

## Constructive Feedback on By-law No. 2024-12 and Zoning Amendment Proposal Township of Wilmot – Part Lot 10, Concession South of Bleam's Road

While the Township of Wilmot's attempt to formalize zoning changes and regulate the use of extractive lands through By-law No. 2024-12 is noted, several key concerns remain unresolved and require further attention before this by-law proceeds to final approval.

### 1. Inadequate Controls on Importation and Recycling of Asphalt and Concrete

The by-law proposes to allow the importation and recycling of broken concrete and asphalt under Zone 14 (Extractive Industrial), with only minimal restrictions, namely that these materials be stored “on the pit floor.”

This vague condition leaves too much room for interpretation and lacks enforceable provisions related to environmental protection, traffic impact, and community well-being.

Studies have shown that asphalt stockpiles can leach petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and heavy metals, particularly during rainfall, creating a serious risk to groundwater quality. A buffer layer of clean sand and gravel placed above and around the stockpile can significantly reduce this risk by acting as a physical and chemical filtration medium. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) recommends the use of granular materials for stormwater infiltration and contaminant attenuation in its Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual (2003), recognizing their effectiveness in reducing pollutant transport. Additionally, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) highlights similar best practices in its Code of Practice for the Environmental Management of Road Salts and aggregate site management guidance. Implementing a sand and gravel buffer aligns with these established standards and provides an important, passive safeguard for local groundwater protection.

Furthermore, previous documents and public discussions have referenced the requirement of a **membrane** to be installed beneath the asphalt stockpile to protect groundwater. This by-law makes no mention of such a membrane.

#### Call to Action:

- Ensure that the requirement for a protective membrane under all recycled asphalt/concrete stockpiles is included in the by-law, along with specifications, inspection requirements, and enforcement provisions
- Include a sand and gravel buffer below and around the asphalt stockpiling area. The buffer should **not be compacted**, must remain **permeable**, and be combined with **surface water control (e.g., grading, berms, and diversion ditches)** to minimize infiltration rates directly beneath the stockpile

**2. Vague Commitment to Open Space (Zone 11) Restoration** Zone 11 is described as being used for an "Arboretum, Wildlife Sanctuary, and accessory uses." However, the by-law contains no specifics about what is happening and where.

Call to Action:

- Require a detailed plan describing what accessory uses are permitted in this area, with timelines and accountability measures
- Designate third-party or regional oversight (e.g., Grand River Conservation Authority) to monitor compliance and ecological integrity.

### **3. Witmer Road Reconstruction**

We appreciate that Township staff have engaged meaningfully with public feedback throughout the Witmer Road reconstruction planning process.

The decision to reduce the posted speed limit to 50 km/h near the residential hidden driveways reflects a responsive and community-focused approach that prioritizes safety for vulnerable road users. Speed monitoring will be essential to ensure these safety measures are adhered to by all road users.

We also commend the Township for proactively consulting the Region of Waterloo regarding the limited approach sight lines at the intersection of Queen Street and Witmer Road—an issue clearly identified in the expert review by True North Safety Group (TNS, May 27, 2025).

However, we remain concerned about the narrow shoulder widths and steep ditch slopes along several segments of the corridor. These design elements are below the standards recommended in the TAC Geometric Design Guide and Township Infrastructure Standards, and they may pose rollover or road departure risks. Especially given the high volume of truck traffic anticipated from pit operations alongside the current local recreational road use including cyclists.

Call to action:

- We urge the Township to follow through on its public commitments and ensure that all aspects of the road reconstruction meet or exceed the required safety and design standards with monitoring and enforcement measures. This includes revisiting clear zone widths, shoulder treatments, and slope stability along the entire route. By doing so, the Township will demonstrate its ongoing commitment to both public safety and transparent, accountable governance.

Final Note:

We support balanced development and the responsible use of land. However, this by-law does not go far enough to protect the surrounding environment, water table, or local residents and road users from the consequences of industrial activity. Its vague wording, missing safeguards, and lack of clarity around critical infrastructure (e.g., protective membrane) must be addressed before approval.

We urge Council to delay final approval and revise this by-law to include enforceable environmental protections, transparency mechanisms, and ensure safe road design is executed.