



100 John West Way
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 6J1
(905) 727-3123
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora

Public Planning Report

No. PDS23-041

Subject: Official Plan Review Second DRAFT

Prepared by: Edward Terry, Senior Policy Planner, MCIP, RPP

Department: Planning and Development Services

Date: April 17, 2023

Recommendation

1. That Report No. PDS23-041 be received; and
2. That comments presented at the Public Meeting be addressed by Planning and Development Services for consideration in the FINAL DRAFT Official Plan and in a report to a future General Committee meeting.

Executive Summary

- After extensive consultation the Project Team has prepared a Second Draft of the Official Plan for Public comment.
- The Second Draft of the Official Plan consists of several revisions made based on feedback received on the first draft released in June 2022.
- Staff and the Project Team have been working collaboratively with York Region Staff throughout the OPR process.

Background

After extensive consultation the Project Team has prepared a Second Draft of the Official Plan for Public comment (see Attachment 1).

Aurora's Official Plan Review was first presented to Council in December 2019, through Report No. PDS19-098 seeking direction to hold a public meeting prior to officially launching the review in accordance with the Planning Act.

On June 21, 2022, Staff presented the first Draft of the Official Plan Amendment to General Committee. After the meeting the DRAFT was formally released for public review and comment.

Over the duration of the OP Review consultation has included:

- 3381 Aware visitors on the public engagement website
- 700 Downloads of the Draft Official Plan
- 58 respondents to the Vision Survey
- 13 Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups
- 7 Public Open House Meetings

Analysis

The Second Draft of the Official Plan consists of several revisions made based on feedback receive on the first draft released in June 2022.

Here is a summary of revisions to the Second DRAFT of the OPA:

Town Structure and Growth Management

- Language added to better connect the Official Plan to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.
- Clarification on growth directed to Regional Corridors (in addition to the Aurora Promenade, the MTSA and Local Corridors).
- 2021 population and employment numbers.
- Improved description of residential neighbourhood edges.
- Defined Urban Boundary and MTSA boundaries.
- Refined limits of Promenade and MTSA Secondary Plan, Residential Designated Growth Areas, Employment Area.

Land Use Designations and Plan

- Streetscape elements are to align with York Region's Streetscape Design Standards (OPA Section 5.3).
- Town's Zoning By-law will set out specific setback requirements for drive-through facilities (OPA Section 5.4).
- Climate change mitigation and net-zero emissions objectives to be implemented through development applications and infrastructure projects (OPA Section 6).

- Policies to enforce the Town's Fill By-law to regulate excess soil and site grading, as well as the requirement of Noise Attenuation Studies for all residential development applications along Regional and Local Corridors (OPA Section 6.8 and 6.9).
- Clarified language for the permission for two secondary residential dwelling units permitted per lot (OPA Section 7.4.3).

Affordable Housing

- An objective of the Town is to ensure a broad range of housing sizes, densities, designs, tenures, and prices are available to meet the needs of current and future residents (OPA Section 7.1).
- Prioritize the provision of affordable housing and family-sized residential dwelling units within the Town's Strategic Growth Areas (OPA Section 7.2).
- Minimum of 35% of all new residential development within the Aurora GO Station Major Transit Station Area and 25% of all new residential development in the rest of the Town should meet the definition of affordable housing (OPA Section 7.3).
- A variety of policies that promote the achievement of housing that is affordable for low and moderate income households in partnership with York Region and the development community.
- Updated Secondary Residential Dwelling Units policies (OPA Section 7.4).
- New denser housing forms proposed on the edges of Stable Neighbourhoods along Arterial and Collector Roads, such development shall provide a transition in heights and densities to lots in the interior of stable neighbourhoods, through the appropriate measures (OPA Section 7.5).
- Updating the definitions of affordable housing (OPA Section 19).

Cultural Heritage

The schedule has been updated to reflect the removal of potential Cultural Heritage Landscapes. There is still an opportunity to study areas in the Town for future Cultural Heritage Landscapes.

Environmental Designations

- Updated policy to encourage the protection, creation and restoration of wetlands.
- Added Natural Core Area, Natural Linkage Area, and Countryside Area from Oak Ridges Moraine Plan and the Town's OPA 48 designations and policies.
- Environmental Protection designation has been refined to better reflect boundaries of features and lots on both Schedule B and Schedule F.

Site Specific Policy Areas

Schedule H has been updated to include the clearer placement of labels to ensure that the areas subject to site specific policies are visible.

Aurora Promenade and MTSA Building Heights

- Lands within the MTSA boundary, east of the tracks, are now permitted up to 7 storeys, with the main area of change being the northern part of the MTSA area.
- The south end of the MTSA, south of Kennedy, has been changed from 7 storeys to 6 storeys.
- The property on Golf Links Drive, west of Yonge Street, has been included and identified as having a max height of 7 storeys (based on a previous settlement).

York Region Comments

Staff and the Project Team have been working collaboratively with York Region Staff throughout the OPR process:

- Consistency with the Regional Official Plan including the Regional Structure and Strategic Growth Area hierarchy
- Sustainable and climate sensitive design
- Sensitive land uses and nuisance mitigation
- Infrastructure in accordance with existing and future Regional servicing
- Schedule updates – consistency and wording

Public Comments

Planning Staff have received comments from the public on the proposed DRAFT. Comments provided to Staff are attached to this report (Attachment 3). Below is a summary of all written and verbal comments received at the time of writing this report:

- Site-specific developments and redesignations
- Intensification and affordable housing
- Transit-supportive development within the Aurora MTSA
- Natural Heritage policies and mapping
- Cultural Heritage Landscape mapping and removals
- OPA 48 and Oak Ridges Moraine policies

Response to Comments

Where appropriate comments have been addressed in the Second DRAFT.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable.

Legal Considerations

The Town held the requisite statutory special meeting of Council in February 2020 to discuss the revisions that may be required to the Official Plan. Further non statutory public meetings have been held at the request of Council. Council is required to have regard to any written submissions received as to what revisions may be required to the Official Plan.

Financial Implications

To date Council has approved a total of \$647,700 in support of the Town's Official Plan Review, including the Aurora Promenade and MTSA consultation components. The final scope of this project will continue to be monitored as it progresses.

Upon its completion the updated Official Plan will become a key reference document that will continue to inform the Town's long-term capital planning.

Communications Considerations

The Town will engage the public broadly in the Official Plan Review. Staff, in partnership with the project's engagement consultants, will involve the public and work directly with them throughout the process to ensure that public concerns are consistently understood and considered.

The Town will work to ensure community concerns are reflected in recommendations and alternatives public feedback will be considered as part of the decision-making processes. The Town will also make sure to close the feedback loop with citizens to share feedback received, and action taken as a result of the feedback.

Notice was provided for this meeting emailing identified interested parties, posting an ad in the local paper, advertising on local mobile signs and via social media.

Climate Change Considerations

The recommendations from this report will increase the Town's ability to adapt to a changing climate by exploring new policy directions that promotes intensification of the Promenade and encourages the protection of the Natural Environment and reduces green house gases.

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 has resulted in a multi-year work program scheduled to tentatively conclude this year with the adoption of an updated Official Plan and Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan.

Staff are seeking Council direction to proceed with the preparation of the Final Draft Official Plan Amendment that will be presented to a future Council meeting.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – DRAFT Official Plan Amendment

Attachment 2 – DRAFT Official Plan Amendment Schedules

Attachment 3 – Public Comments

Previous Reports

General Committee Report No. PDS19-198, dated December 3, 2019
General Committee Report No. PDS20-014, dated February 11, 2020
Public Planning Report No. PDS20-077, dated December 8, 2020
Public Planning Report No. PDS21-034, dated May 11, 2021
General Committee Report No. PDS22-001, dated January 11, 2022
General Committee Report No. PDS22-102, dated June 21, 2022

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on April 4, 2023.

Approvals

Approved by Marco Ramunno, Director, Planning and Development Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer