



## Staff Report

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Planning and Development Committee</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	June 28, 2021	<b>Report Number:</b>	PDS-038-21
<b>Submitted By:</b>	Ryan Windle, Director of Planning and Development Services		
<b>Reviewed By:</b>	Andrew C. Allison, CAO	<b>Resolution#:</b>	
<b>File Number:</b>	PLN.2.12	<b>By-law Number:</b>	
<b>Report Subject:</b>	<b>Envision Durham, Proposed Policy Directions</b>		

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### Recommendations:

1. That Report PDS-038-21 be received;
2. That the proposed policy directions as outlined in Tables 1 through 7 of Report PDS-038-21, be supported;
3. That the Region of Durham Planning and Economic Development Department be forwarded a copy of Report PDS-038-21 and Council's decision; and
4. That all interested parties listed in Report PDS-038-21 and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

## Report Overview

Through Envision Durham, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of the Regional Official Plan (ROP), Durham Region has provided the opportunity for the public and local municipalities to provide comments on the proposed policy directions. The comments submitted to the Region by the public and local municipalities have the potential to create changes to land use planning policies at the Regional level. The MCR is an opportunity to plan for fundamental change, by replacing the current ROP and establishing a progressive and forward-looking planning horizon for the Region until 2051.

The Region has requested public and agency comments on the proposed policy directions for the Region's MCR. This report will provide an overview of Clarington's analysis and recommendations on the proposed policy directions to Council.

## 1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this staff report is to present staff comments to Council regarding the Durham Region Proposed Policy Directions. The recommendations are as a result of a Regional request to the public and municipalities. This Report and any additional Council resolutions will be forwarded to the Region to inform the Envision Durham Process. The Proposed Policy Directions report can be found at the following [Report #2021-P-7](#).

## 2. Background

### Envision Durham to date

- 2.1 The Region of Durham began a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) under the name "Envision Durham, 2041 – Our Region. Our Plan. Our Future" in 2018.
- 2.2 The ROP is Durham Council's core planning document that guides Regional decision-making on long term growth and development. The MCR process will update existing ROP policies and initiatives, review relevant emerging land use planning and development issues, and will constitute the Region's Provincial Plan conformity exercise. The MCR is a mandated responsibility of all upper tier municipalities through the current provincial Growth Plan.
- 2.3 The Region is required to review and update the ROP to conform to the amended Provincial Plans by July 2022. The local municipalities deadline for conformity with Provincial Plans and the Region's Official Plan is July 2023. In Clarington, Staff are commencing the review of the Clarington OP (2018) this year, beginning with the procurement of a consultant as approved by Clarington Council as part of the 2021 Budget.

- 2.4 The Region's Proposed Policy Directions were developed and informed based on best practice reviews, research, public engagement and feedback received during the first two stages of the Envision Durham process.
- 2.5 Currently, Envision Durham is in the "Direct Stage" of the process. Following the release of the Proposed Policy Directions the Regional staff will begin to draft the Plan, during this time the Region will hold the necessary Statutory Public meetings and Open houses and present the Draft Plan to Regional Council for adoption. By 2022 the Region intends to finalize the Plan and submit it to the Ministry for approval.
- 2.6 As part of the Envision Durham process, Clarington Council was previously consulted during the MCR process to provide their position on the nine submissions for Employment Conversion requests within Clarington ([PSD-009-21](#)). Staff have also previously reported to Council regarding the Major Transit Station Areas ([PSD-015-19](#); [PSD-027-19](#)).

### **Proposed Policy Directions**

- 2.7 Based on the framework endorsed by Regional Council in November 2020, the proposed policy directions provide an indication of how the new ROP will be structured around chapters that represent seven balanced, aspirational and outcome-oriented Strategic Directions:
  - a. Prosperous Economy;
  - b. Healthy Communities;
  - c. Supportive Infrastructure;
  - d. Vibrant Urban System;
  - e. Thriving Rural System;
  - f. Protected Greenlands System; and
  - g. Connected Transportation System.
- 2.8 Each Strategic Direction describes a series of policy topics, discusses comments received and introduces proposed policy direction(s).
- 2.9 The Proposed Policy Directions present potential additions and changes to land use planning policies. The seven proposed strategic directions are not intended to be exhaustive but introduce certain directions where further input is being sought before draft Regional Official Plan policies are introduced.

## **3. Staff Comments**

- 3.1 Generally, Staff are satisfied with the Proposed Policy Directions. To prepare comments, Staff canvassed internally throughout the organization and through an inter-department survey, reviewed previous comments sent to the Region through the Envision Durham process to date, and conducted a preliminary analysis of each policy direction compared to the current Clarington Official Plan policies to identify any areas of suggested improvement.

- 3.2 Generally speaking, Staff request that the Region keep their proposed policies broad to allow local municipalities to maintain and establish their policies in a more specific way to suit the needs of the individual local area.
- 3.3 Below, Staff have provided comments on the Proposed Policy Directions that Staff believe require modifications, improvements, clarifications and/or adjustments. All Proposed Policy Directions not included in the table are generally supported by Staff.

## **Prosperous Economy**

### **Goals for a 'Prosperous Economy'**

- 3.4 Staff concur with the following Goal proposed for the 'Prosperous Economy' section of the ROP:
- Support the development of a strong, resilient and prosperous economy that maximizes opportunities for business and employment growth (jobs), innovation, and partnerships, to develop the region to its fullest economic potential.

### **Summary of 'Prosperous Economy' Strategic Direction**

- 3.5 Over time, economic development objectives evolve to align with broader economic trends, regional growth, and as a response to changing local priorities and issues. Reviewing economic development policies will assist in strengthening the interrelationship between key infrastructure and development, support and foster innovation and develop targeted strategies and action plans.

### **'Prosperous Economy' Proposed Policy Directions**

- 3.6 Proposed policy directions that are intended to support a prosperous economy include:
- a) Implementing an appropriate supply of Employment Areas with access to municipal water and wastewater services;
  - b) Supporting a balanced population and employment growth, and the diversification of the Regional employment base;
  - c) Recognizing the importance of, and encouraging the expansion of leading-edge technologies, including high-speed broadband infrastructure;
  - d) Supporting collaboration with educational institutions and the business community in programs that create and maintain a highly skilled regional labour force; and
  - e) Supporting the agricultural and agri-food sector, including new opportunities for agri-tourism, on farm diversified uses and the diversification of agricultural operations.

**Staff Comments**

3.7 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Prosperous Economy Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 1 – Staff Review of ‘Prosperous Economy’ Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Economic Development Policies	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the Employment Lands provided are strategically linked with appropriate active transportation infrastructure to reduce commuting. The Municipality of Clarington has submitted two settlement area expansion requests for Employment Lands through Envision Durham, east of Courtice and in Orono.</li> <li>• Ensure strategic growth areas are within Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs). Clarington has two proposed MTSA’s in Courtice and Bowmanville where the GO Stations will be located.</li> <li>• Include diversification of employment options as a key principle.</li> <li>• Request that the Regions proposed policies support local economic development projects with financial and planning tools.</li> <li>• Support for a balanced approach to development in Downtowns which proposes to balance intensification with local heritage.</li> </ul>
Broadband Infrastructure	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the essential need for Broadband infrastructure through stronger policies.</li> <li>• Encourage the Region and lower tier municipalities to provide access to their infrastructure for co-location.</li> </ul>

**Healthy Communities**

**Goals for ‘Healthy Communities’**

3.8 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the ‘Healthy Communities’ section of the ROP:

- Prepare built and natural environments to be low-carbon and climate-resilient.
- Plan complete communities that improve the quality of life for residents.
- Enhance community health, safety and well-being by planning for sufficient community services.

**Summary of ‘Healthy Communities’ Strategic Direction**

3.9 One of the primary functions of an official plan is to implement policies that shape the development of healthy communities as our built environment has a direct effect on our health. The policies that shape our built communities should; address quality of life, health, safety, convenience and well-being of present and future residents.

**‘Healthy Communities’ Proposed Policy Directions**

3.10 Proposed policy directions intended to foster healthy communities include:

- a) Creating a greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target to achieve net-zero as an aspirational objective;
- b) Developing age-friendly design guidelines with area municipalities;
- c) Encouraging community hubs in transit-supportive locations, especially in Strategic Growth Areas and areas where existing cultural and community services and facilities exist;
- d) Creating a Regional Housing Assessment Report to enable area municipalities to undertake Inclusionary Zoning within their respective jurisdictions;
- e) Encouraging community hubs in transit-supportive locations, especially in Strategic Growth Areas and areas where existing cultural and community services and facilities exist; and
- f) Establishing a new affordable housing target of at least 35 per cent of new housing within Strategic Growth Areas.

**Staff Comments**

3.11 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Healthy Communities Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 2 - Staff Review of ‘Healthy Communities’ Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Sustainability	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that sustainability needs are considered and integrated into the entire Regional Official Plan and not just one section.</li> </ul>

<b>Table 2 - Staff Review of 'Healthy Communities' Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Greenhouse Gas Reduction	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the Region request that the Province prioritize tax incentives for green development projects.</li> </ul>
	6(9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For closer alignment to Policy 6(1), it is recommended that water conservation be incorporated into this policy.</li> </ul>
	6(11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many local area municipalities have invested in the Durham Community Energy Plan. The establishment of community GHG reduction plans at both the local and Regional levels may result in duplication of efforts. Ensure the policies are updated to ensure one does not outweigh the other in significance.</li> </ul>
	6(13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If this refers to local GHG reduction targets it could be incorporated into policy 6(10), and policy 6(2) should similarly speak to monitoring progress.</li> </ul>
Climate Resilient Development	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This policy direction, as currently proposed, may be redundant, given the GHG reduction policy section. In addition, there is duplication and redundancy amongst polices in policy direction (6) and (7) relating to encouraging green development practices.</li> </ul>
Air Quality	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include an additional policy to direct Durham Region Public Health to work with the MECP to regularly assess and report on regional air quality.</li> </ul>
	8(1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define "improved air quality" and use a targeted statistic to explain what the Regional Official Plan is expecting from local municipalities.</li> </ul>
	8(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include policies to allow local municipalities to determine when an Air Quality Study should be submitted as part of an application.</li> <li>Region should be responsible for reviewing this report as The Municipalities do not have staff with the technical expertise.</li> </ul>
Complete Communities	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure integration of Complete Communities policies into the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) directions.</li> </ul>

<b>Table 2 - Staff Review of 'Healthy Communities' Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Public Realm and Urban Design	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 19.2.5 in the current Clarington Official Plan which states that we will “integrate infrastructure and utilities into the public realm with a high priority for aesthetics.”</li> </ul>
Downtowns	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed policies should support local municipalities to reduce vehicular dependency and focus more on pedestrian friendly designs.</li> </ul>
Age-Friendly Planning	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate age-friendly planning into “complete communities.”</li> </ul>
Community Safety and Well-Being Planning	15-sub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of these policy directions. The current Clarington Official Plan states in policy 5.4.14 that we will “ensure community safety while minimizing negative impacts [...]”</li> </ul>
Diverse Housing	15-sub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. The current Clarington Official Plan states in policy 6.3.1 that “the Municipality, in co-operation with other levels of government, shall encourage the provision of a diverse housing stock in terms of type, size, tenure, and cost [...]”</li> </ul>
Supply of Land for Housing	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 23.17.7 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that “a minimum of a 2-year supply of land zoned for medium and high-density housing throughout all the urban areas [...]”</li> </ul>
Housing Options	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 7.3.13 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that it will look to “increase housing options to meet the needs of all residents throughout all stages of their lives.”</li> </ul>
Affordable Housing	18-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create better affordable housing opportunities within MTSAs.</li> <li>Re-define “affordable housing” in the ROP, current definition is dated.</li> <li>Encourage affordable housing in strategic growth areas.</li> <li>Create incentives for developers to supply permanent affordable housing units.</li> <li>Define “affordable ownership.”</li> </ul>



Table 2 - Staff Review of 'Healthy Communities' Proposed Policy Directions		
Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Region should recognize that MTSA's are not the only areas within municipalities where affordable housing may be appropriate. Further information is required on how proposed Regional affordable housing targets would be implemented and measured at the local level.</li> </ul>
Adaptive Re-use	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. The current Clarington Official Plan states in policy 5.5.1 that it will "promote the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste, with particular attention to multi-residential housing forms, which meets applicable Provincial standards [...]."</li> </ul>
Condominium Conversion and Demolition Control	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage local municipalities to enact/develop a demolition control by-law.</li> </ul>
Short-Term Rentals	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage a similar threshold for short-term rentals as seen in policy 26(1). The Region should also explore stronger supports and directions to local municipalities to regulate short-term rentals.</li> </ul>
Special Needs Housing	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 6.3.10 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that "special needs housing is an important element of meeting the accommodation needs of Clarington residents."</li> </ul>

## Supportive Infrastructure

### Goals for 'Supportive Infrastructure'

3.12 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the 'Supportive Infrastructure' section of the ROP:

- Maintain the long-term financial sustainability of the Region by managing its financial resources in a fiscally responsible and prudent manner.
- Provide the necessary Regional municipal services to meet current and projected needs for orderly growth in the region in an environmentally and financially sustainable manner.
- Enable the efficient delivery, location and effective use of energy and utilities.

**Summary of ‘Supportive Infrastructure’ Strategic Direction**

3.13 The planning, financing and provision of adequate municipal services is a principal role of the Region. As a growing, economically competitive region, ensuring supportive municipal infrastructure is in place (or will be in place for future needs) and maintained on a regular basis is essential.

**‘Supportive Infrastructure’ Proposed Policy Directions**

3.14 Proposed policy directions intended for supportive infrastructure include:

- a) Encouraging sustainable urban design within the public realm and stormwater management practices that support low impact development (LID);
- b) Recognizing that to reduce greenhouse gas emissions energy conservation, efficiency measures, and renewable and alternative energy sources need to be improved;
- c) Adapting and building resiliency to the impacts of climate change; and permitting and promoting alternative energy systems and renewable energy systems in accordance with provincial and federal requirements; and
- d) Permitting and promoting alternative energy systems and renewable energy systems in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, while prohibiting large-scale commercial renewable energy facilities in Prime Agricultural Areas and critical environmental areas.

**Staff Comments**

3.15 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Supportive Infrastructure Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 3 - Staff Review of ‘Supportive Infrastructure’ Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Green Infrastructure	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage developing a green infrastructure strategy to mitigate climate change in cooperation with area municipalities.</li> <li>• Develop more specific requirements for development applications regarding LIDs.</li> </ul>
	30(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a Municipality has a reporting requirement as part of a local green development program, integrate requirement into the local GDP to streamline and minimize redundancy.</li> </ul>

**Table 3 - Staff Review of ‘Supportive Infrastructure’ Proposed Policy Directions**

Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
Waste Management	31 (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen this suggested policy by speaking to the evaluation of cumulative impacts on air quality.</li> </ul>
Telecommunications Infrastructure	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the policies acknowledge the significant need for improved rural internet (see Broadband under the Prosperous Economy Section).</li> </ul>
Energy	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure policies encourage the Region to work with the provincial government to upgrade the existing infrastructure to support renewable and alternative energy projects.</li> </ul>

## Vibrant Urban Systems

### Goals for ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’

3.16 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ section of the ROP:

- Establish a vibrant Urban System that supports the development of compact, efficient, and complete communities;
- Balance employment and population growth by ensuring an adequate supply of Employment Areas;
- Value the diversity of areas and places that comprise the Urban System by protecting and integrating natural and cultural heritage resources;
- Advance the development of Strategic Growth Areas as focal points for intensification, economic activity, and significant employment; and
- Manage growth within the Urban System by promoting intensification and development that optimizes infrastructure and public service facilities.

### Summary of ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Strategic Direction

3.17 Lands within the Region’s Urban Area Boundary create an Urban System that is designed to accommodate most of the region’s forecasted population and employment growth. An Urban System is intended to encompass distinct Urban Areas that are guided by policies that aim to separate incompatible uses, provide for focal points, create concentrations of urban activities and essential connections and function as a healthy, complete community.

**‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions**

3.18 The policies directions for Urban Systems are subject to change, additional policy directions and finalization of the proposed policies will be released as the various phases of the Growth Management Study are completed. Some of the draft proposed policy directions that would foster a vibrant Urban System include:

- a) In consultation with area municipalities, Regional Centre policies need to be reviewed and refined against the density targets and planned function as described in ROP policy;
- b) Designating Highway 2 from the Toronto/Durham border easterly to Highway 418 in Clarington, and Simcoe Street from Gibb Street in downtown Oshawa to Highway 407 as “Rapid Transit Spine Intensification Corridors”, signaling their status as Strategic Growth Areas with densities, built form and a mix of uses that will support Light Rail Transit in the long term;
- c) Allowing Places of Worship within Employment Areas subject to meeting criteria including land use compatibility; and
- d) Encouraging the redevelopment of brownfield sites and greyfield sites and prioritize the redevelopment of brownfield and greyfield sites within Strategic Growth Areas and other intensification areas.

3.19 If required, settlement area boundary expansions will be considered for area municipalities through the Growth Management Study (Phase 2), after the completion of the Land Needs Analysis (phase 1). Phase 1 will assist in determining the amount of urban land required to accommodate the 2051 growth forecasts.

**Staff Comments**

3.20 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Vibrant Urban Systems Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 4 – Staff Review of ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Delineated Built-Up Areas and Designated Greenfield Areas	37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. To support this policy direction policy 4.5.1 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that “the municipality will support the achievement of a density of 50 residents and jobs combined per gross hectare [...]”</li> </ul>

**Table 4 – Staff Review of ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions**

Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
Centres and Corridors	38 & 40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff do not support the potential removal of either the Corridor or Centre designations in Clarington’s Urban Areas.</li> </ul>
Major Transit Station Areas	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently the Municipality is preparing Secondary Plans for both the Courtice and Bowmanville MTSA’s. Clarington Council has provided direction on three occasions regarding the MTSA boundaries and related urban boundary expansion via Staff Reports <a href="#">PSD-015-19</a>, <a href="#">PSD-027-19</a> and most recently in <a href="#">PDS-009-21</a>.</li> <li>The delineation of MTSA’s should be conceptual, similar to the current policies for Regional Centres. The detailed delineation and boundary should be left to local Official Plans, Secondary Plans and/or Master Block Plans. This approach will respect the local council/municipality in guiding development through local planning tools, and reduce unnecessary ROPA’s for minor changes, plus add certainty as developers will continue to deal with municipalities as the one window for development applications.</li> </ul>
Corridors	40 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The designation of Highway 2 as a “Rapid Transit Spine Intensification Corridor” should extend to Bowmanville to ensure connectivity to the Bowmanville MTSA and future GO Station and not just to Highway 418.</li> </ul>
Supporting Strategic Growth Areas	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the Region support appropriate land development through a range of servicing options including pre-servicing agreements (Early Payment Agreements) with the private sector.</li> </ul>
Employment Areas	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the importance of a range of employment uses permitted within employment areas, compatible with prestige employment as well as general and light industrial.</li> <li>Expand the Courtice Urban Area Boundary eastward on lands generally bounded by Regional Highway 2, Courtice Road, and Highway 418 for Employment Uses and Major Transit Station Area. The expansion would serve to reinforce Clarington Council's resolution (<a href="#">#GPA-235-09</a>) and will also</li> </ul>

**Table 4 – Staff Review of ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions**

Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		<p>provide strategically located employment lands with easy access to the 401 and 418 highways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the Orono Settlement Boundary eastward to incorporate 10 hectares of land for employment land uses (approved by the LPAT).</li> </ul>
Employment Areas	46 (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are not in support of places of worship within employment areas. As places of worship do not generate employment opportunities and would conflict with policy 4.5.1 of the Clarington Official Plan.</li> </ul>
Employment Area Conversions	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That Regional Council support the Employment Lands Conversion Requests as outlined in Clarington Staff Report <a href="#">PDS-009-21</a>.</li> </ul>
Brownfields and Site Contamination	51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 23.15.2 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that “the Municipality may investigate the development of a Community Planning Permit System for use in specific geographic areas of the municipality such as revitalization areas, brownfields, or intensification areas.”</li> </ul>
Settlement Area Boundary Expansions	52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the Courtice Urban Area Boundary eastward on lands generally bounded by Regional Highway 2, Courtice Road, and Highway 418 for Employment Uses and Major Transit Station Area. The expansion would serve to reinforce Clarington Council's resolution (<a href="#">#GPA-235-09</a>) and will also provide strategically located employment lands with easy access to the 401 and 418 highways.</li> <li>Expand the Orono Settlement Boundary eastward to incorporate 10 hectares of land for employment land uses (approved by the LPAT and westward to incorporate 40 hectares of land for residential land uses (supported by Clarington Council, Adoption OPA 107).</li> <li>The Municipality of Clarington reserves the opportunity to request additional Settlement Boundary Expansions, if needed based on our own Lands Needs Analysis and the Region’s MCR process.</li> </ul>

Table 4 – Staff Review of ‘Vibrant Urban Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions		
Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policies should be clear that a municipality may proceed for with an urban boundary as per the policies of the Provincial Growth Plan.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Policy 2.2.8.4 of the Growth Plan states: “Municipalities may adjust settlement area boundaries outside of a municipal comprehensive review [...]”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Secondary Plan Considerations	53	Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. To support this policy direction the current Clarington Official Plan outlines the general policies and 9 specific secondary plan areas.

## Thriving Rural System

### Goals for ‘Thriving Rural Systems’

3.21 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the ‘Thriving Rural Systems’ section of the ROP:

- Establish a thriving Rural System that supports rural businesses including agriculture, aggregate extraction and tourism;
- Support the health and vitality of existing Rural Settlements which serve the needs of rural residents and area businesses;
- Support a sustainable, diversified, and productive Agricultural System;
- Champion the wise-use and management of resources; and
- Encourage land stewardship to enhance natural heritage, protect drinking water and support climate resiliency.

### Summary of ‘Thriving Rural System’ Strategic Direction

3.22 Currently, Rural Systems cover 84% of the Region’s land base, and houses approximately 8% of Durham’s population (54,000 residents). Agriculture is one of the largest primary goods producing sectors within the Region, with approximately 300,000 acres being used for production. Most of the rural area is planned for agricultural and open space uses, interspersed with rural settlements.

### ‘Thriving Rural System’ Proposed Policy Directions

3.23 Proposed policy directions to support a thriving Rural System include:

- a) Permitting a range of agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses in accordance with the provincial Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas;
- b) Maintaining that the creation of parcels of land for agricultural uses cannot be less than 40 hectares; and
- c) Requiring the rehabilitation of Aggregate Resource Extraction Areas back to an agricultural condition for sites in Prime Agricultural Areas and incorporating relevant Greenbelt Plan rehabilitation policies.

3.24 The Region is currently reviewing the provincial Agricultural System, comprised of the agricultural land base and agri-food network. Systems-based ROP mapping will be developed and refined through 2021 for inclusion in the draft ROP.

**Staff Comments**

3.25 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Thriving Rural Systems Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 5 – Staff Review of ‘Thriving Rural Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Rural System	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove the policy dictating the percentage that on-farm diversified uses can occupy of a property, leave that to area municipalities.</li> <li>• Clarify how the cumulative impact of on-farm diversified uses will be monitored throughout the Region.</li> <li>• Do not require area municipal OPs to limit the scale of on-farm diversified uses.</li> </ul>
Cemeteries	56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 18.6.5 in the current Clarington Official Plan states that our Community Facilities include uses such as post offices, places of worship, cemeteries [...].”</li> </ul>
Minimum Distance Separation (MDS)	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to let area municipalities control this in local Official Plans.</li> </ul>
Rural Settlements	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 4.3.2 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “the Municipality’s rural population forecast will be accommodated within the established boundaries of rural settlements identified on Map A.”</li> </ul>



Table 5 – Staff Review of ‘Thriving Rural Systems’ Proposed Policy Directions		
Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
Edge Planning	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure edge planning policies are incorporated into Settlement Area Boundary Expansion work.</li> </ul>
Specific Policy Areas	58(3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In alignment with Policy 16.2.4 of the Clarington Official Plan, it is recommended that the Region encourage the Government of Canada to rehabilitate the waste sites at Port Granby in a manner that will complement the nature reserve and to dedicate the surplus lands to the Municipality and/or an appropriate public agency for the long term management of the nature reserve.</li> </ul>
Rural Lot Creation	58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen policies by providing each designation (e.g. Prime Agriculture, Rural/Major Open Space, Hamlets etc.) with its own lot creation framework which is directly related to the permitted uses.</li> </ul>
On-Farm Diversifies Uses	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. To support this policy direction policy 13.4.1 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “Prime Agricultural Areas shall predominantly be used for agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses.”</li> </ul>
Non-Abutting Surplus Farm Dwellings	63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly clarify whether a ROPA will be required for these proposals. And if so, in what circumstances?</li> </ul>
Regional Nodes	64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff encourages the Region to keep the Regional Nodes currently within Clarington with the revised names of Brimacombe Ski Area and Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, as discussed with Regional Staff on October 15, 2020.</li> </ul>
Aggregate Resource Extraction Areas	65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 15.3.2 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “Aggregate Extraction Areas shall only be permitted within the Potential Aggregate Resource Areas identified on Map G [...]”</li> </ul>

## Protected Greenland Systems

### Goals for ‘Protected Greenland Systems’

3.26 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the ‘Protected Greenland Systems’ section of the ROP:

- Establish a protected Greenlands System that conserves, protects and enhances water and land resources for present and future generations.
- Protect, restore and enhance an interconnected Natural Heritage System and Water Resources System across the region.

### **Summary of 'Protected Greenland Systems' Strategic Direction**

3.27 Greenland systems comprises approximately 40% of the region's land base – covering areas throughout both Urban and Rural Systems. Greenland systems contain areas with the highest concentrations of sensitive and/or significant natural features and functions, agricultural and rural lands.

### **'Protected Greenland Systems' Proposed Policy Directions**

3.28 Examples of proposed policy directions that would support a protected Greenlands System include:

- a) Recognizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Indigenous knowledge and values which have been acquired through experience, observation) in understanding sites and ecological features and in assessing cumulative impacts;
- b) Ensuring conservation authorities, area municipalities and other stakeholders consider climate change and the effects of severe weather events and cross-watershed impacts while preparing and updating watershed plans; and
- c) Requiring new development and redevelopment to incorporate native and drought tolerant vegetation.

3.29 The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) requires Natural Heritage System (NHS) are established and include key natural heritage features and areas, and the connections between them. In addition to satisfying provincial conformity requirements, a systems-based approach reflects best practices in natural heritage planning because it recognizes the critical role that linkages between features play in establishing and maintaining ecological integrity.

3.30 Staff are currently developing a Regional NHS, in consultation with the Envision Durham Conservation Authority and Area Municipal Working Groups. Systems-based ROP mapping will be developed and refined through 2021 for inclusion in the draft ROP.

### **Staff Comments**

3.31 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Protected Greenland Systems Strategic Direction:

**Table 6 – Staff Review of ‘Protected Greenland System’ Proposed Policy Directions**

Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
Natural Heritage System (NHS)	68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 2.2.3 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “the natural heritage system will be protected. Where there is a conflict between a proposed land use and the protection of the natural heritage system, the latter will prevail.”</li> </ul>
Key Natural Heritage and Key Hydrological Features	69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff agree the Woodlands Study may assist with the creation of an overall Woodland target for the Region. The concern is that a Regional target (example 30%) may not assist local efforts to increase woodland cover when the Watershed (e.g. Bowmanville/Soper) already surpasses that target on the ORM, but not within the Urban Area.</li> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 15.3.20 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “The extraction of mineral aggregates from the area within the key natural heritage feature will be completed and the area will be rehabilitated, as early as possible in the life of the operation [...]”</li> </ul>
Vegetation Protection Zones	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of the policy direction that Vegetation Protection Zones (VPZ) policies be established by the local municipalities.</li> <li>Staff recommend that Region revise the policy direction so that local municipalities can determine their own VPZ criteria including the establishment of minimum VPZs. Policy Section 3.4 of the current Official Plan including Table 3-1 which establishes minimum VPZs for features.</li> </ul>
Identifying a Water Resources System	71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff recommend policy direction such that formerly ‘piped or buried’ watercourses on agricultural lands that are brought into the Urban Area are encouraged/required to be restored at the surface.</li> <li>Clarington staff are very much in support of the policy directions regarding the former Lake Iroquois Shoreline. Policies 3.4.32 and 3.4.33 in</li> </ul>

**Table 6 – Staff Review of ‘Protected Greenland System’ Proposed Policy Directions**

Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		the current Clarington Official Plan support this direction.
Watershed Planning	72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction. Watershed Plans and the more detailed Subwatershed Plans should continue to inform land use planning and servicing decision making. The municipality of Clarington is currently undertaking two Subwatershed Studies in support of the Secondary Plan planning program.</li> </ul>
Natural Hazards	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 3.7.4 of the current Official Plan states “[...] the Municipality shall consider the potential impacts of climate change that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.”</li> </ul>
Wildland Fire	77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction however recommend the inclusion of ‘where appropriate’ as these policies may not apply to every local Municipality.</li> </ul>
Open Space Areas and Greenbelt Urban River Valleys	78	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of this policy direction.</li> <li>To further support Provincial directions related to Urban River Valleys, add setback policies that would protect lands as if they were already designated Urban River Valleys.</li> </ul>
Waterfront Areas	79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of this policy direction. Policy 3.2.7 in the current Clarington Official Plan aims to “recognize the Lake Ontario Waterfront as a dynamic and distinctive element of the Municipality's natural environment.”</li> </ul>
Tourist Activity/Recreation Nodes	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of the policy direction. Policy 10.9.1 in the current Clarington Official Plan states “the Municipality has identified Gateway Commercial Centres intended to serve the specialized needs of residents and attract tourists and visitors to the Municipality.”</li> </ul>
Ecosystem Compensation	82	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff suggest that the ROP not include a policy regarding compensation relating to the development process. This issue should be left to the local municipality to address.</li> </ul>

Table 6 – Staff Review of ‘Protected Greenland System’ Proposed Policy Directions		
Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington staff are in support of ROP including policies requiring compensation should features be removed without prior written consent from the appropriate agency.</li> </ul>
Excess Soil Management	84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require that excess soil placement at receiving sites be required to demonstrate that the activity will have a limited impact rather than no impact at all.</li> <li>Incorporate a policy statement to ensure that development proponents, including the Region when undertaking Regional infrastructure projects, are responsible for the management of their own excess soil generation (including disposal), and discourage site grading and drainage pattern changes unless it is absolutely necessary.</li> <li>Identify locational criteria for excess soil receipt or storage in consultation with the development industry, area municipalities and Conservation Authorities.</li> <li>Provide area municipalities with more guidance to help manage excess soil issues within their jurisdictional boundaries, including quality of life issues for residents (hours of operation, truck traffic, noise, dust, etc.), quality of the fill (e.g. contaminated soil) and the financial implications for the municipality.</li> <li>Provide area municipalities with a consistent region-wide policy framework to regulate receiving sites to help effectively manage excess soil in the future.</li> </ul>

### Connected Transportation System

#### Goals for ‘Connected Transportation Systems’

3.32 Staff concur with the following Goals proposed for the ‘Connected Transportation Systems’ section of the ROP:

- Provide a connected Transportation System that is integrated, safe, efficient, reliable and fiscally sustainable to meet existing and future needs of the region’s residents and businesses.

- Strategically invest in the Transportation System by providing a variety of low carbon mobility choices for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Design and construct transportation infrastructure to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the Transportation System and avoid, minimize or mitigate negative impacts on the natural environment.
- Facilitate the movement of people and goods through a complete streets approach to accommodate all modes of transportation and strengthen the interdependency between transportation and land use.

### **Summary of ‘Connected Transportation System’ Strategic Direction**

3.33 In the current ROP, the Transportation System is structured around several designations applicable to roads, transit and goods movement. These designations are supported by various policies in the Transportation System chapter that describe road networks and applicable design to move people and goods.

### **‘Connected Transportation System’ Proposed Policy Directions**

3.34 Proposed policy directions for a connected Transportation System include:

- a) Incorporating Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategies as part of the development approvals process within Strategic Growth Areas connected by Higher Order Transit corridors;
- b) Ensuring that the transportation network is designed and planned to support sustainable and multi-modal transportation options of walking, cycling and the use of transit and supports mixed-use development;
- c) Providing for transit-supportive urban design and an improved active transportation network, so that 80 per cent of residents and workers in the urban area are within 400 metres or a five-minute walk to the nearest transit stop;
- d) Including the Primary Cycling Network and Regional Trail Network as part of the Regional Transportation System; and
- e) Leveraging the Vision Zero Strategic Road Safety Action Plan through the design of facilities to support active transportation, control traffic speeds and promote safe and attractive environments for pedestrians and cyclists.

3.35 The new ROP will also establish a new schedule showing the future right-of-way (ROW) width requirements for all arterial roads under regional and area municipal jurisdiction; and ensuring the transportation and road network is designed and planned to support sustainable and multi-modal transportation options of walking, cycling and use of transit.

**Staff Comments**

3.36 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have the following comments for the Connected Transportation Systems Strategic Direction:

<b>Table 7 - Staff Review of 'Connected Transportation System' Proposed Policy Directions</b>		
<b>Proposed Policy Direction</b>	<b>Section Number</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
Transit-Supportive Development	89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure policies are written to recognize the need to develop stronger, broader policies that link development and transportation at a Regional and Local level.</li> </ul>
Active Transportation	91-96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies should be updated to clarify the appropriateness of trails within and adjacent to the Natural Heritage System (NHS).</li> </ul>
Transportation Demand Management	97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of the policy direction. Policy 19.8.8 in the current Clarington Official Plan states "Transportation Demand Management is a means to promote a more efficient use of existing transportation [...]."</li> </ul>
Multi-Modal Level of Service	99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of the policy direction. Policy 19.2.6 in the current Clarington Official Plan states looks to "encourage multi-modal transportation options to and within Employment Areas."</li> </ul>
Additional Provincial Conformity Considerations	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarington Staff are in support of the policy direction. Policy 19.3.2 in the current Clarington Official Plan state "the Municipality, in co-operation with other authorities and senior levels of governments, will plan for and protect for future Regional and Provincial transportation corridors and facilities that support the future growth of the Municipality."</li> </ul>
<p>General Comment - Clarington plans for 'transit supportive' communities (compact, mixed-use, grid network), but the Region provides very little public transit. Aside from the MTSAs, there do not appear to be any policies about improving local public transit. GO and Metrolinx are discussed, but Durham Region Transit's role appears to be limited to getting people to a</p>		

Table 7 - Staff Review of 'Connected Transportation System' Proposed Policy Directions		
Proposed Policy Direction	Section Number	Staff Comments
		GO station, and there does not appear to be any mention of a strategy to provide local transit service linking neighborhoods and urban centres.

## Supporting Sections

### Summary of 'Supporting Sections' Strategic Direction

- 3.37 The new ROP will be based on an entirely new framework and will build on the strengths of the existing ROP by bolstering those components that remain relevant, while establishing new policies and approaches for a compelling, user-friendly Plan.
- 3.38 The introductory components of the new ROP will establish the context and assist readers to navigate the:
- a) Historical context of the Region, and how this shapes our future (Prologue);
  - b) Purpose of a Regional Official Plan;
  - c) Preparation of the Plan;
  - d) How to read the Plan; and
  - e) Framework of the Plan, outlining a strong regional vision that is supported by broad strategic directions, ambitious goals, pragmatic objectives and action-based policies.

### Staff Comments

- 3.39 Clarington staff have analyzed and reviewed the proposed policy directions for the MCR and have no specific comments for the Supporting Sections of the new ROP.

## 4. Concurrence

- 4.1 Not Applicable.



## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Region developed the Envision Durham – Proposed Policy Directions ([Report #2021-P-7](#)) for public and area municipality comment. As detailed throughout this report Clarington staff are generally supportive of the proposed policy directions but have noted recommendations where applicable throughout Section 3 of this report.
- 5.2 It is respectfully recommended that Council endorse Staffs comments as the Municipality's formal comments on the Regions Proposed policy Directions, as outlined in Tables 1 to 7 in Section 3 of this report.
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### Interested Parties:

List of Interested Parties available from Department.