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Update on the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan Staff Report to Council

Report Number: 2020-58

Department(s): Planning & Building Services

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Meeting Date: August 24, 2020

Recommendations

1. That the report entitled Update on the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan dated August 24, 2020 be received; and,
2. That the report entitled Update on the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan be forwarded to the Regional Municipality of York as input to York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review, including but not limited to a request that York Region align the Mulock GO major transit station area boundary with the proposed Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan boundary, and the submission of the proposed density to assist York Region's Land Needs Assessment; and,
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Executive Summary

Planning staff, with our consulting team, have prepared a [draft Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan](#) (draft Secondary Plan) and are seeking Council's direction to forward the draft Secondary Plan to the Regional Municipality of York (York Region) as input to the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review.

As noted, the draft Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan is required to be submitted to the Region at this point in order to provide necessary background information to the Region as input to their Municipal Comprehensive Review. This does not constitute the submission of a final draft Secondary Plan to the Region for approval; this step will occur later in the planning process. Further, Council and members of the public will have more opportunities to provide comments on the draft Secondary Plan. A statutory public

meeting will be held in the future, after the status of the Mulock GO MTSA is confirmed in the proposed York Region Official Plan. Any Regional direction on MTSA's and comments from Council or members of the public will be incorporated in the next iteration of the draft Secondary Plan.

The purpose of the draft Secondary Plan is to guide development surrounding the future Mulock GO Station. The draft Secondary Plan, if approved, will permit a range of land uses and densities, and a future road network to facilitate transit-oriented development within the Secondary Plan Area (see Attachment 1).

The area surrounding the future Mulock GO station has been identified as one of the major transit station areas (MTSA's) to be included in the proposed York Region Official Plan. Through this report, Planning staff are recommending that York Region align the Mulock GO Station MTSA boundary with the proposed Secondary Plan Area as shown in Attachment 1. The proposed Secondary Plan Area generally centres around the future Mulock GO Station at the intersection of Mulock Drive and the GO rail corridor. Four Character Areas are proposed within the Secondary Plan Area. Each Character Area will accommodate a variety of land uses, height and density (see Attachment 2). The highest height and density will occur in the Mixed Use Core Character Area, followed by Mixed Use Corridor, East Holland River Valley and Residential Neighbourhood (see Attachment 4). In general, the proposed heights within the Secondary Plan Area range from a minimum of 2 storeys to a maximum of 12 storeys. The proposed densities range from a minimum of 0.75 FSI to a maximum of 2.5 FSI.

Amongst the proposed land use designations, Mixed Use A, Mixed Use B and Mixed Use C will accommodate the widest range of uses; whereas, Station Area Residential will remain primarily residential (see Attachment 3). The difference between the three Mixed Use designations is the percentage of retail and office uses required per development. Mixed Use A requires 15% office and 10% retail use to be included as part of a development; whereas, Mixed Use B and C do not require office use, but require 15% and 10% retail, respectively. To facilitate the range of land uses within the Secondary Plan Area, the draft Secondary Plan proposes to convert a number of sites from employment use to mixed use that include residential/commercial uses.

In terms of new infrastructure and community facilities, the draft Secondary Plan identifies three potential gateway locations and four future public parks (see Attachment 5). There will also be three new public streets within the Secondary Plan Area (see Attachment 6).

Purpose

The purpose of this report is two-fold: i) to provide an update on the work completed to date on the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan and ii) to gain Council direction to submit the draft Secondary Plan to York Region as input to York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

Background

In June 2017, the Province of Ontario (the Province) announced plans for a new Mulock GO station on the Barrie GO line, and Town Council subsequently directed staff to prepare the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan (Secondary Plan) to help guide and facilitate future development around this emerging infrastructure-focused area.

In December 2018, Metrolinx announced taking a market-driven approach to deliver new major transit stations along their rail corridors. Under this new approach, the development of each station would be built by private landowners/developers in exchange for certain development rights on the same property (i.e., around and/or over each station building). While the Town is leading the Secondary Plan process, the design and implementation of the future Mulock GO station is a separate project, which relies on integrated development coming forward.

In February 2019, a Public Information Centre (PIC) was held to seek comments from members of the public on the preliminary vision of the Secondary Plan Area. In April 2019, a Council workshop was held to seek comments from members of Council on the same matter. Comments from both sessions were considered and incorporated into the draft development concepts.

On October 21, 2019, Council received a staff report titled [Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan Request for Public Meeting](#) and directed staff to proceed to a public meeting. Due to the current Provincial and Regional circumstances, which will be discussed in this report, the statutory public meeting is anticipated to take place after York Region provides further direction on MTSAs. In the meantime, another non-statutory PIC was held on February 4, 2020 to seek input from members of public on the revised draft development concepts. Staff continues to work with the Town's consultant, commenting departments and agencies to refine the draft Secondary Plan.

Discussion

The Secondary Plan, once completed, will set a long-term redevelopment vision of the Secondary Plan Area as shown on Attachment 1. It will promote transit-oriented development by permitting a range of land uses and densities, and a future road network to facilitate this vision.

The following sections summarize the Provincial and Regional planning context, main policy directions in the draft Secondary Plan and proposed next steps.

The Secondary Plan, once completed, will set a long-term redevelopment vision of the Secondary Plan Area as shown on Attachment 1. It will promote transit-oriented development by permitting a range of land uses and densities, and a future road network to facilitate this vision.

The following sections summarize the Provincial and Regional planning context, main policy directions in the draft Secondary Plan and proposed next steps.

Provincial and Regional Planning Context

As directed by the Province, York Region is planning for major transit station areas (MTSAs) through its Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). In accordance with the *Planning Act*, York Region will identify boundaries for MTSAs and set minimum residential and job density targets for MTSAs in the proposed York Region Official Plan (Regional OP).

On [April 2, 2020](#), Regional Council endorsed the future Mulock GO station property and surrounding lands as one of the 72 [MTSAs](#) to be included in the proposed Regional OP. Regional staff have been consulting local municipal staff on boundaries of all MTSAs. The final boundaries of all MTSAs are expected to become available in Q3 2020.

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, once the proposed Regional OP identifies an area as an MTSA, the proposed Regional OP must also contain policies that require the local municipality to identify land use permissions and minimum densities in the local Official Plan. Of specific significance is that there are no appeal rights of the Town's policies with respect to land use permissions, heights and densities within MTSAs. Therefore, it is very important that the boundaries of the Mulock GO station MTSA align with the boundaries of the Secondary Plan Area.

Policy Directions of the Draft Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan

Secondary Plan Area

The proposed Secondary Plan Area, as shown on Attachment 1 to this report, involves approximately 79 hectares that centres around the future Mulock GO station. The area can generally be described as along Mulock Drive, from one lot east of Bayview Avenue in the east to the edge of the Urban Centres (almost to Yonge Street) in the west. The proposed boundary represents an appropriate distance around the future Mulock GO station to support transit-oriented development and connects the future Mulock GO station to the Urban Centres. Planning staff recommends that York Region aligns the Mulock GO MTSA boundary with the Secondary Plan boundary as shown on Attachment 1.

Character Areas

The draft Secondary Plan identifies the following four Character Areas (see Attachment 2):

- Mixed Use Core – greatest mix of uses and highest densities;
- Mixed Use Corridor – mix of residential and retail uses along Mulock Drive, second highest densities;

- East Holland River Valley – generally stable with some mix of uses along Mulock Drive, and
- Residential Neighbourhood – extension of existing residential uses to the north.

These Character Areas provide a hierarchy of intensity of activity. Different land use designations can be found in each Character Area.

Land Use Designations

The proposed Secondary Plan Area is currently designated General Employment; Mixed Office/Light Employment; Commercial; and Parks and Open Space in the Town's Official Plan. The draft Secondary Plan proposes to redesignate these lands to Mixed Use A; Mixed Use B; Mixed Use C; Station Area Residential; and Office (see Attachment 3). A summary of the range of permitted uses under each designation is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Proposed Land Use Designation and Permitted Uses

Land Use Designation	Permitted Uses (*not an exhaustive list, refer to draft Secondary Plan for complete list of uses)
Mixed Use A, B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple unit residential such as apartments and townhouses • Home-based Businesses • Office • Commercial Uses • Institutional Uses • Parks • Hotel/Event Facilities • Community Uses <p>Mixed Use A: 15% and 10% of total Gross Floor Area of the proposed development are required to be office and retail uses respectively</p> <p>Mixed Use B: 15% of total Gross Floor Area of the proposed development is required to be retail</p> <p>Mixed Use C: 10% of total Gross Floor Area of the proposed development is required to be retail</p>
Station Area Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple unit residential such as apartments and townhouses • Home-based Businesses • Office • Local Institutional • Convenience Commercial
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office • Commercial • Parks • Public and Private Parking

Height and Density

The proposed height and density policies at build-out are shown on Attachment 4. The highest height and densities are proposed to be located around the future Mulock GO station, along Mulock Drive between the GO rail corridor and Bayview Avenue. In summary, the minimum height within the Secondary Plan Area ranges from 2 to 4 storeys, and the maximum height ranges from 4 to 12 storeys. The minimum density ranges from a Floor Space Index (FSI) of 0.75 to 2, and the maximum FSI ranges from 1.25 to 2.5. To put these proposed heights and densities in context, the minimum height requirements in the Newmarket Urban Centres Secondary Plan (UCSP) ranges from 2 to 6 storeys and the maximum height ranges from 6 to 17 storeys. The minimum density in the UCSP ranges from 1.5 to 2.5 FSI and the maximum FSI ranges from 2.0 to 3.5.

Street Network and Public Realm

The draft Secondary Plan proposes three new public streets and the widening of Kent Drive/Steven Court (see Attachment 6). In addition, the draft Secondary Plan proposes three conceptual gateway locations and four public park locations (see Attachment 5). Each proposed gateway will serve as an entry point along the major transportation corridors that access the Secondary Plan Area. These gateways will contribute to the public realm by creating a sense of arrival and reflect the specific Character Areas that they fall within. Specific design policies are included in the draft Secondary Plan to signify entry points to the Secondary Plan Area. Similar to gateways, the locations of the four public parks are conceptual. The exact size and location of the public parks will be determined through future development applications and in accordance with the Town's Parkland Dedication By-law.

Phasing Policies

It is recognized that development within the Secondary Plan Area will occur in phases. The proposed height and density as shown in Attachment 4 are intended to support the Secondary Plan Area at build-out and is contingent upon the presence of the Mulock GO station. The draft Secondary Plan contains policies to address appropriate level of development in advance of the operation of future Mulock GO station. As shown in Attachment 7, development of the Secondary Plan Area will occur over two phases:

- Phase 1 (Pre-GO station) includes the future Mulock GO station site; Mixed Use Corridor along Mulock Drive west of Cane Parkway; and lands east of Bayview Avenue. Development on lands within Phase 1 can proceed as soon as the Secondary Plan is approved. Planning staff are recommending the Mixed Use Corridor and the lands east of Bayview Avenue to be part of Phase 1 because the proposed built form, land use, and densities of these sites can be served by existing services and transportation network and do not depend on the future Mulock GO station. The Mixed Use Corridor is in close proximity to the Urban Centre. The northeast and southeast corner of the Bayview Avenue and Mulock Drive are located at the intersection of two arterial roads where a medical building and commercial uses already exist.

- Phase 2 (Post-GO station) includes the balance of the Secondary Plan Area, where redevelopment of these sites can only occur after the future Mulock GO station is in operation. This proposed phasing approach is intended to protect the Secondary Plan Area from over development in advance of the future Mulock GO station.

Transitional Policies

The draft Secondary Plan also provides opportunities for land owners to expand their existing operations within the Secondary Plan Area, regardless of which Phase the lands are part of. The proposed interim redevelopment policies recognizes small and large-scale additions to existing buildings may occur in the interim, subject to criteria listed in the draft Secondary Plan. Small-scale redevelopment is defined as an increase of total ground floor area by 10% or less of the existing total ground floor area; whereas, large-scale redevelopment is an increase of total ground floor area by more than 10%. The draft interim redevelopment policies also set out criteria to guide the review of small or large-scale redevelopment applications. For example, large-scale redevelopment must demonstrate how the addition will comply with the policies of the Secondary Plan overtime. The draft Secondary Plan also suggests the interim redevelopment policies be reviewed five years after the approval of the Secondary Plan to determine applicability of such policies.

Employment Land Conversion

The draft Secondary Plan proposes to convert a number of sites from employment uses to mixed use or residential use (see Attachment 8). Through [staff report 2019-64](#), the Town previously submitted an employment land conversion request to York Region for their consideration through the MCR. Lands that are proposed to be designated “Office” or “Stable Sites” in the draft Secondary Plan are not subject to this employment land conversion request since the use on these lands are proposed to remain employment/unchanged. The lands that are subject to the employment land conversion request share the following characteristics:

- Currently identified as Employment Area by York Region;
- Currently designated Employment in the Town’s Official Plan, and
- Proposed to be designated Mixed Use or Station Area Residential in the draft Secondary Plan, which allow residential/commercial uses.

Based on the characteristics listed above, some properties only required conversion on a portion of the lands. For example, only the northern portion of the future GO station site was subject to the employment request because the southern portion of the future GO station site is proposed to be designated Stable Site (see Attachment 3), where no change is anticipated due to the natural heritage constraints (floodplain) present on that portion of the site.

The Town’s employment request was supported by York Region as stated in the Region’s report titled [Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions dated](#)

[March 12, 2020](#) as none of the lands in question are being proposed as employment lands in the proposed Regional OP.

In addition to the Town's request, the owner of 507 Mulock Drive has also requested the Region to consider permitting a conversion of 507 Mulock Drive from employment area to mixed use. The subject property is currently identified as Employment Area by York Region and designated Mixed Employment in the Town's Official Plan. The draft Secondary Plan proposes to designate the property as "Office". The subject property is not being proposed as employment lands in the proposed Regional OP. Regional staff take no position at this time and defer the request to the Town for designation. Planning staff are reviewing the owner's request and will make a recommendation to Council in a future Committee of the Whole report regarding this development proposal and conversion request.

Next Steps

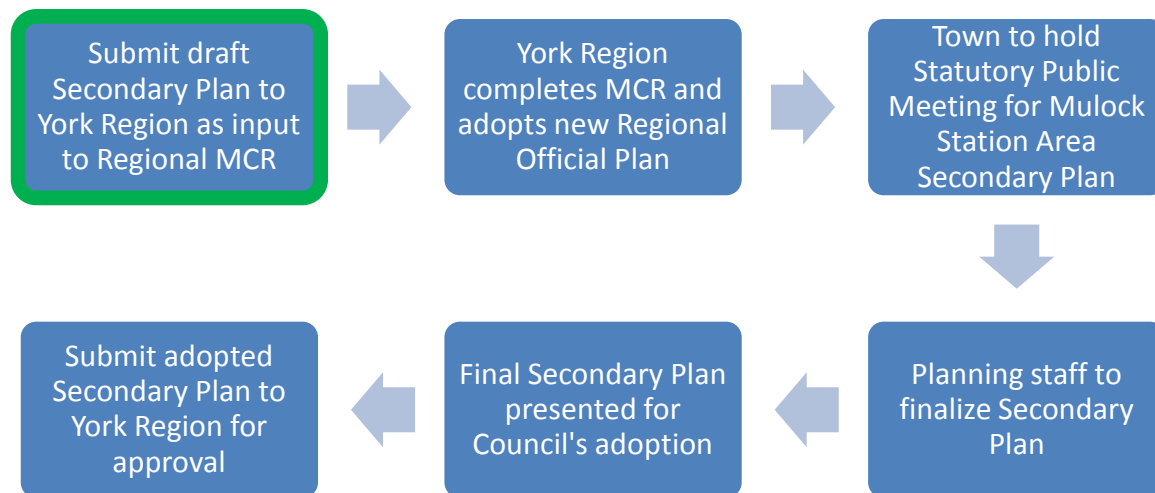
As per the recommendation of this report, the next step in this project is to submit the draft Secondary Plan to York Region as input to the Regional MCR before York Region releases its final MTSA report.

As noted in the Region's [Major Transit Station Areas Update report dated March 12, 2020](#), Regional staff is intending to present a final MTSA report to Regional Council in Q3 2020, "which will include proposed final MTSA boundary delineations and minimum density targets, policy direction for updating the Regional Official Plan based on Growth Plan policies, as well as implementation strategy for Regional and local municipalities." Any Regional direction regarding MTSA will be included in the next iteration of the draft Secondary Plan.

Since the future Mulock GO station has been identified as one of the MTSA's to be included in the proposed Regional OP, it is important to include any Regional MTSA direction in this Secondary Plan. As previously mentioned in this report, once York Region identifies this Secondary Plan Area as an MTSA in the proposed Regional OP and directs the Town to set land use, height and density policies for this MTSA, these policies will be protected from appeals under the *Planning Act*. For these reasons, Planning staff recommend holding the statutory public meeting after the proposed Regional OP is adopted.

Following the statutory public meeting, Planning staff will revise the draft Secondary Plan based on all comments received, present a final recommendation report to Council and seek Council's adoption of the Secondary Plan. Figure 1 below outlines the next steps for this project:

Figure 1 Next Steps



Conclusion

With a draft of the Secondary Plan now prepared, Planning staff recommend providing it to York Region for input to the Regional MCR.

Although the draft Secondary Plan is being recommended to be provided to York Region, this is strictly a matter of process as part of the Regional MCR. Following the conclusion of the MCR, additional opportunities exist for public input, further revisions to the Secondary Plan and a statutory public meeting will be held.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

- Safe Transportation (Streets)
- Economic Leadership and Job Creation
- Vibrancy on Yonge, Davis and Mullock
- Environmental Stewardship

Consultation

The draft Secondary Plan has been prepared under ongoing consultation with the stakeholder group that was formed for this project. Members of this group include staff from York Region, Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority (LSRCA) and Metrolinx.

The draft Secondary Plan has been circulated to all relevant departments and commenting agencies including York Region, LSRCA, school boards and utility companies for review. Comments have been received from York Region and LSRCA. The project team has been working on addressing all technical comments received to date including traffic, natural heritage, sanitary and water/wastewater.

Two Public Information Centres had been held to date and comments received can generally be categorized into the following themes:

- Grade separation/safety
- Train Whistle/Noise
- Trail connection
- Wildlife protection

Planning staff have also been working closely with Regional staff to align among other Regional planning policies, the Region's MTSA boundaries with the proposed Secondary Plan area boundaries. All comments received from the public, internal departments and external agencies will also be addressed in the next draft Secondary Plan and presented at the future statutory public meeting.

Human Resource Considerations

None

Budget Impact

None

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Map of Secondary Plan Area

Attachment 2 – Character Areas

Attachment 3 – Land Use

Attachment 4 – Density

Attachment 5 – Public Realm

Attachment 6 – Street Network

Attachment 7 – Phasing

Attachment 8 – Excerpt from Attachment 5 to York Region report titled Planning for Employment and Employment Conversions

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