

Consultation and Engagement Plan

Richmond Hill Comprehensive Zoning By-law

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1. Project Background

As per Council direction in 2017, the City of Richmond Hill (the City) is working to develop a new City-wide Comprehensive Zoning By-law (CZBL). The City currently has approximately 40 in-force 'parent' Zoning By-laws. A Zoning By-law is a legal document that implements the policies and vision of the Official Plan that regulates buildings, structures, and land use with specific standards of how development can occur on property in different city areas. Section 26(9) of The *Planning Act* requires that municipalities update their zoning by-laws to implement and conform with their respective Official Plans no later than three years after the Official Plan comes into effect. The CZBL must also consider the Provincial Policy Statement, Provincial Plans (including the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan), the *Conservation Authorities Act*, the *Oak Ridges Moraine Act*, and the *Greenbelt Act* when developing regulations. It should be noted that the Province recently brought a new Provincial Planning Statement into force, which will replace the current Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan in October of this year. So far, City Council has approved seven Official Plan Amendments as part of the latest Official Plan Review, with future updates planned to be brought forward to Council at a later date. The new by-law will need to conform with any in-effect provincial policy direction and legislation.

The City's current Zoning By-laws are in need of review and update to:

- Reflect current, emerging planning, development practices, and trends.
- Be fully accessible online in an interactive web-based format.
- Consolidate and simplify regulations to be more user-friendly, easy to understand, administer and enforce.

Reviewing the City's in-force Zoning By-laws and preparing a CZBL provides an opportunity to engage the public and key interest holders. A critical project component is the consultation and engagement program. As such, a Consultation and Engagement Plan to support the development of the CZBL is required to understand community needs.

The Consultation and Engagement Plan outlines a framework to inform the CZBL by:

- Identifying engagement objectives and audiences;
- Establishing the overall timeline and phasing of the engagement process;
- Identifying engagement tools to encourage broad participation;
- Identifying communications needs for the City to promote engagement activities;
- Establishing how engagement will be documented, reported on, and communicated back to participants; and,
- Proposing steps to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the engagement program.

2. Objectives

Project Objectives

The City of Richmond Hill has identified key objectives in providing recommendations for the CZBL, which include:

- Implementing the Official Plan Update and alignment with other municipal initiatives;
- Addressing specific zoning issues and topics as identified in Phase 1: Background Research (technical papers and studies);
- Consolidating/streamlining and updating of zones (i.e. permitted uses and standards);
- Improving clarity and consistency of language;
- Establishing appropriate structure, format, method and approach to zoning (i.e. Traditional Euclidean zoning, Community Planning Permit system, etc.); and,
- Creating an interactive, web-based Zoning By-law with appropriate functionality for internal and external users.

Engagement Objectives

The engagement objectives align with the City's Community Engagement Framework, which uses the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) engagement spectrum. The engagement levels incorporated in this Consultation and Engagement Plan include "Inform" and "Consult."

The engagement process aims to obtain input to inform and refine the draft CZBL and, ultimately, receive Council approval for the CZBL. The CZBL will be completed in two phases in alignment with the Official Plan Review and Approved Amendments and the City's Housing Accelerator Fund Commitments (HAF Action Plan).

Specific objectives of the engagement program are to:

- **Facilitate authentic and meaningful opportunities for engagement for Local Centres and Key Development Area and Neighbourhoods:**
 - Participants will be aware of how their feedback will be used
 - Participants will be aware of the scope of engagement
 - Participants understand what the CZBL is and what is being revised, updated and consulted upon
 - Participants will have an increased understanding of how the CZBL impacts the community
- **Engage broad members of the Richmond Hill community**
 - Efforts will be made to offer opportunities for all, especially underrepresented community groups, to participate in engagement activities.
- **Report back on key outcomes**
 - Participants will be able to see the results of engagement activities and how they shaped the CZBL.

3. Engagement Principles

Engagement opportunities will ensure that residents, businesses, developers and other interested parties can participate. The engagement approach aligns with the Four Principles of Engagement as outlined in Richmond Hill's Community Engagement Framework:

1. Easy and Flexible

We will work to understand the needs of the Richmond Hill community and use various techniques to encourage participation in the CZBL. Our engagement activities will be designed to be practical and easy for participants to understand. We will respond to changing participant needs, conditions, and expectations and look for opportunities to 'go to where the people are.'

2. Coordinated

We make the most of Richmond Hill participants' time by reviewing ways to document and share feedback collected. We consider opportunities to combine engagement efforts for multiple projects when possible and organize across departments to provide a unified experience for the public.

3. Accessible and Inclusive

We aim to remove barriers to participation, look for various ways to collect input and encourage dialogue. We work to understand Richmond Hill's diverse communities' needs, including but not limited to seniors, youth, newcomers, etc. and create plans that meet the requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

4. Meaningful

We design engagement activities to ensure a clear, transparent and shared understanding of objectives that provide meaningful engagement within Richmond Hill. We will engage when feedback informs and shapes the CZBL. We commit to sharing results and impacts with participants and the community where possible.

4. Engaging Indigenous Peoples

First Nations Rights Holders may have an interest in the comprehensive zoning by-law. The City will invite Rights Holders to participate in developing the CZBL through existing approved Indigenous relations processes. Urban Indigenous groups will also be engaged.

5. Involving City Staff

The City has established a Core Project Team comprised of representatives from the Development Zoning Team and other divisions, including Development Planning, Policy Planning, Building (Zoning), and Urban Design. The Core Project team provides strategic oversight of the CZBL project and guidance to ensure alignment with overall City directions. The Core Team meets regularly to review progress and deliverables.

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In addition, the City has established a Steering Committee and a Technical Advisory Team. The Steering Committee includes senior staff from the Planning and Building Services Department and the Infrastructure and Engineering Services Department, including the Commissioner of Planning and Building Services (Project Sponsor), Director of Development Planning, Director of Policy Planning, Director of Building and Director of Infrastructure Planning and Engineering Services. The Steering Committee provides strategic guidance and direction for the project and is responsible for making key decisions.

The Technical Advisory Committee brings together representatives from Buildings, Parks, Transportation Engineering, Operations, Communications, Strategic Initiatives, Economic Development, Community Services, Richmond Hill Centre, Fire Services, and IT/GIS services. The Technical Advisory Team provide technical expertise as required.

6. Consulting Interested and Affected Audiences

The following list outlines key audiences that we believe have an interest in or will be impacted by the outcomes of the process (in alphabetical order):

- **Businesses**, including business improvement areas, social innovation hubs, employers and professional associations
- **Council** - Richmond Hill's Mayor and Councillors
- **Environmental organizations**, including environmental advocacy groups, horticultural/gardening clubs, and other groups interested in environmental and climate change issues
- **External agencies**, including the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, utility companies, CN rail and Metrolinx and school boards
- **Government**, including upper levels of government and neighbouring municipalities (when applicable)
- **Indigenous Peoples**, including First Nations rights holders and urban Indigenous groups
- **Landowners and developers**, including groups that own land and development companies working or interested in working in Richmond Hill
- **Public**, including current residents and those who work in Richmond Hill
- **Transportation**, including York Region Transit and transportation groups active within the City

7. Framing the Conversation

The Comprehensive Zoning By-law impact everyone differently. A key component of the conversation will be helping our audience understand how the CZBL impacts them.

The following frequently asked questions will provide those who are interested with an understanding of the CZBL, why zoning by-laws are important, how the CZBL is being developed and how they can participate in the development of the CZBL:

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- **What is zoning?**
 - Zoning directs what types of uses can occur on a property and where through rules and regulations.
 - Zoning implements the Province's and the City's planning policies concerning growth and development.
- **What is a Zoning By-law?**
 - A Zoning By-law is a legal document regulating the use of a property and how development can occur on it, including land use, building and structure location, size, height and density, lot size, and parking.
- **How does a Zoning By-law impact me and my property?**
 - A Zoning By-law impacts what you can build on your property. It regulates aspects such as lot size and dimension, land use, height, setbacks, and density of structures, as well as landscaping and parking.
- **Why is the City of Richmond Hill developing a City-wide CZBL?**
 - The City is reviewing its zoning by-laws to update and implement its Official Plan and consolidate its approximately 40 parent zoning by-laws, which are outdated with current planning policies, trends, issues and standards. The City's goal is to create one City-wide CZBL that is up-to-date and easy for everyone to access, read, and interpret.
 - Key objectives include creating a comprehensive CZBL that is:
 - User-friendly and easy to understand, administer and enforce
 - Reflective of current and emerging planning and development practices and trends
 - Fully accessible online
- **How is the CZBL being developed?**
 - The CZBL will be developed in four phases:
 - Phase 1: Background research (complete)
 - Phase 2: Strategic Directions (current phase)
 - Phase 3: Drafting of the new CZBL
 - Phase 4: Approval and appeals of the new CZBL
 - The CZBL will consider applicable policies in the Regional Municipality of York Official Plan (YROP) and the City of Richmond Hill Official Plan (RHOP) and include any amendments that may involve Secondary Plans or exceptions to specific areas or properties. The YROP, RHOP, official plan amendments and CZBL regulations must not conflict with in-place Provincial policies and legislation, which include the *Planning Act*, Ontario *Heritage Act*, *Municipal Act*, *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act*, and the Provincial Policy Statement/Provincial Planning Statement (PPS).
- The project provides an opportunity to revisit the current zoning by-laws and create a better CZBL. The first phase of the CZBL will be for areas of the City including:
 - Neighbourhoods
 - Key Development Areas and Local Centres

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- Drafting of the CZBL will be completed in phases to align with the Official Plan Review and Approved Amendments and the City's Housing Accelerator Fund Commitments (HAF Action Plan).
- **What are Strategic Directions (SDR)?**
 - The Strategic Directions provide key recommendations to guide the drafting of the CZBL. The key recommendations are outlined in a series of Strategic Directions Reports (SDRs). The first set of the Strategic Directions Reports include:
 - **SDR 1: Framework, Design, Phasing, and Implementation** sets direction for the framework, design, phasing, and implementation of the new CZBL. SDR 1 provides background and information on the existing zoning by-laws that regulate zoning in the City; how zoning is formulated under Provincial, Regional, and City policies; identifies timing and transition regulations; and how the CZBL will address properties with non-complying standards and non-conforming land uses
 - **SDR 2: Zoning for the City of Richmond Hill's Neighbourhoods** sets the direction for the zone structure and types of regulations for areas designated as "Neighbourhood" under the Official Plan. The report identifies existing land use planning objectives and policies and gives initial direction on implementation.
 - **SDR 3: Zoning for the Yonge St & Carrville/16th KDA, Village LC, Oak Ridges LC, & Newkirk LC** sets the strategic direction for the zone structure and types of regulations for certain areas designated as Key Development Areas and Local Centres under the Official Plan. The report identifies existing land use planning objectives and policies and gives initial direction on implementation for the identified areas that are part of the initial phase of the CZBL.
 - **SDR 4: Zoning for Parking and Loading** sets the direction for parking and loading. The SDR identifies the existing land use planning objectives, policies, and applicable recommendations from the draft Parking and Transportation Demand Management Strategy, which are proposed to inform the CZBL.
 - Future SDRs will be developed after the OP Update is complete, with an accompanying consultation and engagement plan.
- **How can I participate in the Comprehensive Zoning By-law (CZBL) review?**
 - You can participate in the CZBL review by visiting the project [webpage](#), signing up for notifications, attending public consultation events or submitting questions or comments to zoning@richmondhill.ca.

8. The Engagement Approach and Process

Engagement will be delivered in two phases according to specific categories to inform the public of the revisions based on earlier consultations held by the City and to facilitate public participation to understand and support the CZBL. The following engagement phases are anticipated:

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- Comprehensive Zoning By-law Structure
- Neighbourhoods
- Leslie Street Institutional Area
- Yonge & Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area*
- Village Local Centre*
- Newkirk Local Centre*
- Oak Ridges Local Centre*
- Associated Parking & Loading

- Remaining Centres and Corridors
 - Key Development Areas
 - Local Development Areas
 - Regional Mixed Use Corridors
 - Local Mixed Use Corridors
- Employment Areas & Employment Corridors
- Greenway System
- Utility Corridor
- Associated Parking & Loading

**Inclusion of these areas depends on the resolution of appeals to the Richmond Hill Official Plan at the Ontario Land Tribunal.*

***Phase 2 is subject to change pending the Official Plan update.*

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The tables below include engagement elements for the Centres and Corridors, and Neighbourhoods. The engagement approaches identified opportunities to inform and consult as identified in the City's Community Engagement Framework. Future SDRs will have an accompanying consultation and engagement plan.

Detailed approaches will be developed for each event (including roles, responsibilities, communication tactics, etc.).

Phase 1 Engagement Activities

Engagement Activity	Description	Audience(s)
CZBL Strategic Directions Open House #1 (June 24, 2024)	<p>The purpose is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about the CZBL, the timelines for the different topics, and the purpose of creating one CZBL. • Respond to community questions and concerns. • Gather insights to refine the recommendations stemming from the Strategic Directions Reports. 	All audiences

Yonge St & Carrville/16th Key Development Area and Local Centres

Engagement Activity	Description	Audience(s)
Open House - Zoning for the Yonge St & Carrville/16th KDA, Village LC, Oak Ridges LC, & Newkirk (virtual)	<p>The purpose is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about the CZBL, the timelines for the different topics, and the objective of creating one CZBL. • Share feedback received to date on the KDA and LCs. • Respond to questions and concerns. 	All audiences
Statutory Public Meeting – Draft Zoning By-laws for one KDA and three LCs (in person)	The draft of the Zoning By-law relating to the KDA and LCs will be presented to Council.	All audiences
Statutory Public Meeting #2 – CZBL relating to the KDA and LCs (in-person)	It is expected that there may be further changes to the By-law as a result of the Statutory Public Meeting and Open House. If the changes are significant, the City will hold an additional Statutory Public Meeting in accordance with the <i>Planning Act</i> . The updated by-laws relating to the KDA and three LCs will be presented to Council.	Council Public

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Engagement Activity	Description	Audience(s)
External agencies meetings (virtual as needed)	External agencies will be engaged throughout the process as needed to inform the proposed zoning by-laws relating to the KDA and three LCs.	External Agencies
Landowner and developer meetings (virtual as needed)	Landowner and developer meetings will be held throughout the process by City staff if requested.	Landowners

Neighbourhood Zoning By-law

Engagement Activity	Description	Audience(s)
Neighbourhoods Workshops (2-3 virtual)	Workshops will be held to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about the CZBL, the timelines for the different topics, and the objective of creating one CZBL. • Share the SDs and preliminary directions for neighbourhoods. • Share what we learned during the strategic directions phase. • Respond to questions and concerns. • Gather insights on neighbourhood character. 	All audience
Open House - Draft of New CZBL relating to Neighbourhoods (in-person)	The purpose is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the initial draft of the Zoning By-law relating to Neighbourhoods. • Gather insights to refine the draft of the Zoning By-laws. • Respond to questions and concerns. 	All audiences
External agencies meetings (virtual as needed)	External agencies will be engaged as needed throughout the process to inform the proposed zoning by-law relating to neighbourhoods.	External Agencies
Landowner and developer meetings (virtual as needed)	Landowner and developer meetings will be held throughout the process by City staff if requested.	Landowners
Statutory Public Meeting – CZBL relating to the Neighbourhoods (in person)	The By-laws relating to neighbourhoods will be presented to Council.	Council Public

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Reporting

Event summaries will be prepared following each type of engagement activity (e.g., one per event to ensure that feedback provided by residents, interested parties, and Indigenous People is clearly and accurately documented. Summaries will outline the key themes that emerged from the input obtained.

We recommended that the engagement summaries be available on the City's website once finalized to show how feedback was considered. Each summary will be formatted to meet the requirements of the *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Communication Activities

The following ongoing City of Richmond Hill communication activities will help to ensure community members are aware of the CZBL project and the opportunities to participate.

- **Zone Richmond Hill Webpage** – The City's website should continue to have a dedicated project presence as a landing spot for all information related to the project. The project webpage would continue to communicate essential details about the project, provide access to project documents, facilitate public involvement online, and share upcoming event details. Subscribers to the webpage will be notified when the page is updated. Richmond Hill's homepage will be used to promote public initiatives.
- **City of Richmond Hill Social Media** – The City's social media channels can be used to promote opportunities to participate. Given the nature of this project, members of the public must be aware of the opportunity to participate in the update – through in-person or online engagement. The City's established X and Facebook accounts are recommended to be used to leverage the established followers.
- **Project Interested Party list** – Throughout the project, interested community members can sign up for updates through the webpage. This list will be used to communicate directly with community members who sign up for news on the CZBL. Additionally, interested parties can reach out by email or mail.
- **Other Communication Channels** - Promotional tools such as outdoor ad signs, posters, digital ad campaigns (paid), LED signs/LCD screens in community centres, and roll-up banners are examples of other communication tools the City can use.

9. Performance Measures

Throughout the project, it will be important to gauge the effectiveness of the Consultation and Engagement Plan periodically. The following are proposed indicators for assessing the effectiveness of engagement and related communications activities and will be discussed for each event in a report summary:

- Level of community interest and awareness regarding the project, measured by attendance at meetings, media coverage, etc.;
- Number of unique visitors on the project webpage;
- Number of inquiries received, both online and in-person, from interested residents/participants regarding the CZBL consultation topics;
- Number of new subscribers to the ZoneRH webpage; and,
- Number of Notification lists/interested parties.