


Sent by Email

April 3, 2024

Alexander Harras
Director, Legislative Services and Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of Durham
605 Rossland Road E.
Whitby, ON L1N 6A3
clerks@durham.ca

 Corporate Services Department Legislative Services Division	
Date & Time Received:	April 04, 2024 1:06 pm
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Notes/Comments:	

Subject: Director, City Development & CBO, Report PLN 05-24
Initiating Pickering's Official Plan Review

The Council of The Corporation of the City of Pickering considered the above matter at a Meeting held on March 25, 2024 and adopted the following resolution:

1. That staff be authorized to initiate the update of the Pickering Official Plan, and to fulfill the requirements of Section 26(3) of the *Planning Act*, and request the Mayor to call a Special Meeting of Council on May 27, 2024 at 5:00 pm to provide an opportunity for public input on the revisions that may be required; and,
2. That a copy of Report PLN 05-24, and Council's Resolution thereon, be sent to the Region of Durham, local municipalities in Durham Region, the City of Toronto, the Region of York, the City of Markham, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, the Durham School Boards, and any interested parties for their information.

A copy of Report PLN 05-24 is attached for your reference.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 905.420.4660, extension 2019.

Yours truly,



Susan Cassel
City Clerk

Encl.

SC:am

Copy: Jaclyn Grossi, Director of Legislative & Information Services, Town of Ajax;
June Gallagher, Municipal Clerk, Municipality of Clarington;
Chris Harris, Clerk, Town of Whitby;
Fernando Lamanna, Clerk, Township of Brock;
Debbie Leroux, Clerk, Township of Uxbridge;
Mary Medeiros, City Clerk, City of Oshawa;
Ralph Walton Interim, City Clerk, Township of Scugog;
John D. Elvidge, City Clerk, City of Toronto
Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk, York Region
Kimberley Kitteringham, City Clerk, City of Markham
Becky Jamieson, Commissioner of Corporate Services & Town Clerk, Town of
Whitchurch-Stouffville
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
Durham District School Board
Durham Catholic District School Board
Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir
Conseil scolaire Viamonde
Whitevale District Residents Association

Chief Administrative Officer
Director, City Development & CBO
Manager, Policy & Geomatics
Principal Planner, Policy
Administrative Assistant, City Development



Report to Planning & Development Committee

Report Number: PLN 05-24

Date: March 4, 2024

From: Kyle Bentley
Director, City Development & CBO

Subject: Initiating Pickering's Official Plan Review

Recommendation:

1. That staff be authorized to initiate the update of the Pickering Official Plan, and to fulfill the requirements of Section 26(3) of the *Planning Act*, and request the Mayor to call a Special Meeting of Council on May 27, 2024 at 5:00 pm to provide an opportunity for public input on the revisions that may be required; and
2. That a copy of Report PLN 05-24, and Council's Resolution thereon, be sent to the Region of Durham, local municipalities in Durham Region, the City of Toronto, the Region of York, the City of Markham, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, the Durham School Boards, and any interested parties for their information.

Executive Summary: The purpose of this report is twofold: to provide information to Council and the public on the need for a review of the Pickering Official Plan at this time, and to request Council to support hosting a special public meeting, as called by the Mayor, to discuss revisions that may be required to the Pickering Official Plan, as required by the Section 26(3)(b) of the *Planning Act*.

The *Planning Act* requires that Official Plans be reviewed every five years to ensure they conform to Provincial legislation, policy, and plans. The Pickering Official Plan (the Plan) was approved in 1997, and the first comprehensive review of the Plan was initiated in 2007. Since that review, staff have initiated amendments to the Plan for specific topics to implement Council approved plans and to maintain conformity with Provincial legislation and plans, as required by the *Planning Act*. Although Council has amended the Plan on an as-needed basis, a comprehensive review, as required by the *Planning Act*, has not been undertaken since the 2007 review.

Council and staff have been diligent to maintain conformity with Provincial and Regional planning documents through amendments to the Plan. However, the number of recent proposed, and approved, changes to Provincial legislation, policy, and plans, and a new Regional Official Plan, make continuing with this approach not viable. A comprehensive review is required to address the significant changes found in Provincial Bills, including Bill 23, the adoption of a new Regional Official Plan, and proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statements and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan.

In addition to the regulatory requirements the City of Pickering is projected to enter a significant period of growth in the coming decades. This growth will not only increase the population and number of housing units within the community but will result in changes in the needs of residents. This shift is reflected in the number of Council approved corporate and master plans that have been approved in recent years to reflect the changing needs of the community.

Accordingly, staff recommends that a review of the Pickering Official Plan be initiated, under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, and to that end, that the Mayor be requested to call a special meeting of Council at 5:00 pm on May 27, 2024 to obtain public input and initiate the review.

Relationship to the Pickering Strategic Plan: The recommendations in this report respond to the following Pickering Strategic Plan Key Priorities of: Advance Innovation & Responsible Planning to Support a Connected, Well-Serviced Community; Lead & Advocate for Environmental Stewardship, Innovation & Resiliency; and Foster an Engaged & Informed Community.

Financial Implications: None from adopting the recommendations of this report. The City Development Department – Planning & Design section 2024 Budget submission identifies \$500,000.00 for consulting for the Pickering Official Plan Review process.

Discussion:

1. What is an Official Plan

An Official Plan is the City's primary, long range comprehensive municipal planning document, that provides the framework for land use decision-making in the City. It represents Council's vision, guided by community involvement, for growth and change within the City. It sets a policy framework for the physical, social, environmental, and economic development of the City, while ensuring growth occurs responsibly, and resources are used efficiently and sustainably. An Official Plan deals with issues such as:

- where new housing, industry, offices and shops will be located
- what services will be needed, such as roads, watermains, sewers, parks and schools
- creating opportunities for residents to connect socially, culturally, as well as preserve and enjoy the natural environment
- when, and in what order, parts of the community will grow
- where, and how, the City will invest in community improvement initiatives

2. The Pickering Official Plan

In March 1997, the then Town of Pickering Council adopted a new official plan, the Pickering Official Plan, and Durham Regional Council approved the Plan in September of that year. The Plan replaced the previous official plan, known as the Pickering District

Plan. The new Plan had a planning horizon of twenty years (to 2016). In 2007, Council initiated a review of the Plan to bring it into conformity with Provincial and Regional policies. The resulting amendments added detailed policies for specific growth areas in the City, and extended the planning horizon to the year 2031 for the City Centre and the Seaton Community.

Additional amendments have been initiated on specific topics, such as the Integrated Sustainable Design Standards (ISDS), to implement Council approved plans. Amendments within specific areas of the City, including the Kingston Road Corridor – Brock Node Intensification Study, have also been initiated, as required, to maintain conformity with Provincial legislation and plans, as required by the *Planning Act*.

3. Purpose of Updating the Official Plan

The framework of the Official Plan has been in place for over 20 years, with Council amending the Plan regularly to respond to changing needs and policy directions. The vision and goals for Pickering need to be reassessed, as they may have evolved since the Plan was originally structured and approved. In addition, the planning horizon for the Plan has elapsed, and the planning horizon reflected in the amendments made for specific growth areas, to 2031, is quickly approaching.

Pickering's growth rate since the Plan was originally approved by Council has been relatively low, averaging 1.1% growth from 2006-2021. Despite the recent growth trends, Pickering is anticipated to accommodate the largest growth rates in the Region of Durham to 2051, with an anticipated growth rate of 3.3% per year. Pickering is also anticipated to have the largest increase in housing units in the Region to 2051.

Since the Plan was last amended, significant changes to Provincial and Regional policy and legislation have occurred, including:

- an updated Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)
- significant amendments to the *Planning Act*, *Development Charges Act* and *Ontario Heritage Act*, through Bill 108, Bill 109, Bill 23, and Bill 134
- review and updates to Provincial Plans:
 - A Place to Grow: Growth Plan, including growth projections to 2051
 - Greenbelt Plan
 - Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- the Province has released a draft Provincial Policy Statement, that would combine various policies of A Place to Grow and the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, plus introduce new policies, to form a new Provincial land use policy document
- the Region of Durham has adopted a new Official Plan "Envision Durham", with a planning horizon of 2051

In addition to the Provincial and Regional changes identified above, the City has approved, or is in the process of updating, various plans and strategies. It is important that these City initiatives be reflected in the policies of the Plan, ensuring consistency in the documents. Some of these include:

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- Corporate Strategic Plan 2024-2028
 - Integrated Sustainable Design Standards, 2022
 - Integrated Transportation Master Plan, 2021
 - Pickering Housing Strategy & Action Plan, 2022
 - Economic Development Strategy, 2022
 - Retail Market Study, underway
 - Recreation and Parks Master Plan, underway

Given the number of changes listed above, it is timely to engage with stakeholders and the public, as well as with Indigenous Peoples, regarding their vision for Pickering's future. It is also an opportunity to assess if the Official Plan policies that guide the City's growth and development remain appropriate, and are achieving the stated objectives.

A comprehensive review of the Plan will allow staff to assess the changing and evolving legislative and policy framework occurring at the Province and the Region, consider new best practices and planning approaches, to align with City plans and strategies, and accommodate the projected growth to a planning horizon up to 2051.

4. *Planning Act* Requirements

The *Planning Act*, Section 26(1) requires that an Official Plan be reviewed every five years (or ten years after the approval of a new Official Plan) to, among other things, ensure that it conforms to provincial plans, have regard for matters of provincial interest, and be consistent with provincial policy statements.

Section 26 of the *Planning Act* outlines the requirements for updating an Official Plan. To initiate an Official Plan review, the *Planning Act* requires that a special meeting of Council, open to the public, be held to discuss revisions that may be required as part of the Official Plan review.

The *Planning Act* also requires that the approval authority, which for Pickering is currently the Region of Durham, and prescribed public bodies, be consulted. Staff have contacted the Region of Durham, and will send the required notice to the prescribed bodies, prior to the Special Meeting.

At the Special Council Meeting, staff will submit a report and presentation that outlines the intended work plan, and timeline, associated with the review. The report will also highlight major topic areas to be addressed as part of the Official Plan Review process.

5. Resources

An Official Plan Review is a large undertaking, consisting of a wide variety of components and issues, including growth management, natural heritage, employment areas, rural and agricultural systems, and servicing and transportation infrastructure. The process will include a substantial public engagement strategy, to provide multiple opportunities for the community to engage, and provide input and feedback.

The Official Plan Review will primarily be undertaken by existing City staff and resources. External consulting assistance will be sought for specific aspects of the project that require specialized skills and experience, including growth management, employment lands study, and public engagement. Funds have been requested in the 2024 Budget accordingly.

6. Conclusion

The report outlines the requirement of the *Planning Act* to review Official Plans every five years, to ensure that it conforms to Provincial policy and plans. The Pickering Official Plan has not been comprehensively reviewed since last initiated in 2007. The amendments made to the Plan through the 2007 review, included a planning horizon to the year 2031 for certain growth areas in the City, while the rest of the Plan is still based on a 2016 Planning horizon.

There have been significant amendments and proposed changes to Provincial legislation, policy and plans in recent years. Another significant change is the approval of a new Region of Durham Official Plan, with population and housing projections to the year 2051. The projections indicate Pickering is expected to become the fastest growing Municipality in the Region. The changes to the Provincial and Regional planning framework provide opportunities and contain requirements that have implications for the Pickering Official Plan.

A review of the Official Plan will ensure that Pickering's goals and vision for growth and community development, reflect all Provincial requirements, the new Regional Official Plan, incorporates the results of various City initiatives and stakeholder feedback, and establish an updated or new policy framework to guide the City's growth and development to 2051.

Accordingly, staff recommends that a review of the Pickering Official Plan be initiated, under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, and to that end, that the Mayor be requested to call a special meeting of Council at 5:00 pm on May 27, 2024 to obtain public input and initiate the review.

Attachments: None

Prepared By:

Original Signed By

Brandon Weiler, MCIP, RPP
Principal Planner, Policy

Original Signed By

Dean Jacobs, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Policy & Geomatics

BW:ld

Approved/Endorsed By:

Original Signed By

Catherine Rose, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner

Original Signed By

Kyle Bentley, P. Eng.
Director, City Development & CBO

Recommended for the consideration
of Pickering City Council

Original Signed By

Marisa Carpino, M.A.
Chief Administrative Officer