October 19 | **Official Plan Town Hall: Q & A's**

Q **Can we put all the cultural heritage comments in one section to make it easier to follow?**

A City staff have tried to consolidate cultural heritage comments as best as possible for ease of navigation. At the same time, we have to place policies in the Official Plan in order to ensure they are as effective as can be.

We include some cultural heritage policies in Section 3, Planning an Attractive City, to guide the urban design best practices for Barrie. Since heritage conservation is very much about preserving the physical elements of a building or neighbourhood, we want to ensure that there are heritage built-form policies in this section.

The remainder of the policies on cultural heritage can be found in Section 8, Planning a Cultural City. These policies tend to be broader in scope and guide the wider processes the City will undertake to ensure that we foster the recognition, celebration and protection of our diverse cultural heritage.

Q **Regarding consents and severances: do we have a definition as to what is minor?**

A What defines a minor variance is guided by four tests as prescribed in Section 45(1) of the Planning Act. These are:

1. Is the application minor in nature?
2. Is the application desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure?
3. Is the application in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?
4. Is the application in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

Regarding the first test, minor in nature is typically judged in relation to size, impacts and the details of the particular application. A minor variance application would generally have a minimal effect on the existing property and community context.

Generally, in planning terms, what is considered minor relies on the wider context surrounding a site (including the character of the neighbourhood), as well as the specific standards and policies any sort of planning application would need to meet to be in conformity.

Q **Regarding the Official Plan's write up on the Community Improvement Plan (CIP), there is no specific reference to heritage projects as being supported by a CIP, and yet there's a reference to rehabilitation as being supported. Is rehabilitation an umbrella word that covers heritage projects?**

A The use of the word rehabilitation can have a number of applications and interpretations (e.g., the rehabilitation of buildings due to age, environmental rehabilitation, etc.). At the same time, as heritage preservation continues to be a good and valid use of a CIP, we will ensure a specific reference to "built heritage preservation" is included in the CIP section of the Official Plan. The actual CIP in operation now includes funding for the improvement of heritage properties.

Q **What is the City doing with respect to tree planting throughout the city?**

A The City's commitments to tree planting and fostering an urban tree canopy is highlighted in Section 6.3.2, Urban Forests, of the Official Plan.

While the Official Plan does not currently include a city-wide tree canopy target, the City recognizes the value of preserving, enhancing and adding to the tree canopy across the City on public and private sites. Undertaking an Urban Forests Master Plan would ensure appropriate research and analysis is done to set an appropriate benchmark.

In the coming months, the City will also be exploring the creation of a single tree by-law, which will provide further standards for supporting the City's tree canopy.

Q **Can we have a maximum building height for High Density within the Urban Growth Centre and intensification areas?**

A Staff are considering this input although not including maximum heights is not unusual in an Official Plan document, as all of the other elements that go into good land use planning and site design will regulate ultimately what can be built on a site. The intention is that the actual heights on properties will be established through the zoning by-law.

Currently, Barrie is regulated by Zoning By-law 2009-141. City staff are also currently working on a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law that will implement the vision of the new Official Plan once adopted and approved. There will be extensive public consultation on the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law in 2022. Until the new zoning by-law is implemented, Zoning By-law 2009-141 will continue to be in effect.

Q **Can you integrate more policies from the Heritage Neighbourhood Strategy?**

A Barrie's Heritage Neighbourhood Strategy (2010) will continue to be in effect after the implementation of the new Official Plan, as will many of the City's other strategic documents and plans.

If there is a policy in direct conflict with the Official Plan, then the Official Plan prevails. However, if there is no conflicting direction between any two municipal documents, the guidance given in both will be upheld.

Q **What is the zoning going to be for Allandale?**

A The City's Zoning By-law 2009-141 continues to be in effect, and this does not change with the implementation of the new Official Plan. At the same time, work is underway on a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The City will be holding consultation on the new zoning by-law in 2022 and we encourage everyone to participate.

Q **How do you develop your climate action sections? Did you engage with our youth? Take a look at how other cities are dealing with climate change and climate action?**

A The sections on climate change in the Official Plan were informed by a variety of resources including Provincial and Federal direction, Council and staff direction, other municipal approaches, policy research and public input.

Public engagement on the Official Plan has occurred in several phases, starting in 2018. During earlier phases, there was direct consultation with youth in Barrie through the Youth Workbook and several presentations to high school students by staff.

The City's Official Plan also builds on the overall and wider strategic direction of the City related to climate change. For instance, the City's commitment to have net-zero emissions by 2050 is captured, as well as the City's commitment to developing a circular economy – which is essentially a movement increasingly being adopted by municipalities around the world to support a zero-waste society.

Q **The City no longer has any mixed-used designations in this new Official Plan. Why is this? Isn't this a better way to integrate mixed-use within a city?**

A Based on input from the public, the City of Barrie is committed to developing complete communities, which are essentially walkable communities where locals can equally live, work, shop and play. Given this philosophy, City staff believe that most land use designations should inherently allow for a mix of uses. In any land use designation where people can live, we should also make available the option to have a store, pharmacy, daycare, café and/or office space right in the same building. In this draft Official Plan, we have policies encouraging mixed-use developments in a variety of land use designations, like Neighbourhood Area, Medium Density, High Density, Community Hub, Commercial District and more.

Q **Have you assessed the City's master plans for services to know whether the growth projected in the Official Plan can be accommodated?**

A Yes. We are required to do this by the Province, as stated in **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.** All municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, when creating a new Official Plan, must in tandem complete a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). As part of the MCR, municipalities must specifically assess their capacity to accommodate the required infrastructure and public service facilities needed to support any projected population and employment growth.

The Province has set targets for Barrie to grow to **298,000 people and 150,000 jobs by 2051**. The new Official Plan is, in part, our map for achieving these targets. The MCR will be included with the Official Plan staff report when the new Official Plan goes to Council for adoption consideration.

Q **Why isn't City-wide zoning recognized, as part of the Official Plan's existing approval policy?**

A The recognition of Zoning By-law 2009-141 is not affected by the implementation of the new Official Plan. At the same time, the City is working on drafting a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. Once the new Zoning By-law is adopted, Zoning By-law 2009-141 will no longer be recognized.

Public consultation on the draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law will take place in 2022 and we encourage everyone to partake.

Q **Why the shift in right-of-way widths on Map 5 of the Official Plan?**

A To provide clarity and certainty, City staff have tried to provide the most detailed information possible on this map. The map displays right-of-way widths as conveyed in the current Transportation Master Plan, as well as any revised right-of-way widths determined through approved Environmental Assessments.