

Township of Uxbridge

*Official Plan Review
Work Program*

June 2009

Township of Uxbridge Official Plan Review Work Program

1. BACKGROUND

The Township of Uxbridge Official Plan is comprised of some general policies applicable to the Township as a whole, in addition to the policies of the Region of Durham Official Plan; the Uxbridge Urban Area Secondary Plan; and the Coppins Corners Secondary Plan. A Secondary Plan has also been adopted for the Hamlet of Goodwood (OPA 20), but approval has been deferred pending the resolution of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan conformity exercise which is currently on-going. The most recent update to the Official Plan (OPA 19) involved the preparation of a new Uxbridge Urban Area Secondary Plan, as well as general implementation and interpretation policies. It was adopted by Council in 1999 and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board in 2000.

The Planning Act requires the Official Plan to be reviewed at least every five years and the Township has undertaken updates which address specific policy issues since 1999, including:

- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Conformity Exercise (OPA 33), 2005, updated 2006, still waiting Provincial approval,
- a commercial policy review which resulted in a number of specific amendments in 2006 (OPAs 32 and 34-37);
- a wind power facility review which resulted in OPA 40 in September 2006;
- modifications to the site plan and community design strategy in April 2007 and February 2008 (e.g. OPA 42);
- the establishment of complete planning application requirements in May 2008 (OPA 44); and,
- an amendment to permit residential second units in hamlet areas in December 2008 (OPA 48).

However, despite these changes, it is now necessary to carry out a comprehensive review of the Plan to reflect significant policy changes which have been made at the Provincial level, particularly the Places To Grow Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GPGGH) and the Greenbelt Plan. In addition, a number of issues specific to the Township need to be addressed including modifications to the Plan to reflect the Township's Downtown Vision and Action Plan, and consideration of the use of a development permit by-law for areas in the Oak Ridges Moraine to assist in the implementation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP).

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

2.1 Objective

To undertake a comprehensive review of the Official Plan.

2.2 Scope

This process is intended to review and update the current Official Plan to reflect new policy and regulatory initiatives and address emerging issues and trends in community planning for the time horizon of 2031. At the same time, it is intended to continue an approach to the Plan which includes detailed policies for the Uxbridge Urban Area and certain hamlets, as well as implementation and interpretation, while including only policies for the rural area which address issues specific to Uxbridge and which do not replicate policies in the Regional Official Plan.

In particular, the Official Plan Review will generally focus around the following key policy areas:

1. Recent Provincial planning initiatives such as the Ontario Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GPGGH) and the Greenbelt Plan

In accordance with Provincial direction, the Official Plan is required to be updated to reflect a policy framework that:

- manages change and promotes efficient use of resources for a strong, liveable and healthy community;
- promotes compact built form and an appropriate mix of land uses and densities which minimizes the consumption of land and maximizes the use of existing infrastructure;
- identifies areas for intensification and re-development in a manner that is sensitive to the character of surrounding residential neighbourhoods;
- promotes transit-supportive development patterns;
- provides for an appropriate mix of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements, including housing which is affordable for low to moderate income households;
- provides for a healthy mix of employment uses and supply of employment lands in suitable locations to meet projected targets;
- promotes active communities through the development of complete streets (pedestrians and cyclists) and generous public open space areas;

- promotes energy conservation and efficiency to minimize impacts to air quality and climate change;
- protects natural, cultural heritage, water and other resources for current and future generations;
- maintains and enhances the viability and vitality of downtown and mainstreets;
- promotes the redevelopment of brownfields;
- plans for infrastructure demand, management and investment; and,
- provides the tools necessary to appropriately implements these planning directives.

At the same time, the Province, through the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Greenbelt Plan and regulations established with respect to the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, December 2008, has significantly restricted the amount of development which will be permitted in Uxbridge. The appropriate balance will have to be determined between the various Provincial directions. This process will also have to take into consideration the policies of the Regional Official Plan developed as part of the “Growing Durham” process, which implement the Provincial policies as they apply to Durham Region.

A growth management strategy will be required to properly manage and guide the limited future growth and development which is possible in the Uxbridge Urban Area and the hamlets in accordance with the Provincial policies and the Regional Official Plan. The strategy should identify the Township’s priorities for development and sequencing of development including the role of the Kennedy House lands. Consideration would also be given to a process for investigating the use of alternative services in the Uxbridge Urban Area in view of the current constraints on the sewage treatment plant.

2. Rural Area

The Township is largely a rural area, and although the Official Plan relies primarily on the Regional Plan for policy direction in the rural area, there are a number of issues which should be considered which may require the Township to develop their own policies. These include:

- Greenbelt Plan - An approach will need to be developed with respect to the implementation of the Greenbelt Plan. The approach must take into account the policies in the Regional Plan and the potential need to reflect mapping of natural features as it becomes available without the need to constantly update the Official Plan.
- Consider the need to establish policies for agriculture related uses;

- Consider the need for policies related to food security; and,
- Consider the need for additional policies related to aggregate protection.

3. Intensification

In light of the directives of the Growth Plan and the current pressures for intensification in the built up areas of the Urban Area, it will be important to ensure that there is appropriate policy direction in the Official Plan to guide new development within existing areas, ensure compatibility, and maintain consistency with the PPS and Growth Plan. Accordingly, a review of the existing intensification policies should form part of the review and, where necessary, new policies and/or a strategy should be developed to address: intensification areas and/or corridors; land use mix; height; massing; density; compatibility; buffering; urban design requirements; and open space/amenity areas.

4. Downtown

The Township is in the process of completing the Downtown Vision and Action Plan. The results of this work should be reflected in the Official Plan. In particular, a review should be undertaken of the current boundary of the Downtown and permitted the building height to ensure that the current policies reflect the Township's Vision for the area.

5. Sustainable Community Development and Design

The Official Plan can play an important role in establishing a supportive policy framework for encouraging quality "green" initiatives in sustainable community planning. Such initiatives may include the promotion of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) neighbourhood design and equivalent, green buildings, alternative energy sources, and other current and leading edge technology which is aimed at conserving resources, improving efficiencies and reducing greenhouse gases. The current Official Plan contains very little reference to energy and resource conservation or environmental sustainability in planning. This is particularly important for Uxbridge as sustainable planning measures may assist in providing additional opportunities for development. In addition, specific policies should be considered for the protection of the environment including wellhead protection policies specifically for the Uxbridge Urban Area, and food security.

It should also be noted that the Northern Communities Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) which is currently in preparation is intended to integrate with the Official Plan. The Official Plan will be modified to assist in achieving the goals and targets of the ICSP.

6. Affordable Housing

A policy framework or strategy pertaining to affordable housing is required to identify current and future needs and obstacles associated with housing mix, tenure, and affordability, and provide options to address them.

7. Accessibility and Visitability

Although the Township adopted its own Accessibility Plan in 2008, the Official Plan should be updated to reflect these standards and the applicable sections of The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The intent of the AODA is to develop common standards that will integrate accessibility as part of the regular business and capital planning for the public and private sectors, which will work towards achieving a fully accessible province by the year 2025.

8. Floodplain Policy

The Official Plan identified a Special Policy Area in Downtown Uxbridge. However, approval of that section was deferred. The Official Plan Review should establish the process for implementing this designation.

9. Heritage Conservation

The Township has a number of properties formally designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, as well as properties listed on the municipal heritage register. New Provincial initiatives with respect to heritage conservation and planning should be reflected in the Plan.

10. General Review

A general review and update of the existing Official Plan and Secondary Plan policies is required to ensure consistency and effectiveness in accordance with provincial, regional and local initiatives and address a number of specific issues including:

- Update policy direction with respect to the commercial node on Reach Street; and,
- Establish direction which will allow the Township to consider the use of a development permit bylaws, particularly for the Oak Ridges Moraine.

2.3 Public Engagement

The Official Plan Review will be conducted with the benefit of a comprehensive public engagement and consultation program that will promote input and foster consensus with stakeholders, including Council, the public, municipal staff, governmental agencies, the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

3. WORKPLAN

The work plan is outlined below. It describes for each task:

- i) Purpose;
- ii) Approach;
- iii) Consultation;
- iv) Logistics;
- v) Deliverables; and,
- vi) Schedule.

Task 1 Project Initiation	
Purpose	To review the work program and initiate the background research and public input.
Approach	<p>The Study Team, including Township staff and consultants will meet, initially to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) review information sources and contacts; ii) establish the specific background research requirements; iii) establish the precise study schedule, including meeting dates, particularly for the public consultation program to ensure that there is no conflict with major holiday periods; iv) establish the details of the public consultation program including an approach for involving the youth of the community. <p>Following this meeting, an initial public notice will be issued outlining the study process and opportunities for public involvement. A special section will also be added to the Township's website and Township staff will initiate the compilation of a stakeholders' list.</p>
Consultation	Initial notice, web site initiation and initial stakeholders list
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Place ads in newspaper ii) Create stakeholder list and send notices to key stakeholders of study initiation iii) Create website
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Final Work program; ii) Preparation of notice, stakeholder list and website material.
Schedule	May - June 2009

Task 2 – Background Review	
Purpose	To carry out an analysis of existing information focused on the identified issues.
Approach	<p>There is a significant amount of existing background information available which will assist in providing the necessary basis for the Official Plan Review. This information will be reviewed and the implications for the current Official Plan determined.</p> <p>i) Policy Review A detailed analysis will also be undertaken of Provincial policies and legislation (e.g. Heritage Act, Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan), and the Regional Plan in relation to the policies of the existing Official Plan. This review will take the form of tables which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) compare the existing Official Plan policies with the existing Provincial and Regional policies; b) identify areas where changes are required; and, c) recommend policy approaches and/or options where appropriate. <p>ii) Alternative Servicing Options Discussions will be held with the Township engineering consultants and, if deemed appropriate, the Region and the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority, to determine potential alternative servicing options for the Urban Area and an approach for exploring their implementation in Uxbridge.</p> <p>iii) Intensification Potential As a basis for understanding what areas need to be protected and where intensification would be appropriate in the Built Boundary established by the Province, a detailed review of existing and proposed development will occur based on existing mapping, aerial photography, and current development applications. Potential development and redevelopment areas will be determined and the potential level of development which is appropriate would be assessed.</p> <p>iv) Downtown The Downtown Vision and Action Plan and related background material will be reviewed and the implications for the existing Official Plan policies, in particular the boundary of the Downtown and building heights, will be evaluated.</p> <p>v) Rural Area Environmental Features – an inventory of available mapping of environmental features will be made to determine the current status of such mapping and its relationship to the policies in the Greenbelt and Regional Plans.</p> <p>Agriculture Related Uses – A review of past development applications for agriculture related uses in the Township will be undertaken to determine the potential types of uses which may be anticipated. In addition, best practices and policies in other similar</p>

Task 2 – Background Review	
	<p>municipalities will be reviewed to determine alternative approaches which may be applicable to Uxbridge.</p> <p>Aggregate Uses – A review of best practices and policy initiatives in other similar municipalities will be undertaken to identify alternative approaches to issues such as the development of “master plans” for rehabilitation of aggregate areas.</p> <p>vi) Sustainable Community Development and Design An inventory of best practices and policy initiatives in other municipalities related to sustainability and conservation will be carried out to establish potential directions applicable to Uxbridge.</p> <p>vii) Accessibility and Visitability Review the Township’s Accessibility Plan and related legislation and identify issues which should be addressed in the Official Plan.</p> <p>viii) Floodplain Policy Review current Provincial directions with respect to establishment of Special Policy Areas, develop with Township engineering consultant approach to establishment of an SPA in Downtown Uxbridge, and review with Conservation Authority.</p> <p>ix) Heritage Conservation Determine approaches being used by the Township to designation and registration of heritage properties, and identify any changes required to existing Official Plan policies.</p> <p>x) General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review history of Reach St. commercial development and approach taken to it in commercial policy review; • Review background to use of development permit bylaws and applicability to ORM.
Consultation	i) Contact with stakeholders and agencies as required.
Logistics	i) Arrangements for interviews with appropriate Township and agency staff ii) Arrangements for provision of background data
Deliverables	Background research results summaries for input to Background Discussion Paper
Schedule	June-September 2009

Task 3 - Background Discussion Paper and Task 4 Background Review	
Purpose	To prepare an overview report summarizing the results of the background research and carry out a review of the report with the Township, agencies and the public.
Approach	<p>The Background Discussion Paper will summarize the key findings of the background analysis and their implications for the further development of the Township. Where applicable it will set out options for future policy directions.</p> <p>The Background Discussion Paper will be reviewed with Township staff and Council. It will then be revised to take into account comments received and released for public and agency review.</p> <p>The key components of the public consultation program are described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -boards summarizing key background information, as well as an explanation of the study process will be displayed at an evening open house; -members of the Consultant Team and Planning staff will be available to answer questions and discuss ideas and concerns with members of the public; and, -comment sheets will also be provided for the public. ii) Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the study team will present the findings together with slides related to potential issues; -this will be followed by a question and comment period. iii) Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to newspaper advertisements notifying the general public of the release of the report, and the public open house, the website will also be updated with a copy of the report. <p>Following the public open house, the results will be reviewed and a report prepared summarizing the input, including input from agencies, as a basis for the preparation of the update of the Official Plan. This will be provided to Council for information.</p>
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Draft background report will be reviewed with Township Council and staff before being finalized. ii) Public Open House
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Arrange for meeting rooms and other meeting requirements including minutes of meetings ii) Place ads in newspaper iii) Notes of any comments or questions during general discussion period at open house iv) Update stakeholder list v) Add material to website
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Background Discussion Paper ii) Presentation and Materials for Open House iii) Summary of Public Input
Schedule	October 2009 – December 2009

Task 4 Draft Official Plan Amendment	
Purpose	To prepare a draft Official Plan amendment
Approach	An initial draft of the Official Plan amendment will be prepared based on the Background Discussion Paper and public and agency input. The exact format of the Plan amendment cannot be determined at this time because it must reflect the results of the study and consultation. However, it is not intended to be a new Official Plan, but rather an update of the current Plan. A consolidated document will also be prepared to make it easy to understand the proposed changes. It should be noted, however, that the document will be designed to be in conformity with the current Provincial planning policies, as well as to address key local issues. The draft Official Plan amendment will initially be reviewed with Township Staff.
Logistics	Coordinate review of draft amendment
Deliver-ables	i) Draft Official Plan amendment ii) Consolidation of draft amendment with current Official Plan
Schedule	January -February 2010

Task 5- Draft Document Review	
Purpose	To provide an opportunity for an initial public review of the draft Official Plan amendment.
Approach	The draft document will be reviewed at a meeting with Council. Any revisions will be made and a public open house will then be held to receive public input. The document will also be circulated to agencies for comment. The public and agency comments will be reviewed and a report will be prepared outlining a response to the comments. The report will be submitted to Council for review.
Consult-ation	i) 1 Public Open House ii) Agency circulation
Logistics	i) Arrange for meeting rooms and other meeting requirements, take minutes of meetings ii) Place ads in newspaper iii) Update stakeholder list iv) Add material to website
Deliver-ables	i) Materials for Open House ii) Report on public and agency comments
Schedule	March - April 2010

Task 7- Statutory Review	
Purpose	To provide an opportunity for a formal public and agency review of the draft Official Plan amendment.
Approach	A statutory open house (to be held as required a minimum of 7 days prior to the public meeting as required by the Planning Act) and public meeting will be conducted to review the draft Plan amendment. This process will provide an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to provide formal input to the draft Plan amendment. The Plan will also be formally circulated to agencies for comment. This input will be used to refine the Plan.
Consultation	i) 1 Statutory Open House and 1 Public Meeting ii) Agency circulation
Logistics	i) Arrange for meeting rooms and other meeting requirements ii) Place ads in newspaper iii) Formal Minutes of public meeting iv) Update stakeholder list v) Add material to website
Deliverables	Materials for open house and meeting
Schedule	May – June 2010

Task 8 – Finalization of Plan and Guidelines	
Purpose	To revise and finalize the Plan amendment
Approach	Following the public meeting, the comments and submissions will be reviewed and a formal report prepared for Council responding to the submissions and outlining any recommended revisions to the Official Plan amendment. The report and the recommended Plan amendment will then be submitted to Council for approval at a public meeting of Council.
Consultation	1 public meeting of Council
Logistics	i) Arrange for meeting room and other meeting requirements ii) Place ads in newspaper iii) Minutes of Council meeting iv) Update stakeholder list v) Add material to website
Deliverables	Report on public input and recommended Official Plan amendment, as well as consolidation of the Official Plan.
Schedule	July-September 2010