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3 WELCOMING
DESIGN
New Markham hub

4 ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT
Requesting speed

WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 28, 2018

Vol. 21
No. 9

CITY OF BURLINGTON DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN

INDUSTRY CONCERNS

Miriam Bart

Intensification in Burlington's downtown core and around designated transportation hubs is a central theme of proposed changes to the city's new draft Official Plan. But the development industry has expressed concerns that the current draft fails to provide enough information on minimum density targets or adequately explain how they will be met.

February 27, council considered public feedback on the document at a statutory public meeting. The City of Burlington released the third draft of the proposed new Official Plan on February 7, which was initially released in April 2017.

Planning and development committee chair and Ward 1 councillor **Rick Craven** told *NRU* the proposed draft official plan sets out a vision and policy framework to manage future development growth.

"The new OP is a visionary document that takes us to 2030.

It talks about the importance of growing up instead of out, or in Burlington we call it 'growing bold'. Intensification will bring tall buildings to our mobility hubs and our downtown. ... In downtown we're talking about heights of up to 17 storeys with

some exceptions."

However, some residents are not comfortable with the possibility of taller buildings, especially if they were to be located in the city's downtown waterfront area.

"The debate is where those

tall buildings should be. If we're going to grow we have no other place to grow other than up or in closer, more compact formats," he said, "This is typical of cities that mature over time. Burlington is changing from a bedroom community to more of an urban centre."

But **Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association** executive officer **Suzanne Mammel** has reservations. She told *NRU* that the city's latest version of the official plan falls short of meeting requirements of the provincial Growth Plan.

"Typically a municipality would grow through a combination of greenfield [development] and intensification and [set] specific targets you have to reach. ... So there are policies embedded into this version of the OP that look at the downtown. They will

CONTINUED PAGE 5



Schedule A of the draft City of Burlington Official Plan identifies the municipality's urban boundary and four major transit stations.

SOURCE: CITY OF BURLINGTON

UPCOMING

FEBRUARY

- 28** Aurora Public Planning Committee, 7:00 p.m.
- Brampton Committee of the Whole, 9:30 a.m.
- Georgina Council, 7:00 p.m.
- Hamilton Council, 5:00 p.m.
- Mississauga General Committee, 7:00 p.m.

MARCH

- 5** Ajax Community Affairs & Planning Committee, 7:00 p.m.
- Brampton Planning & Development Committee, 7:00 p.m.
- Brock Council, 10:00 a.m.
- Clarington General Government Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- Newmarket Council, 7:00 p.m.
- Pickering Planning & Development Committee, 7:00 p.m.
- Scugog General Purpose & Administration Committee, 1:30 p.m.
- Uxbridge Committee of the Whole, 10:00 a.m.
- 6** Burlington Planning & Development Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- Caledon Committee of the Whole, 1:00 p.m.
- Caledon Committee of the Whole – Planning & Development, 7:00 p.m.
- Halton Hills Council, 6:00 p.m.
- Vaughan Committee of the Whole, 1:00 p.m.
- Whitchurch-Stouffville Council, 7:00 p.m.
- 7** Brampton Council, 9:30 a.m.
- Durham Region Committee of the Whole, 9:00 a.m.



COURTING INVESTORS



Maryam Mirza

After recording strong employment growth in 2017 the **Region of York** hopes to build on past success by expanding efforts to attract foreign investors by emphasizing its investments in infrastructure and transit.

For individual municipalities, the regional strategy allows them to focus on economic activities, most relevant to them, that would attract new business. In Markham, for example, the goal is to encourage new local investment by technology-oriented companies coming from abroad.

“Canada is the second largest trading partner of China and the influx of immigration unbelievable,” Markham regional councillor **Joe Li** told *NRU*.

He says the region needs to accommodate future growth with additional transit and other infrastructure that supports growth. For example, with Viva Rapidways, the region aims to provide foundation for livable, workable and desirable communities for potential

investors to locate in region.

One of the priorities for the region’s 2018 budget is a new agreement with Metrolinx to enhance the PRESTO card system, making it easier for transit commuters to cross municipal boundaries.

Li also represents York Region at **Toronto Global**, an arms-length agency that works with global companies to invest in the Greater Toronto Area. Li told *NRU* that he hopes to expand the list of potential foreign investors most likely to come to the region, thereby adding jobs.

According to a Planning and Economic Development report to council, York Region employment growth rose 3.3 per cent last year, slightly down from the previous year, but still outpacing job growth at the national, provincial and Greater Toronto Area levels. Over the past five years, the report shows that York Region employment has grown at an average annual rate of 3.2 per cent compared to 1.4 per cent for the GTA as a whole.

Li said that Markham benefits from Canadian immigration policies that allow students to work here for a set period after graduation from colleges and universities here, enabling them to join existing companies or establish their own.

York Region policy research and forecasting manager **Paul Bottomley** told *NRU* they’re seeing a balance in population and employment growth.

“We’re not only seeing newcomers, new residents in the region, but a large number of new businesses or expansions of existing businesses and this is sort of a historical trend in many respects,” Bottomley said.

He said the region benefits from having a well-educated labour force, with more than 70 per cent of those employed between the age of 25 and 64 having a post-secondary education.

“A lot of businesses want access to that talent,” said Bottomley. “That’s one reason why businesses move here.”

CONTINUED PAGE 5

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INCLUSION BY DESIGN



Miriam Bart

When the City of Markham selected a location for a new community centre to serve its fast-growing population, the aim was to create a welcoming space for people from diverse ethnicities, interests and abilities. With an official opening of the centre set for April, experts say this space will have a transformative impact on the community.

“We looked at the specific character of the community to inspire the direction of the design,” **Perkins + Will** design principal **Duff Balmer** told *NRU*.

“That results in very different solutions based on different communities and contexts,” he said, citing the breadth of the community’s ethnic diversity and Markham’s wish for a unique design that allowed for various forms of inclusion.

Mayor **Frank Scarpitti** says that the community centre, which provides for diverse social and economic activities, recognizes the need to cater servicing to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. He says that physical and spatial design of the new complex sends a strong message of openness and inclusion and fills a gap in local programming.

“This community centre is so important because of the

high percentage of families with young kids. ... There is a multi-century room, primarily for kids with autism but we have since found out that older adults impacted by dementia also find it a beneficial place.”

Aaniin Community Centre is located in south east Markham, whose population profile is 58 per cent immigrant, making it one of the most diverse neighbourhoods in the country. Recognizing the need to serve diverse cultures, the architects focused on the use inclusive design elements. The name of the community centre--Aaniin [ah-nee], translates as ‘welcome’ in Ojibway, was chosen in honour of Markham’s partnership with Eabamatoong First Nation, reinforcing the value of respecting diverse cultures. The 122,000 ft² facility, located on 13 acres, has LEED Gold status for sustainability. The centre includes a large public gathering area, fitness centre, swimming pool, library, youth room, non-

denominational meditation space and an open kitchen.

Balmer said that a high level of community input transformed the project by identifying demand for a variety of activities. For example, the library provides an incubator space for start-up businesses and the pool has blinds to provide privacy, when needed, for specific cultural groups. As well, there is a non-denominational meditative space.

In meeting these considerations, the architects used specific design features to promote an atmosphere of openness and inclusion.

“Wherever we had the opportunity to remove a wall or open up the space or create a glass wall in lieu of an opaque wall - we took that opportunity,” said Balmer. As a result, he says, the overall effect feels very open and hopefully initiates new levels of interaction within the community.”

The location of a stage and gathering space in the

heart of the building, he says, creates “a ‘town square’ concept. We really focused on the experience the community wanted to have rather than being trapped within the design of preconceived notions of what spaces should be or what they have been in the past.”

He says the overhanging roof also promotes openness by connecting indoor and outdoor spaces. In addition to space for an outdoor farmers’ market, the interior spaces allow for multiple purposes for public events and youth activities.

“This indoor-outdoor relationship was really central to the design,” he says.

Aaniin community centre opened its doors to the public on December 29th, but the official opening is planned for April. 🌸

The design of the new Aaniin community centre in Markham features an overhanging roof and open concept multi-purpose gathering spaces to promote inclusion.

SOURCE: PERKINS + WILL’S TORONTO STUDIO
ARCHITECT: DOUG WARREN



EASING BURDENS



Maryam Mirza

The **Town of Caledon** has added its voice to calls for implementation of a promised review designed to streamline the environmental assessment process for municipal infrastructure projects.

February 20, Caledon council adopted a recommendation that the provincial Ministry of Environment and Climate Change complete a review of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment that had been promised in 2016. The review is intended to speed up the review process by reducing any duplication of studies and thus save time and money for municipalities like Caledon.

“Having to spend two years in an EA [Environmental Assessment] process is onerous,” Caledon CAO **Mike Galloway** told *NRU*. “It’s onerous for our budgets [and] it’s onerous on the time in which we can essentially get the project done.”

Galloway said that the current EA process typically lasts two years and costs thousands of dollars for studies by consultants. He said that in many cases municipalities are asked to complete studies already done by others but not recognized by the current Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

“It [the pending review] is ensuring that the duplication can be minimized within all the different acts that require approval to get any project moving forward, and EA processes are one of those,” He said.

Meanwhile, the Ontario Good Roads Association, the Municipal Engineers Association and the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario have also called for a modernization of the environment assessment review process.

“We think that perhaps the [provincial] minister could delegate – either some or all of this [the process] to staff,” Municipal Engineers Association president **John Thompson** told *NRU*. He says the current process requires input from multiple government departments that he says causes needless delays in providing approvals for infrastructure projects. Speeding up the approval process, while still respecting environmental issues, he said, is “one of the ideas we’ve suggested.”

The multi-organization coalition also has proposed a reduction in the time allowed for so-called ‘bump-up’ requests where a member of public can request a bump up of the assessment to the minister

of the environment, if they have environmental or other concerns. According to critics, that typically adds about 10 months to the approval process for municipal infrastructure. Currently, nearly 95 per cent of these requests are eventually turned down by the ministry, resulting in unnecessary delays to projects, according to the coalition. It also seeks a change in regulations that would eliminate a requirement on municipalities to conduct studies already done by others.

Thompson said his organization assisted in the creation of the MCEA [Municipal Class Environmental Assessment] process decades ago. “We shepherded it way back in the late 80s so municipalities could do the work they always do, and meet all the requirements of the environmental assessment act,” he said. “We’re very interested because it’s our document.”

Since its creation, the assessment review process has not been updated, critics say, despite a rise in the average cost of environmental assessment. An analysis from 2014 found that assessment costs increased from approximately \$125,000 dollars to \$365,000 dollars between 2010 and 2014, Residential and Civil

Construction Alliance of Ontario executive director **Andy Manahan** told *NRU*.

“When the environmental assessment legislation came through in the 1970s the planning act really didn’t look at environmental matters very carefully,” he said. “But now we have provincial policy statements, we have a lot of other water-based initiatives, clean water act, and so forth, where all of these things must be looked at already by the municipality.”

In addition to Caledon and other local governments, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario also backs completion of the review.

“We certainly see an advantage to expedite the process,” AMO president **Lynn Dollin** told *NRU*. “We definitely support going forward with this review in a way that still allows for consultation with the public and lots of opportunity for the public to get involved, but at the same time doesn’t duplicate processes.”

Manahan notes that after a 2016 report by the provincial auditor general, the review was expected to be completed by last November. He expressed concern that this year’s provincial election could further delay a timetable for implementation. 🌱

COURTING INVESTORS

■ CONTINUED PAGE 2

Like Li, he stressed the value of recent transit investments in the region as a lure for new businesses.

“When you’re looking at the

live and work opportunities in many respects you want to make sure that people who move here also have the opportunity to work here.” said Bottomley.

York Region currently has identified 2,600 parcels of vacant employment land, thereby offering location choices for new businesses. Additionally, the region has more than 2,000 businesses that rely on exports for their primary source of revenue, which in turn attracts addition foreign investment in

York, according to Bottomley.

He told *NRU* that continuing to invest in transit goes hand in hand with global companies making York Region their home.

“Residents want to work for those firms and live close to where those firms are located,” he said. 🌸

INDUSTRY CONCERNS

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

be doing updates to the official plan for the other mobility hubs as they study them. We’ve been asking since the outset for the details as they relate to the downtown mobility hub. They have yet to do that.”

During the stakeholder feedback process, Mammel wrote that the official plan chapter on land use policies in the urban area “lacks considerable detail as a whole. Reference is made to establishing minimum density targets, but no detail is provided in terms of quantum of population or jobs to be achieved that will apply to this area of the City. There are no guiding objectives provided to give the reader an idea of the direction where this section ‘may’ be going.”

Acknowledging that additional information is expected to come from a future study on mobility hubs, she wrote that the official plan in its current form, “does not provide

anything concrete on [whether] a proponent could submit an application and understand if they were in conformity or not. This is not a supportable position.”

Burlington deputy city manager **Mary Lou Tanner** told *NRU* that staff have been working on other studies concurrent to the official plan, such as a commercial strategy for employment land near mobility hubs. After extensive public engagement, she says the city is updating policies, first set in 1969, affecting the urban boundary. She says that the official plan delineates where intensification will, and will not, occur.

“We’ve identified that the city is going to grow in our mobility hubs which are the three GO stations as well as downtown Burlington and the corridors that link them. ... We set the limits of where growth would not occur based on the downtown precinct plan with

a few changes that actually expanded the areas where growth would not occur. People were okay with more height being at the north end of town,” she told *NRU*.

As well, the official plan policies work to manage height in and around the east part of town.

Halton Region is expected to double its population over the next 25 years. As a result, Craven says Burlington will be expected to share in this growth, with intensification particularly tied to the mobility hubs.

“[This] seems very logical if we’re going to build

walkable neighbourhoods and we’re going to grow in the downtown,” he said. “[But] not everyone is in agreement over how much growth is appropriate in certain places. That’s the debate that continues to go on.”

Craven expressed hope that the city will conclude its discussions on the official plan in April. If approved, it will be sent to Halton region council for final approval.

A staff report recommending adoption of the proposed Official Plan will be considered at the April 4th Planning and Development Committee Meeting. 🌸

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COMMITTEE AGENDAS



DURHAM

Oshawa mixed-use development proposed

At its February 26 meeting, Oshawa development services committee considered a public meeting information [report](#) regarding official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications by **WinStone Developments** for 133 Ritson Road North. WinStone proposes to build four 12-storey buildings—three containing

ground and second-floor commercial GFA—with a total of 355 apartment units, as well as 17 block townhouse units.

SPA recommended for Whitby apartment building

At its February 26 meeting, Whitby planning and development committee considered a final [report](#) recommending approval of a site plan application by **Landmark – 416 Dundas St. Ltd.** for 416 Dundas Street West and 126 Pine Street. Landmark's application will facilitate the development of a seven-storey

residential apartment building with 120 units and three levels of underground parking.



HALTON

Burlington consults on new Official Plan

At its February 27 meeting, Burlington planning and development committee considered a staff [report](#) recommending council release the proposed new official plan for community and council consideration, and to

also provide an updated on proposed Sustainable Building Development Guidelines. Staff will be recommending approval subject to the adoption of the new official plan in April, 2018.

Milton public secondary school proposed

At its February 26 meeting, Milton committee of the whole considered a preliminary [report](#) regarding a zoning by-law amendment application by **Strategy 4** for 1200, 1360, 1390 and 1436 Bronte Street South. The **Halton District**

CONTINUED PAGE 7

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COMMITTEE AGENDAS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

School Board has initiated the expropriation of the lands for the construction of a new public secondary school. The site is located within the Boyne Survey Secondary Plan area.

Milton subdivision proposed

At its February 26 meeting, Milton committee of the whole considered a preliminary [report](#) regarding zoning by-law amendment and plan of subdivision applications by **Mattamy (Brownridge)**

Limited (Martin East).

The applications encompass lands located east of Sixteen Mile Creek, south of Louis St. Laurent Avenue, north of Britannia Road West and west of Thompson Road. Mattamy proposes a plan of subdivision with 557 detached dwellings, 532 townhouses, a neighbourhood park, two school blocks, two stormwater management blocks, and refinements to the existing natural heritage system, trails and linkages.

CONTINUED PAGE 8

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The primary responsibilities of this role include:

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- Coordinating transit scheduling
- Overseeing the bus stop and shelter program
- Performing research, statistics and data management, such as ridership data trends and route and network performance
- Representing Burlington Transit and the City's interest and providing expertise and coordination as required in transit planning matters at City Council, committee meetings, meetings with external agencies (i.e. Region, Metrolinx), developers, consultants, and at public meetings/open houses
- Responsible for the Supervision of one Planner Analyst

Requirements

The successful candidate will have diploma or degree in diploma in Transportation Engineering Technology, Transportation Planning or an equivalent field, combined with 3 to 5 years of transit service planning or transportation planning experience. The successful applicant must demonstrate strong data analysis, report writing and presentation skills. As well as previous supervisory experience and excellent customer service.

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COMMITTEE AGENDAS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



PEEL

Mavis-401 auto facilities proposed

At its February 26 meeting, **Mississauga** planning and development committee considered a public meeting information [report](#) regarding a zoning by-law amendment application by **Orlando Corporation** for 6350 and 6350 Belgrave Road. Orlando proposes to construct three motor vehicle repair facilities with accessory motor vehicle sales on the site.

Port Credit apartment building proposed

At its February 26 meeting, **Mississauga** planning and

development committee considered a preliminary [report](#) regarding a rezoning application by **Edenshaw Park Developments** for 21-29 Park Street East. Edenshaw proposes to build a 15-storey apartment building with 207 units and three level of underground parking.

Approval recommended for Port Credit Local Area Plan amendments

At its February 26 meeting, **Mississauga** planning and development committee considered a final [report](#) recommending that official plan and zoning by-law amendments be enacted to give effect to the Port Credit Local Area Plan. A public meeting regarding the OPA/ZBLAs was held October 30, 2017. 🌸

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OMB NEWS

PICKERING CITY CENTRE ZBL APPEAL SETTLED

In a February 22 decision, board member **Thomas Hodgins** allowed an appeal, in part, by **OPB Realty** against the **City of Pickering's** passage of a zoning by-law applying to Pickering City Centre.

OPB is the owner of the Pickering Town Centre, a large regional shopping centre. Its appeal concerned a holding provision on its lands in the ZBL that required certain stormwater management and flood storage issues to be addressed as a prerequisite to the lifting of the "H" symbol.


The board was advised that OPB and the city had settled their differences, resulting in the deletion of a section of the ZBL and removal of the H symbol from the Pickering Town Centre lands.

Pickering development review and urban design manager **Nelesh Surti**

provided affidavit evidence in support of the settlement. His affidavit indicated that the settlement "provides an alternative framework to reducing the office stormwater management burden on the Pickering Town Centre lands by applying the Council endorsed Pickering City Centre Stormwater Management Strategy, dated April 2015, to all lands in the City Centre, including the Pickering Town Centre Lands."

Surti advised that the settlement also provides for exploring financing and /or cost sharing options for works upstream of the Pickering Town Centre to help further reduce the office stormwater management burden. He concluded that the ZBL, as revised, is consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement*, conforms to the **Durham Region** and Pickering official plans, and represents good planning.

The board adopted Surti's evidence and allowed the appeal in part, amending the Pickering City Centre ZBL to give effect to the settlement.

Solicitors involved in this decision were **Ira Kagan (Kagan Shastri)** representing OPB Realty Inc., **Michael Mahoney (Cassels Brock)** representing **The Daniels LR Corporation** and **Quinto Annibale (Loopstra Nixon)** representing the City of Pickering. [See OMB Case No. [PL170549](#).] 

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— PEOPLE —

Mississauga council has appointed **David Cook** to serve as Ward 1 councillor effective immediately and until the current term of council ends on November 30.

Cook will also serve as a member of Peel Region council. He fills a vacancy left by the recent death of former councillor **Jim Tovey**. Cook is a

former Mississauga city councillor who served three terms between 1980 and 1988.

Tanzeel Merchant has been appointed Director

of the Local Government Policy Branch in the Local Government and Planning Policy Division of the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs. Previously he

was Director of the Emergency Health Services' Regulatory and Accountability Branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.