

To: Economic and Development Services Committee

From: Warren Munro, HBA, MCIP, RPP, Commissioner,
Economic and Development Services Department

Report Number: ED-23-46

Date of Report: March 1, 2023

Date of Meeting: March 6, 2023

Subject: Envision Durham Municipal Comprehensive Review: City
Comments on the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan

Ward: All Wards

File: 12-03

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to obtain Council's approval of City comments on the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan dated February 2023 (the "Draft D.R.O.P."). The Draft D.R.O.P. is the final component of Envision Durham, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (the "M.C.R.") of the existing Durham Regional Official Plan (the "D.R.O.P.").

The Region has requested that the City provide comments on the Draft D.R.O.P. by April 3, 2023.

A copy of the Region's early release staff Report 2023-P-** and a copy of the Draft D.R.O.P. can be found at the following link: www.durham.ca/EnvisionDurham.

Attachment 1 contains recommended City comments on the Draft D.R.O.P.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Economic and Development Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That Report ED-23-46 dated March 1, 2023 be endorsed as the City's comments on the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan prepared pursuant to the Envision Durham Municipal Comprehensive Review exercise.
2. That staff be authorized to forward a copy of Report ED-23-46 dated March 1, 2023 and the related Council resolution to the Region of Durham and Durham area municipalities.

3.0 Executive Summary

Not applicable.

4.0 Input From Other Sources

The following have been consulted in the preparation of this Report:

- Oshawa Environmental Advisory Committee (O.E.A.C.)
- Oshawa Accessibility Advisory Committee (O.A.A.C.)
- Heritage Oshawa Advisory Committee (Heritage Oshawa)
- Oshawa Active Transportation Advisory Committee (O.A.T.A.C.)

Staff provided copies of the Draft D.R.O.P. to the O.E.A.C., O.A.A.C., Heritage Oshawa and O.A.T.A.C. Each committee was advised that any comments they wish to submit should be sent directly to the Region of Durham by the April 3, 2023 deadline.

5.0 Analysis

5.1 Envision Durham: The Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Durham Regional Official Plan

On May 2, 2018, Regional staff received authorization to proceed with Envision Durham, the M.C.R. of the D.R.O.P. Envision Durham is an opportunity to undertake a core review of the current D.R.O.P. and establish a progressive and forward-looking planning vision for the Region up to 2051.

On February 5, 2019, the Region initiated the first stage (“Discover”) of the public engagement program for Envision Durham by launching a project web page and public opinion survey. With the release of the first of a series of discussion papers on March 5, 2019, Regional staff launched the second stage (“Discuss”) of the engagement program, where participants were asked to provide input on various themes presented through the discussion papers.

The following six discussion papers were released as part of the second stage of the engagement:

- Agriculture and Rural System Discussion Paper (released March 5, 2019);
- Climate Change and Sustainability Discussion Paper (released May 7, 2019);
- Growth Management – Urban System Discussion Paper (released June 4, 2019);
- Environment and Greenlands System Discussion Paper (released September 3, 2019);
- Transportation System Discussion Paper (released October 1, 2019); and,
- Housing Policy Planning Discussion paper (released December 3, 2019).

As previously directed by Council, the City has submitted comments to the Region on each of the six above-noted discussion papers.

On June 24, 2020, Regional staff launched the third stage (“Direct”) of the Envision Durham process with the release of the first policy direction report related to the conversion

of Employment Areas. The Region provided a ninety (90) day submission window for the public, including the development community, to submit requests related to the conversion of Employment Areas. The final date to submit a request for consideration through Envision Durham in this regard was September 23, 2020.

As directed by Council on December 14, 2020, the City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report DS-20-149 dated December 4, 2020 regarding various Employment Area conversion requests. These consisted of four (4) Employment Area conversion requests received from private landowners and three (3) City-initiated Employment Area conversion requests pertaining to employment lands located in Oshawa.

On December 22, 2021, Regional Council adopted amended recommendations of the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee on Employment Area conversion requests. As a result, a total of four (4) Employment Area conversion requests were advanced in Oshawa, including two (2) of the City-initiated Employment Area conversion requests.

The second policy direction report issued under the Direct stage of Envision Durham related to Major Transit Station Areas (M.T.S.A.s). The Region provided a ninety (90) day submission window for the public, including the development community, to submit comments on the M.T.S.A. Policy Direction Report dated December 2020. The final date to submit comments for consideration through Envision Durham in this regard was March 1, 2021.

As directed by Council on February 22, 2021, the City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report DS-21-20 dated February 3, 2021 regarding M.T.S.A.s.

The third policy direction report issued under the Direct stage of Envision Durham related to potential additions and changes to land use planning policies in the D.R.O.P. The Region provided a one-hundred-and-twenty (120) day submission window for the public, including the development community, to submit comments on the Proposed Policy Directions Report dated March 2021. The final date to submit comments for consideration through Envision Durham in this regard was June 30, 2021.

As directed by Council on June 21, 2021, the City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report DS-21-118 dated June 2, 2021 regarding the proposed policy directions.

The Region completed a Growth Management Study, which was completed in two phases. The first phase of the Growth Management Study focused on the completion of a Land Needs Assessment. The Land Needs Assessment is a review and calculation of the ability of the Region's existing urban land base to accommodate the population and employment forecasts contained in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 (Growth Plan, 2020), and seeks to determine if any additional urban land is required. The following four (4) technical reports have been released to inform the Land Needs Assessment:

- Region-Wide Growth Analysis (released July 2, 2021);
- Housing Intensification Study (released September 3, 2021);
- Employment Strategy (released September 24, 2021), and,

- Community Area Urban Land Needs Analysis (released October 1, 2021).

A component of the first phase of the Region's Growth Management Study involved the collection of submissions from the public and the development community regarding settlement area boundary expansions requests. The deadline to submit requests in this regard was May 31, 2021.

On September 7, 2021, the Region released the Proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment – Policies and Delineations for Protected M.T.S.A.s Report. The final date to submit comments for consideration through Envision Durham in this regard was September 30, 2021.

The City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report DS-21-163 dated September 8, 2021 regarding the proposed Protected M.T.S.A.s Regional Official Plan Amendment. On December 22, 2021, Regional Council adopted Amendment Number 186 to the D.R.O.P. which established the policy framework for Protected M.T.S.A.s.

On February 11, 2022, the Region released the Alternative Land Need Scenarios Report, which was released in response to comments received on the four technical reports released between July and October 2021 (as noted above). A public information centre was held on March 24, 2022 to discuss the alternative land need scenarios (seven in total consisting of five Community Area land need scenarios and two Employment Area density target scenarios). In addition, an online survey was launched on March 10, 2022 to solicit feedback on the alternative land need scenarios.

The City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report DS-22-76 dated April 6, 2022 regarding the alternative land need scenarios. Oshawa City Council chose to endorse scenario 2a, a modified version of the Region's scenario 2, as submitted via letter dated April 11, 2022 by Delta Urban to the City on behalf of the Columbus Developers Group as the City's recommended scenario on the Alternative Land Need Scenarios Report.

The second phase of the Region's Growth Management Study focused on the most appropriate locations for settlement area boundary expansions.

On November 10, 2022, the Region released the Growth Management Study Phase 2 Report which identified draft settlement area boundary expansions and area municipal growth allocations.

The City submitted comments to the Region pursuant to Report ED-23-14 dated January 4, 2023 regarding the thirteen (13) private landowner requests for settlement area boundary expansions in Oshawa, one (1) City-initiated request for a settlement area boundary expansion and additional areas in Oshawa identified by the Region of Durham for settlement area boundary expansions.

The Region's final growth allocations and locations for settlement area boundary expansions are incorporated in the Region's Draft D.R.O.P.

Most recently, on February 10, 2023, the Region released their Draft D.R.O.P. for public consultation and stakeholder feedback. Comments on the Draft D.R.O.P. are due to the Region prior to April 3, 2023. A public open house is being held by the Region on March 6, 2023 to discuss the Draft D.R.O.P. and a Planning Act public meeting is being held by the Region on March 7, 2023.

5.2 Background on the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan

The Draft D.R.O.P. is the culmination of work completed through Envision Durham, the M.C.R. of the existing D.R.O.P. The Draft D.R.O.P. provides policies and strategic directions that guide future growth, infrastructure and service delivery, land use planning, and development related matters. It represents the Region's provincially mandated exercise to ensure that the D.R.O.P. conforms with Provincial Plans, has regard to matters of Provincial interest and is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

Consistent with the provincial Growth Plan, the Draft D.R.O.P. has a planning horizon of 2051. The new D.R.O.P. will replace the existing D.R.O.P. Upon approval of the new D.R.O.P. by the Minister, the existing D.R.O.P. would be repealed.

Upon proclamation of certain components of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, the D.R.O.P. will become the official plan of the area municipalities. A proclamation date is not known at this time. Future updated or new area municipal official plans will require Ministerial approval. Ministerial decisions on planning matters cannot be appealed by the Region.

5.3 Overview of the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan

The Draft D.R.O.P. is intended to guide decisions on long-term growth, infrastructure investment and development to secure the health, safety, convenience and well-being of present and future residents of Durham. This is achieved by providing strategic policy direction to ensure an improved quality of life.

The Draft D.R.O.P. incorporates the work undertaken throughout the Envision Durham process including:

- The development of proposed Policy Directions across all disciplines;
- Undertaking a Growth Management Study including employment area conversions, identification of Strategic Growth Areas including all Centres, Corridors, and Protected Major Transit Station Areas, allocation of regional population, household and employment forecasts for each municipality, identification of 2051 Urban Expansion Areas and allocation of required intensification within the Built Boundary;
- Reviewing the Regional Natural Heritage System; and,
- Allocating required intensification targets within the Built Boundary.

The Draft D.R.O.P. contains high-level strategic directions which form the following chapters in the Draft D.R.O.P.:

- A Prosperous Region;
- Healthy Communities;
- Supportive Infrastructure;
- A Vibrant Urban System;
- A Thriving Rural System;
- A Protected Greenlands System; and,
- A Connected Transportation System.

The Draft D.R.O.P. emphasizes a structural framework that forms the underlying basis for the long-term evaluation of the Region beyond the timeframe of the Draft D.R.O.P.

Durham Region’s land use structure as contained in the Draft D.R.O.P. is comprised of four systems:

- Urban System;
- Rural System;
- Greenlands system; and
- Transportation system.

In addition, mapping for the Draft D.R.O.P. has been organized to address:

- Regional Structure – Urban and Rural Systems (Map 1);
- Greenlands System – Regional Natural Heritage Systems, Provincial Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Greenbelt Plan Land Use Designations; Water Resources System including Key Hydrologic Features, Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas, and Significant Surface Water Contribution Areas and Ecologically Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas; Source Water Protection; Highly Vulnerable Aquifers and Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability; and Landform Conservation Areas on the Oak Ridges Moraine (Maps 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, 2g and 2h);
- Transportation System – Transit Priority Network; Road Network; Strategic Goods Movement Network; Active Transportation Network; and Regional Road Right-of-Way Requirements (Maps 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d and 3e); and,
- Aggregate Resources (Map 4).

The Draft D.R.O.P. allocates the following population, employment and household growth targets to the City of Oshawa:

Figure 1 – Population, Employment and Household Allocations Table, Oshawa Statistics

Oshawa	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
Urban:	180,980	199,230	218,930	238,320	256,880	276,800	297,450

Oshawa	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
Rural:	1,040	1,050	1,060	1,070	1,070	1,080	1,090
Total Population:	182,020	200,280	219,990	239,950	257,950	277,880	298,540
Households:	66,640	73,800	81,450	89,060	96,680	104,710	112,970
Employment:	63,740	70,600	78,070	85,250	92,110	99,670	107,280

To accommodate the Region’s population and employment forecasts to 2051, the Draft D.R.O.P. incorporates the extent and location of proposed settlement area boundary expansions required, including 403 hectares of new Community Area Lands and 239 hectares of new Employment Area Lands being added within the Urban Area Boundary of Oshawa.

5.4 Next Steps

Regional staff will consider all public and stakeholder comments on the Draft D.R.O.P.

Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee or Committee of the Whole will consider a final draft of the new D.R.O.P. at a future meeting and will make a recommendation to Regional Council.

Once a new D.R.O.P. has been adopted by Regional Council, it will be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval.

Upon approval by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the existing D.R.O.P. will be repealed and replaced with the new D.R.O.P.

5.5 Staff Comments

Staff comments on the Draft D.R.O.P. are contained in Attachment 1 to this Report.

6.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the comments in this Report.

7.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

The Recommendation in this Report advances the Accountable Leadership, Economic Prosperity and Financial Stewardship, and Environmental Responsibility goals of the Oshawa Strategic Plan.



Tom Goodeve, M.Sc.Pl., MCIP, RPP, Director,
Planning Services



Warren Munro, HBA, MCIP, RPP, Commissioner,
Economic and Development Services Department

Staff Comments on the Region of Durham's Draft Official Plan

Overall Comments

- Staff support the framework for the Draft Durham Regional Official Plan (the "D.R.O.P."). The seven strategic directions (Prosperous Region, Healthy Communities, Supportive Infrastructure, Vibrant Urban System, Thriving Rural System, Protected Greenland System and Connected Transportation System) that the Draft D.R.O.P. will be structured around represent a balanced, aspirational and outcome-oriented approach.
- Staff have reviewed the Draft D.R.O.P. and offer the following comments on the various chapters, tables and maps.

Chapter 1: Regional Structure

- Staff note that Figure 1 of the Draft D.R.O.P. outlines the population, employment and household allocations for each area municipality. Per Figure 1, the City of Oshawa had a total of 66,640 households in 2021 and by 2031 is targeted to achieve a total of 81,450 households, which amounts of an increase of 14,810 new households. However, the Province of Ontario, through Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 ("Bill 23"), has tasked the City of Oshawa with facilitating the delivery of 23,000 new homes by 2031. Staff note that there is a discrepancy between the household growth numbers in the Draft D.R.O.P. and Bill 23 that requires resolution. Staff also question how the provincial target of delivering 23,000 new homes by 2031 will impact the Region's infrastructure planning.

Chapter 2: A Prosperous Region

Investment-ready Infrastructure

- Policy 2.1.6 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Support the delivery of broadband infrastructure to underserved areas through the implementation of the Durham Region Broadband Strategy, including through partnerships.”
- Policy 2.1.7 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Support the establishment of a Regional Broadband Network and continue to engage area municipal partners, Indigenous communities and service providers.”

Staff support the need to recognize the importance of high-speed broadband infrastructure and support working with business and local business organizations to create a business-friendly environment that incorporates state-of-the-art communications facilities and networks, including broadband technology.

- Policy 2.1.8 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Ensure an appropriate supply of land within Employment Areas, with access to municipal water and sewage services to ensure the Region’s investment readiness and competitiveness. The supply and development of such lands will be regularly monitored.”

- Policy 2.1.9 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Advance the provision of adequate regional infrastructure to Strategic Growth Areas in accordance with Section 5.2, to support the growth and development of complete communities where people and jobs are within proximity and have convenient access to transit and other community areas.”

Staff support the importance of infrastructure to facilitate economic development. Specifically, the need to provide appropriate servicing with regional infrastructure in Strategic Growth Areas is key. Staff recommend that the Region prioritize the servicing of Employment Areas, specifically the Northwood Business Park in Oshawa and along the Highway 407 East corridor in Oshawa.

Chapter 3: Healthy Communities

Diverse and Available Supply of Housing

- Policy 3.1.1 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Develop and implement a housing and homelessness plan that supports the goals of ending homelessness, providing affordable rent for everyone, greater housing choice, and strong and vibrant neighbourhoods through the following actions:

- a) increase the privately funded affordable rental housing supply;
- b) increase the government-funded affordable rental housing supply;
- c) diversify housing options by type, size and tenure;
- d) preserve the private rental housing stock;
- e) strengthen the social housing sector; and
- f) support an energy efficient, environmentally sustainable purpose-built rental housing stock.”

Staff encourage the Region of Durham to develop a homelessness plan that looks at housing and support solutions region-wide in all lower-tier municipalities, to reverse current trends that have resulted in over-concentrating the unsheltered population in specific areas in Durham (most notably in the Downtown Main Central Area of Oshawa) to the detriment of the growth, development and vibrancy of those areas.

Housing Options

- Policy 3.1.14 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Require area municipalities to adopt policies and zoning by-law provisions that authorize additional residential units in new and existing residential development, redevelopment and intensification, including:

 - a) the use of three residential units in a detached house, semidetached house or townhouse, where feasible;
 - b) the use of an additional residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached house or townhouse, including properties where the primary dwelling may already contain an additional residential unit;
 - c) allowing more opportunities for additional residential units by not applying minimum unit sizes and not requiring more than one parking space per unit; and
 - d) encourage municipalities to remove parking space requirements for additional residential units in areas intended to support existing and planned higher order transit service, including Major Transit Station Areas and other Strategic Growth Areas.”

City staff are advancing amendments to the City of Oshawa Official Plan and Zoning By-law 60-94 regarding additional rental units as a result of Bill 23. The proposed amendments are generally consistent with the Region’s Draft D.R.O.P. Policy 3.1.14.

Affordable Housing

- Policy 3.1.20 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Require that at least 25% of all new residential units produced throughout the Region, to be affordable to low and moderate income households.”
- Policy 3.1.21 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Require that at least 35% of all new residential units created in Strategic Growth Areas, to be affordable to low and moderate income households.”

Staff support the increase in affordable housing targets in Strategic Growth Areas. However, staff question how the Region or area municipalities would enforce and/or monitor these affordable housing targets.

- Policy 3.1.23 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Encourage reduced parking standards to support the delivery of affordable housing, including purpose-built rental housing.”

Staff note that while a reduction in parking requirements may address certain site development issues such as front yard landscaping and grading, it may also increase

demand on the City's parking enforcement resources (i.e. increase in parking complaints).

- Policy 3.1.25 of the Draft D.R.O.P states:

“Support municipalities that choose to implement inclusionary zoning policies within Protected Major Transit Station Areas, including the completion of a Regional housing assessment report.”

Staff are in favor of allowing each lower-tier municipality to determine if and where inclusionary zoning is appropriate.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- Policy 3.2.4 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Encourage area municipalities to:

- a) develop and implement community-wide GHG reduction and monitoring programs, policies and standards in collaboration with the Region, energy utilities and other key stakeholders;
- b) develop GHG reduction targets for their corporate operations that demonstrate municipal sector leadership in the community-wide effort to reach net-zero emissions by 2050;
- c) provide policies, programs and standards to support the achievement of their corporate GHG reduction targets and monitor progress, including the reduction of GHG emissions from municipal operations; and
- d) work in collaboration with the Region and the province to regularly assess and report on regional air quality.”

Staff note that the City is a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partners for Climate Protection Program, which assists municipalities in taking action against climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City has achieved all five milestones for its Corporate Plan, which outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from municipal sources (i.e. City buildings and facilities, fleet vehicles, street lights, water and wastewater infrastructure and solid waste).

Further, on November 23, 2020, Oshawa City Council endorsed the City's Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan as the formal Milestone 3 (developing a local action plan) submission for the Partners for Climate Protection Program. The City's Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from community sources (i.e. stationary energy, transportation, waste and industrial processes).

Finally, Oshawa's Official Plan already includes policies to monitor greenhouse gas emissions of corporate facilities and activities. Policy 5.1.11 in Oshawa's Official Plan states that:

"The City supports incremental reduction of overall greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants generated by the municipality's own corporate activities and functions. Monitoring of the City's greenhouse gas emissions shall be undertaken in accordance with Policy 9.16 to gauge the impact of the City's efforts in this regard."

Policy 9.16.1(e) of the Oshawa Official Plan states that:

"The City will undertake regular monitoring of appropriate indicators to assess performance related to:

Efforts to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions generated by the municipality's own corporate activities and functions."

Complete Communities

- Staff note that the Region should consider recognizing micromobility devices (ex. e-scooters, e-bikes, or any other battery powered form of active transportation) as forms of sustainable transportation, with reference to such devices in the following sections of the Draft D.R.O.P: 3.3.1, 3.3.4, 5.2.22(l), 8.2; and 8.3.

Chapter 4: Supportive Infrastructure and Services

Excess Soil Management

- Staff note that Excess Soil Management is a new section in the Draft D.R.O.P. Staff note that City of Oshawa By-law 85-2006 controls the dumping of fill, removal of topsoil and alteration of grades. Staff recognize the need for large-scale fill sites to support major development projects, including municipal infrastructure projects.

Staff further note that on June 23, 2017, the City of Oshawa submitted correspondence to the Region of Durham concerning the City's comments on the Province's proposed excess soil management regulation. Further to that correspondence, the D.R.O.P. should consider the following to support the local implementation of excess soil policies:

- Incorporate policy statements to ensure that development proponents, including the Region when undertaking Regional infrastructure projects, are responsible for the management of their own excess soil generation (including disposal), and discourage site grading and drainage pattern changes unless it is absolutely necessary;
- Identify locational criteria for excess soil receipt or storage in consultation with the development industry, area municipalities and Conservation Authorities;
- Develop a model by-law for municipalities to consider;

- Provide area municipalities with more guidance to help manage excess soil issues within their jurisdictional boundaries, including quality of life issues for residents (hours of operation, truck traffic, noise, dust, etc.), quality of the fill (e.g. contaminated soil) and the financial implications for the municipality; and,
- Provide area municipalities with a consistent region-wide policy framework to regulate receiving sites to help effectively manage excess soil in the future.

Energy Conservation and Efficiency

- Policy 4.3.17 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Permit alternative energy systems and renewable energy systems throughout the region, in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.”

Staff note that the Region and area municipalities should maintain and protect agricultural areas (i.e. the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine), natural areas and natural heritage systems as part of considering the siting of renewable energy projects, and ensure that property owners and the public are included in the planning process.

Staff note that the following factors should be considered when determining a location for renewable energy projects:

- Proximity to sensitive uses;
- Noise and odour;
- Ecological features and functions; and,
- Existing infrastructure.

Further opportunities to locate renewable energy projects within urban settings should be considered, such as photovoltaic installations on rooftops.

Chapter 5: Vibrant Urban System

- Staff note that the recent amendments to the Growth Plan, 2019 have extended the planning horizon to 2051 and increased the total forecast for Durham to 1,300,000 people and 460,000 jobs. Staff support extending the time horizon in this regard as it allows additional time for municipalities to plan and prepare for growth-related development in their communities.
- Staff note that the Draft D.R.O.P. does not include a policy that prohibits places of worship within Employment Areas and allows municipalities to regulate the location of these uses. Staff continue to be of the opinion that places of worship should not be permitted in Employment Areas that are also identified as a Provincially Significant Employment Zones. It is essential that Employment Areas in Provincially Significant Employment Zones be maintained for employment uses, in order to achieve employment forecasts. However, consideration should be given to permitting places of worship in Employment Zones that are not located in a Provincially Significant Employment Zone.
- Staff note that the Floor Space Index targets have been removed for Centres and Corridors. Staff support their removal given that the prescribed Floor Space Index

targets in the current D.R.O.P. have proven problematic to apply and can be difficult to achieve even when the associated overall minimum density target has been achieved (or exceeded) on-site. For example, a relatively recent development constructed at 1900 Simcoe Street North (which is an 8-storey apartment building containing 308 studio apartments) meets the required density targets, is an example of good design, and won the 2016 BILD Most Innovative Suite Design Award, yet does not meet the prescribed Floor Space Index target.

Intensification within the Delineated Built-up Area

- Policy 5.1.14 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:
 - “Require area municipal official plans to provide intensification strategies in consultation with the Region, that would include the following:
 - a) implementation of intensification targets, in accordance with Figure 8;
 - b) encouraging additional residential units and other forms of gentle intensification;
 - c) achieving the planned function and minimum density targets for Strategic Growth Areas and other nodes and corridors designated in this Plan;
 - d) identifying other areas appropriate for intensification and determining the appropriate scale of development and transition to surrounding areas;
 - e) addressing the availability of existing and/or planned transit services, municipal water and sanitary sewage capacity, public service facilities, and other community services and amenities to support intensification;
 - f) updating area municipal official plans, secondary plans, and zoning by-laws that support the achievement of minimum density targets; and
 - g) notwithstanding the intensification policies herein, any new or intensified development within Floodplain Special Policy Areas shall be subject to the applicable provisions of the area municipal official plan.”

Figure 8 of the Draft D.R.O.P. identifies the intensification targets for each area municipality. Staff note that the City of Oshawa’s intensification target is fifty percent within the built boundary. In the current D.R.O.P., the City of Oshawa’s allocated units for intensification is thirty-nine percent. Staff support the new proposed intensification target and note that with the exception of 2022, when significant greenfield development was approved in the Kedron Planning Area, a level of intensification in excess of 50% has been achieved each year since 2018.

Strategic Growth Areas

- Figure 10 of the Draft D.R.O.P. identifies strategic growth area targets for area municipalities.

Strategic Growth Area	Minimum Transit Supportive Density Target (people and jobs per gross hectare)
Urban Growth Centers	200
Regional Centres (located along the Rapid Transit Corridor)	150
Regional Centres (located off of the Rapid Transit Corridor)	100-150
Protected Major Transit Station Areas	150
Rapid Transit Corridor	150

Staff note that the Draft D.R.O.P. has identified rapid transit corridors as new strategic growth areas with a minimum transit supportive density target of 150 people and jobs per hectare. Staff support the approach to delineating these strategic growth areas, including rapid transit corridors, as it avoids a “one size fits all” approach that does not reflect contextual realities.

Protected Major Transit Station Areas

- Staff note that there are two proposed protected major transit station areas in Oshawa consisting of the planned Thornton’s Corners GO Station and the planned Central Oshawa GO Station. The identification of protected major transit station areas and development of an associated policy framework culminated in the adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment Number 186. Regional Official Plan Amendment Number 186 was forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval in January 2022 but has not been approved by the Minister. Staff note that further refinements have been made to the protected major transit station areas policies in the Draft D.R.O.P.
- Staff are in the process of undertaking an integrated Master Land Use and Urban Design Plan, Transportation Master Plan and a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for the Central Oshawa Major Transit Station Area.

Urban Expansion Areas and Future Expansions

- Policy 5.7.2 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:
 - “Consider support for amendments to an area municipal official plans to designate a supply of land for development up to the time frame of this Plan, including Settlement Area Boundary Expansions to the extents of the Region’s Urban Area Boundary as shown on Map 1, provided that the amendment:
 - a) is only undertaken as part of a comprehensive review of the area municipal official plan to implement this Plan;
 - b) is supported by an analysis which addresses how the growth management objectives, population and employment forecasts, housing unit allocation, policies and targets of this Plan are being achieved;

- c) includes a phasing strategy for greenfield areas and intensification areas and Regional phasing approaches in accordance with any regional water and sanitary sewage master plans;
- d) takes into consideration the implementation of a watershed plan. The area municipality shall consult with the Region and appropriate conservation authority to determine if any updates are required to an existing watershed plan;
- e) ensures where possible, that expansions to area municipal Urban Area Boundaries are contiguous to existing Urban Areas and do not extend beyond the Urban Area Boundary included on Map 1 to this Plan; and
- f) takes into consideration the extent of existing Major Open Space designation and Natural Heritage System, in accordance with Section 7.1, to determine the extent of lands that may be considered for development and be designated accordingly.”

Staff are of the understanding that Policy 5.7.2 is an enabling policy that directs area municipalities to bring suitable lands into the urban boundary and results in opportunities for area municipalities to approach growth management and urban area expansions under different scenarios, which may not necessarily require all of the lands identified as 2051 Urban Expansion Areas on “Map 1 – Regional Structure – Urban and Rural Systems” of the Draft D.R.O.P.

Chapter 6: Thriving Rural System

Staff have no comments related to Chapter 6: Thriving Rural System.

Chapter 7: Protected Greenlands System

Greenbelt Urban River Valleys

- Staff note that new policies related to Urban River Valleys protected by the Provincial Greenbelt have been added to the Draft D.R.O.P. On April 26, 2021, the City of Oshawa endorsed Item DS-21-72 regarding expanding the existing Urban River Valley designated areas in the Greenbelt Plan within the City of Oshawa.

Regional Natural Heritage System

- Policy 7.4.2 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Permit refinements to the regional natural heritage system, outside of provincial natural heritage system areas, through approved planning applications, without an amendment to this Plan. Such refinements shall be supported by appropriate technical studies and must be in accordance with applicable provincial plans and the policies of this Plan.”

Staff agree that adjustments to the overlay where it is deemed appropriate by lower-tier municipalities in consultation with their Conservation Authorities through various means, such as ground-truthing or site specific environmental impact studies, without

the need for amendments to the D.R.O.P. are appropriate. Furthermore, staff agree that the Region should have an upper-tier level Natural Heritage System that primarily reflects the Provincial Natural Heritage System, and area municipalities should be required to maintain and update their own established natural heritage systems.

- Staff note that Tourist Activity/Recreation Node locations are not identified in the Draft D.R.O.P., unlike in the current D.R.O.P. Staff recommend that the D.R.O.P. continue to include a separate tourist activity/recreational node designation to capitalize on the resources that Durham Region has to offer and promote the Region as a tourist destination.

Chapter 8: Connected Transportation System

Transit Priority Network

- Figure 17 of the Draft D.R.O.P. identifies transit priority network characteristics including the following transit priority network designations: rapid transit spines, high frequency transit networks, other transit connections, commuter rails, freeway transit and local routes. Staff note that there are two rapid transit spines in Durham Region, consisting of the Highway 2 Regional Corridor from the Toronto/Durham boundary easterly to Highway 418 in Clarington, and the Simcoe Street Regional Corridor between Gibb Street and Highway 407 East in Oshawa. The latter will result in bus rapid transit or light rail transit connecting Highway 407 to downtown Oshawa.
- Policy 8.1.7 of the Draft D.R.O.P. states:

“Support the implementation of the Lakeshore East GO rail service to Bowmanville, including the development of Transit Oriented Communities within the Protected Major Transit Station Areas and GO rail service to the Seaton community within the Pickering Urban Area, as indicated on Map 3a.”

Staff continues to advance an integrated Master Land Use and Urban Design Plan, Transportation Master Plan and a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for the Central Oshawa Major Transit Station Area. Staff most recently held the first public information centre on February 2, 2023. The purpose of the public information centre was to present reports on the existing conditions for the Integrated Major Transit Station Area Study to Develop a Land Use and Transportation Plan and Environmental Study Report for the Central Oshawa Major Transit Station Area. Staff are in the process of reporting to Council on the details of the first public information centre and Stage 1 study results, and to seek authorization to begin Stage 2 of the study.

Chapter 9: Site Specific Policies

Staff have no comments related to Chapter 9: Site Specific Policies.

Chapter 10: Policy Exceptions

Staff have no comments related to Chapter 10: Policy Exceptions.

Chapter 11: Implementing the Plan

Staff have no comments related to Chapter 11: Implementing the Plan.

Chapter 12: Interpreting the Plan

Staff have no comments related to Chapter 12: Interpreting the Plan.

Tables

Table 6 – Regional Road Right-of-Way Requirements

- Staff note that there is a new table (Table 6) showing regional right-of-way width requirements for all arterial roads. Staff agree that providing clarity on future right-of-way requirements for specific sections of arterial roads would facilitate the development application review process or conducting Class Environmental Assessment studies, particularly where opportunities for future road widenings are constrained. In addition, staff recommend that provided the intent of the D.R.O.P. is maintained, the Region have flexibility to deviate from the standard provisions/requirements for Regional roads in accordance with accepted up-to-date planning, urban design and engineering standards without the need for an amendment to the D.R.O.P. to address unique locational/contextual circumstances and/or conditions.

Maps

Map 1 – Regional Structure – Urban and Rural Systems

- Staff note that on Map 1 both the Highway 2 Regional Corridor from the Toronto/Durham boundary easterly to Highway 418 in Clarington, and the Simcoe Street Regional Corridor between Gibb Street and Highway 407 East in Oshawa, are identified as a “Rapid Transit Corridor.”

Staff agree that the Region should delineate the above described sections of Highway 2 and Simcoe Street as priority areas for the highest level of Regional transit service. However, staff note that there are long-established, stable neighbourhoods along certain segments of Simcoe Street North, such as generally between Hospital Court and Darcy Street, and along Bond Street and King Street, such as generally between Ritson Road and Wilson Road, that also include a large number of homes identified in the Heritage Oshawa Inventory. These areas should be maintained and preserved, with opportunities for intensification limited to appropriate forms of “gentle density” that support and maintain the existing built form and housing stock and do not disrupt the unique streetscape character of these areas, except where redevelopment is desirable as provided for in the D.R.O.P. and the Oshawa Official Plan. In view of the foregoing, staff is wholly supportive of proposed Policy 5.2.8(e) which reflects this position.

- Staff have no objections to the boundary delineations for the Regional Centres and the Downtown Oshawa Urban Growth Centre as shown on Map 1.

Map 3b – Road Network

- Staff note that a future Type C Arterial Road is being shown between the Oshawa/Whitby boundary and Stevenson Road North, north of Taunton Road West and south of Conlin Road West. Staff have requested that this road be removed and are in the process of preparing a Regional Official Plan Amendment application.