Newmarket

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DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES/PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES REPORT 2016-28

TO: Committee of the Whole

SUBJECT: Coordinated Provincial Plans Review

ORIGIN: Planning and Building Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Development and Infrastructure Services/Planning & Building Services Report 2016-28 dated August 29, 2016 regarding the Coordinated Provincial Plans Review be received and that the following recommendation(s) be adopted:

1. **THAT Council direct staff to submit Report 2016-28 to York Region and the Province of Ontario as the Town of Newmarket's comments on the draft versions of the Provincial Plans, released by the Province as part of the Coordinated Land Use Planning Review.**

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

As part of the coordinated Provincial Plan Review being undertaken by the Province, proposed 2016 drafts of the various Provincial Planning documents have recently been released. The purpose of this Report is to address whether or not these new draft Provincial Plans adequately address the Town's comments as previously submitted to the Province, as well as provide an overview and comments on other significant revisions to the Plans.

BACKGROUND

On February 27, 2015, the Province initiated the process regarding the Coordinated Provincial Plan Review. The following Plans were included in this review:

- Niagara Escarpment Plan (1985) - revised in 1994 and 2005
- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2002)
- Greenbelt Plan (2005)
- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006)

The Province, through an Advisory Panel that was established for this project, carried out a public consultation process wherein approximately 19,300 submissions were received, including 60 from

municipalities. In addition, 17 regional town hall meetings were held throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Town of Newmarket submitted comments as part of this public consultation process. Report 2015-13, prepared in May, 2015, contained the Town's comments which were subsequently forwarded to the Province.

The Province then developed a list of proposed recommended revisions to each of the Plans. The Town of Newmarket reviewed these proposed revisions and prepared Information Report 2016-09 in February of 2016 which advised on whether or not they reflected the previously provided comments. Staff were generally satisfied that the recommendations adequately reflected the Town's comments previously submitted to the Province.

More recently, in May, 2016, the Province released the draft versions of these Plans. Staff have undertaken a review of the draft Plans to ensure that our comments were incorporated, as per the above noted recommendations. The Province is now seeking formal comments and feedback on these draft Plans; the deadline to provide such feedback was September 30, 2016 but has been extended to October 31, 2016. Below are the comments that staff intend to provide to the Province.

On June 22, staff attended a Working Session on the coordinated Provincial Plan Review. This Session was hosted by York Region and was attended by representatives from local municipalities. A review of the more significant proposed revisions to the Plans was provided, as well as an opportunity for municipal staff to provide feedback to the Region. Following this Session, staff provided written comments for inclusion in the Region's report.

COMMENTS

Staff comments on proposed Provincial Plan revisions:

Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

- It is recommended that the portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine lands within the southwest area of the Town, which are shown as "Settlement Area" in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan but have been designated as Environmental Protection lands in Newmarket's Planning documents, be re-designated from "Settlement Area" to be consistent with the Town's Planning documents. These lands are outside of the urban boundary as defined through the Town's Planning documents, and are not needed to support growth. This position is consistent with the Town's previous position and a previous OMB Order.

- It is understood that Provincial staff will be meeting with municipalities to discuss such mapping revisions, **Town staff formally request such a meeting.**

- If the mapping revision described above is not implemented, it is recommended that a policy be included in the new ORMCP that provides a clear framework for amendments initiated by municipalities in these instances.

Greenbelt Plan

- It may be appropriate to review, with the appropriate neighbouring municipalities, land on the east side of Highway 404 adjacent to Newmarket with the purpose of removing it from the Greenbelt Plan area. This reflects other Provincial policy which supports growth for employment lands in appropriate locations with minimal infrastructure expansion.

- Again, it is understood that Provincial staff will be meeting with municipalities to discuss such mapping revisions, **Town staff formally request such a meeting.**

Growth Plan

- It is recommended that a consistent set of "persons per unit" numbers by unit type, on an upper tier municipality basis, be included as a revision to the Growth Plan. Having such metrics would be helpful as it would increase the Plan's enforceability and assist in providing standardized land budget methodology.

- Clarification is required regarding which density targets must be used in cases where an area satisfies multiple locational criteria (2.2.4.5). For example, a vivaNext Rapidway satisfies the definition for a "Major Transit Station Area" and therefore would need to target a minimum 160 residents and jobs per hectare. However, if the Rapidway station is in the proximity of a GO Train Station, a minimum 150 residents and jobs per hectare are required. If the higher target applies in these situations, the policy should be clarified as such.

- The proposed Plan states that: *"Major office* and appropriate major institutional development will be directed to *urban growth centres*, *major transit station areas* or other *strategic growth areas* with existing or planned *frequent transit* service." (2.2.5.9). It is unclear if this means that such office and institutional uses should not be directed to *major transit station areas* or *strategic growth areas* that do not have existing or planned frequent transit (15 minute) service. This is a key concern relative to the Newmarket GO Station, which is envisioned by the Urban Centres Secondary Plan as a transportation hub and is currently the subject of a Mobility Hub Study being undertaken by Town in partnership with Metrolinx. Newmarket will see train service increased to 30 minutes as opposed to the required 15 minute service. Clarification and/or re-wording is suggested.

- The term "Prime Employment Areas" should be replaced by "Transportation-reliant Employment", or "Freight-supportive Employment", or similar. The use of the word "Prime" is misleading as it is typically used to refer to prestige / office-type uses. This difference is important in this instance because of the prohibitory language that the Plan includes regarding "Prime Employment Areas" and

other land uses (see below), whereas mixing prestige industrial / office uses with other land uses is an accepted and encouraged practice to support the notion of 'complete' communities.

- The definition for "Prime Employment Areas" should be updated to reference one of its main characteristics, being close proximity to transportation infrastructure such as *major goods movement facilities and corridors*, and major highway interchanges, as per 2.2.5.3.

- The proposed revisions carry through, and in some instances, exacerbate the philosophy of separating land uses, which is contrary to other policies of the Plan that encourage the concept of mixed use. For example, Sections 2.2.5.5 and 2.2.5.6 explicitly prohibit mixing residential and employment uses. It seems unnecessary that the Employment section have such a strong focus on the separation of employment from other uses. In order to implement other policies of the Plan, including those dealing with climate change, community health and economic prosperity, it is strongly encouraged that the Plan move away from segregated office parks in favour of truly mixed use, walkable, complete communities.

- Include district energy system policies more explicitly in Sections 3.2.1 (Integrated Planning) and 3.2.5 (Infrastructure Corridors). District energy is currently addressed in Section 4.2.9 (A Culture of Conservation), but discussing it again as infrastructure to support growth would be beneficial.

Growth Plan Mapping:

- Schedule 5: The Priority Transit Corridor extends to Aurora. It is logical and supportable to extend this corridor to the Newmarket Urban Growth Centre. This would support intensification within an identified Provincial Urban Growth Centre, support the objectives of the Urban Centres Secondary Plan, support the Newmarket GO Station Mobility Hub Study, and provide a logical connection between two of the Province's major transit projects: Metrolinx RER and the vivaNext Rapidway along Davis Drive.

- Schedule 4: It is recommended that the text "Newmarket Centre" be placed to the east of the "Newmarket Centre Urban Growth Centre" symbol rather than to the north. The current positioning to the north covers the various designations in East Gwillimbury.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

Well-respected:

- Being an influential contributor to regional and provincial affairs.

CONTACT

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