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Town of Aurora

## Committee of the Whole Report

No. PDS25-117

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**Subject:** Application for Zoning By-law Amendment  
Town of Aurora  
115 George Street  
Part of Lots 1 and 2, Registered Plan 38  
File Number: ZBA-2024-07

**Prepared by:** Peter Fan, Planner

**Department:** Planning and Development Services

**Date:** December 2, 2025

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### Recommendation

1. That Report No. PDS25-117 be received; and
2. That Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZBA-2024-07 be approved to rezone the subject lands from "Institutional (I) Zone" and "Environmental Protection Zone" to "Detached Third Density Residential (R3) Exception Zone (578)," and "Public Open Space (O1) Zone", and maintain the existing Environmental Protection Zone boundaries; and
3. That the implementing By-law for the Zoning By-law Amendment be brought forward to a future Council meeting for enactment.

### Executive Summary

This report seeks Council's approval for a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) at 115 George Street (Figure 1). The application proposes to rezone the former George Street Public School property to accommodate residential and public recreational uses. The Town is proposing 7 detached residential lots with approximately 18.3 metres of frontage for each lot along George Street. The rezoning will also create 0.75 hectare of new public park, which may include multi-sport courts, a playground, open space, and trail connections to the existing Tannery Creek corridor and Lions Park. The existing

Environmental Protection (EP) Zone boundary will be maintained, ensuring the continued protection of the floodplain and natural features.

- The proposed ZBA seeks to rezone the subject property to “Detached Third Density Residential (R3) Exception Zone (578)”, “Public Open Space (O1) Zone” and keep the existing “Environmental Protection (EP) Zone” unchanged.
- The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment complies with the Provincial planning policies.
- The proposed application follows the Official Plan guidance by providing infill housing opportunities with existing infrastructure ready while creating new public parkland.

## **Background**

### **Location / Land Use**

The subject property is municipally known as 115 George Street and formerly contained the George Street Public School. The School Board closed the school in 2015, and Council made the decision to acquire it in 2024. The property is located on the east side of George Street, just northeast of the Kennedy Street West and George Street intersection (Figure 1). The property has an area of 1.61 hectares (4.0 acres) and contains 134.27 metres (440 feet) of frontage along George Street. In October 2025, the former George Street Public School demolition was completed by the Town Operations Division.

### **Surrounding Land Uses**

The surrounding land uses are as follows:

North: Single detached dwellings, Medium density residential (Charleville - SP-2022-03 - Approved for 70 Townhouses)

South: Single detached dwellings

East: Lions Park and Tannery Creek

West: Single detached dwellings

## **Policy Context**

### **Provincial Policies**

All Planning Act applications are subject to provincial policy direction under the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS). The PPS provides comprehensive policy direction on matters of provincial interest, supporting the development of strong, complete communities through the efficient use of land and infrastructure, promotion of housing supply and choice, and integration of land use with transportation and public service facilities.

The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP) is a provincial document and continues to apply policies which addresses aquatic life, water quality, water quantity, shorelines and natural heritage, other threats and activities (including invasive species, climate change and recreational activities) and implementation. The subject lands are not within the Regulated Area by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA).

### **Town of Aurora Official Plan 2024**

The subject property is designated Community Services and Facilities and Environmental Protection within the Town of Aurora Official Plan (Figure 2). The Community Services and Facilities designation is to facilitate the development of additional facilities to support the local community. Section 10.2.2 (d) of the Town's Official Plan states, if a building and/or property within the Community Services and Facilities designation is deemed to be surplus by the owner of the building, residential uses may be permitted without amendment to the Official Plan. Site specific development standards will be address through a Zoning By-law Amendment application.

The "Environmental Protection" designation is designed to identify, protect and enhance the natural features and functions that will form a strong and permanent Greenlands System. To reflect the floodplain limits on the subject property, the easternly portion of the subject property is designated as Environmental Protection.

### **Zoning By-law 6000-17, as amended**

As shown on Figure 3, the subject property is currently zoned "Institutional (I) Zone" and "Environmental Protection (EP) Zone" within the Town's Zoning By-law 6000-17, as amended. The Institutional zone permits for broad range of community service uses including social, cultural, educational, public recreational, governmental, health, counseling, welfare, emergency services and utility services. The Environmental Protection zone permits for a range of agricultural uses, conservation uses, public parks and private parks. A small portion of the property is within the EP zone boundary which will remain unchanged as part of this proposed application.

## **Proposed Application**

### **Proposed Zoning By-law Amendment**

The proposed ZBA seeks to rezone the subject property to “Detached Third Density Residential (R3) Exception Zone (578)”, “Public Open Space (O1) Zone” and keep the existing “Environmental Protection (EP) Zone” unchanged.

As shown in Figure 4, the proposed rezoning application will replace the existing zoning on the subject property with a new site specific Detached Third Density Residential (R3) Exception Zone (578), Public Open Space (O1) Zone and keep the existing Environmental Protection (EP) zone unchanged.

The new site specific R3(578) will permit the following:

- Increase the minimum lot area from 460 m<sup>2</sup> to 1170 m<sup>2</sup>;
- Increase the minimum front yard setback from 6.0 m to 9.0 m;
- Increase the maximum lot coverage from 35% to 40%;
- Increase the maximum building height from 10 m to 11m; and
- Establish a consistent 1.2 m minimum interior side yard setback for all dwellings, regardless of height.

### **Proposed Conceptual Site Plan**

As illustrated on Figure 5, a conceptual site plan has been prepared by staff to demonstrate the potential development layout for the subject property. The conceptual site plan illustrates 7 residential lots each with 18.32m of frontage on George Street. The proposed residential lots have a lot depth approximately 65.8m. The proposed residential lots will back onto the proposed Open Space area, which will serve as a public park. The proposed public park will have access off George Street through a 6m wide access. This access will be a shared between pedestrians and Town servicing/maintenance vehicles. No public vehicular access will be permitted as there will be no parking lot in the park. Additionally, the pedestrian access to the park from Reuben Street will be maintained.

The Town of Aurora’s Parks Division will also host a future Public Information Centre (PIC) to continue their community engagement efforts. Prior to the park design being finalized, members of the public will have an opportunity to provide ideas and feedback for the Town to consider.

## **Analysis**

### **Planning Considerations**

**The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment complies with the Provincial planning policies.**

#### **Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024**

The PPS 2024 directs municipalities to promote gentle intensification and optimize existing services. The subject lands have access to municipal services located within the Town's built-up area and is surrounded by established low-density residential uses. While the proposed dwellings are anticipated to be market based, the creation of additional supply within an existing neighbourhood contributes to overall housing availability.

From an environmental perspective, the PPS promotes the protection of natural heritage features and the efficient use of municipal infrastructure. The application maintains the existing Environmental Protection (EP) Zone associated with Tannery Creek and introduces a new Public Open Space (O1) Zone. These designations ensure that the ecological function of the floodplain area remains protected and that residents gain access to public recreation space. Staff find the proposal fully consistent with the PPS direction to integrate environmental protection, housing, and land-use efficiency within settlement areas.

#### **Conformity to the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP)**

The LSPP provides protections to key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features on properties within the Lake Simcoe watershed. The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) has reviewed and has no objection to the approval of the subject applications as presented. The subject property is free from any natural hazards and are outside of hazardous lands; thus, consistent with section 5.2 of the PPS. The subject property is located outside of the LSRCA regulated limits and accordingly no Regulation Permit is required. It is Planning Staff's opinion that the proposed development conforms to the LSPP.

#### **Conformity with the Town of Aurora Official Plan**

**The proposed application follows the Official Plan guidance by providing infill housing opportunities with existing infrastructure ready while creating new public parkland.**

The subject site is designated Community Services and Facilities and Environmental Protection. Section 10.2.2(d) explicitly permits the redevelopment of surplus

institutional lands for residential purposes through a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment. The proposed (R3) Exception Zone (578) and (O1) zones implement this policy direction by converting a vacant institutional parcel into a compatible residential extension of the surrounding neighbourhood and creating a new public open-space block. The proposed zoning maintains appropriate density, setbacks, and lot dimensions reflective of the existing built form on George Street.

Section 3.0 of the Official Plan outlines the Town's overarching goals for complete and sustainable communities. The proposal satisfies these objectives by providing infill housing opportunities that make efficient use of existing infrastructure; contributing to housing choice within a mature neighbourhood; enhancing the public realm through new parkland; and protecting significant environmental areas through retention of the Environmental Protection (EP) Zone.

The proposed residential lots have been evaluated in the context of the Town's Official Plan policies for infill and established neighbourhoods. The proposed lot pattern, frontage, and building envelopes reflect the existing rhythm of dwellings along George Street and maintain the prevailing pattern of lot widths and depths, consistent with Sections 3.0 and 8.2 of the Official Plan, which encourage compatible infill within established residential areas.

The increased 9.0-metre front yard setback and the proposed 1.2 metre interior side yards aligns with average setback of adjacent dwellings and reinforces the streetscape of the corridor. Adequate separation for privacy, access, sufficient spacing for sunlight and maintenance between dwellings is also maintained.

The proposed 40% lot coverage and 11.0-metre height limit maintain a low rise-built form that is compatible with the established built form. Collectively, these standards reflect the existing character of the neighbourhood and uphold the intent of the Official Plan policies for compatible infill.

### **Conformity to the Town's Zoning By-law 6000-17, as amended**

The Detached Third Density Residential (R3) Zone is intended to accommodate detached dwellings on medium-sized urban lots located within established neighbourhoods. The proposed (R3) Exception Zone (578) modifies several performance standards specifically the minimum lot area, minimum front-yard setback, maximum lot coverage, and maximum building height to achieve a compatible built form that reflects the existing lot fabric and architectural rhythm along George Street.

The following chart considers each standard in relation to the general intent and purpose of the parent By-law.

	Parent R3 Zone Requirement	R3(578) Zone Requirement
Permitted Uses	1. Dwelling, Detached 2. Dwelling, Second Suite 3. Home Occupation	1. Dwelling, Detached 2. Dwelling, Second Suite 3. Home Occupation
Lot Area (minimum)	460 m <sup>2</sup>	1170 m <sup>2*</sup>
Lot Frontage (minimum)	15 m	18 m
Front Yard (minimum)	6.0 m	9.0 m*
Rear Yard (minimum)	7.5 m	7.5 m
Exterior Side Yard (minimum)	6.0 m	6.0 m
Interior Side Yard (minimum)	1.2 m (for one storey buildings) 1.5 m (for buildings greater than one storey)	1.2 m*
Lot Coverage (maximum)	35%	40%*
Height (maximum)	10 m	11 m*
Parking (minimum)	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit

*Note: Final zoning performance standards will be evaluated by Staff in detail prior to the implementing Zoning By-law Amendment being brought forward to Council for enactment.*

### Proposed Lot Area:

The parent (R3) Zone requires a minimum lot area of 460 m<sup>2</sup>. The proposed amendment establishes a minimum lot area of 1,170 m<sup>2</sup>, which is more than double the parent standard. The increase in lot size is deliberate and reflects a sensitive approach to infill development within an established neighbourhood. The proposed larger parcels mirror

the typical lot pattern of adjacent residential properties, most of which range between 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> and 1,200 m<sup>2</sup>. Maintaining this pattern helps ensure that the new dwellings will appear as a seamless continuation of the existing neighbourhood rather than as an intensification out of character with their surroundings. It is staff's opinion; the proposed lot area standard will enhance the residential neighbourhood by ensuring that redevelopment proceeds in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding built form.

**Front Yard and Interior Side Yard Setback:**

The parent (R3) Zone prescribes a minimum front-yard setback of 6.0 metres, while the proposed amendment introduces a deeper 9.0-metre minimum setback. The increased setback aligns closely with the prevailing pattern along George Street, where dwellings typically sit between 8 and 10 metres from the street line to form a cohesive streetscape. The additional setback will also allow for more substantial soft landscaping in the front yards, including the opportunity for mature tree planting, which will help integrate the new homes visually with the established streetscape. Furthermore, it will allow adequate space for driveways and snow storage. Lastly, the deeper setback will minimize the perception of building height. Staff are satisfied that the proposed provision delivers a high-quality interface between private and public space.

**Lot coverage:**

Although the proposed lot coverage represents a 5% increase, the generous lot areas mitigate any potential impact. On a 1,170 m<sup>2</sup>, a 40% coverage translates to a maximum building footprint of approximately 468 m<sup>2</sup>, leaving more than 700 m<sup>2</sup> for landscaping and open space. Even with the adjustment, the ratio of building area to lot size remains lower than that typically found on standard (R3) lots. The proposed dwellings will therefore appear appropriately scaled to their sites and will not create the impression of overdevelopment. More importantly, the increase does not compromise functional requirements such as on-site drainage or infiltration capacity. Engineering and Operational Services staff have confirmed that the lots are large enough to manage grading and stormwater within their boundaries. It is Staff's opinion that the proposed provision supports a functional development.

**Proposed Height:**

The parent (R3) Zone establishes a maximum building height of 10.0 metres. The proposed amendment increases the building height to 11.0 metres. The building height provision is used to maintain a consistent scale of development, limit shadowing and



overlook, and preserve the low-rise character of residential neighbourhoods. A review of surrounding properties reveals that several newer two-storey homes already approach or exceed 10.5 metres in height. The proposed 11.0 metre limit therefore reflects the prevailing-built form rather than setting a new standard. It is Staff's opinion; the proposed height provision enables high-quality architectural outcomes without adverse impacts to adjacent dwellings.

### Department / Agency Comments

**No objections from external agencies and Town departments.**

Department/Agency	Comments
Building Division	No objections.
Engineering Division	No objections.
Operational Services (Parks)	No objections.
Operational Services (Public Works)	No objections.
Transportation/Traffic	No objections.
York Region	No objections.
LSRCA	No objections.

### Public Comments

The following section summarizes comments received from the public during the commenting period of the proposed application.

- **Does the new plan include access to the public open space from George Street?**  
The Town is proposing a 6 metres wide walkway to the public open space located on the north end.
- **Will the development need to remove the large mature trees that are currently at the North and South end of the property**  
Tree preservation and replacement will be addressed through the Parks Division approvals. No trees are proposed to be removed at this stage.
- **Are the land currently zoned as EP being reduced?**

No, the extent of the existing Environmental Protection zone boundary remains unchanged.

- **How many lots are being proposed?**

Seven (7) lots are being proposed; each with approximately 18.3m lot frontage.

- **Lots in this community are generally larger. Why have we settled for 7 lots?**

The lotting pattern reflects existing lot widths and depths and provides a compatible transition to adjacent homes.

- **How will the lots be sold?**

Through Council's surplus land disposition process. This will be a public process and open to all members of public.

- **Will the street be widened as a result of the development?**

No, the road will remain in its current configuration. However, the sidewalk in front of the property will be adjusted to be in-line with existing sidewalks.

## **Advisory Committee Review**

N/A

## **Legal Considerations**

The Town, as owner of the property, is considered the applicant for the purposes of this rezoning application and is required to follow the steps within the *Planning Act* to rezone the property, which includes bringing this report to the Committee of the Whole.

Section 34(12) of the *Planning Act* states that prior to passing any zoning by-law (or amendments thereto), a public information meeting must be held. As outlined in this report, the statutory public meeting has been held. Once the zoning by-law amendment has been passed by Council, staff will provide the requisite notice to any person and public body that filed a written request to be notified. The Minister and anyone who made oral submissions at the public meeting or written submissions to Council will then have the opportunity to appeal the zoning by-law amendment.

When the property is to be sold, Council will have to follow the process to declare the lands surplus. A future report and by-law will be required in this regard.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

## **Communications Considerations**

A Notice of Public Planning Meeting was published in the local newspapers and posted on the Town's website. In addition, the notice was given by mail to all addressed property owners within a 120 metre radius of the subject lands, including all the properties on Hawthorne Lane.

A Notice of the Public Planning meeting sign was also posted directly on the property on October 23, 2024.

On November 19, 2024, a statutory Public Planning Meeting was held, with Notices provided through mail, to all Interested Parties, publication in the newspaper, and signage on the property.

All communication requirements as directed by the Planning Act have been satisfied. Notices of Council's Decision on the subject applications will also be provided accordingly.

## **Climate Change Considerations**

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application will increase the Town's ability to adapt to a changing climate by removing, redeveloping, improving and/or rehabilitating an old building to a more efficient use; as well as by improving natural assets on the same property and protecting flood plain areas.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment supports the Strategic Plan goal of supporting an exceptional quality of life for all through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within this goal statement:

Strengthening the fabric of our community: Through the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment on the subject lands, the application will assist to ensure future growth includes housing opportunities for everyone and to meet intensification targets to 2031 as identified in the Town's Official Plan.

## **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

1. Refusal of the application with an explanation for the refusal.

## Conclusions

Planning and Development Services reviewed the proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment in accordance with the provisions of the provincial planning policies and the Town's Official Plan, Zoning By-law and development standards respecting the subject lands. The proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment is considered to be in keeping with the development standards of the Town. Staff recommends approval of the Zoning By-Law Amendment, ZBA-2024-07.

## Attachments

Figure 1 – Location Map

Figure 2 – Existing Official Plan Designation

Figure 3 – Existing Zoning By-Law

Figure 4 – Proposed Zoning By-Law

Figure 5 – Conceptual Site Plan

Figure 6 – Plan of Survey

Figure 7 – Draft Lotting Plan Sketch

## Previous Reports

None.

## Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on November 12, 2025

## Approvals

Approved by Marco Ramunno, Director, Planning and Development Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer