



Our King

2051 Official Plan Review
Shaping Our Future

Discussion Paper 1: Introduction and Context for the 2051 Official Plan Review



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Land Acknowledgement

On behalf of King Township citizens, staff and visitors, we acknowledge that the Township of King sits within the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Williams Treaty First Nation, as well as the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee peoples.

We ask everyone to reflect on the Indigenous nations that have lived on this land since time immemorial and how, as individuals, we can take steps towards reconciliation. Together, we will continue to partner with Indigenous peoples and communities to celebrate the heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding achievements of Indigenous people, and work towards healing a difficult past to create a more respectful future for several generations to come.

Discussion Guide

The Township is excited for your participation in King’s 2051 Official Plan Review. The Official Plan Review is an important process that is all about shaping the future of King Township. The Official Plan affects every resident, business and landowner in King, and establishes a comprehensive long-term vision for the future of the Township as a whole.

As King continues to grow and change, it is important that the Official Plan reflects the needs and desires of the community. Through this review the Official Plan will be updated to align with recent changes in Provincial legislation, to incorporate any relevant policies from the York Region Official Plan, to develop a policy framework to guide future growth in King, and to ensure that the vision as set out in the Official Plan continues to meet the Township’s evolving needs.

We are currently in **Phase 2 – Growth Review and Directions** and we want to hear your thoughts, ideas, and concerns about various thematic areas and emerging policy directions for the 2051 Our King Official Plan. This Discussion Paper “Introduction and Context for the 2051 Official Plan Review” is one of four (4) Discussion Papers that have been prepared for this Phase to help present key topics, things to think about, and emerging policy directions so that we can continue to grow King as a desirable, sustainable, and attractive place to live, work, and visit.

The Discussion Papers that make up this Phase of the Official Plan Review are:

- **Introduction and Context for the 2051 Official Plan Review;**
- Living in King;
- Working in King; and
- Moving and Connecting in King.

These four (4) Discussion Papers will be the subject of community engagement in January and February 2025.





1. Introduction: The Eight Discussion Papers

On September 26, 2023, Council initiated the review of the Our King Official Plan (called “Our King”). To start the conversation on the Official Plan Review, the Township released an Introductory Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper identified key topics to be considered through the review, proposed next steps and approach to public engagement.

This Official Plan Review offers the opportunity to create an updated land use planning framework that will balance anticipated growth with the preservation of the Township’s established characteristics. The project will build on the solid foundation that is Our King and will enhance the policy framework and vision for directing growth through to 2051. Policies will be drafted to provide direction on:

- Accommodating future residential and employment growth;
- Preserving cultural heritage and King’s agricultural system;
- Energy conservation, sustainability, and climate change;
- How to best align King’s policy framework with York Region’s Official Plan and Provincial policy;
- Constructing King’s infrastructure to be future ready and able to accommodate the forecasted growth; and
- Protecting and enhancing King’s natural heritage system.

The Phase 2 Discussion Papers focus on the subject of growth in King Township to the year 2051. These four Discussion Papers undertake a review and analysis of current Official Plan



policies and provide preliminary policy directions for Council and the public to consider. The Discussion Papers that make up this phase are:

1. Introduction and Context for the 2051 Official Plan Review
2. Living in King
3. Working in King
4. Moving and Connecting in King

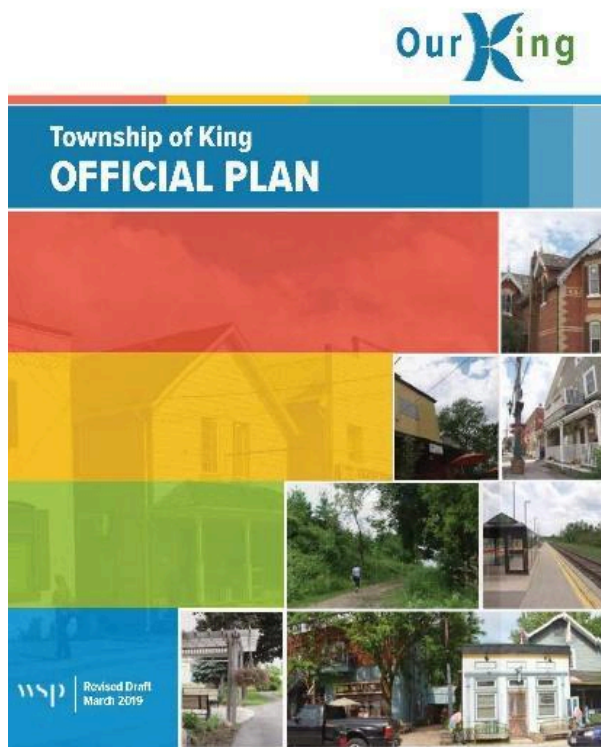
The third Phase of the Official Plan Review will focus on the context of Community. Four Discussion Papers will be prepared in this Phase, focusing on:

1. Living in King
2. Protecting Nature in King
3. Cultivating in King
4. Implementing Our King

These first four Discussion Papers will start the conversation on what needs to be considered as King grows to 2051. Think about the questions asked throughout each of the Papers and review the preliminary policy directions. What do you want King to look like in 2051?



2. The Our King Official Plan



The planning framework in King Township is largely directed by higher levels of government, as enabled by the *Planning Act*. The Province of Ontario provides overarching policy direction which municipalities are required to either "be consistent with" or "conform to," depending on the specific document. According to Section 17 of Ontario's *Planning Act*, municipalities must have an official plan, and as per Section 24, all public works and by-laws must conform to this plan. The *Planning Act* describes the contents of an official plan as setting out and containing goals, objectives, and policies to manage and direct physical changes and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environments.

Further information can be found at the following locations:

- Ontario's "Citizen's guide to land use planning" on Official Plans and the *Planning Act*.
- The current Our King and related documents.

Our King was adopted by Council in September 2019, and approved by York Region a year later. It sets out a long-term vision for the Township and provides a policy framework that considers a planning horizon of 2031.

Our King envisions focused growth within the Township's three Villages: King City, Nobleton, and Schomberg. With King's population expected to grow by 37% between 2016 and 2031, and York Region forecasting a population increase from 28,400 in 2021 to 51,000 by 2051, the Township must plan for significant population and employment growth. The Official Plan Review provides the opportunity to shape King's future in a way that aligns with community values and responds to challenges such as housing supply, including diversified and affordable housing, infrastructure, transportation, economic development, and climate change.

Our King is a guide that outlines how the Township will manage long-term growth and change. Its primary purpose is to establish a framework for managing land use and development throughout King. For example, the Plan:

- **Guides development:** Our King sets out goals, objectives and policies that guide decisions regarding zoning, land use designations, future growth areas, transportation, housing, parks and other important aspects of community planning.



- **Coordinates growth:** the Plan ensures that growth is coordinated and meets the community’s needs, helping to decide where new housing, industry, offices, and shops will be located.
- **Encourages public awareness:** Our King increases public awareness on King’s general land use planning policies and helps all members of the community understand how their land may be used now and in the future.
- **Directs infrastructure planning:** Our King works with the Township’s Master Plans to decide where roads, watermain, sewers, parks, and other services will be built.
- **Provides conflict resolution:** Our King sets out implementation policies that provide a way to evaluate and settle conflicting land uses while meeting local, regional, and provincial interests.

The Our King Official Plan is comprised of several components:

1. **Vision** that sets out the overall goals for the Township to a set planning horizon.
2. **Land Use Designations** that specify areas for residential, commercial, employment, institutional and other types of land use.
3. **Policies** that describe various aspects such as environmental protection, heritage conservation and urban design.
4. **Schedules** (or maps) of all lands in King, visually representing each land use designation and location; and
5. **Appendices** which provide additional information or clarification are included in the plan for ease of reference.

One of the key documents incorporated into Our King was the Township’s Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (“ICSP”). The ICSP was completed in 2012 and was a forward-looking document that described how the long-term wellbeing of the Township and its residents can be enhanced while protecting the environment over the next 20 to 25 years. It was structured around “the four pillars of sustainability”, being environmental, economic, socio-cultural and financial sustainability, to provide a balanced approach to these different dimensions of King’s identity, while promoting community vitality and prosperity.



April 2012



3. The 2051 Official Plan Review

On September 26, 2023, Council initiated the review of Our King through a Special Meeting of Council. The Special Meeting of Council included the presentation of the Official Plan Review Introductory Discussion Paper, which highlighted key aspects of the Official Plan that will need to be reviewed and updated. Over the past year, staff have been engaging with the public and responding to further changes in the land use planning legislative and policy framework, including the changing roles between Provincial, Regional and Municipal government. Over the past year the Township has also been undertaken background studies to support the Official Plan Review, including the preparation of Growth Management and Employment Land Strategies to inform the employment and community land needs to the year 2051. The preliminary findings of these Strategies will be discussed in the Living in King and Working in King Discussion Papers.

The review of Our King will see five phases of work completed to produce an updated Official Plan. Project updates and registration will be hosted on the project's SpeaKING page.

An Official Plan Review is a Provincially mandated exercise that is to be conducted every five years, or ten years following a Section 26 conformity exercise. This ensures that the plan reflects updated legislation and policy to meet the evolving needs and priorities of King Township. Through the current five-year review of Our King, the update will ensure Our King:

1. Aligns with recent changes in Provincial policy and legislation, including recognizing changes intended to “build more homes faster.”
2. Integrates relevant policies of the York Region Official Plan, 2022, which includes making local decisions on how to address population and growth management for King to 2051.
3. Contains a vision, objectives, and policies that continue to meet the Township’s evolving needs.

This will be achieved by:

- Updating the vision and policy framework to guide growth and development in the three Villages, the Hamlets, and the rural area;
- Determining how to accommodate the forecasted employment and population growth and related targets to support the development of complete communities;
- Developing new policies to address the changing nature of employment uses and Provincial policy direction;
- Continuing to promote the preservation of natural and cultural heritage resources by introducing new policies while providing flexibility where appropriate;
- Ensuring the viability of the agricultural system, while providing opportunities for economic development and rural resiliency through enhanced policies for agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses;
- Revisiting the Township’s energy, climate change and sustainability policies to ensure that they are reflective of current standards and that they prepare King for a



- changing climate; and
- Updating the Plan to conform to/be consistent with changes in Provincial policy and integrate the relevant policies of the 2022 York Region Official Plan.

4. Change Since 2023

The last six years have been characterized by continuous changes to the Provincial legislative and policy framework around land use planning. Multiple legislative amendments per year have resulted in significant changes to how land use planning is undertaken in Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in particular. This was well documented in the September 2023 Official Plan Review Introductory Discussion Paper, including:

- Bill 108 – More Homes, More Choice Act (2019)
- Bill 197 – Covid-19 Economic Recovery Act (2020)
- Bill 109 – More Homes for Everyone Act (2022)
- Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act (2022)
- Bill 97 – Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act (2023)

Changes have continued in the past year, which result in new decisions for the Township to make. Updates to Section 1.2 ‘Basis of this Plan’ of Our King will be required to reflect these updated changes.

4.1 Bill 150 – Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023

Bill 150, the Official Plan Adjustments Act, received Royal Assent on December 6, 2023. Among other matters, this legislation unwound previous approvals of various official plans, including the York Region Official Plan. In its place, the legislation provided retroactive approval, back to November 4, 2022, of the York Region Official Plan (“YROP”) and removed some of the modifications that had been made to the Plan, including some of the modifications that impacted land in King.

The September 2023 Discussion Paper identified the Whitebelt lands as a new Community and population and employment targets of 66,400 and 18,300, respectively, to the year 2051. Through Bill 150, modifications were made to remove these lands as Community Area in the YROP. The June 2024 Office Consolidation of the YROP reflects the changes made by Bill 150, with updated boundaries of King’s Community Areas, a population target of 51,000 and an employment target of 17,700 to 2051. These figures form the basis for the Township’s master planning work and the 2051 Official Plan Review.

4.2 Bill 185 – Cutting Red Tape To Build More Homes Act, 2024

The Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act received Royal Assent on June 6, 2024. This



legislation:

- Added back the ability to collect development charges for certain studies under the Development Charges Act;
- Removed upper-tier planning responsibilities for York, Peel, and Halton Regions as of July 1, 2024, and transitioned those official plans to become lower-tier policy plans for administrative purposes;
- Further limited appeal rights for planning applications, including limiting appeals on certain types of applications to only be filed by the affected property owner and agencies, provided they have made oral or written submissions to a public meeting;
- Revises the Planning Act to remove the authority of municipalities and Council to require applicants to pre-consult with the municipality prior to submission of applications;
- Reverses the requirement for municipalities to refund application fees;
- Removed the section related to Minister's orders made at the request of a municipality;
- Introduced regulations providing for certain prescribed persons to provide for the lapsing of approvals of plans and drawings;
- Removed the Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator tool in favour of an updated Minister's Zoning Order ("MZO") framework; and
- Enables the passing of a Municipal Act by-law relating to water and wastewater servicing allocation.

Through the Official Plan Review the Township will need to decide what to do with the YROP as it is now a lower-tier official plan administered by the Township and continues to be in effect. Having two policy documents is cumbersome to administer and can cause confusion for the public as to what policies are in effect for their property. It is anticipated that through the Official Plan Review the relevant policies of the YROP will be incorporated into Our King, allowing the Township to repeal the YROP once the Official Plan Review is complete. The policies of Our King will reflect changes to the scope of municipal planning responsibilities, and to ensure that the policies are consistent with, and conform to, all applicable Provincial policies.



4.3 Conservation Authorities Act Regulation (O. Reg. 41/24)

A series of legislative amendments and regulations have been introduced over recent years to remove certain development review functions from conservation authorities across Ontario. Amendments to the *Planning Act* have excluded conservation authorities from the definition of "public body," meaning they can no longer independently appeal municipal council decisions to the Ontario Land Tribunal or be a party to such appeals. However, conservation authorities still play a role in commenting on development applications and proposals under the Planning Act



and Aggregate Resources Act. Their jurisdiction includes natural hazard management, management of conservation authority-owned land, drinking water source protection, and surface water and groundwater monitoring programs.

Ontario Regulation 41/24, effective April 1, 2024, significantly altered the regulatory landscape by shifting the authority to set out regulations. Previously, conservation authorities had the power to make regulations concerning lands within their jurisdiction. However, under the new regulation, this power was been centralized to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (“MNRF”) and in certain circumstances, the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Areas where development activities would require a permit from a conservation authority are now limited to:

- Hazard lands;
- Wetlands;
- River or stream valleys (the limits of which are to be determined in accordance with the procedure established in O. Reg. 41/24);
- Areas that are adjacent or close to the shoreline of an inland lake that may be affected by flooding, erosion or dynamic beach hazards (the limits of which are to be determined in accordance with the procedure established in O. Reg. 41/24); and
- Other areas that may be identified further by regulation.

Within the above areas low-risk activities are also exempt from approval (subject to conditions). This relief was provided to small seasonal or floating docks, fences, erosion control structures, and non-habitable structures. If a development is approved under the Planning Act, that activity would also be exempt from requiring a permit, so long as any conditions or restrictions in the approval are satisfied.

The scope of conditions attached to a conservation authority permit are also limited to assisting in preventing or mitigating any effects on controlling flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, unstable soil of bedrock, and human health or safety or damage or destruction in the event of a natural hazard. Conditions can also occur to support the administration or implementation of the permit.

Conservation authorities could previously offer ecological review services beyond regulated areas. However, due to recent changes, this is no longer possible in most cases. Consequently, municipalities may need to explore alternative options such as consulting services or hiring additional staff to undertake reviews.

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) continues to implement the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, focusing on stormwater management, sediment control, and reducing phosphorus loading into Lake Simcoe.





4.4 The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement

A new Provincial Planning Statement (“2024 PPS”) came into effect on October 20, 2024. This new Statement replaced the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and the 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, except for interpretive purposes in the Greenbelt Plan area, as discussed in Section 4.5 below.

Municipal official plans are recognized as the most important vehicles for implementation of the 2024 PPS. The 2024 PPS requires official plans to identify matters of Provincial interest and set out appropriate land use designations and policies in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement and any applicable provincial plans which provide more refined direction. Municipalities may go beyond minimum standards set out in policy to address matters of importance to a specific community, unless doing so would conflict with any policy of the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement.

Policy 6.1.5 of the 2024 PPS outlines how the Statement shall be implemented and interpreted in an official plan:

“Official plans shall identify Provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. Official plans shall provide clear, reasonable, and attainable policies to protect Provincial interests and facilitate development in suitable areas. In order to protect Provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to-date with the Provincial Planning Statement. The policies of the Provincial Planning Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of an official plan.”

The 2024 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) emphasizes the need for diverse housing options, including affordable housing, through intensification and redevelopment. It provides guidance for managing growth within settlement areas, which is further discussed in the Living in King Discussion Paper.

The 2024 PPS also introduces new policies for settlement area boundary expansions, with additional restrictive policies for Villages in the Township due to the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. These expansions are detailed in the Living in King and Working in King Discussion Papers.

Supporting a modern economy, the 2024 PPS redefines Employment Areas, offers flexibility in employment land conversions, and promotes economic development. It also addresses land use compatibility adjacent to employment areas, as explored in the Working in King Discussion Paper.

The 2024 PPS includes policies for infrastructure and facilities, such as transportation systems, sewage, water, and stormwater, detailed in the Moving and Connecting in King Discussion Paper. It encourages municipalities to develop locally relevant policies, involving local and Indigenous communities to ensure inclusive and equitable planning outcomes. The PPS also allows for innovative, context-specific solutions and suggests the Province may report on performance indicators to measure policy effectiveness.



Figure 1: Planning Document Hierarchy

4.5 Greenbelt Plan Amendment No. 4

As part of the release of the 2024 PPS, an administrative amendment was made to the Greenbelt Plan that came into effect October 20, 2024. This amendment was made to Section 1.4.1 of that Plan to confirm that a reference in the Plan to the Provincial Policy Statement or PPS means a reference to the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, and that a reference to the Growth Plan means a reference to the 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (both now otherwise revoked).

The intent of this change is clear: to keep the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and 2019 Growth Plan in effect where the Greenbelt Plan applies. The Province will likely need to undertake a full conformity review of the Greenbelt Plan at a later date to update and integrate the relevant policies. In the meantime, the Official Plan Review will need to consider both the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and 2019 Growth Plan as applicable, in addition to the 2024 PPS.



5. Other Township Studies

King's Corporate Strategic Plan and Master Plans cover various aspects of community development. These plans were developed with input from the public, agencies, and other stakeholders, and have been adopted by Township Council. Key projects and studies include:

- 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP);
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, 2019;
- Water and Wastewater Master Plan, 2020;
- King Township – 2020 Transportation Master Plan A Way Forward;
- Active Transportation Strategy, 2020;
- Traffic Calming Strategy, 2020;
- Community Tourism Plan, 2021;
- Community Improvement Plan (CIP), 2021;
- Comprehensive Stormwater Management Master Plan, 2022;
- Village Urban Design Guidelines, 2023;
- 2023 King Township Tree Canopy Study, 2024;
- ThinkKING Green: Sustainable Development Program, 2024; and
- King Climate Action Plan, 2024.

A review of Our King considers these strategic planning documents alongside the latest Provincial legislation and policy. Many of these documents support the implementation of Provincial policies and legislation.

Further studies are ongoing and will be monitored for incorporation into the Official Plan Review, and include the:

- Doctors Lane and Old King Road Neighbourhood Plans Study and implementing Community Planning Permit System;
- Highway 11 Corridor Study;
- Employment Lands and Growth Management Strategies;
- Parks, Facilities and Trails Master Plan Update;
- Transportation Master Plan Update; and
- Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update.





6. Preliminary Policy Directions

Each Discussion Paper concludes with a list of preliminary policy directions being considered through the Official Plan Review. To fully understand the updates being considered for "Our King," it is essential to read all the papers. Changes to this list, whether additions, deletions, or edits, will be made based on public, Council and stakeholder engagement and input, in addition to further reflection and analysis of issues raised during this project.

The Table below provides an example of the preliminary policy directions that are included in the Living in King, Working in King and Moving and Connecting in King Discussion Papers. Each Table includes the "Theme" that the direction is related to, as well as a Section reference to the current Our King Official Plan. The preliminary, or emerging policy direction is summarized in the following column, and the final column identifies the policy, legislation or resource that is driving the change.

Below is a sample of policy directions from Discussion Paper 2 (repeated there) as an example:

#	Theme	Our King OP Section	Emerging Policy Direction	Policy/Legislative Driver and Resource
	Vision	1.2 Basis of this Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to be updated to reference the 2024 Provincial Policy Statement, revocation of the Growth Plan outside of the Greenbelt Plan area, and future Township repeal of the York Region Official Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPS 2024 Planning Act amendments Greenbelt Plan Amendment No. 4
	Vision	1.4 Our Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to be updated to extend the planning horizon to 2051, and to recognize the work of the 2051 Official Plan Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPS 2024 Community feedback



7. Next Steps and Getting Involved

The 2051 Official Plan is a multi-phase project, with many opportunities to join the conversation and provide feedback into the project's progress. All project information shall be posted on the project's SpeaKing page, including project mailing list registration, schedule of future in-person events, and online engagement.

This is the Phase 2 Discussion Paper. A second series of Discussion Papers will be prepared in Phase 3 (Spring 2025) on the context of Community. The Community Discussion Paper will look at the themes of:

1. Living in King (second phase of review)
2. Protecting Nature in King
3. Cultivating in King
4. Implementing Our King

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