



City of Kingston Draft Official Plan

May 2009
Newsletter #3

What is an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is a document that provides a 20-year direction for the future development of a municipality. Revised every five years, the Plan establishes goals and a means to achieve them by taking into consideration important land use, social, cultural, economic and environmental factors.

The Official Plan is aimed at creating a better living environment within your community. As the Plan deals primarily with the physical aspects of expected growth and development, it also provides an indication of how the municipality and your community will look in twenty years.

How does the Official Plan affect me?

The Official Plan affects your everyday life. The Plan determines where new houses, stores, industries, schools, parks, and other land uses will be built; protects our natural environment; and, directs the construction of new services such as sewers, watermains and roads.

What is the benefit of an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is the main tool for ensuring that growth is properly managed and directed to appropriate locations within the municipality. Without an Official Plan, the municipality could experience haphazard development, which could adversely affect servicing costs and property taxes. In addition, many day-to-day problems from conflicting land uses would result in unacceptable living conditions.



Why is a new Official Plan needed?

The municipality currently uses the three separate Official Plans from the former Township of Kingston, the former Pittsburgh Township, and the former City of Kingston to guide growth and development. However, these existing policy documents vary in their scope, organization and contents. Therefore, a new Official Plan is needed to harmonize the existing policies, creating one document that will be applicable to the entire municipality. In addition, a new Official Plan is required to implement the policy direction of recently adopted studies, such as the Urban Growth Strategy and the Transportation Master Plan. The City also wants to ensure that policies are included that address sustainability, as it works towards becoming the most sustainable city in Canada.



The new Official Plan will provide direction for the next 20 years of growth in Kingston. Public input on the new Official Plan is critical to ensure its success.

Recent Revisions to the Draft Official Plan

The Fall 2008 Draft Official Plan was subject to public consultation throughout the first part of 2009, and the Planning Committee was presented with a series of reports that outlined the comments received from the public and technical agencies.

Based on the comments that were received, a number of changes have been made, and the Recommended Draft Official Plan, 2009 has been prepared. The following sections of this handout summarize some of the major components of the Official Plan document, and outline major comments received and significant changes that have been made. These changes include:

- the finalization of the Urban Growth Strategy and Urban Boundary;
- comments regarding affordable housing and student accommodations;
- revisions to the policies related to energy conservation and production; and,
- comments regarding the policies for mineral and aggregate resources.



Legislative Framework

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is the approval authority for Official Plans in the province. In 2008, the City received detailed comments from the MMAH’s One Window Review process, which includes comments from other provincial ministries. The changes recommended by the MMAH were incorporated into the Fall 2008 Draft Official Plan.

A major component in the drafting of any official plan is the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural environment.

Municipal official plans provide a long term framework for comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning that supports and integrates the principles of strong communities, a clean and healthy environment, and economic growth.



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Population & Growth Management

Management of the City’s future growth in a strategic and efficient manner is important. Accommodating a future increase in population in a way that optimizes the use of infrastructure and services, and that protects valuable natural areas and agricultural lands, is an important part of Kingston’s new Official Plan.

According to the 2006 Census, the population of Kingston is 117,207, which is an increase of 2.6% (or 3,012 persons) since the 2001 Census. In terms of future population, the medium projection for the year 2026 is 133,100 persons and 67,200 households. This projection is based on historical trends in population, as well as assumptions on future job creation levels. The population projections are used to determine the amount of land needed for future development, both for homes and businesses.

One of the main components of the final Urban Growth Strategy is a focus on intensification for future development. This would direct development to the existing urban area, at a higher density than currently exists, in locations where services such as sewer and water pipes are already available. In order to be consistent with provincial policy, staff undertook an analysis and determined that a 9% intensification target is a realistic figure for the City.

The Province requires municipalities to plan for all land uses for a period of up to 20 years. Intensification will help Kingston meet that requirement, but some additional lands are needed. Areas already included in the existing Official Plans for future development include the Cataraqui West neighbourhood, and the remainder of the Greenwood Park neighbourhood in the east end. Other areas also include Westbrook East and the Clogg’s Road area. All of these longer term areas will be included within the City’s Urban Boundary as part of the new Official Plan.

As the City’s Official Plan moves along its 20 year lifespan, the City may require additional areas to comply with the Province’s requirement to maintain a 20 year supply of land. For that reason, additional areas were identified in the Urban Growth Strategy, and have been identified in the new Official Plan as Future Development Areas (FDAs). These areas include the St. Lawrence Community in the east end and Mile Square in the west end. The FDAs are not included within the Urban Boundary. The purpose of these FDAs is to indicate where future growth may occur. Before development can occur, these areas must undergo a detailed evaluation report to ensure that they are planned in a manner that is sustainable, that is consistent with Provincial Policy, and that allows public input on their future development.

Planning Committee recently supported strengthened provisions to recognize the agricultural value of the federally-owned Collins Bay Penitentiary, should it become available for development.

Housing

Two issues that received many comments from public consultation on the Fall 2008 Draft Official Plan were affordable housing and student housing.

In order to address some of the concerns, staff revised policies regarding the definition for affordable housing to define what is included as administrative costs. Further, in a new urban residential neighbourhood, 25% of all new housing units are to be affordable, and may take the form of row housing, triplexes and multi-unit residential buildings. Where an increase in height, density or both is requested, a high priority community benefit will be the provision of additional residential units for affordable housing. This housing contribution may take the form of affordable housing constructed on-site, on lands near the site, or cash-in-lieu for the purpose of constructing affordable housing. The use of surplus lands owned by the City and other governmental agencies are to be considered according to the “Housing First” policy.

A significant amount of correspondence was received with respect to student housing. Many of the concerns brought forward through the correspondence were operational in nature (such as stricter enforcement of property standards) and are not appropriate to be addressed through the Official Plan. There were minor changes to the policies strengthen and clarify some policies such as those protecting stable neighbourhoods. As well, recommendations made through the Downtown Residential Review Committee continue to be implemented by staff.



Kingston has a great deal of potential for solar energy generation.

Energy Conservation & Production

There is a need to address energy generation in the new Official Plan because of the effects of climate change, the deregulation of the energy sector, and the rapid evolution of renewable and alternative energy generation. There are significant social, economic and environmental merits of using renewable and alternative energy technologies. Still, such merits must be balanced with the extent to which the use of renewable or alternative technology can be mandated by a municipality and whether its function and compatibility with the natural environment and adjacent land uses can be assured.

The proposed energy policies were presented in the Fall 2008 Draft Official Plan. While most respondents were in support of the general direction of the policies, a number of comments indicated that some of the proposed requirements are too onerous for individual homeowners. Also, the province has recently introduced the *Green Energy & Green Economy Act, 2009*, which will affect the types of controls that municipalities may have over renewable energy projects. The energy policies have been revised to address public concerns, in the event that the legislation does not take effect before the Official Plan is approved.

Mineral & Aggregate Resources

The Province requires that all municipalities protect mineral and aggregate resources for long-term use. These resources are necessary for the future development of communities, and they need to be protected from activities that would prevent or hinder their use, or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety, or environmental impact.

The City has a variety of aggregate resources, as well as a significant wollastonite deposit (wollastonite is an industrial mineral used in various applications, such as adding strength and flexibility to plastic). The most recent revisions to the policies will provide greater protection for the future extraction of mineral and aggregate resources, in accordance with the regulations of the *Mining Act* and the *Aggregate Resources Act*. The policies now provide a clearer distinction between the mineral resource area designation and the reserve area overlay. As well, changes to the schedules will ensure that the limestone overlay will be shown as geological information but not as aggregate reserves.



A significant wollastonite deposit is located in the northeastern portion of the municipality.

Next Steps in the Official Plan Review Process

1. A revised draft of the Official Plan will be available in May 2009.
2. The statutory Public Open House will be held on Monday, June 8, 2009 in Memorial Hall at City Hall.
3. The statutory Public Meeting before Planning Committee will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2009 in Council Chambers at City Hall.
4. The Recommended Draft Official Plan will be adopted by City Council.
5. The document will be forwarded to the MMAH for approval, and will be subject to appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board. For information on the Official Plan approval process and appeals to the O.M.B., refer to the following websites and citizens' guides: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1755.aspx> and <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1759.aspx>

Public Consultation

The Recommended Draft Official Plan, 2009 is the result of a significant amount of public consultation. Further modifications are not anticipated, and the Recommended Plan is the document that staff are recommending to Planning Committee and Council. In order to comply with the requirements of the *Planning Act*, the meetings being held in June will constitute the statutory open house and public meeting for the Recommended Draft Official Plan.

▪ **Public Open House**

When: Monday, June 8, 2009; 2 to 4 pm and 6 to 8 pm

Where: Memorial Hall, City Hall, 216 Ontario Street

What: Staff will be available, along with copies of the document and schedules, to discuss any questions or concerns the public may have. There will not be a formal presentation.

▪ **Public Meeting**

When: Thursday, June 18, 2009; 6:30 pm

Where: Council Chambers, City Hall, 216 Ontario Street

What: Staff will present the Recommended Draft Official Plan to the Planning Committee. Verbal and written comments on the document will be received at the meeting.

Please note: In order for a person or public body to reserve their right of appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) regarding the Recommended Draft Official Plan, they must make a verbal or written submission at the Public Meeting on June 18, 2009, or submit comments in writing before Council makes a decision on the document.



City of Kingston Official Plan Review

How do I obtain a copy of the Recommended Draft Official Plan?

Borrower's copies of the Recommended Draft Official Plan are available at the following locations:

- City Hall, 216 Ontario Street;
- Planning & Development Dept., 1211 John Counter Blvd; and,
- The Central, Turner, and Pittsburgh Branches of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library.

The document can also be downloaded from the City's website: www.cityofkingston.ca/op.

How do I provide comments on the Recommended Draft Official Plan?

Comments may be provided in writing to the Planning & Development Department before a decision on the document is made by Council:

Regular mail: 216 Ontario St., Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

E-mail: opzb_update@cityofkingston.ca

Fax: 613-542-9965

If you are a person with a disability and need City of Kingston information provided in another format, please contact Barry Kaplan, Accessibility Coordinator.

Tel: 613-546-4291, ext. 3182

E-mail: bkaplan@cityofkingston.ca