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# Policy Directions Report

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

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September 2021

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Purpose & Overview

The purpose of this Policy Directions Report is to identify the preferred policy directions and to address policy conformity gaps that will be the basis for formulating the new Town Official Plan, as part of the Town’s ongoing Official Plan Review (OPR). The discussions and directions put forth in this Report are key to applying and promoting provincial planning interests as established in the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) and Provincial Plans, regional interests contemplated in the ongoing York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review and the Regional Official Plan update, as well as detailed local planning considerations.

This Report builds on the stakeholder and public feedback received on the Discussion Papers that explored a comprehensive range of policy themes important to the Town. The information obtained will help formulate a set of policy directions that will serve as the basis for the development of a new Official Plan.

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## 1.2 What is an Official Plan?

Official Plans are guided and developed under a framework established by the Province of Ontario to ensure that short- and long-term growth is coordinated in a manner to meet local social, economic, built and natural environment needs and aspirations. Municipal Official Plans must be consistent with the PPS, 2020 (hereby referred to as “the PPS”) issued under the Planning Act, 1990 (hereby referred to as “the Planning Act”), and must conform or not conflict with any applicable Provincial and Regional Plans, including the Growth Plan, 2020 (hereby referred to as “the Growth Plan”) , the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017, the Greenbelt Plan, 2017, and the Region of York Official Plan, as they relate to the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. These overarching policy documents provide direction to the Town on land use planning matters. Overall, 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.
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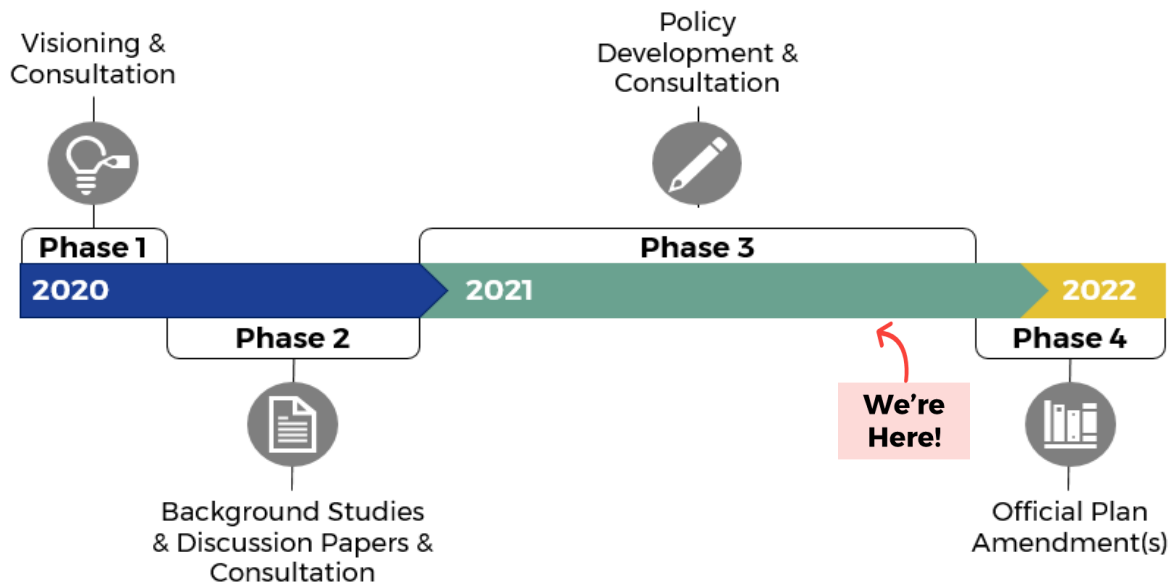
## 1.3 Why is the Town Undertaking an Official Plan Review?

The OPR work program consists of four phases which are summarized below and will result in a detailed review and the preparation of a new Official Plan. The impetus for undertaking a review of the Town’s Official Plan is predominantly three-fold:

- First, the Town is required to review its Official Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act to ensure consistency with the PPS and to ensure conformity with the Growth Plan, applicable Provincial Plans, and the Region of York Official Plan.
- Second, the Region of York initiated a work program in 2018 to undertake a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to comprehensively implement the policies of the Growth Plan, and guide the Region’s population and employment growth to 2051. The Town’s Official Plan is required to be updated within one year of the approval of the Region’s Official Plan.
- Lastly, the context within which the Town continues to evolve has changed since the current Official Plan was prepared and adopted (adopted in 1980, and the last comprehensive update was undertaken in 2004).

## 1.4 Official Plan Review Work Program

The OPR offers an opportunity to adopt contemporary land use and development policies that will guide growth and development over the planning horizon to 2051 and manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environment of the Town.



**Figure 1: Focus Areas of the OPR**

The comprehensive OPR work program includes the following phases:

- **Phase 1: Visioning and Consultation** – resulted in a community vision and guiding principles summarized in a Community Visioning Report to inform future planning directions, by establishing what the community values and how the Town is envisioned to evolve over the planning horizon.
- **Phase 2: Background Studies and Discussion Papers** – focused on data collection and the review of background information required to advance the OPR. This involved the

critical analysis of policy gaps, such as the need to incorporate updated housing attainability policies, appropriate energy and climate change considerations and emerging urban design policies for example. This phase also involved the preparation of four Discussion Papers, in addition to the Community Visioning Report completed as part of Phase 1, to address the key themes related to growth management, the natural environment, healthy and complete communities, and general technical and housekeeping matters. This phase included a cursory review of the Secondary Plans to determine recommendations for a potential consolidation strategy.

- **Phase 3: Policy Development** – involves the preparation of this Policy Directions Report and will include the development of new and updated Official Plan policies to implement the preferred policy directions.
- **Phase 4: Draft New Official Plan** – will involve the technical writing, reviewing, evaluating, and drafting of policies for the new Official Plan based on the work completed to-date.

The Town is also undertaking numerous ongoing studies and updates to existing Master Plans to inform and complement the Official Plan Review. The studies being currently undertaken include the following:

- Preliminary Growth Management Assessment;
- Commercial Policy Study;
- Natural Resources Study; and,
- Housing Strategy.

Together these studies will help guide growth, natural heritage, housing and commercial land development decisions for the Town.

## 2 CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Whitchurch-Stouffville, located within the Region of York, is one of Canada’s fastest growing municipalities. The Town is located in the heart of the Greater Toronto Area, giving it easy access to transportation routes as well as to recreational and cultural destinations. Highway 404 forms the western boundary of the Town, with links to all of Ontario’s “400” series Highways. The Town has access to commuter trains and buses as well as regional transit services.

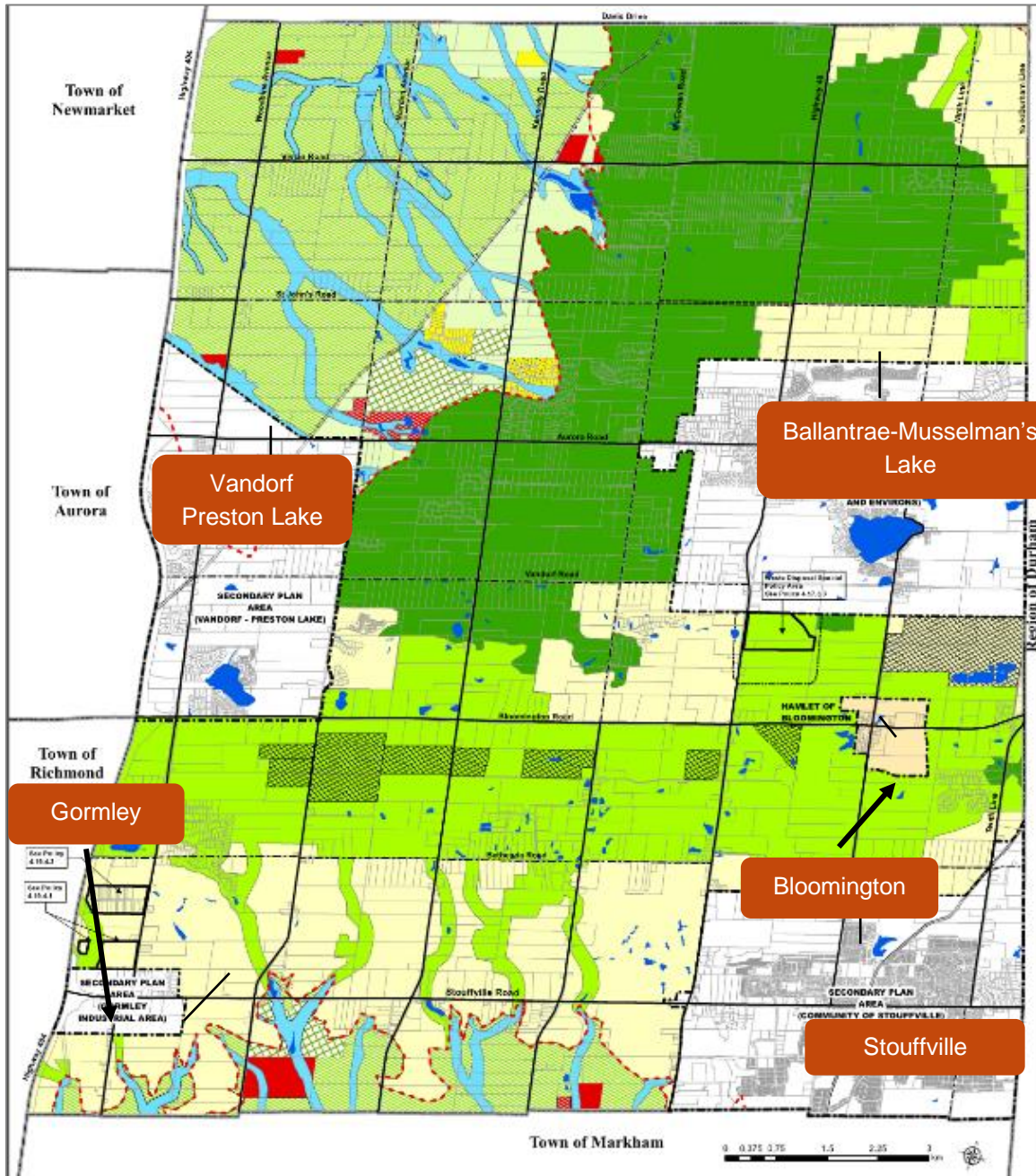


Figure 2: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Current Structure

As illustrated in Figure 2, agriculture is still a dominant land use and is supported by large areas of prime agricultural land. The Town also contains many environmental features. This reflects the fact that over 90% of the municipality is located in the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt Area. The Town's four settlement areas of Stouffville, Ballantrae-Musselman Lake, Vandorf Preston Lake and Gormley are the primary settlement areas of the Town. The Community of Stouffville will be key to accommodating the projected increases in population and employment, and also will seek to achieve the objectives of a complete community to ensure that the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability or income, can be met.

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, from 2006 to 2016, the Town experienced a massive increase in population growth of 87% (24,390 to 45,837 persons), making it 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.

**From 2006 to 2016, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville experienced rapid and diverse growth. Some of the most prominent community changes include:**

- An increase in family size from 2.8 in 2006 to 3.1 in 2016
- An increase in median income from \$86,364 in 2006 to \$96,622 in 2016.
- A 30% increase in the visible minority population from 7% in 2006 to 37% in 2016
- An increase in the number of residents identifying as immigrants from 4,395 (18%) in 2006 to 14,740 (32%) in 2016
- An increase in the number of couples with children from 2,960 in 2006 to 7,350 in 2016

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.

### 3 VISIONING AND ENGAGEMENT

#### 3.1 Approach to Community Engagement

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 based on the following guiding principles:

- To maintain a transparent process which informs the public about key project milestones and opportunities to get involved;
- To be inclusive and respectful towards the local community’s needs and values;
- To learn from and listen to local businesses and entrepreneurs;
- To establish open lines for communication that are met with a timely response; and
- To encourage collaboration among the community to develop a shared vision for the Town’s future.



Figure 3: Approach to Community Engagement

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## 3.2 Community Engagement Initiatives

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville developed a slogan to be used define and to communicate the OPR project to the public. As a result, “**Re-imagine Stouffville – the Town’s Official Plan Review**” 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 and generate discussion throughout the Official Plan Review, including:

- Public Open Houses;
- Stakeholder and Technical Committees;
- Podcasts;
- Social Media;
- Email Registration List;
- Community Magazine (“On The Road”);
- Newspaper Advertisements;
- Project Website; and,
- Project Video.

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## 3.3 Vision Statement and Guiding Principles Updates

A review of feedback received through 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 and growth aspirations of the Town and the changing priorities of the community. In March 2021, Council endorsed the new Vision Statement and Guiding Principles. It is intended that the new Vision Statement and Guiding Principles will serve as the foundation for the new Town Official Plan and policy directions.

**The following Vision Statement and Guiding Principles were endorsed by Council in March 2021.**

## 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 preservation of agriculture in the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine.

## 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 accessible 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.*

## 4 POLICY DIRECTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

An Official Plan is a policy document adopted by Council under the provisions of the Planning Act, which sets out the ground rules for land use planning in Ontario and establishes the overall content and basis for preparing official plans. As such, the Official Plan addresses matters of Provincial interest and establishes more detailed local planning policies that apply to all lands within the Town. An Official Plan also expresses the vision and guiding principles for the community and provides policy direction on how land in the community should be managed. An Official Plan is prepared with input from community members and stakeholders to ensure that the future planning and development needs of the Town will be met.

The Town's Official Plan is being updated to provide a more contemporary planning framework for the Town while ensuring consistency and providing greater clarity in interpreting the Town's planning policies. The Official Plan Review is a significant opportunity for the Town to develop policies to address local planning priorities, including the development of a complete community to better balance residential and non-residential growth, support age-friendly community building, direct intensification to appropriate locations, and protect the Town's natural and cultural heritage resources.

To assist in establishing a framework around the issues to be addressed through the Official Plan Review, the OPR team has identified a list of "Focus Areas" which identify key strategic planning directions that should be considered in guiding the Town's Official Plan Review. These "Focus Areas" served as the topic areas for the Discussion Papers, as seen in Figure 4, and were key to providing the basis for establishing policy directions to direct growth and land use planning decisions in the Town within the planning horizon.

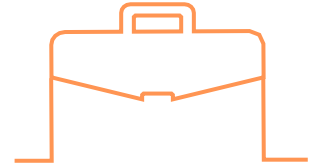


Figure 4: Focus Areas of the OPR

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## 4.1 Planning for Growth

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville was the third fastest growing municipality in Canada and second fastest growing in Ontario, according to the 2016 Census. The Town is comprised of a number of dynamic settlement areas, balanced with the small-town atmosphere valued by residents and businesses. The Town has experienced a 54.3% population growth rate in recent years, the current Official Plan forecasts an increase in population of approximately 60,600 people by 2031. In addition, the number of new Canadians living in the Town has increased by a notable 282% between 2006 to 2016. The Town's employment base is also expected to increase by 69% from 2011 to 2031 to accommodate 23,000 jobs.



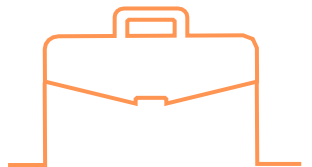
As part of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), it is forecasted that by 2051, the Town's population will grow to 92,900 residents and 31,900 jobs. The Town's Growth Management Strategy focuses population and employment growth in the Community of Stouffville, with some moderate population growth in the Ballantrae-Musselman Lake Community. Additional employment growth will be located on the lands in the Gormley Industrial Area and in the Vandorf Preston Lake lands. The balance of the Town will remain rural/agricultural/environmental in character and is not planned to see significant growth.

The Town's desirability as a place to live, work and play has made it increasingly important for the need to focus on strategic and planned growth to ensure sustainability in meeting projected needs. The Town, with its vast natural landscapes and opportunities for strategic growth, has the potential to emerge as a leader in planning for growth through implementing specific policies to ensure a coordinated and balanced approach to meeting the future needs and desires of the community.

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### 4.1.1 Residential Growth and Intensification Strategy

The Planning Act provides the fundamental land use planning framework in Ontario and identifies matters of Provincial interest that municipalities shall have regard to when preparing and adopting an official plan. The PPS further builds upon this directive by focusing growth and development within urban and rural settlement areas while supporting the viability of rural areas. This allows for recognition that growth in built up areas will promote the wise management of land use and involve directing, promoting or sustaining development.



The Growth Plan recognizes the importance of built-up areas within settlement areas as the locations where the vast majority of growth will be occurring throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan identifies these as areas with the capacity to support and establish complete communities, and as locations with existing or planned transit and municipal

infrastructure required for future growth. This specifically includes the Growth Plan assigning the the Region of York a population forecast of 2,020,000 by 2051. The release of draft documents indicates that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has been assigned to plan for a population of 92,900 residents by 2051. The development of the Phase 3 lands in Stouffville will be the main source of future greenfield housing supply in the short to mid-term, including the proposed Lincolnville MTSA along with proposed community urban expansion lands. The forecast takes account two Minister's Zoning Orders in the whitebelt, just west of the community of Stouffville which are proposed for a mix of low, medium, and high-density units. The Whitebelt lands comprise agricultural lands that are located outside of the Province's Greenbelt Area, and have been identified by the Region as the lands most suitable for urban expansion. Notwithstanding, the Town has requested that the Region consider settlement area boundary expansions into the Countryside Area of the ORMCP to facilitate the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area and the Bethesda lands abutting the Community of Stouffville, as they represent a more logical and contiguous expansion for employment uses.

The Community of Stouffville will continue to be the focus of intensification growth, primarily along the Main Street corridor, Highway 48 (MZO and employment conversion lands) and the Stouffville GO MTSA. The increase in population will represent an annual average growth rate of 1.9%. A minimum 21% intensification target in built up areas, such as the Community of Stouffville will be required, and a minimum of 50 people and jobs per hectare will be required for designated greenfield areas.

With the majority of growth expected to occur within the Community of Stouffville, a designated settlement area, the Town will have an opportunity to implement the Region's forecasted growth projections, and decide where and by how much each of the settlement areas within the Town will grow. Specific growth studies that will inform growth in the Community of Stouffville include the following:

- **Lincolnville GO Land Use Study:** The purpose of this ongoing study is to identify a preferred land use scenario and corresponding Official Plan policies and Urban Design Guidelines to guide future development for the area surrounding the new Lincolnville GO station. The study will result in the delineation of a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and the approval of an Official Plan Amendment to implement transit-supportive land uses and densities in the vicinity of the GO Station. As part of the study, a Land Use Study Report has been prepared to identify a boundary for the MTSA and analyze feasible land use options within the study area.
- **Highway 48 Visioning Study:** The purpose of this study is to address the lands along Highway 48 and south of Stouffville Road in the Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan. This includes lands subject to the recent MZO's, employment area conversions approved through the Region's MCR, and the "Gateway Mixed Use Area" at the intersection of Highway 48 and Stouffville Road and adjacent portions of the Western Approach Mixed Use Area. Another MZO has been recently submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing within the Highway 48 Visioning Study Area. The limited development in the area also provides opportunities for the creation of a distinctive gateway. The study will

result in the development of the required plan and strategy with the intent of “kick starting” development of this key gateway to the Community of Stouffville.

- **Whitebelt Lands:** The Whitebelt landscape encompasses approximately 375 hectares along the southern portions of the Town of Stouffville and are not subject to the policies of the ORMCP or the Greenbelt Plan. The Region of York has identified the need for these lands for future employment and community growth within the Town and must be considered in the new Official Plan.



**Figure 5: Construction Activity in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

## POLICY DIRECTIONS:

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Update the Official Plan population forecast and planning horizon to 2051.	Current Town Official Plan population horizon is to 2031.	<p>The Planning Act states that in order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities must keep their official plans up-to-date with the PPS which was updated in 2020.</p> <p>The new Town Official Plan must ensure conformity with the Regional Official Plan. The ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review will establish growth forecasts to the planning horizon of 2051. The Region's draft forecasts indicate that the Town must plan for a population of 92,900 by 2051.</p>
2	Establish Town-wide minimum built-up area intensification target of 21% and minimum designated greenfield density target to minimum 50 residents and jobs per hectare. The majority of this intensification will be focused within the Community of Stouffville.	<p>Current Town Official Plan specifies a greenfield density target of a minimum 50 residents and jobs per hectare for Phase 3 lands only; as well as an intensification target of 2,020 new residential units within the "Built Boundary" for the period of 2006-2031.</p> <p>This matter is still being discussed with the Region.</p>	<p>The Growth Plan establishes minimum intensification and density targets for upper and single-tier municipalities to support the achievement of growth management objectives for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.</p> <p>York Region is required to plan for a minimum Region-wide intensification target of 50% and a minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare in the designated greenfield area.</p>
3	Implement policies regarding use of	Current Town Official Plan does not	Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates that use of whitebelt lands will be key to accommodating projected 2051

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	whitebelt lands as residential and associated uses required by the Region.	address use and provision of whitebelt lands for urban expansion.  This matter is still being discussed with the Region.	population and employment forecasts. York Region will be required to accommodate over 130,000 people and 50,000 jobs in new whitebelt areas. Proposed urban expansion land needs for the Town is 375 hectares that must be considered for planning to 2051.  According to these forecasts, the Town is expected to accommodate a population of 92,900 people and 31,900 jobs by 2051. The Town is working on a Growth Management Strategy to understand how the expected growth will be allocated within Whitchurch-Stouffville.
4	Implement a 'Community Structure' focused on establishing major nodes and corridors and intensification areas. This will be focused in the Community of Stouffville, particularly within Major Transit Station Areas and strategic growth areas.	Current Town Official Plan recognizes agriculture as the dominant land use in the Town with secondary planning for the Community of Stouffville, Ballantrae-Musselman Lake, Vandorf Preston Lake, Bloomington, and the Gormley Industrial Area.	Section 1.2.4 of the PPS specifies the need to ensure a coordinated planning approach for the Town to identify areas where growth or development will be directed, including the identification of nodes and the corridors linking these nodes.
5	Forecasted growth should be directed towards the Town's Serviced Urban Areas, notably including the Community of Stouffville, through intensification	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the availability of full servicing as a constraint to growth and focuses growth	The Planning Act requires the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems.  Section 1.1.1 of the PPS emphasizes promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	and redevelopment where feasible, or through new development where sufficient infrastructure (full municipal water and wastewater services) and community services and facilities are provided or planned for.	in the Community of Stouffville as it is the only community with full services.	development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.  Section 2.2.1.2 of the Growth Plan requires the vast majority of growth will be directed to settlement areas that have existing or planned municipal water and wastewater systems.
6	Implement updates as a result of the Highway 48 Corridor Study.  Settlement area boundaries need to be clearly delineated on all Town Official Schedules.  Address consistency between the Gateway and Western Approach policies and implement updated urban design directions and policies from the new urban design guidelines.	Current Town Official Plan Gateway Areas are major entrances to the Community are found on Main Street at the intersections with Highway 48 and the York Durham Line respectively, as well as at the southern boundary of the Town on the Ninth Line.  Current Western Approach Area policies are not integrated with Highway 48 Corridor considerations.	The Gateway Study (OPA 145) was approved and is included in the current Town Official Plan Consolidation. The Highway 48 Corridor Study will further build upon this and be taken into account in the new Town Official Plan.

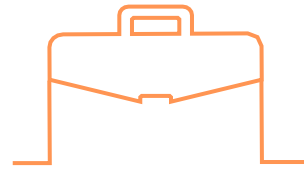
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
7	Identify and delineate the Lincolnville and Stouffville GO MTSA's (Major Transit Station Area's) boundaries in order to implement the minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for the MTSA's.	The Lincolnville OPA will define the MTSA and establish relevant policies.	<p>Section 16.16 of the Planning Act requires the Town to identify the authorized uses of land in the MTSA area and of buildings or structures on lands in the area. This also includes identifying the minimum densities that are authorized with respect to buildings and structures on lands in the MTSA area.</p> <p>Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates the Lincolnville and Stouffville GO MTSA's will be critical components to achieving 2051 population and employment targets.</p>
8	Implement phasing policies for intensification areas, and new community areas, to ensure appropriate and sustainable urban development within existing and new areas.	The current Town Official Plan contains phasing policies for Phase 2 and 3 lands only up to 2031.	<p>Section 1.1.3.2 of the PPS requires the Town to develop land use patterns within settlement areas based on a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment.</p> <p>Section 2.2.2.3 of the Growth Plan requires the Town to develop a strategy to achieve the minimum intensification target and intensification throughout delineated built-up areas.</p> <p>Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates that phasing of growth is key to achieving Regional and local growth targets.</p>
9	Implement context-sensitive development criteria to protect existing character, notably for downtown Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan notes that new construction and/or infilling should complement the immediate physical context. This includes complementing the massing patterns,	Section 2 of the Planning Act directs growth to appropriate locations and promotes development that is well-designed.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
		rhythms, character and context of existing development.	
10	Consider policies to guide infill development of commercial sites in communities currently designated for “Mixed Use” within settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan only focuses on commercial infill in the Communities of Gormley and Vandorf Village.	Section 2 of the Planning Act directs growth to appropriate locations.  Section 2.1 of the Growth Plan states that better use of land and infrastructure can be made by directing growth and intensification to greyfield sites which are lands that are underutilized as a result of economic obsolescence.

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## 4.1.2 Employment Growth and Economic Development

The Planning Act identifies the adequate provision of employment opportunities as a provincial interest by promoting sustainable economic development. The PPS asserts that planning authorities, such as the Town, should promote economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and a broader mix of uses to meet long-term needs. This also includes advancing opportunities for a diversified economic base and encouraging growth through compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities.



The Provincial Growth Plan also promotes economic development and competitiveness in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by making more efficient use of existing employment areas and vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities. This includes planning to better connect areas with high employment densities to transit and integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment. Based on the employment allocations provided to the Region of York, the Town is expected to plan for a total of 31,900 jobs by 2051, with just under half of this growth in employment areas. The majority of the Town's forecast employment area growth is anticipated to be through proposed urban expansion lands. Approximately 45% of the Town's employment growth is anticipated to be through population-related employment, as a result of population growth in intensification areas and greenfield areas in the Community of Stouffville as well as the proposed community urban expansion area. A portion of the whitebelt lands have also been identified as potentially suitable for employment uses.

The Community of Stouffville is designated as the focus for employment growth in the Town given the availability of required services. These employment areas are intended to provide the potential for the development of the Community of Stouffville as a balanced community with opportunities for both living and working. The Town's Commercial Policy Study, which assess adequacy of commercial land supply, also promotes a downtown policy direction to maintain the historic downtown as a central meeting place and shopping area. In addition, the Gormley Industrial Area and the Community of Vandorf are also key employment areas where economic development will occur on private or communal services. The Town Official Plan also intends to promote the rural economy by enhancing the resource-based industries of agriculture and aggregate production.



**Figure 6: Construction Activity in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

## POLICY DIRECTIONS:

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Update the Official Plan employment forecast and planning horizon to 2051.	Current Town Official Plan employment horizon is to 2031.	<p>The new Town Official Plan must ensure conformity with the updated Growth Plan. The growth Plan puts for a new employment horizon to 2051.</p> <p>The new Town Official Plan must ensure conformity with the Regional Official Plan. The ongoing municipal comprehensive review will implement an employment horizon to 2051. The Region anticipates that the Town must plan for 31,900 jobs by 2051.</p>
2	Implement policies regarding use of whitebelt lands as employment uses required by the Region.	<p>Current Town Official Plan does not address use and provision of whitebelt lands for urban expansion.</p> <p>This issue is still being discussed with the Region.</p>	<p>Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates that use of whitebelt lands will be key to accommodating projected 2051 population and employment forecasts. York Region will be required to accommodate over 130,000 people and 50,000 jobs in new whitebelt areas.</p> <p>Proposed urban expansion land needs for the Town is 375 hectares that must be considered for planning to 2051.</p> <p>According to these forecasts, the Town is expected to accommodate a population of 92,900 people and 31,900 jobs by 2051. The Town is working on a Growth Management Strategy to understand how the expected growth will be allocated within Whitchurch-Stouffville.</p>
3	Establish policies directed to attract a diverse labour force to accommodate the Town's businesses by ensuring a range of housing options, human and social services, cultural opportunities and	The current Town Official Plan does not explicitly put forth policies regarding attracting a diverse employment force.	<p>Section 1.3.1 of the PPS states that the Town must provide opportunities for a diversified economic base.</p> <p>Section 2.5 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the need to integrate and align land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.</p> <p>Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates that focusing growth and intensification in built up areas is key to talent attraction.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	parks and open spaces are provided. This is particularly important for the Community of Stouffville as it seeks to become a complete community.		<p>Particularly with the millennial workforce, access to transit and other amenities are critical to attracting and maintaining talent.</p> <p>The Town's Economic Development Strategy (2020), outlines a strategy to create and support economic growth within the Town and work with the Town's regional partners and neighbouring municipalities to encourage future economic prosperity.</p>
4	Identify Town's "strategic employment areas" along Highway 404, beyond 2051, particularly related to the Gormley Industrial and Vandorf Employment Areas.	Current Town Official Plan recognizes the existing Gormley Industrial Area as a distinctive, industrial and commercial area.	<p>Section 1.1.2 of the PPS that planning for employment areas should be considered beyond a 25-year horizon.</p> <p>The Growth Plan specifies that the Town may plan for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the horizon of the Plan.</p> <p>Preliminary York Region Forecast and Land Needs Assessment indicates that employment in the Town is forecast to grow by approximately 16,500 jobs between 2016 and 2051 with just under half of this growth in employment areas alone.</p>
5	Update employment area standards, including land use permissions and requirements for minimalizing land consumption and servicing costs, for the Existing Gormley Industrial Area and potential Employment Expansion Area, existing Vandorf Employment	Current Town Official Plan primarily recognizes the existing Gormley Industrial Area, Vandorf Employment Area, and the Industrial and Business Park Area designations in	<p>Section 1.1.1 of the PPS requires implementing standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs. At the time of an Official Plan Review, the Town is required to assess employment areas identified in local official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of the employment area.</p> <p>Section 2.2.5.1 of the Growth Plan notes that the municipalities must ensure the availability of sufficient land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan. Municipalities are also required to consider designating and preserving lands within settlement areas located adjacent to or near major goods movement facilities and corridors, including major highway</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	Area and “Potential Employment Area” designation.	the Community of Stouffville.	interchanges, as areas for manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities.
6	Maintain employment areas as large and cohesive areas for industrial, manufacturing, warehousing and, where appropriate targeted office uses, particularly related to the Gormley Industrial and Vandorf Employment Areas.	This is not currently addressed in the current Town Official Plan.	<p>This includes supporting a broad mix of lot sizes that support a diversity of employment opportunities related to the primary function of Employment Areas to support industrial, manufacturing, warehousing and some office uses.</p> <p>This will ensure that designated employment areas have the necessary flexibility to adapt to emerging and long-term employment needs.</p>
7	Promote the development of green industries, including industrial uses and environment- focused professional and technical office uses and services.	This is not currently addressed in the current Town Official Plan.	This is consistent with the York Region Economic Development Plan that promotes opportunities for broadening York Region’s economic base through new cluster analysis and development, including environmental and green technology.
8	Encourage and support the remediation and reuse of contaminated lands and brownfield sites in employment areas, particularly related to the Gormley Industrial and Vandorf Preston Lake Employment Areas.	The current Town Official Plan includes directives regarding the remediation of contaminated lands, notably focusing on soil remediation.	<p>Section 1.7 of the PPS identifies promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites as key to the long-term prosperity of Ontario.</p> <p>Section 2.1 of the Growth Plan states that brownfield sites can make better use of land and infrastructure by directing growth to settlement areas and prioritizing intensification.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
9	Promote creative industries as a key economic sector.	This is not currently addressed in the current Town Official Plan.	This is consistent with the York Region Economic Development Plan.
10	Include policies that support and promote tourism and cultural attractions to enhance the quality of life for Town residents, from day-to-day activities to major events that are supported by local businesses.	The current Town Official Plan promotes a viable tourism economy as a key goal of rural and agricultural areas.	<p>Section 1.7.1 of the PPS states that providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development is key to long-term economic prosperity. Furthermore, Section 1.1.5.3 of the PPS emphasizes that recreational, tourism and other economic opportunities should be promoted in rural areas.</p> <p>The Growth Plan recognizes the potential for cultural heritage to attract tourism and promote local investment and commerce.</p> <p>York Region Economic Development Action Plan (2020 – 2023) emphasizes the need for coordinated tourism investment and marketing.</p>
11	Update employment land conversion policies and criteria to ensure sustained protection of employment lands.	The current Town Official plan includes employment land conversion policies that would need to be updated based on Provincial and Regional policies.	<p>Section 1.3.2.1 of the PPS details that planning authorities must plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.</p> <p>Section 2.2.5.9 of the Growth Plan states that the conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses may be permitted only through a municipal comprehensive review.</p>
12	Incorporate policy recommendations from the ongoing Commercial Policy Study, which is expected to inform the commercial policy framework for the Town.	The Commercial Policy Study will provide recommendations with respect to commercial land supply/demand,	The Town is currently undertaking a Town-wide Commercial Policy Study to ensure a sufficient amount of land is designated to meet the commercial and retail needs of the Town's growing population to 2051.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
		commercial land use structure and designations, commercial and retail market needs, and strategies to improve the vitality and vibrancy of the Downtown Core in the community of Stouffville.	
13	Implement stringent and innovative mitigation options related to the protection of sensitive land uses, particularly in the Community of Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan notes that uses that are likely to cause air or water pollution, odour, or a level of noise which causes an adverse impact on adjacent sensitive land uses, shall be prohibited.	<p>The PPS defines “sensitive land uses” as buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby major facility. Sensitive land uses may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.</p> <p>Section 1.2.6.1 of the PPS states that sensitive land uses must be planned and developed to avoid, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety.</p>
14	Implement policies that promote a mix of employment types in employment areas.	The current Town Official Plan does not include significant emphasis on promoting a mix of employment types	Section 2.2.5.1 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities must ensure the availability of sufficient land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan. This includes integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.

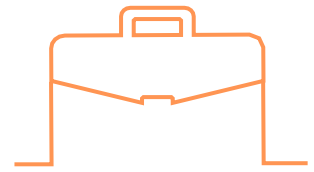
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
		in employment areas.	
15	Promote the intensification of existing employment areas with compatible employment uses.	Intensification of existing employment areas is not contemplated in the current Town Official Plan.	This will ensure that the employment targets of the Growth Plan are achieved.  Ensuring compatibility will support the PPS and Growth Plan by promoting clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.
16	Implement policies to emphasize the need for employment areas to be accessible by a range of transportation modes. This is particularly relevant to the Community of Stouffville that is serviced by transit networks.	The current Town Official Plan does not include the need for employment areas to be accessible by a range of transportation modes, notably including active transportation.	Section 2.2.5.4 of the Growth Plan states that in planning for employment, surface parking will be minimized, and the development of active transportation networks and transit-supportive built form will be facilitated. This includes retail and office uses that will be directed to locations that support active transportation and have existing or planned transit.
17	Implement policies to support the changing nature of gas stations and their placement in settlement areas, such as the Community of Stouffville, in consideration of new transportation options	This is not currently addressed in the current Town Official Plan.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	such as zero emission vehicles.		
18	Review existing policies and criteria which permit places of worship within Employment Areas.	The Town Official Plan currently includes policies regarding Places of Worship within Employment Areas.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town. Consistent with the Town's 2016 Places of Worship Study.

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### 4.1.3 Transportation System

An effective transportation network is a critical component of complete and healthy communities. The Planning Act recognizes the need for promoting growth through development that is sustainably designed to support public transit. The PPS further promotes land use patterns that promote active transportation before all other modes of travel. The Growth Plan prioritizes intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability to advance the creation of complete communities. The transportation system within the Greater Golden Horseshoe will be planned and managed to offer a balance of transportation choices that reduces reliance upon the automobile and promotes transit and active transportation. This includes offering multimodal access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural, and recreational opportunities and accommodating agricultural vehicles and equipment in appropriate settings. To support goods movement, the Growth Plan puts forth a coordinated goods movement network that links major goods movement facilities and corridors to the provincial highway network and areas of significant commercial activity. Municipalities are also required to develop and implement transportation demand management policies to reduce trip distance and time, increase the modal share of alternatives to the automobile and to support active transportation.



**Figure 7: GO Train Crossing in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
1	Ensure a variety of transportation connections to employment and commercial areas within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from residential areas. This is primarily applicable to the Community of Stouffville	The current Town Official Plan promotes new development areas that should be connected to the existing development whenever possible through road connections, as well as bicycle and pedestrian links, to ensure that the community functions in an integrated fashion. The concept of a 15-minute community is not included.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes the adequate provision and efficient use of transportation as a provincial interest. Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.</p> <p>Section 1.8.1 further notes that the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas should be promoted.</p> <p>Section 2.1 of the Growth Plan states that transit should connect people to homes, jobs and other aspects of daily living for people of all ages; and meet climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives.</p> <p>Consistent with the concept of a '15 minute complete community' that emphasizes that residents should be able to access their basic needs of food, healthcare, work, green space, etc. within a 15-minute commute from their home.</p>
2	Promote the street network as the basis for enhanced transportation opportunities, including transit, walking, cycling, and placemaking initiatives. This includes implementing the concept of "complete streets" in	Current Town Official Plan does not fully consider the integrated nature of various transit modes. The concept of "complete streets" is	<p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.</p> <p>Section 3.1 of the Growth Plan notes using a complete streets approach to roadway design, reconstruction, and refurbishment will ensure that the needs and safety of all road users are considered when planning and building the street network.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	the Community of Stouffville, including the re-identification of street classifications, based on existing or proposed land uses through a “complete street” lens.	not included in the current Town Official Plan.	<p>“Complete Streets” are defined in the PPS as streets planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists.</p> <p>Consistent with York Region’s Designing Great Streets Guidelines, 2019.</p>
3	Update existing rights-of-way to be designed to optimize the efficient movement for a variety of modes where increases for other transit modes can be achieved.	The current Town Official Plan considers rights-of-way requirements based on road classification.	Section 6.3 of the Growth Plan requires site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are transit supportive.
4	Introduce policies that support and enhance green, sustainable and active forms of mobility.	Green and sustainable mobility are not a notable theme in the current Town Official Plan.	<p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity. Section 1.8.1 further notes that the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas should be promoted.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan states that convenient access to a range of transportation options, including options for the safe, comfortable and convenient use of active transportation is a key component of long-term growth. This includes sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and secure bicycle parking.</p>
5	Review and enhance policies related to public transit aimed at making it universally accessible	The current Town Official Plan notes encouraging pedestrian, bicycle	Section 1.1.1 of the PPS emphasizes the need to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	choice for travel in the Community of Stouffville.	and wheelchair accessibility throughout the community as a community development principle.	Consistent with the York Region 2020 to 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Consistent with the Town's Multi-Year Accessibility in Action Plan.
6	Incorporate and implement policies related to a "Vision Zero" program focused on reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries for the most vulnerable users of the Town's transportation system, including pedestrians, school children, older adults and cyclists. This would be a Town-wide program.	The concept of Vision Zero is not included in the current Town Official Plan.	Section 2 of the Planning Act regards the orderly development of safe communities as a provincial interest.  Public safety is a notable theme of the PPS as it relates to land-use planning.  Section 3.1 of the Growth Plan states that the safety of all road users should be considered when planning and building the street network. This includes ensuring dedicated lane space for bicyclists on the major street network, or other safe and convenient alternatives.  Consistent with the 'York Regional Police Road Safety Strategy' which has adopted the Vision Zero approach to road safety.
7	Include policies that support patterns of growth and a mix of land use that will ultimately require less travel for everyday activities, and which encourage travel	The current Town Official Plan lacks comprehensive direction on the relationship between land use patterns and	Section 1.1.3 of the PPS states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which are transit-supportive, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed and support active transportation.  Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan states that communities feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and public service facilities. Per Section

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	by transit, cycling and walking.	multi-modal transportation.	2.2.4.8, all major transit station areas will be planned and designed to be transit supportive and to achieve multimodal access to stations and connections to nearby major trip generators, where appropriate.  Consistent with the York Region Transportation Master Plan, 2016
8	Implement the policy recommendations and schedules of the Town's Active Transportation Servicing Plan, 2018; and the directions of the Town's Transportation Master Plan	The current Town Official Plan does not comprehensively implement these recommendations and considerations.	The Town's Active Transportation Servicing Plan provides best practice design guidance, sidewalk prioritization scoring and makes sixteen recommendations to revitalize the active transportation network. The recommendations will guide future capital road reconstruction projects, strategies for development and planning, and by-law considerations.
9	Implement a transit-oriented development pattern to maximize the amount of residential, business and leisure space within walking distance of public transport.	The current Town Official Plan includes limited discussion on transit-oriented development.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.  Section 1.1.3.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for transit-supportive development in settlement areas.  Section 3.1 of the Growth Plan states that transit is the first priority for transportation planning and investment. The transit network will support and facilitate improved linkages between strategic growth areas and other areas planned for a mix of uses and transit-supportive densities.
10	Implement policies to support the establishment of the Stouffville and Lincolnville GO MTSA's	The current MTSA designation for the Lincolnville GO Station was implemented before	Section 2.2.4 of the Growth Plan states that development in all MTSA's will be supported by a diverse mix of uses to support the needs of the community, including housing, retail, etc.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	(ongoing study) as local nodes.	being addressed in the Growth Plan. The Lincolnville OPA will define the MTSA and establish relevant policies.	
11	Implement the provision of alternative development standards to support transit supportive development, including reduced minimum parking requirements and the establishment maximum parking requirements for both privately-initiated development applications and area municipal zoning by-laws.	The current Town Official Plan includes limited policies regarding transit supportive development.	Section 1.1.1 of the PPS states that promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning is needed to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.
12	Implement transit-supportive urban design and an improved active transportation network. This includes promoting the integration of different modes of transportation through cycling and transit-supportive	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding transit supportive development and urban design strategies.	Section 1.1.1 of the PPS states that promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning is needed to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.  Section 1.6.7.3 further states that as part of a multimodal transportation system, connectivity within and among transportation systems and modes

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	facilities such as bike racks and storage at transit stations/stops.	The current Town Official Plan also recognizes the importance of different modes of transportation, primarily related to integration with MTSA's. Transit-supportive facilities are not contemplated.	should be maintained and, where possible, improved, including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.
13	Encourage reducing single-occupant vehicle use.	The current Town Official Plan does not address the issue of single-occupant vehicle use.	Section 2.2.5.16 of the Growth Plan states that approaches to transportation demand management that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicle use are needed. Section 3.2.2.4 further emphasizes the need to prioritize active transportation, transit, and goods movement over single-occupant automobiles.
14	Implement active transportation facilities on utility corridors, and major open space areas, to benefit both use of public lands and to complement recreational uses within or adjacent to these areas in the Town's settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan does not consider the use of underutilized sites and corridors for active transportation.	Section 1.6.8.4 of the PPS states that the preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged, wherever feasible.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
15	Enable the creation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Development Guidelines, which will include a checklist, through policy to identify the types of TDM measures that should be implemented as part of the development review process, depending on the nature of the proposed development in terms of location and land use. This includes requiring certain types of development (such as a large commercial, mixed use, industrial or multi-storey condominium buildings) to submit a TDM Plan as part of, or along with, a Transportation Impact Study (TIS), as a requirement for a complete application	The current Town Official Plan only focuses TDM in Vandorf-Preston Lake Area.	<p>Section 1.6.7.2 of the PPS states that efficient use should be made of existing and planned infrastructure, including through the use of transportation demand management strategies, where feasible.</p> <p>Section 3.2.2.4 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities will develop and implement transportation demand management policies in official plans or other planning documents or programs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) reduce trip distance and time;</li> <li>b) increase the modal share of alternatives to the automobile, which may include setting modal share targets;</li> <li>c) prioritize active transportation, transit, and goods movement over single-occupant automobiles;</li> <li>d) expand infrastructure to support active transportation; and</li> <li>e) consider the needs of major trip generators.</li> </ul>
16	Encourage initiating Class Environmental	The current Town Official Plan does not	Section 4.6 of the PPS states that in addition to land use approvals under the Planning Act, infrastructure may also require approval under other legislation

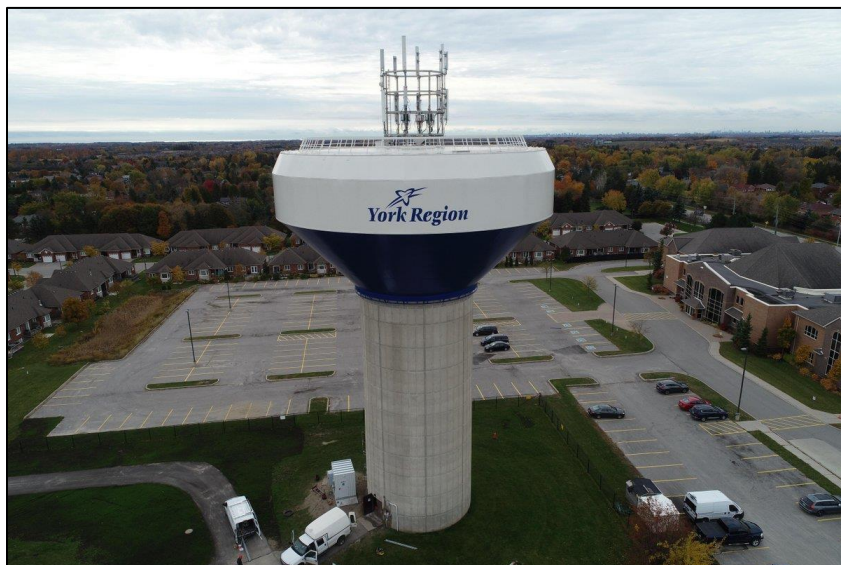
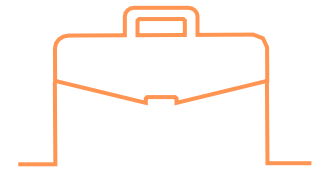
#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	Assessment (EA) studies in advance of, or integrated with, the Planning Act for secondary plans or significant areas of intensification for arterial and regional roads as the best approach.	currently contemplate EA's for intensification for arterial or regional roads.	and regulations. An environmental assessment process may be required for new infrastructure and modifications to existing infrastructure under applicable legislation.
17	Implement an 'Intelligent Town' approach to emerging technologies in transportation. Intelligent communities are more than technology and infrastructure – they are focused on solving problems that matter, not just the ones that technology can address.	The concept of 'Intelligent Town' is not included in the current Town Official Plan.	The Growth Plan recognizes the importance of technology to improving resident's quality of life and also shaping the future of communities.
18	Add a new Transportation Schedule to the OP to illustrate the full hierarchy of roads	Schedule B of the current Official Plan depicts both, land uses and transportation system elements	Given the importance of transportation, a new Transportation Schedule should be separate from the Land Use Schedule to illustrate the various elements of the transportation system in a clearer way.
19	Implement innovative solutions for autonomous vehicles.	The current Town Official Plan does not	Consistent with the York Region Transportation Master Plan, 2016.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
		include policies related to autonomous vehicles.	

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#### 4.1.4 Water, Wastewater and Other Infrastructure

Ensuring that the delivery of water and wastewater systems is a priority, as it serves as the necessary foundation for community growth. The Planning Act establishes as a provincial interest the need to ensure the adequate provision and efficient use of sewage and water services, waste management systems, and communications facilities. The PPS further promotes this objective by stating that planning for infrastructure and public service facilities should be coordinated and integrated with land use planning and growth management. This includes community components related to sewage, water and stormwater to ensure the necessary foundations are available for local communities to grow. The Growth Plan recognizes that well planned infrastructure is essential to the viability of Ontario's communities and critical to economic competitiveness, quality of life, and the delivery of public services. The infrastructure framework established by the Growth Plan requires that municipalities undertake an integrated approach to land use planning, infrastructure investments, and environmental protection. In addition, the Growth Plan identifies a clean and sustainable supply of water as essential to the long-term health and prosperity of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. This means that there is a need to co-ordinate investment in water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to service future growth in ways that are fiscally sustainable and linked to decisions about how these systems are paid for and administered. Water infrastructure planning will be informed by watershed planning to ensure that the quality and quantity of water is maintained. In addition, green infrastructure is critical to promoting the sustainable future of Town through implementing innovative approaches to managing run-off, improving water quality and the development of the buildings.



**Figure 8: Water Tower in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
1	Update the infrastructure planning horizon to 2051 or beyond based on the Town's direction.	Current Town Official Plan planning horizon is to 2031.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems.</p> <p>Section 4.6 further states that in order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities must keep their official plans up-to-date with the PPS which was updated in 2020.</p> <p>Section 1.1.2 of the Planning Act states that the PPS does not limit the planning for infrastructure, public service facilities and employment areas beyond a 25-year time horizon.</p> <p>The Growth Plan implements a planning horizon to 2051. However, nothing in the Growth Plan limits the planning for infrastructure and public service facilities beyond the horizon of this Plan.</p>
2	Promote sustainable infrastructure for better water quality through water conservation and wastewater and stormwater management based on watershed principles part of new developments in the Town's settlement areas.	Sustainability is a notable theme in the current Town Official Plan.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the promotion of development should be designed to be sustainable as a provincial interest.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1 of the PPS states that planning for efficient and sustainable use of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality is a priority.</p>
3	Advance opportunities for innovative green infrastructure including,	The current Town Official Plan focuses primarily on	Section 1.6.2 of the PPS states that planning authorities should promote green infrastructure to complement infrastructure.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	stormwater management systems, bioswales, green walls and roofs, etc.	stormwater management systems to implement green infrastructure.	Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan, states that integrating green infrastructure and appropriate low impact development is key to managing growth. This includes infrastructure investments that optimize the use of existing and planned infrastructure, water and wastewater services, and promote green infrastructure and innovative technologies.
4	Establish a comprehensive solid waste management program to maximize waste diversion for residential and non-residential uses, including limits, diversion targets, program monitoring and awareness.	The current Town Official Plan does not include a comprehensive solid waste management program.	Section 1.6.10.1 of the PPS states that waste management systems need to be provided that are of an appropriate size and type to accommodate present and future requirements, and facilitate, encourage and promote reduction, reuse and recycling objectives.  Section 4.2.9.2 of the Growth Plan notes that municipalities will develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies in support of a comprehensive plan with integrated approaches to waste management, including reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, diversion, and disposal of residual waste.
5	Provide policies and criteria related to development proposed to be serviced with private communal water and wastewater per the definition of the Growth Plan.	The Town's Secondary Plans include specifications for development on private water and wastewater services, however, they require updating. This is also something that is being considered by the Region through their MCR, notably	Section 1.6.6.1 of the PPS states that planning authorities should accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing private communal sewage services and private communal water services, where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available or feasible. This is especially important where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available, planned or feasible, private communal sewage services and private communal water services are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
		related to communal systems.	<p>Section 3.2.6.2 of the Growth Plan states that private communal water and wastewater systems will be planned, designed, constructed, or expanded in opportunities for optimization and improved efficiency.</p> <p>The Growth Plan defines “Private Communal Water and Wastewater Systems” as private communal water systems are drinking-water systems that are not municipal water systems and that serve six or more lots or private residences, and Private communal wastewater systems are sewage works that serve six or more lots or private residences and are not owned or operated by a municipality.</p>
6	Implement policies and criteria for communal systems for employment development as a means to support more intensive employment growth.	The current Town Official Plan is not consistent with updated provincial policy.	Communal servicing systems can support the broad objectives of the PPS towards intensification, efficient land use, the need to address rural affordability, settlement area growth, preservation of agricultural land, increased active transportation, efficient infrastructure, and economic development by allowing denser development in small settlement areas.
7	Implement the directives of the Town Water and Wastewater Master Plan.	Not included in the current Town Official Plan.	Master Plan should be updated to reflect MCR and planning horizon to 2051.
8	Implement Town-wide stormwater management practices through green infrastructure policies supporting low impact development (LID).	The current Town Official Plan does not include LID policies.	<p>Section 1.6.6.7 of the PPS requires stormwater management best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency, and low impact development.</p> <p>Section 3.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan requires as part of stormwater management the need to incorporate appropriate low impact development and green infrastructure.</p>
9	Implement sustainable urban design within the public realm,	The current Town Official Plan does not include green	Section 1.6.2 of the PPS requires planning authorities to promote green infrastructure to complement infrastructure.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	incorporating principles of green infrastructure where feasible.	infrastructure policies.	
10	Implement new opportunities for energy from waste, source reduction, reuse, diversion and energy from waste where appropriate.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate opportunities for energy from waste.	Section 4.2.9 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities must develop and implement official plan policies that promote integrated waste management through enhanced waste reduction, composting, and recycling initiatives, and the identification of new opportunities for energy from waste, source reduction, reuse, and diversion, where appropriate.
11	Implement a policy that requires studies to ensure the protection of human health and the environment, including studies that address impacts on air emissions, leachate, noise, odour, dust and recommendations that address such impacts as applicable prior to the approval of any new or expanded waste disposal site.	The current Town Official Plan does not include additional study requirements for waste disposal sites related to human health and environmental impacts.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the orderly development of safe and healthy communities. This includes the protection of public health and safety.
12	Implement a Town-wide Dig Once policy, when feasible, which would	The current Town Official Plan does not include a Dig Once	The Planning Act promotes the adequate provision and efficient use of communication infrastructure as a provincial interest.

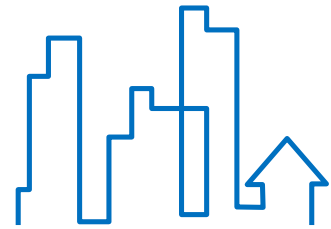
#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	allow and/or require broadband infrastructure to be installed during road construction/ reconstruction and other major development activities. This includes encouraging co-location on shared towers and structures, wherever possible.	policy to ensure utility coordination.	Section 1.7.1 of the PPS encourages the efficient and coordinated communications and telecommunications infrastructure.
13	Implement Town-wide energy conservation and efficiency measures and renewable and alternative energy systems critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting and building resiliency to the impacts of climate change. This includes implementing innovative ways to develop renewable and alternative energy projects.	The current Town Official Plan includes energy conservation as a component to sustainable development.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act includes the conservation of energy as a provincial interest.</p> <p>Section 1.7.1 of the PPS states the need to promote energy conservation and providing opportunities for increased energy supply as important to long-term economic prosperity.</p> <p>Section 4.2.9.1 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities must develop and implement official plan policies that energy conservation for existing buildings and planned developments.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
14	Support the expansion of leading-edge technologies, including high-speed broadband infrastructure, particularly in the Town's rural and underserved areas. This includes requiring new development to be designed to enable the implementation of highspeed broadband, where feasible.	The current Town Official Plan does not include policies related to broadband.	This is of importance to the Town and was noted as a priority through public consultation.

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## 4.2 Planning for Complete Communities

The concept of a complete community is implemented as a best practice with the goal of shaping communities to be places where homes, jobs, schools, community services, parks and recreation facilities are easily accessible to everyone. Whether they are urban, suburban or rural; complete communities provide a variety of housing types with a range of affordability supported by effective opportunities for public active transportation. Complete communities seek to foster vibrant public interaction through giving residents and workers a sense of place and belonging. In addition, complete communities provide ease of access to daily necessities to establish a sustainable way of living for people of all ages, ability and income. This ensures that communities can support people throughout all stages of life, and throughout all the challenges of life, thus promoting opportunities and respect for the experiences and needs of all.

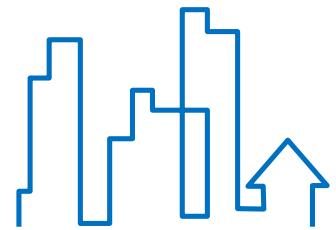


The Town's OPR process allows for the unique prospect to reimagine existing neighbourhoods and manage change and growth through the lens of a complete community. This will allow the residents and businesses of the Town to engage through meaningful thought and consideration to define how the Town should evolve over the next 25 years. Attention to the need to achieve a complete community will allow the Town to build on the values and principles that have allowed it to become a desired community, while also recognizing the opportunities for improvement that can further promote a high quality of life.

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### 4.2.1 Affordable and Attainable Housing

Attainable housing is a critical component to supporting the overall growth of a community. As greater disparities continue between individual incomes and the significant cost of living in the Greater Toronto Area and York Region, the need for diverse and attainable housing has emerged as a dire situation that must be addressed in order to promote the evolution of an inclusive and complete community. Housing affordability and diversity allows for individuals to find stable suitable housing, which in return, allows for increased contribution to their community in an evidently more productive and healthy manner. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville OPR process allows for the opportunity to examine expected growth through the lens of providing existing and future residents the opportunity to thrive and contribute within a diverse range of housing options.



In 2017, the Government of Canada developed a National Housing Strategy recognizing the right to housing as a human right. The Regional Official Plan further recognizes the need to provide a full mix and range of housing options in optimal locations that allows residents to contribute positively to the local economy and community. Additionally, the Region has implemented the Housing Solutions: A Place for Everyone strategy emphasizing the goal of increasing the stock of attainable and adequate housing, helping people find attainable housing and strengthening the

housing and homelessness system. To further reinforce its commitment to promoting a high quality of life, the Region has also implemented the Housing Matters and Seniors Strategies to respond to the everchanging dynamics of the Region that affect the objective of achieving attainable and adequate housing. This ensures the Region’s continuous attention to achieving complete communities by promoting values and principles consistent with suitable housing for individuals of all incomes, ages and abilities.



**Figure 9: Stacked Townhouses in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Require the provision of affordable housing targets as a component of all residential development applications.	The current Official Plan notes the need to provide a choice with respect to secure, adequate and affordable housing. Affordable housing is not universally required as a component of all residential development applications.	<p>Section 16.1 of the Planning Act states that Official Plan should enact policies and measures as are practicable to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>Section 1.4.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans.</p> <p>Section 2.2.6.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the need to support housing choice through the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan.</p>
2	Encourage and support the Town-wide provision of a full range of housing options including ownership and rental housing, social housing, housing for seniors, supportive housing, emergency shelters for women and families, accessible housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities	The current Official Plan notes the need to provide a choice with respect to secure, adequate and affordable housing. Alternative housing forms and those for vulnerable populations is not discussed.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes the need for the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing, as a provincial interest.</p> <p>Section 1.4.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents. This includes all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan states the need for a range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	and other types of housing that meets the needs of the Town's diverse population.		
3	Incorporate enabling policies related to Inclusionary Zoning and examine the feasibility of implementing Inclusionary Zoning within the Lincolnville and Stouffville Major Transit Station Area's (MTSA's), and future Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) areas, with a focus on the Community of Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan does not include Inclusionary Zoning guidelines or provisions.	Section 16 of the Planning Act states that an official plan of a municipality that is prescribed for the purpose of this subsection shall contain policies that authorize inclusionary zoning by authorizing the inclusion of affordable housing units within buildings or projects containing other residential units, and providing for the affordable housing units to be maintained as affordable housing units over time.
4	Ensure universal accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities in the development of design guidelines and standards for new residential development. This includes encouraging and prioritizing the	The current Town Official Plan notes that the external design of buildings should be accessible to all.	The Ontario Human Rights Code, and Supreme Court of Canada, has made it clear that society must be designed to include all people. Housing providers, and other responsible parties, including government, should use the principles of universal design when they are developing and constructing the physical features of housing, and when they are designing housing policies, programs, and procedures.  Section 2 of the Planning Act states that the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters is a provincial interest.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	development of accessible and supportive housing options for people with special needs in areas that have access to community services, amenities and health care, such as the Community of Stouffville.		Section 1.1 of the PPS states the need to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.
5	Promote the appropriate use and provision of garden suites and other types of secondary residential dwelling units. This includes maintaining permissions for “garden suites” as a housing option, provided they are authorized through a temporary use by-law, and are identified as one of the potential forms of secondary units.	The current Town Official Plan provides limited opportunities for secondary residential dwelling units.	Section 39 of the Planning Act allows garden suites provided that they conform to provincial and local requirements.  This will also need to take into consideration the ORM policies related to secondary units.
6	Implement policies aimed at increasing the rental housing supply, including both, purpose-built rental and	The current Town Official Plan does to address the provision of rental housing.	Through Bill 108, the Planning Act has been updated to consider that two ARUs be contemplated on lots in conjunction with single detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	additional residential units. This includes policies that specify the conditions for permitted secondary units and additional residential units (ARUs), including affordable rental units.		<p>Section 2.2.2.6 of the Growth Plan requires that targets be established for the creation of affordable rental housing.</p> <p>Per the Region of York Land Needs Assessment and Forecast, the Region's rental housing propensity rates (by age group) are expected to increase over the forecast period from 14% in 2016 to 22% in 2051. The Region recommends expanding the supply of purpose-built rental housing across the Region. This includes a provision for affordable rental units catering to lower-income households.</p>
7	Promote the location of affordable housing within the Town's settlement areas in proximity to community hubs, schools and activities.	The current Town Official Plan does not note the need for ensuring the proximity to community hubs, schools and activities to affordable housing.	<p>Section 1.2.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities should coordinate economic, environmental and social planning considerations to support efficient and resilient communities.</p> <p>Section 1.1.1 further emphasizes the importance of ensuring that necessary public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.</p>
8	Update the definition of 'Affordable Housing' to be consistent with the PPS.	The current Town Official Plan does not define 'Affordable Housing'.	Ensures consistency with updated provincial and regional policy.
9	Implement a Town-wide policy to encourage less expensive housing including secondary units, microhomes, purpose-built rental	The current Town Official Plan does not specifically include policy language to	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.

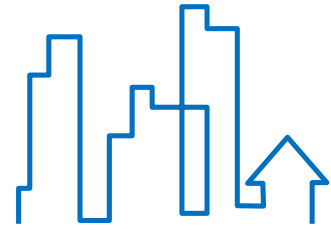
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	housing and medium and high-density apartments in areas that are well served by local amenities including transit, schools and parks.	encourage less expensive housing.	
10	Implement policy that a microhome may be an appropriate form for a temporary garden suite or secondary unit ancillary to the primary dwelling, where permitted.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate microhomes.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.
11	Support the practice of shared living, including various iterations of innovative housing arrangements, by adopting a new definition for “housing options” consistent with the PPS.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate the notion of shared living.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.
12	Encourage the development of new affordable rental and ownership housing options, including a variety of innovative housing arrangements.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the importance of affordable housing.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
13	Encourage built and cultural resource conservation through adaptive re-use for affordable housing. This is particularly relevant for downtown Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate the notion of adaptive reuse for affordable housing.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.
14	Encourage and prioritize the development of accessible and supportive housing options for people with special needs in areas that have access to community services, amenities and health care.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the importance of adequate housing to meet the needs of all.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.  Section 1.4.3 of the PPS states that all housing options are required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements.
15	Encourage cash in lieu for the purpose of constructing affordable housing in or near the proposed development site in the Town's settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan does not have policies regarding cash in lieu.	Section 2 of the Planning Act notes the need for adequate provision of a full range of housing as a provincial interest.  Section 1.4.3 of the PPS states that all housing options are required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements.

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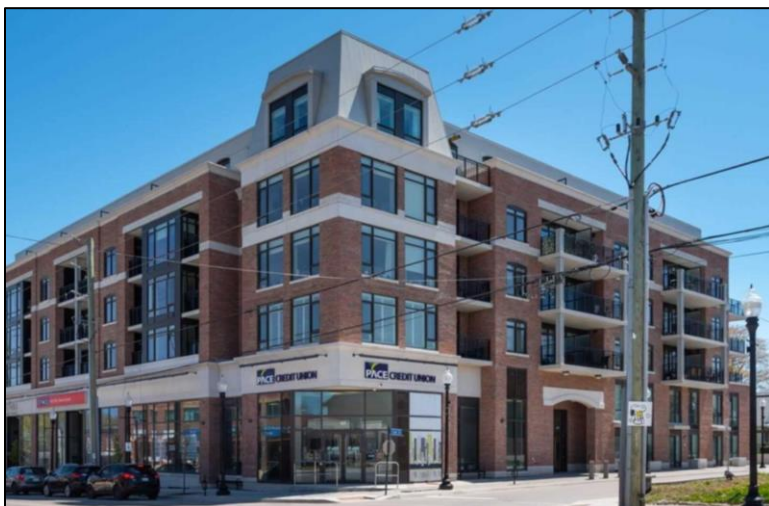
## 4.2.2 Built Form and Urban Design

High quality urban design involves careful consideration to the form, shape and character of the built environment and community as a whole. In an effort to make functional and attractive, buildings, streets and public squares, thoughtful planning through a coordinated effort to connect people and places is paramount. This is accomplished through creating inclusive communities that ensure equal access to public goods and daily necessities as part of a complete community for social, physical and mental wellbeing. Urban design allows for communities to transform place making, environmental stewardship, social equality and economic viability into the creation of places with innovative beauty and identity.



The Provincial Growth Plan implements urban design through policy directives to achieve the creation of complete communities. This is further supported by Section 3.3.2 of the Regional Official Plan that states that municipalities must plan high-quality urban design and pedestrian-friendly communities that provide safety, comfort and mobility so that residents can walk to meet their daily needs. Urban design is also recognized as a key component to maximizing public investments in public transportation, along with promoting walking and cycling for everyday activities to promote a healthy lifestyle. Recognizing high quality urban design as a cornerstone of a sustainable community through design standards supports opportunities for energy efficiency and innovative use of public and private spaces.

Currently, the Town utilizes urban design strategies for residential intensification and sustainable development. The intent of these measures is to uphold and identify existing areas for enhancing urban design and form, along with future opportunities to promote the Town’s envisioned identity that should be in keeping with the character of Stouffville. Included in this is the need for attractive, comfortable and convenient design strategies.



**Figure 10: Mixed-Use Development in Downtown Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Ensure that enhancement of the public realm is a consideration of all new development.	The Town has established Community of Stouffville Urban Design Guidelines (2002), the Residential Intensification Urban Design Guidelines (2009), and the Gateway Urban Design Guidelines, to ensure enhancement of the public realm through new development.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 5.2.5.6 of the Growth Plan states that need for municipalities to develop and implement urban design and site design official plan policies and other supporting documents that direct the development of a high quality public realm and compact built form.</p>
2	Promote a complete streets approach in the Community of Stouffville for the development of all new streets and enhancement of existing streets that ensures there are no barriers to access or enjoyment regardless of ability, as defined by the Growth Plan.	The current Town Official Plan does not include a complete streets approach to planning.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 3.2.2.3 of the Growth Plan states that in the design, refurbishment, or reconstruction of the existing and planned street network, a complete streets approach will be adopted that ensures the needs and safety of all road users are considered and appropriately accommodated. Using a complete streets approach to roadway design, reconstruction, and refurbishment will ensure that the needs and safety of all road users are considered when planning and building the street network.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
			The Growth Plan defines “Complete Streets” as streets planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists.
3	Ensure sidewalks and boulevards will be designed to provide safe, attractive, interesting and comfortable spaces for pedestrians through providing well designed and coordinated improvements.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding the size of sidewalks/ boulevards and the promotion of their connectivity.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.
4	Incorporate natural and built heritage resources in urban design, such as landmark buildings and open spaces, streetscapes and view corridors, to the overall sense of identity.	The current Town Official Plan does not include Town-wide specific policy directives for incorporating natural and built heritage resources in urban design.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 1.7.1 of the PPS states that an important aspect to long-term prosperity is encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.</p> <p>Section 4.2.2.3 of the Growth Plan states that natural features should be incorporated into the planning and design of the proposed use wherever possible.</p>
5	Ensure compatibility between land use, and appropriate intensity and scale, a set of principles	A central theme of the current Town Official Plan is to ensure a proposed	Section 5.2.4.5 of the PPS states that the type and scale of built form for the development must be contextually appropriate when considering long-term growth.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	and urban design policies should be used for assessing any applications for redevelopment, infill and intensification in settlement areas.	use is compatible with surrounding uses.	
6	Develop stringent urban design and age-friendly policies in the Official Plan to ensure that buildings and places add to the experience of the pedestrian and enhance the mobility and accessibility for youth and seniors.	The Town Official Plan currently supports existing urban design guidelines related to the built form.	<p>The Growth Plan notes the need for walkable built environments and an age-friendly approach to community design that will meet the needs of people of all ages.</p> <p>Section 5.2.5.6 further details that in planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, municipalities will develop and implement urban design and site design official plan policies and other supporting documents that direct the development of a high quality public realm and compact built form.</p> <p>Section 6.3.2 notes that urban design standards are key to ensuring the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within primary settlement areas to create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are transit supportive.</p>
7	Promote Town-wide design excellence through sustainable, healthy and active community and building design standards.	The Town Official Plan includes policies related to promoting high-quality building standards.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed, encourages a sense of place and provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 4.2.9.1 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities must develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies in support of urban design standards that support energy efficiency and demand reduction.</p> <p>Section 6.3.2 further notes design standards are important to ensuring the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
			primary settlement areas to create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are transit supportive.
8	New development in older established areas of historic downtown Stouffville, will be encouraged to develop in a manner consistent with the overall character of the older established area.	The Town has established Community of Stouffville Urban Design Guidelines (2002) and the Residential Intensification Urban Design Guidelines (2009) to ensure enhancement of the public realm through new development. The recommendations arising from the Heritage Conservation District Study will inform the Official Plan.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural and historical significance.</p> <p>Section 1.7.1 of the PPS promotes the need to define a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.</p> <p>The Growth Plan notes that it is necessary to plan in a way that protects and maximizes the benefits of cultural resources that make our communities unique and attractive places to live.</p>
9	Locate parking areas in locations screened from public view, particularly along major arterial roads in the Community of Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan policy direction is limited to stating that parking lots should be situated on the site in a manner which	Consistent with the York Region Transportation Master Plan, 2016.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
		reduces its impact on the street. The Western Approach Mixed Use designation also establishes maximum setbacks to restrict front yard parking.	
10	Implement minimum targets to ensure that tree preservation and/or improvements to the tree canopy are considered as part of area municipal tree by-laws and the development review and approvals process.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding tree conservation. The Town is also undertaking a Private Tree cutting by-law and the Natural Resources Study will inform tree canopy targets.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the conservation and management of natural resources.  Section 1.8.1 of the PPS requires that municipalities prepare for and minimize the negative impacts to air quality and climate change and that planning authorities should maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.
11	Promote sustainable growing environments for trees in urbanized areas by allocating adequate soil volumes and landscaped area through development, redevelopment, site	The current Town Official Plan does not specifically address the opportunities for providing sustainable growing environments for trees.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the conservation and management of natural resources.  Section 1.8.1 of the PPS requires that municipalities prepare for and minimize the negative impacts to air quality and climate change and that planning authorities should maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	alteration and infrastructure.		
12	Require that native tree species be used in new tree planting initiatives part of developments.	The current Town Official Plan does not include policies regarding the planting of native trees.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the conservation and management of natural resources.  Section 1.8.1 of the PPS requires that municipalities prepare for and minimize the negative impacts to air quality and climate change and that planning authorities should maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.
13	Implement a Town-wide 'community safety approach' to design where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, where individuals and families can meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.	The current Town Official Plan does not include a specific 'community safety approach'.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the orderly development of safe and healthy communities.
14	Implement policies regarding a transition in heights and densities between new development and surrounding areas. This includes policies for the transition of existing	Transition guidelines for built form are included in the Community of Stouffville Urban Design Guidelines.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of built form that is well-designed.  Section 2.2.2.3 of the Growth Plan requires that the appropriate type and scale of development in strategic growth areas and transition of built form to adjacent areas.

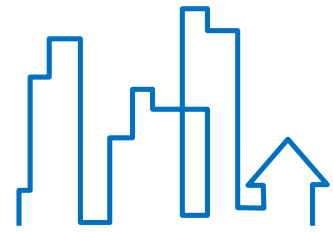
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	neighbourhoods adjacent to areas of intensification and infill.		
15	Target public space improvement through sidewalk presence, pedestrian-level street lighting, public seating, tree plantings, cycling paths, traffic calmers, textured rights-of-way and guiding pathways and public art to improve access, comfort, safety and cultural activities.	The Town Official Plan currently has a Community Character Strategy for the Community of Stouffville.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the creation of public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.  Section 1.5.1 of the PPS requires public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.
16	Implement policies which integrate public art into the public realm, including parks, trails, community centres, libraries, streetscapes and infrastructure (bridges, walls, waterworks, etc.).	The current Town Official Plan does not include policies regarding public art.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires planning for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.
17	Implement Bird-Friendly Design policies. This includes designing for a total window surface area	Bird-Friendly Design policies are not currently considered	This has been identified as a priority for the Town.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	of 25-40 percent relative to the entire façade and creating visual markers.	in the Town Official Plan.	
18	Implement cash in lieu of parking provisions and process for development.	The current Town Official Plan does not include cash in lieu of parking provisions.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town. Cash-in-lieu of parking policies assume that an automobile user will be displaced by the inadequate provisions of private parking and will therefore occupy an on-street or off-site public parking space instead.

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### 4.2.3 Cultural Heritage Resources

Cultural heritage resources uphold a community identity as they preserve and enhance symbols, places and artifacts important to past and present ideals, beliefs and aspirations. Cultural heritage resources include built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources. The Town Official Plan Review allows for the opportunity to highlight its unique legacies of past contributors through the preservation of historical buildings and landscapes. In addition, the



economic, societal and health benefits of interacting, appreciating and learning with the past allow for a collective enhanced quality of life rooted in a socially aware and inclusive community.

The Growth Plan provides guidance in protecting cultural resources as an element to achieving complete communities. Municipalities are required when developing and implementing an Official Plan to identify strategies for the wise use and management of cultural heritage resources. In addition, this also provides for the opportunity for local communities to engage with Indigenous communities to consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

The Town is currently undertaking a Heritage Conservation District Study in support of Town Council's direction to protect community character in downtown Stouffville.



**Figure 11: Built Heritage in Downtown Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Discourage the demolition, destruction or inappropriate alteration or reuse of cultural heritage resource.	The current Town Official Plan does not have a process for discouraging demolition for properties not designated under the <i>Heritage Act</i> .	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.</p> <p>Section 2.6.2 of the PPS states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved.</p> <p>Section 2.6.3 further states that planning authorities must not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.</p> <p>Section 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.</p>
2	Incorporate Town-wide policies directing that Council consider the interests of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.	The current Town Official Plan does not note policies regarding the role of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage.	<p>Section 2.5.6 of the PPS states that planning authorities must engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.</p> <p>The Growth Plan recognizes through their historic relationship with the lands and resources in this region, Indigenous communities have gained traditional knowledge that is of value to the planning decisions being made today. A balanced approach to the wise use and management of all resources, including those related to water, natural heritage, agriculture, cultural heritage, and mineral aggregates, will be implemented in the GGH.</p>

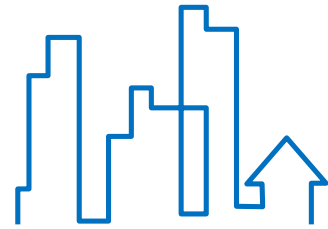
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
3	Enhance policies which support the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage resources, particularly in downtown Stouffville, with emphasis on resources which are important to the Town that can foster public education.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage resources. However, there is no emphasis on how cultural heritage can foster public education.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.</p> <p>Section 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities.</p>
4	Promote heritage streetscapes as important economic assets along Main Street in downtown Stouffville.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the importance of heritage streetscapes, particularly related to downtown Stouffville.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.</p> <p>Section 1.7.1. of the PPS recognizes encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes, as important to long-term prosperity.</p> <p>Section 1.1.4 states the need to provide opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets.</p>
5	Encourage the preservation of cultural heritage resources through the adaptive re-use of structures along	The current Town Official Plan promotes the conservation of the Town's heritage resources by identifying, recognizing,	Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	Main Street in downtown Stouffville.	preserving, protecting, improving and managing those resources, including the potential for their adaptive reuse.	
6	Enhance policies to require the completion of a Heritage Impact Statement for any development that has the potential to impact a cultural heritage resource.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies related to the requirement for a Heritage Impact Statement.	Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need for conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.
7	Review 'Heritage Area' delineation on Schedule F and update requirements for development within the Heritage Area.	Schedule F of the new Town Official Plan requires updating.	This will be reviewed part of the Town's Heritage Conservation District Study.

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## 4.2.4 Parks, Trails and Open Spaces

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has great parks and open spaces that offer a range of amenities such as splash pads, playgrounds, sport courts, sports fields, and dog parks. There are also many trails throughout the community, both local and regional. Parks and recreation planning is typically directed by a parks and recreation or community services master plan which informs the development of policies and standards that may be included in a municipality’s official plan. This Section of the Discussion Paper will identify the policy framework, relevant background material, an analysis of best practices and a summary of preliminary policy recommendations/strategic directions related to parks, open spaces and trails.



Section 1.5 of the PPS establishes policies for public spaces, recreation, parks, trails and open space, and promotes healthy, active communities by planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity. This is consistent with the Provincial Growth Plan’s vision of a complete community that must include recreation and open spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. The Regional Official Plan implements this through promoting in areas that will experience intensification well designed public open spaces that create attractive and vibrant places to support enjoyment of the outdoors.

Bill 197 amended the Planning Act on July 21, 2020, affecting the Community Benefits Charge and Parkland Dedication provisions of the Act. The amendments set out various procedural matters related to the passing of a community benefits charge by-law and a by-law with respect to the alternative parkland rate.



**Figure 12: Community Park in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Promote the development of a comprehensive parks, open space and trails network to encourage healthy communities. This will align with the updates to the ongoing Town Community and Leisure Services Master Plan.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the physical connection that parks, and other open spaces can bring to the Town’s natural resources. The connection to encouraging healthy communities is not explicitly stated.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states that the orderly development of safe and healthy communities is a provincial interest. This includes the adequate provision of recreational facilities and public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that healthy communities will be supported by planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.</p> <p>Section 4.2.5.1 of the Growth Plan states community connectivity will be supported by a co-ordinated approach to trail planning and development.</p>
2	If appropriate, consider policies for smaller or linear greenspaces as part of the park hierarchy which would allow for alternative spaces to be incorporated in new and redevelopment areas. This will align with the updates to the ongoing Town Community and Leisure Services Master Plan.	The current Town Official Plan does not include a classification or requirements for smaller or linear greenspaces as part of the park hierarchy.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states that the orderly development of safe and healthy communities is a provincial interest. This includes the adequate provision of recreational facilities and public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>The PPS and Growth Plan promote compact development and spaces in all forms.</p>
3	Implement a strong Town-wide policy focus	The current Town Official Plan	Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for adequate provision of recreational facilities and public spaces that are of high quality, safe,

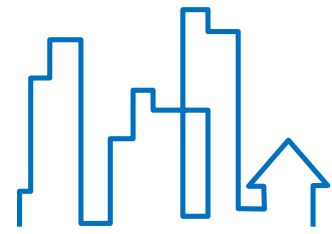
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	<p>on the pedestrian environment for all ages, all incomes, all abilities and all weather conditions</p>	<p>emphasizes the importance of pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair accessibility throughout the community.</p>	<p>accessible, attractive and vibrant. This includes the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which this Act applies.</p> <p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that planning public streets, spaces and facilities must be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity.</p> <p>Section 1.1.1 further states that it is important to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.</p> <p>The Growth Plan puts forth the notion of “Complete Streets” which are streets planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists. This aligns with the concept of “Complete Communities” that are age-friendly.</p>
4	<p>Maximize existing parks in settlement areas for passive and active leisure opportunities.</p>	<p>The current Town Official Plan recognizes the need to maximize use of existing parks. Further broadening of passive uses to all park classifications is needed.</p>	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for adequate provision of recreational facilities and public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states the need for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan requires an appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities.</p> <p>Section 6.1.3 further notes that public open spaces within primary settlement areas should create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
5	Creating open spaces that are flexible enough to be used for a variety of events and activities as social hubs, gather spaces, cultural spaces and educational settings by a variety of ages and cultural groups.	The current Town Official Plan requires further emphasis on the ability for parks to adapt to use and users regardless of the classification.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for adequate provision of recreational facilities and public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.</p> <p>Section 6.3.2 of the Growth Plan details the need for open spaces that through site design and urban design standards create attractive and vibrant places that support everyday activities.</p>

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## 4.2.5 Health and Well-being

According to the World Health Organization, health is about more than just the absence of disease; being healthy is about complete physical, mental and social well-being. Health is shaped by much more than access to the health care system. Our health is shaped by the conditions in which we live, learn, grow, work, and age. The Official Plan plays an important role in establishing how communities are planned. Through policy, it can influence healthier environments that support people to thrive and be healthy. The implementation of the Official Plan can affect the way people socialize and connect within a community as well as influence structural opportunities for people to interact. Healthy communities incorporate features such as active transportation as well as accessibility.



The implementation of the Official Plan can affect the way people socialize and connect within a community as well as influence structural opportunities for people to interact. Healthy communities incorporate features such as active transportation as well as accessibility.

Section 1 of the PPS notes that efficient land use and development patterns support sustainability by promoting strong, livable, healthy and resilient communities, protecting the environment and public health and safety, and facilitating economic growth. Chapter 3 of the Regional Official Plan provides further policies related to human health and well-being, air quality and climate change, the provision of human services, the preservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources, and the provision of a mix of housing and affordability. It is noted that the definition of a healthy community (as adopted by the World Health Organization) is one that is “continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.” The Healthy Communities Goal identified in the Regional Official Plan is to improve the health and well-being of residents and workers in the Region by planning and developing sustainable active communities.



**Figure 13: Hiking Trail in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Develop as a complete community to meet the needs and desires of all in both urban and rural areas of the Town as deemed appropriate.	The current Town Official emphasis the implementation of a complete community in the Community of Stouffville.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the orderly development of safe and healthy communities.  Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
2	Recognize the importance of active transportation as a healthy lifestyle shift toward more sustainable transportation modes for daily needs in the Town’s settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan does not include emphasis on the correlation between active transportation and a healthy lifestyle shift related to meeting daily needs.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the orderly development of safe and healthy communities.  Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that healthy, active communities should be promoted by active transportation.  Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
3	Support the development of walkable and pedestrian oriented communities in the Town’s settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan encourages pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair accessibility throughout the community.	Section 2 of the Planning Act states that there is a need to promote development that is pedestrian oriented.  Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states the need for planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe and the needs of pedestrians.  The Growth Plan implements the concept of “Complete Streets” that are streets planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists. Using a complete streets approach to

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
			roadway design, reconstruction, and refurbishment will ensure that the needs and safety of all road users are considered when planning and building the street network.
4	Ensure accessibility to community services, including education, pharmacies, social services and health care. This includes enhancing community health, safety and well-being by planning for sufficient community services in the Town's settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the need for the adequate provision of public services.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities.</p> <p>Section 1.2.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities should coordinate economic, environmental and social planning considerations to support efficient and resilient communities.</p> <p>Section 1.1.1 further emphasizes the importance of ensuring that necessary public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.</p> <p>The Growth Plan envisions public services that will be co-located in community hubs that are broadly accessible.</p>
5	Facilitating healthy, active and accessible community planning design for people of all ages, particularly youth and seniors.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes planning for seniors. The concept of planning for youth is not included.	Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
6	Ensure shade protection is available at outdoor venues to ensure that seniors	The current Town Official Plan does not co-relate the availability of shade to minimizing	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the promotion of a built form that provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.

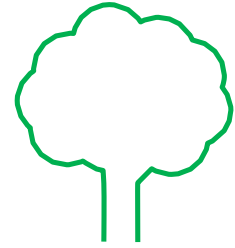
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	and individuals with health concerns can enjoy the outdoors. This includes implementing programs that would enhance tree cover on area municipal road allowances to provide shade and comfort.	the risks for those with health conditions while outdoors.	
7	Promote linkages between the environment and health, such as the role of active mobility in improving health, supporting healthy lifestyles and reducing greenhouse gases.	The current Town Official Plan to provide uses which will enhance communication between residents and connections with the natural environment.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities.</p> <p>Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.</p> <p>Section 1.5.1 further states that healthy, active communities should be promoted by planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources</p>
8	To promote physical activity as a way of life and quality of life through programming and education of target	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the role of public spaces in being spaces for outdoor education.	Section 6.3.2 of the Growth Plan states the need to ensure the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within primary settlement areas through site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	groups in public spaces.		
9	Implement policies to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions to prepare for the Town's future climate. This includes implementing a sustainability, climate change adaptation/mitigation and low carbon lens to reviewing development applications.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate policies for greenhouse gas emissions.	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.  Section 2.2.1.4 of the Planning Act requires efforts to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to environmental sustainability.
10	Promote the use of community gardens, local farms market and urban agriculture to support access to community involvement in producing and consuming local food.	The current Town Official Plan does not consider opportunities for community gardens, local farms market and urban agriculture.	Section 1.7.1 of the PPS emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities to support local food.  Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the need for healthy, local, and affordable food options, including through urban agriculture.

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### 4.3 Planning for the Natural Environment

In recent years, the Town has experienced a significant increase in overall population and business activity. The natural environment has continued to be an indicator in the shape and scale of development in the Town. Unique and irreplaceable landscapes, most notably being the Oak Ridges Moraine, has defined the Town's expansive agricultural and greenlands system. This is not only consistent with the values of preserving the rural history and character of the Town, but also acknowledges the need for careful and focused growth to sustain the ecological functions and processes of the natural environment that continue to be an important aspect of the Town.



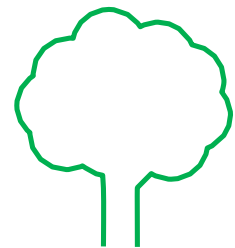
The Town's Greenlands System is comprised of a network of interconnected natural features and areas such as wetlands, woodlands, valleylands, lakes and water courses. The Greenlands System is recognized and identified to help conserve and enhance biological diversity and ecological functions within the Town. Some ecological functions include but are not limited to movement corridors for wildlife, and the protection of endangered species habitat. Also, the Greenlands System plays an important function on sustaining ecosystem services that we all depend on such as pollination, clean water, and flood damage reduction and prevention.

The abundance of natural areas in the Town presents a unique opportunity to balance, and integrate, a high-quality natural environment as part of the projected growth in the Town. The protection and enhancement of the natural environment, and its economic, social and health benefits, is viewed as a significant priority for residents, businesses and community organizations alike. The natural environment not only allows for innovation in commerce, community development and recreation, but also the ability to proactively respond to current challenges including climate change that cannot be addressed without a comprehensive approach that considers environmental sustainability as a primary objective.

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#### 4.3.1 Preserving Rural Areas

The PPS promotes a diversified rural economy and provides direction to protect and mitigate impacts of non-farm development on agricultural operations. Part of this protection requires that new land uses mitigate adverse impacts of non-agricultural uses on agricultural land, restricts the creation of new rural lots, and requires new or expanding livestock facilities or urban development to comply with the minimum distance separation formulae. Also, the protection of prime agricultural land for a diversifying range of agricultural uses is a key component of the PPS. The PPS strongly emphasizes the protection of prime agricultural land with non-agricultural uses being extremely limited and lot creation being discouraged. This includes taking action to conserve land and resources which avoids the need for costly remedial measures to correct problems and supports economic and environmental principles.



Provincial plans further provide a framework for comprehensive, integrated, place-based and long-term planning that supports and integrates the principles of strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and economic growth, for the long term. The Growth Plan recognizes the role of the agricultural system of rural areas in the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network will be maintained and enhanced. The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Greenbelt Plan note the important role of compatible economic activity in rural area's that can foster a diverse range of economic and social activities associated with rural communities, agriculture, tourism, recreation and resource use. This is also reflective in the aspired vision of the Town Official Plan by supporting the continuation of all forms of agriculture and related uses as an important part of its rural heritage and a major economic contributor. The intent of this is to support and enhance the resource based industries of agriculture and aggregate production, which are the focus of the economy of the rural/agricultural/ environmental area.

Ensuring an integrated rural planning approach and local economy has been recognized as a notable opportunity for the Town to implement policies to further support the use of rural and agricultural lands. This is consistent with the goals of provincial plans, and local values, to support a strong, healthy and prosperous rural community that also promotes the vitality to the overall Town. This will allow for the ability to promote the important role of rural communities and industries as a focus of economic, cultural and social activity that support surrounding rural and agricultural areas across the Greater Golder Horseshoe. Opportunities to support a diversified rural economy may be promoted by protecting farmland and the viability of the agri-food sector in rural areas.



**Figure 14: Stouffville Farmers Market Produce**

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Implement Edge Planning Design tools into the Official Plan to protect agricultural lands from urban development in the Town’s settlement areas.	The current Town Official Plan does not include the concept of Edge Planning Design tools.	York Region Edge Planning Background Report recommends that many of the edge planning tools can be incorporated into local Official Plan policies to ensure they are utilized. Goals and objectives can be established to protect agricultural lands and establish a minimum distance from the agricultural-urban boundary to review development and land use changes to ensure agricultural land is protected by mitigating impacts (to both the agricultural and urban land users).
2	Review and confirm the application of MDS to on-farm diversified and agriculture-related uses.	The current Town Official Plan includes the requirement for Minimum Distance Separation Formulae.	The Province of Ontario implements the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document which provides formulae and guidelines for livestock facility and anaerobic digester odour setbacks.
3	Update policies related to the protection of prime agricultural lands consistent with provincial policies.	The current Town Official Plan does not confirm to current policy and mapping as it relates to prime agricultural lands.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province.</p> <p>Section 2.3.1 of the PP2, 2020 states that prime agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.</p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) developed the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas, 2016. The Town’s new Official Plan will need to consider these Guidelines as a large portion of the Town’s land is comprised of prime agricultural areas.</p>
4	Implement policies to direct cannabis cultivation	The current Town Official Plan does not include cannabis	Section 1.1.4.1 of the PPS states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by promoting diversification of the economic

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	and processing operations.	cultivation provisions.	base and employment opportunities through goods and services, including value-added products and the sustainable management or use of resources.  The Town currently has an Interim Control By-law in place and a Study is being initiated to develop policies for cannabis cultivation.
5	Protecting rural character from seeing a surplus of industrial style buildings on the Town's prime agricultural land.	The need to maintain rural character of agricultural lands is a common theme in the current Town Official Plan.	Section 2 of the Planning Act states the need for growth and development to occur in appropriate locations.  Section 1.1.4.1 of the PPS states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by building upon rural character.
6	Implement policies on rural lot creation consistent with the PPS and updated Provincial Plans to discourage fragmented agricultural lands and operations.	The current Town Official Plan includes outdated consent policies that do not conform to provincial policy.	Section 32.1 of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan includes criteria required to permit rural lot creation.  Section 4.6 of the Greenbelt Plan includes criteria required to permit rural lot creation.
7	Allow secondary dwellings for the purposes of farming help within existing buildings on the lands when possible.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding dwellings for farming help.	The PPS definition for an agricultural use includes accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.  Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Guidelines on permitted uses outline a best practice of farmers to consider alternatives to building new, separate, permanent dwellings. Alternatives include a second unit within an existing building on the farm; a temporary structure, such as a trailer or other portable dwelling unit, or an existing dwelling on another parcel owned by the operator, whether on a farm, in a nearby settlement area, or on a rural lot.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
8	Implement policies to promote and protect the long-term sustainability of aggregate resources being extracted.	The current Town Official Plan regulates aggregate resources and extraction activities.	Section 2.5.1 of the PPS states that mineral aggregate resources must be protected for long-term use and, where provincial information is available, deposits of mineral aggregate resources shall be identified.  Section 4.2.8.1 of the Growth Plan state that municipalities must develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies to conserve mineral aggregate resources.
9	Implement policies that require rehabilitation of aggregate resources impacted by extraction or restoration to pre-existing natural self-sustaining vegetation conditions, once operations are no longer occurring.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies regarding restoration of aggregate areas.	Section 2.5.3.1 of the PPS states that progressive and final rehabilitation must be required to accommodate subsequent land uses, to promote land use compatibility, to recognize the interim nature of extraction, and to mitigate negative impacts to the extent possible. Final rehabilitation shall take surrounding land use and approved land use designations into consideration.  Section 4.2.8.4 of the Growth Plan states that the disturbed area of a site must be rehabilitated to a state of equal or greater ecological value and, for the entire site, long-term ecological integrity will be maintained or enhanced.
10	Promote countryside tourism and agri-tourism opportunities that build on agricultural and/or natural heritage assets. This includes agricultural fairs, farmers markets and events.	The current Town Official Plan does not emphasize the agri-tourism potential of rural lands.	Section 1.1.4 of the PPS states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by providing opportunities for sustainable and diversified tourism, including leveraging historical, cultural, and natural assets.  Section 2.2.9.4 of the Growth Plan states that where permitted on rural lands, resource-based recreational uses should be limited to tourism-related and recreational uses that are compatible with the scale, character, and capacity of the resource and the surrounding rural landscape.
11	Incorporate policies that maintain significant and productive rural areas to recognize the important	The current Town Official Plan puts forth the notion of environmental	Section 2 of the Planning Act requires the conservation and management of natural resources.

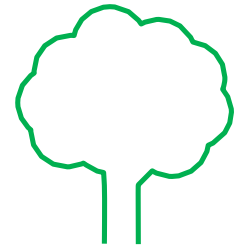
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	role of the lands for agricultural uses, food production, rural uses, and in providing open space connections between natural areas for habitats.	sustainability in recognition of the linkages between natural area corridors and natural features.	Section 1.5.1 of the PPS state the need to recognize provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.
12	Enhance land use permissions that provide flexibility to maximize farming in the Town's rural areas.	The current Town Official Plan provides flexibility to maximize farming uses.	Section 2.3.3.2 of the PPS states that in prime agricultural areas, all types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards.
13	Refine policies pertaining to permitted uses within the Agriculture designation, which categorize permitted uses as: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses. This includes policies to consider/evaluate the appropriateness of on-farm diversified uses to implement provincial guidelines.	The current Town Official Plan does not include these terms defined.	Consistent with "Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas" per the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.  Ensure consistency with updated provincial policy definitions.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
14	Policies should support opportunities for local food, urban and near-urban agriculture, and promote the sustainability of agricultural, agri-food and agri-product businesses through protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts.	The Town mainly focuses on local food security as criteria for the selection of agricultural/rural areas as community improvement areas.	<p>Section 2.3.2 of the PPS states that planning authorities are encouraged to use an agricultural system approach to maintain and enhance the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network.</p> <p>Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan emphasizes the need to support and enhance the long-term viability and productivity of agriculture by protecting prime agricultural areas and the agri-food network.</p>
15	Enhance policies for non-agricultural uses that may be permitted in rural areas in accordance with the PPS. These uses may relate to small scale commercial, employment and industrial uses.	The current Town Official Plan includes policies; however, they require updating.	Section 2.3.6 of the PPS specifies permitted non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas.

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### 4.3.2 Natural Heritage

A key objective of the *Planning Act* is to promote an environmentally sustainable development founded by a healthy natural environment. This includes the conservation and management of natural resources in order to protect ecological systems, natural areas, features and functions.



The PPS further promotes this by defining Ontario's land-use planning system to protect natural features and area for the long term. The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, is recognized as a finite resource that should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved. The Natural Heritage Reference Manual, prepared by the Province of Ontario, provides guidance for interpreting the PPS policies on natural heritage. Specifically, the Natural Heritage Reference Manual recommends that natural heritage systems should be identified using a comprehensive approach that evaluates the contribution of all land cover and habitats to the ecological function and biodiversity of landscapes and examines deficiencies that should be rectified to address diversity and connectivity. This comprehensive approach recognizes that individual natural areas and features have strong ecological ties to one another, as well as ecological interdependencies within the larger landscape. The comprehensive approach emphasizes the maintenance and enhancement of ecological functions (e.g., corridors, linkages) that sustain biodiversity rather than solely serving to protect individual features or patches of habitat.

The policy directives of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan are rooted in the importance of protecting and enhancing the environment and demonstrate the need for municipalities to consider the impacts of growth on natural heritage resources and functions. This includes aligning local municipal policies with the objectives and permitted uses of Natural Core and Natural Linkage Area designations within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan to ensure that strategic growth is supported by environmental sustainability. In addition, other lands under the Greenbelt Plan within the Town are designated as part of the Natural Heritage System. This specific designation protects areas of natural heritage, hydrologic and/or landform features, which are often functionally inter-related, and which collectively provide essential ecosystem services, including water storage and filtration, cleaner air, habitat, support for pollinators, carbon storage and resilience to climate change.

Given the importance of natural heritage resources as noted in provincial policies, the Town has the duty to implement policies that protect natural heritage and the opportunity to fully integrate natural heritage within the context of a growing community. The Town is currently undertaking a Natural Heritage Resource Study. The findings and policy recommendations from that Study will be incorporated into the OPR.

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
1	Implement the two Source Protection Plans (South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe, and Credit Valley Toronto and Region and Central Lake), with respect to wellhead protection areas and designated vulnerable areas to protect municipal drinking water sources.	The current Town Official Plan does not include Source Protection Plan provisions.	Section 40.1 of the Clean Water Act, 2006 states that the council of a municipality or a municipal planning authority that has jurisdiction in an area to which the source protection plan applies shall amend its official plan to conform with the significant threat policies and designated Great Lakes policies set out in the source protection plan.
2	Ensure the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water and the function of sensitive groundwater recharge/discharge areas, aquifers and headwaters will be protected and enhanced, especially for those stream reaches that are heavily reliant on local sources of groundwater discharge.	The current Town Official Plan identifies ground water as being potentially sensitive to development because of their recharge and discharge functions.	Section 2 of the <i>Planning Act</i> notes the supply, efficient use and conservation of water as a provincial interest.  Section 2.2.1 of the PPS requires the need to identify water resource systems consisting of ground water features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas, and surface water features including shoreline areas, which are necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the watershed. This includes maintaining linkages and related functions among ground water features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas, and surface water features including shoreline areas.

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
3	Implement Town-wide objectives to promote a systems-based approach to protecting the natural environment, achieve no net loss and to protect, enhance and restore features and areas and their ecological functions.	The current Town Official Plan includes objectives regarding protection of the natural environment. Minimal emphasis is put on a systems-based approach.	Section 2 of the Planning Act states as a provincial interest the need to ensure protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions.
4	Implement policies to consider cross-jurisdictional relationships and impacts on natural heritage and recognize the importance and extent of external connections.	The current Town Official Plan does not consider the cross-jurisdictional relationships and impacts on natural heritage.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes as a provincial interest the importance of conservation and management of natural resources.</p> <p>Section 2.1.1. of the PPS states that natural features and areas must be protected for the long term.</p> <p>Section 4.2.2.1 of the Growth Plan supports a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term approach to planning for the protection of the region’s natural heritage and biodiversity.</p>
5	Consider Town-wide innovative solutions to ensure open space linkages to serve as recreational and wildlife linkages.	The current Town Official Plan recognizes the importance of open space linkages.	<p>Section 1.5.1 of the PPS states that healthy, active communities should be promoted by open space linkages.</p> <p>The Growth Plan puts forth the common theme of ensuring that connectivity of key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features be maintained or, where possible, enhanced for the movement of native plants and animals across the landscape.</p>
6	Implement policy language that provides for the protection, improvement and restoration of hydrologic	The current Town Official Plan implements policies for the protection of hydrologic functions	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes as a provincial interest the importance of a sustained supply, efficient use and conservation of water.</p> <p>Section 2.2.1 of the PPS states that planning authorities must protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	functions of key hydrologic areas.	of key hydrologic areas.	
7	Implement policies to ensure the importance of protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment in the management of natural or human-made hazards is considered in all development.	The current Town Official Plan is limited in providing comprehensive policies regarding remediation of natural or human-made hazards.	Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes as a provincial interest the importance of public health and safety.  Section 3.2.2 of the PPS states that sites with contaminants in land or water must be assessed and remediated as necessary prior to any activity on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be no adverse effects.
8	Implement policies that consider strategies to address the impacts of climate change on natural hazards.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate the impacts of climate change.	Section 3.1.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities must prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.
9	Implement Town-wide environmental stewardship policies to promote the value of ecological goods and services that result from natural heritage conservation.	The current Town Official Plan limits its stewardship program to the Vandorf-Preston Lake Area.	Promoting environmental stewardship has been identified as a priority for the Town and through comments received from public engagement.
10	Promote the management of invasive species as an important consideration in	The current Town Official Plan does	This will support the objectives of the PPS and Growth Plan in protecting threatened and endangered species, while also promoting climate change resiliency. This includes the importance of protecting land, biodiversity,

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.	not contemplate invasive species.	natural features and resources for the long-term quality of life, economic prosperity, environmental health and ecological integrity of the Province.
11	Require new development and redevelopment in the Town's settlement areas to incorporate native and drought tolerant vegetation.	The current Town Official Plan promotes the planting of native species.	Integrating native vegetation has been identified as a priority for the Town and through comments received from public engagement.
12	Encourage on-site and local reuse of excess soil and encourage soil conservation through the use of low impact development and planting new and protecting existing trees and vegetation. This includes requiring that excess soil placement at receiving sites be required to demonstrate that the activity will not have a negative impact on existing land uses, the natural environment, surrounding land uses and cultural heritage resources through measures such as	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate the use of excess soil.	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Act recognizes as a provincial interest the importance of public health and safety. This includes its relationship to environmental wellbeing.</p> <p>Section 3.2.3 of the PPS states that planning authorities should support, where feasible, on-site and local re-use of excess soil through planning and development approvals while protecting human health and the environment.</p> <p>Section 4.2.9.3 of the Growth Plan states that any excess soil should be reused on-site or locally to the maximum extent possible and, where feasible, excess soil reuse planning is undertaken concurrently with development planning and design.</p>

#	Policy Recommendation	Context, Gap, Conflict	Justification
	screening, appropriate buffers and setbacks, and containment management.		
13	Encourage green infrastructure and passive noise attenuation measures in place of acoustical fencing and other traditional noise attenuation measures, where feasible and appropriate.	The current Town Official Plan does not contemplate the use of green infrastructure for noise reductions.	Section 2.2.1.4 of the Growth Plan recognizes green infrastructure as a key part of managing growth.
14	Implement policy language to ensure that development and site alteration are prohibited within key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features and adjacent lands, unless an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) or Natural Heritage Evaluation (NHE) shows no negative impacts or if authorized through an Environmental Assessment (EA).	The current Town Official Plan includes requires for when an EIS/NHE is required.	Section 4.2.3.1 of the Growth Plan states that outside of settlement areas, development or site alteration is not permitted in key natural heritage features that are part of the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan or in key hydrologic feature expect for activities that create or maintain infrastructure authorized under an environmental assessment process.  The environmental assessments process ensures that governments and public bodies consider potential environmental effects before an infrastructure project begins.

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## 4.4 Planning Administration, Implementation and Interpretation

Consideration for planning administration, implementation and interpretation ensures that key Provincial, regional policy and legislative are incorporated. The policies of the Official Plan will generally be re-written, however there may be an opportunity to carry forward certain policies which already conform to or implement the various Provincial and Regional documents.



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### 4.4.1 Public Engagement and Consultation

The Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015 (Bill 73), largely took effect on June 1, 2016, and made significant amendments to the Planning Act, along with changes to the Development Charges Act. Some of the most significant changes dealing with public consultation include the requirement for municipalities to explain the effect of public input on planning decisions, the requirement for Official Plans to include public consultation procedures regarding Official Plan Amendments, and the need for upper-tier municipalities to establish Planning Advisory Committees with public representation.

Additionally, Bill 73 provides municipalities with the option to offer alternative notice procedures when seeking citizen input. To this effect, various Planning Act regulations related to planning instruments (i.e. Official Plan Amendments, Zoning, Site Plans, etc.) were amended to enhance relevant notice requirements and to modernize and simplify the content of notices for publishing in newspapers and posting on properties. For example, notices were previously required to be given in one of certain specified formats (e.g. personal service, mail or fax) to prescribed persons and public bodies, persons and public bodies who asked to be notified and, in some cases, approval authorities. Bill 73 adds email as an additional notification option to those listed above. Furthermore, prior to Bill 73, for notices in multi-tenant residential buildings there was no previous requirement to provide notice to tenants. Additionally, previous requirements required a wider notice for the passing of a Zoning By-law than what was required for decision notices for other planning matters (i.e. Official Plan Amendments, Site Plans, etc.).

The PPS, 2020 also provides an improvement for Indigenous Communities seeking consultation and accommodation regarding land use planning decisions. The PPS provides stronger language that reinforces the municipalities Duty to Consult and the type of relationship that municipalities should have with Indigenous Communities. These changes include Ontario's recognition of Indigenous Communities unique relationship to land and resources, their role in land use planning and the contribution Indigenous knowledge has on land use planning decisions. The PPS also clearly acknowledges the Duty to Consult on matters that may impact Aboriginal (Indigenous) rights as protected by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution and encourages meaningful relationships that promote knowledge-sharing and inform decision-making on land use decisions. The PPS also mentions that Planning authorities shall engage and coordinate with Indigenous Communities on matters of land use planning and cultural heritage; and clearly acknowledges the potential benefits a healthy relationship with Indigenous Communities.

## POLICY DIRECTIONS:

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Review public notification and consultation policies to drive more meaningful, effective and inclusive public involvement in planning decisions.	The current Town Official Plan includes outdated notification and consultation policies.	Bill 73 provides municipalities with the option to offer alternative notice procedures when seeking citizen input.
2	Incorporate policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.	The current Town Official Plan does not include policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.	<p>Section 1.2.2 of the PPS requires planning authorities to engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.</p> <p>Section 2.6.5 further states that planning authorities must engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.</p> <p>Section 5.2.3.7 of the Growth Plan states that planning authorities must co-ordinate planning matters with Indigenous communities throughout the planning process to ensure that appropriate engagement is undertaken. Municipalities are encouraged to build constructive, cooperative relationships with First Nations and Métis communities and to facilitate knowledge sharing in growth management and land use planning processes.</p>
3	Consider policies that speak to the interests of Indigenous communities not only in culture, archaeology and history, but also housing and economic development.	The current Town Official Plan does not include policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.	Section 5.2.3.4 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities must engage Indigenous communities in local efforts to implement this Plan, and to provide the necessary information to ensure the informed involvement of these communities.

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## 4.4.2 Planning Tools and Administration

One of the impetuses for undertaking this Official Plan Review stems from the fact that the Town is required to review its Official Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act to ensure conformity with Provincial Plans such as the Growth Plan, as well as the York Region Official Plan, and to ensure consistency with the PPS.



The last comprehensive amendment to the Town's Official Plan was approved in 2004. Since then, the planning regime in the Province, and the Town itself have changed dramatically. Therefore, this OPR presents an opportunity for the Town to incorporate and implement recent planning tools to guide the Town's land use and development decisions over the planning horizon.

The Planning Act provides the fundamental land use planning framework in Ontario. It governs the overall content and direction of Official Plans through Section 16, addressing key policy themes including the social, economic, built and natural environment of the municipality, affordable housing, and other matters. In addition to policies for land use and development, the Official Plan must also include policies and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public in respect of planning instruments such as zoning by-laws, plans of subdivision, consent applications and others.

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

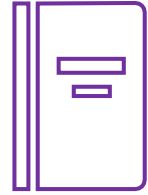
#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Enable policies for the Town to establish a Community Planning Permit System.	The current Town Official Plan states that the Town will give consideration to the use of a Development Permit System to implement the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.	The community planning permit system (CPPS), as established by the Province, is a land use planning tool that municipalities can use when planning for the future of their communities. Municipalities must first amend their official plan by adopting policies for the area where the CPPS will be used. The development of an official plan amendment must follow legislative and regulatory requirements Municipalities must then or at the same time also pass a community planning permit by-law.
2	Enable policies related to Inclusionary Zoning and examine the feasibility of implementing Inclusionary Zoning within the Lincolnville and Stouffville Major Transit Station Area's (MTSA's).	The current Town Official Plan does not include Inclusionary Zoning guidelines or provisions.	Section 16 of the Planning Act states that an official plan of a municipality that is prescribed for the purpose of this subsection shall contain policies that authorize inclusionary zoning by authorizing the inclusion of affordable housing units within buildings or projects containing other residential units, and providing for the affordable housing units to be maintained as affordable housing units over time
3	Update policies related to parkland dedication and the preparation of a Parks Plan to reflect the Town's direction as it relates to the potential implementation and collecting funds through	The current Town Official Plan mainly puts forth Parkland dedication policies for the assemblance of a park of a suitable size, or shall take "cash-in-lieu" of parkland. The Town's update to the	Section 51.1 of the Planning Act states that the approval authority may impose as a condition to the approval of a plan of subdivision that land in an amount not exceeding, in the case of a subdivision proposed for commercial or industrial purposes, 2 per cent and in all other cases 5 per cent of the land included in the plan shall be conveyed to the local municipality for park or other public recreational purposes or, if the land is not in a municipality, shall be dedicated for park or other public recreational purposes.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	the Community Benefits Charge Authority.	<p>Leisure and Community Services Master Plan is ongoing.</p> <p>Town is currently undertaking a CBC Feasibility Assessment to determine need for a CBC Strategy and By-law.</p>	Bill 197 amends sections 37 and 37.1 of the Planning Act as it relates to the community benefit charges against land to pay for the capital costs of facilities, services, and other development related costs by by-law after preparing a Community Benefits Charge Strategy.
4	Develop policies that are performance or results-based, where appropriate, so that development applications can be evaluated in a flexible, but consistent manner, in order to enable good development.	The current Town Official Plan's policies ability to be performance or results-based is limited.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town to establish goals, targets, incorporating evaluation methods within policies.
5	Include an Indigenous Land Acknowledgment in the new Town Official Plan.	The current Town Official Plan does not include an Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.	<p>Following the 2015 release of the Federal Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) final report, land acknowledgements have emerged as one of the responses to the TRC "Calls to Action."</p> <p>This has been identified as a priority for the Town and through comments received from public engagement.</p>

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### 4.4.3 Implementation and Interpretation

The current Town Official Plan is divided into thirteen sections and contains over five-hundred pages. The Plan also includes close to thirty Figures and Schedules that are described in the policies and enhance the understanding of the Plan. The text and schedules are inter-related and are read in conjunction with one another.



The Official Plan Review will culminate into a new Official Plan document—a repeal and replace exercise, for technical purposes – to produce a single, concise and clean document that is easier to navigate. There are a number of reasons why a repeal and replace of the existing Official Plan is appropriate and recommended:

- Rather than preparing a surgical amendment with numerous individual revisions, preparing a single, clear document (that includes a history or original source reference to maintained policies) will better demonstrate the intent of the project team and Council;
- In general, working within a new document also allows the Town to create a contemporary document that will be at the forefront of development decisions;
- There is also a desire to make the Official Plan easier to read and more intuitive. Care shall be taken to ensure the text and mapping is prepared to be accessible to the broadest possible audience. The aim is that this Review results in a user-friendly, graphically-enhanced Official Plan which is accessible to all users.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards in the Province. All governments, businesses, non-profits and public-sector organizations must abide by AODA standards and regulations to ensure people with disabilities can access services, goods, or facilities as required. As a result, the new Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan must meet AODA standards such as providing it in a suitable format, using reasonable font sizes, high contrast and other format considerations.

**POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
1	Create a new Official Plan document that is streamlined and has improved formatting and organization.	The current Town Official Plan is lengthy and can use improved formatting.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town and through comments received from public engagement. This was also noted in the General Technical and Housekeeping Discussion Paper.
2	Develop contemporary Schedules and Figures with GIS data to complement the Official Plan text and provide for opportunities of analysis. This includes updates to the most current parcel fabric and Provincial, Regional, and Conservation Authority mapping.	The current Town Official Plan Schedules and Figures require updating.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town and through the General Technical and Housekeeping Discussion Paper. This will also ensure that Schedules and Figures are updated with current provincial and regional requirements and mapping.
3	Develop legible and easy-to-understand Schedules and Figures that will assist the readers in understanding the Official Plan policies and geographical features of the Town.	The current Town Official Plan Schedules and Figures ability to be user friendly is limited.	This has been identified as a priority for the Town and through the General Technical and Housekeeping Discussion Paper. This also ensures that the Schedules and Figures can be easily used and interpreted by all.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
4	Ensure the new Official Plan meets and considers Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards such as providing it in a suitable format, using reasonable font sizes, high contrast and other format considerations. This includes incorporating all new accessibility guidelines and requirements into a new Official Plan that is easy to read and interpret, and will allow for frequent and new users alike to navigate and find information easily.	Accessibility guidelines have been updated since the release of the current Town Official Plan.	<p>The AODA is a law that sets out a process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Under the AODA, the government is responsible for creating accessibility standards that organizations must follow. Implementing and enforcing these standards will help us work together towards the goal of making Ontario more accessible and inclusive by 2025.</p> <p>This has been identified as a priority for the Town and through public consultation.</p>
5	Implement policies that enable the Town to require a peer-review of any required studies or reports at the expense of the applicant.	Requirements for peer reviews are included in the current Town Official Plan.	This is will ensure that the Town can have confidence in the information and recommendations presented in any required development related studies or reports.
6	Update the list of required information and	The current Town Official Plan list of	This will ensure that information and materials to be submitted as part of a complete application is consistent with current provincial policies.

#	Policy Recommendation	Current Context/Gap	Justification
	materials to be submitted as part of a complete application.	required information and materials to be submitted as part of a complete application is outdated.	
7	Develop a new comprehensive Definitions section	The Current Official Plan provides limited definitions within various sections.	A review of the definitions will be undertaken to ensure that they are clear, contemporary, contain accessible language and are in conformity with Provincial legislation and the Regional Official Plan. A substantial number of new definitions will also be added to the Official Plan.

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## 4.5 Secondary Plans

The intent of a Secondary Plan is to provide policies and direction for development in certain areas of the Town. The Official Plan includes four Secondary Plan Areas which provide more detailed land use direction for specific communities and complements the policies of the Official Plan. These Secondary Plan Areas include:



- Community of Stouffville Secondary Plan
- Vandorf-Preston Lake Secondary Plan
- Ballantrae-Musselman Lake and Environs Secondary Plan
- Gormley Industrial Secondary Plan

The Town will use this OPR as an opportunity to undertake a Secondary Plan consolidation exercise with the objective of streamlining the Official Plan. The new Official Plan will be structured to avoid duplication and conflicts with secondary policies; streamline implementation and interpretation policies; and eliminate conflicting policies and definitions.

### **POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

#	Policy Recommendation
1	Streamline and update Secondary Plan policies, including consolidation of definitions, removal of repetitive designations/policies and consolidation of interpretation and implementation policies.
2	Consolidate Secondary Plan Areas Schedules into a single settlement area boundary and remove the Oak Ridges Moraine designations from the Secondary Plans so they are only addressed in the Official Plan.
3	Consider updating urban design policies and directions within the Official Plan, based on ongoing review of the Community of Stouffville Urban Design Guidelines.
4	Revisions to policies for Ballantrae Musselman's Lake will be dependent on the results of the ongoing Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) mediation process.

## 5 NEXT STEPS

This Policy Directions Report is being completed as part of Phase 3 'Policy Directions' of the Official Plan Review to implement preferred policy directions and to address policy conformity gaps. This Report has been drafted founded on the information gathered in the previous project phases based on a background review, research and initial consultation and feedback obtained from the four Discussions Papers. It has also been informed by the Community Visioning Consultations undertaken in Phase 1. The directions and recommendations presented in this Report will be refined through consultation with the public as part of future consultations.

This is a starting point for generating discussion about policy directions that will formulate the new Town Official Plan. Feedback opportunities for a full range of stakeholders to provide input and insight on these policy issues will be available in Phase 3 of the project.

### **Provide Your Comments:**

Comments and feedback on the Policy Directions Report can be provided through the webpage or emailed to: [opreview@townofws.ca](mailto:opreview@townofws.ca).