

7

AURORA 2C LANDS (REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 53)

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

1. The recommendations contained in the following report dated November 29, 2007, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services, be adopted, and
2. The following Local Municipal Impact be noted in addition to the comments set out in section 6 of this clause:

“The Town of Aurora, after completing a comprehensive planning review, has established that the current Regional 2031 population exercise has identified a population of 71,000 for 2031, for the Town of Aurora.”

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Commissioner of Planning be authorized to give Notice to adopt Amendment No. 53 to the Official Plan of the Region of York, as set out in *Attachment No. 1* to this report.
2. The Regional Solicitor be directed to proceed with the adopting bylaw for Regional Council’s consideration on January 24, 2008.
3. Regional staff continue to work with Town and other agency staff on the policies and schedules for the related secondary plan.
4. Regional staff be authorized to attend the Ontario Municipal Board in support of the Regional position, if necessary.

2. PURPOSE

This report recommends the adoption of Amendment No. 53 (ROPA 53) to the York Region Official Plan, which expands the Town of Aurora’s urban boundary by redesignating approximately 445 ha (1,100 acres)

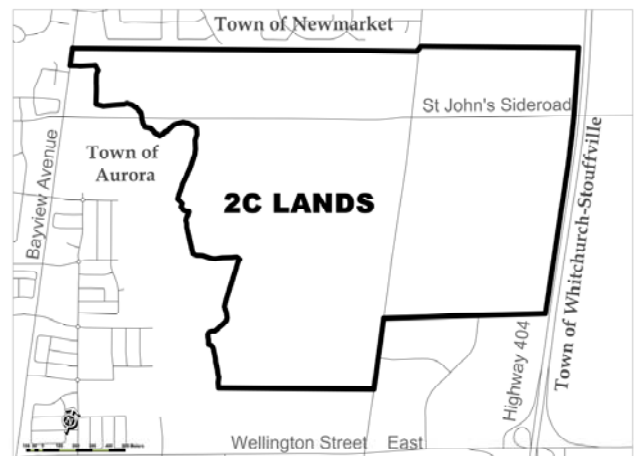


Figure 1

of land from “Rural Policy Area” to “Urban Area”, see *Attachment No. 1*.

3. BACKGROUND

The following provides the background of the Aurora 2C lands, details of the ROPA 53 Public Meeting, and comments from circulated agencies.

3.1 History of 2C Lands

In 1996 the Town completed a Growth Management Strategy which determined that extension of the Town’s urban boundary to include the 2C lands should be dealt with in subsequent 5 year Official Plan reviews. In 2002 the Town initiated a 5 year comprehensive review, then adopted its recommendations and requested York Region to process an Official Plan amendment to expand the Town’s urban area to include the 2C lands. In December 2003 the Provincial Minister introduced a Minister’s Zoning Order for the Greenbelt and the ROPA for the 2C lands was put on hold awaiting the final version of the Greenbelt Plan, which has now been proclaimed.

3.1.1 Ontario Municipal Board Hearing

On June 22, 2005 the Ontario Municipal Board (“Board”) held a pre-hearing conference for two site specific appeals within the 2C lands and ordered that development should proceed in a comprehensive manner. Minutes of Settlement were reached between the appellants, Town and Region, and as part of the settlement the Region agreed to process a ROPA for the 2C lands.

3.2 Public Meeting held January 10, 2007

The Public Meeting for ROPA 53 was held on January 10, 2007 at which time staff received 9 written requests from individuals requesting to be kept informed of the decision and one written comment objecting to the loss of a hardwood forest located on the west side of Leslie Street. A copy of this report has been provided to persons noted above, and a copy of the Notice of adoption will be provided to them subsequent to Regional Council’s decision. A copy of the planning report presented at the Public meeting and subsequently adopted by Regional council forms *Attachment No. 2* to this report. In respect to the issue of preserving the woodlot, a Natural Heritage Evaluation has included the woodlot and a 30 metre buffer in the Natural Heritage System for the 2C lands.

Subsequent to the Public Meeting, Regional and Town staff met with staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal and resolved some issues identified by the Province in January 2007. Revised comments were provided by the Province in the Fall of 2007 which enabled the processing and decision process for ROPA 53 to move forward.

3.3 Comments from Circulated Agencies

In a letter dated September 26, 2007 the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing updated its comments of January 8, 2007 and advised that:

- The request by the Town of Aurora to expand its urban boundary is subject to the Growth Plan excluding policy 2.2.8 which deals with Settlement Area Boundary Expansions.
- Other policies of the Growth Plan, including but not limited to, the greenfield density target, intensification target, complete community design, transit supportiveness, sewer and water infrastructure, and natural heritage protection/management including water quality and quantity should be dealt with at the secondary plan stage.
- In respect to water quality and quantity, MMAH staff have requested a further meeting to deal with stormwater management remediation efforts that link phosphorous generated from the urbanization of the 2C lands and the Assimilative Capacity Study targets. This meeting should take place concurrently with the work for the related secondary plan.

In a letter dated August 24, 2007 staff of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority advised it has no objection to the approval of the ROPA 53. Conservation Authority staff note that development of the 2C lands can only occur in a manner that fulfills the recommendations and targets of the regional Assimilation Capacity Study.

In a letter dated February 23, 2007 staff of The York Region District School Board advised that it will require two public schools sites within the amendment area.

A synopsis of the comments from the Region's Infrastructure Planning branch are included as an attachment to the Information Report for the Public Meeting (see *Attachment No. 2*). The 2C lands will be serviced by municipal water supply and sewage treatment facilities. The 2008 Water and Sewer Master Plans will identify the required Regional infrastructure to serve full build-out of the site. At the secondary plan stage, a development phasing plan will need to be established linking the amount of development to the timing of infrastructure improvements that may include widening of St. John's Sideroad, Wellington Street and Leslie Street, and protection for an interchange at Highway 404 and St. John's Sideroad.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Amendment No. 53 to the York Region Official Plan (ROPA 53) is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 and meets the tests of the Regional Official plan for urban boundary expansions. Adoption of ROPA 53 provides for the appropriate Regional Official Plan designation to enable the Town and landowners to move forward with the related secondary plan. ROPA 53 facilitates subsequent approvals that allow for

approximately 94 developable hectares of strategically located employment land and 114 developable hectares of residential and related uses. Development of the 2C lands will likely generate approximately 4,000 jobs and a population increase of approximately 8,000 persons.

4.1 ROPA 53 is Consistent with Provincial Policy

Policy 1.1.3.9 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) indicates planning authorities may permit expansions to settlement areas only at the time of a comprehensive review and where it can be demonstrated that sufficient opportunities are not available to meet projected needs through intensification and redevelopment. A comprehensive review has been carried out and Regional staff are of the opinion that the 2C lands are required to meet the Town's 2026 population and employment projections set out in Table 1 of the Regional Official Plan. The Town needs to accommodate an additional 18,000 to 19,000 persons and 12,450 jobs to meet the Region's 2026 forecasts. In the event that the Region's forecasts are adjusted to accommodate the Growth Plan projections, the 2C lands will still be required to meet the revised forecasts. *Attachment No. 3* to this report indicates how all of the requirements of policy 1.1.3.9 have been addressed. ROPA 53 is consistent with the PPS 2005.

4.2 ROPA 53 Meets the Tests of the Regional Official Plan for Urban Boundary Expansions

Adoption of ROPA 53 meets the urban boundary expansion tests set out in Policy 5.2.3 of the Regional Official Plan. It enables the Town to meet the Region's 2026 forecast of 75,000 persons, and 33,000 jobs. It is the Town's only remaining option for greenfield development as there are no other greenfield lands available for development within the Town. Development and servicing of the 2C lands represents a logical and contiguous expansion of the 2B lands. *Attachment No. 4* to this report indicates how each of the tests of Policy 5.2.3 have been met.

4.3 Next Step - Secondary Plan

A Secondary Plan that includes land policies and schedules will be prepared by the Town of Aurora. The Secondary Plan is required to conform to the density, intensification targets, community design and other provisions of the Provincial Growth Plan. Preliminary conclusions set out in background reports prepared by Hemson Consulting and endorsed by the Town of Aurora indicate that an overall density of 51 residents and jobs per net hectare can be achieved by applying a residential density of 32 units per net hectare and 45 jobs per net hectare. A density threshold of 50 residents and jobs per net hectare is required on a Region wide basis by the Places to Grow Plan for greenfield development. The Secondary Plan is also required to comply with applicable Regional policies that include among other things the provision for a broad range of housing types, a mix of uses, a system of walkways and bicycle paths, and completion of a transit plan.

The Province recently released a proposal for a regulation to protect Lake Simcoe that includes reducing the limit of phosphorous loading from sewage treatment plants and stormwater management facilities. New facilities designed to manage stormwater from a

new development within the Lake Simcoe basin, such as the Aurora 2C lands, will have to be built to the highest protection level specified in the Province's Management Planning and Design Manual. Requirements of the proposed regulation and other related legislation will be established at the secondary plan stage.

Municipal sanitary servicing for the 2C lands requires the expansion of the Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control plant and Southeast Collector trunk sewer, or other suitable transmission alternative. Connection to the East Holland Trunk sewer, located to the west within the 2B lands, will provide the link to the York Durham Sewage System. Depending on the timing of other development in the Town of Newmarket, Aurora and East Gwillimbury, including intensification, some of the Aurora 2C lands may require the North York servicing solution for full build out.

In addition, ultimate build out the Aurora 2C lands will require the completion of a new Regional watermain and water tower on Leslie Street north of Wellington Street. The anticipated timing of construction completion is 2014 for these water works.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A Fiscal Impact Analysis is required at the secondary plan approval stage and will be carried out by Regional Finance staff in consultation with staff from other Regional departments. Hemson Consulting has completed a fiscal impact analysis as part of the planning justification for the ROPA and concluded that development of the 2C lands will have a net fiscal surplus to both the Town and the Region at full built out.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

On April 12, 2005 and again on June 27, 2006 the Town of Aurora requested the Region to initiate the process to bring the 2C lands into the "Urban Area" boundary. The recommendations of this report are consistent with the position of the Town.

7. CONCLUSION

Adoption of ROPA 53 is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 and the urban boundary expansion policies of the Regional Official Plan. A Regional "Urban Area" designation will allow the Town to move forward with the secondary plan process to establish detailed development policies and a land use plan. Adoption and subsequent approval of ROPA 53 assists in resolving an Ontario Municipal Board hearing that has a history dating back to 1998. It is recommended that the Regional Commissioner of Planning and Development Services issue the Notice to adopt ROPA 53 as set out in Attachment No. 1 to this report.

Report No. 1 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee
Regional Council Meeting of January 24, 2008

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Belton, Manager of Development Review, Community Planning Branch at 905 830-4444 ext. 1507 or paul.belton@york.ca.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The four attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)