

Committee of the Whole (Public Meeting) Report

DATE: Tuesday, October 3, 2023 **WARD(S):** ALL

TITLE: OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW: PROPOSED PART A OFFICIAL PLAN
AMENDMENT – STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide an update on the Vaughan Official Plan Review to support the October 3, 2023 Statutory Public Meeting regarding the Part A Official Plan Amendment.

Report Highlights

- The October 3, 2023 Statutory Public Meeting gives the public and stakeholders opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Part A Official Plan Amendment and other matters pertaining to the Official Plan Review.
- The City is required to update the Vaughan Official Plan, 2010 to maintain conformity with the York Region Official Plan and Provincial plans, policies and legislation.
- The comprehensive update to the Vaughan Official Plan will be delivered through two separate amendments: Part A and Part B.
- The draft Part A Official Plan Amendment deals solely with conformity to Provincial and Regional policy and Provincial legislation.
- The draft Part A Official Plan Amendment is targeted for adoption by Vaughan Council in November 2023 in alignment with the statutory deadline requiring the Vaughan Official Plan to conform with the November 2022 York Region Official Plan within one year of Provincial approval.
- *Planning Act*, Section 17(15)(d), requires that one public meeting be held to provide the public an opportunity to make representations regarding the proposed updates to the Plan.

Recommendations

1. THAT the Public Meeting report for the City-initiated amendment to the Vaughan Official Plan 2010, "Part A Official Plan Amendment", File PL-9550-16 BE RECEIVED, and that any issues identified be addressed by the Policy Planning and Special Programs Department in a comprehensive report to the Committee of the Whole.

Background

The October 13, 2021 Section 26 Official Plan Review (OPR) report to the Vaughan Committee of the Whole, as listed in the Previous Reports/Authority section of this report, provides background information on the OPR project.

Vaughan is one of the fastest growing cities in Canada with a population of 340,700 people and 240,100 jobs in 2021.

Vaughan's forecasted growth will account for almost one-third of the region's growth over the next three decades. It is important the City plans for new growth in a way that is strategic, thoughtful, appropriate and aligned with what our residents and businesses value most.

The Vaughan Official Plan is a strategic planning document that establishes a policy framework to guide the physical, social, environmental and economic development of the city .

The Vaughan Official Plan (VOP):

- Implements goals, objectives and land use policies to serve the city's communities
- Directs density, housing supply, protection of environmental features and agricultural areas, cultural heritage preservation and more
- Guides growth and development to implement the vision for the city's long-term evolution

The current VOP 2010 was adopted by the City of Vaughan Council on September 7, 2010 and endorsed with modifications by the York Region on June 28, 2012. It was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, now known as the Ontario Land Tribunal, and has since received partial approval.

Under the Planning Act, the VOP 2010 must be updated to conform to updated Provincial and Regional policies and Provincial legislation.

The updated VOP must conform with Provincial legislation, policies and plans including the [Provincial Policy Statement](#), [Greenbelt Plan](#), [Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan](#) and the [Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#) that mandates 2051

growth targets for people and jobs. The updated VOP must also conform with the [York Region Official Plan](#) that was approved in November 2022 by the Province with modifications.

Policy Planning staff has been actively involved in the York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review since initiation in January 2019.

Vaughan Policy Planning staff has worked with York Region staff throughout the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process to advocate for the interests of the City and people of Vaughan. Vaughan's Policy Planning staff has brought reports to Council detailing comments on the MCR work; such as employment area conversion requests, Protected Major Transit Station Areas, and the draft land budget and forecast.

Policy Development

The updated VOP will also include policies to enhance the quality of life and better meet the needs of the community.

The local context has evolved since VOP 2010, and the OPR provides the City with the opportunity to adopt contemporary land use and development policies to better guide growth and development to the year 2051. These updated policies will be informed by the intensive background research, and ongoing best practice research and engagement undertaken as part of the OPR.

The Official Plan Review commenced in January 2020 and consists of four phases.

The OPR contract was awarded to WSP Canada in November 2019. The Project was formally launched in January 2020 and October 13, 2021 marked the statutory public initiation.

The Project workplan outlines four phases as follows:

- Phase 1: Visioning and Background Review
- Phase 2: Policy Development
- Phase 3: Statutory Phase/Adoption
- Phase 4: Post Adoption/Approval

The Visioning and Background Review phase has been completed.

The following key deliverables were completed in Phase 1: Visioning and Background Review:

1. Project Management Items: included the Project Timeline, Guiding Principles and Governance Plan.

2. Background Research and Gaps Analysis: provided an overview of the background information that was being reviewed, an information gaps analysis, a review of best practices and a change agents review.
3. Seven Background Papers: included the Residential Growth, Intensification and Housing Needs Strategy, Commercial Land Use Review, Employment Land Use Review, Urban Design and Sustainable Development Review, Natural Heritage Network Review, Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Framework, and Agriculture System Policy Review.
4. Phase 1 Engagement Summary and Vision Report: provided an overview of the engagement activities completed in this phase.

The OPR is well underway and three major policy deliverables have been completed.

The following deliverables have been completed:

1. Policy Conformity Matrix: outlined VOP 2010 policies in need of updates conform to relevant Provincial and Regional updates, and included feedback from Regional staff.
2. Policy Directions Report: was built on the background and engagement work, and provided a roadmap and recommendations for future VOP policy updates.
3. Draft Part A Official Plan Amendment: has been publicly released and contains proposed policy updates that are scoped to Provincial and Regional conformity.

Engagement

Internal and external engagement activities began in September 2021. The [Phase 1 Engagement Summary](#), released in March 2023, outlines the engagement activities and feedback received during Phase 1. Engagement efforts completed in Phase 1 and Phase 2 to-date are summarized below.

Staff pre-engaged Indigenous Peoples at the start of the Project and has continued engagement throughout the OPR.

Pre-engagement with Indigenous Peoples commenced at the launch of the Project in January 2020 and has continued throughout the duration of the work program. The Nations engaged are as follows:

- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Huron-Wendat Nation
- Beausoleil First Nation
- Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
- Curve Lake First Nation
- Hiawatha First Nation
- Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation

- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chief Council
- Métis Nation of Ontario

Pre-engagement meetings with Indigenous peoples included discussions on the importance of relationship-building, ways to improve communication, and how land use processes can be updated to better address the interests of Indigenous Peoples. Meeting and working sessions with Indigenous Peoples allowed staff to gain valuable feedback and information to help inform changes to policy and planning process.

The treaty rights holders, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, provided valuable input into OPR.

The City of Vaughan is located within the Treaty 13 Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN). In December 2020, staff received a document from MCFN outlining recommendations for the updated Plan. During meetings and working sessions, MCFN advised staff that they have a strong interest in the following matters:

- Archaeological, cultural and historical knowledge sharing
- Economic development
- Education and awareness
- Natural Heritage
- Environment
- Planning processes

Mayor and Members of Council were interviewed in early 2020 and circulated on key deliverables.

At the commencement of the OPR, staff interviewed the 2020 Mayor and Members of Council to gain valuable insights into how the community should be engaged and to hear their ideas about the Project. Staff circulated major deliverables and updated Mayor and Members of Council on key milestones, and worked closely with Corporate and Strategic Communications staff who provided them with regular information packages and promotional materials for engagement events.

An OPR Technical Advisory Committee was formed that included staff from many City departments, York Region and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

The committee was circulated on all major deliverable for review and comment, and several meetings were held to share information, discuss key matters, and to gather and address feedback.

Staff engaged the Building Industry and Land Development Association – York Chapter to deliver project updates and gather feedback on policy directions.

Regular updates have been and continue to be given to the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) – York Chapter via the City’s Development Liasson Committee. On March 21, 2023, the Project Team hosted a meeting via Zoom with the BILD – York Chapter for further consultation regarding the proposed policy directions. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a Project update, discuss and summarize the key takeaways and collect feedback related to the Policy Directions Report.

A virtual survey was launched, and 17 virtual and 15 in-person events were held to-date to meaningfully engage members of the public.

One Virtual Special Committee of the Whole Meeting: was held in October 2021 to fulfill the *Planning Act* requirement to inform the public of upcoming revisions and policy changes before revising an official plan, and to provide the opportunity for public feedback.

Two Virtual Community Vision Workshops: provided both a morning and evening timeslot for participants to receive information and provide insights to help shape the updated vision for Vaughan as part of the updated VOP. The workshops, attended by a total of 64 people, included a presentation, ice-breaker poles, and breakout room discussions.

Three of Four Virtual Community Working Group (CWG) Meetings: have been held to-date. The CWG is an advisory group of 24 volunteer community members. CWG members were carefully selected by the Project Team through a publicly advertised application process designed to create a group that is representative of Vaughan’s diversity. Members include representation from people of various backgrounds, ages and abilities, as well as local businesses, faith-based groups, environmental interest groups and ratepayers. CWG meetings allowed for more in-depth exchange of information, discussions and feedback to help shape OPR deliverables and ultimately the updated VOP.

One Virtual Community Vision Survey: was open between February to March 2022 and allowed community members to provide input into the Vision and Guiding Principles for the updated VOP. A total of 89 survey responses were received.

Four Topic-Base Webinars: were held between April and May 2022 with a focus on four different topics related to the OPR: climate change resilience and adaption; affordable housing placemaking and healthy communities. Each webinar included a presentation

from a subject matter expert and an interactive discussion. A total of 46 participant attended the webinars.

Nine Community Pop-up Events: were held between June to September 2022 in public spaces including the Vaughan Mills Shopping Centre, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Subway Station, and the Longo's grocery store at Rutherford Road and Clarence Street, various Concert in the Park event locations and other events, such as the Pancake Picnic, held in Vaughan. Events included an information table, registration sheet and a minimum of two Project Team members to answer questions, gather feedback and raise awareness about the OPR and engagement tools. These events brought engagement opportunities into everyday life to speak with community members who may not typically participate in open house or other forms of engagement. A total of 65 people were engaged.

Eleven Official Plan Update Sub-Committee Meetings: were held since the Sub-Committee was established and appointed by Council December 2022. The Sub-Committee's mandate is to make recommendations to Council regarding the proposed policies developed through the OPR as proposed in the draft Official Plan Amendment document. The Project Team provides regular updates and presentations to the Official Plan Update Sub-Committee through scheduled sessions.

Five Ward Pop-up Events: were held in May 2023 at a community centre in each of the five city wards. An interactive display and community expression board were set up at each event to impart information and gather ward-specific input. A total of 265 people attended the pop-up events.

Five Ward Public Meetings: were held in June 2023 in each of the five wards that included a presentation, a discussion period. A total of 25 people participated.

One Statutory Open House: was held on September 26, 2023, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Maple Community Centre to provide the public with the opportunity to speak to staff about the OPR and the draft Part A OPA.

The Project Team worked with Corporate and Strategic Communications staff throughout the project to maximize promotion of all public engagement events and provide the Mayor and Members of Council with information, project updates and promotional materials.

Community members were also engaged through print media and ads, social media, the Project website and the engagement portal

The Vaughan community was kept informed on Project updates and engagement opportunities through a variety of communication channels including the Project mailing list, social media, virtual ads, mobile signs, public service announcements, eNewsletters. The Project website vaughan.ca/OPR and the engagement portal forwardvaughan.ca, launched at the start of the Project, continues to gather feedback through engagement tools and to relay important project updates and opportunities for engagement .

Several public feedback themes emerged throughout the engagement process

These included the following:

- Complete and walkable communities
- Diverse and affordable housing
- Flexible employment
- Accessible design for all ages and abilities
- Protection of natural areas
- Environmental enhancement
- Support for agri-tourism and agricultural education
- Walkable streets
- High quality greenspace
- Active transportation
- Sustainable building practices
- Adaptive re-use of underutilized retail and office spaces

More information on the engagement process and feedback received can be found in the [Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report](#).

Phase 2: Policy Development Workplan

There is a statutory requirement for the VOP to be updated to conform to the updated York Region Official Plan by November 2023.

The [York Region Official Plan](#) was approved by the Province with modifications in November 2022. Under the *Planning Act*, the official plans of local municipalities shall be amended to conform with the Regional plan within one year of the Regional plan coming into effect. The updated Official Plan must also conform with new Provincial policies, plans and legislation.

The Official Plan Amendment has been divided into Part A, dealing solely with conformity, and Part B to address other matters.

The OPR workplan initially outlined the drafting and adoption of a single Official Plan Amendment (OPA). An Official Plan Amendment (OPA) is a formal document that details updates to change an official plan.

The draft Part A OPA addresses recent Provincial updates and targets Vaughan Council adoption in November 2023 to align with the statutory adoption deadline.

Splitting the OPA into Part A and Part B also allows more time in the Project timeline to address official plan matters beyond Provincial and Regional conformity in the Part B OPA.

The Part B OPA will address background and best practice research, feedback received, and the local context.

This OPA, discussed later in this report, will include new and updated policies specific to the City of Vaughan and include updates that address the vision and guiding principles and key theme areas.

Previous Reports/Authority

[City of Vaughan Official Plan Review Update Report, September 2023](#)

[Official Plan Amendment - Major Transit Station Areas, May 2023](#)

[Official Plan Amendment \(Major Transit Station Areas\) City - Wide - File No.26.18, September 2023](#)

[Statutory Initiation of the Vaughan Official Plan Review 2051, Section 26 \(3\) of the Planning Act; and Update on the Vaughan Official Plan Review Including Timeline, Workplan and Communication and Engagement Strategy, October 2021](#)

Analysis and Options

September 6, 2023 saw the public release of the draft Part A OPA that is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

The draft Part A OPA reflects the changes to the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

This document, released publicly on and included as Attachment 1 to this report, includes draft updated policies to address the following Provincial policy updates:

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

- Ensure an adequate 25-year land supply and maintain at least a 15-year supply of residential lands and a five-year supply of residential units.
- Increase emphasis on the changing climate and require that planning authorities identify appropriate locations for transit-supportive development and ensure a supply of a range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment.
- Increase emphasis on the supply of more affordable and market-based housing and require that planning authorities provide for a full range of housing options.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020

- Plan for new minimum density targets and population and employment forecasts for the 2051 planning growth horizon. This includes minimum density targets of residents and jobs combined per hectare for Protected Major Transit Station Areas.
- Incorporate the Natural Heritage System from the Growth Plan as an overlay in official plans and apply the appropriate corresponding policies.
- Identify and protect water resource systems and incorporate the Agricultural System from the Growth Plan in official plans.

Greenbelt Plan, 2017

- Introduce the Urban River Valleys designation in official plans.
- Consider key hydrologic features and key hydrologic areas in watershed plans required by the Greenbelt Plan, including significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and significant surface water contribution areas.
- Include new conditions that require an environmental impact study.
- Incorporate new definitions and policies for the agri-food network and on-farm diversified uses, including agri-tourism uses.

Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017

- Prohibit waste disposal sites and facilities in Natural Core Areas, Natural Linkage Areas, key natural heritage features, and key hydrologic features and related vegetation protection zones.
- Permit on-farm diversified uses and agriculture-related uses in Prime Agricultural Areas that are within in Natural Core and Natural Linkage Areas.

The draft Part A OPA also reflects updates in the York Region Official Plan.

The following Regional changes are addressed:

- Plan for updated 2051 population, housing, and employment forecasts.
- Reflect the urban boundary expansion in official plans.
- Incorporate updated Regional structure, land use designations and policies.
- Conform with updated general policies regarding complete communities, employment, Rural Areas, water and wastewater servicing, Wellhead Protection Areas, and stormwater management.
- Reflect policies for updated consultation and engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
- Incorporate policies for Protected Major Transit Station Areas and Major Transit Station Areas within the Region's hierarchy of strategic growth areas.

Conformity with protected Major Transit Station Area policies will be addressed through OPA 101 as discussed in the "Official Plan Amendment (Major Transit Station Areas) City – Wide – File No. 26.18" report.

The draft Part A OPA includes proposed updates to several existing VOP schedules and proposes new schedules to conform with Provincial and Regional policy updates as discussed above.

Updates are proposed to the following existing VOP schedules (Attachment 2):

- Schedule 1: Urban Structure
- Schedule 1B: Urban Areas
- Schedule 2: Natural Heritage Network
- Schedule 4: Provincial Plan Areas and Designations
- Schedule 5: Mineral Aggregate Resources
- Schedule 11: Recharge Management Area (WHPA-Q)
- Schedule 14A: Areas Subject to Secondary Plans

The following new VOP Schedules are proposed:

- Schedule 1A: Strategic Growth Areas
- Appendix 1: Regional Employment Areas and Densities

The Part B OPA is targeted for Vaughan Council adoption in late March 2024

The targeted adoption date allows for more time to strengthen proposed policies, gain additional insights from the TAC, the Mayor and Members of Council, and Indigenous Peoples, undertake additional engagement, and address community feedback beyond the scope of conformity.

Matters beyond conformity will be fulsomely addressed through the Part B OPA

The Part B OPA will allow great flexibility in revising and providing new VOP policies, rooted in background and best practice research and engagement, that address the following key areas:

- The Vision and Guiding Principles
- Updated Parks and Open Space Policies
- Climate Change, Mitigation and Adaption Measures
- Transportation, Active Transportation and Infrastructure Policies
- Urban Design, Public Realm and Sustainable Development
- Building Types and Development Criteria
- Urban Agriculture and Food Production
- Community Services and Facilities

Updates in the Part B OPA will also include the new Vision and Guiding Principles, restructured chapter hierarchy and new graphical format, and any amendments that may be made to the Part A OPA by York Region upon approval.

Next Steps

The draft Part A OPA will be revised to consider feedback pertaining to matters of Provincial and Regional conformity.

Feedback received through engagement efforts, including feedback expressed at the October 3, 2023 Statutory Public meeting, on matters strictly pertaining to conformity will be considered in the next draft. Any feedback received that is determined to be outside the scope of conformity will be considered in the Part B OPA.

Adoption of the proposed Part A OPA by Vaughan Council will be sought in November 2023 to target the statutory approval deadline.

The proposed Part A OPA will be brought to the Vaughan Committee of the Whole on November 7, 2023, to seek ratification. If ratified, adoption by the Vaughan Council will be sought at the November 14, 2023 meeting. If adopted, the proposed Part A OPA will be forwarded to York Region in pursuit of approval.

Financial Impact

A capital project budget to deliver the proposed workplan was established at the onset of the project and has been monitored throughout the project. The additional work and revised timeline required for the development of a Part B Official Plan Amendment will be paid to the Project consultant WSP Canada. There is sufficient budget remaining in

the Capital project to accommodate the work required to complete the Project.

Operational Impact

All major deliverables were circulated to, and address feedback received from the OPR TAC that included staff from many City departments, York Region and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The VOP is an overarching strategic document as such, the OPR process and updated policy work impacts the development of other plans and projects currently being undertaken by other City departments. Efforts have been made, and continue to be made, to align the OPR work with other City initiatives wherever possible, and vice versa.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

York Region is currently the approval authority for the draft Part A OPA. York Region staff has reviewed and provided feedback on all major deliverables to-date, including the seven background papers, Policy Direction Report, and the draft Part A OPA and associated mapping. Staff will continue to work with York Region staff throughout the life of the OPR.

Conclusion

In short, the *Planning Act* requires that the VOP be updated to conform with Provincial and Regional policy, and Provincial legislation. The October 3, 2023 Statutory Public Meeting provides community members with the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Part A OPA and other VOP matters. The two-part OPA allows for matters of conformity to be prioritized and addressed in the draft Part A Conformity OPA to target the statutory deadline of November 2023. The Part B OPA will address matters beyond conformity that are rooted in background and best practice research and insight received through intensive engagement efforts and are specific to the local planning context. The updated VOP will plan for new growth in a way that is strategic, thoughtful, appropriate and aligned with what Vaughan residents and businesses value most.

For more information, please contact: Fausto Filipetto, Senior Manager of Policy and Sustainability and Policy Planning and Special Programs, ext. 8699

Attachments

1. Draft Part A Official Plan Amendment Policies
2. Draft Part A Official Plan Amendment Schedules

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