

## COMMUNICATION 132038

Received From: Niki Dwyer, MCIP RPP, Director of Development Services  
Addressed To: Committee of the Whole  
Date: March 9, 2021  
Topic: Carleton Place Official Plan Review

### BACKGROUND

Council has directed staff to undertake the Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan. The present Official Plan was adopted and approved in 2013, with minor amendments and changes in 2014 and 2015.

With the passing of the new Provincial Policy Statement in 2020, sweeping amendments to the Planning Act (Bill 108) in 2019 and the adoption of new growth projections by the County of Lanark in 2019, it is apt to take the opportunity to update our own local policies to conform to the provincial requirements but also consider whether or not the goals and objectives of the original plan are still reflective of our local community values.

The Comprehensive Review exists at two key stages. **Stage 1** is to assess whether there is sufficient services and un-serviced land available to accommodate the population projections. **Stage 2** of the review involves the analysis and amendment to policies, goals and objectives of the plan.



**Stage 1** of Comprehensive Review commenced in August 2020. A preliminary report on the project was provided to Council on January 26, 2021 for discussion and information and an initial public survey was launched at the beginning of February closing on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. A report with three (3) growth scenarios will be presented to Committee for direction on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 following which staff will undertake a rigorous and in-depth public consultation process.

**Stage 2** of the review involves the evaluation and discussion of the land use policies which shape and guide the type of growth we experience within the community. While the intent of an Official Plan is to provide overarching policies for implementation within the Development Permit By-law, the policies still need to provide sufficient direction to guide and enable that implementation. This process is intended to commence in 2021.

The Comprehensive Review offers an opportunity for the community to pause and reflect on how the plan has been implemented to date and assess if the goals and objectives of the Plan are still reflective of the local interest. It also provides the chance to evaluate whether or not the policies are effective in regulating and guiding development as originally intended.

All land use planning documents are intended to be “living” documents and it is both normal and appropriate to critically review their mandates on a regular basis.

## **COMMENT**

The purpose of this report is to generate discussions by Council regarding the depth and breadth of the type of policy review that should be undertaken as part of **Stage 2**.

At this time, there are two (2) avenues that Council may wish to direct staff to proceed with:

### **Option 1 – Select Policy Update**

- A) Internal staff to review and consult on certain components of the Official Plan in stages. Internal capacity exists to provide this level of review for 3-5 policy areas over an ±18 month period. This type of review involves significant resources for research and consultation and cannot be sustained over a longer period of time. However, if Council is of the opinion that the existing Plan is generally reflective of the present community vision, this approach would give a very “local plan” in a cost effective manner.
- B) Alternatively, Council may choose to direct staff to retain the services of an external consultant to assist with the internal review of certain policy areas. This may offer opportunity to review more policy areas while continuing to be reflective of local values.

### **Option 2 – New Official Plan**

Retain the services of an external consultant to review and re-write the Official Plan in its entirety. This process is estimated to take 12-18 months and would be significantly more costly than an internal review. The approach does however offer opportunities for in-depth review and suggestions based on applied industry standards in other communities and ultimately tends to lead to a better “policy plan”. This approach is recommended if Council is of the opinion that the present Official Plan is not reflective of the local community’s values and/or requires a review of more than five (5) policy areas.

It is also noted that the 10 Year Capital Plan and corresponding Development Charges Study has forecasted the need to review the Official Plan which was based on a budgeted amount of \$75,000 for use in 2021, \$37,500 of which will be funded by the Development Charges reserve fund.

It is worth noting that there are certain components of the Official Plan which are mandated for inclusion by the Provincial Policy Statement and the County’s Official Plan. These include but are not limited to:

- The provision of sufficient land to accommodate a range and mix of housing to meet the projected needs of the community;

- The identification of appropriate locations and minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment;
- The protection and preservation of employment areas;
- The establishment and implementation of minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans;
- Inclusion of policies respecting the accommodation and provision of sufficient water and sewage services to accommodate the forecasted growth;
- The identification of Natural Heritage Systems;
- The adoption of a watershed approach to quality and quantity control of water resources

Notwithstanding the mandated provincial interests, the local municipality has significant authority in identifying and implementing additional policies which are of value to the immediate community.

In order to assist Council's discussion as it pertains to the purpose of this report, staff has summarized the areas of provincial and local interest in Appendix A for review and direction. Council and the public are also highly encouraged to review the content of the Official Plan which is available on the Town of Carleton Place [website](#).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council provide direction to staff to undertake Option 1B of the Director of Development Services Report on the Carleton Place Official Plan Review dated March 9, 2021; and

THAT Council provide direction to staff to commence the review with the following specific policy areas:

## Appendix A – Official Plan Policy Components for Review:

*Note to reader: In considering the policy areas identified, consider the following key questions:*

- *Has development in the last 10 years reflected this policy mandate?*
- *Does this policy seem relevant today?*
- *Does this policy reflect the type of development I want to see in the community?*
- *Are there policies I would like to see that do not exist today?*

*It may also be useful to examine the land use schedules of the Official Plan, appended here as B and C.*

Policy Area (and sample text)	Provincial / Local	Does this need updating?
<b>1.0 Vision and Guiding Principals:</b> <i>The Town of Carleton Place is committed to maintaining and celebrating its heritage through balanced and sustainable growth which will support a sense of place respectful of our unique historical, cultural and natural heritage where citizens can enjoy an unparalleled quality of life.</i>	Local	
<b>2.0 Community Design Framework:</b> <i>It is of vital importance that ongoing changes to the built form be undertaken through high quality developments that are integrated with the surrounding community. Accordingly, the community design framework policies which follow shall be considered and applied to all proposed development and will form the basis for the regulatory framework of the Town's Development Permit By-law.</i>	Local	
<b>3.1 and 3.2 Mississippi District Land Use Policies</b> <i>The Mississippi District is composed of the Town's core area which developed with a focus on the Mississippi River. It includes the Downtown District, the Mississippi District Residential Area with its associated parks, institutions, recreational facilities and local commercial uses and the Mississippi District Thoroughfares which include specific roadways, the Mississippi River and strategic parcels which will influence the future of the downtown core.</i>  Note that this section has 4 sub-districts (Core, Residential, Throughfares, Strategic Properties).	Local	

<p><b>3.3 Highway District</b>  <i>Encouraging and enhancing commercial development in Carleton Place is crucial to the Town's quality of life. Commerce provides employment through the retail sale of goods and services to residents, visitors and other businesses and helps broaden the Town's tax base which in turn helps the municipality maintain required public services.</i></p>	Local	
<p><b>3.4 Employment District</b>  <i>The recent widening of Highway 7 has expanded the municipality's competitive locational advantage for industrial development. Improved highway access improves the Town's ease of access to Ottawa's western suburbs which have traditionally been areas of strong industrial demand. In order to capitalize on this strength, the Town has completed an industrial development strategy which will in part be implemented through land use policies.</i></p> <p>Note that this section has 3 sub-districts (Health, Business and Industrial).</p>	Local	
<p><b>3.5 Residential District</b>  <i>The lands designated as Residential District on Schedule A provide the main locations for housing in Carleton Place. A broad range of housing types and compatible services and amenities are permitted to make the most efficient use of available infrastructure.</i></p>	Local	
<p><b>3.6 Future Development District</b>  <i>The Town has been pro-active to ensure that it will have sufficient lands available to accommodate future residential and employment growth. To that end lands have been annexed from adjacent municipalities. Some of those lands will be immediately available for development and have been designated as either residential or employment district on Schedule A of this Plan. Lands which are surplus to the immediate (i.e. next five years) development needs of the municipality have been overlaid with a Future Settlement Area designation.</i></p>	Local	
<p><b>4.1 Green Infrastructure</b>  Includes sub-policies for Natural Heritage features, "Natural Environmental District", Species at Risk, Fish Habitat, and Street Trees.</p> <p>Note that the Natural Environmental District is an overlay specific to mapped areas only.</p>	Provincial and Local	

<p><b>4.2 Parks and Open Space</b>  <i>The Parks and Open Space System consists of major parks, conservation areas, trail systems, and the Mississippi River corridor. The Parks and Open Space System provides opportunities for active and passive recreation and physical linkages for the movement of people. Certain elements of the Open Space System are meant to act as buffers between developments and to provide pathway-oriented recreational activities.</i></p>	Local	
<p><b>4.3 Built Infrastructure</b>  <i>Built Infrastructure refers to the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, structures and railway lines required for transportation services, the physical supply and distribution of water, the collection and treatment of waste water and the management of storm water, the collection and disposal of solid waste, the construction and maintenance of energy production and distribution facilities such as hydroelectric structures, wind and solar energy facilities and gas pipelines and finally the development of communication facilities including both above ground and underground equipment such as transmission towers and telecommunication infrastructure, including fibre optic lines.</i></p>	Provincial / Local	
<p><b>5.2 Flood Hazards</b>  <i>Floodplains represent lands that are susceptible to flooding during the spring run-off or as a result of significant storm events. No development other than those structures that are necessary for flood or erosion control, conservation purposes and uses of a passive non-structural nature as approved by Council in consultation with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority shall be permitted within the Floodway or Floodplain.</i></p>	Provincial	
<p><b>5.3 Contaminated Lands</b>  <i>Contaminated lands are those lands where the environmental condition of the property has been impaired through past activities. Although such lands represent a potential hazard due to real or perceived environmental contamination, opportunities for their redevelopment may exist.</i></p>	Provincial	
<p><b>5.4 Organic Soil</b>  <i>Organic soils, as shown on Schedule A, shall be considered as a constraint to development and as such development and site alterations shall only be permitted where it can be demonstrated through a geotechnical study undertaken by a qualified professional that the hazard can be overcome using accepted engineering techniques and that no new hazard or adverse environmental impacts will result.</i></p>	Provincial	

<b>5.5 Noise, Vibration and Air Quality</b> <i>Depending on the type, purpose and location of a development application, a supporting study that addresses potential noise, vibration and air quality impacts may be required. The study may recommend various measures that must be implemented by the proponent of a development as a condition of approval.</i>	Provincial	
<b>5.6 Incompatible Land Uses</b> <i>Every effort shall be made to prevent or minimize future land use conflicts which can arise when incompatible land uses develop in close proximity to one another. Ministry of the Environment guidelines on Land Use Compatibility (Guidelines D-1, D-2, D-4 and D-6 and any other relevant or future MOE Guideline documents) shall be applied when reviewing development and when considering amendments to this Official Plan or to the Development Permit By-law.</i>	Provincial	
<b>6.0 Implementation</b> <i>Note that the majority of the provisions within this section are obligatory and reflective of general powers of the Municipality in accordance with the Planning Act. There are however some exceptions identified below.</i>	Provincial	
<b>6.18 Economic Development</b> <i>Council recognizes that the economic base of the Town is dependent upon a mix of commercial, service industries, manufacturing activities and tourism. Council's intent is to establish a framework in which to encourage new economic growth and new employment generation while sustaining existing economic strengths.</i>	Local	
<b>6.21.1 Affordable Housing</b> <i>Council will strive to meet a target of 25% of all new housing to be affordable housing by enabling a full range of housing types and densities to meet projected demographic and market requirements of current and future residents.</i>	Provincial/ Local	
<b>6.21.3 Heritage Conservation</b> <i>The municipality will maintain a cultural heritage resource register resulting in inventories of significant heritage buildings as well as a list of locally significant buildings and structures. Council shall obtain updated archaeological site mapping from the Ministry of Culture under the provisions of a municipal-provincial data sharing agreement and update this database as new archaeological sites are identified from land development</i>	Provincial/ Local	

<i>and on the Provincial archaeological sites database. Council may undertake the preparation of an Archaeological or Cultural Heritage Master Plan with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture.</i>		
<b>7.0 Administration of the Plan</b> <i>Note that the majority of the provisions within this section are obligatory and reflective of general powers of the Municipality in accordance with the Planning Act.</i>	Provincial	