



Community Vision Summary REPORT

As part of the
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Official Plan Review
October 2020



REVISION HISTORY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WSP Canada Group Limited (WSP) has been retained by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (the Town) to complete their Official Plan Review (OPR).

This Community Vision Summary Report (the “Report”) documents the consultation and engagement activities completed during Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review and summarizes the feedback received from stakeholders, agencies, and the public. This Report is also a way of reporting back to the community and to Town Council on the feedback received over the course of Phase 1. This Report will be used to update the Town’s current Official Plan, specifically, the section on guiding principles and the Vision Statement for the next 25 years.

Feedback received from stakeholders and the public between July 2020 and October 2020 is documented, analyzed and presented in this report. Over the course of Phase 1 of the project, approximately **333 participants** submitted feedback or participated in Visioning and Public Consultation activities (includes 241 survey participants, 52 Virtual Open House participants, 15 participants of an online mapping activity, one written letter submission, and approximately 24 stakeholder representatives engaged as part of a Technical Advisory Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Committee), and eleven (11) different Indigenous Community leaders were contacted.

The feedback received during Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review was used to update the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s Official Plan Vision Statement and Guiding Principles. The Proposed Vision Statement and Guiding Principles are presented in Section 5 of this Report for Council and Public feedback. Approval of the final Vision Statement and Guiding Principles will occur in Phase 4 of the Official Plan Review which will involve the technical writing, reviewing, evaluating and implementation of policies for the new Official Plan based on all work completed.

1 WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL PLAN?

An Official Plan (OP) is developed with input from the community. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's Official Plan expresses the vision and guiding principles of the community and contains policies that direct growth and development within the Town while protecting important natural resources and cultural features. The Official Plan policies establish:

- Where new housing, industry, offices and shops will be located;
- What community services, such as roads, transportation, utilities, parks, trails and schools will be needed to accommodate growth and develop healthy and sustainable communities;
- When, and in what order, parts of the community will grow;
- How to promote economic development and develop community improvement initiatives;
- How to protect and conserve cultural heritage resources; and
- How to protect the Town's agricultural lands and environmentally-sensitive areas.

1.1 WHY IS THE TOWN UNDERTAKING AN OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW?

The Town is undertaking an Official Plan Review (OPR) and has identified key issues to be addressed with the community under key theme areas: Planning for Growth, planning for the Natural Environment, Planning for Complete Communities, Consultation and Visioning, and General and Housekeeping items. The comprehensive OPR work program includes the following phases:

- **Phase 1: Visioning and Consultation** – will result in a community vision and guiding principles to inform future planning directions, by establishing what the community values and how the Town is envisioned to evolve over the 25-year planning horizon.

The work completed as part of Phase 1 is presented in this summary report.

- **Phase 2: Background Studies and Discussion Papers** – will focus on data collection and the review of background information required to advance the OPR. This phase will also involve the preparation of various Discussion Papers to address the key themes related to growth management, the natural environment, healthy and complete communities, and general technical and housekeeping matters. This phase will culminate with a cursory review of the Secondary Plans to determine recommendations for a potential consolidation strategy.
- **Phase 3: Policy Development** – will involve the preparation of a Policy Directions Report and the development of new and updated Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies to implement the preferred policy directions.
- **Phase 4: Draft New Official Plan** – will involve the technical writing, reviewing, evaluating, and implementing policies for the new Official Plan.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This Visioning Summary Report (the “Report”) documents the consultation and engagement activities completed during Phase 1 of the Official Plan Review and summarizes the feedback received from stakeholders, agencies, and the public. This Report is also a way of reporting back to the community and to Town Council on the feedback received over the course of Phase 1. This Report will be used to update the Town’s current Official Plan, specifically, the section on guiding principles and the Vision Statement for the next 25 years.

1.3 CURRENT CONTEXT

Whitchurch-Stouffville, located within York Region, is one of Canada’s fastest growing municipalities with a mix of urban and rural settlement areas and significant natural environment features, such as the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Greenbelt Area. There are four main settlement areas in the Town that were presented to the public during Phase 1 Consultation to provide context about current land use planning studies underway and to engage in discussions about land use change and population and employment growth across the Town. These settlement areas are:

- Community of Stouffville;
- Ballantrae-Musselman’s Lake;
- Vandorf-Preston Lake; and
- Gormley.

There are also a number of rural clusters, including:

- Bethesda;
- Bloomington;
- Cedar Valley;
- Lemonville;
- Lincolnville;
- Pine Orchard;
- Pleasantville;
- Ringwood;
- Vivian; and
- Wesley Corners.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has a very diverse local economy with strengths in knowledge-based industries, advanced manufacturing, building and construction and the agriculture and tourism sectors. According to the 2016 Canada Census, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville was the third fastest growing community in Canada, and the second fastest growing municipality in Ontario. The Town has seen an increase in family size, increase in population diversity, and has welcomed a significant increase in new Canadians.

With a growing and diversifying population within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, it is important that the Official Plan is updated to reflect these changes to best serve its evolving communities well into the future.

1.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DURING COVID-19

In 2019, Town Council endorsed a Communications Plan and Work Program prepared by Town Staff for the Official Plan Review. In 2020, changes to the initial approach were required as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. Refinements to the schedule and consultation approach were deemed necessary by Staff and Town Council in order to advance work on the OPR and engage in community and stakeholder consultation, while being mindful and sensitive to the circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Communications and Engagement Strategy (Strategy) was prepared by WSP in June 2020 to build upon the Town's existing 2019 OPR Communications Plan. The purpose of the Strategy was to provide Town Staff with a detailed overview of the roles and responsibilities, engagement tactics, and detailed approach for engaging the public, Town staff, agencies, Indigenous communities and stakeholders in the OPR process. Consultation activities were adapted to engage stakeholders and the public digitally and by mail. Phase 1 consultation also included online meetings with stakeholder groups, online engagement tactics through the Town's project website (cometogetherws.ca/opr), and an online Public Open House with live polling, all of which is summarized in the next section of this Report.

2 CONSULTATION SUMMARY

A variety of engagement tactics were used throughout Phase 1 of the OPR. The following section provides an overview of those tactics.

2.1 STAKEHOLDERS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Figure 1 is a summary of the various groups engaged throughout Phase 1 of the OPR. The various stakeholders in Figure 1 were identified by Town Staff prior to drafting of the Engagement Strategy by WSP.



Figure 1. Groups Engaged in the Town's OPR

The Town created two stakeholder committees comprised of various community members, Town staff across different departments and external agencies and committee representatives. These two committees are the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

2.1.1 STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

The SAC acts as a sounding board for the Project Team and provides insights into Official Plan focus areas and draft policies. Representatives on the SAC were selected by the Town's Project Team and include a broad range of stakeholder interests. The SAC is engaged at each major milestone of the OPR project and have the opportunity to review and comment on project materials. Representatives of the SAC are then responsible for engaging with their respective committees to collectively inform the OPR process.

The SAC is made up of one representative from each of the following organizations:

- Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Central Counties Tourism
- Youth Council
- 55+ Club
- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Heritage Advisory Committee
- BILD York Region
- Environmental Stewardship Working Group
- Main Street Reconstruction Steering Committee
- Stouffville Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Stouffville Working Group
- York Region Federation of Agriculture
- York Region Police
- York Region Public Health

On August 13, 2020, a Visioning Workshop was held for SAC members to discuss the vision and objectives of the OPR. The presentation reviewed the OPR process and its main focus areas, the current and future context of the Town, the project's public engagement principles, as well as the role and responsibilities of SAC members. The SAC meeting included live polling using the MentiMeter (Menti) application. Details regarding questions and responses from the Menti polling are provided in Section 3 of this Report.

2.1.2 TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The TAC is comprised of Town staff and agency leaders that provide technical insight and local context to the Project Team. Feedback received from the TAC informs future policy areas of the Official Plan. Members of the TAC are given the opportunity to comment on draft project reports and materials.

The TAC is comprised of representatives from each of the following groups, in addition to staff from Town departments:

- Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority
- Metrolinx/GO Transit
- York Region Long Range Planning
- York Region Transit
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique
- York Catholic District School Board
- York Region District School Board
- WS Library

On August 13, 2020, a Visioning Workshop was held with TAC members to discuss the vision and objectives for the OPR. Similar to the initial SAC meeting, the TAC Visioning Workshop comprised of a presentation from the Project Team with live polling using Menti to gather feedback. The presentation reviewed the OPR process and its main focus areas, the current and future context of the Town, the project's public engagement principles, as well as the role and responsibilities of members of the TAC. Details regarding questions and responses from the Menti polling are provided in Section 3.

2.2 INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

As a result of legal decisions made by the Supreme Court of Canada, the Crown has a Duty to Consult with Indigenous communities on issues that may affect treaty rights, aboriginal rights and land claims. Although the Duty to Consult remains the responsibility of the Province, procedural aspects of this duty have been delegated to municipalities in infrastructure and land use planning matters where the use of land or natural resources could be impacted. In fact, the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) recognizes, "the importance of consulting with Aboriginal communities on planning matters that may affect their Section 35 Aboriginal or treaty rights."

It is important to provide Chief and Council with an opportunity to comment on their communities' preferred level of involvement and ask how leadership would like to be engaged on the OPR. As a starting point, a government-to-government letter was sent to all Indigenous communities as an open invitation for an in-person or online meeting with the Town's Project Manager. Indigenous communities were also contacted individually for one-on-one meetings and were also invited to the Online Public Meeting. The following Indigenous communities were contacted:

- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Alderville First Nation

- Beausoleil First Nation
- Curve Lake First Nation
- Hiawatha First Nation
- Scugog Island First Nation
- Chippewas of RAMA First Nation
- Conseil de la Nation Huronne-Wendat
- Haudenosaunee Confederacy
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation

2.3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville requested that a slogan be used to communicate the OPR project to the public in advance of a Public Meeting. As a result, “**Re-imagine Stouffville – the Town’s Official Plan Review**” was selected by the Town and was used to advertise the project to members of the Public.

The Town’s Communications Department used a variety of tools to notify the public about the project including:

- **Podcast** - The "Talk of the Town" is a weekly informational podcast produced by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. A new episode is uploaded every Tuesday. It is available at SoundCloud and on the Town’s social media accounts.
- **Social Media** – the Town manages a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram account that was used to direct members of the public to the project website and inform them about upcoming public engagement opportunities and meetings.
- **Email** - the Town has an interested parties list and registration list where direct email is sent to any member of the public interested in the OPR project as well as stakeholders and Indigenous community leaders.
- **Community Magazine** – “On the Road to Whitchurch-Stouffville” is a business and tourism-oriented community magazine, plus official Town news. It is published monthly by the Economic Development Office for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. On the Road is distributed by mail to all Whitchurch-Stouffville addresses. Two (2) articles were written and released during Phase 1 of the OPR. An article was published in the summer of 2020 to introduce the OPR project and a second article (including a pull out of a community visioning survey) was released in the October 2020 edition to enable residents to complete the Public Survey by hand.
- **Newspaper Advertisements** – Notification for the Public Meeting was provided in the Sun-Tribune on September 10th and 17th, 2020.
- **Project Website, Project Video and Town’s Website** – the Town has a dedicated project website, where project contact information, a project video, direct access to an online survey, access to an interactive mapping tool, project staff contact information

and meeting information was made available. The website is: <https://cometogetherws.ca/opr>. The Town also advertised the public meeting, survey and interactive mapping tool on the Town’s corporate website.

- **Post Card** – a post card as well as copies of the survey were delivered to local businesses, the Town Museum, Town Hall, Leisure Centre and Library.

The website and social media advertisements shown in Figure 2 demonstrate the public outreach campaign that ran for several weeks to engage the public. The objective of this campaign was to encourage participation in the project and provide information to the public about the project and the various ways they can participate.

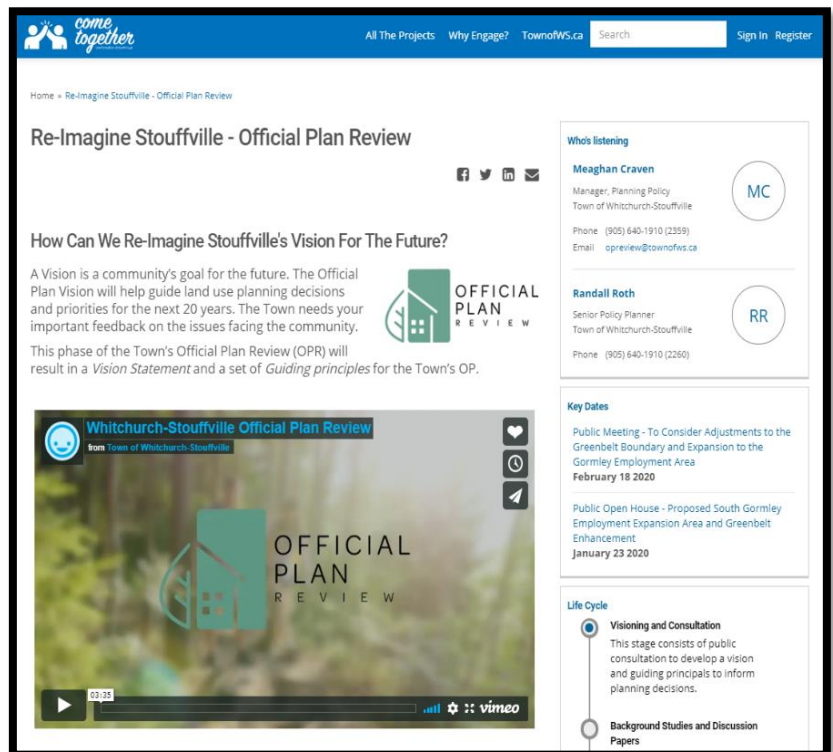


Figure 2. Project Website, Town Website and Social Media Notifications

2.3.1 ONLINE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

On September 23rd, 2020, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville held an online Public Open House. The Newspaper, Project Website, Direct Email and Social Media were used to notify the public of the Open House 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. The Public were provided with a direct link and a telephone number to listen, and or view the Open House Materials and ask questions between the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. There were 52 participants who attended the meeting by calling in or accessing the webinar portion of the meeting using their personal computer or smartphone. To gain feedback throughout the duration of the event, the online polling tool MentiMeter was used to survey participants in real time, with approximately 20 attendees interacting with the poll and a majority of the attendees using the GoToMeeting chat function to provide feedback, questions and comments. The open house presentation was uploaded to the Town's website following the meeting and many of the live polling questions also released to the public in the form of a printed and online survey, so that members of the public could provide input to the Town regardless of whether they could attend the Public Meeting on September 23rd, 2020.

The purpose of the online Public Open House was to provide the public with an opportunity to become familiar with the OPR project, to collect feedback on the goals and objectives of residents with respect to each of the OPR focus areas, and to obtain feedback on the Vision for the Town's Future. The intent of the Open House was also to generate discussion, answer questions and collect feedback from the public to inform the Vision for the future of the Town through its new OP.

The online Open House was structured as a presentation (shown in Figure 3) with real-time polling throughout the duration of the presentation. The presentation is available on the OPR website: <https://cometogetherws.ca/opr>. The Open House consisted of a presentation approximately one hour in duration, which discussed the OPR process, the current and future context of the Town, the OP's current Vision, the project's consultation approach and activities, as well as next steps for the OPR. The Open House ended with a question and answer period providing an opportunity for participants to ask the project team questions related to the OPR.

In order to collect feedback during the online Open House, the platform MentiMeter was used to ask seven (7) questions during the presentation. Questions were asked in the form of multiple choice, ranked and scaled preferences and word cloud brainstorming. This tool was used to collect feedback on topics ranging from how participants heard about the meeting, what focus area they are most interested in, how they would like to see the Town grow, and what they think the Town will look like in 25 years. A breakdown of each question asked, and feedback received during the Open House is provided in Section 3 of this Paper.

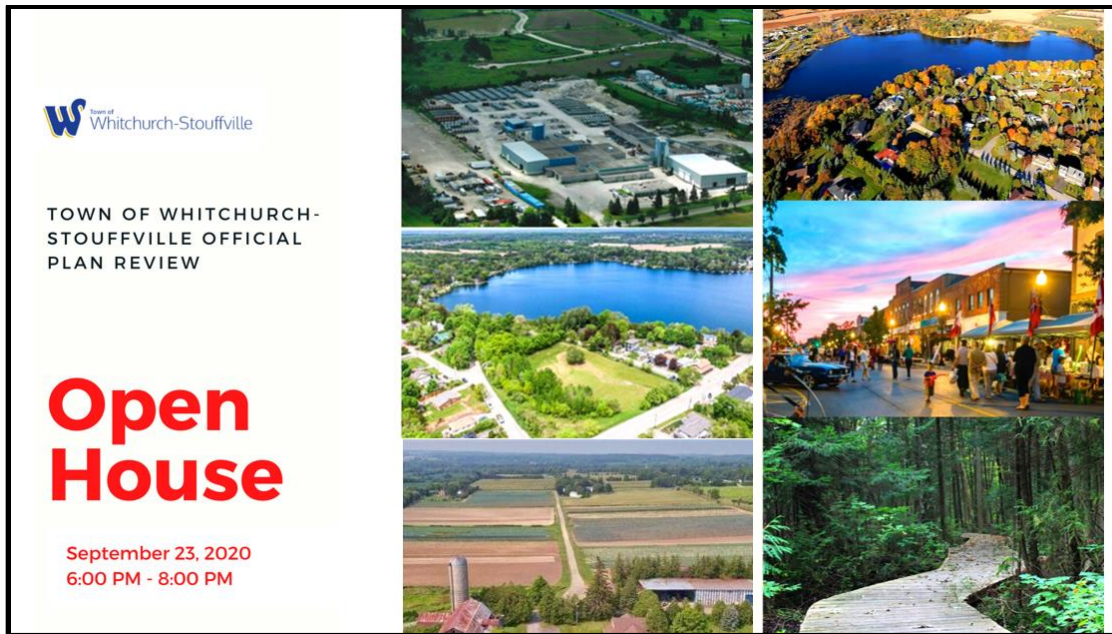


Figure 3. Online Public Open House Presentation

2.3.2 PUBLIC SURVEY

A survey was made available to the public before and after the Public Open House to collect additional feedback on the Community Vision and focus areas of the Official Plan Review. The Survey was available for 4 weeks, launching on September 11th and closing on October 9th, 2020. The Town received a total of 241 responses (which includes 35 hand written survey responses) and 1 written letter submission during this period of time.

The survey was available for completion both online through the project's website (<https://cometogetherws.ca/opr>) and in-person, with hard copies available at Town facilities, including the Leisure Centre, Town Hall and Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum. A printed copy of the survey was also distributed to all Whitchurch-Stouffville Residents in the Community Magazine called "On the Road with Whitchurch-Stouffville." Figure 4 shows how the survey appeared on the project website.

The survey questions and a summary of all responses are discussed in detail in Section 3 of this Report and referenced in Appendix E.

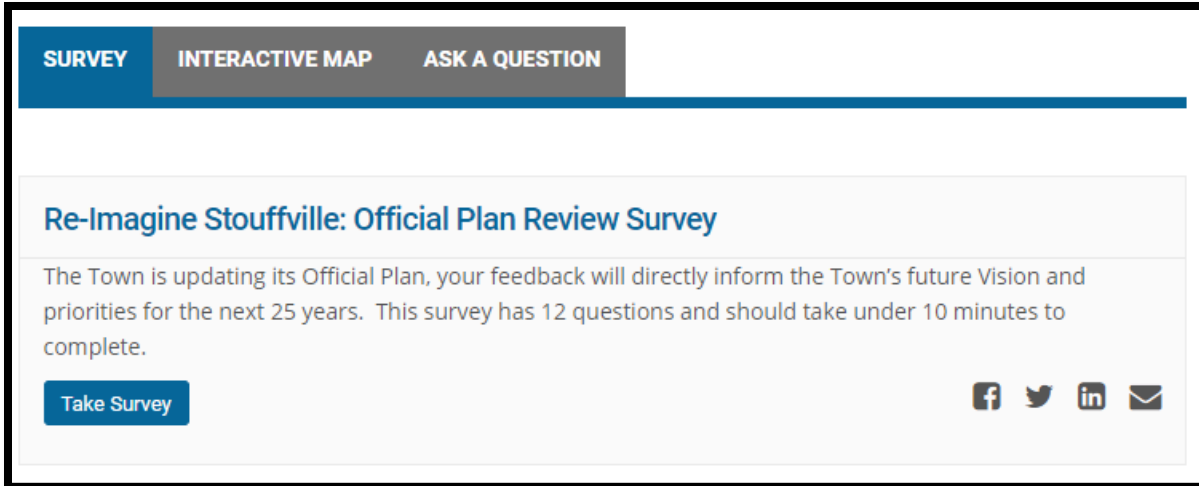


Figure 4. Survey posted on cometogtherws.ca/opr

2.3.3 INTERACTIVE MAPPING


As an innovative method to gain public feedback, an interactive mapping tool was used to gather insight on how the community envisions the Town's future. Feedback was collected from participants who uploaded a photo or comment to a map to identify what they love about the Town, or they would like to see as a priority for the future. The mapping area for this activity included the entire Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The interactive mapping tool was available on the project website from September 11th to October 9th. During this time a total of 14 responses were received. Feedback collected by the Town from this tool is discussed further in Section 3 of this Report. Below, Figure 5 shows how the interactive mapping tool appeared to participants on the project website.

SURVEY
INTERACTIVE MAP
ASK A QUESTION

What Does Stouffville's Future Mean to You?

[f](#)
[t](#)
[in](#)
[✉](#)

6 days



What is your vision for the future of Whitchurch-Stouffville? Tell us by selecting one or more of the options below and add a photo or a comment.

What you would like to see as a priority for the future? You can drop pins on this map regarding any or all of the following topics:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Culture
- Environment
- Community Services and Health
- Agriculture
- Business
- Other – did we miss anything? What else do you love, or want to change?

How to Drop a Pin?

- Zoom into the area you would like to place a pin by using the + or...
[Continue reading](#)

Go to Map

Figure 5. Interactive Mapping Tool

3 WHAT WE HEARD

The following section provides a summary of what was heard during Phase 1 of the OPR.

3.1 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

During the August 13, 2020 SAC and TAC Visioning Workshops, live polling and open facilitated discussion was used to inform stakeholders and collect feedback on the Town's OPR policy directions. Both of the TAC and SAC members were asked the same questions.

In general, feedback collected from the range of stakeholders in the SAC highlighted the importance of **preserving and leveraging natural areas and agricultural practices**, because it provides Whitchurch-Stouffville with a safe and healthy future. During the workshop, the desire to provide **a mix of housing typologies, improve mobility options** and reflect the Town's **growing diversity** was also highlighted as important considerations for the Town's future vision. The results from the SAC Visioning Workshop are summarized in a table provided in Appendix A.

The feedback collected from the TAC focused on the importance of natural heritage linkages, the preservation of natural areas such as wetlands and parks, encouraging active transportation, and providing a mix of employment uses in key areas of the Town. TAC members also discussed the future challenges that face the Town with respect to **climate change, the ongoing development and growth management needs, as well as increased pressure on the Town's existing infrastructure**. The TAC also highlighted the importance of including the Town's **diverse communities** when envisioning its future success. The results from the TAC Visioning Workshop are summarized in a table provided in Appendix B.

3.2 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The online Public Open House held on September 23rd highlighted the following key concerns and interests among residents in the Town:

- Manage current and future growth;
- Preserve natural environment and agricultural lands;
- Improve infrastructure;
- Create walkable communities; and
- Apply appropriate densities across the Town and provide good urban design in settlement areas.

A majority of participants were most interested in hearing from the Town about population growth and topics related to housing and employment, with several other participants interested in speaking about the natural environment and agriculture. A majority of Open House participants **strongly agreed** that settlement areas in the Town have changed significantly since 2016 and that more can be done to develop and improve the Town's settlement areas (Appendix C). A variety of land use planning objectives were presented during the Open House and the top three

All of the results from the Public Open House Live Poll are summarized in Appendix C.

Additional feedback was received during the Question and Answer Period of the Open House, which covered the topic areas of climate change, growth and infrastructure, economic development, complete communities and reconciliation with Indigenous communities. A detailed record of the question and answer period is provided in Appendix D.

3.3 SURVEY

After analysis of the 241 survey responses and one written letter, the common theme emerging from survey participants was that there is a significant interest in the future of the Town as it relates to population growth and the impact population growth will have on existing infrastructure, traffic congestion and the supply of parks, open spaces and natural areas.

When asked how survey participants and public open house participants heard about the project, more than half relied on social media notifications and approximately 29% indicated that the survey and/or public meeting was found in the Town's Magazine.

Generally, survey participants voted in favor of preserving the Town's natural resources and environmental areas, including farmlands, as a top priority. A majority of survey responses on questions related to transportation and complete communities, indicates that walkable communities and future priorities that meet the changing demographics of the Town are important to the community.

When asked about the community vision for the future, the top three general priorities across all survey participants was neighbourhood character, infrastructure and design and culture (Figure 8). This indicates that the protection of neighbourhood character, through good planning and design principles and ensuring that future growth has adequate municipal servicing and infrastructure (water, roads, wastewater, utilities) is most important to the community. When asked the same question but with the focus on living in a healthy community, the top three priorities across all survey participants was connectivity to natural spaces, access to local food, and access to a variety of transportation options (cycling, walking, hiking). Those participants who provided other responses indicated that climate change, Indigenous reconciliation and a community that strives to meet the principles of diversity and inclusion are top priorities.

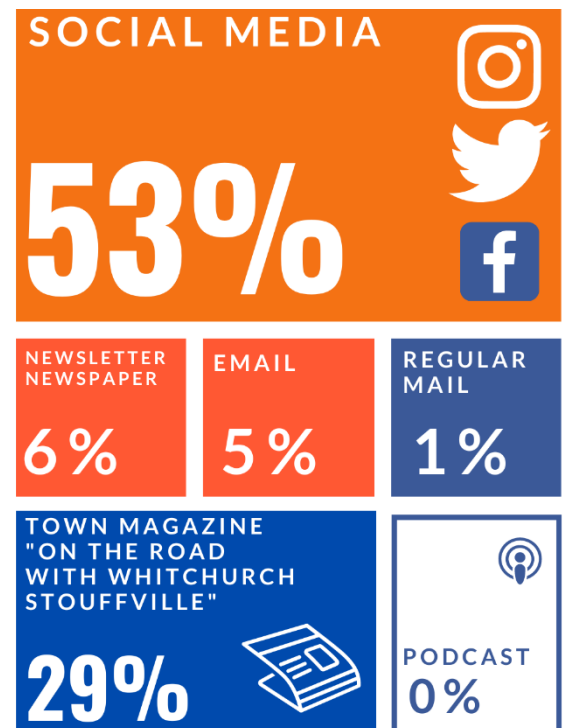
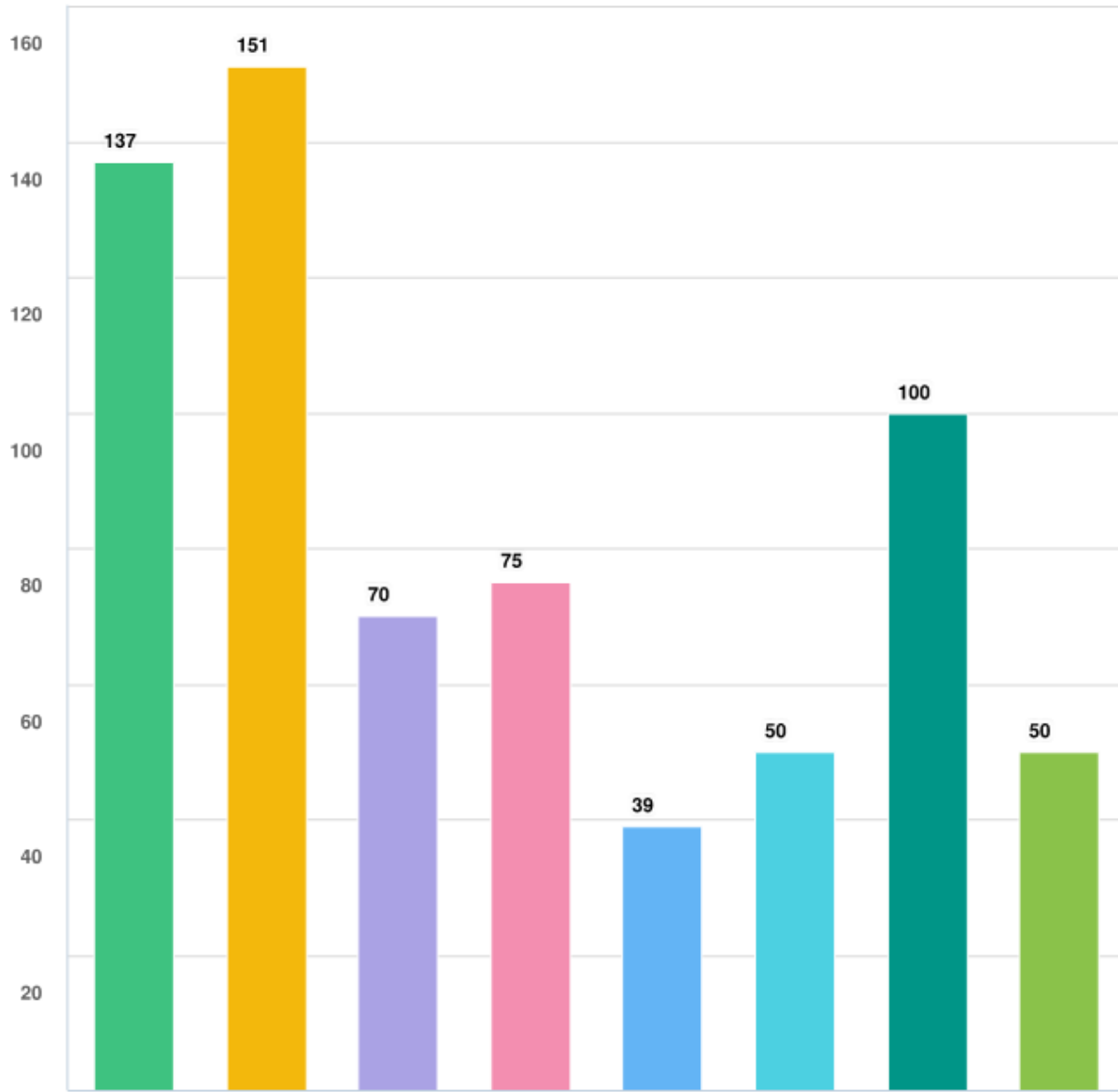


Figure 7. Percent of people notified by various communication tactics

When thinking about the next 25 years, what top three (3) priorities come to mind?



Question options

- Infrastructure: Providing adequate water, waste water and utility services
- Neighbourhood Character: Protecting neighbourhood character and countryside
- Employment Areas: Providing enough land mix of employment opportunities
- Mobility Options: Transit and Active Transportation Options
- Density: Intensification as a priority (higher buildings, mixed use)
- Affordable Housing: mixed live-work options
- Design and Culture: Ensuring that design standards (e.g. maximum height) are appropriate and enforced
- Other (please specify)

Figure 8. Top three general priorities over the next 25 years

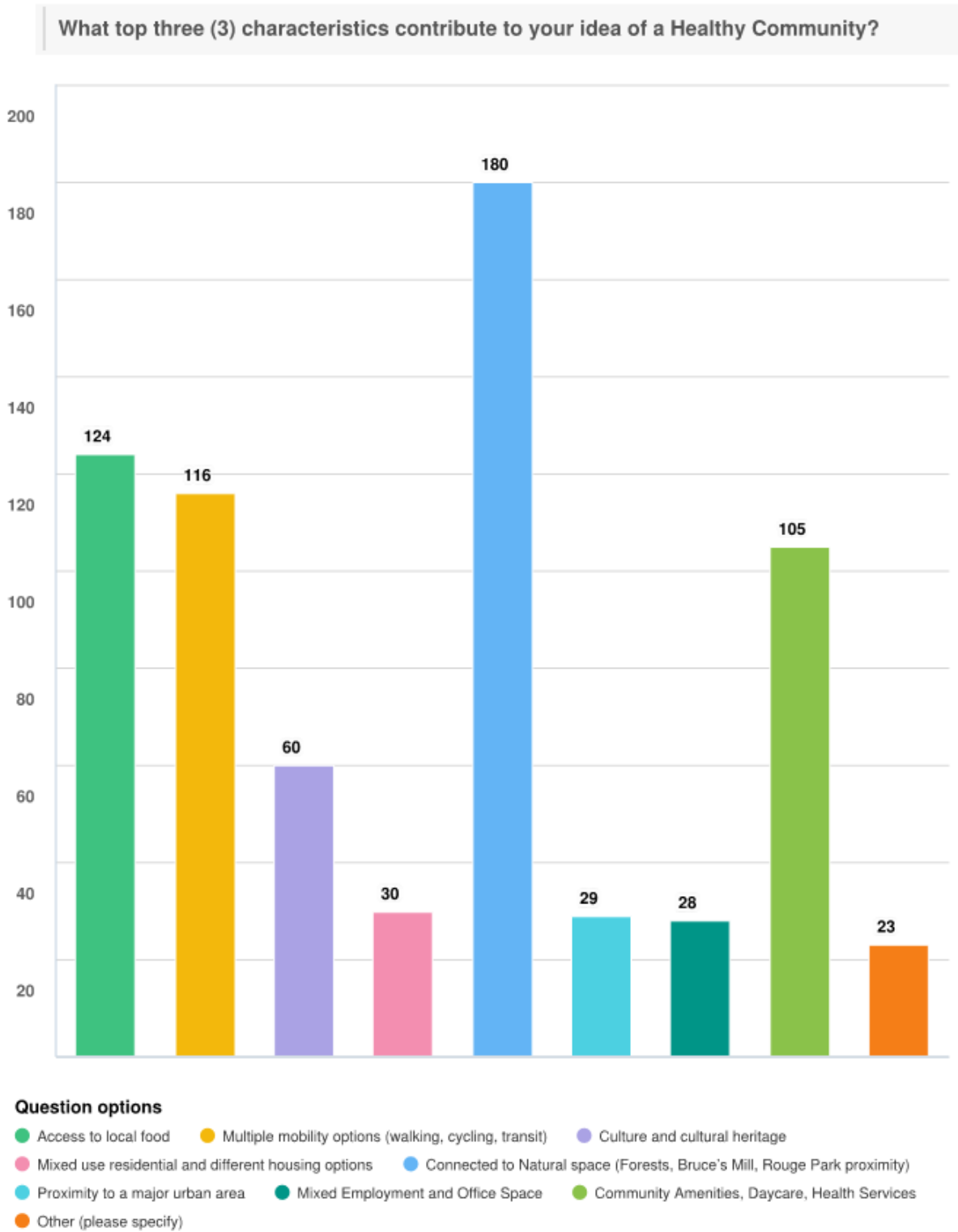


Figure 9. Top three priorities for a healthy community

When asked about the Town’s current vision, the most popular term that resonated with participants was “preserve natural resources and environmental area” with 175 votes, followed by “safe” and “healthy or friendly” with 170 votes. These results are shown in Figure 10 below.

**Which of the key terms used in the Vision Statement are most important to you?
Select all that apply.**

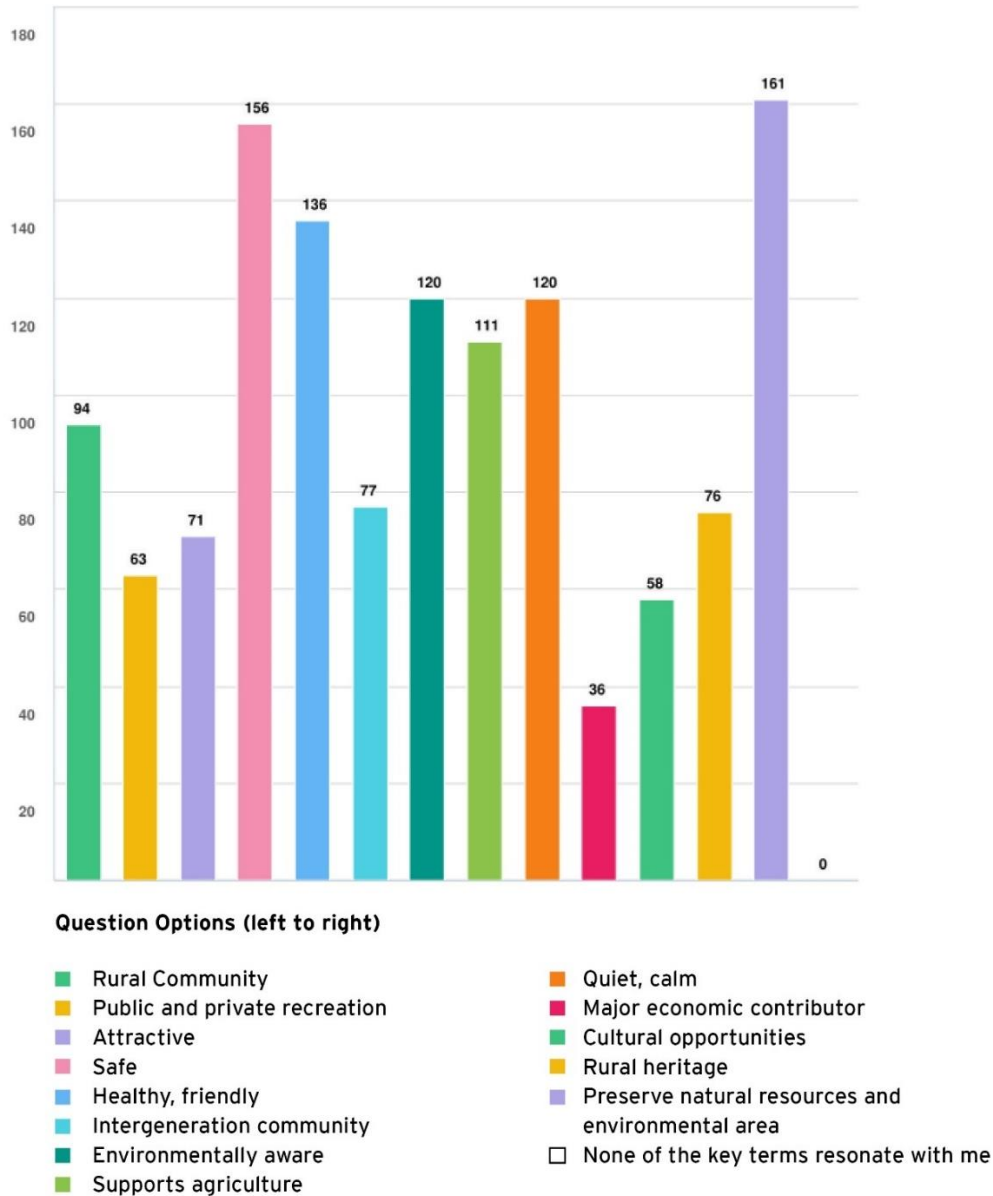


Figure 10. Key Vision Terms Most Important to Participants

For further details, all response data from the survey can be found in Appendix E.

3.4 INTERACTIVE MAPPING FEEDBACK

Feedback received from the interactive mapping tool primarily discussed growth management, complete communities and natural areas for the Town. Participants suggested the Town should prioritize the following:

- Walkable communities and pedestrian-friendly measures to slow traffic;
- Preserve the downtown area of Main Street as an economic and cultural hub;
- Promote economic development opportunities in other areas of the Town, such as near Lincolnville GO; and
- Preserve environmental lands and farmlands.

To provide some context for participants, Town staff added comments to the interactive map to highlight key areas in the Town. Comments were made to show Highway 404, Lincolnville, Stouffville, Highway 48, Vandorf, Gormley, Ballantrae-Musselman's Lake, the Gateway and Western Approach Area, as well as some of the Town's agricultural lands and significant natural heritage features.

For further details, all response data from the mapping activity can be found in Appendix F.

3.5 ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

In addition to the public open house, survey and interactive mapping activity, the Town received one letter from a member of the public expressing their interest in the project and input regarding the Town's future. Similar to other feedback received from the public and stakeholders, the letter highlighted the Town's growing traffic congestion and its resulting safety concerns for pedestrians, as well as the importance of protecting green spaces, forests, trails and farmlands.

4 ANALYSIS

Feedback received and documented in Section 3 has been organized thematically and analyzed to provide the Town with recommendations for the Official Plan's Guiding Principles and Vision Statement. This section ensures that input collected over the course of Phase 1 of the OPR can be incorporated into the Draft vision, guiding principles and policy directions of the OPR.

4.1 GENERAL FEEDBACK

Upon further analysis of the survey responses, question and answer period at the Open House, Stakeholder Meetings and interactive mapping, letters and emails received by the Town and the following sub-section documents general feedback received and what it means to the Town's Official Plan Review and what this means in each of the focus areas that the Town will expand upon during the next Phase (Phase 2) of the Official Plan.



The top three key messages, most frequently raised during Phase 1 Consultation focused on:

- 1) Ensuring infrastructure and community services meet the needs of a growing population while providing a mix of employment options and affordable housing options;
- 2) Ensure that planning and design of future settlement areas, major corridors, and transportation options support walkable, inclusive and sustainable and complete communities with a particular focus on Main Street; and
- 3) Preservation of the natural environment, rural character and farmland with focus on protecting the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and York Regional Forest.

The following is an analysis of the core topic areas raised when being asked about the future of the Town and what has changed the most since 2016.

Managing Land Use Change

The greatest number of comments and feedback received from the public was with respect to the areas of the Town experiencing the greatest change and the important areas of focus for the future. With respect to areas of the Town facing the greatest change since the 2016 census, it is evident that infrastructure upgrades, traffic congestion and improving the economic prosperity and vibrancy of Main Street are topic areas across the Town that have seen great change since 2016.

More specifically, there is a concern that community and infrastructure services (e.g. leisure and recreation facilities, roads, water services, programs, public pools, schools) cannot keep up with the ongoing population growth and require more attention. Analysis of feedback also indicates that Main Street and surrounding central Town areas are undergoing significant change and ongoing construction and require thoughtful and well planned development, parking and employment opportunities while respecting the cultural and built heritage. In contrast, a few participants indicated that surrounding municipalities like Markham, continue to grow and offer employment opportunities, adding to the regional economic competitiveness. Growth across bordering municipalities of Whitchurch-Stouffville may also be seen an important need to continue to protect and increase the connectivity of greenspace and natural areas, such as the York Regional Forests as well as agricultural lands.

Transportation and Transit

Areas along Main Street, Hoover Park Drive West, Highway 404, Highway 48, 9th Line and 10th line and major arterial roads were areas presented by members of the public as facing increased traffic congestion and change. Although less frequently raised by participants, increased transit, mobility, and active transportation opportunities are an important aspect for the future of the Town.

Housing, Diversity and Reconciliation

Some feedback received indicates that there is a need to provide a better mix of housing options, welcoming in new and diverse populations and providing affordable housing options for future generations and seniors. Increased attention can be made to reconcile relationships with Indigenous communities and provide policies that support inclusion and equity.

Employment Lands and Agriculture

Although less frequently raised by members of the public, an important topic included the need to support local businesses and protect farming. There was evidence that farm land north of Bloomington Road is a general area of importance and that the Town has some of the more arable land in all of Ontario. There is a lack of local businesses in the eastern areas of the Town and diversification of employment lands and provision of new locations for employment was recommended as a way to reduce travel time for future residents.

Natural Environment

The need for more greenspace, parks and natural areas is a topic raised by some participants. Natural linkages across a variety of existing environmental areas was a topic frequently raised by the TAC and SAC and was generally noted by members of the public. Participants also ranked climate change and reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions as one of the highest priorities of the Town for planning for the future of the environment during live polling at the public open house.

The key messages received from open-ended questions with the public and stakeholders provides insight for the Town's goals and objectives for the future. Feedback is organized into common themes and is summarized in Section 4.2.

4.2 VISIONING AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To ensure the Official Plan reflects the community's vision for managing growth and change over the next 25 years, the following key messages were identified by stakeholders:

- Balance growth and natural areas; feedback shows that many residents appreciate the slow and rural pace of Whitchurch-Stouffville, while others wish to see intensification and more urban amenities.
- Preserve natural areas, resources and farmlands, as this is considered part of the Town's identity by many residents.
- Reflect and celebrate the Town's changing and growing communities; inclusion and equity for all residents regardless of background, age, gender, race, ability, etc.
- Create complete, walkable communities with affordable housing options.
- Encourage a range of economic opportunities and job creation within the Town.
- Maintain safe, healthy, and friendly communities.

4.2 PLANNING FOR GROWTH

To ensure the Official Plan prioritizes strategic growth, accommodates population and employment forecasts, and plans for future infrastructure needs, the most prominent directions identified through consultation were:

- Improve infrastructure in order to meet the demands of future growth; members of the stakeholder and technical advisory committees identified water and wastewater infrastructure and roads as currently being under pressure.
- Allow a mix of employment and office uses; opportunities such as agri-tourism were identified to expand agricultural practices.
- Manage growth in Settlement Areas.
- Housing and new developments should co-exist with other development needs of the Town (i.e. cultural heritage and built heritage balanced with new mixed use, affordable housing and new community facilities (library, daycare, healthcare) with careful consideration for height and density).



4.3 PLANNING FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

To ensure the Official Plan works to protect and enhance the Town's natural features such as agricultural and rural lands, the natural heritage system, water resources and mineral aggregates, stakeholders identified the following key items to be considered:

- Preserve natural features within the Town, such as conservation areas, parks, trails, wetlands, the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and farmlands; based on feedback received, it was made abundantly clear that the community prioritizes natural, open and agricultural lands.
- Create linkages between natural heritage features.
- Ensure harmony between growth and preservation.
- Reduce emissions and improve the Town's impact on climate change by encouraging sustainable practices.
- Maintain the Town's strong agricultural community to provide access to local food.



4.4 PLANNING FOR COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

To ensure the Official Plan encourages complete and mixed-use communities, meet's the Town's housing needs, promotes downtown vitality and urban design, preserves cultural heritage resources and protects parks, trails and open spaces, the following prominent issues were voiced by stakeholders:

- Encourage a mix of uses, including a variety of housing typologies, employment uses and community facilities.
- Provide affordable housing options for all residents, including seniors and young adults.
- Allow for a balance of employment and residential uses.
- Promote active transportation and transit options that support walkable communities.



- Manage density and building heights was raised. Participants acknowledge that in order to protect the natural environmental areas of the Town that growth and new development is required, however, there is an interest to still preserve rural character, and ensure that those areas designated for future growth are well designed.
- Manage urban sprawl was raised. This feedback is directly related to the request to manage density and design while preserving natural areas, it also was raised within the context of Town boundary expansion and the growth of nearby area municipalities. It indicates that the Town has an opportunity to work closely with area municipalities to ensure that regional natural linkages are preserved, and a balance of growth is directed to areas that can accommodate intensification.
- Maintain neighbourhood character and particularly rural character is important to participants. The growth of Main Street and the major settlement areas can be balanced with rural land uses to ensure that there are a variety of landscapes for communities that wish to live in the countryside.
- Improve urban design on Main Street and beautify major local streets and corridor areas across the Town. This indicates that local economic opportunities need to be realized in core areas of the Town and can be supported by improving the urban design of major town centers.
- Create linkages between parks, trails and open spaces indicates the importance of the regional network of trails, watercourses, and habitat across the Town, area municipalities and provincial designated areas such as the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine.
- Celebrate the community's diversity and cultural heritage and acknowledge and focus on reconciliation with Indigenous communities.

4.5 GENERAL TECHNICAL / HOUSEKEEPING UPDATES

To ensure the Official Plan is up-to-date and successful, the following items were voiced by stakeholders:

- Align policy directions with Provincial and Regional plans.
- Encourage collaboration among agencies.
- Assist the Town in meeting its overall objectives through clear and concise policy directions.



5 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In June 2019 the Town released an introductory discussion paper for the Official Plan Review. This paper included a review of the Communications Plan objectives and presented the Vision and Guiding Principles of the current Official Plan. The information in the discussion paper as it relates to the Vision Statement is copied below for reference:

The Town's current Official Plan is based on the following 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.*

The following guiding principles support the Town's vision, which are further articulated through various objectives:

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

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

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

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

The policies of the Official Plan seek to implement the vision statement and principles through policies related to an Environmental Conservation Strategy, a Land Use Strategy, Functional Community Services (Parks, Roads, Trails, Waste Management, Wellhead Protection), and Social, Cultural and Design Directions (Housing, Community Improvement, Heritage, Community Design).

5.1 REIMAGINE STOUFFVILLE – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISING THE VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Based on feedback provided from consultation activities during Phase 1 of the OPR, and informed by the existing Vision and Guiding Principles, the following is proposed for the new Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan.

5.2.1 VISION STATEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of feedback received in the public survey, stakeholder meetings and public open house demonstrate that the Town's current Official Plan Vision appears to meet community needs, and speaks to rural character and the natural environment, however, it requires an update that is more concise and reflective of the innovative future direction of the Town and the changing priorities of the community.

When asked why the Vision Statement does not resonate with participants, the following main factors were raised by a majority of survey and open house participants:

- **Diversity:** The Town has an opportunity to attract more multicultural retailers and the growing population is more diverse.
- **Population and Economic Growth:** Several comments were made regarding both the positive and negative impact population growth has had on the changing character of the Town. Several participants indicated that the small-town character is no longer present. Others encourage change and accept that the Town is no longer primarily rural. The presence of new residents, families, population diversity and the importance of supporting the local economy were raised significantly, while few responses indicated that the Town is experiencing too much change. In general, the majority of responses identified the need to diversify jobs and support local businesses as part of the Town's future economic growth while balancing growth with the preservation of the small-town/rural character.
- **General Language Used:** In general, survey participants indicated that the overall vision statement can offer more concise and focused language, more innovative messaging, enabling the Town to have a stronger message for the future.


When asked about the Town's future Vision, and what should be included, a majority of survey responses concluded that the following key messages can be incorporated to update the Town's Vision:

- Support economic development and job diversity with a focus on supporting local businesses.
- Acknowledge and support the importance of the Town's changing demographic diversity and multiculturalism.
- Ensure that while population growth is occurring, the preservation of cultural heritage and Indigenous characteristics remain a priority.
- That all policies in the Official Plan demonstrate the importance of the preservation of the natural environment, protection of wildlife, and natural linkages, as well as the Oak Ridges Moraine and valuable agricultural lands.

- To support innovation and enhance the design of Main Street and main settlement areas for future opportunities, while ensuring that there is still a balance of affordable housing options.
- To support healthy community building by ensuring public safety and improved active transportation options to meet changing demands of climate change and public health matters (i.e. pandemic).

The following is a revised Vision Statement for Council and public feedback:

Community Vision



The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will be a safe, healthy, and inclusive community with rural character, supporting future generations by providing a range of community services, affordable housing, employment and active transportation opportunities.

Future growth will be directed to key settlement areas which will be designed to a high standard of excellence, while respecting cultural heritage resources and neighbourhood character.

The Town will act as a leader in mitigating the impacts of climate change and ensure that existing and future infrastructure services are resilient and meet the needs of a growing community.

The Town will support and enhance the development of parks and open spaces, while providing natural linkages across natural areas, including the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine.

The principles of the Official Plan set a framework for future planning in order for local decision-making to adhere to and meet the future community vision. The following proposed guiding principles will support the Community’s Vision and are grounded in 6 pillars (following page).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Public Health and Safety and Community Services

Decisions made with respect to the future of the Town should protect and enhance complete communities by prioritizing public health and safety and ensuring that the Town provides and manages community services (healthcare facilities, seniors care, daycare, recreation and community facilities).



Climate Change and Resilience

Any change in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville should consider its impact to greenhouse gas emissions, encourage sustainable design practices, and ensure that infrastructure and development services are resilient to future impacts (i.e. health and safety, climate change, conservation of natural resources).



Environmental Protection and Improvement

Any change in the Town should be undertaken in a manner which will preserve and improve the quality and quantity of the natural environment and provide adequate parks, open spaces and natural linkages.



Economic Prosperity & Financial Accountability

Decisions made with respect to the future of the Town's economy will be transparent, accountable and financially feasible. Decisions will support economic sustainability by providing a range of employment and agricultural job opportunities and a focus on supporting the local economy while respecting capital and operating costs.



Design Excellence and Cultural Heritage Preservation

Decisions made with respect to the future of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville should meet a high level of standard for design, provide for a suitable range of housing options and affordability, while respecting cultural heritage and conserving the rural character of the Town.



Accountable, Inclusive and Equitable

Decisions made in the Town will continue to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and embrace a diversity of cultures, in order to recognize and support a fair, equitable and inclusive community, by providing equal opportunity and accessibility across all dimensions of diversity.



APPENDIX

A

SAC Visioning Workshop MentiMeter Results

Question	Responses
What Organization or Group do you represent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 55+ Club - Small business owners - Committee of Adjustment - Heritage Committee - Central Counties Tourism - Stouffville Chamber of Commerce - Accessibility Advisory Committee - York Region Federation of Agriculture - York Region Housing Services - York Regional Police - York Region Public Health
What do you love most about the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main Street - Small Town feel with large City facilities - Open spaces, parks and trails - Diversity - Convenience - Heritage - Festivals
What areas of the Town do you think are facing the greatest pressure for development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highway 48 - Highway 404 - Village of Stouffville - Downtown - Gormley - Ballantrae - Hoover Park - Agricultural and environmental lands
What issues or opportunities are facing the Town with respect to the Natural Environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development near farming and wetland areas - Environmental heritage can be leveraged in creating sustainable tourism - Opportunities to create linkages between green space areas - Ability to balance natural space and intensification
What top three characteristics contribute to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed use residential and different housing options (8 responses)

<p>your idea of a Complete Community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connected to natural space (7 responses) - Community amenities (6 responses) - Culture and cultural heritage (5 responses) - Walkability score (5 responses) - Mixed employment and office space (3 responses) - Access to local food (1 response) - Proximity to a major urban area (1 response)
<p>With respect to future changes in areas facing pressure for development, please rank your top priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Mobility options - 2nd: Infrastructure - 3rd: Affordable housing - 4th: Employment areas - 5th: Density - 6th: Neighbourhood character - 7th: Design and culture - 8th: Other
<p>Over the next 20 years, what top three goals should the Town focus on with respect to the Natural Environment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Parks, trails, open spaces and protected areas - 2nd: Reducing emissions and improving the Town's impact on changing climate - 3rd: Wetlands, watercourses and water quality - 4th: Preservation of the Oak Ridges Moraine - 5th: Expanding the Greenbelt and protecting the countryside - 6th: Improving air quality and planting more trees
<p>What are your goals for the Town's future in order to build a healthy, complete community? What specific examples would you like to see?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable housing - Maintaining a strong agricultural community - Mixed use communities and community facilities - Balancing growth and infrastructure
<p>What is the community's top priority now and in the future?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability - Mobility - People and inclusiveness - Harmony of growth and preservation
<p>What Key Terms come to mind when you think of Stouffville?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcoming - Agriculture

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friendly
Do you think that the current Vision Statement meets current and future objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Somewhat (5 responses) - Yes (4 responses) - No (1 response)
If the Vision Statement does not resonate with you, why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs to be more “punchy” - Include the diversity of culture and cultural heritage
Which of the key terms should we keep as part of the Vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe Community (10 responses) - Healthy / Friendly (9 responses) - Cultural Opportunities (9 responses) - Intergenerational Community (8 responses) - Preserve Natural Environment (7 responses) - Environmentally Aware (6 responses) - Attractive (6 responses) - Rural Community (5 responses) - Supports Agriculture (5 responses) - Major Economic Contributor (5 responses) - Rural Heritage (3 responses) - Quiet, Calm (3 responses)



APPENDIX

B

TAC Visioning Workshop MentiMeter Results

Question	Responses
What organization or department do you represent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural environment (33% of respondents) - Transportation (25% of respondents) - Development and buildings (17% of respondents) - Other (i.e. School boards) (17% of respondents) - Social and cultural (8% of respondents)
What would you like to learn from participating in this group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure alignment with Regional plans - Ensure collaboration with among agencies - Assist the Town in meeting its objectives
What areas of the Town do you think are facing the greatest pressure for development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highway 48 - Highway 404 - Village of Stouffville - Downtown
What issues or opportunities are facing the Town with respect to Natural Environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an open space and natural heritage linkages - Ensure adequate protection of natural heritage systems
What top three characteristics contribute to your idea of a Complete Community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed employment and office spaces (9 responses) - Connected to natural spaces (8 responses) - Walkability (8 responses) - Mixed use residential (7 responses) - Community amenities (4 responses) - Culture and cultural heritage (2) - Other (1) - Access to local food (0 responses) - Proximity to a major urban area (0 responses)
With respect to future changes in areas facing pressure for development, please rank your top priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Infrastructure - 2nd: Mobility options - 3rd: Employment areas - 4th: Neighbourhood character - 5th: Affordable housing - 6th: Density - 7th: Other - 8th: Design and culture

<p>Over the next 20 years, what top three goals should the Town focus on with respect to the Natural Environment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Wetland, watercourses and water quality - 2nd: Parks, trails, open spaces and protected areas - 3rd: Reducing emissions and improving the Town's impact on changing climate - 4th: Preservation of the Oak Ridges Moraine - 5th: Improving air quality and planting more trees - 6th: Expanding the Greenbelt and protecting countryside
<p>What are your goals for the Town's future in order to build a healthy, complete community? What specific examples would you like to see?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active transportation, connectivity and transit - Access to broadband internet across the Town - Mixed use communities and community facilities - Variety of housing - Balance of employment and residential growth
<p>Do you think that the current Vision Statement meets current and future objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Somewhat (13 responses) - Yes (0 responses) - No (0 responses)
<p>If the Vision Statement does not resonate with you, why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment and transit - Town's diversity - Climate change resiliency and sustainability - Town needs are focused on community areas (i.e. too rural)
<p>Which of the key terms should we keep as part of the Vision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy / Friendly (10 responses) - Preserve Natural Resources (10 responses) - Safe (9 responses) - Support Agriculture (9 responses) - Rural Heritage (8 responses) - Major Economic Contributor (8 responses) - Public and Private Recreation (8 responses) - Attractive (6 responses) - Rural Community (5 responses) - Intergenerational Community (5 responses) - Environmentally Aware (5 responses) - Cultural Opportunities (5 responses) - Quiet, Calm (4 responses)

What is the community's top priority now and in the future?

- Job creation and employment
- Creating complete communities and growth management
- Affordable housing
- Climate change resiliency
- Integrate natural and built environment



APPENDIX

C

Public Open House MentiMeter Results

Question	Responses
How did you hear about this meeting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media (8 responses) - Other (i.e. E-mail) (6 responses) - Town website (4 responses) - Newspaper, flyer, or newsletter (5 responses) - Word of Mouth (2 responses) - Town Podcast (0 responses)
What focus area of the Town's Official Plan are you most interested in?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth (10 responses) - Natural Environment and Agriculture (7 responses) - General Project Information (5 responses) - Public Health & Community Services (1 response) - Transportation, Transit and Trails (0 responses)
Tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Town since 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Settlement areas in the Town have changed significantly since 2016 (Respondents generally agreed with this statement) - More can be done to develop/improve the Town's settlement areas (Respondents generally agreed with this statement) - I have not noticed any change in the Town's settlement areas since 2016 (Respondents generally disagreed with this statement)
When thinking about future development, please rank your top priorities in terms of what you would like to see in the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Improved Infrastructure - 2nd: Increase Density and Good Design in Settlement Areas - 3rd: Preserving the Natural Environment - 4th: Mobility Options - 5th: Increase and Mix of Employment Areas - 6th: Creation of Mixed Uses and Affordable Housing - 7th: Other (i.e. Farmland Preservation, Reconciliation, Rural Internet, Accessibility)
What top three goals should the Town focus on with respect to the Natural Environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walkability (16 responses) - Connection to Natural Spaces (12 responses) - Mix of Uses and Different Housing Options (10 responses)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed Employment Uses and Office Space (10 responses) - Access to Local Food (7 responses) - Culture and Cultural Heritage (7 responses) - Community Amenities (7 responses) - Close to a Major Urban Area (3 responses) - Other (1 response)
<p>What top three characteristics contribute to your idea of a Complete Community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st: Reduce emissions and improving the Town's corporate response to climate change - 2nd: Create more parks trails and plant trees - 3rd: Create/protect wetlands, watercourses and water quality - 4th: Protect wildlife habitat and natural areas - 5th: Other
<p>What top three words come to mind when you imagine what the Town should look like in 25 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Figure 6 below.



APPENDIX

D

Public Open House Question & Answer Results

Public Open House - Question and Answer Results

Following the presentation and MentiMeter polling, further feedback was received during the Public Open House Question and Answer Activity, which covered topic areas of climate change, growth and infrastructure, economic development, complete communities and reconciliation.

Climate Change

The Town's targets regarding energy and emissions was discussed, which will be integrated into the OPR based on direction provided from the York Region Climate Change Action Plan (2020).

Growth & Infrastructure

Multiple attendees asked about the 404 Highway Corridor Expansion and how this will be incorporated into the OPR. It was confirmed that the employment designations under the 404 Highway Corridor Expansion project will be considered as part of the OPR.

This activity also confirmed that updated employment and population projection numbers for the Town of Whitchurch Stouffville is anticipated to be released in Summer 2021.

Regarding the Region's ongoing update to their Comprehensive Water Supply Network, it was confirmed that this will be considered as part of the growth management component of the OPR.

Concerns were raised regarding the current state of roads and services as well as impacts to this infrastructure from ongoing new development in the Town. It was advised that the OPR will take this into account and that specialized technical documents such as the Transportation Master Plan and Water and Waste Water Master Plan will guide these improvements and future growth.

Economic Development

Given the current circumstances and impacts from COVID-19, questions were raised about how the Town will encourage a vibrant town centre and the resiliency of local businesses and recreation. It was advised that the Town recently passed a Community Improvement Plan and that the OPR will include policies that focus on the downtown area to support local businesses.

Complete Communities

The Town's urban design, particularly how to limit features such a large surface-area parking lots and "sterile" design, was discussed. This can be addressed through the OPR by establishing detailed and specific implementation policy. Further, receiving robust community feedback to understand the desired urban design and built form for the Town is critical.



The Town's changing demographics was also discussed, particularly regarding how the OPR can reflect the Town's growing diversity. This can be achieved by reflecting the diverse array of the Town's residents when developing the updated Vision and Guiding Principles for the new OP.

Reconciliation

As noted during the MentiMeter polling and this activity, recognizing Indigenous land rights and the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's calls to action are important topics for residents. The Town is engaging with Indigenous Communities as part of the OPR and is open to receive input on how to further these efforts.

RE-IMAGINE STOUFFVILLE

OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW- VIRTUAL PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

We are seeking your input on a new Vision and Guiding Principles for the Town's Official Plan to help plan the future of the Town for the next 25 years. Join us for our First Virtual Open House for the Town Official Plan Review.

When & Where?

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 @ 6:00PM – 8:00PM

Virtual Public Meeting link (from your computer, tablet or smartphone, hosted via GoTo Meeting): <https://bit.ly/32U62c2>

You can also dial in (users without internet): (647) 497-9391 with the access code: 755-649-701

Please pre-register using this link by September 21, 2020:

<https://bit.ly/31HQ5hL>

What is an Official Plan?

The Town's Official Plan is a policy document that provides direction on managing growth and land uses, the provision of infrastructure and services, and the conservation of natural and cultural resources. An Official Plan is important for the Town in order to inform the public about the municipality's general land use planning policies, and to make sure growth is coordinated and meets the community's current and future needs.

How Can We Re-imagine Stouffville's Vision for the Future?

A Vision is a community's goal for the future. The Official Plan Vision will help guide land use planning decisions and priorities for the next 25 years. The Town needs your important feedback on the issues facing the community.

Virtual Open House

During the Open House, there will also be an opportunity to provide comments using a live chat forum provided through the meeting link. Should you require any assistance, the Town can accommodate.

Additional Information:

For more information, or to pre-register, please contact Zahrah Khan, Policy Planner II at opreview@townofws.ca or (905) 640-1910 ext. 2329

Other ways you can participate:

We need your input throughout the Official Plan Review process. There are a number of ways you can stay engaged, receive updates and provide your input:

- Visit the project website at cometogetherws.ca/opr to:
 - Complete the Visioning Survey (hard copies of the survey can also be completed at the following Town facilities: Leisure Centre, Town Hall, WS Museum and WS Public Library)
 - Provide your comments using the online "Places Tool"
 - Obtain further information, regular study updates and materials
- Sign-up for our Interested Parties email list to receive our e-newsletter and notification of upcoming events by emailing opreview@townofws.ca
- Read the Town's On The Road Magazine for regular updates
- Follow us on Social Media
 - [Facebook - @WStouffville](https://www.facebook.com/WStouffville)
 - [Twitter - @TownofWS](https://twitter.com/TownofWS)
 - [Instagram - @TownofWS](https://www.instagram.com/TownofWS)



APPENDIX

E

Public Survey Results

Question	Responses
<p>How did you hear about the OPR?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Media (123 responses) - “On the Road in Whitchurch-Stouffville” magazine (69 responses) - Word of mouth (14 responses) - Other (11 responses) - Town website (7 responses) - Newspaper (7 responses) - Newsletter (4 responses) - Mail (3 responses) - Podcast (0 responses)
<p>What areas of the Town do you think are facing the greatest changes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General (84 responses) - Town Centre/Main Street (32 responses) - Periphery (23 responses) - Settlement Area (17 responses) - Natural Area (12 responses) - Transportation/Traffic/Mobility (13 responses) - Major Corridor (10 responses) - Employment Area (11 responses) - Housing (5 responses) - N/A (32 responses)
<p>When thinking about the next 25 years, what top three priorities come to mind?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood Character (151 responses) - Infrastructure (137 responses) - Design and Culture (100 responses) - Mobility Options (75 responses) - Employment Areas (70 responses) - Affordable Housing (50 responses) - Other (50 responses)

<p>When thinking about the Natural Environment and Agriculture over the next 25 years, what are your top priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Density (39 responses) - General (91 responses) - Preservation (58 responses) - Farmlands (23 responses) - Parks, Trails & Recreation (16 responses) - Greenbelt (4 responses) - Oak Ridges Moraine (4 responses) - Sustainable Practices (3 responses) - Wildlife (1 response) - N/A (37 responses)
<p>What top three characteristics contribute to your idea of a Healthy Community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connected to natural space (180 responses) - Access to local food (124 responses) - Multiple mobility options (116 responses) - Community amenities (105 responses) - Culture and cultural heritage (60 responses) - Mixed use residential and different housing options (30 responses) - Proximity to a major urban area (29 responses) - Mixed employment and office space (28 responses) - Other (23 responses)
<p>Over the next 25 years, what top three goals should the Town focus on?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks, Trails, Open Spaces and Protected Areas (143 responses) - Preservation of Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine (140 responses) - Community Services (73 responses) - Wetlands, Watercourses and Water Quality (76 responses) - Transportation Options and Transit (62 responses)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Mixed Employment Areas and Jobs (56 responses) - Reducing Emissions and Improving the Town's Impact on Climate Change (43 responses) - Improving Air Quality and Planting More Trees (44 responses) - Affordable Housing (38 responses) - Other (23 responses)
<p>Does this statement and key terms used to describe the Town's Vision resonate with the needs of the community for the future?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (128 responses) - Somewhat (96 responses) - No (8 responses)
<p>Which of the key terms used in the Vision Statement are most important to you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserve natural resources and environmental area (175 responses) - Safe (170 responses) - Healthy, friendly (148 responses) - Environmentally aware (135 responses) - Quiet, calm (134 responses) - Supports agriculture (124 responses) - Rural community (109 responses) - Intergenerational community (87 responses) - Rural heritage (87 responses) - Attractive (81 responses) - Public and private recreation (72 responses) - Cultural opportunities (65 responses) - Major economic contributor (40 responses) - None of these key terms resonate with me (0 responses)

If the Vision Statement does not resonate with you, why?

- We should expand and attract more multicultural retailers as population is growing and more diverse
- Without proper businesses here, we are not a major economic contributor. And that needs to change.
- Although we still have a lot of rural space, the Town itself has lost its small-town community look, feel and heritage.
- Population has grown and not just a farming community anymore.
- "Country close to the city" is rapidly becoming "Country paved over by the city". This needs to stop.
- It doesn't align with the amount of and type of development taking place right now or in the works.
- Changing too fast.
- I do not see this as a rural community.
- It needs to be much tighter — more concise. Current statement is saturated with random key words that dilute our purpose and vision.
- I worry that the stress for an "attractive" community pushes out things, or people, that others may deem "unattractive". I have had plenty neighbours complain that my unmanicured lawn is "unattractive" despite it being important for our local ecosystem. It puts superficial appearances above other things in the community.
- WS has become a suburban community with rural heritage. New growth is not based on the rural community, it's taking over the 'Country close to the city'.
- Economic contributor - we don't want factories built on farmland.
- We are fast becoming Markham north. We are losing the country feel.

- We should strive to be more than 'environmentally aware'; too many of the terms lack clarity and are open to interpretation; many are also pretty low hanging fruits/obvious statements, they don't indicate innovation.
- It will if the pledge to being "environmentally aware" is unpacked and truly observed.
- I don't feel like we need to focus on being a major economic contributor. Yes, the lands by the 401, but we don't need the density in town. Our roads can't handle it.
- Need to have more job opportunities in town and larger commercial tax base. Would like Stouffville to be self-sustainable like Uxbridge and less of a bedroom community.
- I care less about statements. Let's see some action. There is way too much emphasis on keeping everything the same. Towns need to grow, culture needs to be nurtured and economic plans executed on.
- Rural heritage. Let's focus on the future
- Quiet and calm is what you will find in a cemetery. I prefer thoughtful intensification that provides some excitement and reason to go downtown and enjoy the cultural and unique retail attractions.
- Quiet, calm. Stouffville is too quiet as is. The town would benefit from further intensification and better urban design, especially on main street.
- In 25 years, Stouffville would not be rural. Plan review should consider revising the vision to adopt a futuristic style.
- Can't say quiet with the train whistles through the night.
- Developing farm lands is not in keeping with our vision.
- I don't think that the term "Country close to the City" is accurate anymore. I think we have sprawled and lost a lot of our identity. It seems

like we grew too much too quickly. We need to protect our agriculture and greenspaces by investing in them before it's too late.

- The vision statement resonates; however, the facts don't follow the vision statement. Too many sub-divisions with very high-density housing. High-rise should be kept to a maximum 4 storey high. Stouffville is losing its charm.
- It sounds perfect to me. Only wondering if it is attractive enough to younger generation.
- The idea of a country / rural town is outmoded. Stouffville does not look like a rural town with all the condos, townhouses etc. Most residents have more affinity with Toronto and city life than rural life. Time to move on.
- Must focus on becoming more self-sustaining - jobs, community services, health care in proportion to residential. Not just residential.
- We are not really a rural community anymore.
- It doesn't reflect young growing families or cater to new age urban needs.
- Don't consider Stouffville as rural anymore with all the building happening in the south end we will become part of Markham soon at this rate.
- Too much development.
- The area is a key place for town meets country that is Stouffville's character. Why people live here.
- This is not reflective of the practices of our town.
- Concerned with all the subdivisions going up, that the "rural community, quiet, calm" statements will no longer apply.
- It does not limit the development of farm land.
- While it resonates, it is the anti-thesis of the push for growth constantly pursued.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are no longer rural. Rural denotes old and past its time. Rural to me means lack of connection between neighbours. - It does but I don't know enough about how all those things can happen without offsetting each other. For example, being quiet and calm but also being a major economic contributor. - The majority of Stouffville's population doesn't still reside in a rural setting. Focus on the town nestled among natural areas. - It is not specific enough in relation to recreation. Too much building to reflect the statement.
<p>What should be included in a new Vision statement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think there should be thoughtfulness around economic development. Stouffville is bound to grow, it's a beautiful city. In planning, there should be a greater focus on economic development as we grow. With economic development comes more opportunity for the town and its residents. I also think we should celebrate our natural spaces and improve them. - "Inclusive" a community that is inclusive and welcoming to all (regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, etc.). A community that makes an effort to ensure all people feel connected and a part of the community. - Employment. We need more jobs here so we are no longer a bedroom community. - Increased density that will bring better public transportation. Please keep in mind that the current health crisis may go on for a long time. People working from home may become the norm. Public transportation within the Town will be more important than transportation choices to Toronto. - Strong (meaning with teeth) Heritage protections for historical sites both indigenous and colonial including private buildings. Small town feeling

meaning rigid limits on heights and better planning that acknowledges we are not a city but a town.

- Opportunities for employment within the community.
- Maintaining the natural environment. Ensure we (i.e. our descendants) still have a planet to live on in 100 years.
- One additional point: Stouffville is way behind in places to eat. Most communities in Ontario have one eating place per 150 to 400 population. In Stouffville, it is only one eatery for 667 people!
- I think we are a diverse community on different levels not just the demographic. That should be celebrated and we shouldn't make it feel like we're striving for cookie cutter. I also think there's a gap in our perceived brand and what visitors, newcomers, long-time residents and business owners actually think of the town and the plans for the future.
- We don't need a new one.
- Diversity.
- With the aim of supporting the creation and preservation of small local businesses.
- Slower growth of cookie cutter housing. More affordable and senior housing.
- More focus on the economy.
- The intensification of housing and new developments for the near future should co-exist with the other key terms within the vision statement. All aspects of daily living should be expanded as well.
- Embracing diversity and using it as an asset.
- Wildlife.

- Words like growth, opportunity, heritage, natural, and safe.
- Embracing diversity, multiculturalism.
- Community focused.
- Diversity and sustainable growth balanced with current Vision statement.
- Quiet, rural.
- Implementation of the Vision.
- More retail and restaurants and cultural grocery stores.
- Preserving farm land and Oak Ridges Moraine.
- Preservation of farmlands.
- Diversity in growing population.
- Inclusive, equitable, multi-cultural.
- Safety and public transit.
- Innovation and leadership to protect our environment; culturally diverse; accessible; sustainable.
- Responsible, globally minded, growth.
- A far more robust environmental plan, something more fetching than just "aware".
- Diversity and inclusion.
- A safe, clean & quiet country outside the city that brings you back to nature.
- Country close to the city where families live, work and play. We nurture and celebrate our history, our heritage, our connection with nature and agriculture. We are a diverse, energetic and growing town with world class experiences for residents and visitors.

- The challenge is living that vision as we grow and welcome so many new people to town in a relatively short time. I think we are managing it so far. One thing not mentioned is our charitable natural.
- Safe and Engaged community.
- A bustling and thriving town centre.
- Support infrastructure development and attract economic development.
- Inclusion, cooperation and consultation with Indigenous communities.
- Environment and Wildlife.
- Preserving rural landscapes; Maintaining the environment and ecological footprint; Supporting local businesses; Environmental awareness; Quiet and peaceful; Supporting local agriculture.
- Protect the Forrest and green space. That is the charm of Stouffville/Ballantrae. A community in harmony with nature.
- A commitment to preservation of greenspace, agricultural land and dedication to "green" policies. Looking to develop recreation and outreach for Stouffville's youth.
- Protect aquifers, protect farmlands, mitigate climate change; a statement regarding commitment to addressing climate change.
- Sustainable, agricultural, conservation.
- Re-affirm connection to rural, but refocus it towards local food production and natural preservation.
- I believe a stronger emphasis on community support services, as well as a commitment to diversity and inclusion should be part of the new statement.

- Green community.
- Respect the wildlife.
- Welcoming to clean high-tech businesses. Opportunities for live/work space and home business. Welcoming to small business and startups. Cool cafes and restaurants with friendly ambience. A downtown vibe without downtown prices.
- Employment, development, inclusive, sustainable, complete.
- Building resilience to the climate crisis and developing a restoration culture.
- Growing families, community, urban amenities.
- Green environment and Heritage Buildings.
- Commitment to maintaining Stouffville's small-town charm while continuing to grow.
- Provide access to the services for growing community.
- Protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine, the York Regional Forest, and any remaining agricultural land.
- Innovative community in which to live, work and play.
- Rural/Country pride.
- Family oriented, safe, open spaces.
- Living standards.
- Listening to the community.
- A connection to the "rural" community/preservation of the history and natural resources/area.
- Not just "intergenerational" community but also include "inter-racial/inter-cultural" community

(African, Asian, etc.) that is more inclusive, reflective, relevant to growing non-Caucasian population so that there's no need to drive to Markham, etc. (eg. grocery stores that have international ingredients).

- A place to live and love.
- Let's be beautiful.
- Country Close to the City!
- Environmental protection, focused on well-being of residents, mix of urban and rural, supporting agriculture, forward-thinking.
- The option of variety and choice.
- "Stouffville: Where the People make the Place". The people make the community what it is.
- Innovative.
- I would not change a thing!
- Define culture and cultural heritage clearly - we have our town ancestral history, culture + heritage to preserve + respect plus respect and appreciation for new diverse cultures. All good some may not think the ancestral heritage is included in this.
- Reduce ecological footprint
- I like the current vision statement, but without too many adjectives! We can't be all things to all people, so should focus on what makes Stouffville so livable + special - "Country close to the city" is more valued today than ever as the hiking trails and rural areas are full of families seeking respite from screens!
- Preserve and protect heritage areas, preserve Town character
- Country Close to the City...it is what drew me here from Toronto despite a daily 3 hr commute

to and from work. Stouffville offered what the big city could not. it was a haven to come home daily back then. A place to de-stress and return to some nature and balance.

- I wouldn't change a thing; just focus on how to live, promote and enforce it!
- Stouffville can be unique. Protect its rural character. Without open spaces, quality of life suffers.
- Living and working in a healthy environment.
- Implementation of needs more reflective of community - e.g. bike lanes, pickle ball courts.
- Detailed - specific objectives would delineate specifics that are "hidden" in the Vision.
- Employment, Community, Growth, Opportunity

Re-Imagine Stouffville:

Official Plan Review Survey

This survey has 10 questions and should take under 10 minutes to complete. The Town is updating its Official Plan, your feedback will directly inform the Town's future Vision and priorities for the next 25 years. This survey is also available online at: cometogetherws.ca/opr

Thank you for your feedback as we plan for the Town's future.

1. What is your postal code? _____

2. How did you hear about the Official Plan Review?

- Social media Newsletter Newspaper Town Website
 Mail Podcast Word of Mouth "On The Road"
 Other: _____

3. According to the 2016 Canadian Census, the population of Whitchurch-Stouffville was 45,837 people and is expected to grow in the next 25 years. What areas of the Town do you think are facing the greatest change?

4. When thinking about the next 25 years, what top three (3) priorities come to mind?

- Infrastructure: Providing adequate water, waste water and utility services
 Neighbourhood Character: Protecting neighbourhood character and countryside
 Employment Areas: Providing enough land mix of employment opportunities
 Mobility Options: Transit and Active Transportation Options
 Density: Intensification as a priority (higher buildings, mixed use)
 Affordable Housing: mixed live-work options
 Design and Culture: Ensuring that design standards (e.g. max. height) are appropriate and enforced
 Other: _____

5. When thinking about the Natural Environment and Agriculture over the next 25 years, what are your top priorities?

6. What top three (3) characteristics contribute to your idea of a Healthy Community?

- Access to local food
 Multiple mobility options (walking, cycling, transit)
 Culture and cultural heritage
 Mixed use residential and different housing options
 Connected to Natural space (Forests, Bruce's Mill, Rouge Park proximity)
 Proximity to a major urban area
 Mixed Employment and Office Space
 Community Amenities, Daycare, Health Services
 Other: _____

7. Over the next 25 years, what top three (3) goals should the Town focus on: DS-049-20- Attachment 1

- Wetlands, Watercourses and Water Quality
- Reducing Emissions and improving the Town's impact on changing climate
- Parks, Trails, Open Spaces and Protected Areas
- Transportation Options and Transit
- Affordable Housing
- Community Services, Healthcare Facilities and Daycare/Retirement Centres
- Preservation of the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine
- Improving Air Quality and Planting More Trees
- Creating more mixed employment areas and jobs
- Other:

8. The Town's current Official Plan Vision Statement is, "*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...*" and uses the following key terms: rural community, attractive, healthy, friendly, environmentally aware, quiet, calm, cultural opportunities, preserve natural resources and environmental area, public and private recreation, safe, intergenerational community, supports agriculture, major economic contributor and rural heritage.

a) Does this statement and key terms used to describe the Town's Vision resonate with the needs of the community for the future?

- Yes Somewhat Not at all

b) Which of the key terms used in the Vision Statement are most important to you? Select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> rural community | <input type="radio"/> public and private recreation |
| <input type="radio"/> attractive | <input type="radio"/> safe |
| <input type="radio"/> healthy, friendly | <input type="radio"/> intergenerational community |
| <input type="radio"/> environmentally aware | <input type="radio"/> supports agriculture |
| <input type="radio"/> quiet, calm | <input type="radio"/> major economic contributor |
| <input type="radio"/> cultural opportunities | <input type="radio"/> rural heritage |
| <input type="radio"/> preserve natural resources and environmental area | |
| <input type="radio"/> none of the key terms resonate with me | |

9. If the Vision Statement does not resonate with you, why?

10. What should be included in a new Vision statement?

For further information or to sign up for our interested parties list, please visit:

cometogetherws.ca/opr

Please drop off your completed survey by October 9, 2020, at the following Town facilities: Town Hall, Leisure Centre / WS Library, or WS Museum. Alternatively, you can also mail in the survey to: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, 111 Sandiford Drive, Stouffville, ON L4A 0Z8, Attn: Zahrah Khan



APPENDIX

F

Interactive Mapping Tool Results

Location	Comment
Downtown/Main Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn downtown Main Street into a more pedestrian friendly environment. The COVID-19 restrictions that are on Main Street now are demonstrating how to do this. It would be similar to what Markham Village did to their main street making it appear narrower to slow traffic naturally and aid pedestrians. This will over time attract people and appropriate businesses back to the street.
Main Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserving Main Street as a hub for culture and local businesses. Revitalizing and filling this piece of Stouffville to complement the existing development of Stouffville Junction will help to invite new and unique businesses and help build culture
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased traffic and noise is not desired near residential areas.
Lincolnville GO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business and stores should be added near the new GO station.
Highway 48 & Davis Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More businesses along the Hwy 48/Davis Drive, northern Stouffville should take advantage of cottage country traffic
Ballantrae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ballantrae is already overdeveloped, preserve as much land for environment protection as possible.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to preserve land use for agriculture, or for a new conservation area similar to Bruce's Mill.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is prime farmland and protecting it is a wise investment for a resilient future - local food, ecosystem services, agri-food and agri-tourism opportunities.

Downtown / Stouffville GO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planners should be cautious about over developing the downtown area, including around the GO station. Part of the charm of Stouffville comes from the lack of intensive development in the downtown core. Consider planning larger developments outside of the downtown. - Furthermore, transit ridership may be diminished moving forward as more and more people work from home, and condos may become a less attractive housing option.
11737 McCowan Rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willowgrove's Nature School
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More innovative and integrative approaches are so important as development continues to boom across town. Conserving the existing green spaces and working with the landscape rather than against it will give residents and our natural wildlife a better chance of coexisting without the need for harmful removal of the animals or human conflict.
11737 McCowan Rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willowgrove Day Camp
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep as much greenspace and farmland as possible
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outdoor recreation will be a huge part of life in a post-pandemic world. Having spaces to gather as a community will also foster the sense of belonging we all want.