were collected from the City of Hamilton’s online passed By-Law archive files.

Since 2012, the City of Hamilton established two Official Plans, one that relates to rural land and the other to urban lands. This study primarily examined Hamilton’s Rural Official Plan and associated Official Plan Amendments (OPAs), where agriculture is the primary long-term land-use. The files which document OPAs adopted and approved by Hamilton’s City Council and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2012–2017 were compiled from public documents made available online on the City’s website. The assistance of staff at City of Hamilton’s Planning Services is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but no limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural uses are also conducted within portions of the Escarpment Rural Areas, however, the intent of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) is not necessarily to preserve agricultural land. Land use amendments within the NEP are subject to consideration by the Niagara Escarpment Commission and are not within the scope of this study.

There were also instances of Rural Official Plan policy updates (OPA No. 5, OPA No. 9) and a city-wide road widening (OPA No. 12) that were not included in this summary, as potential impact on prime agricultural lands and the total amount of converted land were unknown.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Our research captured six development redesignation policy amendments under the City of Hamilton’s Official Plan (Urban and Rural). Two of these amendments pertained to urban boundary expansion. The largest piece of land which was converted for development use was an airport employment growth district. They are reflected category 1 of Table 11.1 for the City of Hamilton.

Rural Agriculture: Our research captured zero rural redesignation policy amendments City of Hamilton’s Official Plan. This is reflected category 2 of Table 11.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Eleven site-specific policies were captured from 2000–2017, which is reflected in category 3 of Table 11.1. These OPAs permitted an institutional use, the addition of a small restaurant in conjunction of an existing winery, an agricultural processing warehouse, a garden centre, a breeding kennel, and the severance of some surplus farm dwellings.

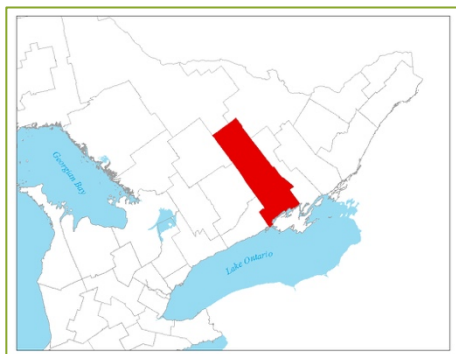
Table 11.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs in the City of Hamilton by Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	3	16.5	0	2
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	2	18	0	0
2006	4	0	0	4.8
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	1	0	0	56.5
2009	1	0	0	21.5
2010	7	0	0	60.5
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	0	0	2.2
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	1	0	0	6.2
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	20	34.5	0	151.7

Provincial Land Use Plans:

The City of Hamilton is subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Greenbelt Plan covers 78.37% of the total land, however, this summary cannot comment on the effectiveness of the Greenbelt and agricultural preservation in the City of Hamilton as no data was captured prior to the introduction of the Greenbelt Plan, and the four OPAs within this study were located outside of the Greenbelt.

County of Hastings



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 610,392 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 123,861.3 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 102,774.37 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$95,198,797
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$926.3
 Population (2016)¹: 136,445
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 3.4%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.1%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	40.06 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	178.6 Ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	218.66 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.18 %

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the County of Hastings, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Hastings during the years 2000–2017. In Hastings, all lower-level municipalities are governed by the County’s Official Plan policies. The first Official Plan for the County of Hastings was adopted in 2002, and as such, the OPs and OPAs for the 14 lower municipalities (Town of Bancroft, Town of Deseronto, Municipality of Hastings Highlands, Township of Carlow/Mayo, Municipality of Centre Hastings, Township of Faraday, Township of Limerick, Township of Madoc, Township of Marmora & Lake, Municipality of Stirling-Rawdon, Township of Tudor & Cashel, Municipality of Tweed, Township of Tyendinaga, Township of Wollaston) for the years 2000 and 2001 were also examined. The physical copies of original files that document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during study timeframe were provided by staff at the Hasting County’s Planning and Development Division. The assistance of staff at Hasting’s Planning and Development Department are appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the County of Hastings

In Hasting’s Official Plan, there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with predominantly Canadian Land Inventory Class 1–3 soils. Agricultural uses are also permitted in the *Rural* and *Waterfront* designation, however lands in this designation are predominantly Class 4–7 soils and are not considered prime agricultural lands. For this study, only amendments affecting the *Agricultural* designation were collected from Hasting’s Official Plan.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period only one amendment in Hastings converted prime agricultural land to an *Agriculture-Special* designation to permit one consent to sever a 40.06 hectare parcel. This amendment is captured in category 1 of Table 12.1.

Rural Designation: Six amendments that converted agricultural lands to a rural designation were captured from 2000 to 2017. Five of these amendments were comparatively small, affecting about 10 hectare each. The sixth amendment changed the designation on a 121.4-hectare parcel of land. This amendment is captured in category 2 of Table 12.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: From 2000–2017, no site-specific amendment affecting agricultural lands were captured. This is reflected in category 3 of Table 12.1.

Table 12.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Hastings County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	3	40.06	28.98	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	1	0	121.4	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	1	0	10.12	0
2011	1	0	6.1	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0

2014	1	0	12	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	7	40.06	178.6	0

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: The County of Hastings does not fall into the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, nor the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Official Plan Amendments in Perth County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

County of Huron



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 339,927 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 290,995 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 297,726 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$1.234 billion
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$4,145
 Population (2016)¹: 59,297
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -0.4%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 0.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	25.3 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	25.3 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	.009%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Huron County's Official Plan (OP) and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). For data collection in Huron, the original files which document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were accessed at the Huron County Planning and Development offices in Goderich, Ontario. The assistance of staff at Huron County Planning and Development is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or alternatively, to reflect existing physical features or hamlets that had been excluded from previous OP schedules.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Huron County

Agricultural activity in Huron County occurs in the *prime agricultural area*. Huron County recognizes that there are both prime and non-prime agricultural lands within the county, however it has designated in its Agricultural Resource Map that the entire county is a *prime agricultural area*⁶. Secondary or rural designations are not used.

Trends Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, two amendments pertained to the redesignation of *Prime Agricultural Areas* to a development designation, totalling 25 hectares. One of these amendments pertains to an 18-hectare expansion of the Exeter settlement area while the other pertained to the redesignation of a prime agricultural area within the village plan area of Brussels. This type of farmland conversion is summarized by adoption date in category 1 of Table 13.1.

Rural Agriculture: Huron County does not use a rural land use designation to define areas outside the *Prime Agricultural Area* but where agriculture remains the primary use. This type of amendment was not seen in Huron County, and zero OPAs were captured under category 2 of Table 13.1.

Site-specific Amendments: Site-specific policies were not used in Huron County’s Official Plan to permit additional uses in the *Prime Agricultural Area*. No amendments were captured under category 3 of Table 13.1.

Table 13.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through Opas In Huron County By Adoption Date (2000—2017)

Year Of Regional OPA Adoption Or Approval By The OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	1	7.3	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	1	18	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0

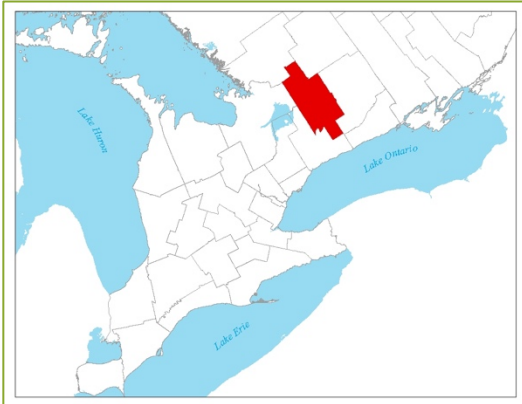
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	2	25.3	0	0

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Agricultural Area Gain: In Huron County, land was added to the *Prime Agricultural Area* on several occasions during the study period. An OPA in Central Huron redesignated a block of *Extractive Resources Area* to *Prime Agricultural Area*. Two other OPAs, also in Central Huron, added land to the *Prime Agricultural Area* from the *Natural Environment* designation. This study captured a total of 10 hectares added to the *Prime Agricultural Area* in Huron County.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Huron County does not fall into the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment, nor Places to Grow Plan. Official Plan Amendments in Huron County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

City of Kawartha Lakes



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 308,438 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 145,966.1 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 125,211.76 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 12,810 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 4.15%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$149.55 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$1,194.42
 Population (2016)¹: 75,423
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -1.8%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3.0%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	128.7 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	50.1 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	56.9 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	235.7
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.16%

City's Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of official plan amendments (OPAs) approved by the City of Kawartha Lakes and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Kawartha Lakes during the years 2000–2017. As the City of Kawartha Lakes' Official Plan was not approved by the Province until 2012, amendments to the Township of Ops' Official Plan and the County of Victoria's Official Plan were also collected, as these plans were in effect prior to the adoption and approval of the City of Kawartha Lakes' Official Plan. Official Plans were also in place for the Town of Lindsay and the Village of Fenelon Falls, both also within what is now the City of Kawartha Lakes, however there were no agricultural lands designated in these plans and thus they were not included in this study. Official Plan Amendments recorded from 2000–2012 in this study were to the Township of Ops' and County of Victoria's Official Plans. Amendments from 2013–2017 were to the City of Kawartha Lakes Official Plan. Access to all of the data was provided by staff at the City of Kawartha Lakes Planning Division. The assistance of planning staff is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses. Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as official plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the City of Kawartha Lakes

In the City of Kawartha Lakes Official Plan there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Prime Agricultural Area* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with predominantly Class 1–3 soils. Agricultural uses are also permitted in the *Rural Areas* designation, however lands in this designation are predominantly Class 4–7 soils and are not considered prime agricultural lands. For this study, only amendments affecting the *Prime Agricultural Area* designation were collected from the City of Kawartha Lakes Official Plan.

Similar designations were used in the County of Victoria Official Plan. An *Agriculture* designation was used for areas of prime agricultural lands, and a *Rural* designation was used to reflect areas where agriculture was permitted, but where the soils were not considered highly capable for agricultural production. When collecting data from the County of Victoria Official Plan, only amendments to the *Agricultural* designation were considered.

In the Township of Ops Official Plan, the designations used for agriculture varied slightly. An *Agricultural* designation and *Agricultural Support* designation were both used. For this study, only changes to the *Agricultural* designation were captured. The *Agricultural Support* designation was considered in data collection to be a rural-type designation.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: The majority of the OPAs captured in the City of Kawartha Lakes converted agricultural lands to a development designation; these amendments accounted for 13 of the 23 total amendments. Most of the land converted to an agricultural designation was for residential purposes. Two of the largest OPAs, accounting for 55 of the total 129 hectares converted to development designations, were for large scale residential and future residential, institution and community uses. Smaller amendments for development purposes permitted a medical centre, industrial uses, a retirement home, rugby club and a church facility.

Rural Designation: Three amendments that converted agricultural lands to a rural designation were captured from 2000–2017. Two of these amendments were small in nature, affecting less than one hectare each, both of which permitted limited retail activity as a use secondary to the primary farming operation. The third, larger amendment changed the designation on a roughly 49-hectare property from *Agricultural* to *Agricultural Support* for the purposes of permitting a fairground and associated facilities.

Site-Specific Amendments: From 2000–2017 there were seven site-specific amendments affecting agricultural lands in the City of Kawartha Lakes. These amendments were mostly small in nature and permitted such uses as private schools and a sawmill, as well as permitting severances from the land. Two larger site-specific amendments were captured in this study. The first amendment, affecting roughly 41 hectares of a 100-hectare property permitted up to 5 single-detached dwellings to be occupied on a single lot. The second amendment, affecting nearly 12 hectares of a property had the effect of reducing the lot area minimum for lands within the prime agricultural area. By doing so, this amendment enabled pasture lands to be added to an existing abattoir operation.

Table 14.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In The City of Kawartha Lakes By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption Or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	0.7	0	0
2001	3	21.6	0	0
2002	3	0	49.4	41
2003	2	51	0	0
2004	2	32	0	2.3
2005	2	0	0	1.5
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	2	3.7	0	0
2008	3	0.8	0.7	0
2009	2	7	0	0
2010	1	11.9	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	0	0	11.7
2017	1	0	0	0.5
Grand Total	23	128.7	50.1	56.9

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Only 4.15% of the total geography of the City of Kawartha Lakes is covered by the Greenbelt Plan³. This land is subject to the policies of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; there is no Greenbelt Protected Countryside in the City of Kawartha Lakes. From 2000–2017, no amendments within the Oak Ridges Moraine were captured.

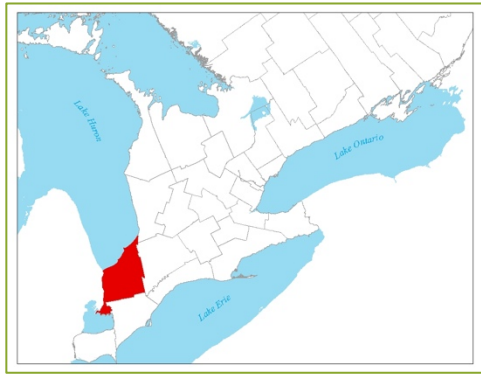
Table 14.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In The City of Kawartha Lakes By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2014	Pre 2005	2005- 2014	
Prime Agriculture	161	17.8	0	0	178.8

Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (Ha)					
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (Ha)	44.2	12.7	0	0	56.9
Total	205.2	30.5	0	0	235.7

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000–2017 study time frame.*

County of Lambton



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 300,225 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 244,654 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 239,408 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$570.6 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,383.28
 Population (2016)¹: 126,638
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -1.6%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 0.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	284.94 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	254.74 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	539.09 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.22%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Lambton County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and Housing and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Lambton County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Lambton County was first approved in 1982 and has since provided overarching land use plans for the eleven lower-tier municipalities that make up the county, although each may have their own respective Official Plans that provide further detail. The lower-tier municipalities within Lambton County are the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston, Township of Dawn-Euphemia, Township of Enniskillen, Municipality of Lambton Shores, Village of Oil Springs, Town of Petrolia, Town of Plympton-Wyoming, Village of Point Edward, City of Sarnia, Township of St. Clair, Township of Warwick. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was provided by staff at each of the individual planning departments.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Lambton County

In Lambton County, most rural land in Lambton is comprised of prime agricultural lands (Classes 1–3), which is recognized under the *Agricultural Area* or *Rural* designation. There are also specialty crop areas that are suitable for the production of fruits and vegetables. Including the Thedford Marsh, a Provincially significant specialty crop area with organic soils. Agricultural Areas are further designated within lower-tier OPs where policies for their protection, maintenance, and improvement and established. Designations at the lower tier were generally consistent with the upper tier, though under the *Restricted Agricultural* designation.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: The great majority of OPAs captured were used to move agricultural land to a development designation. Twenty-seven OPAs were captured in this category, and of those twenty-one moved agricultural land to a residential designation, affecting a total of 184.72 hectares. These OPAs were generally are on a small scale with a median site size of 4.01 hectares. They permitted a range of residential types including subdivisions, serviced hamlets, and the creation of 2 or more lots. There were an additional two OPAs that moved agricultural land to an *Open Space* designation to permit the expansion of a golf course. These OPAs are captured in category 1 of Table 15.1.

Rural Designation: Zero OPAs were captured in Lambton County that pertain to a rural designation where agriculture is the primary land use. This is reflected in category 2 of Table 15.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Four OPAs were captured in Lambton County that place site-specific policies on agricultural land. Two of these OPAs are placed on larger sites (222.58 ha and 26.28 ha respectively) to allow for industrial uses, specifically to allow for solar power generation facilities. The remaining two OPAs are small in size and extend the diversified commercial uses permitted on agricultural land, including a brining facility and a non-agricultural commercial use. These OPAs are captured under category 3 of Table 15.1.

Table 15.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through ROPAs In Lambton County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	1	32.37	0	0
2002	2	8.10	0	0
2003	4	77.42	0	0
2004	3	51.44	0	0

2005	3	9.08	0	0
2006	1	0	0	0.32
2007	3	14.89	0	0
2008	3	43.20	0	222.58
2009	1	0	0	26.28
2010	2	15.73	0	0
2011	1	19.42	0	0
2012	2	3.24	0	5.56
2013	2	3.36	0	0
2014	1	2.41	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	2	3.71	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	31	284.35	0	254.74

**Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Lambton County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Lambton County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Lanark County



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 303,564 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 97,922 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 75,597 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$55,231,957
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$730.6
Population (2016)¹: 68,698
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 3.0%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 4.6%

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Lanark County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017. Lanark County is an upper-tier municipality that adopted its first Official Plan (OP) on June 27, 2012. Lanark’s OP recognizes and emphasizes lower-tier municipal land use priorities and places them within a broader framework with a particular focus on long-term sustainability. Though lower-tier municipalities must now conform to Lanark County’s OP, land use such as *Settlement Areas* are first established within lower-tier Official Plans.

The lower-tier municipalities that comprise Lanark County include the Municipality of Mississippi Mills, the Town of Carleton Place, the Town of Perth, the Township of Beckwith, the Township of Drummond-North Elmsley, the Township of Lanark Highlands, the Township of Montague, and the Township of Tay Valley. During data collection, planners from Lanark County confirmed that zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural soils have been approved within the County during the timeframe of this study. The assistance of planning staff is greatly appreciated in making this research possible.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Lanark County

Agricultural Resource Lands are determined in lower-tier OPs and are protected through local and County level policies. These areas were identified based on the presence of prime agricultural soils according to the Canada Land Inventory system (Classes 1–3), or in recognition of a concentration of farms that have been in long-term production that may also include Class 4–7 lands. Land fragmentation and conflicting land uses in the area were also taken into account when identifying *Agricultural Resource Lands*. Agricultural uses and prime agricultural soils may also be present and permitted in the *Rural* designation in lower-tier Official Plans. When development is proposed on said *Rural* lands, the Township of Drummond-North Elmsley’s OP, for example, states that the policies of the Agriculture designation will be considered and may instead be applied by Council.

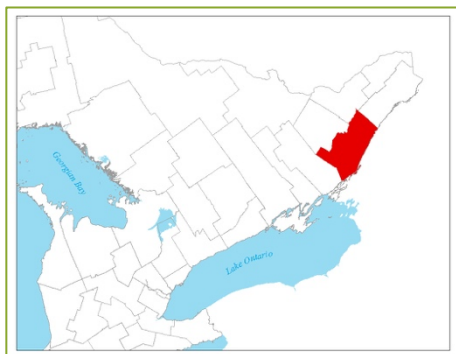
Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Zero approved OPAs affecting prime agricultural land from 2000–2017 in Lanark County were captured in this study. Both Lanark County’s and the lower-tier’s OPs have included some flexibility that may help to serve as an explanation. Farm related residential severances and additional uses that may result in a dwelling being made surplus are permitted in circumstances of farm consolidation. There is also an ability to reduce the minimum lot area in instances where specific specialized agricultural operations do not require large lot areas such as garlic farms, apiaries or aquaculture. Lanark County’s OP does however report a decline in the number of farms and increasing challenges to the agricultural sector, as identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs⁶. The OP has included strategic objectives to address this decline such as building supports for the agricultural tourism sector, rehabilitating and enhancing agricultural land, and preparing for technological changes in agricultural food production.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Lanark County’s Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Lanark County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

United Counties of Leeds & Grenville



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 338,289 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 136,237.4 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 111,743 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$153,254,801
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$ 1371
 Population (2016)¹: 100,546
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -1.4 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.2 %

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	186 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	12 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	7 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	205 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.0008%

Counties' Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the United County of Leeds and Grenville, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Leeds and Grenville during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan for the County was adopted in 2015 and later approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2016. Before 2015, all thirteen lower municipalities were governed by their respective local official plans and OPAs were processed and stored by local planning departments. Data between 2000–2014 was collected from the following lower-tier municipalities: Township of Augusta, City of Brockville, Township of Edwardsburgh/ Cardinal, Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley, Township of Front of Yonge, Gananoque, Township of Leeds and Thousand Islands, Township of Merrickville-Wolford, Prescott, Township of Rideau lakes and Village of Westport. Access to electronic data for the lower-tier municipalities was provided by staff at each of the individual planning departments. The assistance of staff at Leeds and Grenville's lower-municipalities' planning departments is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the United County of Leeds and Grenville

In Leeds and Grenville’s OP there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with predominantly Soil Classes 1, 2 and 3 as defined in the Canada Land Inventory of soil capability for agriculture. Agricultural uses are also permitted in the *Rural* designation, where agricultural activities remain active but dispersed, where soils are predominately shallow and where non-agricultural development has taken place over time. Lands in this designation are predominantly blocks of land consist primarily of soil classes 5, 6 and 7 of soil capability for agriculture and are not considered prime agricultural lands. For this study, only amendments affecting the *Agricultural* designation were collected from the county Official Plan. The land-use designations used by the lower-tier municipalities across Leeds and Grenville were largely consistent with the county’s official plan designation framework. In this study only official plan amendments affecting the lands defined as in the agriculture designation were collected.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: in Leeds and Grenville, only amendment that converted agricultural lands to development designation was captured from 2000–2017, which was a comprehensive official plan review that converted 186 hectares of agricultural lands to various development uses in 2006. This amendment is listed in category 1 of Table 16.1.

Rural Designation: Over the course of the study period, one amendment in Leeds and Grenville was captured which converted 12 hectares of prime agricultural land to rural designation in 2007. This amendment is listed in category 2 of Table 16.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: From 2000–2017, only one site-specific amendment affecting agricultural lands in Leeds and Grenville was captured, which added commercial use on a 7-hectare agricultural parcel. This amendment is captured in category 3 of Table 16.1.

Table 16.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In the United County of Leeds and Grenville By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0

2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	1	186	0	0
2007	1	0	12	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	0	0	7
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	3	186	12	7

**Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville does not fall into the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, nor the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Official Plan Amendments in Leeds and Grenville County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

County of Lennox and Addington



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 283,968 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 79,901 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 61,239 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$ 84,557,702
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$1,380
Population (2016)¹: 42,888
Growth Rate 2006–2011⁵: 3.2%
Growth Rate 2011–2016¹: 2.6%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Lennox & Addington County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017. Lennox & Addington County is an upper-tier municipality that adopted its first Official Plan (OP) on September 30, 2015. It was later approved by Ontario’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs in 2016. Lennox & Addington’s OP recognizes and emphasizes lower-tier municipal land use designations and priorities and places them within a broader framework that can function across municipal boundaries. Though lower-tier municipalities must conform to Lennox & Addington County’s OP, land use designations are first established within lower-tier OPs.

The lower-tier municipalities that comprise Lennox & Addington County include Town of Greater Napanee, the Township of Addington Highlands, the Township of Loyalist, and the Township of Stone Mills. During data collection, planners from the lower-tier throughout Lennox & Addington County confirmed that zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural soils have been approved within the County during the timeframe of this study. The assistance of planning staff is greatly appreciated in making this research possible.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Lennox & Addington County

Prime agricultural lands in Lennox & Addington County are designated under *Agriculture* in both upper- and lower-tier OPs. *Agricultural* areas were identified based on the presence of prime agricultural soils according to the Canada Land Inventory system (Classes 1–3), or in recognition of a concentration of farms that have been in long-term production that may also include Class 4–7 lands. Prime agricultural lands are protected through local and County level policies. There are some instances where certain lands within the Agricultural Area designation have been approved for non-agricultural uses through local OPs. In these cases, land would instead be subject to corresponding policies within lower-tier OPs.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Zero approved OPAs in Lennox & Addington County affecting prime agricultural land from 2000–2017 were captured in this study. Loyalist Township did note one approved amendment (OPA 3) at the lower-tier that impacted prime agricultural lands but this OPA resulted in an increase in the amount of area protected. Loyalist also noted that the settlement area boundaries have been the same since 2001 except one minor change in Bath, which took place in response to an error.

Lennox & Addington does have varying flexibility in lower-tier OPs that allow new lot creation within the *Agricultural* designation. Generally, lot creation can take place given that either both the severed and retained parcel may remain in agricultural production, it is the result of a farm consolidation, any changes will not be onerous on municipal services, or is required for infrastructure.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Lennox & Addington County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Lennox & Addington County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Middlesex



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 331,727 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 251,035 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 249,248 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$781,498,738
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$3135.42
Population (2016)¹: 455,526
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 2.6%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3.7%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	78.3 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	97.28 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	175.58 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.05%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the County of Middlesex, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Middlesex during the years 2000–2017. In Middlesex, all lower-level municipalities are subject to and guided by the County’s Official Plan, which was first adopted by the county in 1993 and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 1998. The lower tier municipalities that comprise the County include the Township of Strathroy-Caradoc, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre, the Municipality of Thames Centre, the Municipality of North Middlesex, the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex, the Township of Lucan Biddulph, Township of Adelaide Metcalfe, and the Village of Newbury. During data collection, relevant OPAs were collected and documented by staff at Middlesex County’s Planning and Development Department. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations).

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation.

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features. OPAs that redesignate land in order to permit an aggregate operation have similarly been recorded as a housekeeping amendment and not included as contributing to farmland loss.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the Middlesex County

In Middlesex’s OP, prime agricultural lands are designated in the *Agriculture* land use designation. Agriculture is prioritized within the OP and the *Agricultural* areas comprises all lands not designated *Settlement, or Natural Environment*. Prime agricultural lands generally include specialty crop lands or Canada Land Inventory Classes (CLI) 1–3, the *Agriculture* designation in Middlesex is used to denote both land where prime agricultural soils dominate, and also includes the less productive CLI Class 4–7 soils and areas where there is a concentration of ongoing agriculture. Prime agricultural areas in Middlesex have been identified by OMAFRA or an alternative agricultural land evaluation system approved by the Province.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Seven official plan amendments were captured which converted a total of 78.3 hectares of prime agricultural lands to a development designation. Three of these official plan amendments converted 43.7 hectares of agricultural land to the *Natural Environment* designation. Two redesignated small parcels of agricultural lands to the *Settlement* designation for residential use (2.3 hectares in total) and the remaining two converted the land for a commercial (24.5 hectares) and recreational use (7.8 hectares). These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 17.1.

Rural Designation: Middlesex does not designate prime agricultural land under a rural designation, and therefore no relevant OPAs were captured. This is reflected in category 2 of Table 17.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Eight site-specific amendments affecting agricultural lands were captured. Six of these amendments were small in size (10 hectares or less) and allowed for a range of industrial and commercial uses on the subject land including a golf course, self-storage facility, a special care home, and transportation services. The largest amendment permitted the development of an outdoor commercial paintball site on a 43-hectare parcel. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 17.1.

Table 17.1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In the County of Middlesex By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	2	41.3	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	1	1.2	0	0
2004	2	0	0	20
2005	2	2.4	0	3.05

2006	0	0	0	0
2007	1	0	0	4.2
2008	4	25.6	0	62
2009	1	7.8	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	1	0	0	4
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	1	0	0	4.03
Grand Total	15	78.3	0	97.28

**Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Middlesex County does not fall into the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, nor the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Official Plan Amendments in Perth County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

Region of Niagara



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 185,423 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 94,217.7 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 88,323 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 48,048 ha
 Percent of Region in Greenbelt: 25.9%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$836.1 million
 Value of Cash Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$9,467
 Population (2016)¹: 447,888
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 0.9 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 3.8%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1000.5 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	240 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	846.5 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	2087
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	2.21%

Region Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the Niagara Region Official Plan and Regional Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In Niagara, the files that document OPAs approved by the Region and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were compiled and provided electronically by staff at Niagara Region’s Planning and Development Services department. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Farmland conversion has been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan (OP) schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or alternatively, to reflect existing physical features that had been excluded from previous OP schedules.

Niagara region is also subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). While agricultural activities are conducted within portions of the *Escarpment Rural Areas*, the intent of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) is to preserve ecological features and not necessarily to preserve agricultural land. Amendments that occurred within the *Escarpment Rural Areas* were not therefore the explicit focus of this study and were only captured and included if prime agricultural soils were affected.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Niagara Region

In the Niagara Region, agricultural activity takes place primarily in three land use designations: *Unique Agricultural Area*, *Good General Agricultural Area* and *Rural Area*. Prior to 2005, the designations *Good Grape Areas* and *Good Tender Fruit Areas* were also used. They were merged into a single *Unique Agricultural Areas* designation in 2005. *Unique Agricultural Lands* have the highest level of priority for protection as a specialty crop area identified by the province.

The *Good General Agricultural Area* corresponds to a prime agricultural designation and includes organic soils, and CLI Class 1, 2 and 3 lands. Lands within the *Rural Area* of Niagara continue to be used predominantly for agriculture but non-farm development are also permitted. This study considers the conversion of the *Unique Agricultural Lands* and *Good General Agricultural Lands*, while excluding OPAs related to the conversion of the *Rural Area* designation.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Redesignation of Prime Agriculture: Over the course of the study period, a total of 17 OPAs pertained to the conversion of prime agricultural land in Niagara Region to a development designation. All 17 of these OPAs were for urban area expansions on land formerly designated *Good General Agricultural Area*, *Good Grape Area*, *Good Tender Fruit Area*, or the *Unique Agricultural Area*. One of these redesignations pertained to a rehabilitated aggregate site within the *Unique Agricultural Area*, permitting a mixed urban area. This farmland conversion is captured in category 1 of Table 18.1.

Rural Agriculture: Over the course of the study period, two OPAs redesignated *Good Agricultural Area* to *Rural Area*. This encompassed 240 hectares and is captured in category 2 of Table 18.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policies were used in the Niagara Region on 25 occasions during the course of this study period to allow additional uses within the prime agricultural area. Most of these uses, such as churches and home occupations, are traditional rural land uses and were therefore considered necessary to the vitality of the rural community. Recreational uses, such as sports fields and golf courses, were also permitted during the study period. A motor speedway, a theme park and a long-term care facility were also permitted through site-specific policy amendments. A total of 846.4 hectares of prime agricultural area was converted through site-specific policy amendments, and are captured in category 3 of Table 18.1.

Table 18.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Niagara Region By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (Ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses
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	Agricultural Area			(Ha)
2000	9	807.1	225	19.6
2001	6	0	0	94.2
2002	1	0	0	64.9
2003	6	56.8	0	29.8
2004	3	0	0	3.6
2005	5	29.5	0	24
2006	3	0	15	119.1
2007	4	28.7	0	107.7
2008	1	4.3	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	2	0	0	342.5
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	12.1	0	0
2013	2	0	0	35
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	2	62	0	6
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	45	1000.5	240	846.4

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Within Niagara Region, the Specialty Crop Area of the Greenbelt Plan covers 48,048 hectares or 26% of the Region's land area³. After the Greenbelt Plan took effect on December 16, 2004, 17 amendments were approved to redesignate prime agricultural land to other uses or permit non-agricultural uses in the agricultural designation. Of these amendments, three pertained to lands within the Greenbelt however these applications were initiated prior to the plan's adoption and were instead subject to previous policies such as the Provincial Policy Statement. These amendments were approved on a case by case basis when staff were satisfied that alternative sites that avoid prime agricultural land were unavailable or did not provide enough separation from neighboring agricultural operations.

The remainder of the OPAs approved after 2005 pertain to lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan aside from OPA 1-2009, approved by the OMB, that permitted the redesignation of 12.1 hectares from *Unique Agriculture Area* to the *Urban Area* and *Rural Area* designation in order to facilitate the Queenston Quarry Redevelopment. The conversion of prime agricultural land, organized by OPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt, is captured in Table 18.2.

Table 18.2. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In The Niagara Region By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2014	Pre 2005	2005- 2014	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (Ha)	1130.5	70	28	12.1	1240.6
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (Ha)	181.9	553.3	111.2	0	846.4
Total	1,312.4	623.3	139.2	12.1	2087

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000—2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000—2017 study time frame.*

County of Norfolk



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 160,755 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 118,452.70 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 100,200.97 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$591,772,048
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$5,905.85
Population (2016)¹: 64,044
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.0%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.4%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment)	84.62 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses	433.56 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	518.18 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.44%

County Methods in Brief

This study involved the examination of the Official Plans (OPs) and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved during the years 2000 to 2017 for Norfolk County. Norfolk is a single-tier municipality, having de-amalgamated from Haldimand County in 2000, effective January 1, 2001. The current OP for Norfolk County was adopted on May 9, 2006, and later adopted by Ontario’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2008. Data was collected in Norfolk by scanning the County’s online database of By-Laws using keywords “agriculture”, “agricultural” and “prime agricultural soil” and cross referencing findings with the consolidated Official Plan. Some OPAs were missing acreage associated with the site. In these instances, acreage was estimated by measuring the approximate area on Google Maps using the Schedule included with the OPA as a guide. The assistance of Norfolk County staff in confirming the results of this research is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Norfolk County

Agriculture is the dominant use of land in Norfolk County with approximately 85 percent of the land base considered to be prime. The definition of prime agricultural soil in this context is consistent with the Canadian Land Inventory system, primarily consisting of Class 1–3 soils. Norfolk County recognizes prime agricultural lands in their official plans under the *Agricultural* designation. While agricultural activities are permitted under the *Rural* designation, identified prime agricultural land is subject to the restrictions and protections within the *Agricultural* designation.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Seven amendments that removed prime agricultural soils from an *Agricultural* designation to an urban designation were captured from 2000–2017. The largest was through OPA 1–2006 which moved approximately 30.27 hectares from the *Agricultural* designation to an *Urban Residential* designation to facilitate the development of a residential lifestyle community which incorporates a mixture of residential uses, commercial uses, and recreational uses in the form of a golf course and open space. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 19.1.

Rural Designation: Norfolk County does not use a *Rural* designation for prime agricultural soils. Zero OPAs were captured in this category.

Site-Specific Amendments: Thirty OPAs were captured that place a site-specific special policy onto prime agricultural lands in Norfolk County. One additional OPA (OPA No. 6–2004) was captured but not included in this study as even though it permitted wind farms to be developed on 10,086 hectares of agricultural land across the County, the footprint of wind turbines is minuscule relative to the large geography over which they can be located. The average size of sites impacted by site-specific policies was 14.95 hectares, with the largest being OPA 5–2001, which permitted the development of a golf course on 79.8 hectares of agricultural lands. Seven of the OPAs captured were under a hectare in size. These OPAs were used to permit a range of development including a Fire Hall, small non-agricultural commercial land use, or facilitate a residential severance. These OPAs are captured in category 3 of Table 19.1 captures these amendments below.

Table 19.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Norfolk County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	4	10.52	0	86.68
2002	1	0	0	8
2003	1	0	0	0.36
2004	3	0	0	8.33**
2005	2	25.92	0	0.79

2006	3	30.27**	0	0.48
2007	3	5.66	0	55.24
2008	4	6.6	0	58.88
2009	4	0	0	90.1
2010	2	0	0	10.41**
2011	2	0	0	77.08
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	2	0	0	13.81**
2014	2	5.34	0	5.5
2015	1	0	0	2
2016	2	0.3**	0	1.7
2017	1	0	0	15**
Grand Total	37	84.62	0	433.56

**Totals may not add due to rounding. **hectarage estimated using Schedule and measured on Google Maps.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Norfolk County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Norfolk County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Northumberland



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 190,515 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 102,654 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 93,727.62 ha
 Area of County in the Greenbelt³: 35,238 ha
 Percent of County in the Greenbelt: 18.50%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$152.04 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$1,622.18
 Population (2016)¹: 85,598
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.4%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 4.2%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1.6 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	59.4 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	1.5 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	62.5
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.06%

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Northumberland County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Northumberland County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Northumberland County was approved in 2016, and as such, data for the County was collected from the seven lower-tier municipalities within the County, each with their own respective OP. The lower-tier municipalities in Northumberland County are the Townships of Alnwick/Haldimand, Cramahe and Hamilton, the Municipalities of Brighton, Port Hope and Trent Hills, and the Town of Cobourg. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was given by staff at each of the individual planning departments. The assistance of planning staff is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories.:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Northumberland County

There are several land use designations that currently exist between the lower-tiers of Northumberland County that reflect agricultural land use. In Alnwick/Haldimand, Brighton, Cobourg, Cramahe and Hamilton, *Agricultural* and *Rural* land use designations are used. The *Agricultural* designation reflects areas with Class 1, 2 and 3 soils of high capability for agricultural production, while the *Rural* designation is used in area with lower capability soils and less agricultural production. Similar designations are used in Trent Hills, which has a *Prime Agricultural Lands* designation for Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 soil lands, and a *Rural Policy Area* for those areas that contain mostly soils not of prime importance to agriculture. Port Hope has a different set of agricultural land use designations. Under a broad *Agricultural* designation, Port Hope uses a *Prime Agriculture* designation for areas with high capability soils for agriculture and a *General Agricultural* designation for areas which have lower capability soils but on which agricultural uses may still exist.

Land use designations in the lower tiers of Northumberland County previously included *Agricultural Area*, *Permanent Agriculture*, *Marginal Agriculture*, and *Agricultural Priority Area*. For the purposes of this study, these historical land use designations as well as the current designations that reflected prime agricultural lands, including *Agricultural*, *Prime Agricultural Lands*, and *Prime Agriculture*, were used to capture prime agricultural land loss.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, there were a limited number of redesignations of prime agricultural lands for development purposes. Only two amendments occurred that redesignated a total of 1.6 ha of prime agricultural lands. These amendments permitted recreational vehicle sales and the development of a shoreline subdivision. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 20.1.

Rural Designation: Two amendments were adopted in Northumberland County that redesignated agricultural lands to a rural-type designation. One of these amendments was combined with a special policy for the rural lands that permitted a church camp. The second amendment redesignated the lands to a rural designation to permit residential development. These amendments are shown in category 2 of Table 20.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Only one site-specific amendment occurred in Northumberland County during the study period. This amendment applied to a relatively small parcel of land, approximately 1.5 ha, and allowed commercial uses. Category 3 of Table 20.1 reflects this.

Table 20.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Northumberland County By Adoption Date (2000—2017)

Year of OPA Adoption Or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
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2000	0	0	0	0
2001	1	0	0	1.5
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	0	7.4	0
2005	1	0.8	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	1	0	40	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	0.4	12	0
2015	1	0.4	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	6	1.6	59.4	1.5

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Nearly 19%, or 35,238 ha, of Northumberland County is covered by the *Greenbelt Plan*; however, no amendments occurred in the study period that redesignated prime agricultural lands to a development, rural or site-specific designation within the Greenbelt. Table 2 captures redesignations in the county by application date relative to the implementation of the Greenbelt.

Table 20.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Northumberland County By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2014	Pre 2005	2005- 2014	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (Ha)	47.4	13.6	0	0	97.44
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (Ha)	1.5	0	0	0	1.5
Total	48.9	13.6	0	0	62.5

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000–2017 study time frame.*

Prime Agricultural Land Gain: In 2011, an amendment in Hamilton Township in Northumberland County produced a gain of prime agricultural land³. This amendment corrected the location of a provincially significant wetland and associated floodplains, changing the designation on the 67 hectare property from *Environmentally Sensitive – Floodplains* and *Natural Heritage – Provincially Significant Wetlands* to *Permanent Agriculture*.



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 279,030 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 120,452 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 102,151 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$224.6 Million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,198.71
 Population (2016)¹: 934,243
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 8.8%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 5.8%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	132 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	40.7 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	5.53 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	178.23 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.15%

City’s Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by The City Of Ottawa, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for The City of Ottawa during the years 2000–2017. The City Of Ottawa, now a single-tier municipality, amalgamated in 2001 and approved its first Official Plan (OP) for The City Of Ottawa in 2003. Prior to amalgamation, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton consisted of City of Ottawa, City of Nepean, City of Kanata, City of Cumberland, City of Vanier, City of Gloucester, Village of Rockcliffe Park, Township of West Carleton, Township of Goulbourn, Township of Osgoode, and Township of Rideau. Access to data for the entire region as it now exists was provided electronically by staff at the City of Ottawa’s planning department. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in The City of Ottawa

The City of Ottawa protects prime agricultural land under the *Agricultural Resource* and *Rural* designations. Around 40 percent of Ottawa’s rural lands are used for agriculture. The National Capital Commission has also established their own 20,000-hectare National Capital Greenbelt that separates the urban area and the urban communities established just beyond it. This greenbelt designates *Natural Environment Areas* and *Agriculture Resource Areas* as well as large facilities including a sportsplex, hospital, detention centre, schools, and churches. Prime agricultural soils within these designations are identified based on the Ottawa Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) evaluation system or by the National Capital Greenbelt Plan produced by the National Capital Commission. Policies within these designations are intended to strictly limit permitted land uses and lot creation on all lands identified as *Agricultural Resource Areas*.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Only one OPA that is relevant to agricultural land within the study’s timeframe were captured that move agricultural land to a development designation. OPA 77 redesignated 132 hectares to implement the land uses and transportation infrastructure established by the Fernbank Community Design Plan. This is reflected in category 1 of Table 21.1.

Rural Designation: Only one OPA was captured that is relevant to this category. OPA 46 redesignated 40.7 hectares from *Agriculture Resource Area* to the *General Rural Area* to support a future country estate lot development. This is reflected in category 2 of Table 21.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: One OPA was captured that placed a special policy on agricultural land within the time frame. OPA 75 permitted the establishment of a self-storage warehouse on a 5.53 hectare site. This is reflected in category 3 of Table 21.1.

Table 21.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In The City of Ottawa By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0

2006	1	0	40.7	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	0	0	5.53
2010	1	132	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	3	132	40.7	5.53

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: The City of Ottawa Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however the City of Ottawa does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The National Capital Greenbelt is a federal initiative intended to protect agriculture.

County of Oxford



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 203,961 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 180,270 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 179,737 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)³: 910,779,360
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$5,067.30
 Population (2016)¹: 110,862
 Growth Rate 2006–2011⁴: 2.9%
 Growth Rate 2011–2016¹: 4.9%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	841.68 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	27.39 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	869.07 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.48%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Oxford County the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Oxford County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Oxford County and its eight lower-tier municipalities was approved in 1979. The lower-tier municipalities within Oxford County are Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra Tavistock, Norwich South-West Oxford, Zorra, Woodstock Tillsonburg, and Ingersoll. The files which documented the County's OPAs were compiled by Oxford County's planning staff. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel

lines, or to reflect existing physical features. Housekeeping amendments that were not applicable to this study include OPAs that facilitate aggregate operations on agricultural land.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Oxford County

Prime agricultural lands are captured under the *Agricultural Reserve* designation in Oxford county. The intent of the Agricultural Reserve designation is to protect broad areas of high capability soils, recognizing that individual parcels within these areas may in fact contain pockets of Class 4–7 soils. That being said, approximately 91 percent of agricultural land in the County is considered to be Class 1–3 according to the Canadian Land Inventory, and 89 percent of Oxford’s total land base is devoted to agricultural production.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: This research captured twelve amendments that converted agricultural reserves to another designation, primarily Open Space, Residential Settlement, and Traditional Industrial. The largest redesignation was through OPA 113, which redesignated 340 hectares of land from *Agricultural Reserve* to a *Traditional Industrial* designation as a part of East Woodstock’s Secondary Plan and Design Study. This OPA impacted land surrounding the existing Toyota industrial facility. Another notable redesignation was through OPA 99, which permitted the redesignation of 405 hectares designated *Future Urban Growth*, *Agricultural Reserve*, and *Open Space* to facilitate the long-term use of the lands for a motor vehicle manufacturing and assembling facility. While there was no stated hectarage within the OPA specific to the agricultural land in question, the parcel was measured using the maps provided and estimated to be 241 ha. Not captured in this study but notable was two OPAs that converted land back into the Agricultural Reserve designation, including OPA 135 and OP 14-07-1 which together impacted approximately 23 hectares of land. These OPAs were captured under category 1 of Table 1.

Rural Designation: As all lands outside of designated settlement areas in Oxford County are considered to be prime agricultural lands, the County does not have a rural land use designation to define. Zero OPAs were captured under category 2 of Table 22.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Four site-specific policies were used to permit additional uses on lands designated agricultural. Three of these amendments impacted small parcels of land to establish a dairy production facility, a solar farm, and a schoolhouse. OPA 40 placed a site-specific policy on of prime agricultural land in order to permit a 9-hole golf course. The agricultural assessment for this OPA identified that 89 percent of the total 28.3 hectares redesignated are considered to be Class 1 and 2 soils with the remaining 11 percent being organic soils. Organic soils and are not classified with the Canadian Land Inventory rating system ad may be treated differently than prime agricultural soils, particularly if covered by natural heritage features. Therefore the organic soils impacted in this OPA have been removed from the total land loss. The remaining 25.19 hectares have been captured along with the other site-specific amendments under category 3 of Table 22.1.

Tabl 22.1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Oxford County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

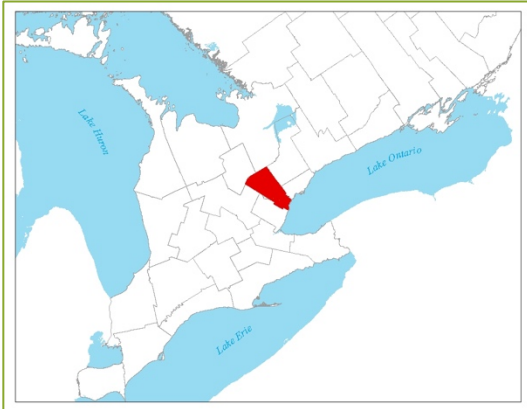
Year of OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses
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				(ha)
2000	1	0	0	25.19
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	1	2.63	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	3	244.2	0	0.4
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	4	375	0	1
2009	3	139.85	0	0
2010	1	31	0	0
2011	1	15	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	34	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	1	0	0	0.8
Grand Total	16	841.68	0	27.39

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Oxford County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Oxford County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Region of Peel



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 124,695 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 42,262.5 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 33,726 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 56,052 ha
 Percentage of Region in the Greenbelt: 45%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$94.1 million
 Value of Cash Receipts per Ha of Census Farm: \$2,791
 Population (2016)¹: 1,381,739
 Growth Rate 2006-20115: 11.8%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 6.5%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	3,315.7 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	126.7 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	3442.4 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	8.15%

Region’s Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the Region of Peel’s Regional Official Plan and Regional Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In Peel Region, the files that document OPAs approved by the Region and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were accessed through the Region’s online list of amendments. The assistance of staff at the Region of Peel’s Integrated Planning Division is appreciated in the identification of pertinent files.

Farmland conversion has been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features that have been excluded from previous OP schedules.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Peel Region

In the Region of Peel, the *Rural System* covers all lands outside the urban boundary. Within the *Rural System* lies *Rural Service Centres* and the *Prime Agricultural Area*. The *Prime Agricultural Area* is identified in a single contiguous area located in the southern part of the Town of Caledon, below the brow of the Niagara Escarpment. The northern parts of the *Prime Agricultural Area* overlap parts of the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation (ORMC) Plans. The *Prime Agricultural Area* in the Region of Peel is defined as generally comprising Canada Land Inventory (CLI) soil capability for agriculture rating of Class 1, 2 and 3⁶. The Region of Peel’s Regional Official Plan also indicates that there are CLI Class 1 lands in the east and west parts of the City of Brampton; however, these lands fall within the urban boundary and are identified as part of the *Urban System*. *Rural Areas* are designated in the lower-tier official plans, not in the Regional Official Plan. Lower-tier municipalities in the Region of Peel are the planning authority for permitting non-farm uses in the Region’s *Prime Agricultural Area*, subject to the provisions of the Provincial Policy Statement and a local official plan amendment.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development designations: Over the course of the study period, three OPAs pertained to the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Area* to a development designation. Two were for the expansion of a “rural serviced area”, while the other was for the expansion of the “urban serviced area”. The urban boundary expansion added 2,428 hectares to the City of Brampton’s urban area, while the two expansions of the rural serviced area will provide 645 hectares for residential and employment uses in the Town of Caledon. These lands fall outside the urban boundary, but will have full municipal water and wastewater services. Altogether, the three OPAs redesignated 3,073 hectares of *Prime Agricultural Area* to a development designation. This type of farmland conversion, organized by OPA adoption date, is captured in category 1 of Table 23.1.

Rural Agriculture: Peel Region does not use a rural land use designation to define areas outside the *Prime Agricultural Area* but where agriculture remains the primary use. Zero OPAs were captured under category 2 of Table 23.1 for Peel Region.

Site-Specific Amendments: Over the course of this study, site-specific permission was granted one time to allow a golf course in the *Prime Agricultural Area*. This amendment is captured under category 3 of Table 23.1. Additional site-specific amendments may have been made by lower-tier municipalities in Peel Region to permit additional uses in the *Prime Agricultural Area*; however, they were not captured in this study.

Table 23.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Peel Region By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	41.9	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0

2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	0	0	126.7
2005	1	437	0	0
2006	1	2,428	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	207.5	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	201.3	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	6	3315.7	0	126.7

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: The Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) cover 45% of Peel Region's land base. In the *Protected Countryside* of the Greenbelt Plan, the expansion of settlement areas and the redesignation of any *Prime Agricultural Areas* are prohibited (except in the prescribed limited circumstances). The policies of the Greenbelt Plan apply to OPAs initiated after December 16, 2004. Policies in the ORMCP *Countryside Area* are less restrictive, however, long-term protection of *Prime Agricultural Areas* within the plan is required where such lands are identified in an official plan. The policies of the ORMCP apply to OPAs initiated after November 17, 2001.

The site-specific policy to permit a golf course on 127 hectares pertained to lands that fell partially within the Greenbelt Plan and partially within the ORMCP plan. The other three amendments considered in this study pertained to lands outside the Greenbelt Plan. Prime agricultural land conversion in Peel Region is organized by application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt in Table 2.

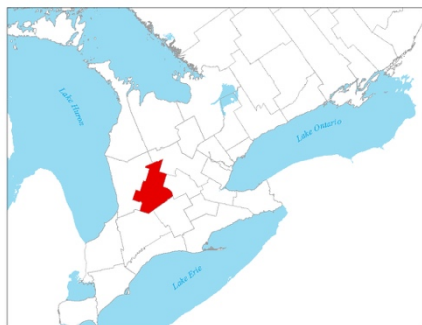
Table 23.2. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Peel Region By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan.

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2014	Pre 2005	2005- 2014	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (Ha)	2,865	408.8	41.9	0	3,315.7
Prime Agricultural Area	0	0	126.7	0	126.7

With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (Ha)					
Total	2,865	408.8	168.6	0	3,442.4

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000–2017 study time frame.*

County of Perth



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 221,852 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 203,526.9 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 210,041 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$966.5 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$4,601
 Population (2016)¹: 76,796
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.0 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 2.2%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	253.9 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	501.8 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	754.7
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.37%

County's Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Perth County's Official Plan and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). For data collection in Perth County, the physical and electronic files, which document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017, were accessed at the Perth County Planning department offices in Stratford, Ontario. The assistance of staff is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features that have been excluded from previous OP schedules.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Perth County

Agricultural activity in Perth County is conducted under the *Agriculture* land use designation. The county’s Official Plan states that 90 percent of the County’s total land area is classified as having Class 1, 2 or 3 soil capability for Agriculture. There is no secondary or rural land use designation in Perth County. This study considered the conversion of land in the *Agriculture* designation and will refer to it as the prime agricultural area.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, there were a total of 15 OPAs that pertained to the redesignation of prime agricultural land to a development designation, totalling 217 hectares. Two of these OPAs redesignated prime agricultural land to a recreational land use. The other 13 OPAs permitted the expansion of settlement areas, hamlets or villages in the prime agricultural area. This type of farmland conversion, organized by OPA adoption date, is captured in category 1 of Table 24.1.

Rural Agriculture: Perth County does not use a rural land use designation to define areas outside the prime agricultural area but where agriculture remains the primary use. This type of amendment was not captured in Perth County.

Site-specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were used on 37 occasions during the course of the study in Perth County to allow additional uses within the *Agriculture* designation. Site-specific policies were used to permit residential infilling, institutional and industrial land uses, and sales facilities. The majority of the site-specific policy amendments permitted home occupations or expanded on-farm diversified uses. The amount of land impacted through site-specific policies does not necessarily reflect the amount of land removed from agricultural production. The vast majority of this land impacted through a site-specific policy will remain in agricultural production. A total of 501.8 hectares of prime agricultural land was converted through site-specific policy amendments, which is captured in category 3 of Table 24.1.

Table 24.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Perth County By Adoption Date (2000—2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	2	0	0	59
2001	5	7.3	0	13.5
2002	3	0	0	42.7
2003	3	21.8	0	0.05
2004	3	0	0	9.8
2005	6	152	0	4.5
2006	5	0.5	0	40
2007	6	30.3	0	119.2
2008	3	0.7	0	1.8
2009	3	0	0	39.6
2010	2	0	0	2.1

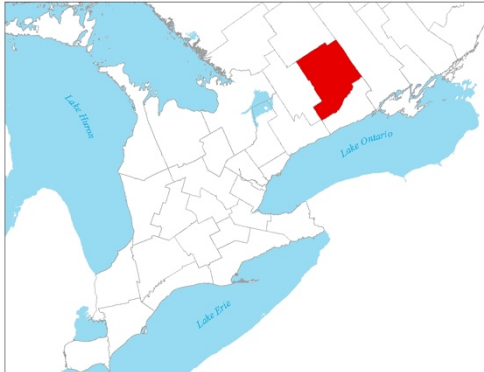
2011	4	0	0	7.1
2012	7	0.5	0	67.5
2013	4	0.3	0	5.7
2014	1	2.8	0	0
2015	3	3.5	0	1.2
2016	5	29.1	0	21
2017	7	5.1	0	67
Grand Total	72	253.9	0	501.8**

**Totals may not add due to rounding **501.8 hectares indicated above is not meant to be a measure of farmland conversion. This number tallies the area of land in the Agriculture designation granted permission for additional uses through site-specific policies, not necessarily the amount of land occupied by the additional uses. The vast majority of this land will remain in agricultural production.*

Agricultural Land Gain: In Perth County, land was redesignated to the *Agriculture* designation on several occasions during the study period. OPA 41, approved in 2004, pertained to an MNR approved rehabilitation of a 34-hectare aggregate extraction site back to the agricultural designation. Further reconsideration of hamlet and settlement boundaries through three OPAs also resulted in 62 hectares of land being added to the agricultural designation; it is worth noting that these lands continued to be used for agricultural production while included in the settlement area. This study captured a total of 97 hectares of land added to the *Agriculture* designation in Perth County between 2000 and 2017.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Perth County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement but the County does not fall into the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, nor the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Official Plan Amendments in Perth County are not subject to the policies of these provincial land use plans.

County of Peterborough



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 378,395 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 104,668.7 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 81,844 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 7,080 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 1.87%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$94.3 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$1,152
 Population (2016)¹: 57,204
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -2.6%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.9%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	745.7 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	15.4 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	34.4 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	795.5
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.76%

County's Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plans (OPs) and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) that were approved in Peterborough County from 2000–2017. In Peterborough, the upper-tier OP does not include all of the lower-tier member municipalities. As such, OPs and OPAs were examined at the county-level, and also at the lower-level. The lower-tier municipalities in Peterborough County are the townships of Asphodel-Norwood, Cavan Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, Otonabee-South Monaghan and Selwyn, and the municipality of Trent Lakes. For data collection in Peterborough, the files which document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were provided both electronically and in physical formats from the county and lower-level planning offices. The assistance of staff in making this research possible is appreciated.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Peterborough County

The Peterborough County OP currently acts as the planning document for the townships of Selwyn, Asphodel-Norwood, North Kawartha and Douro Dummer. Within the local plan policies for land use in the county OP, there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Prime Agriculture* designation applies to prime agricultural lands of Class 1, 2 and 3 soils. The *Rural* designation permits all agricultural activities; however, it is generally applied to areas with less capability for agriculture and Class 4 to 7 soils. The municipality of North Kawartha does not contain any prime agricultural lands and as such, was excluded from this study. The remaining four lower-tiers, Cavan Monaghan, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, Otonabee-South Monaghan and Trent Lakes, each have their own respective OP. Cavan Monaghan and Otonabee-South Monaghan have similar designations as the county OP; an *Agriculture* designation is used for prime agricultural areas, while a *Rural* designation is used for areas of lower capability for agriculture, defined by their soil class. Trent Lakes and Havelock-Belmont-Methuen do not have a prime agricultural designation due to their geography and were excluded from the study.

For the purposes of this study, both the *Prime Agriculture* designation and the *Rural* designation of the county OP, as well as the *Agriculture* and *Rural* designations of the lower-tier OPs were considered. A number of OPAs occurred in the county that eliminated the *Agriculture* designation from some OPs or converted *Agriculture* and *Rural* designations in other OPs. Due to this, both designations were considered, and supplemental information including Canada Land Inventory mapping was used to determine if the loss was in fact prime agricultural land.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Seven OPAs were approved within Peterborough County that redesignated prime agricultural lands to a non-agricultural designation for the purpose of residential, industrial and commercial development. These amendments were generally quite small in size. The largest OPA amendment is the 2015 Official Plan Update approved by the OMB, which converted 688 ha of agricultural lands for various uses including Rural or Hamlet as a part of the Settlement Area Review. Lands taken out of the prime agriculture designation during this update were identified with the assistance of OMAFRA in 2012. These amendments are captured in category 1 of table 1.

Rural Designation: Conversion of prime agricultural lands to a rural designation occurred twice in the study period from 2000 to 2017. These amendments did not capture conversions as the result of LEAR studies, which were considered housekeeping amendments. For the two amendments in Peterborough County, one permitted a severance from the lands, while the other permitted a group home to be allowed on the subject lands. Category 2 of table 2 captured these amendments.

Site-Specific Amendments: Over the course of the study period, site-specific amendments were approved three times in Peterborough County. These amendments covered a total of 34 ha, and allowed uses such as a camping facility, home-based businesses and trailer sales. These amendments are shown in category 3 of table 1 below.

Table 25.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Peterborough County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	4	4.4	15	14
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	2	6.6	0	0
2004	1	0	0	15.1
2005	2	0.9	0.4	0
2006	1	46.5	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	2	687.6	0	5.4
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	12	745.74	15.4	34.4

**Totals may not add due to rounding*

Provincial Land Use Plans: A very small proportion, less than 2%, of Peterborough County is covered by the *Greenbelt Plan*. No amendments were captured within the Greenbelt Area of the county either before or after the *Greenbelt Plan* implementation in 2005. Table 25.2 captures the amendments before and after the *Greenbelt Plan* implementation.

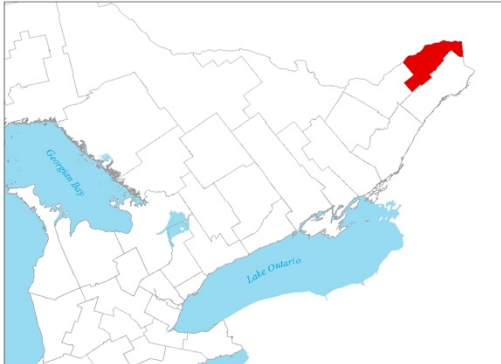
Table 25.2 Prime agricultural area converted through OPAs in Peterborough County by application date and location relative to the Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	

Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	26	735	0	0	761
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)	29.1	5.3	0	0	34.4
Total	55.1	740.3	0	0	795.4

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000-2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

United Counties of Prescott and Russell



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 200,447 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 120,347 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 123,837 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$343,890,158
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2776.95
 Population (2016)¹: 89,333
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 4.6%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 6.5%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	50.59 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	136.82 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	29.14 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	216.55 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.18 %

Counties' Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell's Official Plan and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In Prescott and Russell, the files that document OPAs approved by the county and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000 to 2017 were compiled and provided electronically by staff at the County's planning department. The assistance of staff at Prescott and Russell's Planning and Forestry Department are appreciated in making this research possible.

Farmland conversion has been captured in three categories:

- (1) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations)
- (2) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- (3) Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Prescott and Russell

Prescott and Russell designates agricultural lands under two categories in the county Official Plan. These designations include *Agricultural Resource Policy Area* and *Rural Policy Area*. The *Agricultural Resource Policy Area* is identified as:

Soil capability for agriculture, primarily soil classes 1, 2 and 3 (Canada Land Inventory classification system);
Agricultural designations from local Official Plans; and

The extent of land fragmentation and the presence of conflicting land uses in the area.

The *Rural Policy Area* designation is composed of lands which are located outside of the primary development and resource areas. For this study, only lands in the *Agricultural Resource Lands* were considered to be of relevance and interest.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period only one amendment in Prescott and Russell converted prime agricultural land to a development designation. The re-designated land use is 'Trade and Industry' which allows commercial and industrial developments. This amendment is captured in category 1 of Table 26.1.

Rural Designation: Over the course of the study period, three OPAs redesignated agricultural lands in the *Agricultural Resource Policy Area* to *Rural Policy Area*. The first OPA was approved to allow for the development of a golf driving range and the expansion of an existing commercial operation. The other two OPAs were comprehensive 5-year reviews of the County Official Plan which amended the county's geographic boundary and converted a number of prime agricultural lands to various other uses. As most of these cases were redesignation to the *Rural Policy Area*, this OPA is included in the 'Rural Designation' category. The amount of redesignated area was calculated by adding the available land areas and measuring the map in the schedules in the planning documents. This category encompassed 135.22 hectares and is captured in category 2 of Table 26.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Only one site-specific amendment was captured in Prescott and Russell during the study period. This amendment applied to a 29.14 hectares land and permitted an academic institution and related athletic facilities on it. Category 3 of Table 26.1 reflects this amendment.

Table 26.1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Prescott and Russell By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	1	0	15.22	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	0	0	29.14
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	1	0	120	0

2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	1	0	1.6	0
2017	1	50.59	0	0
Grand Total	5	50.59	136.82	29.14

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: The United Counties of Prescott and Russell's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Prescott and Russell does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Prince Edward



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 105,049 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 57,960.3 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 50,969 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$113,981,990
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2236.3
 Population (2016)¹: 24,735
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: -0.9%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: -2.1%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	0 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	109.6 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	137 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	246.6 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.43 %

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the County of Prince Edward, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Prince Edward during the years 2000–2017. In Prince Edward, all lower-level municipalities are governed by the County’s Official Plan policies which were adopted by the county in 1993 and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 1998. For data collection in Prince Edward, the electronic copies of original files that document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during study timeframe were provided by staff at the County’s Planning and Development Division. The assistance of staff at Prince Edward’s Planning Department are appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the County of Prince Edward

In Prince Edward’s Official Plan, there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Prime Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with predominantly Soil Classes 1, 2 and 3 and some of the Class 4 soils as defined in the Canada Land Inventory of soil capability for agriculture. Agricultural uses are also permitted in the *Rural* designation, where agricultural activities remain active but dispersed, where soils are predominately shallow and where non- agricultural development has taken place over time. Lands in this designation are predominantly blocks of land consist primarily of soil classes 5, 6 and 7 and some of the class 4 soils as defined in Canada Land Inventory of soil capability for agriculture and are not considered prime agricultural lands. For this study, only amendments affecting the Prime Agricultural designation in the OP were collected.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, no amendments in Prince Edward was captured which converted prime agricultural land to development designation.

Rural Designation: Five amendments that converted agricultural lands to a rural designation were captured from 2000–2017. Three of these amendments were small in land size, affecting less than 4 hectares each. The fourth amendment changed the designation to permit a range of commercial uses on the subject land (13.8 hectare) including a restaurant, inn, winery, cooking school, and recreational facilities. The fifth amendment was the largest in size and it changed the designation on an 89.2 hectare land to permit a gold course. These amendments are captured in category 2 of Table 26.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: From 2000–2017, four site-specific amendments affecting agricultural lands in Prince Edward were captured. Three of these amendments were small in size (less than 10 hectare) and use site-specific policies to allow for a range of industrial and commercial uses on the subject agricultural parcel. The largest amendment permitted the development of 7 lots for residential use on a 120-hectare land. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 26.1.

Table 26.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Prince Edward County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	0	13.8	0
2001	1	0	3.5	0
2002	1	0	1.8	0
2003	1	0	0	4.1
2004	1	0	0	9.7
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	1	0	0	3.2

2007	3	0	90.5	120
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	9	0	109.6	137

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Prince Edward County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Prince Edward County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Renfrew



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 744,857 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 163,079.4 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 132,306 ha
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$ 109,477,989
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$827.46
 Population (2016)¹: 102,394
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 3.9 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.1 %

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	0 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	53.51 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	53.51 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.03%

County Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by the County of Renfrew, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for the County of Renfrew during the years 2000–2017. In Renfrew, all lower-level municipalities are governed by the County’s Official Plan policies. The first Official Plan for the County of Hastings was adopted in 2002. For data collection in Renfrew, the electronic copies of original files that document OPAs approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during study timeframe were provided by staff at the County’s Planning Division. The assistance of staff at Renfrew’s Planning and Development Department is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the County of Renfrew

In Renfrew’s Official Plan, there are two agricultural land use designations. The *Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with predominantly CLI Class 1 to 3 soils. Agricultural uses are also permitted in the *Rural* and *Waterfront* designation, however lands in this designation are predominantly Class 4 to 7 soils and are not considered prime agricultural lands. For this study, only amendments affecting the Agricultural designation were collected from Renfrew County’s Official Plan.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: No amendment that converted agricultural lands to a development designation was captured from 2000–2017, as reflected in category 1 of Table 27.1.

Rural Designation: Over the course of the study period three amendments in Renfrew converted prime agricultural land to a rural designation. Two of these amendments permitted severance of a new lot on the subject land and the third permitted a new rural residential subdivision. These amendments are captured in category 2 of Table 27.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: From 2000–2017, no site-specific amendments affecting agricultural lands in Renfrew were captured. This is reflected in category 3 of Table 27.1.

Table 27.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Renfrew County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

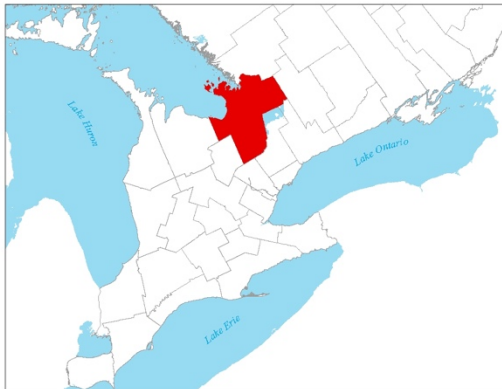
Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	1	0	8.12	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	1	0	10.7	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	0	34.69	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0

2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	3	0	53.51	0

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Renfrew County’s Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Renfrew County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

County of Simcoe



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 474,202 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 218,882.32 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 200,741.48 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 25,050 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 5.28%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$447.76 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,230.52
 Population (2016)¹: 307,050
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 6.0%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 9.9%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment)	2,034.2 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation	82.16 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses	310.06 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	2,426.4 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	1.13%

Purpose of the Summary

This county summary is part of a wider study on farmland availability in Ontario. The study quantifies the conversion of prime agricultural areas based on Official Plan Amendments in upper and single-tier municipalities across the province over a 17-year study period from 2000—2017. This summary is meant to provide detail of the findings in Simcoe County. In conjunction with similar case studies from other counties/regions in Ontario, these findings will form the basis of the University of Guelph’s *Measuring Farmland Conversion* research project.

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Simcoe County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Simcoe County during the years 2000 to 2017. Data was collected from each of the lower-tier municipalities within the County, each with their own respective Official Plan (OP). The cities of Orillia and Barrie, though geographically within Simcoe County, act as single-tier municipalities and were not included in data collection for the County. Data was collected from the following lower-tier municipalities: Towns of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil, Midland and New Tecumseth, and Townships of Adjala-Tosorontio, Clearview, Essa, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Severn, Springwater, Tay and Tiny. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was provided by staff at each of the individual planning departments. The assistance of planning staff is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Simcoe County

The land-use designations used by the lower-tier municipalities across Simcoe County were largely consistent with one another. All of the lower-tier municipalities, with the exception of the Town of Midland, use both *Agricultural* and *Rural* designations. The *Agricultural* designation reflects prime agricultural lands with high capability soils and a concentration of farms and agricultural activity. The *Rural* designation is used for lower capability, non-prime lands. In Midland, only a *Restricted Rural* designation is used to recognize areas not of urban-type development, however these lands are not considered to be prime agriculture.

The Towns of Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil also use specialty designations in addition to the *Agricultural* and *Rural* designations. In Bradford West Gwillimbury, a *Marsh Agricultural* designation is used to identify specialty crop lands that enable intensive farming on muck soils. The *Specialty Crop Area* designation is used in Innisfil to identify prime agricultural lands with soil that provides the ability to produce specialty crops. In this study, changes to lands in the *Agricultural*, *Marsh Agricultural* and *Specialty Crop Area* designations were captured.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: In Simcoe, 28 amendments were documented that converted prime agricultural lands to a development designation. In total, just under 2,142 ha of prime agricultural lands were converted for development. The largest of these amendments occurred in Bradford West Gwillimbury, converting 468 ha for establishment of employment lands, and in New Tecumseth, where 450 ha were redesignated in the creation of the Alliston Industrial/Commercial Secondary Plan. This type of farmland conversion is summarized by adoption date in category 1 of Table 28.1.

Rural Designation: Seven amendments throughout the study period converted a total of 82 ha of prime agricultural lands to a rural designation. Uses permitted in the newly designated rural lands included golf courses, storage facilities and day spas. These amendments are captured under category 2 of Table 28.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific amendments that permitted additional uses on prime agricultural lands were used ten times, totalling 310 ha. In Simcoe County, these amendments ranged in size from a 0.4 ha special policy permitting a school, to a 40 ha special policy permitting the operation of an Agricultural Society and associated events. Site-specific type amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 28.1.

Table 28.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Simcoe County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	3	22.3	5.3	8.09
2001	3	96.1	0	0.4
2002	3	192	1.86	3.24
2003	3	29	68	42
2004	4	263.9	0	11.3
2005	5	75.2	4.9	6
2006	3	45.7	0	10
2007	3	450	1.3	39.63
2008	2	104.5	0	0
2009	2	618	0	0
2010	2	34	0.27	0
2011	3	6	0	41.4
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	3	32.6	0	0
2014	1	0	0.51	0
2015	3	59	0	108
2016	1	0	0	40
2017	1	6	0	0
Grand Total	45	2,034.2	82.16	310.06

**Totals may not add due to rounding*

Provincial Land Use Plans: Only a small portion of the lands in Simcoe County are covered by the Greenbelt Plan, totaling just over 5% of the total county geography³. Of the 52 amendments captured in the County, only two were within Greenbelt coverage. The conversion of prime agricultural lands in the county, organized by OPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt is captured in Table 28.2.

Table 28.2 Prime agricultural area converted through OPAs in Simcoe County by application date and location relative to the Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt	Within the Greenbelt	Total
	Application date	Application Date	

	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	1465.3	667	0	0	2132.3
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)	29.8	261.1	3.2	0	294.1
Total	1,495.1	928.1	3.2	0	2,426.4

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000-2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 330,987 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001): 200,925 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 192,456 ha
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$436,451,040
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2267.79
Population (2016)¹: 113,429
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 0.7%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 2.0%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1.36 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	120 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	33.01 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017	154.37 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.077 %

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry's Official Plan and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, the files that document OPAs approved by the county and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were compiled and provided electronically by staff at Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry's Planning Services department. The assistance of staff is appreciated in making this research possible.

Farmland conversion has been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as Official Plan schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry

Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry designates agricultural lands under two categories in the county Official Plan. These designations include *Agricultural Resource Lands* and *Rural Area*. The *Agricultural Resource Lands*

designation specifically applies to lands which are Class 1–3 in Canada Land Inventory for agricultural capability, specialty crop land and lands which are used for or related to agricultural productivity. The *Rural Area* designation identifies the other lands which are characterized by their ‘wide open spaces’ or ‘country-side’ setting. For this study, only lands in the *Agricultural Resource Lands* were considered to be of relevance and interest.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period six amendments in Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry converted prime agricultural land to a development designation. All six of these OPAs were for rural settlement area expansions within the lower-tier municipalities on land formerly designated as *Agricultural Resource Lands*. The permitted land uses include rural settlement, commercial district and residential district. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 29.1.

Rural Designation: Over the course of the study period, one OPA redesignated *Agricultural Resource Lands* to *Rural Area*. This encompassed 120 hectares and is captured in category 2 of Table 29.1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Two site-specific amendments occurred in Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry during the study period. One of these amendment applied to 16 hectares of land and the other applied to a quite small piece of land (about 0.01 hectare). Both of these amendments allowed vehicle storage uses on the subject lands. Category 3 of Table 29.1 reflects this.

Table 29.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of Regional OPA adoption or approval by the OMB	Number Of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	2	0	120	33
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	6	0.89	0	0.01
2015	1	0.47	0	0

2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	9	1.36	120	33.01

***Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Provincial Land Use Plans: The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Region of Waterloo



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 136,892 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 91,378.02 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 86,997.30 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 464 ha
 Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 0.34%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$563.63 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$6,478.69
 Population (2016): 535,154
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 6.1%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016: 5.5%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1,018.9 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	0 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	1,018.9 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	1.11%

Region’s Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the Waterloo Regional Official Plan (ROP) and Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPAs). In Waterloo Region, the files that document ROPAs approved by the Region and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were accessed at the Waterloo Region office in Kitchener, Ontario. The assistance of staff at Waterloo Region Planning, Development and Legislative Services is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Waterloo Region

Waterloo Region designates agricultural lands under two categories in the overarching *Countryside* category. These designations include *Prime Agricultural Area* and *Rural Area*. The *Prime Agricultural Area* designation defines prime agricultural lands classified by high capability (Class 1, 2 and 3) soils and additional areas with locally concentrated agricultural operations. The *Rural Area* designation identifies non-prime agricultural areas where lower capability (Class 4–7) soils predominate. Prior to instituting the *Rural Area* designation, a *Non-Prime Agricultural Area* designation was used to capture lower-capability agricultural areas. For this study, only lands in the *Prime Agricultural Area* were considered to be of relevance and interest.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period eight amendments in Waterloo Region converted prime agricultural land to a development designation. Each of these amendments provided for expansions to urban area designations within the region. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 30.1.

Rural Designation: In 2000, one amendment occurred in Waterloo Region that converted lands designated as a *Prime Agricultural Area* to a *Non-Prime Agricultural Area* designation to permit the development of a golf course. This was the only official plan amendment that occurred in the study period that reflected a change to a rural-type designation. However, this amendment was not included in the study conversion totals, as further inquiry proved that the lands were previously an aggregate operation consisting of largely non-prime soils, and the *Non-Prime Agricultural Area* designation better reflected the land capability for agriculture.

Site-Specific Amendments: No amendments were captured during the study period that used site-specific policies to permit additional uses on prime agricultural lands.

Table 30.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Waterloo Region By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption Or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	1	8.2	0	0
2003	2	568	0	0
2004	2	289.6	0	0
2005	1	3	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	150	0	0

2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	7	1,018.9	0	0

**Totals may not add due to rounding*

Provincial Land Use Plans: In Waterloo Region, only 464 hectares are covered by the Greenbelt Plan, equivalent to less than 0.5% of the total regional geography³.

Table 30.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Waterloo Region By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	847	172	0	0	1,019
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	847	172	0	0	1,019

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000-2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

County of Wellington



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 257,335 ha
 Area of Census Farm (2001)²: 190,764.36 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 188,745 ha
 Area of County in the Greenbelt³: 18,785 ha
 Percent of County in the Greenbelt: 7.3%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$943.2 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$4,997
 Population (2016)¹: 90,932
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.4 %
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 4.9%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	817.31 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation* 2000–2017	31.75 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	88.32 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	935.38 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	0.49%

**Consistent with provincial policy, Wellington redesignated certain lands from prime agriculture to secondary agriculture. These lands were not considered prime agriculture due to their lower capability soils. For further details, see the section on secondary agriculture below.*

Purpose of the Summary

This county summary is part of a wider study on farmland availability in Ontario. The study quantifies the conversion of prime agricultural areas based on Official Plan Amendments in upper and single-tier municipalities across the Province over a 17-year study period from 2000–2017. This summary is meant to provide detail of the findings in Wellington County. In conjunction with similar case studies from other counties/regions in Ontario, these findings will form the basis of the University of Guelph's *Measuring Farmland Conversion* research project.

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Wellington County's Official Plan (OP) and Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In Wellington County, the original files which document OPAs adopted and approved by the County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017 were accessed at the Wellington County Planning and Development offices in Guelph, Ontario. The assistance of staff at the County of Wellington's Planning and Development is appreciated in the retrieval of pertinent files.

Farmland conversion has been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;

Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features that have been excluded from previous OP schedules.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Wellington County

Wellington County's Official Plan includes a Rural System with land use designations for *Prime Agricultural Areas*, *Secondary Agriculture Areas*, *Recreational Areas*, *Rural Employment* and *Country Residential Areas*. *Prime Agricultural Areas* are defined as "Class 1, 2 and 3 agricultural soils, associated 4 to 7 soils and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit the characteristics of ongoing agriculture"⁶. *Secondary Agriculture Areas* are "non-prime farmland but which can sustain certain agricultural activities"⁶. Agriculture remains a promoted use in the *Secondary Agriculture Area*, however additional uses are permitted. This study considers the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas* to either built-up land use designations or the *Secondary Agricultural Area*.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development designations: Over the course of the study period, twenty-three amendments pertained to the redesignation of *Prime Agricultural Areas* to a built-up designation, totalling 812 hectares. *Urban Area Expansions* comprised 11 of these OPAs, while the remainder were redesignations for hamlets, industrial, institutional or recreational uses in the countryside. This type of farmland conversion, organized by OPA adoption date, is captured in category 1 of Table 1.

Rural designations: Wellington County does not use a rural designation for the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas*. As such, no OPAs have been captured under a rural designation. The study did, however, capture the conversion of *Prime Agricultural Area* to *Secondary Agriculture Area* and the details of these OPAs can be found below.

Secondary Agriculture: Over the course of the study period, three OPAs redesignated *Prime Agricultural Area* to *Secondary Agricultural Area*. Two of these OPAs are the result of a land evaluation and area review study conducted for the Town of Erin that identified the areas unsuitable for the *Prime Agricultural Area* designation. While these two OPAs totaled 16,263 hectares of land, according to the Canada Land Inventory, this land was not considered prime agricultural land. As such, these two amendments have been qualified as housekeeping amendments and have not been included in this study. The third OPA redesignated 32 hectares of *Prime Agricultural Area* to the *Secondary Agricultural Area* for the purpose of severing the property. This OPA is also considered a housekeeping amendment, as a secondary designation is more appropriate given the lower capability soils.

Site-specific Amendments: Over the course of the study period, Wellington County used site-specific policy amendments five times to allow additional uses within the *Prime Agricultural Area*. These uses totaled 87 hectares and included a landscape materials sales yard, private residences, a golf course, and a flour mill/grain elevator combination. These amendments are captured in category 3 of Table 31.1.

Table 31.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Wellington County By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by The OMB	Number of OPAs Related To The Conversion Of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	98	0	0
2001	3	47.3	0	0
2002	2	42.3	0	0
2003	4	14.7	0	20
2004	4	68.3	0	19
2005	2	401.1	0	0
2006	2	0.9	31.75	0
2007	1	0	0	37.2
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	2	2.83	0	10.12
2010	2	68	0	0
2011	1	47	0	0
2012	2	15.89	0	0
2013	1	2.4	0	0
2014	1	8.66	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	28	817.31	31.75	86.32

**Totals may not add due to rounding*

Provincial Land Use Plans: In Wellington County, 18,842 hectares are included in the *Protected Countryside* of the Greenbelt Plan, representing a relatively small portion of the County’s land area at 6%³. The conversion of *Prime Agricultural Areas*, organized by OPA application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt is captured in Table 2.

Table 31.2 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Wellington County By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt	Within the Greenbelt	Total
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	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	713.3	135.7	0	0	849
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)	76.2	10.2	0	0	86.4
Total	789.5	145.9	0	0	935.4

**Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*

Region of York



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 176,213 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2001)¹: 71,210.5 ha
 Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 57,702 ha
 Area of Region in the Greenbelt³: 123,361 ha
 Percentage of Region in the Greenbelt³: 70%
 Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$301.5 million
 Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$5,224
 Population (2016)¹: 1,109,909
 Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 15.7%
 Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 7.5%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	5,233.5 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	2755.5 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	0 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	7,988.95 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	11.22%

Purpose of the Summary

This region summary is part of a wider study on farmland availability in Ontario. The study quantifies the conversion of prime agricultural areas based on Official Plan Amendments in upper and single-tier municipalities across the Province over a 17-year study period from 2000–2017. This summary is meant to provide detail of the findings for York Region. In conjunction with similar case studies from other counties/regions in Ontario, these findings will form the basis of the University of Guelph’s *Measuring Farmland Conversion* research project.

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of the York Regional Official Plan (OP) and Regional Official Plan Amendments (OPAs). In York Region, the files which document OPAs approved by the Region and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000 to 2017 were accessed through the Region’s online amendment document webpage. The assistance of staff at York Region’s Long Range Planning Division is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features that have been excluded from previous OP schedules. In York, changes made to the *Agriculture and Rural Land Base* map through the 2010 ROP were seen as significant and not housekeeping; further detail on these changes and how they are included in this study is provided below.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in the York Region

In York Region, agricultural activity takes place primarily in three designations: The *Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area*, *Agricultural Areas* and *Rural Areas*. Within the Greenbelt Plan, the Holland Marsh is designated as a *Specialty Crop Area* for its black organic and muck soils suitable for a range of horticultural crops, and receives the highest level of protection for future agricultural use through the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Both lands designated as *Agricultural Areas* or the *Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area* permit a range of farm practices. *Rural Areas* support agriculture as a primary use but also permit “uses such as equestrian facilities, farm markets, rural settlements, existing rural residential and estate residential development and golf courses”⁶. This study considers the conversion of the *Agricultural Area* and *Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area* designations.

Natural Heritage System: York’s Regional Greenlands System is composed of cores, corridors, and linkages. The cores are composed of key natural heritage and hydrological features. The corridors and linkages connect the system. In the Regional Greenlands System, “the full range of existing and new agricultural, agricultural-related and secondary agricultural uses and normal farm practices is permitted”⁶. OPAs pertaining to *Agricultural Policy Areas* within the Greenlands System were included in this study.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, 12 OPAs pertained to the conversion of prime agricultural land to a development designation. These redesignations totalled 5,233.5 hectares and were captured in Table 32.1 under category 1.

Rural Designation: Five OPAs in York redesignated *Agricultural Areas* to *Rural Areas* for non-agricultural uses. This comprised 1,755 hectares of farmland for non-agricultural uses and is captured in category 2 of Table 32.1. Over the course of the study period, land was also gained in the prime agriculture designation from the rural designation. The 2010 York Regional Official Plan repealed the Region’s existing 1994 *Agricultural and Rural Systems* map. At the time of the 2010 ROP adoption, *Agricultural Areas* and the *Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area* increased significantly in size, while the *Rural Area* decreased in size. These changes are mapped based on the results of a 2009 Land Evaluation and Area Review study for agriculture and result in a greater land area protected for long-term agricultural use. The results of these changes have been provided by staff at York Region and are tallied in Table 32.2.

Site-Specific Amendments: Site-specific policy amendments were not used in York Region’s Official Plan to permit additional uses within the *Agricultural Policy Areas*. No amendments were captured under category 3 of Table 32.1.

Table 32.1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In York Region By Adoption Date (2000–2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated as a Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	3	0	13.1	0
2001	2	915	0	0
2002	2	630.5	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	3	708.5	46	0
2006	2	620	1,696.4	0
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	1	211.4	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	1	709.7	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	2	1,438.3	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	1	0	1000	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	17	5,233.5	2,755.5	0

**Totals may not add due to rounding*

Table 32.2 Difference in area covered by agricultural land use designation between ROP 1994 and ROP 2010

	Area Included in the Agricultural Designations (ha)		
	ROP 1994	ROP 2010	Difference
Holland Marsh Area	2,885.6	4,076.4	1,190.8
Agriculture Policy Area	59,052.9	74,058.7	15,005.8
Rural Policy Area	55,836.2	33,045.1	-22,791.1

Provincial Land Use Plans: The Protected Countryside and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area of the Greenbelt cover 38% of the Region, while the ORMCP covers an additional 31% of the region. The ORMCP countryside designation is broad and permits a range of rural land uses including recreation and rural settlements, as specified in regional official plans. Long term protection of prime agricultural areas is required where such areas are identified by municipalities within the ORMCP. In the settlement areas, towns, and villages identified in the ORMCP, the urban policies of the ROP apply⁶. The policies of the ORMCP apply to applications initiated after November 17, 2001.

Within the borders of the ORMCP there were four amendments that pertained to the redesignation of *Prime Agricultural Areas* during the 2000–2017 study period. Three of these amendments were completed or initiated prior to the enactment of the ORMCP. The fourth amendment, OPA 50 (to the 1994 Regional Official Plan) redesignated 1,696 hectares of *Prime Agricultural Area* to a *Rural Area* in 2006. The rural designation was deemed more consistent with the existing land uses in that area and consistent with the uses permitted by the ORMCP.

During the study period there were two amendments passed in the Greenbelt area: both applications were initiated prior to the December 16, 2004 implementation of the plan. Amendments to redesignate *Prime Agricultural Areas* in York Region continued in the areas outside the Protected Countryside after the implementation of the Greenbelt. Prime agricultural areas converted to non-agricultural uses, organized by application date and location relative to the borders of the Greenbelt are captured in Table 32.3.

Table 32.3 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In York Region By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2017	Pre 2005	2005- 2017	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (ha)	2,267.2	4844.4	877.4	0	7,989
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (ha)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2,267.2	4,844.4	877.4	0	7,989

**Table 32.1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000–2017 study time frame. Table 32.3 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000-2017 study time frame.*