



**Council
Public Planning
Meeting Agenda**

**Tuesday, February 11, 2020
7 p.m.**

**Council Chambers
Aurora Town Hall**



**Town of Aurora
Council Public Planning
Meeting Agenda**

Tuesday, February 11, 2020
7 p.m., Council Chambers

- 1. Approval of the Agenda**
- 2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**
- 3. Planning Applications**

- 1. PDS20-014 – Town of Aurora Official Plan Review**

Recommended:

1. That Report No. PDS20-014 be received; and
2. That staff report back with an Official Plan Review workplan that incorporates the feedback received to date from public consultation; and
3. That the Town Clerk provide a copy of this report to The Regional Municipality of York, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Town of Newmarket, Township of King, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, and City of Richmond Hill, for information.

- 4. Confirming By-law**

Recommended:

That the following confirming by-law be enacted:

XXXX-20 Being a By-law to confirm actions by Council resulting from a Council Public Planning meeting on February 11, 2020.

5. Adjournment



**Town of Aurora
Public Planning Report**

No. PDS20-014

Subject: Town of Aurora Official Plan Review
Prepared by: Michael Logue, Senior Policy Planner, Growth Management
Department: Planning and Development Services
Date: February 11, 2020

Recommendations

- 1. That Report No. PDS20-014 be received;**
- 2. That Staff report back with an Official Plan Review workplan that incorporates the feedback received to date from public consultation; and,**
- 3. That the Town Clerk provide a copy of this report to the Regional Municipality of York, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Town of Newmarket, Township of King, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, and City of Richmond Hill, for information.**

Executive Summary

Staff are seeking feedback from the public at this Special Meeting on the proposed scope of the Official Plan Review, and the key issues that need to be addressed through the Study process. The Town of Aurora's Official Plan Review is a Provincially legislated Municipal Comprehensive Review conformity exercise and major undertaking.

- Aurora's Official Plan must conform with the Regional Official Plan, Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- A preliminary scan of the 2010 Official Plan has identified six thematic Focus Areas, to keep the Plan current, strategically relevant and in conformity;
- The study process is envisioned in five phases over a multi-year work program;
- Forecasted growth to include minimum intensification levels, and density targets for the Major Transit Station Area surrounding Aurora GO; and,
- Environmental policies and natural heritage mapping will need to be updated.

The preliminary work program described at a high level in this report, the scope of the Official Plan review, and the Public Engagement and Communications Strategy will be further refined in a subsequent report to Council.

Background

Aurora's upcoming Municipal Comprehensive Review and Official Plan Review was first introduced to Council in December 2019, through Report No. PDS19-098.

Aurora's Official Plan to be brought into conformity with Regional Official Plan & Provincial plans (Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine)

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

On May 2, 2019, the Province of Ontario (the "Province") released "More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan". The Action Plan included a series of initiatives intended to address housing supply in the Province, including a review of the PPS. On July 22, 2019, the Province released proposed changes to the PPS. The PPS provides direction on matters of provincial interest as it relates to land use planning. The most recent version of the PPS came into effect April 2014. The PPS is issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and all decisions of Council affecting land use planning matters shall be consistent with the PPS.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan provides a strategic framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the "GGH") region including:

- Setting intensification targets within built-up areas, minimum density targets within greenfield areas, and establishing Major Transit Station Areas as mixed-use mobility hubs. These and related policies direct municipalities to make more efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure to reduce sprawl. They promote a culture of conservation, compact built form, and better designed communities with an attractive and vibrant public realm; and,
- Building complete communities with a diverse range of housing options, public service facilities, recreation and green space that better connect transit to where people live and work.

The Growth Plan builds on the policy foundation provided by the PPS, and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The Town of Aurora Official Plan must conform to the Growth Plan. On May 16, 2019, the Province brought into effect A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden

Horseshoe, 2019 (the “Growth Plan (2019)”), for which all planning matters are required to conform. This new Growth Plan (2019) replaces the previous Growth Plan (2017).

The *Places to Grow Act, 2005* requires that Official Plans must be amended to conform to the Growth Plan by a specified time period. In 2017, the Minister of Municipal Affairs directed that by July 1, 2022 Official Plans be brought into conformity with the previous Growth Plan (2017). Despite the release of the new plan in May 2019, it is Staff’s understanding that the conformity deadline for the Official Plan remains July 1, 2022.

Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001 and the accompanying Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) (2017), is the policy framework for protecting and enhancing the Oak Ridges Moraine’s ecological and hydrological features and functions that support the health and well-being of the Region’s ecosystems and residents. Municipal planning decisions are required to conform to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, which prevails over Official Plans. Through the MCR process, the Town’s Official Plan will be reviewed to ensure conformity with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017).

York Region Official Plan

York Region is currently undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review (the “MCR”). A draft Regional Official Plan (the “ROP”) is not expected to be released until late 2020, and anticipated Council adoption in 2021. The Region’s work plan involves a number of thematic Focus Areas, which include:

- Intensification and Employment Strategies, including population and employment forecasts to 2041 and direction for Major Transit Station Areas and Strategic Growth Areas;
- Complete & Healthy Built Environment;
- Natural Heritage;
- Implementing the Agricultural System;
- A Housing Strategy;
- A Climate Change Action Plan;
- Indigenous Communities Consultation & Vision;
- Infrastructure Master Plans; and,
- A Fiscal Impact Analysis.

Staff have been actively engaged in the Regional conformity processes. Regional policy direction must be known and understood in advance of preparing the Town's policies and related mapping. Aurora's Official Plan will need to be brought into conformity with the ROP once the Province approves it.

Analysis

Section 26 of the Planning Act set out the requirements for updating an existing Official Plan

An Official Plan is a strategic document that guides land use and infrastructure planning for a municipality. Official Plans have legal status and derive their authority from the *Planning Act*. Official Plans contain goals and objectives of the community and establish policies to direct the form, extent, nature and rate of growth and change. Official Plans are typically written to guide municipal decisions for a certain planning horizon, e.g. to 2041.

Section 26 of the *Planning Act* sets out the requirements for updating an Official Plan. It identifies the basic scope of an Official Plan review:

- That it confirm with, or not conflict with, provincial plans;
- That it has regard for matters of provincial interest; and,
- That it be consistent with the PPS.

An OP update as per Section 26 of the *Planning Act* can be undertaken within five years, or ten years for a brand new Official Plan. One primary consideration in an Official Plan review is determining the scope of the review. The scope of the review of the Town's 2010 Official Plan must be carefully defined in order to identify the resources that will be required to undertake the review and analysis in a timely manner.

Special Meeting of Council & Open House Officially Kick Off OP Review

The purpose of the Special Meeting required by the *Planning Act*, is to determine the scope of the review. This report and open house serve as the Special Meeting, introducing the Official Plan Review and providing the community and stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on the focus areas identified. Notice of the Public Open House and public meeting was provided in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Crucial step is determining the scope of review of Town's existing Official Plan

It is important to recognize that this is a review of the Town's existing Official Plan to consider what policies are working, and what new policies are required to be added. The purpose of this review is not to create a new Official Plan from first principles, but to build open the OP's existing guiding principles which are still quite relevant in 2020.

Staff have undertaken an internal scan to understand the potential scope of the review of the 2010 Official Plan with the Town's Departments, residents, business owners, and York Region. Staff will continue to engage other commenting partners, such as public agencies, advisory committees and conservation authorities to seek feedback.

A Technical Steering Committee (TSC) comprising of staff from the Town's Departments and York Region has been established and will act as a resource for the Study Project Team on key issues and provide input at various stages during the review. A community-based steering committee, comprised of residents, stakeholders and Councillors, is proposed to be formed at the outset of the review.

Once the scope of the Official Plan Review has been clearly determined, Staff will report back to Council on the issues to be addressed as part of the review. This will include whether a comprehensive review of the 2010 Official Plan is necessary to fully conform to Provincial Policy and the Region of York Official Plan, or if the review will require more of a scoped approach targeting specific issues.

The Study process is envisioned in five phases with six strategic Focus Areas

The draft work program for the MCR and Official Plan Review envisions the Study process being conducted over five phases (see figure in Attachment 1):

- Background Review;
- Growth Analysis;
- Complete, Vibrant and Healthy Communities;
- Infrastructure & Movement; and,
- Synthesis & Implementation.

Each phase of the Study process will be iterative, and include a process of generating, testing and confirming ideas, concluding with a discussion paper synthesizing the policy recommendations. Six strategic Focus Areas of study are proposed (see figure in Attachment 2):

- Employment Strategy;
- Growth Management Strategy;
- Neighbourhood, Complete Community & Housing;
- Environment & Climate Strategy;
- Urban Design, Greening & Heritage; and,
- Infrastructure & Movement.

The Study will be complemented by a series of consultation events, which are described in the Public Consultation section below.

Municipal Comprehensive Review Requirements

Major Growth Plan (2019) policy matters required to be addressed through the conformity exercise, which will form part of the Official Plan Review include:

- Managing forecasted growth through intensification;
- Protecting Employment lands; and,
- Developing environmental policies and updating natural heritage mapping.

The MCR requirements are further described in the following paragraphs. A future report will outline a detailed work program and associated timing to achieve conformity with the Growth Plan (2019) in the context of the York Region's MCR and reporting timelines.

Managing forecasted growth through intensification

The Growth Plan (2019) sets out the requirement for municipalities to develop an intensification strategy to achieve minimum intensification targets. Single and upper tier intensification targets are set out in the Growth Plan (2019), and in Aurora's case will be determined through York Region's MCR.

York Region is determining the distribution of revised Growth Plan growth forecasts, and intensification targets, to each local municipality based on a 2041 planning horizon. The growth forecast for Aurora will inform the Town's MCR and Growth Strategy. A draft growth forecast from York Region is expected to be released by March 2020.

Intensification and Density Targets for York Region set out in the Growth Plan (2019); Aurora's to be determined through the Region's MCR.

The Built-Up Area, as delineated by the Province's Built Boundary (unchanged from its delineation in the current Official Plan's Schedule A), identifies the area within which the minimum intensification targets will apply. The Growth Plan (2019) encourages intensification generally throughout the delineated built-up area.

The Growth Plan (2019) also sets out minimum density targets for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs). Formerly known as mobility hubs, MTSAs are the lands around transit stations generally defined as the areas within an approximate 500-800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk. Through the MCR, the Region is required to delineate the boundaries of each MTSA and to demonstrate that each MTSA is planned to meet the prescribed minimum density targets (200 residents and jobs per hectare for subways; 160 residents and jobs per hectare for light rail transit; and 150 residents and jobs per hectare for GO Transit rail).

The Growth Plan (2019) also allows for identifying strategic growth areas. Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) are to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form, similar to an MTSA but not necessarily surrounding a major transit station. The MCR may identify major opportunities for infill, lands along major roads or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit, as potential SGAs.

As part of the York Region's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review, Town Staff have been working with the Region to delineate Aurora's only MTSA, surrounding the GO train station. Within Aurora's policy context, the Aurora Promenade is serving as the starting point for the MTSA, and also meets the criteria to be considered as an SGA (Yonge Street corridor). Staff will continue to engage the Region in its MCR process.

As per Council's resolution of October 22, 2019, the Official Plan Review will consider establishing a policy framework for a Community Planning Permit system for the Aurora Promenade.

Planning for Employment Lands to include job density targets

The Growth Plan (2019) requires municipalities to plan for all Employment Areas by regulating permitted land uses and establishing minimum density targets. The Growth Plan (2019) requires that municipalities will prohibit certain land uses (residential and

other sensitive land uses) within lands designated as Employment Areas. The Growth Plan (2019) also requires municipalities to either prohibit major retail uses or to establish size or scale thresholds for these uses.

Mandated minimum density targets for Employment Areas will be measured in jobs per hectare, and reflect the current and anticipated type and scale of employment for specific Employment Areas. A future report on the Official Plan work will detail the analysis needed to achieve conformity in this focus area.

Environmental policies and natural heritage mapping to be updated

The Growth Plan (2019) requires municipalities to develop conservation policies in their Official Plan related to: water, energy, air quality improvement, integrated waste management, and stormwater master plans. The Growth Plan (2019) also requires that municipalities develop Official Plan policies that will address greenhouse gas emissions and climate change that are aligned with other provincial plans and policies. Based on consultation with Town departments, agencies, and the Region, the staff report on the work program will identify any technical studies required to achieve conformity.

Public consultation for Official Plan Review will be guided by a Public Engagement and Communications Strategy

The five year review to consider any updates to the Official Plan is a statutory requirement of the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* sets out the minimum requirements for public consultation in undertaking the review. Meeting the legislation will require substantial time and resources. The Town is planning to go beyond the minimum requirements based on best practices for Official Plan reviews, and have developed a preliminary Public Engagement and Communications Strategy. Staff are in the process of retaining a public engagement consultant to assist the Town in undertaking public consultation.

The strategy developed by Planning staff and Corporate Communications will provide a consistent approach and serve as the framework for public engagement, ensuring members of Council, key stakeholders and residents are engaged during all phases of the study process.

Next Steps

Planning Staff will prepare a future report that advises on the scope and work program for the Official Plan Review. While the Focus Areas identified in this report will continue to form the basis of the overall work program and the consultation strategy, the report will present the results of the external scan of the community, including public agencies and partners that have been consulted to date, and any refinements to the Focus Areas.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable.

Legal Considerations

The legal considerations are throughout the report.

Financial Implications

Council has approved a capital budget of \$300,000 for the Official Plan Review in 2016. A capital budget request has been made for 2021 and there is the potential for additional capital budget requests for future years, dependent on the scope and other timing considerations to be determined in the detailed work plan.

Communications Considerations

Based on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum and the Town of Aurora Community Engagement Framework, the Town of Aurora will utilize the 'Involve' level of engagement (the third, or middle level of five).

As mentioned in this report, the Town intends to go above and beyond minimum standards for engaging the public in the Official Plan Review. Staff, in partnership with the project's engagement consultants, will involve the public and work directly within them throughout the process to ensure that public concerns are consistently understood and considered. We will work to ensure community concerns are reflected in recommendations and alternatives and it is anticipated that public feedback will be a factor in decision-making processes.

Throughout the review process a number of online and offline engagement activities will be used, including public meetings, online consultations, surveys and interactive

educational activities. To date, feedback has already been sought via online survey and through Planner Pop-up events throughout Town. A comprehensive webpage has already been completed to ensure residents are kept informed of activities and opportunities to provide feedback.

Once the public engagement consultant is engaged, a comprehensive plan of engagement activities will be developed and shared with Council and the public.

Link to Strategic Plan

The Municipal Comprehensive Review and review of the Official Plan supports the Strategic Plan goal of: Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all, via the objective of Strengthening the fabric of our community, specifically through the action item: Prepare and update the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. That Council provide direction.

Conclusions

The Provincially legislated MCR conformity exercise, together with the review of the Town's Official Plan, represents a major undertaking that will result in a multi-year work program. In undertaking a preliminary scan of the 2010 Official Plan, Staff have identified a number of thematic Focus Areas that need to be addressed in order to keep the document current, strategically relevant and in conformity with Provincial and Regional Plans.

The work program presented at a high level in this report, will be described in greater detail in a future report to Council. The Public Engagement and Communications Strategy will also be refined and presented to a future Council meeting.

Staff are seeking feedback from the public at this Special Meeting on the proposed scope of the Official Plan Review and key issues to be addressed through the Study process. The scope of the review will be confirmed following the Special Meeting.

February 11, 2020

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Report No. PDS20-014

Attachments

Attachment 1: Town of Aurora MCR & OPR Process

Attachment 2: Town of Aurora MCR & OPR Focus Areas

Previous Reports

General Committee Report No. PDS19-198, dated December 3, 2019

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team Meeting review on January 23, 2020.

Departmental Approval

Approved for Agenda



**David Waters, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Director
Planning and Development Services**

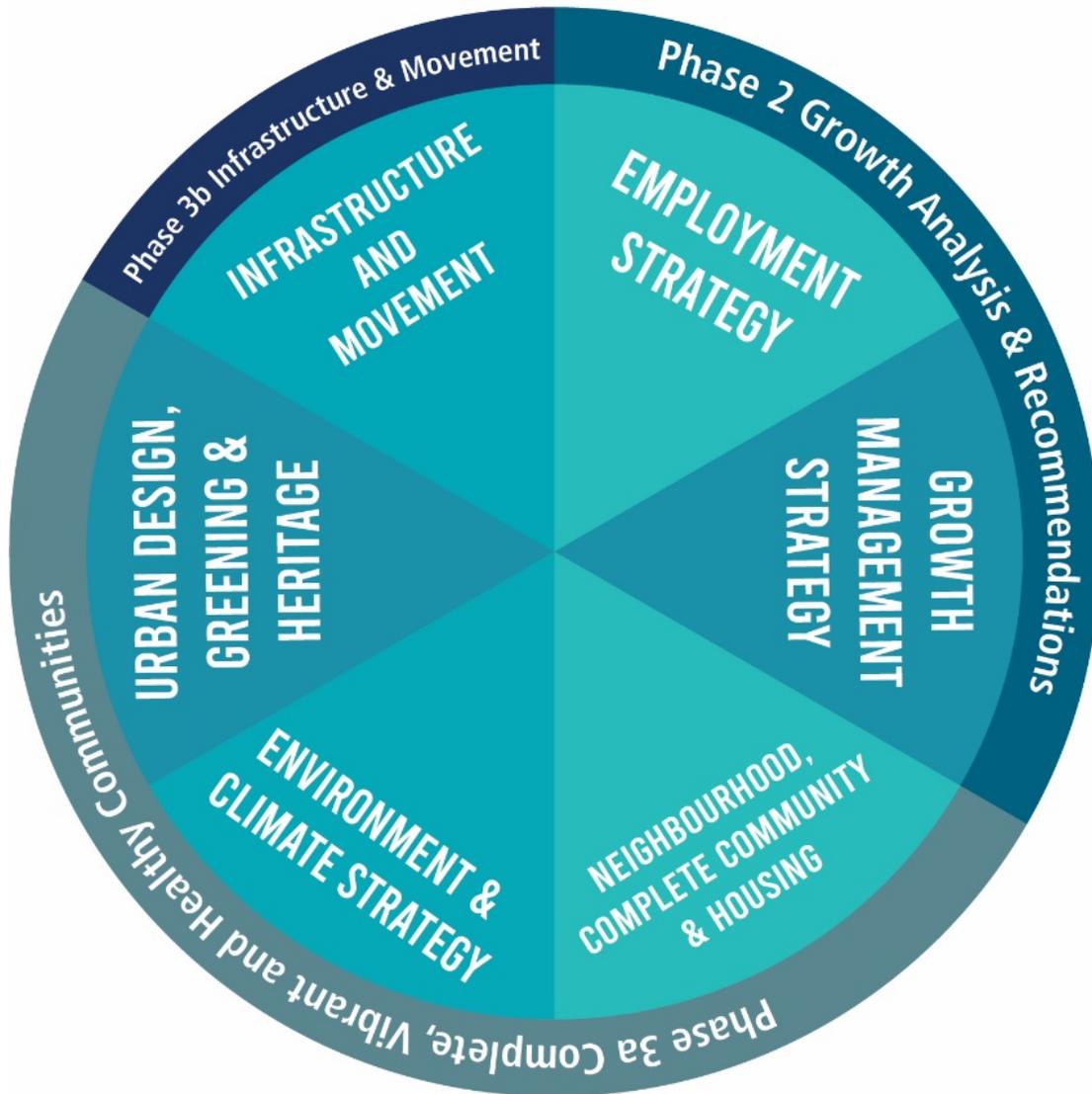


for **Doug Nadorozny
Chief Administrative Officer**

Attachment 1: Town of Aurora MCR & OPR Process



Attachment 2: Town of Aurora MCR & OPR Focus Areas



The Corporation of The Town of Aurora

By-law Number XXXX-20

**Being a By-law to confirm actions by Council
resulting from a Council Public Planning meeting
on February 11, 2020.**

The Council of the Corporation of The Town of Aurora hereby enacts as follows:

1. That the actions by Council at its Council Public Planning meeting held on February 11, 2020, in respect of each motion, resolution and other action passed and taken by the Council at the said meeting is hereby adopted, ratified and confirmed.
2. That the Mayor and the proper officers of the Town are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action or to obtain approvals where required and to execute all documents as may be necessary in that behalf and the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to affix the corporate seal to all such documents.

Enacted by Town of Aurora Council this 11th day of February, 2020.

Harold Kim, Deputy Mayor

Samantha Yew, Deputy Town Clerk