



Staff Report for Council Public Meeting

Date of Meeting: May 18, 2022

Report Number: SRPI.22.054

Department: Planning and Infrastructure

Division: Policy Planning

Subject: SRPI.22.054 Draft OPA 18.3 Vision and City Structure – Request for Comments (City File: D01-22002)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to request comments concerning a municipality initiated Official Plan Amendment that will update the Official Plan with the City's 2041 Planning Vision and City Structure, and provide supportive policies for place-making, mobility, affordable housing, climate change, and other matters.

Recommendation:

- a) That Staff Report SRPI.22.054 with respect to the municipally initiated amendments to the City's Official Plan that will update the City's 2041 Planning Vision and City Structure and other supporting policies (City File D01-22002) be received for information purposes only and that all comments be referred back to staff.

Contact Person:

Andrew Crawford, Policy Planner, phone number 905-771-5528

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Infrastructure

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, Interim City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Location Map:

The proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 18.3 applies to all areas of the City.

Background:

This staff report provides an overview of the draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 18.3 regarding City Vision and City Structure, and it seeks Council feedback on the proposed policy changes. In accordance with the Official Plan Update Key Directions Report, this OPA is one of 14 official plan amendments that will be undertaken as a part of the City's Official Plan Update (OP Update). OPA 18.3 on Vision and City Structure and OPA 18.4 on Neighbourhoods (see Staff Report SRPI.22.055), together make up the first batch of OPAs. Batches 2 and 3 OPAs will occur in 2023.

Summary:

OPA 18.3 is informed by the [Key Directions Report](#) that was endorsed by Council on February 9, 2022. The draft amendment responds to six themes and 23 key directions in the Report (see Appendix B for a list of key directions applicable to OPA 18.3). More specifically, the proposed OPA will add a City Vision to the Official Plan, which articulates our city building aspiration. The OPA will also update the City's urban structure framework to include additional Centres and Corridors, and to reflect changes in Employment Areas. A mobility hierarchy is introduced through this OPA, which prioritizes modes of travel within the City. Lastly, the OPA updates a number of policy areas, including: affordable housing, infrastructure planning, climate change, sustainable design, parks, and urban design. These proposed policy changes are high level and they set the overarching framework for more detailed policies in future work through Batch 2 and 3 OPAs.

Proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 18.3:

Vision and Planning Horizon

Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 of OPA 18.3 proposes updates to Chapter 2 of the Official Plan by inserting a Planning Vision for the City and extending the planning horizon to 2041. The newly proposed vision states:

“By 2041, the City of Richmond Hill will be the centerpiece of York Region and one of the most prominent, complete communities in the Greater Toronto Area”

The vision guides the Official Plan as a future forward document that considers emerging trends in demographics, lifestyles, and fundamental shifts in the global economy, as well as increasing concerns over housing affordability and climate change. The vision also emphasizes the importance of complete community in order to create places that enable people to live, work, play and innovate within their communities.

The proposed vision was developed in concert with Council and the public, who generally support this vision, as noted in the [Phase 1 What We Heard Report](#).

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City Structure and Schedule A1

OPA 18.3 proposes a number of changes to policies within Chapter 3 of the Official Plan in order to provide an overarching framework for city planning. Starting with the title of this chapter, section 2.2.5 of OPA 18.3 proposes to rename Chapter 3 from “Building a New Kind of Urban” to “City Building”. Generally, the proposed changes in this chapter continue to provide direction in relation to the City’s overall structure, which includes the Centres and Corridors, Neighbourhoods, Employment Lands, and the Greenway System. Sections 2.2.9 and 2.2.11 of OPA 18.3 also clarify, through changes to policy 3.1.3(16) and Figure 2, that rural and agricultural areas, along with urban open spaces and environmentally sensitive lands are a part of the City’s vast Greenway System. These changes further state that the Greenway System supports multiple City interests, including tourism, recreation, local economy, and natural heritage.

Section 2.2.2 of OPA 18.3 proposes to replace the current Schedule A1 with a modified version. The schedule is also proposed to be retitled to “City Structure” to better reflect that the Schedule addresses the four components of the City’s overall structure across the entire City, not just the urban area.

The proposed Schedule A1 maintains the same framework in the current Official Plan, with some minor changes to initiate “Big Moves” that were introduced during Phase 1 of the OP Update process. These “Big Moves” include the creation of two new Local Centres: at Bathurst and Highway 7, and at East Beaver Creek and Highway 7. In addition, the Newkirk Local Development Area is proposed to be re-designated as a Local Centre, and its boundary will be expanded to include lands within and near the Richmond Hill GO Station area at Newkirk Road and Major Mackenzie Drive. OPA 18.3 also proposes to extend the Yonge Street Regional Mixed Use Corridor north to Bloomington Road. These changes reflect the Region’s direction regarding intensification along major transit station areas and its plans to expand the Regional Bus Rapid Transit network. The detailed planning for the updated centres and corridors, including proposed boundaries, land use permissions and densities, will be further elaborated in subsequent OPAs in 2023.

Another “Big Move” that OPA 18.3 will implement is the update to the City’s Employment Areas so that they reflect the employment land conversions that are supported by the Region through the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). As a recap, in February 2020, City Council supported five out of eight site-specific conversion requests initiated by private landowners and three area-specific conversion requests initiated by the City. This decision was made in response to the staff report [SRPRS.20.003](#). Two conversions were made by the Province through Minister’s Zoning Orders (Ontario Regulations 698/20 and 39/22), which pertain to lands located near Highway 404 and Major Mackenzie Drive East.¹ These areas are proposed to be recognized on the City Structure Schedule as “areas subject to Minister’s Zoning

¹ Ontario Regulation 39/22 pertains to lands located on the future Vogell Road; Ontario Regulation 698/20 pertains to lands located at 1577-1621 Major Mackenzie Drive East.

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Order,” since detailed planning for these areas has been established by the Province through these regulations.

The changes to Schedule A1 also propose to add existing and proposed major transit infrastructure, in order to illustrate the connection between proposed growth areas and investment in major transit infrastructure. This change includes adding potential subway and GO train stations near Yonge Street and 16th Avenue, as well as proposing a potential GO station near Elgin Mills Road and Newkirk Road. These proposed higher-order transit stations would serve the residents and businesses along the Yonge Street Regional Mixed Use Corridor, the Yonge and 16th Key Development Area, and the Yonge and Bernard Key Development Area, as well as the Newkirk Business Park. These proposed transit stations have not yet been recognized by Metrolinx in their plans, but their addition to Schedule A1 will serve as a means to advocate for these stations to be located there in the future. And lastly, it is noted that this map no longer includes the North Leslie or West Gormley Secondary Plan boundaries, in order to recognize these areas as part of the Neighbourhood element of the City’s structure.

It is recognized that since OPA 18.3 is to be followed by subsequent OPAs, there may be a period of time where the conceptual elements displayed on Schedule A1 will not be aligned with other schedules of the Official Plan, and similarly, there may be policies in Chapter 3 that are not aligned with more detailed policies in subsequent chapters. To address this situation, section 2.2.37 of OPA 18.3 proposes to add a new policy to Chapter 7 Implementation, to clarify that the more specific policy and/or mapping shall take precedence over general policies and/or mapping, should there be a conflict.

Intensification Hierarchy

Sections 2.2.9 through 2.2.11 of OPA 18.3 propose to clarify that the purpose of the City’s Intensification Hierarchy is to prioritize where development is directed to meet the City’s residential intensification target. The Richmond Hill Centre, as a Regional Centre, continues to be at the top of the hierarchy. At the very bottom, the hierarchy continues to recognize limited growth potential in Neighbourhoods through infill development and additional residential units.

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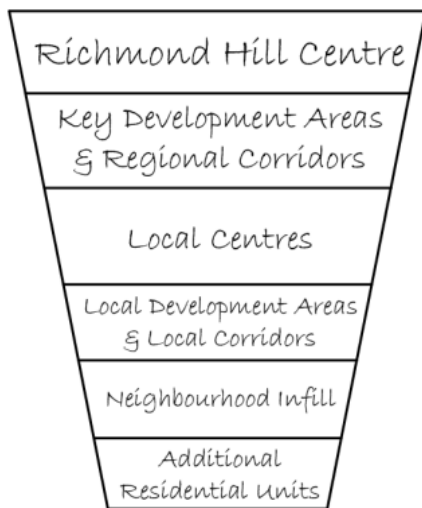


Figure 1 Intensification Hierarchy

A new policy 3.1.3 (4) is proposed to clarify that the Intensification Hierarchy is about prioritizing where growth and infrastructure investment to support that growth should occur in the City. Another new policy 3.1.4 (3) further clarifies that area specific density of development will be based on the local context, including considerations such as the amount of developable lands, compatibility with the surrounding area and its planned growth and development, and existing and planned infrastructure capacity. In addition, since centres typically have larger land area and can be designed with fine-grained city blocks, these areas have greater potential to create a mix of uses that contribute to complete communities. Therefore, OPA 18.3 proposes a new policy 3.1.3 (5) to clarify the role of centres as key focal points and destination areas, while corridors play a supporting role by providing connections, continuity and transition between centres. The details on specific centres and corridors, including any proposed boundaries, land use permissions, and densities will be further determined through subsequent OPAs.

As a side note, the proposed Intensification Hierarchy does not include Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) that are identified as part of the Region's MCR work. The proposed MTSAs in Richmond Hill are located across different centres and corridors. As explained in the Key Directions Report, due to the local context of these centres and corridors, their anticipated growth and densities vary widely, and one overarching designation would not allow for variations to respond to the local context. The OP Update will recognize MTSAs in a later OPA, by adding them to Schedule A3 (Settlement Area) as a means for monitoring and measuring minimum density targets. The City will also incorporate MTSA supportive policies and associated minimum density targets into the Official Plan following the adoption of the Regional Official Plan.

Mobility Hierarchy

Section 2.2.31 of OPA 18.3 formalizes a Mobility Hierarchy through proposed changes to policy 3.5.1(2). This proposed Mobility Hierarchy prioritizes walking and active

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transportation at the top, while single occupant vehicles are at the very bottom of the hierarchy. This prioritization is different from how people move around in the City today, but it is necessary for helping the City to achieve its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, as well as supporting intensification along major transit corridors. This proposed change will also create communities that promote healthy active living.

As depicted in the Mobility Hierarchy, a new trend the City anticipates is the increase of micro-mobility as more people use electrified modes of transport, such as electric bikes or scooters. With the use of these electric devices, people may be more willing and able to travel over longer distances, and at faster speeds, and therefore may prefer them to using their private automobile. Through the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update work that the City is presently undertaking, additional policies in support of this hierarchy and TMP recommendations may be forthcoming in subsequent OPAs.

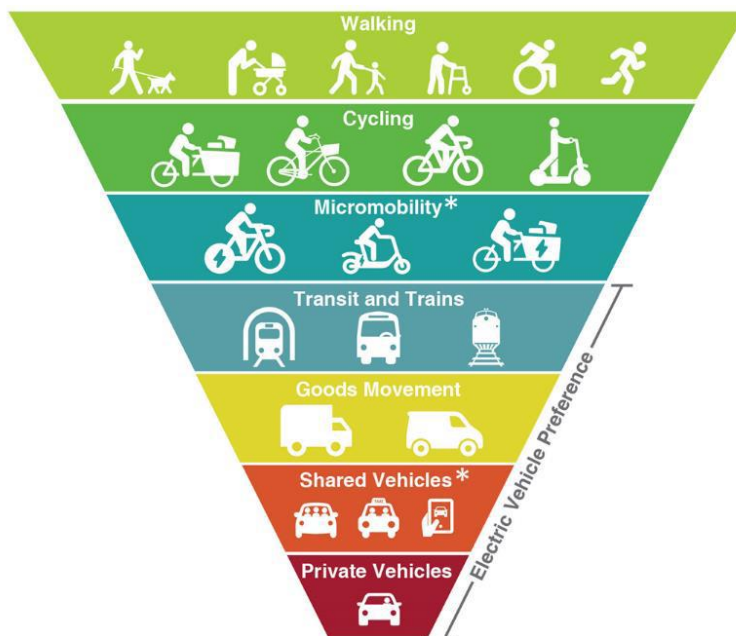


Figure 2 Mobility Hierarchy

Affordable Housing

Section 2.2.13 of OPA 18.3 begins to implement actions identified in the City's [Affordable Housing Strategy](#) through proposed changes to policies 3.1.5(4) and 3.1.5(6) relating to rental housing and family-sized housing. More specifically, the OPA proposes to require 5% of new units to be 3 or more bedroom in a multi-residential development with 20 or more proposed units. This new policy diversifies housing types, and it recognizes that multi-residential units in high density or medium residential development are typically more affordable than ground-related housing. OPA 18.3 proposes to further reinforce the protection of existing purpose-built rental housing by preventing their demolition or conversion, unless certain criteria are fulfilled. Moreover, should any of the rental units be deemed affordable units prior to a demolition, the replacement units must

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also be affordable. Lastly, section 2.2.14 of OPA 18.3 proposes to create a new policy 3.1.7(5) that encourages public agencies to prioritize surplus public lands or buildings to be used for affordable housing, if these properties are not needed for other public agency uses.

Alignment of Development and Infrastructure

Section 2.2.16 of OPA 18.3 reiterates the importance of aligning infrastructure planning and land use planning, and emphasizes the importance of needing to phase development and optimizing existing infrastructure. A new section 3.1.9.1 Phasing of Development is proposed to be added to the Official Plan. This section would require that the infrastructure necessary to support the future residents, businesses and users of new development must either be in place or identified in the City or Region's Capital Plans and/or Development Charges Background Study before any new development applications requiring that infrastructure can proceed. The policy also provides a list of the Council-endorsed plans that identify improvements necessary to support future development. Aligning approvals with the provision of infrastructure will help ensure the City can achieve orderly development and financial stability.

Sections 2.2.16 to 2.2.19 of OPA 18.3 propose multiple changes to policies related to Master Environmental Servicing Plans (MESPs) and stormwater management. Policies are being updated to reflect that the City has now prepared and approved an Urban Master Environmental Servicing Plan (Urban MESP), and as such, site-specific MESPs may not be required for most development sites within the urban area. Development will also be required to implement the applicable servicing requirements of the Urban MESP. Changes are also proposed to provide guidance with respect to stormwater management, and potentially require more detailed stormwater management plans to address site-specific matters. Some of the technical requirements and options surrounding stormwater management infrastructure has been removed from the Official Plan, and replaced with references to the City's Standards and Specifications Manual.

Section 2.2.32 of OPA 18.3 proposes a new policy 3.5.5(3) to permit stratification of right-of-ways and easements, under certain circumstances. A stratified right-of-way is a street right-of-way that has been divided in ownership. An easement is the right of a party or the public to use the land that is owned by another party. Through the development application process, the City may decide to permit stratified rights-of-way and easements to allow the public to access streets and other areas, while still enabling private development to retain private uses above or below the new streets. According to the Stratification and Public Easement study commissioned by the City, the practice of stratified right-of-ways has become increasingly popular in the Greater Toronto Area, and it modernizes the way cities plan and share transportation infrastructure. The proposed policy would ensure that stratified streets and easements would look and function like any other public street.

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Climate Change

Section 2.2.4 of OPA 18.3 proposes to add a new paragraph in Chapter 2, which adds to the Official Plan's Vision by identifying, over the lifetime of the plan, the need to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. It also recognizes that many of the policies and objectives in the Official Plan help contribute to the City's response to climate change; these include the concepts of developing complete communities and carrying out the goals of the City's Environment Strategy and the Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP).

Sections 2.2.8, 2.2.23 and 2.2.34 of OPA 18.3 also propose to add new targets from two Council-approved plans. Firstly, a new target from the CEEP aims for the City to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (as a new policy 3.1.1 (2) and updated policy 5.22 (3)(g)). Secondly, two targets from the Urban Forest Management Plan aim to increase the City's forest canopy target from 25% to 30%, and to add a new target for woodland cover of 15% by 2041. The addition of these targets aligns the Official Plan with both of the Council-approved plans.

In support of achieving the greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, Section 2.2.21 of OPA 18.3 proposes changes to policies related to energy conservation in section 3.1.9.6 of the Official Plan to also acknowledge the use of renewable and alternative energy systems and to work with development proponents to consider options for how development can implement actions identified in the CEEP.

Sustainable Design

Section 2.2.25 of OPA 18.3 updates a number of policies in the Official Plan to acknowledge the use of the Sustainability Assessment Tool (SAT) in evaluating development applications. The 2010 Official Plan initially directed for the development of the SAT, which was completed and brought into use in 2014, and has since been updated in 2021. These initial direction policies in the Official Plan have been updated to reflect the creation of the SAT, and new policies have been added in Chapter 5 to reflect the requirement for certain development applications to use and submit the SAT.

With the implementation of the SAT, many of the more technical requirements in the energy and sustainable design policies have been updated or removed, as many of the sustainable design elements of development applications can be addressed through the SAT. Advancements in technology and improvements in the Building Code have also required the update of some policies in sections 3.1.9.6 and 3.2.3 to match current industry standards.

Additionally, more permissions are proposed to be added by Section 2.2.21 of OPA 18.3 to encourage the use and/or creation of renewable energy facilities. Section 2.2.25 of the OPA also proposes to add to the policy on urban agriculture (existing policy 3.2.3 (8)), by allowing for community gardens, rooftop gardens, and vertical agriculture, with the aim of increasing the adoption of urban agriculture by allowing for/encouraging multiple options for it to occur.

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Parks

Section 2.2.29 of OPA 18.3 proposes to add two new Park typologies to the Official Plan: Destination Parks and Urban Plazas. Destination Parks are identified in the City's Parks Plan as major park spaces containing unique features not found elsewhere in the City, and attract visitors from across the City and beyond. Urban Plazas are privately-owned spaces in developments that are open for public use and access, and can provide open spaces in the centres and corridors for the use of residents, employees, and visitors to these areas. The addition of these two typologies will align the Official Plan with the typologies contained in the Parks Plan (2013), and expands on the Urban Plazas concept previously introduced in proposed and approved Secondary Plans.

Urban Design

Section 2.2.28 of OPA 18.3 proposes multiple amendments to section 3.4.1 of the Official Plan to provide general directions for urban design and built form. The proposed amendments respond to emerging urban design trends that support inter-connection of public and private spaces, walkability, connectivity, and placemaking. In particular, the proposed amendments have a strong emphasis on streetscapes and the public realm, with the goal of improving how people experience and interact with places and built form. In doing so, these policies will also help facilitate more and diverse opportunities for social interactions. As such, the proposed changes in policies 3.4.1(14) through 3.4.1(26) aim to promote city pattern, create gateways, views and vistas of important landmarks and the Greenway System, and encourage entrance features of neighbourhoods. Additionally, proposed updates to policies on urban design in centres and corridors further support the public realm by providing direction related to animating the ground floors and entrances of buildings.

OPA 18.3 updates public art policies of the Official Plan to conform with the Regional Official Plan policy that requires that 1% of the capital budget of certain Regional projects be allocated for public art. Similarly, the policy is also updated to reflect that 1.5% of the capital budget for certain City projects be allocated for public art, in accordance with the City's Public Art Policy.

With respect to connectivity, OPA 18.3 proposes changes in policy 3.4.1 to promote the development of urban scaled spaces and greater interconnections between streets and blocks, as well as connections to public transit. The proposed amendments also reinforce walking as the top of the mobility hierarchy by enhancing policies 3.4.1(28) through 3.4.1(40) to maximize pedestrian comfort and safety. Furthermore, the OPA inserts bicycle-supportive policies throughout Chapter 3 to support cycling and other active transportation. Lastly, barrier-free design is also added to Policy 3.4.1 to ensure accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.

In centres and corridors, OPA 18.3 proposes updates to Policy 3.4.1(47) to clarify that above grade structured parking would only be permitted in areas with high water table or other extenuating conditions. This type of parking facility would be subject to a number of design conditions, including the animation of street-fronts and open spaces

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by providing commercial, retail and/or community uses on the ground floor and incorporating design elements to mask the upper levels of the parking structure.

Another notable amendment proposed is the clarification on how angular plane is applied for the transition of low density built form in Neighbourhoods to higher density built forms in centres and corridors.

Technical Matters

OPA 18.3 also contains some minor changes of a technical nature. As examples, the title of the “Oak Ridges Corridor Park” is proposed to be modified through sections 2.2.24, 2.2.27, 2.2.29, 2.2.30, 2.2.33 of OPA 18.3 to reflect its formal name of the “Oak Ridges Corridor Conservation Reserve”. Section 2.2.26 of OPA 18.3 clarifies that live-work units and home occupations may occur anywhere within the centres and corridors (unless otherwise specified through more detailed land use permissions in Chapter 4). These changes are complementary to those that are proposed in OPA 18.4 (see staff report SRPI.22.055).

Section 2.2.38 of OPA 18.3 proposes to add a new definition of “Secondary Plans”, in order to recognize that Secondary Plans consist of amendments to the Official Plan focusing on a specific area of Richmond Hill. The new definition will recognize that any reference to “secondary plans” in current policies will recognize that the requirements of secondary planning for an area in Richmond Hill will still be met by an integrated amendment, and not just amendments that produce a stand-alone secondary plan document. The proposed definition is consistent with the definition provided in the Planning Act.

Provincial Policy Considerations:

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) (the “PPS”) sets the policy foundation for land use planning in the Province of Ontario. The PPS provides policy direction across the province on land use planning and development, and on matters that are of a Provincial interest (as listed in Section 2 of the Planning Act). The new PPS came into effect on May 1, 2020. When developing Official Plan policy and evaluating planning applications, Staff must ensure that advice to Council on a planning matter is consistent with the PPS.

The PPS provides the following provincial policy direction that is relevant to OPA 18.3:

- Promote land use patterns within settlement areas to support active transportation and are transit-supportive (1.1.3.2)
- Provide for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional and broader mixed of uses (1.3.1(a))
- Encourage a sense of place by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning (1.7.1(e))

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- Identify areas where growth or development will be directed, including the identification of nodes and corridors (1.2.4(b))
- Manage and promote growth and development that is integrated with infrastructure planning (1.2.1(a))
- Establish and implement phasing to ensure orderly progression of development within designated growth areas and timely provision of infrastructure (1.1.3.7(b))
- Provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options, including affordable housing (1.4.3)
- Support rural and agricultural areas (1.1.4.1 and 2.3.1)
- Recognize provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas (1.5.1(d))
- Promote water conservation and efficient use of water (1.6.6.1(c))
- Prepare for the impacts of climate change through stormwater management, including the use of green infrastructure (1.6.6.7(c))
- Promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficient and conservation, and considers the mitigation effects of vegetation and green infrastructure (1.8.1(f))
- Maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible (1.8.1(g))
- Provide transportation systems that are safe, energy efficient, and that facilitates the movement of people and goods (1.6.7.1)
- Plan for public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, to foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity (1.5.1(a))
- Provide opportunities for the development of energy supply, including district energy and renewable energy systems as well as alternative energy systems (1.6.11.1)

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (the "Growth Plan") came into effect on May 16, 2019. Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan was brought into effect on August 28, 2020. The Growth Plan builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS by providing more detailed land use planning policies for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The Growth Plan requires that all advice to Council and all decisions made by an authority which affects a planning matter, must conform to the Plan.

The Growth Plan provides the following policy direction that is relevant to OPA 18.3:

- Support the creation of complete communities (2.2.1 (4)).
- Direct growth to the existing settlement areas without adding new settlement areas. Within the settlement area, it further directs growth to areas with existing or proposed higher order transit stations and along priority transit corridors (2.2.1 (2), 2.2.4 (1)).

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- Maintain Richmond Hill Centre as an urban growth centre, by planning for a vibrant urban mixed-use centre, a place for major office growth, and that which focuses around a major new inter-modal transit hub (2.2.3, 2.2.5(2)).
- Promote a range and mix of housing options, including strengthening the protection of rental housing, ensuring the construction of 3-bedroom units in high-rise development, and ensuring excess public lands can be used to create affordable housing (2.2.1 (4)(c), 2.2.6 (1), (3)).
- Align development approvals with infrastructure capital plans and investment, to ensure sufficient capacity for new development (3.2.1 (1), 3.2.1(3)).
- Support urban agriculture (2.2.1 (4)(d)(iv)).
- Promote green infrastructure, low-impact development, mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of a changing climate, resiliency, and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (2.2.1 (4)(f), 2.2.1 (4)(g), 4.2.9, 4.2.10)).
- Ensure that development contributes to the creation of a vibrant public realm (2.2.1 (4)(e)).
- Prioritize active transportation, transit, and goods movement over single-occupant automobiles (3.2.2 (2), 3.2.2 (4)(c)).
- Introduce greenhouse gas emissions targets (4.2.10 (2)(c)).

Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan was amended and came into effect in May 2017. The ORMCP and its policies work to collectively manage and guide land use within the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM). Accordingly, the Plan works together with the Growth Plan and other Provincial policies to identify and provide certainty respecting growth management and urban development, where and how future growth should be accommodated, and where urbanization should not occur so as to provide protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological and hydrological features, areas and functions of the ORM. To that end, the ORMCP relies on municipal official plans to map and delineate agricultural, rural and settlement areas and requires that the policies of the Plan be read in conjunction with all other applicable land use planning policy, regulations or standards. Like the PPS, the policies of the ORMCP are to be implemented through land use planning instruments and decisions.

OPA 18.3 proposes a City Structure which maintains the existing land use designations within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area, and does not propose to expand the settlement area into any protected areas.

Regional Policy Considerations:

Regional Official Plan (ROP)

The Region is undertaking a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) to update the 2009 ROP. The Region's MCR will culminate in an update of the ROP to ensure conformity to the Provincial Plans, and consistency with the PPS.

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City staff have reviewed the draft ROP to ensure that proposed changes in OPA 18.3 would not conflict with those of the forthcoming ROP.

In the meantime, City Staff have also identified the following in effect ROP policies and mapping as most relevant to the proposed OPA:

- Implement the Regional Structure as depicted on Map 1 and in Chapter 5 of the ROP.
- Direct growth to the Urban Area, and intensification specifically to the Centres and Corridors along Yonge Street and Highway 7 (5.3.6).
- Maintain Richmond Hill Centre as a Regional Centre with the highest densities and greatest mix of uses (5.4.20).
- Continue to plan for Key Development Areas, Regional Corridors, and Local Centres and Corridors in areas near existing or planned rapid transit stations as areas for intensification and a mix of uses (5.3.6, 5.5).
- Support phasing of development to achieve intensification targets (5.1.12(g)).
- Reinforce the use of master plans and integrating land use planning with the provision of infrastructure such as water and wastewater servicing (5.1.7, 5.1.9).
- Reflect the Rural and Agricultural Areas in the City's Greenway System (6.3, 6.4).
- Create high-quality communities by employing the highest standard of urban design (5.2.8).
- Promote sustainable buildings and community energy plans (5.2.20, 5.2.13).
- Prioritize the use of active transportation and transit over other modes of transport (5.2, 7.2).

Local Policy and Context

As noted in the [Key Directions Report](#), amendments to the Official Plan are to be undertaken to address the four pillars of the Official Plan Update process. These pillars are explained in Section 1.3 of the Key Directions Report. OPA 18.3 addresses these pillars as follows:

The *Growing our Economy* pillar is supported through the new City Structure, which looks to create new mixed-use areas, requires a mix of uses within Centres, and encourages animation of street frontages in Centres and Corridors through the provision of non-residential uses (i.e. commercial, retail and community uses) at grade. The expansion of permissions for live-work units and home occupations also support this pillar.

The *Design Excellence* pillar is supported through the changes to the Urban Design section of the Official Plan, in supporting the public realm and ensuring new buildings, including above grade parking structures, contribute a high level of architectural design to the City. Furthermore, policies related to urban plazas, gateways, connectivity, and public art, all contribute to the realization of design excellence through development.

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The *Green and Sustainable* pillar is supported through the proposed changes to the sustainable design policies, which will update, modernize and improve sustainable building design. The additions of the net-zero GHG target from the CEEP and the increased tree canopy cover and woodland cover targets from the UFMP also support this pillar, as well as the changes to the parks typologies to facilitate more open spaces, especially in the urban areas.

Finally, the *Protect and Enhance* pillar is supported by the City Structure continuing to maintain the City's existing urban boundary and not expanding the settlement area. The changes to the affordable housing policies will support a greater mix of housing types, and the urban design policies will continue to protect and complement neighbouring areas with the angular plane and view corridors policies. Furthermore, policies which seek to phase and align development with infrastructure ensure that communities are enhanced through the provision of new development.

Public Consultation:

Staff have employed the following methods to consult with the public and stakeholders with respect to this amendment:

On April 7, 2022, the draft OPA and its associated prescribed material was posted on the [Official Plan Update website](#), and notification about this information and related Open House and this meeting was shared with the public through various means, including: print ads in the Liberal, digital advertisements, social media notices, email notifications, Curbex signs, LED postings at City buildings, and posters within City facilities.

On April 26, 2022, a Public Open House was hosted virtually. At the open house, City Staff provided an overview of the proposed intent and policies under OPAs 18.3 and 18.4. A summary of the Questions and Answers and comments received at the open house will be published on the City's website through a separate "Phase 3 - What We Heard Report". At the time of writing, City Staff have also scheduled meetings with individual key stakeholders who have expressed interest in the proposed amendment. These include meetings with the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), the regional school boards, and Regional Staff. In addition, the City has scheduled meetings with local ratepayer groups to garner feedback on the proposed policies.

Notification:

OPA 18.3 is being developed in accordance with Section 17 and 26 of the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* requires public consultation on the proposed amendments to be conducted through at least one public meeting with a minimum of 37-days notice issued beforehand. Accordingly, notice for today's public meeting was issued on April 7, 2022 through the City's website, social media, and the Liberal newspaper, and re-issued on April 14, 2022 (see Appendix 3).

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City staff will continue to monitor and analyze feedback received on the amendment and will provide a fulsome summary of the comments heard in a subsequent report to Council. Any comments received up until May 18, 2022, which coincides with today's Council Public Meeting, will be synthesized in a forthcoming What We Heard Report.

Next Steps:

Staff will collect comments and analyze all feedback received. Following this, Staff will return to Council with a final draft of the OPA to be considered for adoption on June 27, 2022. Following Council adoption, the City will seek approval of the amendment from York Region as the approval authority.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

The recommendation of this report does not have any financial, staffing or other implications.

Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:

Updating the Official Plan is identified as a Council Priority. The recommendation of this report, however, does not have any direct implications with respect to the City's Strategic Plan. It can be noted that the proposed OPA 18.3 supports all four of Council's Strategic Priority areas by directing the majority of growth to centres and corridors, and balancing growth with sustainable development. The proposed amendments help create a strong sense of belonging by increasing housing choice and affordability, and by promoting placemaking. With regards to getting around the City, the OPA promotes a mobility hierarchy that offers diverse modes of transportation while prioritizing walking and active transportation. And lastly, the OPA promotes fiscal responsibility by integrating planning for infrastructure with land use.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council and the public with an overview of OPA 18.3. This amendment incorporates the City's planning vision for the next 20 years and it sets the framework for more detailed policy changes in subsequent OPAs in 2023. This report has been structured for information purposes only, with a recommendation that all comments be referred back to staff for consideration.

Appendix Contents and Maps:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Appendix A – Draft Official Plan Amendment 18.3
- Appendix B – List of Key Directions in OPA 18.3
- Appendix C – Notice of Open House and Council Meeting issued April 7 and April 14, 2022 in the Liberal

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPI.22.054 Draft OPA 18.3 Vision and City Structure - Request for Comments.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SRPI.22.054 Appendix A - Draft Official Plan Amendment 18.3-updated.pdf- SRPI.22.054 Appendix B - Key Directions to OPA 18.3.pdf- SRPI.22.054 Appendix C - Notice.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 26, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Patrick Lee - Apr 26, 2022 - 9:04 AM

Kelvin Kwan - Apr 26, 2022 - 11:35 AM

Darlene Joslin - Apr 26, 2022 - 1:17 PM