

Town of Fort Erie Official Plan Conformity and 10-Year Update

Introduction

The Town of Fort Erie (Town) has initiated an Official Plan Conformity and 10-Year Update to guide growth towards the 2051 planning horizon (the “Official Plan Review”). Fort Erie is expected to grow by 48,050 people and 18,430 jobs during this time period. An Official Plan establishes policies to manage growth and change over the planning horizon, while having regard for matters of provincial interest.

The Town's existing Official Plan, initially adopted in 2006, has been subject to several amendments in response to provincial land use planning policy, including *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* plan for growth and development. The updated Official Plan will need to conform to provincial plans and policies, including the *2020 Provincial Policy Statement* and recent changes to the *Planning Act*.

Further, Niagara Region recently approved a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE), that identified additional lands within the Town to accommodate projected growth. A key aspect of the Official Plan Review will involve developing policies to appropriately manage future growth on these lands.

To date, the Town has completed several Master Plans and Studies. These comprehensive undertakings, including the Active Transportation Master Plan, the Housing Needs Study and Housing Action Strategy, function as essential inputs to inform the upcoming updates to the Official Plan.

Official Plan Review Description

The objective of the Official Plan Review is to achieve conformity with provincial legislation, plans and policies, as well as conforming to the recently adopted Niagara Region Official Plan. The Official Plan Review will also be considerate of local land use planning priorities and community aspirations. The following preliminary themes have been identified on this basis:

- Health and Social Wellbeing
- Population and Employment Dynamics
- Employment Areas and Lands
- Housing
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action
- Anticipated Settlement Expansion
- Strategic Land Use Designations
- Strategies for Increasing Density
- Safeguarding Cultural Heritage

The Official Plan will apply all lands within the Town's municipal jurisdiction.

A key component of this Official Plan Review is consultation with regulatory agencies, conservation authorities, stakeholders and Indigenous Nations. The Town is committed to conducting a wide range of engagement activities throughout the duration of the Official Plan Review. Engagement is pivotal in developing an Official Plan that encompasses broad

participation and receives Council's endorsement for its overarching objectives. This process enables the community and stakeholders to understand how the Official Plan will shape the future with well-defined and informed policies and objectives.

Anticipated Timeline and Next Steps

The Town anticipates completing the Official Plan update by November 2024.

- Phase 1: Initiation & Background Research & Reporting – November 2023
- Phase 2: Draft Official Plan Development – March 2024
- Phase 3: Recommended Draft Official Plan & Adoption – July 2024
- Phase 4: Approval Authority Process – November 2024

Additional Information

As the update progresses, a webpage will be set up on the Town's engagement portal, *Let's Talk Fort Erie* (<https://letstalk.forterie.ca/>). As more information becomes available, including a Study description and frequently asked questions (FAQ), it will be posted on the Study's webpage.

Contact Information

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