

Town of Georgina Official Plan Review

Workshop #1, November 14, 2013
Report



Date Prepared: January 8, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0	BACKGROUND	1
3.0	POLICY REVIEW.....	2
4.0	OFFICIAL PLAN STRUCTURE	4
5.0	DEVELOPING A VISION	4
6.0	REVIEW OF OBJECTIVES.....	8
7.0	NEXT STEPS.....	10

Figures

Figure 1	Lands Subject to Official Plan Update
Figure 2	Diagram of Ontario's Planning Hierarchy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The first public workshop on the Town of Georgina Official Plan Review was conducted on November 14, 2013 at the Recreational Outdoor Campus (ROC) Facility in the Town of Georgina. The meeting was held from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm and was attended by approximately 50 participants.

The workshop had three main purposes, which were:

- To provide participants with an overview of the Official Plan review process;
- To review and improve the current Official Plan objectives in groups; and,
- To develop a vision for the Official Plan.

The review of objectives and development of a vision were carried out in a group discussion format.



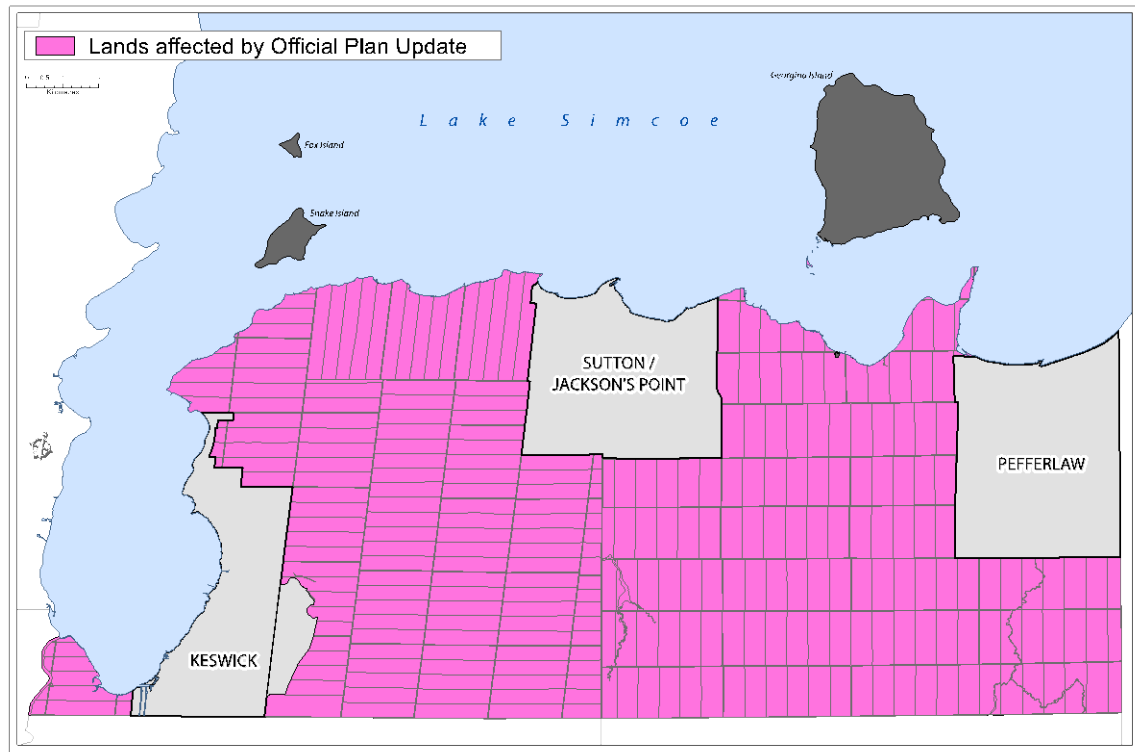
2.0 BACKGROUND

The Official Plan for the Town of Georgina was originally approved on October 17, 2002, and deemed to come into force on November 8, 2002. The Planning Act requires that the Official Plan be reviewed every five years. This Official Plan Review is the mandated five-year Official Plan Review.

The lands subject to the Official Plan Review are shown in **Figure 1**. Lands covered by the Keswick Secondary Plan, the Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan, the Sutton/Jackson's Point Secondary Plan and the Pefferlaw Secondary Plan are not included as part of this Official Plan Review. The lands that are included in the Review are primarily Agricultural, Rural, Environmentally Protected and designated Shoreline areas. The hamlets in the Town are also included in the Review. The hamlets are:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| • Virginia | • Baldwin |
| • Udora | • Belhaven |
| • Ravenshoe | • Brown Hill |

Figure 1: Lands Subject to Official Plan Update

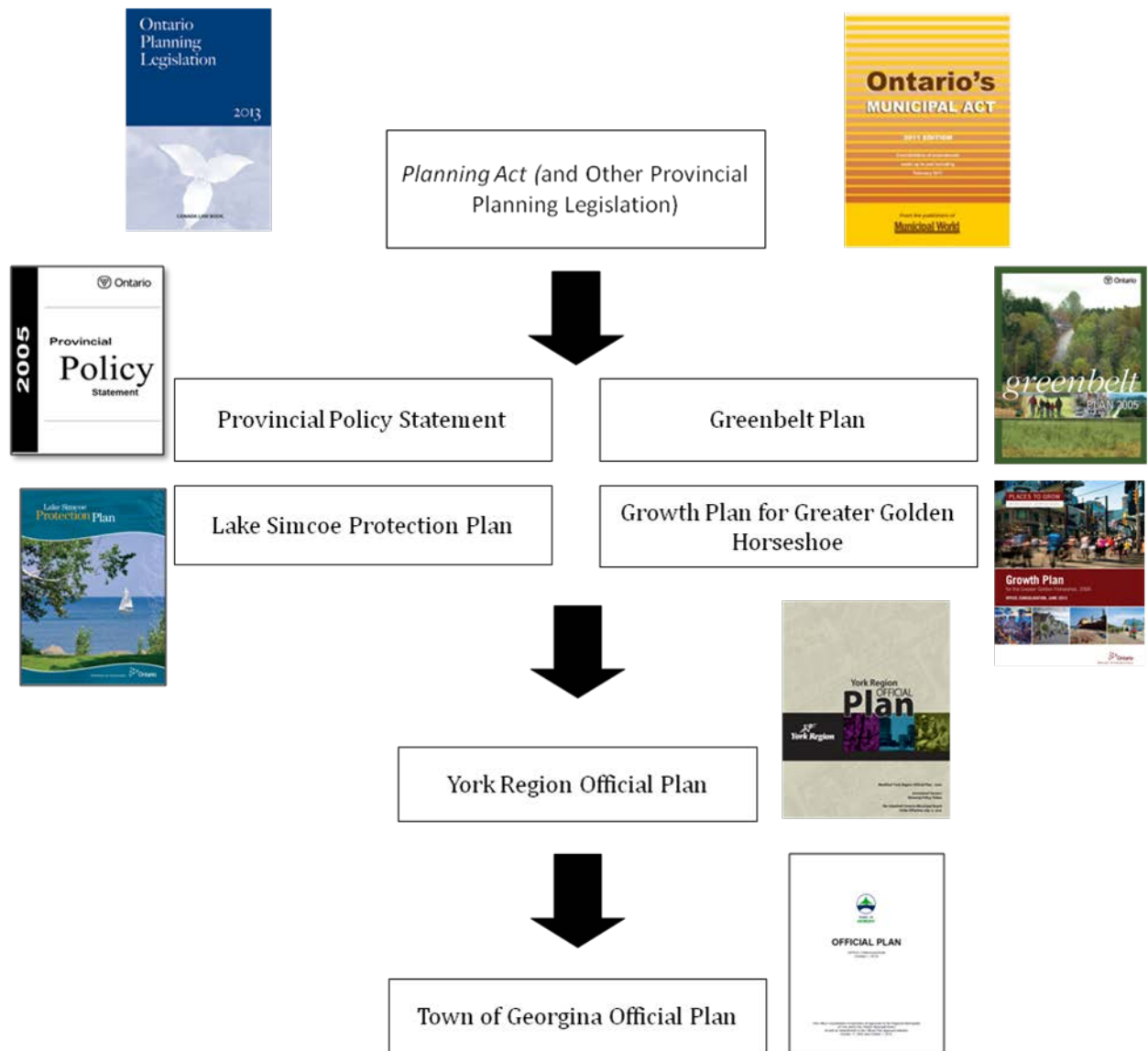


3.0 POLICY REVIEW

The planning system in Ontario is based on a hierarchy depicted in **Figure 2**. The Province of Ontario sets Provincial Policy which then must be implemented at a Regional level and finally the local level. The Planning Act mandates that Local Official Plans:

- Be consistent with provincial policy statements;
- Conform to Provincial Plans;
- Comply with Regional Official Plans; and,
- Have regard to matters of provincial interest.

Figure 2: Diagram of Ontario's Planning Hierarchy



Provincial Policies in the Town of Georgina includes the Provincial Policy Statement, the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan. In addition, the Town of Georgina is subject to the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan which is a Provincially legislated plan for ensuring the maintenance and improvement of water quality and environmental conditions surrounding Lake Simcoe.

In 2010 the Region of York adopted a new Official Plan. Portions of that Plan remain before the Ontario Municipal Board; however, the vast majority of the Plan has been approved. Since the Town of Georgina Official Plan must comply with the Regional Official Plan it is necessary to examine the Regional Plan and determine what changes to the current planning policies and mapping in Georgina are required.

4.0 OFFICIAL PLAN STRUCTURE

The current Georgina Official Plan is organized according to the following general Table of Contents:

- Guiding Principles and Objectives
 - Natural Environment
 - Lake Simcoe and its Tributaries
 - Growth Management
 - Rural and Agricultural Areas
 - Healthy Communities
 - Economic Development and Financial Sustainability
- Land Use Policies
- Healthy Communities
- Servicing and Infrastructure
- Development Review
- Implementation
- Interpretation
- Secondary Plans

5.0 DEVELOPING A VISION

There is presently no overall Vision in the Official Plan for the Town of Georgina that describes the Town 20 years from now. The Vision will form the foundation of more detailed guiding principles and objectives, as well as, policies that will be developed in the Plan. The first exercise of the evening was to ask the participants to describe their vision in one or two words and then each of the described visions were categorized by the facilitators in order to establish



clear categories under which the visions statements could be placed. It should be noted that many of the responses also identify guiding principles that the Official Plan should focus on. At the end of the exercise the following categories for a Vision were determined.

Category 1: Complete Community

- Work, Live and Play in Georgina
- Balance between Environmental Protection and Growth
- Strong complete community
- Place to work, play and live
- Nature/outdoors
- Supportive of the needs of the community
- Opportunities for individuals and families
- Employment and recreation
- Working and playing in my home area (community)
- Balance
- Family community that has a balance of agricultural/business and community strength
- Balanced lifestyle
- Things happening/yet tranquil/Buzz
- Community that personifies the perfect lifestyles – Balance
- Local jobs/tourism/retraining and character
- Living in Georgina is like having your cake and eating too
- Community
- Opportunity
- Meaningful community centred
- Vibrant
- Pride of ownership
- Balance
- Balanced growth of population and industry while protecting the rural community, the environment and the lake
- Environmentally, economically, socially ahead of the curve

Category 2: Agriculture and Rural Character

- Rural areas maintained
- High density housing adjacent to already existing subdivision
- Flow between areas
- Lake side bedroom community
- Keep the country rural feeling
- No high rises , no row upon row of housing
- Green areas
- Limited development
- Rural planning and focus
- Making better beaches and parks and protecting them
- Having food marinas for boaters
- Having jobs and large enough schools
- Retain small Town area
- Tourism destination
- Retain quality of life
- Place to work and live
- Reputable

- Small town “rural” feel while continuing to grow
- A great place to live and work
- Beautiful
- Keep Rural with work hubs – more employees
- Stay Rural with greenspace
- Rural area
- Recreation areas
- Support Agriculture and Agri-Business

Category 3: Environment: Land, Water and Air

- Protection of woodlands, wetlands and undeveloped shoreline
- Maintain the natural shoreline
- Wildlife corridors
- Green, clean, healthy
- Save the NG Forest
- Forest protection
- Clean air & water
- Natural paradise
- In balance nature – protect forests
- Healthy lake
- No growth without jobs
- No pollution
- Environmentally driven Town e.g. Eco-Tourism destination – more planning and studying
- Land use and development contribute to environmental improving health of Lake Simcoe and its watersheds

Category 4: Employment and Tourism

- Safe
- Fun
- Organized
- Viable recreational destination
- Tourism area with protected natural environment i.e. lake, forests
- Family orientated community rich in recreation
- Encourage growth to stimulate the local economy
- Employment
- Transportation
- The Town above the City
- Promote agriculture
- Employment lands – lower taxes
- Waterfront, boardwalk, parks



- Transportation
- Incentives to attract business to Georgina NOW
- Protect natural resources
- Provide employment to reduce traffic
- Improve tax base
- Business/increase in services
- Clean industry to promote jobs locally and reduce commuting
- Conference centre – accommodation and jobs

Category 5: Sustainability

- Vision: to provide a Plan which protects the environment while directing growth to areas capable of being serviced
- Employment opportunities
- Safe
- Accessible to other employment areas
- Promote waterfront open space
- Sustainable development services
- Self sustainable community
- Live and work here surrounded by nature
- Sustainable employment and business in Georgina
- Healthy sustainable, prosperous communities embedded in blue (Lake Simcoe) and green (natural heritage)
- Growth /Sustainability
- Sustainable – Electrically efficient
- Sustainable

By the end of the workshop, three draft vision statements had been prepared by staff and the consultants for the consideration of participants. The three vision statements were:

- 1) To become a well-balanced and vibrant community that preserves and protects our natural environment and rural character, while providing for growth and economic development in a sustainable manner.
- 2) Through preservation and respect for our historic rural, shoreline and village communities and our unique environmental features, our Town will grow together as one sustainable community.



- 3) A prosperous, environmentally driven community that is safe for all its members.

As the workshop concluded, participants were given a red dot and asked to review the vision statements. The participants were asked to place their red dot on the vision statement that they thought was best. A clear majority of participants selected vision statement number one:

To become a well-balanced and vibrant community that preserves and protects our natural environment and rural character, while providing for growth and economic development in a sustainable manner.

6.0 REVIEW OF OBJECTIVES

Objectives provide the basis for the detailed policies that are to be included in the Official Plan. Objectives describe what the Town wishes to achieve in order to implement the Vision. In order to review the objectives of the Official Plan participants were divided into interest groups. Categories of interest groups were based on the interests expressed during the visioning exercise and the objectives of the current Official Plan. The categories were: rural and agricultural areas, economic development and financial sustainability, natural environment, Lake Simcoe and its tributaries, and growth management. There were individual tables for each of the interest groups. The groups were then provided with copies of the current objectives in the Official Plan related to that issue and asked to:

1. Comment on the applicability of the existing objectives; and,
2. Describe other objectives which should be considered as part of the Official Plan Review.

The following is a summary of the responses from each group.

Rural and Agricultural Areas

- Need more agricultural promotion and education to encourage younger generations
- Provide government grants and/or benefits to starter farms
- Shrink down the Secondary Pepperlaw Plan, it should stay as farm land/forest
- Losing farms to solar and wind turbines
- Strategic plan of implementation to re-engage the farming community
- Protest using farm land for fill that alters the grade of the site
- Make policies more strict for what fill is allowed to come in to farm land
- Provide grants or reduced interest for the Tile Drainage Act (provide incentives)

Economic Development and Financial Sustainability

- The current Official Plan does not speak to sustainability
- Specific incentives to attract business
- Georgina should be less expensive than other municipalities for business
- Open for business
- More aggressive Economic Development Department marketing campaign

- Need business taxes to reduce residential tax
- Objectives are safe and motherhood
- What does guiding principle say?
- Need to define “sustainability” – environment, economy, society...balance
- Need to respect all of these components
- Bring HST office to Georgina -> productivity or other government offices -> bring in clean industry
- Lake is our greatest asset
- Incorporate technology, such as, solar panels -> electrical growth
- Need infrastructure for electrical cars -> 25 years this will be common
- Balance between conservation and economic growth
- Investors are looking to grow the housing market but cannot do so because of Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority
- Additional health care facility and job growth
- Aging population is growing and younger population is diminishing
- Keep eye on demographic changes

Natural Environment

- No development or site alteration on wetlands and significant woodlands
- Any development must conform to good environmental practices
- Dramatic reduction in phosphorous levels in Lake Simcoe
- We need to incorporate the perils of climate change
- While there are plans in place to protect “species at risk” we need plans to protect all wildlife not just their habitats (not wait until they’re “at risk”)
- We need a Tree Cutting by-law
- We need criteria to be defined in order to bring the objectives of the upper tier plans into our Official Plan



Lake Simcoe and its Tributaries

- Sod industry and golf course be monitored to ensure a greener and safe use of pesticides
- Maintain historical homes and areas too
- Septic and waste water monitoring/inspecting both new and old established residents

- Encourage by-laws to ensure shoreline protection ie. % of shoreline development permitted

Growth Management

- Include reference to housing diversity, mixed housing including: hotel, daycare, retirement
- Outline that a mixed community includes opportunities for living, shopping, dining, and working.
- Outline that a neighbourhood includes the following components: recreation, schools, churches, parks, and sports.
- Focus on industry, commercial and business development.

Each group was asked to report back, and all of the participants were invited to comment on the presentations made by each group. Through the general group discussion the following other possible objectives were identified.

1. The Town of Georgina needs to see itself as one single community comprised of a number of large neighbourhoods and hamlets.
2. Economic, social, and environmental sustainability should be objectives of the Town.
3. Encourage economic development to improve the municipal tax base.
4. Develop monitoring mechanisms to measure plan implementation.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

Following the group discussion the facilitators provided participants with an overview of the Next Steps involved in this project. They include:

- **Hamlet Open Houses**
Open houses will be held in order to gain public input on the state of growth in the hamlets. Part of the open house will focus on boundary adjustments to the hamlets.
- **Workshop #2**
Building on the outcomes of the visioning, objectives, and guiding principles workshop, this workshop will be designed to identify the planning directions that need to be included in the Official Plan. The Planning Directions Report will then be prepared to identify specific changes required to the Official Plan.
- **Open House Under Section 17(16) of the Planning Act**
During this workshop there will be an opportunity to review and discuss the proposed policy and mapping changes that will be included in the Official Plan Review.
- **Public Meeting Under Section 17(15) of the Planning Act**
This is a statutory public meeting of Council in which the public can address Council with respect to the proposed changes in the Draft Official Plan.

At the conclusion of the meeting Jim Dymont advised all of the participants that staff and the consultants are available to correspond with them through email or by phone and will make every effort to return any messages or calls received within 24 hours.

The meeting concluded at approximately 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted;

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim Dymont', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jim Dymont BES, MCIP, RPP