

Town of Whitby Staff Report

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Report Title: **Envision Durham – Draft Regional Official Plan**

Report to: **Committee of the Whole**

Date of meeting: March 6, 2023

Report Number: **PDP 10-23**

Department(s) Responsible:

Planning and Development Department
(Planning Services)

Submitted by:

R. Saunders, Commissioner of Planning
and Development

**Acknowledged by M. Gaskell, Chief
Administrative Officer**

For additional information, contact:

Lori Tesolin, MCIP, RPP

Principal Planner, Policy and Heritage
Planning: 905.444.2858

1. Recommendation:

1. That Report PDP 10-23 be endorsed as the Town's comments on the Envision Durham draft Regional Official Plan; and,
2. That the Clerk forward a copy of Report PDP 10-23 to the Durham Region Planning and Economic Development Department and the Durham area municipalities.

2. Highlights:

- The Region of Durham is seeking comments by April 3, 2023 on the draft new [Envision Durham Regional Official Plan \(ROP\)](#).
- The new ROP will repeal and replace the existing Durham ROP and includes a new planning horizon to 2051. The new ROP reflects the current requirements of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, other related Provincial policy and legislation, and also considers consultation for Envision Durham undertaken by the Region to date.

- The Region is forecasting a total 1,300,000 population and 460,000 jobs across Durham by 2051.
- For the Town of Whitby, the Region has forecasted:
 - 176,360 in population and 63,760 jobs to 2031, and
 - 244,890 in population and 95,210 jobs to 2051.
- The Region has allocated 39,260 new housing units by 2051 to Whitby, at a 50 per cent Intensification Rate. The Intensification Rate requires 50 per cent of new units to be developed within Strategic Growth Areas (SGA's) within Whitby, such as Regional Centres, Rapid Transit Corridors, Regional Corridors and the Whitby GO Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA), as delineated on draft [Map 1 – Regional Structure: Urban and Rural Systems](#). It also includes additional units in existing lower density neighbourhoods and elsewhere within the built-up area as defined by the Province.
- Whitby can generally accommodate the proposed unit allocation and 50 per cent intensification rate. The Town's Official Plan was updated in 2018 and identifies Centres and Intensification Areas that align with the Region's Strategic Growth Areas. Other more "gentle intensification" would be accommodated elsewhere within the built-up area.
- The Region is recommending a Minimum Transit Supportive Density Target of 150 people and jobs per hectare (P&J/ha) for Regional Centres located along Rapid Transit Corridors.
- Staff request a lower target of 100 – 150 P&J/ha, for Regional Centres located along Rapid Transit Corridors, to allow more flexibility and to recognize local circumstances where higher targets are not always appropriate nor achievable, such as in the historic area of the Downtown Whitby Regional Centre located at the intersection of Brock Street and Highway 2.
- The Region adopted [Regional Official Plan Amendment \(ROPA\) 186](#) in December 2021, to delineate and provide policies for Protected Major Transit Stations Area (PTMSA), including the Whitby GO PTMSA. Although ROPA 186 is still awaiting approval by the Minister, it has been included in the draft new ROP.
- Staff continue to request that the Town-owned Victoria Fields lands at the southeast quadrant of Gordon Street and Victoria Street be excluded from the Region's proposed Whitby GO PMTSA boundary, as the inclusion of these lands will artificially increase required densities elsewhere in the PMTSA to achieve the overall target of 150 P&J/ha.

- The Region is recommending approximately 500 hectares of Settlement Area Boundary Expansions (SABEs) generally within north Whitby (Brooklin), including both Community Area and Employment Area SABEs, in locations westwards towards Lakeridge Road and Highway 407, and between Brooklin and Columbus at the Whitby/Oshawa Border, as delineated on draft [Map 1 – Regional Structure: Urban and Rural Systems](#).
- Of the 500 hectares of SABEs in Whitby, the Region is recommending approximately 200 hectares of new Employment Area SABEs, within the vicinity of Highway 407, west of Country Lane to Lakeridge Road, and located within the vicinity of Rossland Road and Taunton Road, between Lakeridge Road and Highway 412.
- Staff acknowledge the recommended amount of land required for SABEs within Whitby resulting from Regional Council's adoption of Scenario 2a. The SABEs include previously 'deferred' lands located within the Brooklin Community Secondary Plan (Refer to Whitby [Official Plan Schedule A, Lands Identified as D3](#), lands subject to existing ROP policy 14.13.7).
- Staff support the draft ROP policy to establish a new Regional Hospital located at Highway 407 and Highway 412 in the Town of Whitby (Draft ROP policy 3.3.20) within the new Employment Area SABEs.
- As part of the ROP process, Regional Council endorsed the conversion from Employment Areas to Community Areas for two sites within Whitby, which would permit residential and mixed uses for lands generally located at Victoria St. and Montecorte Street, as well as at Anderson Street, south of Winchester Road. Since the Regional Council decision in December 2022, Regional staff have received two (2) additional conversion requests within Whitby, located at Country Lane near Highway 407 and at Cochrane Street near Highway 407.
- Staff acknowledge the Regional Council decision for certain Employment Area conversion requests within Whitby. The addition of new Employment Areas within the SABEs will offset the loss of the existing Employment Area lands through conversion. Any further conversions should be compensated elsewhere to continue to protect for enough land within Whitby for local job creation.
- The draft new ROP provides updates to the [Regional Natural Heritage Systems Map](#). Staff are generally supportive and are working with Regional staff to ensure consistency and to resolve any discrepancies amongst data sources being used.
- The draft new ROP provides updates to the Regional Rural System mapping. Staff are generally supportive of the Rural System policies that would protect the agricultural land base over the long term, including consideration of criteria for establishing agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses.

- Staff support advancing the draft new ROP as soon as possible, so that area municipalities can begin conformity exercises. Whitby Planning staff will commence an update of the Town Official Plan to conform to and implement the new ROP, once the Region's updated Official Plan is approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Town's conformity exercise will include, amongst other matters, updating the Brooklin Community Secondary Plan to include the SABEs.

3. Background:

On May 2, 2018, Regional Council authorized commencement of the Envision Durham Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of the Regional Official Plan (ROP). The outcome of the MCR is full replacement of the current ROP. It will provide an updated planning vision for the Region up to 2051. Local area municipal Official Plans must conform to the updated ROP.

Town of Whitby Planning staff, in collaboration with staff from other departments, submitted comments to Durham Region Planning staff on the following six [Envision Durham Discussion Papers](#):

- Agriculture and Rural System Discussion Paper (released March 5, 2019);
- Climate Change and Sustainability Discussion Paper (released May 7, 2019);
- Growth Management – Urban System Discussion Paper (released June 4, 2019);
- Environment and Greenlands System Discussion Paper (released September 3, 2019);
- Transportation System Discussion Paper (released October 1, 2019); and,
- Housing Policy Planning Discussion paper (released December 3, 2019).

Town of Whitby Planning staff have also worked with Regional staff to provide data and feedback on the Region's related growth studies to inform the Land Needs Assessment, Natural Heritage System mapping, Agricultural System mapping, and requests for Employment Area Conversions and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions.

Comments have previously been forwarded to the Region, following Whitby Council's consideration of the following Town of Whitby staff reports:

- [Report PL 02-21 – Envision Durham Employment Area Conversion Requests](#)
- [Report PL 58-21 - Proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment for Protected Major Transit Station Areas \(PMTSA\)](#)
- [Report PL 37-21 – Envision Durham Proposed Policy Directions](#)
- [Report PL -71-21 – Envision Durham Land Needs Assessment Technical Reports](#)
- [Report PDP 23-22 – Envision Durham Land Needs Assessment Alternative Scenarios](#)

On March 6, 2023, the Region will host an in-person Public Open House, in addition to a Statutory Public Meeting under the *Planning Act* on March 7.

4. Discussion:

The [draft Envision Durham Regional Official Plan](#) (ROP) will repeal and replace the Region's existing Official Plan and has a new planning horizon to 2051, as required by the Growth Plan.

The draft new ROP provides policies and strategic directions to guide future growth, infrastructure and service delivery, land use planning, and development related matters. The draft ROP conforms to Provincial Plans, has regard to matters of Provincial interest, is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and has a planning horizon to 2051.

The draft new ROP forecasts Durham Region's growth to 1.3 million residents and 460,000 jobs by 2051. This represents an almost doubling of the Region's 2021 population of nearly 725,000, and more than double its current estimate of 197,000 jobs.

Population, household, and employment allocations to 2051 are provided for each area municipality, as well as intensification targets, as prescribed by the provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan).

Population and Employment forecasts for Whitby compared to the total for the Region include:

Municipality	2021	2031	2051
Whitby			
Total Population	143,750	176,360	244,890
Employment	48,730	63,760	95,210
Durham Region			
Total Population	723,270	907,290	1,300,000
Employment	241,660	307,430	460,000

The draft new ROP categorizes Durham Region's land use structure into four land use systems:

- Urban System;
- Rural System;
- Greenlands System; and
- Transportation System

Urban System

The Urban System is comprised of Community Areas (formerly referred to as Living Areas), which include emerging centres and corridors, as well as established and developing neighbourhoods. It also includes Employment Areas, where residential uses are not permitted. (Refer to ROP draft [Map 1 – Regional Structure: Urban and Rural Systems](#).)

Durham's Urban System is where the majority of future growth is directed. The draft Envision Durham ROP requires:

- a minimum 15-year supply of land through residential intensification and redevelopment on lands available within Settlement Areas;
- a minimum of 50 per cent of all new residential units across the Region to be provided through intensification in Strategic Growth Areas, and elsewhere within the Built Boundary as defined by the Province; and
- a job to population ratio of 50 per cent (one job for every two residents).

The draft new ROP commits to ensuring that the necessary regional services and infrastructure are in place, and to plan for and implement services and infrastructure to enable a minimum 50 per cent annual rate of intensification regionwide.

Intensification means the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists. Intensification occurs within the 'built boundary' of the Urban Area, mainly within Strategic Growth areas, and more minimally in other areas like existing neighbourhoods.

Strategic Growth Areas form a hierarchy of areas that concentrate population growth and a mix of uses along transit networks. They include Urban Growth Centres (Pickering and Oshawa only), Regional Centres, Regional Transit Corridors, Regional Corridors, and Protected Major Transit Station Areas. Intensification can also be achieved through additional dwelling units in existing lower density neighbourhoods. These Strategic Growth Areas are delineated in the draft new ROP on [Map 1 – Regional Structure: Urban and Rural Systems](#). (Refer to Attachment #1 for a Map 1 excerpt for Whitby.)

The draft new ROP proposes the following residential development and intensification objectives for Whitby to 2051:

- 39,260 new housing units, out of a regional total of 225,810 (Whitby is fourth after Pickering, Ajax and Clarington);
- 19,440 units targeted for intensification in Strategic Growth Areas, resulting in a 50 per cent intensification rate. (Similar to others, except for Ajax – 86 per cent, Brock – 20 per cent, and Clarington and Pickering – 40 per cent); and,
- 17 per cent of the Region's intensification allocation (fourth after Ajax – 25 per cent Oshawa – 20 per cent and Pickering – 19 per cent)

The Region is also recommending a Minimum Transit Supportive Density Target of people and jobs per gross hectare (P&J/ha), for Strategic Growth Areas, as follows:

Strategic Growth Area	Location in Whitby	Minimum Transit Supportive Density Target (P&J/ha)
Urban Growth Centre	N/A (Oshawa and Pickering only)	200
Regional Centres located along Rapid Transit Corridors	Downtown Whitby	150
Regional Centres not located along Rapid Transit Corridors	Downtown Brooklin Brock and Taunton	110 - 150
Protected Major Transit Station Areas	Whitby GO Station	150
Rapid Transit Corridors	Highway 2	150

The density targets apply to the entirety of the Strategic Growth Area boundary, and not to individual parcels.

Comments:

Whitby can generally accommodate the proposed unit allocation and 50 per cent intensification rate within these Strategic Growth Areas. The Town's Official Plan was updated in 2018 and identifies Major Central Areas on [Schedule A](#), Intensification Areas and Corridors on [Schedule B](#), as well as the Whitby GO Major Transit Station Area, which generally aligns with the Region's draft Strategic Growth Areas. Other more "gentle intensification" would be accommodated elsewhere within the built-up area.

Staff request that the Region consider greater flexibility for Regional Centres, such as Downtown Whitby, to better recognize local circumstances where high P&J/ha targets are not always appropriate nor achievable in historic areas.

Protected Major Transit Station Areas

The Region adopted ROPA 186 in December 2021, to delineate and provide policies for Protected Major Transit Stations Area (PTMSA). ROPA 186 has not yet been approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and may be reviewed as part of the draft Envision Durham ROP.

ROPA 186 delineates the Whitby GO PTMSA as identified in the Region's [Notice of Adoption for ROPA 186](#). (Refer to Attachment #2 for an excerpt of the Whitby GO PTMSA boundary delineation.)

The ROPA 186 PTMSA boundaries and policies are included in the draft new ROP. Policies that enable and encourage inclusionary zoning for affordable housing in new developments, development above rail corridors and shared and/or reduced parking, are included, along with sustainable transportation and urban design policies.

The Nordeagle Phase 1 lands (refer to Whitby Official Plan exception policy 4.7.5.2) are included within the new Whitby GO PTMSA boundary.

Comments:

Staff continue to request that the Town-owned Victoria Fields at the southeast quadrant of Gordon Street and Victoria Street be excluded from the Region's proposed Whitby GO PMTSA boundary as the inclusion of these lands will artificially increase required densities elsewhere to achieve the overall target of 150 P&J/ha.

Other Nodes and Corridors:

The Urban System section of the draft ROP includes policies related to other nodes and corridors including Regional Corridors, Waterfront Places, and Local Centres. It also includes Designated Greenfield Areas, which are located outside of the delineated built-up area. Most policies are enabling, and/or align with the updated Town of Whitby Official Plan.

Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

The draft ROP incorporates the extent and location of proposed Settlement Area Boundary Expansions (SABEs) that are required to accommodate the Region's population and employment forecasts to 2051, as detailed in the Regional [Report #2022-INFO-91](#) released on November 10, 2022.

The proposed locations for SABEs and growth allocations have been incorporated into the draft Envision Durham ROP, with no changes made to what was released in November 2022.

The draft ROP recommends approximately 500 hectares of SABEs within Whitby, in locations surrounding Lakeridge Road and Highway 407, and between Brooklin and Columbus at the Whitby/Oshawa Border (Refer to Attachment #1).

The amount of SABEs required has been informed by [Regional Council adoption of Scenario 2a](#) of the Region's Land Needs Assessment Alternative Scenarios Growth Management Study.

The table below summarizes the amount of proposed draft Community Area and Employment Area SABEs within Whitby, compared to the Regional total.

Municipality	Community Area SABEs	Employment Area SABEs
Whitby	294 hectares (727 acres)	203 hectares (502 acres)
Durham Region	2,499 hectares (6,176 acres)	1,223 hectares (3,084 acres)

The total SABEs in Whitby account for 93% of available “Whitebelt” lands within the municipality. The term “Whitebelt” refers to lands not yet included within the Settlement Area Boundary, however, located outside of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt Plan areas. There are no proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan Area within Whitby.

Of the 500 hectares of SABEs in Whitby, the Region is recommending approximately 200 hectares of new Employment Area SABEs, within the vicinity of Highway 407, west of Country Lane to Lakeridge Road, and located within the vicinity of Rossland Road and Taunton Road, east of Lakeridge Road and west of Highway 412.

The future hospital site is proposed at the northeast corner of Winchester Road West (Highway 7) and Lake Ridge Road, within the Employment Area SABE.

Comments:

Staff acknowledge the amount of land required for SABEs within Whitby resulting from Regional Council’s adoption of Scenario 2a. Staff support the Regional Council resolution to include previously ‘deferred’ lands located within the Brooklin Community Secondary Plan (Refer to [Whitby Official Plan – Schedule A Lands Identified as D3](#), lands subject to existing ROP policy 14.13.7).

Staff support the draft ROP policy to establish a new regional hospital located at Highway 407 and Highway 412 in the Town of Whitby (Draft ROP policy 3.3.20) within the new Employment Area SABE.

Employment Areas and Conversions

Employment Areas form part of the Urban System and are typically situated along or near major transportation corridors with separation and buffering from adjacent Community Areas. General Industrial (e.g., heavy manufacturing) and Prestige Industrial (e.g., business parks, research labs) land uses are directed to locate within designated Employment Areas. Residential uses are not permitted.

In 2021, Regional Council considered a report regarding Employment Area Conversion Requests (Regional Report: #2021-P-25 [Envision Durham – Recommendations on Employment Area Conversion Requests](#)), which would convert Employment Area lands to Community Area lands, thereby permitting residential and other uses. There were nine (9) conversion requests within Whitby, two of which were endorsed through the [Regional Council Decision](#) at its meeting on December 22, 2022.

The two Employment Area Conversions within Whitby are reflected in the draft new ROP for lands located at Victoria Street and Montecorte Street (Request # CNR-06), as well as at Anderson Street, south of Winchester Road (Request # CNR-029). Refer to Attachment #1.

Since the Regional Council decision, Regional staff have received two (2) additional conversion requests for lands within Whitby, located at Country Lane near Highway 407 and at Cochrane Street near Highway 407, as part of the Region's consideration of SABEs.

Comments:

Whitby Planning staff acknowledge the previous two Employment Area conversions within Whitby resulting from Regional Council's decision. The addition of 203 hectares (502 acres) of new Employment Areas within the SABEs in Whitby will offset the loss of those existing Employment Area lands through conversion. Any further conversions should be compensated elsewhere to continue to protect for enough land within in Whitby for local job creation.

Regional Planning staff's previous general comments and recommendations outlined in their Report [#2021-P-25](#), to protect and maintain the supply of Employment Areas over the long-term, in proximity to 400 series highways, and where a variety of parcel sizes can accommodate a full range and type of Employment Area uses, would also apply to the two new conversion requests.

Housing

Several policies are included in the draft new ROP to align with Provincial direction to support a range of housing options, including affordable housing.

Staff are generally supportive. However, the following comments are offered:

Draft ROP Policy	Comment
3.1.5) Encourage the development of microhomes where appropriate. 3.1.6) Require microhomes to comply with the health and safety requirements of Ontario's Building Code, area municipal zoning and other local bylaws.	Clarify why it is necessary to include and define the term "microhomes" when Provincial Bill 23 allows additional dwelling units in accessory structures.
3.1.14) Require area municipalities to adopt policies and zoning by-law provisions that authorize additional residential units in new	Additional dwelling units should be limited to Urban Areas (i.e., "urban residential land" as defined by Bill 23)

and existing residential development, redevelopment and intensification, including (a, b, c...) d) encourage municipalities to remove parking space requirements for additional residential units in areas intended to support existing and planned higher order transit service, including Major Transit Station Areas and other Strategic Growth Areas.	and parking requirements should not be removed in their entirety. Instead, municipalities should support reduced parking rates, where deemed appropriate and when justified as part of a Traffic Impact Study. This comment applies to policies throughout the draft ROP where reduced parking is recommended.
<p>3.1.20 Require that at least at least 25% of all new residential units produced throughout the region, to be affordable to low and moderate income households.</p> <p>3.1.21 Require that at least at least 35% of all new residential units created in Strategic Growth Areas, to be affordable to low and moderate income households.</p>	Clarify how the required minimum targets for 25 and 35 percent of new residential units to be affordable housing would be enforced/ implemented over the long term.

Economic Development

Policies are included in the draft ROP to support general economic development objectives related to job creation and local economic spin offs.

Staff are generally supportive. However, the following comments are offered:

Draft ROP Policy	Comment
2.1.11) Encourage the province to invest in highway and rapid transit infrastructure to support regional economic growth and employment opportunities through measures including (a, b, c...) d) supporting implementation of Rapid Transit Corridors on the Highway 2 and Simcoe Street corridors, in accordance with Section 5.2.	While the implementation of Rapid Transit Corridors on Highway 2 may support general economic development objectives, the Region should recognize the varying local circumstances along this Rapid Transit Corridor, and not negatively impact the unique heritage character of Downtown Whitby.
3.1.8) Support the conversion and adaptive reuse, where feasible, of industrial or commercial buildings, or portions thereof, into residential units.	While providing more housing is an important goal of the ROP, it should not come at the expense of building complete communities that also offer industrial and commercial uses that provide important jobs, goods and services.

Climate Change and Sustainability

Staff are pleased to see, and are generally supportive of, the draft ROP policies for sustainability and climate change related to encouraging more green infrastructure, energy efficiency and low impact development.

Staff offer the following comments:

Draft ROP Policy	Comment
3.2.19) Encourage area municipalities to: a) establish urban and rural tree canopy targets	It is recommended that the Region encourage a minimum target for urban tree canopy and encourage area municipalities to update or develop urban forest management plans.

Rural System

The Rural System is located outside of settlement areas. While agriculture is the predominant land use, the Rural System also houses a small rural population, aggregate extraction, cemeteries, large and small businesses, recreational uses, major open space and natural heritage areas.

Policies are included in the draft ROP regarding Agricultural, Prime Agricultural, Agriculture-related and On-farm Diversified uses, rural lot creation and severances, Rural Settlements (i.e., Hamlets) and Aggregate Resources, consistent with the updated Provincial Policy Statement. The intent is to protect prime agricultural areas over the long-term, allow minor infilling of existing hamlets, support thriving and diverse agricultural uses in the rural area, and restrict non-agricultural uses and fragmentation of the agricultural land base (e.g., not allow severances for agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses).

[Map 1 – Regional Structure: Urban and Rural Systems](#) identifies various components of the Rural System including Hamlets, Country Residential Subdivisions, and Prime Agricultural Areas in Whitby.

Through the Envision Durham process, the Region has reviewed and made certain refinements to the Provincial Agricultural System mapping. For example, lands in the vicinity of the Royal Ashburn golf course appear to have been identified as Major Open Space rather than Prime Agricultural.

Staff are generally supportive of the Rural System policies that would protect the agricultural land base over the long term, including consideration of criteria for

establishing agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses. The following additional comments are offered.

- The Rural Settlement Areas (i.e., Hamlets) identified on Map 1 appears to reflect the minor rounding of the Hamlets in Whitby completed through the Town's Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt conformity exercises. Further rounding out of Hamlets is no longer permitted (refer to draft ROP policy 6.5.5).
- [Map 4 – Aggregate Resources](#) has been updated to exclude aggregate resources within the urban area of Whitby, as previously requested by staff, and consistent with mapping in other area municipalities.
- Planning Staff will continue to work with Regional staff as needed, regarding other minor refinements to mapping of the Rural System.

Greenlands System

The Region's Greenlands System is comprised of the Major Open Space Areas, Oak Ridges Moraine Areas and Waterfront Areas, and links the region's waterfronts with the Oak Ridges Moraine through the connecting valley systems (including the protected Urban River Valleys of the Greenbelt Plan).

The draft ROP [Map 2 – Greenland Systems](#) also reflects mapping contained in existing Provincial Plans, such as the Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, as well as other features and functions, such as Water Resources features, Key Hydrologic features, Source Water Protection, and Aquifer Vulnerability. The Greenlands System mapping implements various provincial policy directions.

The draft new ROP provides updates to the [Regional Natural Heritage Systems Map](#). There are no proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan area within Whitby.

The Town of Whitby Official Plan was updated in 2018 and already includes mapping and policies that align with the draft ROP. Additionally, the draft ROP provides flexibility for refinement by area municipalities based on local circumstances.

Comments:

Staff are generally supportive of the Greenlands System policies, and will continue to work with Regional staff regarding minor changes to their Natural Heritage System and other mapping, due to minor data discrepancies with the mapping in the Town of Whitby Official Plan, including [Schedule C and Appendix 1](#), and other sources.

Transportation System

The Transportation System in Durham includes roads, railways, sidewalks, trails, public transit, commuter and other parking lots, harbours, marinas and airports. Staff are generally supportive and will continue to work with Regional staff on minor comments.

The draft ROP [Map 3 – Transportation](#) includes the following: Transit Priority Network, (major) Road Network, Strategic Goods Movements, Active Transportation Network and Regional Right of Way requirements. The transportation policies and mapping of the ROP were recently updated through ROPA 171 to reflect the Region's updated Transportation Master Plan, and the draft ROP is consistent with these recent changes. The Whitby Official Plan was also recently updated through OPA 123 to conform to ROPA 171.

The new ROP policies focus on Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and transit supportive design, as well as active transportation networks, and prioritizing investments that advance active transportation, transit, goods movement and overall safety.

Comments:

Staff generally support the objectives and goals of the draft ROP. The Town has already, or is in the process of, implementing policies similar to those identified.

Staff also generally support the proposed policies for focusing intensification along transit networks and Regional corridors to improve Transit Oriented Development and reduce dependency on individual vehicles. The Town of Whitby Official Plan currently includes several policies to support implementation.

Staff request that the Region continue to work with Town staff on future plans for the Rapid Transit Corridor along Highway 2, to recognize, plan for, and respect unique local circumstances, such as historic Downtown Whitby.

5. Communication and Public Engagement:

Public engagement on Envision Durham is the responsibility of the Region of Durham. On March 6, 2023, the Region will host an in-person Public Open House, in addition to a Statutory Public Meeting under the *Planning Act* on March 7.

Town staff have participated in area municipal working group meetings, attended public engagement sessions hosted by the Region and responded to questions from public inquires where possible, or have otherwise directed inquiries to Regional Planning staff.

6. Input from Departments/Sources:

Input has been received from staff in the Planning and Development Department (Planning Services and Engineering Services), Strategic Initiatives and Community Services. The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority has also been engaged by the Region over the course of the Envision Durham project.

7. Strategic Priorities:

The comments align with the Town's strategic priorities to be a high performing, innovative, effective and efficient organization, as well as goals for affordability and sustainability.

8. Attachments:

Attachment #1 – Excerpt Map 1. Regional Structure – Urban & Rural Systems: Whitby
Attachment #2 – Excerpt ROPA 186 – Protected Major Transit Station Areas: Whitby
GO Station