

PLANNING REPORT

ACTION

INFORMATION

TO: Mayor Brown & Members of Council
FROM: Forbes Symon, Senior Planner, Jp2g Consultants Inc.
DATE: June 19, 2023

RE: Town of Perth Official Plan Review & Update: Special Council Meeting

Recommendation: *That Council conclude the Special Meeting on the Official Plan Review and Update and request that the public submit comments no later than July 31, 2023 to ensure they are captured in the pending Issues and Options Report. Further that the Consultant be directed prepare and present an “Official Plan Review Issues & Options Report” to Council, for consideration.*

Town of Perth retained the services of Jp2g Consultants Inc to undertake a review and update of its Official Plan in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990*. As part of the Official Plan Review & Update, it is a requirement that Council hold a “Special Meeting” open to the public to discuss revisions that may be required or are being considered to the Official Plan and provide the public with an opportunity to submit comments or suggestions for improvements to the existing Official Plan.

The following Planning Report provides an overview of the nature of the Official Plan Review & Update project, identifies opportunities for public engagement, and presents a preliminary list of issues related to conformity with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) that have been identified by the Consultant to date.

Purpose of Perth’s Official Plan

Pursuant to Section 17 of the *Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990*, Chapter P.13, as amended, Town Council is charged with responsibility for preparing and adopting a local Official Plan. The Town of Perth Official Plan was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in May 2000, along with the approval of sixteen (16) amendments and contains policies which are designed to manage future growth, development and change within the Town.

The purpose Official Plan, as expressed in Section 1.0 states that:

“This Official Plan is intended to build on the opportunities and provide the policy framework for addressing the challenges and to guide land use decisions made by Council, the community and provincial Ministries over the next 20 year period. The Plan builds upon the many attributes and amenities the community has to offer. These include a diverse and well maintained housing stock, modern health

facilities, secondary and post-secondary educational services, a mature commercial base, a range of public service, recreation, leisure and cultural facilities, to name a few. This Plan will assist both private interests and public administrators by providing the basis for decision making. Private interests will be aware of Council's policies for future development and can plan their activities accordingly. Public administrators will be able to identify and program the delivery of needed services in the most cost-effective way."

Section 1.3., Future Directions states that "An Official Plan should be considered as a dynamic document that both directs the future growth and development of a community and also changes with the times. Over the next 20 years the physical, social and environmental circumstances of Perth will change. Council acknowledges that this will lead to a review of the Plan to ensure it is pro-active rather than reactive."

Requirement to Review & Update Official Plans

Section 26 of the *Planning Act, R.S.O 1990* requires that Council review and update its Official Plan no less frequently than 10 years after it comes into effect, and every five years after that. The Town's current Official Plan (OP) was approved in 2000. The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) underwent a significant update in 2020 and now is an appropriate time for the Council to initiate the Official Plan review and update at this time.

The purpose of the review is to ensure that the Official Plan is:

1. Consistent with Provincial Plans;
2. Has regard for matters of provincial interest;
3. Is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement; and
4. Conforms to the Lanark County Sustainable Communities Official Plan.

It is worth noting that there are no provincial plans in place that effect the Town of Perth. The intent of the Official Plan Review and Update is to modify the current Official Plan to be consistent with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement. By doing so, the assumption is that the Town of Perth OP will have regard for matters of provincial interest.

In addition to being consistent with the PPS, the Town of Perth Official Plan must also conform to the Lanark County Sustainable Communities Official Plan (2012).

The OP Review and Update process also provides Council with an opportunity to update its Official Plan so that it is current and continues to reflect the Town's growth and development goals.

Agency Consultation

As part of the Official Plan Review process, there is a requirement to consult with the approval authority and with the prescribed public bodies with respect to the revisions that may be required. The approval authority for the Town of Perth Official Plan is the County of Lanark. At the beginning of the project, the Consultant had discussions with

the Lanark County Planner regarding roles, expectations and prescribed agency consultation.

With the assistance of the Lanark County Planner, the Consultant is in the process of reaching out to the various agencies, including prescribed provincial ministries, local area school boards, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, LLG District Health Unit, surrounding municipalities, First Nations (Algonquins of Ontario, Metis of Ontario), and utilities. These agencies are to be provided with a notice of commencement of the Official Plan Review and Update project and Council's desire to bring the OP into compliance with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and conformity with the Lanark County Sustainable Communities Official Plan. They are formally requested to participate in the Town of Perth OP Review/Update project. Specifically, they are asked to provide any information that would assist with updating the resource mapping (in GIS format) and any technical information or policy examples to bring the OP into compliance with the 2020 PPS.

Town Staff & Council Consultation

The Consultant is in the process of initiating interviews with senior municipal staff and members of Council to solicit their opinions on elements of the Official Plan that should be updated or revised. The results of this consultation will be reflected in the "Town of Perth Official Plan Review Issues and Options Report" to be presented to Council later this year.

Public Consultation

The June 27th, 2023 Special Council meeting is a prescribed requirement under the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990*, intended to formally introduce the Official Plan Review and Update project to the ratepayers and provide them with the opportunity to submit comments for consideration by Council. Although written or oral comments are encouraged at the Special Council Meeting, written comments are welcomed. Council is welcoming written comments from members of the public to be submitted to the Director of Development Services no later than July 31, 2023, so that they may be captured in the "Town of Perth Official Plan Review Issues and Options Report" and considered in future Council deliberations on the items to be addressed in the Official Plan Update. It should be understood that public comments can be submitted at anytime throughout the Official Plan Review and Update project, however to be captured in the Issues and Options Report comments are required by July 31, 2023.

The Town created a special page on its website <https://www.perth.ca/en/do-business/Planning-Services.aspx> dedicated to the Official Plan Review. This page includes information of what is an Official Plan, why the Town needs an Official Plan, the requirement to review the Official Plan, public comment submissions, and ways in which the public can get involved in the project.

As the project moves forward, the public will have additional opportunities to provide comments on the future draft official plan amendment designed to update the Town of Perth Official Plan.

Preliminary List of Issues

Based on the Consultant's review of the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, discussions with the County of Lanark Planner, the following preliminary list of issues to be considered in the Official Plan update has been created. It is important to understand this is a **preliminary list** and that comments from the public, agency comments and comments from staff and Council are expected to add to or modify this list. These issues will be explored in detail in the pending Issues and Options Report.

1. **Engagement with Indigenous Communities** – this is a requirement under the PPS and is not currently addressed in the Perth OP in a substantive way.
2. **Climate Change** acknowledgement is a requirement under the PPS, especially related to sustainable infrastructure, built form and growth management.
3. **Intensification and Redevelopment** is a significant theme in the PPS and the Town should establish policies which address potential compatibility issues and integration of new development within established neighbourhoods. There should also be new policies on **additional residential units** as a means of introducing new rental residential development within existing neighbourhoods. Efforts should be made to determine if there are other intensification and redevelopment opportunities as well as reviewing the current policies to ensure they are working effectively.
4. **Economic Diversification** is promoted in PPS – there is an opportunity to improve and enhance the economic development policies contained in the Official Plan – expanded/more permissive home occupation/industry policies, recognition of employment lands, protection of commercial downtown core and highway commercial development. There may also be a need to consider short term rentals.
5. **Growth Management** is a central theme of the PPS – there is currently some direction in the OP regarding growth management, but it could be expanded to more clearly identify how and where growth is to be accommodated – efforts should be made to include population projections in the OP. Much of this work was done through OPA #16 but should be reassessed to ensure it accurately reflects the direction of the Town.
6. **Lanark County Sustainable Communities Official Plan (SCOP)** was approved after the approval of the Town of Perth OP. The Perth OP must conform to the Lanark SCOP. A review of the Lanark SCOP will be completed to ensure the Perth OP is in full conformity with the Lanark SCOP.

7. **Housing** is one of the community building blocks. There are general statements related to housing (affordable housing) but the OP could benefit from detailed policies and reference to programs/reports focused on the affordable housing issue.
8. **Emergency Management** is a new policy theme in the PPS – current Perth OP does not address emergency management in a substantive way - general policies related to the Town’s emergency management plan should be considered.
9. **Open Space/Parks/Recreation** policies in the Perth OP could be enhanced with acknowledgement of the of public lands and conservation areas in the Town, expanded recreational trail policies which reference active transportation, and policies related to public access to water resources. The OP should also reflect the OP recommendations contained in the Recreation Master Plan.
10. **Hazard lands** need policy improvement related to prohibited uses, permitted development and site alteration and to direct development away from hazards. Efforts should be made to ensure the hazard land mapping is the most accurate available. There is also a need for policy and mapping specific to wildfire hazards which is a new PPS theme.
11. **Natural Heritage Systems (NHS) Mapping** is a major theme in the PPS. The current Perth OP has good policies to acknowledge and protect various natural heritage features but there are no policies or mapping related to a natural heritage system. The Town requires a NHS as per the PPS (2020).
12. **General Housekeeping** changes are common with Official Plan updates. References to various government ministries that have name changes, updated reference documents like the new PPS (2020), new municipal studies and documents are all recommended to be updated to the appropriate current reference.

Next Steps

The formal public consultation on the OP Review is proposed to conclude **July 31, 2023**. Following this, Council will be presented with an Issues and Options Report from the Consultant, summarizing the Official Plan Review component of the project. Council will then determine the issues to be included in the Official Plan Update and provide direction on the preferred policy option to address the issue. Once the scope and nature of the update has been determined, the Consultant will conduct the necessary research and prepare a draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Planning Justification Report for Council’s consideration.

Once Council is satisfied with the draft Official Plan Amendment, the Consultant will initiate the formal Official Plan Amendment process, including additional agency and public consultation, including an Open House and Public Meeting.

Once Council has heard from the agencies and public on the draft OPA, they will determine whether the draft OPA requires further changes or modifications to address comments received. When Council is satisfied with the OPA, they will formally adopt the OPA and forward the document to the County of Lanark for final approval.

Opportunities for public comment are available throughout the formal OPA process at both the Town and County levels.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Jp2g Consultants Inc.
ENGINEERS ▪ PLANNERS ▪ PROJECT MANAGERS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Symon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Forbes Symon, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner | Planning Services