



**Council Meeting
February 23, 2026**

Firearm Discharge By-law Update

Recommendation

The Senior Municipal Law Enforcement Officer recommends:

- 1. THAT BLE Report No. 01-2025 be received;**
- 2. AND THAT Staff be authorized to initiate a public consultation and engagement process to solicit input from interested members of the community;**
- 3. AND THAT Staff return to the April 27, 2026, meeting with a follow up Report to Council.**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to present to Council for consideration an update to Firearms Discharge By-Law No. 700-83.

2. Background

It is appropriate to review current Bylaws to:

- i) assess against current legislation;
- ii) ensure that the Bylaw continues to address their intended purpose; and,
- ii) evaluate against the community's needs and expectations.

The Township's current Firearms Discharge By-law, Bylaw 700-83, has been in effect since 1983. The current Firearms Discharge By-law was passed by Council on October 17, 1983. Short Form Wording and Set Fines were never approved.

3. Options and Analysis

After reviewing the current Firearms Discharge By-law, staff are recommending changes to the By-law that would prohibit all firearms and bows within the various settlement areas across North Dumfries. It would also keep the current prohibited area around the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve.

The Bylaw, as drafted, does not propose to alter the provisions related to the discharge of firearms or bows within the rural countryside area. The provision of the property owner providing written consent to allow individuals to enter and discharge firearms and bows remains in effect.

A new By-law has been drafted for Councils consideration which is included as Attachment No. 1 to this Report.

The following changes are being recommended by Staff in the rewrite of the current Firearms Discharge By-law:

1. Adding updated definitions to Section 2 of the By-law;
2. Bringing the By-law up to date with current legislation as the legislation in the current By-law is outdated;
3. Removing the ambiguous "Schedule A" within the existing Bylaw that is written in metes and bounds and replacing it with mapping showing the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve land;
4. Prohibiting the discharge of bows and firearms within all settlement areas of North Dumfries;
5. Adding provisions around schools, places of worship, day nurseries, recreation centres and parks to establish a minimum separation distance;
6. Providing exemptions for blank ammunition, future businesses such as gun clubs and paintball arenas and allowing landowners to protect their land from threatening wildlife.

rare Charitable Research Reserve and Waterloo Regional Police Service have been contacted within respect to the proposed revisions and framework of the draft Bylaw.

rare has advised that they did not want any changes to their land and wanted it to remain free from bows and firearms. As such they support the status quo.

The Police Service has indicated that they would support the By-law but also assess firearms incidents through the lens of Federal and Provincial legislation when responding to calls for service. The Region of Waterloo and the Grand River Conservation Authority will also be consulted for comment focussing on their naturalized landholdings located within the Township.

Staff are recommending to Council that before a decision is made on a new and updated Firearms Discharge By-law, that an engagement / consultation program be embarked upon with the community to solicit comments and input.

The outcome of the consultation process would be included in a follow-up Report to Council which may assist within informing a preferred course of action that Council may wish to act upon. Staff are suggesting that the follow up Report would be presented for discussion on April 27, 2026.

4. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications on the 2026 Budget associated with the consideration of this Report.

5. Attachments

1. Current Firearms Discharge By-law No. 700-83
2. Amending DRAFT Firearms Discharge By-law (XXXX-26)
3. Schedules 1 to 4 of DRAFT By-law (XXXX-26)

For further information on the contents of this Report, please contact Justin Harris, Senior Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, at 519-632-8800 ext. 107 or via email at jharris@northdumfries.ca

Report Prepared By:



Justin Harris,
Senior Municipal Law Enforcement Officer

Respectfully Submitted By:



Andrew McNeely,
Chief Administrative Officer

BY-LAW NO. 700-83

OF THE

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH DUMFRIES

Being a by-law of the Township of North Dumfries for prohibiting or regulating the discharge of guns or other firearms, air guns, spring guns or any class or type thereof within the Municipality or any defined area or areas thereof pursuant to Section 210(29) of The Municipal Act, R.S.O. 1980, Chapter 302 and amendment thereto.

NOW THEREFORE THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH DUMFRIES ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:-

1. "Restricted Area" shall mean those areas of the Township of North Dumfries as described in Schedule "A" attached hereto which said schedule is hereby declared to be and form part of this by-law.
2. (a) No person shall discharge, cause to be discharged, or allow to be discharged guns or other firearms, air guns, spring guns or any class or type thereof within the Restricted Area of the Township of North Dumfries.

(b) Notwithstanding section 2(a) the legal owner or legal occupant of property primarily used as a farm may for the preservation of livestock or agriculture discharge a firearm within the Restricted Area of the Township of North Dumfries.
3. No person shall discharge, cause to be discharged or allow to be discharged guns or other firearms, air guns, spring guns or any class or type thereof outside the Restricted Area of the Township of North Dumfries to which this by-law applies, without first obtaining permission in writing from the owner or legal occupant of the property.
4. In the prosecution of a breach of this by-law, the onus of proving that consent referred to in Section 3 hereof, has been given shall be on the person accused.
5. Should any section of this by-law be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be ultra vires, the remaining parts shall nevertheless remain valid and binding and shall be read as if the offending section had been struck out.
6. Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of this by-law is guilty of an offence and is liable on Summary Conviction to a fine (exclusive of costs) of not less than \$50.00 and not more than \$2,000.00 for each offence which shall be recoverable under the Provincial Offences Act.
7. In addition to the penalty herein provided the presiding justice may order the confiscation of any firearms, air guns, spring guns or any type or class thereof used contrary to the provisions of this by-law.
8. This by-law shall not apply to:
 - (a) Military Companies or Peace Officers in the lawful execution of their duties;
 - (b) Lands under the jurisdiction of the Grand River Conservation Authority where discharge of firearms is under direct supervision of said Authority.

- (c) Any person discharging firearms as provided for in the Dog Tax and Livestock and Poultry Protection Act, R.S.O. 1981, Chapter 123 and amendments thereto, at any dog found killing or injuring any livestock or poultry, or found straying not under proper control upon premises where livestock, or poultry are habitually kept.

ENACTED AND PASSED THIS 17th DAY OF October , A.D., 1983.

Franklin R. Liso
MAYOR

J. H. Griffin
CLERK



SCHEDULE "A"

ALL AND SINGULAR that parcel of land composed of Part of Lots 1, 2 and 3 of Beasley's Old Survey (formerly in the Township of Waterloo, now in the Township of North Dumfries); Part of Lots 17, 18 and 19 Concession XII of Part of Subdivision Lot 3 West of the Grand River; Part of Road Allowance between Lots 18 and 19, Concession XII and the Public Road through Lot 19, Concession XII (closed by By-Law 79 & 80) all being within the Regional Municipality of Waterloo in the Province of Ontario and which may be more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at the southeast corner Lot 17 Concession XII, Part Subdivision Lot 3 West of the Grand River in the Township of North Dumfries.

THENCE, N. $15^{\circ} 57' 30''$ W 233.913 metres along the east limit of aforesaid Lot 17 to a point.

THENCE, N. $76^{\circ} 26' 45''$ E 262.375 metres along the line between the Subdivision Lots 2 and 3 West of the Grand River, Concession XII Township of North Dumfries.

THENCE, N. $75^{\circ} 52' 45''$ E 382.338 metres along the aforesaid limit to the southerly limit of Blair Road (Regional Road#49

THENCE, N. $75^{\circ} 53' 10''$ E 142.753 metres along the limit of the Township of North Dumfries to a point.

THENCE, N. $74^{\circ} 59' 30''$ E 137.849 metres to a point in the limit of the Township of North Dumfries.

THENCE, N. $79^{\circ} 06'$ E along the aforesaid Township Limit and line produced to the centreline of the Grand River which point is also the westerly limit of the City of Cambridge (formerly City of Galt as annexed in 1952)

THENCE, northerly along the centreline of the Grand River which line is also the boundary between the Township of North Dumfries and the City of Cambridge (formerly City of Galt) to the intersection of the boundary between the former Town of Preston and the former City of Galt.

THENCE, westerly along the line between the City of Cambridge (formerly Town of Preston) and the Township of North Dumfries to a point in the westerly bank of the Grand River.

THENCE, northwesterly along the line between the City of Cambridge (formerly Town of Preston) and the Township of North Dumfries being the westerly High Water Line as gazetted in 1851 and depicted on a plan of survey registered and deposited as W.D.R. 290 (now Registry Office #67 for Waterloo South) to a point being the intersection of the aforesaid High Water Line (1851) and the line between the City of Cambridge (formerly Town of Preston) and the Township of North Dumfries which line has a bearing of N- $7^{\circ} 06' 40''$ W.

THENCE, S 7° 06' 40" E 237.116 metres along the aforesaid line to a point in the northerly limit of Blair Road.

THENCE, easterly 33.958 metres along the north limit of Blair Road on a curve to the right having a chord bearing S 86° 43' 13" E and chord distance of 33.958 metres.

THENCE, S 87° 19' E 445.886 metres along the northerly limit of Blair Road to a point.

THENCE, continuing on a curve to the right 162.477 metres which curve has a chord bearing S 87° 39' 57" E and chord distance of 162.419 metres to a point in the north limit of Blair Road.

THENCE, S 12° 37' 50" E 12.457 metres to a point in the south limit of Blair Road.

THENCE, S 16° 17' E 1,543.456 metres along the line between the City of Cambridge (formerly Town of Preston) and the Township of North Dumfries and line produced to a point at an adjustment in the easterly limit of a road allowance for Dumfries Road #1.

THENCE, N 87° 24' 45" E 19.105 metres along the easterly limit of a road allowance to a point.

THENCE, S 23° 59' 10" E 11.531 metres to a point at the junction of the easterly limit of the road allowance for Dumfries Road #1 and the southerly limit of a former Public Road closed by By-Law #79 (Not Registered).

THENCE, N 77° 07' 40" E 281.638 metres along the southerly limit of this road allowance (closed) to a point.

THENCE, N 76° 29' 20" E 129.973 metres along the southerly limit of aforesaid road allowance (closed) to an angle in said road allowance.

THENCE, N 75° 02' 20" E 80.040 metres along a post and wire fence to a point in the southerly limit of Lot 18 Concession XII Subdivision Lot 3 West of the Grand River.

THENCE, N 76° 28' 45" E 751.420 metres along the southerly limit of aforesaid Lot 18 and Lot 17 to the westerly limit of the City of Cambridge (formerly City of Galt) and the point of commencement.



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH DUMFRIES

BY-LAW NUMBER _____

BEING A BY-LAW TO REGULATE THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH DUMFRIES AND TO REPEAL BY-LAW 700-83

WHEREAS Section 9 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 provides a municipality the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

AND WHEREAS Section 11 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 provides that municipalities may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public, including the passing of by-law within the respective sphere of jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS Sections 23 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 authorizes a municipality to delegate certain powers and duties;

AND WHEREAS Section 119 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 authorizes a local municipality for the purpose of public safety to prohibit or regulate the discharge of firearms;

AND WHEREAS Section 425 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 authorizes a municipality to provide offences for a contravention of a by-law;

AND WHEREAS Section 429 of the Municipal Act, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.25 authorizes a municipality to establish a system of fines under a by-law;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of North Dumfries hereby enacts as follows:

1. SHORT TITLE

This by-law may be cited as the “Firearms Discharge By-law”

2. DEFINITIONS

- a) “Bow” shall mean a curved or re-curved stave of a resilient material, strung taut from end to end and used to launch an arrow, bolt, quarrel or any similar projectile

that is capable of causing bodily injury or death to a person and includes cross-bows, long bows, re-curved bows and compound bows.

b) “Firearm(s)” shall mean a barreled weapon from which any shot, bullet or other projectile can be discharged and that is capable of causing bodily injury or death to a person, and includes any frame or receiver of such a barreled weapon and anything that can be adapted for use as a firearm, including air guns, spring-guns, or any class or type thereof;

c) “Highway” shall mean a common and public highway and includes a street, public land and road allowance and any bridge, trestle, viaduct or structure that forms part of a highway and all lands between the lateral boundaries;

d) “Law Enforcement Officer” shall mean a Police Officer, a member of the Armed Forces of Canada, a peace officer, an Officer appointed under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act or the Township’s Municipal Law Enforcement Officers;

e) “Livestock Product” shall be defined as in the Livestock and Livestock Products Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.L.20, as amended, or any successor legislation thereto;

f) “Occupier” shall include,

(i) a person who is in physical possession of premises, or

(ii) a person who has responsibility for and control over the condition of premises or the activities there carried on, or control over persons allowed to enter the premises, even if there is more than one occupier of the same premises; (“occupant”) e.g. an agent

g) “Recreational Trail” shall mean a property that is open to the general public for permitted recreational trail uses, and includes any bridge, trestle, viaduct or structure that forms part of a trail and all lands between the lateral boundaries;

h) “Regulated Area 1” shall mean the areas in the Township of North Dumfries as described in Schedules 1 and 3 attached hereto which forms a part of this by-law;

i) “Target” shall mean an animal, reptile, bird or object;

j) “Settlement Area” shall mean the areas in the Township of North Dumfries as described in Schedules 1 to 4 attached hereto, which forms part of this By-law;

k) “Shooting Range” a location that is designed or intended for the safe discharge, on a regular and structured basis, of firearms for the purpose of shooting at an object to be aimed at in shooting practice or contests.

l) “Township” shall mean the Corporation of the Township of North Dumfries and its geographical boundaries;

m) “Wildlife” shall be as defined in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c.41, as amended, or any successor legislation thereto.

3. INTERPRETATION

3.1 The regulations established in this By-law apply to the discharge of Bows and Firearms on all lands and waters within the boundaries of the Township.

3.2 The attached Schedules 1 to 4 form part of this By-law.

3.3 Nothing in this By-law shall be interpreted as reducing or eliminating the need for full compliance with the provisions of all Federal and Provincial statutes or regulations relating to Bows and Firearms.

4. REGULATIONS

Settlement Areas

4.1 No person shall discharge, cause to be discharged, or allow to be discharged a Bow or Firearm in the Settlement Areas of the Township.

Regulated Area 1

4.2 No person shall discharge, cause to be discharged, or allow to be discharged a Bow or Firearm in Regulated Area 1 of the Township.

Compliance

4.3 No person shall discharge, cause to be discharged, or allow to be discharged a Bow or Firearm on any private property on which the discharge of Bows and Firearms are permitted unless he or she;

- a) is the owner or occupier of the property, or
- b) has the express written permission of the owner or occupier of the property.

5. GENERAL

Although the provisions of section 4.3 allow for the discharge of firearms in certain specified circumstances, no person shall discharge, cause to be discharged or allow to be discharged a firearm in the Township;

- a) on any property owned or occupied by the Township, without express written permission by the Township;
- b) on any property owned by the Region of Waterloo or the Grand River Conservation Authority without express written permission to do so;
- b) on or within 150 metres, or at any target within 150 metres, of any property used for the purposes of a school, place of worship, day nursery, community recreation centre or park;
- c) on, across or within 30 metres of any highway, private road or recreational trail;
- d) for the purpose of detonating “Tannerite” (also known as “Shockwave”) or any other binary explosive that requires a shot by a firearm to initiate a detonation.

6. EXEMPTIONS

Despite the provisions of sections 4 & 5 of this by-law, nothing in the by-law shall serve to prohibit the discharge of a Firearm by:

- a) A Law Enforcement Officer in the lawful execution of their duties.
- b) Any person, while lawfully discharging a firearm at a rod and gun club, gun club, skeet club or a shooting range which is operating in compliance with all federal and provincial legislation and all municipal by-laws and wherein all necessary and property safety precautions have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Waterloo Regional Police and full approval has been obtained by the Chief Firearms Officer of Ontario.
- c) A person firing blank ammunition which does not discharge a projectile, for or in connection with its lawful use, in any of the following activities; a motion picture, television or stage production, historical re-enactment or display, starting or controlling a sporting event or in connection with special honour guard tribute by the Royal Canadian Legion or similar community based event, provided that the person has obtained Township approval and any appropriate permits.
- d) An establishment or business providing “paint ball gaming”, at a location zoned for this purpose and duly authorized pursuant to the Township’s Zoning By-law, as amended.
- e) A person who is an owner or occupier of lands who believes, on reasonable grounds, that Wildlife is threatening to injure that persons property, including, but not limited to crops, livestock, pets or persons on that property.

9. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

9.1 The applicable Law Enforcement Officer(s) is responsible for enforcing the provisions of this by-law;

9.2 A Law Enforcement Officer may enter upon land at any reasonable time for the purpose of enforcing the by-law or carrying out an inspection to determine compliance with the by-law;

9.3 Any person who contravenes any provision of this by-law is guilty of an offence; and, upon conviction is liable to a penalty in accordance with the Provincial Offences Act and to any other applicable penalties.

9.4 For the purpose of subsection 9.3 an offence is a subsequent offence if there has been a previous conviction under this by-law as prescribed by the Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, C. P. 33, as amended, or any successor legislation thereto.

10. REPEAL OF EXISTING BY-LAW

10.1 By-law No. 700-83 be hereby repealed in its entirety.

11. VALIDITY

11.1 If a court of competent jurisdiction should declare any section or part of a section of this by-law to be invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of the by-law as a whole or any part thereof, other than the part which was declared to be invalid.

12. EFFECTIVE DATE

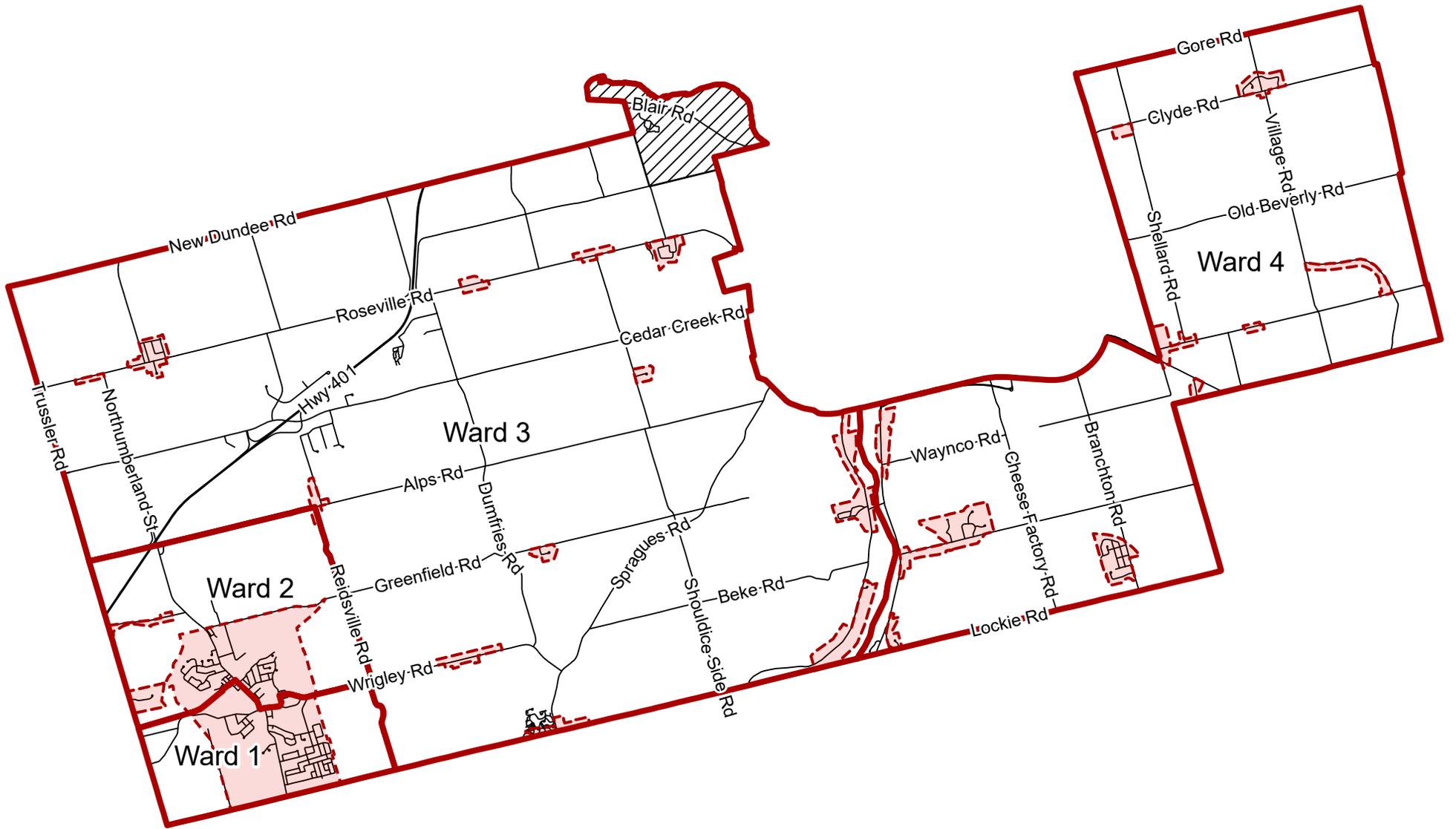
12.1 This by-law shall come into full force and effect on the date of the final passing.

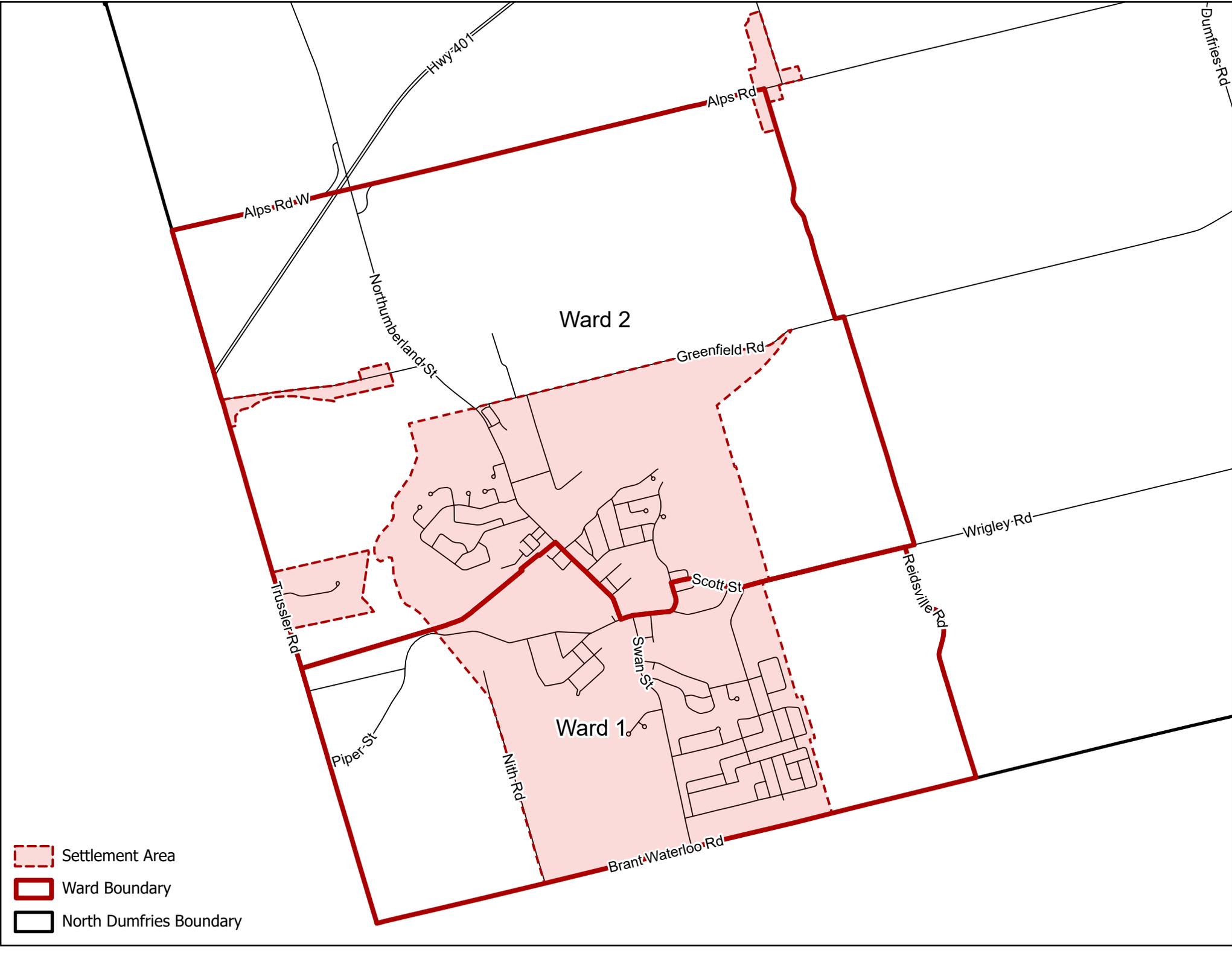
READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS _____ OF _____, 2026.

Susan Foxtton, Mayor

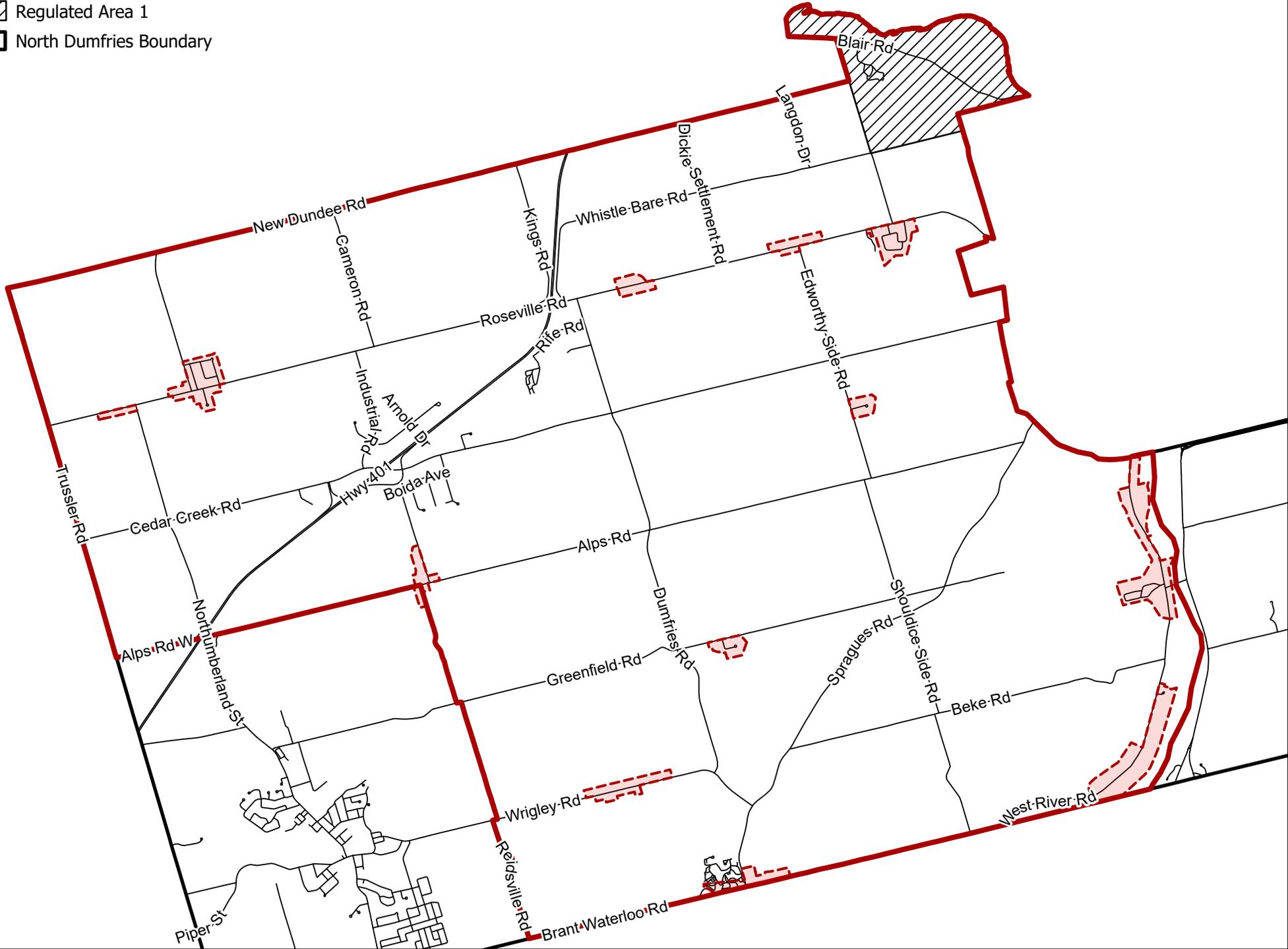
Ashley Good, Clerk

-  Settlement Areas
-  Regulated Area 1
-  Ward Boundary
-  North Dumfries Boundary





-  Rural Settlement Area
-  Ward 3
-  Regulated Area 1
-  North Dumfries Boundary



- Settlement Areas
- Ward 4
- North Dumfries Boundary

