



Town of Wasaga Beach

Official Plan Review

Project Newsletter No. 1 | June 2017

The Town of Wasaga Beach invites you to participate in the Official Plan Review. By providing your input and ideas, you can help to shape the future of your community.

What is an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is a forward-looking document that describes the community's long term vision and sets out related goals and policies for directing land use and development and guiding decision-making by Town Council. The Plan sets out the criteria to be considered for all development proposals within the Town to promote positive community growth and improvement. It provides direction related to the location and density of housing, business and industry, tourism and economic development, protection of the natural environment, managing population and growth, planning of roads and infrastructure, the provision of parks and community facilities, urban design and other matters. All by-laws passed and all public works undertaken by the Town must conform to the Official Plan.

Why is the Town reviewing the Official Plan?

The Town's current Official Plan was approved in 2004. Under the Planning Act, an Official Plan must be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that it is consistent with provincial plans and policies. The Town's Official Plan must also conform with the Simcoe County Official Plan, which received final approval in December 2016.

In addition, the Town wants to ensure that the Official Plan remains reflective of community goals and priorities. Over the past 25 years, the population of Wasaga Beach has more than tripled to reach a 2016 census population of 20,675. About one in three residents arrived after the current Official Plan was prepared.

A renewed community discussion about the future of Wasaga Beach has begun. A new focal point for future community development has emerged from the recently completed Downtown Master Plan. The time is right to continue the momentum of the Downtown Master Plan and pro-actively lead and guide future growth in a new direction for the entire Town.

The **Town of Wasaga Beach** is reviewing its **Official Plan** to:

- Ensure it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014)
- Bring it into conformity with the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017), and the Simcoe County Official Plan (2016)
- Build on related initiatives such as the Downtown Master Plan (2017), Age Friendly Community Plan (2016), Housing Strategy (2012), transportation and infrastructure studies, etc.
- Direct growth and development to contribute to a complete, healthy, walkable and sustainable community
- Reflect the future vision and priorities of the community, building on the community discussion that produced the Downtown Master Plan process and other initiatives to create a new community-wide plan



Images above from Downtown Master Plan, FORREC Limited, 2017.



How does the Official Plan affect you?

The Official Plan is the guiding document for land use and development in your community. It directs where new development will occur, what services will be needed and how they will be provided, and when and in what order parts of your community will grow and change. Policies of the Official Plan are implemented by a Zoning By-law which regulates the use of land and the form of buildings and structures on each property in the Town. The Zoning By-law must conform to the Official Plan.

What is being considered?

The process of creating a new Official Plan is just underway. It begins with a series of consultation initiatives and preparing topic-specific discussion papers in 2017 to set the stage for preparing the draft Official Plan and reviewing it with the community in 2018. Some of the key topics include:

- The overall **community structure** and distribution of planned future growth and development among existing built-up areas and new development areas;
- Appropriate areas of focus for higher density and mixed use development such as **nodes and corridors**;
- Future **housing** needs based on planned population growth, demographics, affordability and market factors including the mix of housing types, sizes and densities;
- Future **employment** growth, economic development, market sectors, opportunities, and land requirements;
- **Commercial, retail and tourism** opportunities and the role and function of areas designated for related land uses;
- **Transportation** within the Town and connections beyond, options and choices including walking, cycling and transit;
- **Infrastructure and public services**, energy and utilities, community facilities, parks and open space;
- **Natural heritage, resource conservation**, protection of **water resources**, climate change and community resiliency;
- **Cultural heritage** resources and conservation;
- **Public health and safety**, natural and human-made hazards.

How can you participate?

There are several opportunities to provide your input to the Town's Official Plan Review. Upcoming consultation events include:

- A **Public Meeting** will be held on **June 27, 2017** at **7:00 p.m.** at the **Town of Wasaga Beach Municipal Office, Council Chambers, 30 Lewis Street, Wasaga Beach**
 - A **Community Visioning Workshop and Drop-in Info Centre** and will be held on **June 28, 2017** at the **RecPlex in the Oakview Room (1724 Mosley Street)**, **drop-in between 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., presentation and workshop from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.**
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