



## Memorandum to Council

**To:** Mayor and Council File No: 6750-01  
**Date:** February 24, 2025  
**From:** John Perrott, Manager, Economic Development and Partnerships  
**Subject:** Commercial and Retail Land Analysis Briefing Report

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Council with an executive summary of the findings from the Commercial and Retail Land Analysis Report contracted by the Economic Development and Partnerships Department to form part of the background documents used to inform the new Official Community Plan.

### **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receive the memorandum titled “Commercial and Retail Land Analysis Briefing Report”, dated February 24, 2025.

### **Background:**

The Economic Development and Partnerships Department commissioned a Commercial and Retail Land Analysis in 2024 as a background document to help inform the development of the City of Vernon’s new Official Community Plan (OCP). The goals of the Land Analysis project were to:

- Assess the adequacy of existing commercial land supply to meet the demands of a growing population and evolving economic landscape.
- Evaluate how the shifting business models, consumer behaviours, and tourism trends are impacting commercial land use and future requirements.
- Highlight pathways to optimize land use and enhance the City’s ability to attract investment and support economic growth.
- Ensure that Vernon’s OCP and Zoning Bylaw reflect the current realities and prepare the City for long-term success.

This Briefing Report (Attachment 1) summarizing the full technical report was prepared by the consultant and provides information highlights and findings. Key findings include:

- Vernon’s current supply of zoned commercial and retail land is nearly 28 million square feet (inclusive of buildings, landscaping, and parking lots).

- Future demand estimates were developed using two approaches: a Per-Capita Approach (i.e. traditional square footage requirements based on 2044 population projections) and a Consumer Spending Approach (i.e. space required to fulfill consumer expenditure demands of the 2044 population):
  1. *Based on the Per Capita Approach*, existing zoned land would be sufficient to meet the expected demand; and
  2. *Based on the Consumer Spending Approach*, there would be a need for an additional 19 million square feet of commercial and retail land.
- To meet future demand for commercial and retail land, available existing commercial and retail properties should be protected, existing properties within municipal boundaries be considered for rezoning (as needed), and the community should to expect new commercial land development to occur outside Vernon's municipal boundaries.
- It is estimated that approximately 20% of existing Vernon properties and buildings are ready to be redeveloped due to age and condition. Developers and property owners should look to utilize higher-density approaches (i.e. more compact uses, mixed use development, etc.) as allowed under current zoning bylaws as opportunities to increase commercial and retail space availability and unit variety.

This report helps to ensure that the City's OCP and subsequent policies will consider the needs of property owners/developers, entrepreneurs and residents based on the recommendations and actions identified within this report. Additionally, the recommendations and actions will inform the Economic Development Strategy.

### **Communication:**

The Technical Report and Briefing Report will be posted on the City's OCP website at <https://www.engagevernon.ca/ocp-tp>.

### **Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – Commercial and Retail Lands Analysis Briefing Report

Reviewed by: Roy Nuriel, General Manager, City Planning  
Reviewed by: Terry Barton, Director, Planning and Community Services  
Reviewed by: Kevin Poole, Director, Corporate Administration  
Approved by: Peter Weeber, Chief Administrative Officer