

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council Report**Item 7**

Subject: Lincolnville GO Station Land Use Study**Staff Report No.** DS-046-20**Department:** Development Services**Date:** October 20, 2020

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council authorize Staff to seek public and stakeholder review and comments on the draft Lincolnville Land Use Study, Draft Lincolnville Major Transit Station Area Official Plan Amendment policy framework, and Draft Lincolnville Urban Design Guidelines; and
- 2) That Council direct Staff to report back at a Statutory Public Meeting for the draft Lincolnville Major Transit Station Area Official Plan Amendment; and
- 3) That Council request the Region of York to consider the approval of an Official Plan Amendment for York Region Major Transit Station Areas ahead of its Municipal Comprehensive Review Amendment; and
- 4) That Council direct the Clerk to forward a copy of Report No. DS-046-20 to York Region.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the progress of the Lincolnville GO Station Land Use Study and to seek authorization to seek public and stakeholder review and comments for all of the Draft Lincolnville documents.

2. Executive Summary:

The purpose of the Lincolnville Land Use Study is to determine the viability of a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) to be implemented in the vicinity of the new Lincolnville GO Station. Staff received feedback from Council, the public and stakeholders on the

previously reported draft land use concepts, which have been refined into one preferred concept.

In support of the proposed preferred land use concept is the Draft Land Use Study Report, Draft Land Use Official Plan Policy Framework, and Draft Urban Design Guidelines. A component of the study process was a Commercial and Residential Market Demand Assessment, a Water and Waste Water Servicing Assessment and a Transportation Study. These documents are now available for public and stakeholder review and comment. The Official Plan Amendment and final documents will be brought forward at a Statutory Public Meeting at a later date.

3. Background:

In 2018, Metrolinx made the decision to relocate the Lincolnville GO station from its current location north of Bethesda Road to a new location south Bethesda Road, on the west side of Tenth Line. This presented an opportunity for the Town to review the land use policies in the vicinity of the new GO Station in more detail. As part of its Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to update its Official Plan, York Region is evaluating potential MTSA's across the entire Region. The new Lincolnville GO Station has been identified by the Region as a potential MTSA. This has provided an opportunity for the Town to examine the Lincolnville GO station area as a possible MTSA in terms of its ability to develop as a transit supportive community.

The objectives for the study are:

- Delineate the boundary for the MTSA;
- Identify a preferred land use scenario and corresponding Official Plan policies to support transit-supportive development in the area; and,
- Develop Urban Design Guidelines to guide future development for the area surrounding the Lincolnville GO station.

A MTSA is generally defined as an “area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk” (Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019). The Growth Plan requires the boundaries of all MTSA's to be delineated in the corresponding Upper Tier Official Plans. If approved, the Lincolnville MTSA would be required to achieve a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

In June 2019, WSP provided a draft Land Use Study Report (Attachment 1), which included draft delineations of the MTSA boundary, and three draft concept design options. Each of the options incorporated a slightly different configuration of mixed uses, including residential, commercial and in one case, dedicated employment. The three options were meant to provide the basis for discussion in order to generate one preferred land use concept. The first of two public open houses was held on June 13th, 2019 to receive input from the community.

Between June and October of 2019, Town Staff consulted with the Technical Advisory Committee, the Stouffville Phase 3 East Landowners Group, additional landowners, and the general public. WSP prepared three conceptual demonstration plans to facilitate discussion about the location and distribution of different types of land use and development types across the study area. The second public open house was held on October 10th, 2019. The purpose of the second open house was to provide an update on the progress to date and provide the community with a more interactive opportunity to provide input.

Based on feedback from the consultations, WSP has prepared a single draft Preferred Land Use Concept, along with draft Urban Design Guidelines (Attachment 2) & a draft Official Plan Policy Framework (Attachment 3). Town staff along with the Technical Advisory Committee have reviewed these drafts and provided feedback, resulting in the draft documents included with this report.

Highlights of the preferred land use concept include:

- Concentrates density around the GO station as a priority, and along Tenth Line as a secondary focus
- Requirements for mixed-use in the vicinity of the Tenth Line / new “East-West Collector” intersection
 - Commercial uses are limited to only support future population
- ‘Major Transit Station Area’ proposed
 - Minimum density of 150 people/jobs per hectare
 - 400 metre radius is recommended
- Road network is consistent with current Stouffville Secondary Plan

As part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review process at the Region, local area municipalities were requested to seek Council endorsement of the proposed MTSA boundaries earlier this year. Subsequently, on January 21, 2020, Town Council endorsed the recommended Stouffville GO Major Transit Station Area and Lincolnville GO Major Transit Station Area boundaries and the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare for each of the Town’s two proposed MTSA’s. In March of 2020 York Region Council endorsed the identification of the 72 Major Transit Station Areas across the Region, including the Lincolnville GO Station.

4. Analysis and Options:

Draft Land Use Study Report – Preliminary Land Use Concepts:

The first draft of the Land Use Report included the three preliminary draft concepts for evaluation. These preliminary concepts can be found at the project [webpage](#).

Each of the three preliminary land use concepts provided a mix of uses including residential, commercial and in one case, dedicated employment:

Option 1: High density mixed-use and residential uses primarily along Tenth Line and the south side of Bethesda Road with less density moving outwards.

Option 2: High density mixed-use concentrated within 200 metres of the GO station. A portion of these higher densities also interfaces with the environmental areas along the eastern boundary. The concentration of these land uses around the Station creates three separate medium density areas, one on either side of Tenth Line to the south, and an enclave in the northeast corner of the MTSA area boundary.

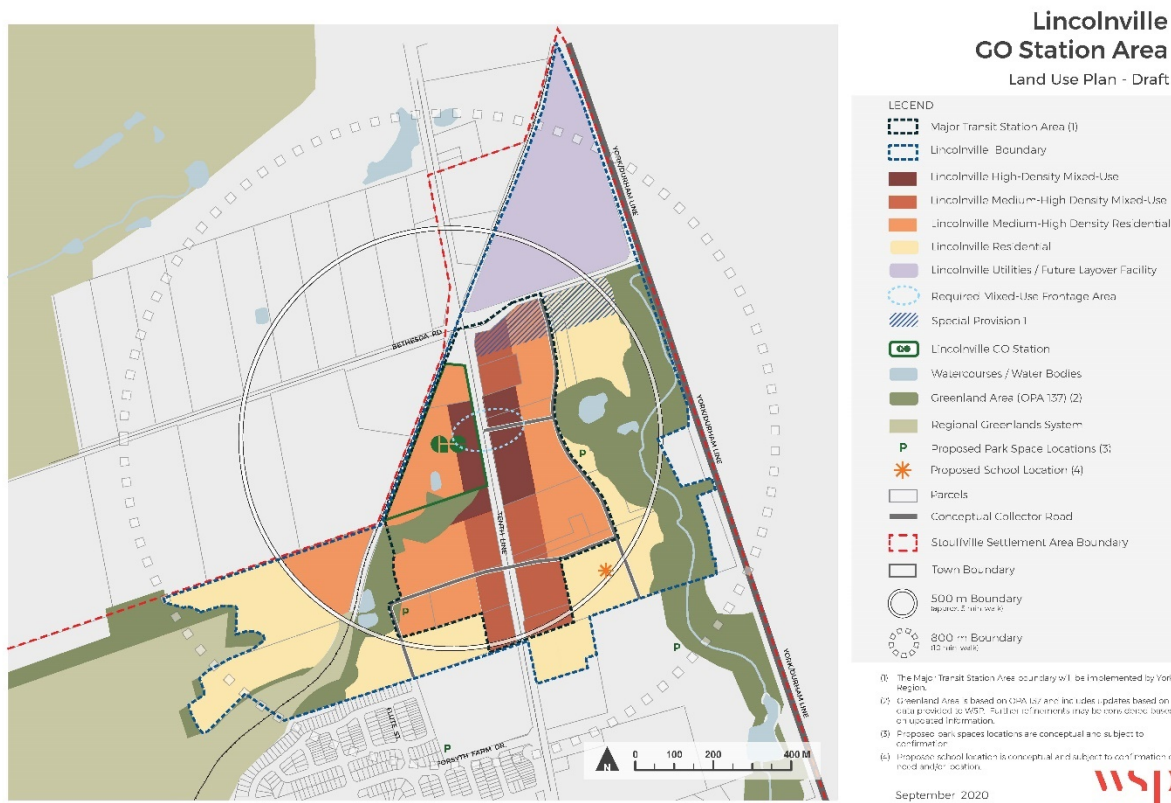
Option 3: Highest densities in closest proximity to the GO Station area and along the Tenth Line corridor within the 400-metre radius but also includes an Employment Priority Overlay along the northern edge of the MTSA within a 200 metre radius. This option also includes a high-density residential enclave in the northeast corner of the MTSA.

Some of the criteria used to evaluate the options include:

- Transit Supportive – The concept needs to capitalize on the proximity of the GO Station and meet a transit supportive density target of 150 people plus jobs per hectare.
- Well-Connected and Accessible – Must facilitate walkability and provide transit and pedestrian connections within and around the MTSA
- Feasible – Must be serviced and fiscally sustainable, and achievable
- Compatible – Compatible with existing neighbourhoods, the natural environment, and the transportation network.

Preferred Land Use Concept

An iterative approach was used to determine the preferred concept. The preferred concept (as shown below and on page 10-12 of Attachment 1) is a hybrid of the original preliminary land use concepts and has been created based on the background work conducted by WSP, consultation and the technical studies conducted.



The preferred land use concept generally follows Option 2, with the concentration of higher density mixed-use in close proximity to the GO Station. The preferred concept also borrows from Option 3 by supporting density along Tenth Line. Relatively lower densities are permitted moving outwards from Tenth Line. Areas outside the MTSA boundary have a lower density, yet still have a higher density than residential areas outside the Lincolnville Study Area. This will allow for an appropriate transition to the surrounding neighbourhoods.

A key consideration in the design of the preferred concept was the location of parks throughout the MTSA, particularly as they relate to the built form, and the natural heritage features. They are strategically located yet allow for some locational flexibility based on the development application process. There is also the need for a school location, which in consultation with the Catholic School Board staff, is being proposed on the east side of Tenth Line, just outside the MTSA boundary.

Lincolnville GO Station - Commercial and Residential Market Demand Assessment:

As part of the Lincolnville Study, urbanMetrics conducted a Commercial and Residential Market Demand Assessment (Attachment 4) in order to identify the amount of retail/service commercial space warranted within the Lincolnville GO MTSA to support the future MTSA, as well as the appropriate location for this space.

Based on the low and high population and job densities for the Lincolnville GO MTSA, market support was identified for between 39,900 square feet and 50,300 square feet of local serving retail and service commercial space at full build-out. Some examples of service commercial could include a pharmacy in conjunction with medical offices, local bank branch, restaurants, dry cleaning, or personal services such as hair care, or day spas.

Some concern was expressed early on in the study process about the viability of more dense forms of residential development than has been typical in the community of Stouffville. However, the market demand assessment has demonstrated that housing construction activity and new home sales suggest that there is market support for the townhouse, stacked townhouse, back-to-back townhouse and apartment units being considered for the MTSA. In particular, the assessment examined housing absorption rates for condominium apartments and determined there is market support for the apartment units being proposed in the Lincolnville GO MTSA.

Lincolnville MTSA Transportation Study:

As part of the Lincolnville Land Use Study, HDR was retained to conduct a Transportation Study (Attachment 5) to determine the potential impacts on transportation as a result of the newly proposed land use designations and associated levels of density. HDR evaluated both a short term (2025 horizon year) and long-term development timeline.

HDR also provided recommended cross sections for each of the road types, including Tenth Line, Bethesda Road, general collector roads and the proposed MTSA "main street". The cross sections provide support for those provided in the Draft Urban Design Guidelines. HDR has recommended a proposed road network for 2025, and a concept for the long term, which builds upon the 2025 concept. These recommendations will allow for proper traffic flow, as well as provide a safe active transportation and pedestrian-friendly network.

Water and Waste Water Servicing Assessment:

The Town's Water and Wastewater Master Plan, which was finalized in 2018, was based on population and employment forecasts from that time. The extent of the densities and development being proposed in the Lincolnville MTSA was originally contemplated as part of the Water and Waste Water Master Plan. As such, it was necessary to re-examine the servicing requirements for the area. As part of the Lincolnville Study GM BluePlan was retained to conduct a Water and Waste Water Servicing Assessment (Attachment 6) to determine the servicing requirements for the new levels of density proposed as part of the Lincolnville Land Use Study.

An estimated number of population and jobs was calculated using the required minimum densities of 150 people and jobs per hectare and based on the preferred land use concept. The estimates used in the preliminary analysis represent a total increase of

approximate 2,500 people + jobs in the Lincolnville Area with respect to the original Water and Waster Water Master Plan Scenario.

The study findings indicate that the local system has the potential to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate water demands, pressure and available fire flows for the proposed planning estimates in the Lincolnville Area. Regarding waste water, there is a potential need to revisit the size and/or slope of sections of subtrunk 15 to ensure that it can support proposed higher density in the immediate sewer service area.

The study recommends that a holistic approach for the whole community of Stouffville is undertaken to analyze and confirm the water and wastewater servicing strategies for the community. Applications for development or redevelopment within the urban area shall be reviewed in the context of its possible impact on the community-wide water and wastewater servicing system and not in isolation. The Town may require a servicing study that addresses the impact of development or redevelopment on areas that extend beyond the development application site.

GM BluePlan is currently working with the Town on a Stouffville Growth Area Analysis which includes a comprehensive review of the Town's water and waste water servicing strategy. The Town is also working closely with the Region of York to ensure sufficient servicing capacity is provided.

Draft Urban Design Guidelines:

The Draft Lincolnville Urban Design Guidelines (UDG's) have been created to provide urban design direction and guidance for proposed development at the planning application stage to assess, promote and fulfill the intent of the Town's Official Plan policies, the Stouffville Secondary Plan and the Town's Zoning By-law in relation to the Lincolnville MTSA. The vision for the Lincolnville area is to have a vibrant complete community with a variety of built forms that will meet the minimum density required for a MTSA. The Guidelines are designed to help guide the community into achieving that vision.

The Guidelines are divided into two sections: the public realm and the private realm. The public realm consists of parks and open spaces, laneways, and road right of ways. The right of ways are based partially on the HDR Transportation study report. Some of the design principles for the public realm include:

- Providing a consistent and complementary level of pedestrian-scaled streetscape design including such elements as decorative and conventional paving, landscaping, lighting and signage within public boulevards and private realm;
- Orienting building entrances, terraces and porches toward public streets to act as an interface between private and public realms and activate the public realm;

- Providing road widths that accommodate vehicular circulation, but where possible to allow for more generous planting, amenity and pedestrian boulevards; and,
- Creating an interconnected and permeable complete street network that accommodates active transportation and incorporates a connected park, parkette, urban plazas, and open space network; including public access to natural heritage area trails.

The private realm relates to buildings and their relationships to the streets and to each other, landscaping and parking and servicing. Some of the design principles for the public realm include:

- The massing of buildings shall transition from greater to lower mass and height by incorporating techniques such as stepbacks of upper storeys, transitional building heights and separation distances between different building masses;
- Building height shall be lower adjacent to the existing low-rise residential uses adjacent to the Lincolnville MTSA community and should gradually increase toward the GO Station area intersection and Tenth Line corridor;
- Architectural styles of individual units and blocks should be sensitive to and complement each other. The various architectural forms within the community may incorporate both traditional/heritage and modern influences; and,
- Street-facing garages should be avoided where possible, and designed to be flush with, or recessed behind the main façade for townhouse blocks.

Draft Land Use Policy Framework:

The Draft Policy Framework Forms Attachment 3 to this report. It is not in the form of an Official Plan Amendment as of yet, but rather provides the proposed policies that will go towards forming the actual amendment to implement the Lincolnville MTSA. The proposed land uses and policies regarding permitted use, density and permitted building types will accompany the preferred concept. The policies provide some flexibility in the density limits but are intended to ensure the minimum density target is achieved across the MTSA. The residential designations will be differentiated from other residential designations of the Stouffville Secondary Plan Area with a unique Lincolnville designation, and will allow for more density than the surrounding residential lands.

The policies have been designed to ensure that a compact, complete and walkable community can be achieved in the MTSA, by requiring a commercial/retail component, and ensuring other amenities such as parks, greenspace, appropriate parking, and infrastructure are provided.

Public and Landowner Consultation:

Throughout the Lincolnville Land Use Study, consultation with the public, stakeholders and the local land owners has been a key part of the process. Two Public Open Houses have been held, which were each attended by approximately 30 to 40 members of the public. Staff have received several comments from attendees of both open houses. In addition, Town staff have been continuing to consult with land owners in the area, as well as the Technical Advisory Committee.

Some of the land owners within the Lincolnville GO study area have also submitted pre-consultation applications for their lands. This has provided the opportunity for these land owners to seek an understanding of how the proposed policies will be implemented on the ground. This has led to an informed and iterative process.

During the consultation process some concerns were identified by the landowner's group. Staff have worked extensively to address as many concerns as possible to ensure this is an iterative process. Some of the concerns as well as how they are being addressed are outlined below.

Proposed Densities

Concerns have been raised that with the provision of infrastructure such as traditional stormwater management pond, required parking levels, and park space, the applicants may not be able to meet the required level of 150 people plus jobs per hectare, while developing a compact and mixed-use community, with an attractive built form. Staff are working with land owners to determine creative ways to address density concerns. Part of the solution was ensuring a delineation of the MTSA that would allow the required density levels to be reached. Other potential solutions include flexible policies around parking and stormwater management facilities.

Road Right of Ways and locations

Through consultation with the land owners, it has been proposed that some Right of Ways could be reduced to accommodate more space for development. Staff have concerns that the decrease in the right of way would reduce the availability of on street parking and would impact the built form and walkability of the community. Staff will continue to work with landowners to determine whether there is potential for flexibility in the right of way, either through the Urban Design Guidelines, or through policy text.

Mixed Use Main Street and Location of North-South Collector Road

The Stouffville Phase 3 East Landowners Group has expressed concerns that a "Main Street" type of collector road with commercial retail uses required in mixed-use buildings may not be viable in the Lincolnville area, beyond just the intersection located at Tenth Line and the GO Station exit. WSP and Town staff are of the opinion that it is vital for this proposed new community to have a mix of uses that includes some commercial/retail

locations to service the local community and commuters. This approach is supported by the Commercial and Residential Market Demand Assessment conducted by urban Metrics in support of the Lincolnville Study. Staff and WSP have been working with the land owners and have added some flexibility in the policies, while maintaining some required commercial retail space.

The extent of the proposed “main street” may be limited by the location of the north-south collector road east of Tenth Line. Ongoing engineering analyses indicate that the north-south road may need to shift west of the proposed location, thus shortening the proposed “main street”. Staff and the landowners are continuing to address this issue both through the Lincolnville Study, and through the development application process.

Natural Heritage Constraints

Concerns were raised by land owners that the Greenlands System included areas that are not appropriate, such as areas of invasive plant species. Town staff are committed to working with land owners, and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to address these concerns. Where appropriate, staff has agreed to modify the Greenlands System mapping, provided the appropriate studies are conducted to the satisfaction of TRCA and the Town. Refinements are also possible through the development application process.

Project Schedule and Next Steps

To coincide with this Council meeting, the draft documents have been made available for a 45-day public review period, during which Town staff will be accepting comments from stakeholders, the public and the Technical Advisory Committee. In addition to being attached to this report, the documents are also available online through the project webpage, and hard copy documents are also be available upon request.

It is important to note that while the Town is undertaking the Lincolnville Land Use Study and initiating an Official Plan Amendment for the proposed Lincolnville MTSA, that the Region York is the approval authority. Therefore, the Town will be able to adopt an Official Plan Amendment for the Lincolnville MTSA, but final approval is required by the Region. In order to approve the Lincolnville MTSA, it will have to be first designated by the Region in its Official Plan. Given that York Region is currently undertaking its Municipal Comprehensive Review, the timing as to when the MTSA's across the Region will be approved is unknown at this time. The Region is permitted by the Growth Plan to delineate the boundaries of MTSA's, ahead of the completion of the overall MCR, subject to certain criteria. Town staff have requested that the Region consider this option in order for the Lincolnville Official Plan Amendment to be approved in a timely manner. Staff continue to recommend that this be the preferred approach for MTSA's across the entire Region, so as not be delayed by the remaining MCR process.

Once all comments have been received and addressed in the draft documents, they will be finalized and the draft Official Plan Amendment will be prepared. A Statutory Public Meeting for the Lincolnville Official Plan Amendment is anticipated later this year. Once

the Amendment is adopted by Council, it will proceed to Region for final approval, which as mentioned above, will be dependent on the MCR process and timing.

5. Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications, as this study falls within the approved budget for the Lincolnville GO Station Land Use Study.

6. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

1. Expanding the tax base through a growing, diversified economy
Building and maintaining a tax base that supports the highest quality program and service delivery.
 - Focus on servicing and development of Provincially Significant Employment Zones
 - Update the Economic Development strategy and continue to attract businesses to locate in WSI
 - Identify expansion areas for Industrial / Commercial growth
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2. Asset Planning, Maintenance and Development
Successful stewardship of the infrastructure and facilities required to support a growing community and vibrant economy.
 - Address / plan for maintenance of existing assets & infrastructure; Create new infrastructure
 - Focus on continuous improvement of the asset register for asset management planning

7. Attachments:

1. DRAFT Lincolnville GO Station Land Use Study Area
2. DRAFT Lincolnville GO Station Urban Design Guidelines
3. DRAFT Lincolnville GO Station Area Land Use Policy Framework
4. Water and Wastewater Servicing Assessment Technical Memo 1
5. Lincolnville GO Station Transportation Study
6. Commercial and Residential Market Demand Assessment

8. Related Reports:

1. June 19, 2018 - Report No. DS-035-18 – Lincolnville GO Station Land Use Study Terms of Reference
2. June 4, 2019 - Report No. DS-027-19 - Lincolnville GO Station Area Land Use Study
3. January 21, 2020 – Report No. DS-001-20 - York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review Update and Major Transit Station Area Delineation

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