



Staff Report for Council Public Meeting

Date of Meeting: June 20, 2023

Report Number: SRPI.23.068

Department: Planning and Infrastructure

Division: Policy Planning

Subject: **SRPI.23.068 - Request for Comments - OPA 18.7
Newkirk Local Centre (City File MOPA-23-0002)**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to request comments concerning a municipally-initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA 18.7) to the City's Official Plan (refer to Appendix A). The OPA seeks to add or modify policies in the Official Plan related to the Newkirk Local Centre in order to address several key directions contained in the City Plan 2041 Key Directions Report.

Recommendation:

- a) That Staff Report SRPI.23.068 respecting the municipally-initiated Official Plan Amendment 18.7 (refer to Appendix A) to the City's Official Plan (City File MOPA-23-0002), be received for information purposes only, and that all comments be referred back to staff.

Contact Person:

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

Brian DeFreitas, Acting Manager of Policy, phone number 905-771-5431

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Infrastructure

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, 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:

Below is a map displaying the lands subject to Official Plan Amendment 18.7 (“OPA 18.7”). The proposed Official Plan Amendment generally applies to lands as shown below. Should you require an alternative format, please call the contact person listed in this document.



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Proposal:

The purpose of OPA 18.7 is to provide detailed planning policies and schedules related to the Newkirk Local Centre as part of the City Plan Official Plan Update process. The OPA, as drafted, aims to address matters that are unique to the Newkirk Local Centre such as the long term planning vision for the area, permitted land uses, design elements, public realm, mix of land use, density of development, and recommended adjustments to the boundaries of the Local Centre in an effort to ensure conformity with the York Region Official Plan (2022) and Provincial policies. The OPA implements City Plan Key Directions endorsed by Council in February 2022, and supports the City's [Investment Attraction Strategy](#), [Affordable Housing Strategy](#), [Parks Plan](#), and the emerging [Transportation Master Plan](#). The OPA also intends to support economic development and job creation in the City. Furthermore, this OPA proposes to incorporate direction from the York Region Official Plan (2022) regarding Protected Major Transit Station Areas within the Newkirk Local Centre.

Background Information:

OPA 18.7 for the Newkirk Local Centre has been developed in tandem with three other centre-specific OPAs: OPA 18.5 Yonge and Carrville/16th Ave Key Development Area (see SRPI.23.066), OPA 18.6 Village Local Centre (see SRPI.23.067), and OPA 18.8 Oak Ridges Local Centre (see SRPI.23.069). These four centre-specific OPAs are preliminary drafts that are being brought forward to Council concurrently for information and input from stakeholders, prescribed bodies and the general public. Together they form the series of Batch 2 amendments of the City's Official Plan Update¹. These OPAs stem from the Key Directions Report which recommended that, after the City establishes its City Structure (which occurred through the adoption of OPA 18.3 City Vision and Structure in the fall of 2022), area-specific OPAs would be undertaken comprehensively as a part of the overall OP Update.

Impetus for the Proposed Official Plan Amendment:

Key Directions Report

OPA 18.7 implements several important key directions that are outlined in the [Key Directions Report](#) which are applicable to the Newkirk Local Centre.

- **Key Direction 2.d** – Clearly express required public realm and facilities (parks, streets, community centres, library, fire halls, tree canopy, schools, etc.) that is commensurate with build-out of the broader area – to create amenity-rich communities.
- **Key Direction 3.c** – Appropriately designate intensification areas and implement Regional MTSA minimum density direction.

¹ For more details regarding the City's Official Plan Update, including copies of past staff reports, please see the city's webpage: www.RichmondHill.ca/OPUpdate.

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- **Key Direction 3.d** – Ensure that development provides social, physical and visual connections to adjacent areas to create a cohesive sense of place.
- **Key Direction 3.g** – Support density with public realm elements that are commensurate with the proposed level of build-out density, and ensure that density is in keeping with directions set out in other City master plans (e.g., TMP, UMESP, Parks & Recreation, Fire, etc.)
- **Key Direction 3.m** – Continue to consult on and provide more detailed guidance for Centres, starting with clear vision statements for each area.
- **Key Direction 3.7.a** – Convert employment lands south of Centre Street East to Local Centre designation.
- **Key Direction 3.7.b** – Elevate the area within the Intensification hierarchy by redesignating the lands from Newkirk Local Development Area to Local Centre;
- **Key Direction 3.7.c** – Support development of a new community with a mix of uses and encourage structured commuter parking to allow for intensification opportunities.
- **Key Direction 3.7.d** – Update land use compatibility policies to ensure that existing and adjacent uses may continue.
- **Key Direction 3.7.e** – Provide new, and maintain existing, affordable housing.
- **Key Direction 3.7.f** – Enhance and provide connections to open space.

The Four Pillars of the Official Plan Update

As noted in the Key Directions Report, policy and mapping updates to the City's Official Plan are to be undertaken to address the four pillars of the update process. The four pillars include: Growing our Economy, Design Excellence, Green and Sustainable, and Protect and Enhance. These pillars are explained in Section 1.3 of the Key Directions Report. The draft OPA 18.7 responds to the Council endorsed four pillars of the Official Plan Update as noted below:

Pillar 1: Growing Our Economy

OPA 18.7 supports this pillar by providing opportunities for new businesses in order to create a vibrant, mixed-use centre. Policies to require at-grade retail, commercial, or community uses along Major Mackenzie Drive and Newkirk Road will create spaces for new businesses that provide the types of uses residents need nearby. The requirement of a minimum amount of non-residential in the Northern Character Area will create opportunities for new office spaces that will provide new jobs.

Pillar 2: Design Excellence

OPA 18.7 supports this pillar by envisioning the expansion and creation of high-quality parks and urban plazas, including the expansion of Essex Parkette and a new plaza next to the GO Station, which will create gathering places and memorable destinations. New design policies will enhance the public realm by ensuring entrance features are oriented towards public street frontages, and that streetscape elements are coordinated to contribute towards a unified theme for the Local Centre.

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Pillar 3: Green and Sustainable

OPA 18.7 supports this pillar by promoting transit-supportive development and the creation of a complete community around the Richmond Hill GO Station, which will help advance the City's goals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The OPA also promotes the creation of a network of trails and connections to nearby parks and natural areas for residents and employees in the Newkirk Local Centre to enjoy.

Pillar 4: Protect and Enhance

OPA 18.7 supports this pillar by protecting the existing affordable rental apartment buildings within the Local Centre; it will not only allow for their continued existence, but will provide opportunities for infill development to occur around these apartment buildings to further expand. A variety of housing types is also promoted, from ground-related townhouses to mid-rise and high-rise apartments, as well as affordable housing options that allow for opportunities to age in place within the same community.

Commuter parking will continue to be permitted in the Local Centre in order to support the GO Station, but it will be encouraged to be located underground or in structured parking to allow for opportunities for redevelopment. The OPA will also ensure the continued operation of the Newkirk Business Park to the north, by locating sensitive land uses such as residential away from the Centre Street frontage, across from existing businesses.

Proposed OPA Intent and Rationale:

OPA Structure

OPA 18.7 focuses on updating policies in Chapter 4 (Land Use Policies) of the Part 1 Official Plan (OP), and adds two new Schedules to the Official Plan. Similar to the other proposed municipally-initiated OPAs that are being brought forward to Council at this time, OPA 18.7 embeds policy direction for the Newkirk Local Centre directly into the existing Part 1 OP. This OPA format is a more streamlined approach than what has been prepared for previous Secondary Plans for intensification areas. This approach was recommended in the Key Directions Report in order to reduce duplication and cross-referencing of Official Plan policies, thereby eliminating the use of multiple documents and improving readability. Consequently, matters that are specific to the Local Centre are detailed in Chapter 4 of the Official Plan, while all other matters that are not unique to this area, such as phasing, affordable housing, and sustainable design, continue to be addressed comprehensively by the rest of the Part 1 Official Plan.

The following sections summarize draft OPA 18.7 by themes. More details and the rationale for the proposed policies are found in the OPA within Appendix A of this staff report.

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Vision

The vision for the Newkirk Local Centre is to create an affordable, livable, mixed-use community anchored by a transit station that connects commuters from across the City. This vision was developed through public workshops and surveys held in 2021 and 2022; for more information on these events, refer to the Public Consultation section of this report.

City Structure

OPA 18.7 is proposing to elevate the Newkirk Local Development Area to a Local Centre, to match the City Structure as shown on Schedule A1 (City Structure) of the OP. For more information refer to the Local Policy/Context Considerations section of this report.

Character Areas

Given the unique built form and characteristics of the different portions of the Newkirk Local Centre, OPA 18.7 is proposing to establish three Character Areas within the Local Centre that are intended to reflect the specific land use context in each area. This will allow implementation of the land-use policies for Newkirk Local Centre to be customized to each area's individual context.

The three Character Areas proposed by OPA 18.7 are:

- The **Northern Character Area**, which is proposed to consist of the portion of the Newkirk Local Centre located north of Major Mackenzie Drive and east of the C.N. Railway corridor. This area is expected to be redeveloped as a transit-oriented, mixed-use area adjacent to the Richmond Hill GO rail station, and will contain the majority of employment uses (including office, retail, and commercial uses) in the Local Centre.
- The **Southern Character Area**, which is proposed to consist of the lands south of Major Mackenzie Drive and east of the C.N. Railway corridor. This area is expected to act as a transitional area towards the surrounding neighbourhood, and will accommodate low-rise and mid-rise residential development.
- The **Western Character Area**, which is proposed to consist of the portion of the Newkirk Local Centre located west of the C.N. Railway corridor. This area is currently comprised of mid-rise apartments, and the OPA anticipates this character to remain while providing for opportunities for infill development around the existing apartments.

Land Use

The predominant use of land within the Newkirk Local Centre shall be for mixed-use, transit-oriented development. The City's Official Plan currently allows for a broad range and mix of land uses within Newkirk. As noted above, OPA 18.7 proposes to elevate the

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Newkirk LDA to a Local Centre. In doing so, the land use permissions are proposed to be carried forward and expanded upon via OPA 18.7.

Mix of Uses

In keeping with the vision to build a complete mixed-use community, OPA 18.7 proposes to permit a wide variety of uses in the Newkirk Local Centre. The permitted uses for the Local Centre designation would be largely the same as what is currently permitted in the Local Development Area designation presently set out in the City's OP. Permissions generally include: medium-density residential uses (e.g. townhouses, stacked townhouses, and walk-up apartments 4 storeys or less); high-density residential uses (apartments); office; retail and commercial; community uses; and parks and open space. Additionally, major office and major retail uses would be permitted in the Northern Character Area, allowing for these types of non-residential uses with a gross floor area greater than 10,000 square metres to be established.

The policy of requiring non-residential uses (i.e. retail, commercial, office, or community) at-grade along Major Mackenzie Drive has been carried forward from the existing Local Development Area policies, to continue to apply to lands within the Newkirk Local Centre. The policy has been expanded to apply to the Newkirk Road frontage as well. Additionally, retail, commercial and community uses are encouraged to front onto parks and urban plazas. The intention of this policy is to ensure the creation of a complete community by providing non-residential uses that provide much-needed jobs, good/services and amenities to residents.

Additionally, the City's OP includes a policy in the Newkirk Local Development Area that permits an additional 0.5 FSI where development provided office, commercial or retail uses in a mixed-use form. To further expand on the provision of office uses within the Local Centre, this policy is being upgraded to require at least 0.5 FSI of non-residential space for new development within the Northern Character Area.

Height and Density

The City's OP currently permits building heights up to 15 storeys within both the Newkirk Local Development Area and the Employment Corridor designation. In order to provide a more context-sensitive approach to height, OPA 18.7 proposes to add individual maximum height limits for each Character Area, ranging from 10 to 20 storeys. Additional minimum and maximum height requirements related to street wall and base building heights will help shape buildings to positively affect the public realm. To aid in built-form transition to areas outside of the Local Centre, building heights are expected to decrease towards the edges of the Local Centre. Additionally, a height limit of 4 storeys is required where development abuts existing low-rise buildings in the Neighbourhood designation; this is a similar approach taken by the OP policy framework as it relates to most intensification areas in the City.

In terms of density, the City's OP currently permits a density of up to 2.0 FSI within the Newkirk Local Development Area, and up to 2.5 FSI within the Employment Corridor

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designation. Similar to the height provisions, OPA 18.7 proposes to provide a more context-sensitive approach by providing a range of densities across individual portions of the Local Centre. These densities are generally highest on lands that are closest to the Richmond Hill GO station, and decrease towards the edges of the Local Centre. Overall, densities of between 1.25 and 3.0 FSI are proposed in the draft OPA. Schedule G2 in OPA 18.7 contains a detailed density allocation for the Newkirk Local Centre.

Beyond maximum densities, OPA 18.7 is proposing to add minimum density requirements of 1.0 FSI for development in the Northern Character Area, and 0.75 FSI for development in the Southern and Western Character Areas. These minimum density requirements will allow the Newkirk Local Centre to meet the minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs per hectare required for the area identified as a Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA). More information on the PMTSA is located in the Provincial Legislation and Policy Considerations section of this staff report.

Public Realm

A new public street is shown on Schedule G2 (Public Realm) to OPA 18.7; this new street is located in the Northern Character Area, west of Newkirk Road. This street is proposed to maintain street access to the GO Station rail platform; it may also be used for bus circulation and access. The street will also provide frontage and access for new development within this portion of the Local Centre. Finally, a protected bicycle facility is planned for the northern segment of the new street, to connect with the proposed pedestrian/active transportation crossing of the C.N. Railway corridor. This crossing may be in a bridge or tunnel, and will provide residents and businesses on the west side of the corridor with improved access to the GO rail platform; it will also provide additional connections for residents and employees within the Local Centre to access neighbourhoods, businesses, parks and other amenities located west of the Local Centre.

OPA 18.7 also proposes a network of parks and urban open spaces to accommodate the planned increase in population and jobs within the Newkirk Local Centre. An expansion of Essex Parkette in the Southern Character Area is proposed in accordance with the Parks Plan (2022), and is shown on Schedule G2 (Public Realm). As there are a number of existing public parks located within a short walking distance, new public parks are not being proposed within the Local Centre boundary itself; however, the policies of OPA 18.7 require the provision of urban plazas as part of new development, which will provide new open space and gathering opportunities. As the location and sizing of these urban plazas may be flexible to accommodate development proposals, their exact location and size have not been shown on Schedule G2 (Public Realm). One such urban plaza is expected to be located adjacent to the Richmond Hill GO Station in the Northern Character Area; this space can be designed to accommodate pedestrian flow to/from the GO station, but also as a focal point and central gathering place for the Local Centre.

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Boundary Adjustments

OPA 18.7 proposes to modify Schedule A2 to implement the proposed boundaries of the Newkirk Local Centre. Schedule 1 to OPA 18.7 (see Appendix A) outlines the changes in land use designations. The OPA would replace the existing land use designations of “Employment Area”, “Employment Corridor”, “Local Development Area”, “Local Mixed-Use Corridor”, and “Neighbourhood” that presently apply to lands within the proposed boundary with the “Local Centre” designation.

Included as part of the change in land use designation is an employment conversion of the portion of the Newkirk Business Park located south of Centre Street East. This conversion would allow for non-employment uses consistent with a Local Centre. The conversion is supported by Council’s decision dated February 26, 2020 (see Staff Report SRPRS.20.003), and the York Region Official Plan (2022) which did not include the lands south of Centre Street East as part of the Region’s Employment Land mapping.

Through OPA 18.7, Staff are also recommending an adjustment of the Newkirk Local Development Area boundary to include lands west of the LDA. These lands are proposed to be included in the Newkirk Local Centre boundary given their unique context and relationship to the Local Centre. This expansion would allow the inclusion of the existing low-rise and mid-rise apartment buildings along Major Mackenzie Drive that are similar to and consistent with the other apartment buildings within the Western Character Area.

Technical Amendments

In addition to the changes focused around the Newkirk Local Centre, OPA 18.7 modifies or deletes some policies in sections of the Official Plan related to Local Development Areas and the Employment Corridor. The modified or deleted policies relate to elements that are specific to lands being proposed to be within the Newkirk Local Centre boundary. Generally these policies have been replaced by new policies specific to the Newkirk Local Centre, and are no longer needed.

Background Research and Context:

The preparation of OPA 18.7 included background research with consideration to current and past development applications and concept plans, data on a variety of matters (e.g., MTSAs, employment, housing, parking, built form), and site visits. It also involved a 3D modelling and density analysis to understand how built form in the Local Centre could be shaped over the long term. This analysis considered the overall growth forecast for the City and estimates made by the Region and the City, the intensification prioritization hierarchy, OP Chapter 3 policies, the Key Directions Report, and urban design policies. The OPA is also informed by the findings from several other City initiatives related to the Official Plan Update such as the Parks Plan, the emerging Transportation Master Plan, and the updating of the Urban Master Environmental Servicing Plan. Finally, the public consultation and engagement undertaken to date has also helped shape the proposed policies.

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Provincial Legislation and Policy Considerations:

The following summarizes how OPA 18.7 complies with provincial legislation and policies. More details are provided in Section 1.3 (Basis) of the OPA in Appendix A.

Planning Act

Provisions of the *Planning Act (1990)* authorize municipalities to identify and delineate the boundary of protected major transit station areas (PMTSAs), and to identify land uses, as well as the minimum and/or maximum density and/or heights of buildings or structures on lands within PMTSAs. OPA 18.7 identifies the Newkirk Local Centre as an intensification area within PMTSA #50 Richmond Hill GO Station in the York Region Official Plan (2022). The proposed amendment includes a minimum prescribed density of 150 residents and jobs per hectare, and provides permitted use and built form policies to achieve and exceed this minimum density target over the long term. Overall, the policies of OPA 18.7 anticipate the Newkirk Local Centre being able to accommodate up to 350 residents and job per hectare, or approximately 7,500 residents and 3,600 jobs.

Provincial Policy Statement, (2020)

Policies of the *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)* encourage compact, mixed-use development to support livable and resilient communities while considering housing needs. In accordance with these policies, OPA 18.7 directs higher density development within the Local Centre in the form of low-, mid-, and high-rise development. Residential development is permitted throughout this Local Centre, and to support a mix of land uses, the policies of the OPA require that development within the Local Centre provide non-residential space for properties that front arterial and collector streets. The non-residential use may be in the form of retail, commercial, office/major office, and community uses.

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

Policies of *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)* support the achievement of complete communities and prioritize for major transit station areas (MTSAs) on priority transit corridors. OPA 18.7 plans for a complete community within the Newkirk Local Centre by integrating a mix of uses in a compact form that provides for amenities and services within a 15-minute walk or 5-minute bike ride. The Local Centre surrounds a major transit station (the Richmond Hill GO Station) with higher intensification planned than the surrounding lower density neighbourhood.

Regional Policy Considerations:

The York Region Official Plan (2022) identifies the Newkirk Local Centre area as part of Protected Major Transit Station Area #50, with a minimum density target of 150 people and jobs per hectare. To support this density, the York Region Official Plan directs that this area support a mix of land uses. The purpose of PMTSAs and the process of

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identifying them, as well as the City's input into that Regional process is documented in [Staff Report SRPRS.20.004](#). OPA 18.7 designates the majority of PMTSA #50 as a Local Centre. The remaining lands of the PMTSA will continue to be designated Neighbourhood, Local Mixed Use Corridor, and Natural Core and will be guided by the applicable land use policies of the City's OP. Additional policy direction regarding areas outside of the Local Centre designation may be provided via subsequent amendments under the Official Plan Update process.

Furthermore, the York Region Official Plan directs that the Official Plan provide direction regarding built form and scale of development to support and implement the Regional intensification hierarchy, to provide a residents to jobs ratio target to ensure live work opportunities and an appropriate balance of jobs to population, and to provide affordable housing targets. The proposed OPA provides a target ratio of 7 residents to 3 jobs, which is intended to be achieved over the long term. The Official Plan presently provides a minimum affordable housing target of 25% of new housing in the City overall; and a subsequent amendment may update the affordable housing target to better implement the direction from York Region.

Local Policy Context and Considerations:

Section 3.1.3 of the Official Plan outlines the City Structure, as well as the intensification hierarchy which clarifies the City's priorities for where new growth is intended to occur within the City. OPA 18.3, which was part of the Batch 1 amendments of the City's Official Plan Update, updated the City Structure to elevate the area around Major Mackenzie Drive and Newkirk Road from a Local Development Area to a Local Centre. In accordance with the intensification hierarchy, the Newkirk Local Centre will accommodate intensification at a scale and intensity less than the Key Development Areas and less than the Regional Corridor. Local Centres will be important community focal points and will develop as revitalized, mixed-use centres with pedestrian-oriented, human-scaled main streets.

In addition to the foregoing, OPA 18.7 draws from Policy 7.1(2) of the Official Plan which states that all relevant policies of the Official Plan must be considered when reviewing and evaluating changes to land use, including an amendment to the Official Plan. The focus of OPA 18.7 is to supplement or amend existing policies of the Official Plan as it relates to the Newkirk Local Centre. Future decisions regarding development in this area will rely not only on policies provided in OPA 18.7, but also on other relevant policies within Part 1 of the Official Plan. Therefore, when assessing the appropriateness of OPA 18.7 in guiding development within the Newkirk Local Centre, it is important to be mindful that the balance of Official Plan policies regarding City Vision, City Building, Implementation, and Interpretation will also need to be considered and applied as necessary.

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Public Consultation:

In addition to the consultation during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the OP Update process, an extensive stakeholder and community engagement program was used during Phase 3 to raise interest and awareness and to help shape the City's vision and goals for the future. The Phase 3 engagement involved public workshops, an online survey, and landowners meetings, and additional engagement via email. LURA Consulting summarized this feedback and prepared the Phase 3 Batch 2: What We Heard – Employment and Intensification Areas Engagement Summary Report. This report summarizes feedback received on employment, Major Transit Station Areas and Corridors, the four growth centres – Yonge Street and Carrville Road/16th Avenue Key Development Area, Village Local Centre, Newkirk Local Centre, Oak Ridges Local Centre, as well as housekeeping matters. The details of the consultation and key messages received respecting the Newkirk Local Centre are outlined below.

Workshop

On November 22, 2022, City staff hosted a virtual workshop related to the Newkirk Local Centre to inform the development of OPA 18.7. At the workshop, participants were able to hear from City staff about the Key Directions for the area, share their insights and personal experiences about the area and engage in interactive discussions about how the area can be further developed to address the community's current and future needs. At the workshop, slides were shared on the purpose of the workshop, background information on the Official Plan update, and the policy context for planning the Newkirk Local Centre. The workshop also included interactive breakout activities on the area's vision, land use and character areas, considerations unique to the area, and public realm elements such as streets and parks.

Online Survey

From October 27 to November 30 2022, a public online survey was available on the City's website to gather feedback from the public to further inform the development of OPA 18.7. The OP update project webpage, social media posts, and emails included a link to the questionnaire. It included questions on employment lands, mixed use development, the four centres, and matters considered most important when evaluating Official Plan Amendments.

Stakeholder and Landowner Meetings

Stakeholder meetings with prescribed agencies (Metrolinx, York Region, School Boards, Alectra and TRCA) took place in October/November 2022. Likewise, a landowner meeting was held on November 29, 2022 to collect additional feedback from land owners in and adjacent to the Newkirk Local Centre. Similar to the workshop, an overview of the Key Directions for the area was provided and opportunities were given for participants to provide additional input. Focused follow-up meetings took place in March/April 2023 to discuss elements of the proposed policy direction for the Newkirk Local Centre.

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Key Feedback Received

The comments and feedback from surveys and workshop are synthesized in the two reports: [Phase 2: What We Heard – Centre-Specific Workshops Engagement Summary Report – July 2021](#) and [Phase 3 Batch 2: What We Heard – Employment and Intensification Areas Engagement Summary Report](#). Some of the key considerations include:

- General support for the proposed vision statement.
- While some participants felt that "affordable" required more explanation, others indicated that affordability could mean higher density and affordable rental housing is an important amenity to the area.
- There was a suggestion to build a parking garage to free up land for other uses near the GO station.
- There is a desire for truly mixed-use development, including retail, office, commercial and community uses, and residential.
- Participants suggested linear parks that are cohesive with the area and urban squares/plazas next to new buildings. There is an opportunity to integrate the new and existing community through public spaces.
- Participants also noted the importance of providing safe pedestrian and bike connectivity to the neighbourhoods and the GO station, as well as green and open spaces, German Mills Creek, transit, etc. within and from the study area. It was suggested that underpasses are needed to prevent the railway from being a barrier.

Draft OPA for Public Comment

An Official Plan Update Committee meeting was held on May 2, 2023 to provide a high level overview of the proposed OPA 18.7 for the Newkirk Local Centre. The Draft OPA 18.7 was posted to the City's website on May 11, 2023 for public review and comments. An in-person Open House was held on June 7, 2023 to allow members of the public to view information boards about each of the centre-specific OPAs, learn about the Comprehensive Zoning By-law project and speak to staff directly.

City staff will continue to monitor and analyze feedback received on the amendment over the summer and will provide a full summary of the comments heard in a subsequent report to Council. Any comments received up until June 20, 2023, which coincides with today's Council Public Meeting associated with this OPA, will be synthesized in a forthcoming What We Heard Report.

Notification

OPA 18.7 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 May 11, 2023

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through the City's website, social media, and the Liberal newspaper, and re-issued on May 18, 2023 (see Appendix B).

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 in the fall of 2023. 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. OPA 18.7 supports all four of Council's Strategic Priorities by directing the majority of growth to strategic growth areas, such as this Local Centre. The proposed OPA also helps to create a strong sense of belonging by diversifying housing choice and enhancing the public realm in this Local Centre. With regards to getting around the City, the proposed OPA provides for a fine-grained street network, along with facilities for active transportation and transit expansion. Lastly, the proposed OPA promotes fiscal responsibility by coordinating the secondary planning process with infrastructure planning through the Parks Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and other important City initiatives.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this report is to request comments concerning a municipally-initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA 18.7) to the City's Official Plan (refer to Appendix A). The OPA seeks to add or modify policies related to the Newkirk Local Centre in the Official Plan. These changes will address several key directions contained in the City Plan Key Directions Report endorsed by Council in February 2022, and will implement provincial and regional policy directions regarding complete communities. 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: Amendment 18.7 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan
- Appendix B: Notice of Council Public Meeting issued on May 11th and 18th, 2023 in the Liberal

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPI.23.068 Draft OPA 18.7 Newkirk Local Centre.docx
Attachments:	- SRPI.23.068 - Appendix A - Draft OPA 18.7.pdf - SRPI.23.068 - Appendix B - Notice of Council Public Meeting.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 1, 2023

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

Maria Flores - May 31, 2023 - 9:17 AM

Kelvin Kwan - May 31, 2023 - 1:40 PM

Darlene Joslin - Jun 1, 2023 - 9:45 AM