



Town of East Gwillimbury

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT P2022-01

To: Council

Date: February 15, 2022

Subject: Draft Updated Official Plan and Notice of Public Open House

Origin: Development Services, Planning Branch

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **THAT** Development Services, Planning Branch Report P2022-01 dated February 15, 2022, entitled “Draft Updated Official Plan and Notice of Public Open House” be received; and
2. **THAT** the draft Updated Official Plan attached to this report be received by Council and used as the basis for ongoing public consultation, with a virtual public open house scheduled for March 3, 2022, and additional public engagement to follow prior to the finalized Updated Official Plan being brought back to Council for adoption.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Town’s draft Updated Official Plan. The draft Updated Official Plan has been informed by extensive public consultation to date and will be subject to further review through an upcoming virtual public open house as well as additional public engagement including a statutory public meeting. Modifications to the draft Updated Official Plan can be made based on the public input received prior to a finalized version being brought back to Council for adoption.

BACKGROUND

The draft York Region Official Plan has been prepared, which sets the policy framework for the Town’s local Official Plan

The draft York Region Official Plan (YROP) was presented publicly and received by Regional Council on November 25, 2021. The draft YROP incorporates the October 21, 2021, decision by Regional Council to approve a minimum of 70% of the East Gwillimbury Whitebelt as Urban Area. In line with this decision, the YROP provides

updated mapping, density targets, and population and employment distributions across the new community areas to 2051 for the Town's Updated Official Plan to implement. It is a requirement under Section 27 of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990, for the Town's Official Plan to conform to the Regional Official Plan, and the Town's Updated Official Plan will establish the policy direction for responsible, coordinated, and sustainable growth management and phasing across the new community areas in line with Regional policies and targets.

The YROP will be subject to public review and is anticipated to be sent to the province for approval by the Spring of 2022. Concurrently, the Town's draft Updated Official Plan will be finalized based on public input received and then adopted by Town Council and forwarded to the Region for review and approval over the course of 2022.

The Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement were also updated by the provincial government in 2020

The province's Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) were both updated in 2020 as part of the provincial government's More Homes, More Choice: Housing Supply Action Plan. The Town's Updated Official Plan is required to conform to the Growth Plan and be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan provides the framework for where and how the Greater Golden Horseshoe region will grow. Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan in 2020 introduced increased minimum population and employment forecasts for York Region, a new land needs assessment methodology focused on meeting localized market demands, and an increased planning horizon to 2051. A comprehensive summary of the 2020 updates to the Growth Plan was provided to Council on July 28, 2020, through report P2020-17.

The PPS is a consolidated statement on the provincial government's policies on land use planning. It sets the provincial policy direction for the efficient use of land, provision of housing, protection of the environment and resources, promotion of economic development, and more. The 2020 updates to the PPS focused on increasing housing supply and mix, and policies were updated to require municipalities to maintain an increased 15-year housing land supply and allow more housing through market-based suitability. A comprehensive summary of the province's updates to the PPS was provided to Council via memorandum dated May 5, 2020.

The Town's draft Updated Official Plan has been developed to conform to the updated Growth Plan and be consistent with the updated PPS, in both the planning for existing neighbourhoods as well as the planning for new community areas across the expanded urban boundary. The draft Updated Official Plan also continues to protect and

implement other provincial plans such as the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, with a priority of the Updated Official Plan being to encourage responsible, sustainable growth while ensuring the Town remains over 83% protected greenspace (note that this greenspace calculation was presented to Council previously through report P2021-30 dated November 2, 2021).

Overview of public consultation for the Town’s Official Plan Review thus far

The draft Updated Official Plan has been informed by extensive background reports, technical analysis, and public consultation. All background work and information related to the Official Plan Review is available online at www.eastwillimbury.ca/opreview, with a further overview of the meetings, consultation, and public engagement pursued as part of the Official Plan Review project to date also provided below:

Event	Outreach/Impact
Launch of Project Website and creation of Subscriber/Interested Party Mailing List (August 2020)	Over 70 emails subscribed thus far with frequent project updates sent. The project website is also continually updated.
Mayor and Councillor Interviews (September 11, 14 and 16, 2020)	Interview sessions held with Mayor and Councillors to discuss community interests, concerns and goals for the Official Plan Review.
Community Visioning Workshops (two virtual public sessions held on October 27, 2020)	Community Workshops were held to receive public input on the vision for the Official Plan Review and to provide the public with an opportunity to share initial comments and desired outcomes for the updated Official Plan. Attendance was as follows: 42 Attendees for Session 1 51 Attendees for Session 2

<p>Growth Management Council presentation (March 23, 2021)</p>	<p>Information presentation to Council regarding the Region’s MCR, urban expansion, and local phasing and responsible growth management policies.</p>
<p>Establishment of East Gwillimbury Whitebelt Landowners Group (April 2020)</p>	<p>Group is composed of approximately 50 organized landowners.</p>
<p>Discussion Papers Workshop and Special Meeting of Council (April 27, 2021)</p>	<p>Information presentation to Council and commenting opportunity regarding the Discussions Paper Themes and overall policy directions for the Official Plan Review.</p>
<p>Chat with a Planner Consultation (March and April 2021)</p>	<p>Direct outreach opportunity for members of the public to connect individually with planning staff and ask questions or provide comments on the Official Plan Review. 16 individual sessions held with members of the public to discuss the project, with each session lasting approximately 30 minutes.</p>
<p>Whitebelt Properties Mail Out (September 10, 2021)</p>	<p>49 letters sent to additional Whitebelt property owners informing them of the Region’s MCR process, proposed urban expansion, and Council endorsement for the remainder of the Whitebelt to become urban area. Information was also provided about the Official Plan Review process with notice of the project website provided and encouragement to have owners reach out to planning staff directly with any questions or comments. 7 call backs received, with the main question being about if becoming urban area impacts property taxes, which it does not.</p>

<p>Community Workshops on each Discussion Paper topic (June 2 and 3, 2021)</p>	<p>Virtual Public Workshops/breakout sessions held on each Official Plan Review Discussion Paper theme to receive public comments and answer any questions.</p> <p>Attendance was as follows:</p> <p>Agricultural and Rural Lands – 25 Complete Communities, Housing and Community Design – 29 Growth Management – 33 Sustainability and Climate Change – 24</p> <p>111 Attendees in total</p>
<p>Presentation of Finalized Discussion Papers and Land Needs Assessment (September 21, 2021)</p>	<p>Presentation made and Council received the Discussion Papers and Land Needs Assessment. The documents were then also posted publicly on the project website and the mailing list was notified. These documents were developed to inform the subsequent development of the draft Updated Official Plan.</p>
<p>Senior Management Team (SMT) review and comments (January 19 and 26, 2022)</p>	<p>Overview of draft Updated Official Plan provided to SMT and comments received by internal departments.</p>

In addition to the consultation outlined above, a virtual public open house is scheduled for this upcoming March 3, 2022, to have the public review the draft Updated Official Plan and provide comments. Further details about this virtual public open house are provided in the notice included as Appendix 1 to this report. Additionally, a growth management Council workshop will be held on April 12, 2022, and further public consultation including a future statutory public meeting will also be scheduled to receive feedback prior to Council’s adoption of the finalized Official Plan.

ANALYSIS

Overview of the draft Updated Official Plan and planning to 2051

The draft Updated Official Plan builds on the background work undertaken from the Discussion Papers and focuses on promoting complete communities and responsible growth, supporting job creation, providing diverse and attainable housing, ensuring high quality community design, and promoting environmental sustainability and protection of the Town's agriculture and rural lands.

In implementing the Region's approved Urban Area expansion, the draft Updated Official Plan provides clear phasing and growth management policies to direct growth in a sustainable, logical and cohesive manner. The draft Updated Official Plan will ensure that new community areas are developed as complete communities with access to local jobs, housing, services and amenities while also protecting and sympathetically integrating natural features, trails and open space. It is a priority of the draft Updated Official Plan to promote a cohesive municipal identity while also celebrating and promoting the uniqueness of our community areas. The draft Updated Official Plan also promotes sustainable infrastructure and fiscally responsible development across the new community areas.

The draft Updated Official Plan ensures conformity with recent updates to provincial plans like the Growth Plan as well as consistency with the updated Provincial Policy Statement, as mentioned previously. The draft Updated Official Plan implements the policy direction and forecasts of upper-tier plans and also maintains the policy protections for the Greenbelt, Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, and Oak Ridges Moraine.

The significant mapping updates are in regards to the expanded Urban Area and the designation of community and employment land across the Town's 70% Whitebelt that was approved to become urban, in line with the Region's Official Plan. The lands brought into the urban boundary will be subject to a future secondary plan and community design plan approvals as outlined by the draft Updated Official Plan to manage phasing, growth and infrastructure servicing in a sustainable manner.

The existing Natural Heritage System protections of the Official Plan are retained, and it is also a priority of the draft Updated Official Plan to ensure that the Town remains over 83% protected greenspace as growth occurs.

The majority of the existing land use designations are unchanged from the Town's current Official Plan, although the draft updated Official Plan introduces a new height maximum for the Village Core Area of 6 storeys (from 4 storeys) and also introduces a

Major Public Use designation to allow post-secondary or a major health care facility for the lands currently designated exclusively as Post-Secondary Institution in Queensville.

As a first draft, the draft Updated Official Plan as attached will be subject to further agency, advisory committee, and public review (open houses, workshops, and public meetings) with any necessary modifications to be made prior to the Updated Official Plan being brought back to Council for adoption.

Purpose of the Public Open House

A virtual public open house is scheduled for March 3, 2022, to receive public input on the Town's draft Updated Official Plan. Details for the public open house are provided as part of Appendix 1 to this report. The open house provides the public with an opportunity to hear information on the draft Updated Official Plan and discuss the content with representatives from the Town and the consulting team, The Planning Partnership. Section 17 and 26 of the Planning Act R.S.O., 1990 requires that at least one public open house be held to review the materials related to the revision or update of a municipal Official Plan.

Next steps and timing

Modifications to the draft Updated Official Plan can be made based on the input received from the public through the open house. Further, a growth management Council workshop will be held on April 12, 2022, and additional consultation including a future statutory public meeting will be scheduled to receive public feedback prior to Council's adoption of the finalized Official Plan.

Council's adoption of the finalized Updated Official Plan is anticipated in late Q2 of 2022 where it will then be forwarded to the Region for approval. The review process from the Region will occur through 2022 as their own Regional Official Plan becomes approved.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The reserved budget allocated for the Official Plan Review is \$600,000, funded through development charges and Community Capital Contributions. The project continues to remain on track with this allocated budget as it enters its final phase, this being the ongoing public consultation and future Council adoption and Regional approval.

The Updated Official Plan and growth forecasts are key to informing the Town's long term infrastructure planning and needs. The Updated Official Plan will inform the development of the Town's Master Plans, which will include costing details for growth related infrastructure projects. Growth related infrastructure investment is largely funded

through development charges and costing requirements will be included in a revised DC By-law to ensure that the Town can pay for the projected growth and mitigate risk by servicing development sequentially as growth occurs to 2051.

NEED FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Section 17 and 26 of the Planning Act R.S.O., 1990 requires that at least one public open house be held to review the materials related to the revision or update of a municipal Official Plan. A virtual public open house has been scheduled for March 3, 2022, with notification to be provided to the public over various mediums including social media, the project website and mailing list, and the local newspaper. Further details and notice of this open house are also provided as part of Appendix 1 to this report, with this open house being held virtually due to COVID-19.

Additional consultation will also be scheduled over the coming months to provide the public with further opportunity to review and comment on the draft Updated Official Plan. A growth management Council workshop will be held on April 12, 2022, and a future statutory public meeting will also be held later in 2022 to receive public feedback prior to Council's adoption of the finalized Official Plan.

This public engagement is also in addition to the non-statutory public consultation that has occurred throughout the duration of the Official Plan Review project, which was outlined previously in this report.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The recommendations of this report align with the following Strategic Priorities:



Responsible
Growth &
Environmental
Protection

Ensure that communities are built in a respectful manner, with resident and business quality of life protected



Build
Complete
Communities

Effectively manage new and existing assets to deliver exceptional services to residents while ensuring a sustainable community



Quality
Programs &
Services

Provide programs and services that are inclusive, affordable, and accessible to all residents



Culture of
Municipal
Excellence

Ensure strong fiscal responsibility and program delivery

Enhance Customer Service focused culture with increased engagement and communications

CONCLUSION

This report presents the Town's draft Updated Official Plan for Council and the public. The attached draft Updated Official Plan will be used as the basis for ongoing public consultation, which includes a virtual public open house scheduled for this upcoming March 3, 2022.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Notice of Virtual Public Open House for the Draft Updated Official Plan

Appendix 2 – Town of East Gwillimbury Draft Updated Official Plan

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