

2. VISION, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 PURPOSE

The Vision Statement, principles and objectives upon which the Official Plan is based are outlined in the following sections. The vision, principles and objectives provide general guidelines for the planning of the rural/agricultural/environmental area of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, which are elaborated upon in the policies of the Plan. The vision, principles and objectives represent expressions of general intent which are not to be interpreted as direct statements of planning policy. It is not proposed that they be applied specifically to any development or redevelopment proposal. They form the basis for the formulation of the policies contained in the Plan.

2.2 VISION STATEMENT

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE: COUNTRY CLOSE TO THE CITY

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is a rural community that will preserve and enhance its quiet, calm, attractive environment for residents, visitors and future generations. It will be:

- i) a safe, healthy, friendly and intergenerational community;
- ii) a community which focuses its development in the Community of Stouffville and other settlement areas to preserve the resources of the rural/agricultural/ environmental area;
- iii) an environmentally aware community with a strong Greenlands System;
- iv) a community which supports the continuation of all forms of agriculture and related uses as an important part of its rural heritage and a major economic contributor;
- v) a community which provides a wide range of public and private recreation and cultural opportunities; and,
- vi) a community which protects its natural environment and its built cultural heritage.

2.3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Principle: Decisions made with respect to the future of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville should protect and enhance this safe, healthy and friendly community.

The intent of this principle is to encourage a broadly based planning approach which will maintain and, where feasible, enhance the health of the community and its residents. Determinants of this healthy community include a sense of belonging to the community, and social and safety features found in a caring community, as well as environmental qualities.

Objectives:

The following objectives support this community development principle:

- i) To provide for limited new uses which will be supportive of its rural/agricultural/ environmental environment; and which will enhance communication between residents and connections with the natural environment.
- ii) To protect the cultural heritage of the community through the preservation and enhancement of heritage buildings, streetscapes and other features.
- iii) To provide for a linked open space and trail system, including natural features and parkland, as a central feature of the community which will reinforce its special character.
- iv) To provide in the Town as a whole, a range of recreational, educational and cultural facilities and activities to meet the needs of all residents.
- v) To build and maintain the physical services required to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the community.
- vi) To protect the physical resources, particularly the ground and surface water resources, required to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the community.

- vii) To ensure that all changes in the community promote safety and security through the use of appropriate design strategies.
- viii) To provide within the Town a choice with respect to secure, adequate and affordable housing.
- ix) To encourage pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair accessibility throughout the community.
- x) To minimize or prevent conflict between potentially incompatible uses.
- xi) To ensure that the soil quality of development sites is suitable for the proposed use.

2.4 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Principle: Any change in the Town should be undertaken in a manner which will preserve and enhance the integrity of the natural environment.

This principle is intended to ensure that environmental sustainability is considered as a major factor in the future planning of the municipality, and, particularly in the assessment of any proposed changes in the community. Environmental sustainability refers to the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment including surface and groundwater systems, natural habitats (i.e. aquatic, wetland and terrestrial), landforms (including the Oak Ridges Moraine), natural area corridors and the establishment of linkages between natural features.

Objectives:

The following objectives support this community development principle:

- i) To preserve, enhance and restore the natural systems of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville; and,
- ii) To preserve and enhance surface and groundwater resource quality and quantity to serve existing and future uses on a sustainable basis.

2.5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE: ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

Principle: Decisions made with respect to the future of the Town will reflect the need to establish an economically sustainable community.

The intent of this principle is to support, and where feasible, enhance the resource based industries of agriculture and aggregate production, which are the focus of the economy of the rural/agricultural/ environmental area. In addition, resource based uses such as recreation, as well as home businesses and other similar uses will be supported and, where feasible enhanced where their location does not conflict with agriculture or aggregate uses or the natural environment.

Objectives:

The following objectives support this community development principle:

- i) To foster an environment which supports the health of agriculture and other resource based industries.
- ii) To support uses compatible with the objectives of the rural/agricultural/ environmental area.

2.6 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE: FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

Principle: Any change in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville should be financially feasible both with respect to capital and operating costs.

Objectives:

The following objectives support this community development principle:

- i) To keep capital and operating costs of public sector development in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville at a level that can be borne financially by residents and businesses.
- ii) To ensure that the capital costs of new development are covered by charges derived from that new development.