



Public Meeting Report

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Report To:	Planning and Development Committee	
Date of Meeting:	April 20, 2026	Report Number: PDS-033-26
Authored By:	Nicole Zambri, Principal Planner	
Submitted By:	Darryl Lyons, Deputy CAO, Planning and Infrastructure Services	
Reviewed By:	Trevor Pinn, Deputy CAO/Treasurer (Acting CAO)	
File Number:	COPA2026-0003 (Cross References :ZBA2024-0033 and SC2024-0019)	
Resolution#:		
Report Subject:	Official Plan Amendment application to facilitate approximately 1,200 residential units at 6 Wilmot Creek Drive in Newcastle.	

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the public and Council. It does not constitute, imply or request any degree of approval.

Recommendations:

1. That Report PDS-033-26 and any related communication items, be received for information only;
2. That Staff receive and consider comments from the public, review agencies, and Council with respect to the Official Plan Amendment application submitted by GHD on behalf of Rice Development Corporation and continue processing the application including the preparation of a subsequent recommendation report; and
3. That all interested parties listed in Report PDS-033-26 and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

The Municipality is seeking the public's input on a proposed Official Plan Amendment application, in association with related Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications, at 6 Wilmot Creek Drive in Newcastle.

1. Application Details

Owner: Rice Development Corporation

Agent: GHD Limited

Proposal: Official Plan Amendment (OPA)

Clarington Official Plan proposed amendment:

The Official Plan Amendment application will facilitate the proposed development of a total of 1,293 residential units in a mix of built form typologies, including walk up apartments by amending the following Clarington Official Plan policy:

Policy 9.4.5(h) which limits the number of townhouse units per block to 50 units and apartment buildings to 2. The proposal shows:

- 102 townhouse units on Block 8;
- 13 apartment buildings on Block 10;
- 5 apartment buildings on Block 9.

Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan proposed amendment:

Proposal to reduce the minimum height from 6 storeys to 4 storeys within the 'High Density Residential' designation on Block 10; and to redesignate lands from 'Medium Density Residential' to 'Parkette' to accommodate a larger park block (Block 13).

Area: 30.71 hectares (75.89 acres)

Location: 6 Wilmot Creek Drive, Newcastle; North of the hydro corridor and south of Highway 401; Part Lots 3 and 4, Broken Front, Former Township of Darlington; Within the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan Area (**see Figure 1**)

Roll Numbers: 1817-010-010-01100; 1817-010-010-00522; 1817-010-010-00511;
1817-010-010-00512

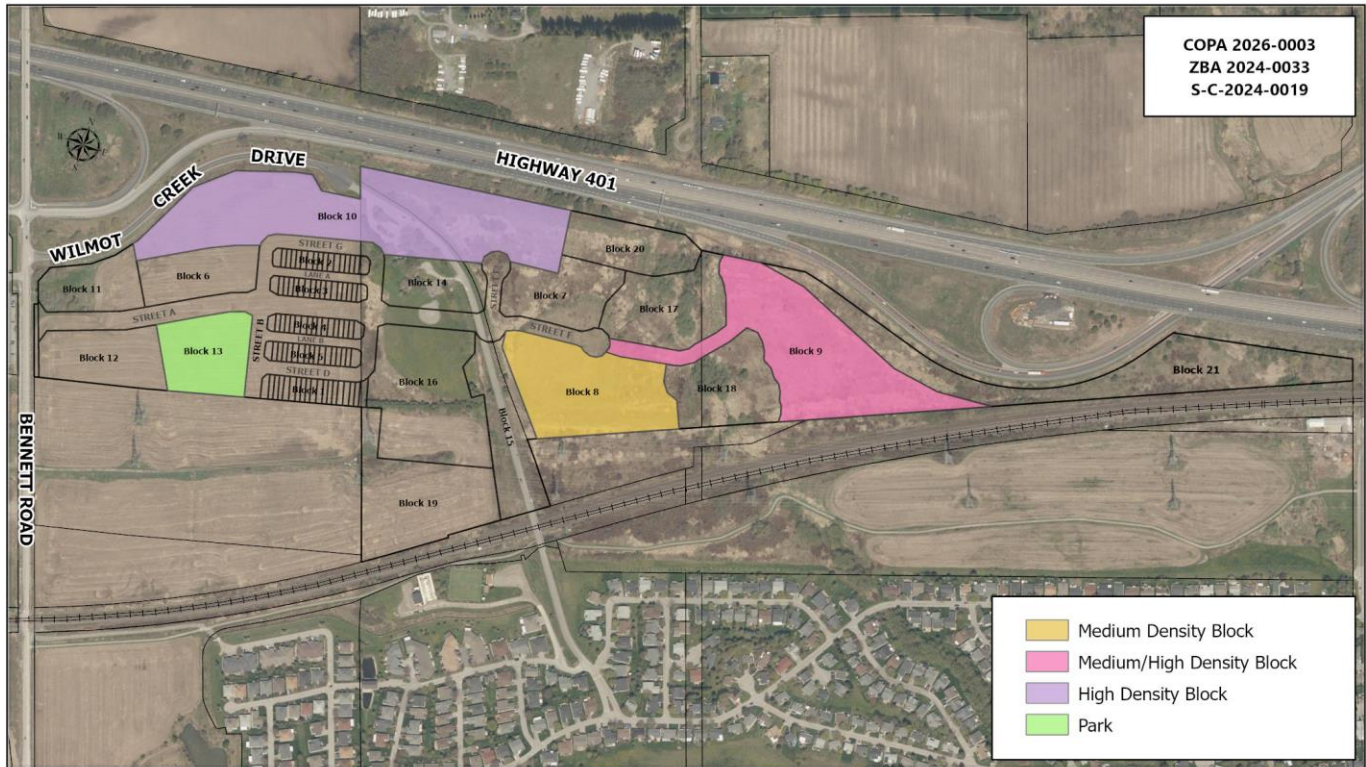


Figure 1 – Proposed Plan highlighting the Blocks subject to the OPA

2. Background

- 2.1 The subject lands are located within the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan Area and are proceeding concurrently with the lands to the south which are under separate ownership and applications.
- 2.2 On December 12, 2024, applications for a Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision were received and deemed incomplete. The outstanding materials were submitted and the applications were deemed complete on March 11, 2025. The proposal showed two mixed use blocks adjacent to Bennett Road, five high and medium density blocks with a maximum height of eight storeys, street related townhouse blocks, two park blocks, open space blocks, and public roads. The total amount of residential units proposed is approximately 1,755 units and a retail floor space of 1,700 square metres within a mixed-use building.
- 2.3 A public meeting was held on June 16, 2025 and comments from the public, agencies and departments were received (refer to **Attachment 5** for the previous concept plan).
- 2.4 One of the consistent comments received from the public was related to density and the need to provide different building typologies, such as low-rise apartments for seniors. As a result, the Owner has revised the proposal to accommodate low rise apartments within Block 10. The proposal has also been revised to accommodate a larger park block.

- 2.5 Through the review of the application, Clarington Staff also identified conflicts with the multi-unit residential policies contained in Policy 9.4.5 (h) of the Clarington Official Plan. The proposed Official Plan Amendment seeks to amend the maximum number of townhouse units per block and the number of apartment buildings per block. The increase in the number of apartments buildings per block was a result of the height being reduced and providing more low-rise type of apartment buildings to add variety to the built form typologies.
- 2.6 Given the changes, the proposal now shows a reduced number of dwelling units from 1,755 to 1,293 units and an increase in area to the park located adjacent to the mixed-use blocks (refer to Attachment 4 for the revised concept plan).
- 2.7 The revisions to the applications and a formal Official Plan Amendment were received on February 20, 2026 and deemed complete by Staff on March 30, 2026. The applications were also circulated to agencies and departments for comments. The Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications will all be processed concurrently.
- 2.8 A subsequent Site Plan application and Draft Plan of Condominium application will be required for the future development blocks at a later date.

3. Land Characteristics and Surrounding Uses

- 3.1 The subject lands are located between Highway 401 and the hydro corridor, on the east side of Bennett Road and within the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan Area, municipally known as 6 Wilmot Creek Drive, Newcastle. The site has frontage along the Highway 401 corridor, Bennett Road, and the existing Wilmot Creek Drive.
- 3.2 The site consists of mainly vacant agricultural lands, some open space, a gate house, multipurpose building for recreational space for the existing Wilmot Creek community, and a hydro corridor.
- 3.3 The surrounding uses are as follows:
 - North:** Highway 401 and agricultural lands.
 - East:** Existing Wilmot Creek Adult Lifestyle Community and hydro corridor
 - South:** Hydro corridor, CN Railway and beyond, Wilmot Creek Adult Lifestyle Community. Beyond this, Lake Ontario shoreline.
 - West:** Industrial lands and low-rise residential dwellings to the southwest.

4. Provincial Policy

The Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) 2024

- 4.1 The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS) encourages planning authorities to create healthy, livable, and safe communities by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of housing types, including affordable housing and shall promote development patterns that efficiently use land and infrastructure.
- 4.2 The PPS policies direct growth to settlement areas and promote compact development forms. The subject lands are located within the Newcastle Urban Settlement boundary. Planning authorities are to facilitate a variety of housing forms and promote residential intensification to achieve efficient development patterns, especially along public transit and active transportation routes.
- 4.3 The PPS encourages a minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per gross developable hectare in designated growth areas.
- 4.4 The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features, and ground water features. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated, and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
- 4.5 The proposal is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement.

5. Official Plan

Durham Regional Official Plan (Envision Durham)

- 5.1 The Durham Region Official Plan (Envision Durham) designates the subject lands as “Community Areas.” Community Areas are to be planned for a variety of housing types, sizes, and tenures, including townhouse dwellings. These areas can also include population-serving uses and shall be developed in a compact form through higher densities and by intensifying and redeveloping existing areas.
- 5.2 Envision Durham provides a long-term policy framework that is used to manage Durham Region’s growth and development to 2051. The intent of Envision Durham is to manage resources, direct growth and establish a basis for providing Regional services in an efficient and effective manner
- 5.3 Development within this area shall be planned to achieve a minimum density target of 53 people and jobs per hectare. The density proposed is estimated to be around 116 people and jobs per ha. The proposal meets the density target.
- 5.4 The application conforms with Envision Durham.

Municipality of Clarington Official Plan

- 5.5 The Clarington Official Plan designates the property Urban Residential, Neighbourhood Centre, Green Space, and Environmental Protection Area and is within Newcastle Urban Area. The area is also identified as Special Policy Area B2. Area B2 includes the lands located north of the CN railway which are subject to a Secondary Plan. A variety of housing forms, which may include retirement and assisted living facilities, are encouraged subject to the Secondary Plan. Consideration shall be given to locate high rise residential uses and commercial uses on a public road system within a plan of subdivision. A portion of the lands may be developed with private leasehold arrangements and private streets.
- 5.6 The Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan area also includes a Neighbourhood Centre. Neighbourhood centres are to serve as focal points for residential neighbourhoods and provide a range of retail and service uses to meet the day-to-day needs. The maximum amount of gross leasable floor space in any one Neighbourhood Centre shall be 5,000 square metres.
- 5.7 Bennett Road is identified as a Type C Arterial Road on Map J4 and a proposed grade separation is shown at the CN railway intersection.
- 5.8 Table 4-3 in the Clarington Official Plan states that areas at the edge of neighbourhoods and adjacent to arterial roads are to have a minimum density of 19 units per net hectare and a height ranging from 1 to 3 storeys (which can be further refined through the secondary plan). It also provides for limited apartments, townhouses, semi-detached dwellings, and detached dwellings.
- 5.9 The Clarington Official Plan contains criteria for multi-unit residential development. The policies state that development shall be suitable to accommodate the proposed density and built form and shall be compatible with the surrounding context. A site-specific Official Plan Amendment was submitted by the applicant to address the limitation on the number of townhouse units per future development block and the number of apartment buildings.
- 5.10 Natural Heritage Features are identified and mapped on the subject lands. The natural heritage features are designated Environmental Protection Area. The natural heritage system is to be protected and enhanced for the long term to promote responsible stewardship and provide sustainable environmental, economic and social benefits. Studies will determine the appropriate development limits and vegetation protection zone in accordance with the Official Plan.
- 5.11 Where a development or redevelopment proposal includes non-developable land or land designated as an Environmental Protection Area, the Municipality may require that such land be dedicated to the Municipality and will not be accepted as statutory parkland dedication.
- 5.12 A draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) that was submitted as part of the application by GHD is included in **Attachment 1**.

Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan

- 5.13 The subject lands are within the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan and are designated, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Neighbourhood Centre, Parkette, Environmental Protection Area, Stormwater Management Facilities, and Green Space.
- 5.14 The Secondary Plan also shows lands that will be acquired by the Ministry of Transportation along Highway 401, as well as a private road-control access into the existing Wilmot Creek Community, which is needed with the proposed re-route of Wilmot Creek Drive.
- 5.15 A local road connection is shown through the hydro corridor and connecting to the south parcel also subject to Planning Act applications (SC2024-0018), as well as connecting trails throughout the Secondary Plan Area.
- 5.16 Development within the Secondary Plan Area shall provide a distribution of land uses by providing a mix of uses, heights, and densities to support a complete community. Taller buildings are to be directed close to Highway 401 and Bennett Road.
- 5.17 The Medium Density Residential Designation permits a mix of housing types and tenures in mid- and low-rise building forms. Apartments and townhouses are permitted building types within the Medium Density Residential Designation. The height of buildings shall be a minimum of two storeys and a maximum of six storeys.
- 5.18 The High-Density Residential Designation permits mid-rise building forms mainly in apartment building types or similar. The height of buildings shall be a minimum of six storeys and a maximum of eight storeys. The revised proposal has low-rise apartment buildings with a height of four storeys which necessitated the need for an amendment to the High-Density Residential designation for Block 10. The minimum density within the High-Density Residential designation is 60 units per net hectare.
- 5.19 The Neighbourhood Centre is to provide commercial uses and cultural or entertainment opportunities in combination with residential uses. Mixed-use buildings are permitted, as well as a grocery store. Heights can range from one to six storeys with the one storey portion limited to 50% of all development in the Neighbourhood Centre. The minimum density is 40 units per net hectare.
- 5.20 The proposal also reflects the Land Use Schedule by providing two park blocks, a stormwater management pond, and the open space areas. The proposal has been revised to increase the size of the westerly park (Block 13), as such, an Amendment to the Secondary Plan Land Use Schedule is required.
- 5.21 A draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) that was submitted as part of the application by GHD is included in **Attachment 1**.

6. Zoning By-law 84-63

- 6.1 The subject lands are currently zoned “Agricultural (A)” within Zoning By-law 84-63.
- 6.2 Finalization of appropriate zone uses and provisions will be determined after all public and agency comments have been received and will be brought forward in a subsequent recommendation. A hold symbol will be implemented as part of the Zoning By-law Amendment to ensure the conditions of the draft plan of subdivision, site plan approval and draft plan of condominium have been fulfilled. The parks will also be rezoned to an urban residential zone and will have a hold until the lands are transferred to the Municipality.
- 6.3 Parts of the subject lands are also proposed to be rezoned to Environmental Protection to protect the natural heritage features and reflect the open space lands, including the stormwater management pond.
- 6.4 A draft Zoning By-law Amendment submitted by the applicant is included in **Attachment 2**.

7. Summary of Background Studies

- 7.1 The applicant has submitted the required supporting plans and studies which have been circulated to departments and agencies for review and comment. The list of studies and drawings are on the development application webpage at www.clarington.net/6WilmotCreek and are also available upon request. A summary of the submitted reports and studies will be provided in a future recommendation report.

8. Public Notice and Submissions

- 8.1 Public Notice was mailed to 30 households within 120 metres of the subject lands on April 1, 2026. Public Notice was also sent to the interested parties who expressed an interest in the related Zoning By-law Amendment and Subdivision applications. Three public meeting signs were installed on the subject lands. Details of the proposed application were also posted on the Municipality’s website, and in the Clarington Connected e-newsletter.
- 8.2 As of writing this report, staff have received three public submissions with main concerns raised about security for the existing Wilmot Creek community.
- 8.3 Staff will continue to process any public inquiries received. Comments received at the Statutory Public Meeting will also be considered and included in the recommendation report.

9. Departmental and Agency Comments

- 9.1 The application was circulated to internal departments and external agencies for review and comments. At the time of writing this report, staff have not received all of the agency and department comments. A list and summary of the agency and internal department comments received, as well as all public comments received, will be included in a subsequent recommendation report.

10. Discussion

- 10.1 The proposed residential development is located within the Newcastle Urban Boundary and the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan. The proposal represents a form of development encouraged by Provincial, Regional, and Municipal policies.
- 10.2 The applicant has reduced the number of residential units by approximately 462 units as the minimum height in Block 10 is proposed to be reduced to four storeys to accommodate a different built form typology (low-rise apartment buildings). The applicant has now proposed walk-up apartments and a multi-building high-density cluster on Block 10 as opposed to the previously proposed 6 to 8 storey apartments. See **Attachment 4** for the revised concept plan.
- 10.3 The proposal continues to show a future public road that will connect to the proposed plan of subdivision SC-2024-0018, as well as a private road access to the existing Wilmot Creek Community.
- 10.4 Further discussion on the appropriateness of the land uses proposed and the built form, such as heights, densities and general site layout will be addressed through a subsequent recommendation report and through the site plan application process.

Park and Trails

- 10.5 The Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan indicates that parks shall be provided as part of a connected parks and open space system. Wherever feasible, lands designated Green Space shall incorporate parks and leisure uses for passive recreational uses. Schedule A to the Secondary Plan shows two parkettes within the subject lands. Parkettes are smaller scale parks and shall be between 0.5 to 1.0 hectare in size.
- 10.6 The revised proposal has increased both park blocks shown within the Secondary Plan. Previously the park blocks were 0.71 and 0.60 hectares. Now the park blocks are 1.02 and 0.79 hectares, respectively.
- 10.7 An Official Plan Amendment was submitted to change the land use designation from 'Medium Density Residential' to "Parkette" for the westerly park. The easterly park was revised to remove the townhouse block along Street C and have more exposure along the street frontage, which reflects the park area shown within the Secondary Plan Land Use Schedule.

Height Reduction within the High-Density Designation

- 10.8 The proposed height reduction within the High-Density Designation from a minimum of six storeys to four storeys will need to be evaluated based on the proposed minimum density targets of Envision Durham, Clarington Official Plan and the Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan to ensure targets are still being maintained. The maximum height will still be eight storeys. The Amendment would allow for greater flexibility in building typologies using variations in heights to create a more pedestrian scaled design. A full analysis of the urban design principles and objectives will be completed as part of the recommendation report.

Multi-Unit Residential Policies

10.9 The Official Plan Amendment seeks to increase the number of future condominium townhouse units on Block 8 from 50 to 102 units. It also seeks to increase the number of apartment buildings from a maximum of two buildings per block. This would only apply to Blocks 9 and 10 of the draft plan of subdivision to allow for the mid-rise walk-up apartment buildings.

Affordable Units

10.10 The Wilmot Creek Secondary Plan has specific policies to facilitate affordable housing. The Clarington Official Plan also encourages a minimum of 30% of the proposed units to be affordable.

10.11 The application currently does not mention any intention to provide affordable or rental housing. Further discussions with the Owner in this regard will be required and would be discussed in a future recommendation report. Staff will work with the applicant to encourage the inclusion of affordable housing units.

11. Financial Considerations

11.1 Not Applicable, as this is a public meeting report to gather public input and the analysis of the proposal and the reports are being reviewed by the different agencies, additional financial considerations that may arise will be discussed in a subsequent recommendation report.

12. Strategic Plan

12.1 The proposed development will be reviewed against the three pillars of the Clarington Strategic Plan 2024-27. Staff will give special attention to the priorities of growing resilient, sustainable, and complete communities and connecting residents through the design of safe, diverse, inclusive, and vibrant communities. An analysis of the proposed development's alignment with the specific priorities of the Strategic Plan will be included in the future recommendation report.

13. Climate Change

13.1 The application, including submitted reports are being reviewed by staff and circulated agencies. Analysis of the proposal, including the impacts on climate change will be discussed in a subsequent recommendation report.

14. Concurrence

14.1 Not Applicable.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 The purpose of this report is to provide background information and obtain comments on the submitted applications for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Draft Plan of Subdivision for 1,293 residential units at the Statutory Public Meeting under the *Planning Act*. Staff will continue to review and process the applications, including consideration of department, agency and public feedback and will prepare a subsequent recommendation report for Council's consideration. Comments received at this public meeting will be considered and included in the final recommendation report.

Staff Contact: Nicole Zambri, Principal Planner, 905-623-3379 ext. 2422 or nzambri@clarington.net or Amanda Tapp, Manager of Development Review, 905-623-3379 ext. 2527 or atapp@clarington.net.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Draft Official Plan Amendment
- Attachment 2 – Draft Zoning By-law Amendment
- Attachment 3 – Draft Plan of Subdivision
- Attachment 4 - Revised Concept Plan
- Attachment 5 – Previous Concept Plan

Interested Parties:

A list of Interested Parties available from Department.