

Presented To:	Planning Committee
Presented:	Monday, Feb 09, 2015
Report Date	Friday, Jan 23, 2015
Type:	Presentations

For Information Only

Official Plan Review - Population, Growth and Housing

Recommendation

For information only.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to continue to provide Planning Committee with an overview of the public consultation, background studies and discussion papers that form the basis of the current Official Plan review. This report will touch on some of the larger aspects of:

- Population, Household and Employment trends;
- Planning for an Aging Population;
- Growth and Settlement;
- Land Supply and Intensification; and
- Housing, Second Suites and Rental Conversion

Background

As highlighted in the January 26th report, the City is currently undertaking a five year review of the Official Plan. The process began in January of 2012 and has involved conducting a number of public consultation sessions, background studies and policy discussion papers, which have been presented to Planning Committee, including:

- Growth and Settlement Background Report and Issues Paper – May, 2012;
- Population, Households and Employment Land Projections for the City of Greater Sudbury – May, 2013;
- Growth and Settlement Policy Discussion Paper – June, 2013;
- Second Unit Policy Options (from Housing and Homelessness Background Study) – October, 2013;
- Rural Consent Policy Options – November 2013; and,
- Rental Conversion Policy Review – November 2014

The purpose of undertaking these studies was to first understand the population and employment growth anticipated for Greater Sudbury over the next 20 years and then use that information, along with public input, to craft policies around growth and settlement, land supply, housing, infrastructure and demographic changes, while at the same time ensuring that the Plan and its policies are consistent with Provincial plans,

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Kris Longston
Senior Planner
Digitally Signed Jan 23, 15

Recommended by the Division

Mark Simeoni
Acting Director of Planning Services
Digitally Signed Jan 27, 15

Recommended by the Department

Paul Baskcomb
Acting General Manager of Growth & Development
Digitally Signed Jan 27, 15

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Doug Nadorozny
Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Jan 27, 15

policies and legislation. The discussion papers and background studies also provided the opportunity to review and explore new land use planning issues raised by the public during extensive consultation process.

The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement

Under the *Planning Act*, municipalities must ensure that their Official Plans are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and conform to applicable Provincial Plans, which in the case of the City of Greater Sudbury is the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario. With respect to issues of growth and development, land supply and housing, the PPS outlines specific policies that municipalities must be consistent with. In general terms, municipalities must:

- maintain a 3 year supply of lands, with servicing capacity, that are suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and/or registered plans;
- maintain a 10 year supply of land through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development;
- ensure sufficient land is made available through intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, designated growth areas, to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, housing and other land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years;
- Provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities, including permitting all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents and all forms of residential intensification, including second units; and
- With respect to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, maintain an updated Official Plan and develop other supporting documents, including strategies for maintaining a 20-year supply of lands for a variety of employment uses in appropriate locations to support economic development objectives.

It is important to note that the above Provincial policies stress the use of residential intensification in all land supply calculations to ensure that the growth ideally occurs through infill and intensification of existing neighborhoods first to maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

It should also be noted that the PPS contains many policies related to all aspects of land use planning that the revised Official Plan will need to be consistent with. The above represent only a general overview of some of the policies that are the most relevant to this report. A full review of the draft Official Plan and its consistency with the PPS has been undertaken as part of this five year review and will also be conducted by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs as part of their review process.

Population, Housing and Employment Needs Study

One of the key pieces of the five year Official Plan review process is to project the future population and employment growth and trends over the next 20 years and beyond to ensure that the Provincial requirements related to land supply and housing listed above can be met.

To this end, the City undertook a study looking at projected population and employment growth to the year 2036. The study developed two different scenarios to test how various demographic and economic factors could affect future population, housing and employment levels. The first scenario, “the reference scenario”, was based on relatively stable employment and modest growth, the second or “high scenario” was based on a more optimistic outlook which included expansion in the Northern Ontario mining sector. The key findings of this study were:

- The City’s population is expected to grow under both scenarios over the next 25 years;
- The “reference scenario” would see the City’s population increase by approximately 10,500 people

between 2011 and 2036, or 6.3%;

- The “high scenario” would see the City’s population increase by approximately 22,000 people between 2011 and 2036, or 13.2%;
- Employment growth over the same period would be approximately 2,220 (2.7%) jobs or 8,600 (10.7%) jobs under the reference and high scenarios, respectively;
- Due to the City’s aging population, the average household size will continue to decline from the current 2.33 persons per household to 2.18 under the reference scenario. This is expected to continue the current shift towards the construction of more row and apartment units as a result of both market conditions and the aging population;
- Housing is expected to grow by approximately 8,810 units between 2011 and 2036 under the “reference scenario” and 13,170 units under the “high scenario”. Both scenarios would see a similar distribution among the new units of about 55% singles, 34% apartments with the remainder being comprised of row houses and semi detached units.
- The age structure of the population will have a wide range of effects on how the City grows. In 2011, 29% of the City’s population was over the age of 55 and 11% was over the age of 70. By the year 2036, this is projected to increase to 34% and 20%.

Planning for an Aging Population

One of the key findings of the Population, Housing and Employment Needs study was how the demographics of the City will change over the next 20 years and how the age structure will have a wide range of effects on how Greater Sudbury grows. This is due to the fact that the long term demand for housing and the participation in the labour force are both driven in a large measure by the age structure of the population, and in both the “High” and “Reference” growth scenarios, the population will age.

The population profile of the City is “top heavy” with a proportionally large number of people near or past retirement age relative to the rest of Ontario and Canada. In 2011, 29% of the City’s population was over the age of 55 and 11% was over the age of 70. By the year 2036, this will have increased to 34% and 20%.

Having a demographic profile where one in three people is over the age of 55 and one in five are over the age of 70 will result in changes in housing demand and how the City delivers services, including housing, recreation and transportation. This demographic shift will also have an impact on the demand for services, particularly in the healthcare sector given the Greater Sudbury’s aging population and its provision of specialized healthcare services to all of Northeastern Ontario.

To respond to the needs of an aging population, the Official Plan will need to be flexible and ensure that we recognize and plan for the change in demographics that will take place over the next 20 years. To this end, the Official Plan should seek to:

- support development that is age-friendly including the creation of smaller, unique, flexible and non-traditional housing opportunities for an aging population, promotes ‘aging in place’ and is in close proximity to amenities and services in the Downtown, Regional Centres, Town Centres and Mixed Use Commercial areas;
- create a safe and secure physical and social environment for Greater Sudbury’s aging population with supportive design standards that are flexible and adaptable (sidewalk policies, curb heights, park facilities, etc.);
- provide accessible, affordable and convenient public transportation to Greater Sudbury’s aging population to conduct their daily activities;
- support the creation of more affordable housing and long-term care facilities of a senior friendly

design with support services for an aging population;

- facilitate ‘aging in place’ to allow residents to live healthy, independent lives in the comfort and dignity of their own homes;
- support an active lifestyle for an aging population by increasing the availability and accessibility of social and recreational opportunities; and,
- support development that recognizes the short-term and long term demand for an increase in health care service and related economic opportunities in Greater Sudbury.

Land Supply Summary

A key component of the five year review of the City’s Official Plan is to analyze the land supply and compare it to the projected household demand over the 20 year planning period. As mentioned, the PPS requires that municipalities maintain a minimum of 3 years of supply in lands that are suitably zoned and in lands that are in draft approved or registered plans. Municipalities are also required to maintain a minimum 10 year supply of lands that are designated and available for residential development. Another important consideration is that the PPS places a 20 year time horizon on the amount of land that is available for development.

To complete this analysis, staff identified and categorized all of the vacant lands within the settlement areas of the City and tested the supply against the “High Growth” scenario outlined in the Population, Housing and Employment Needs Study. This analysis revealed that:

- There is an approximate 5 to 7 year supply dwelling units that can be accommodated on existing vacant lots in the City under current zoning;
- There is an approximate 17 year supply of dwelling units that can be accommodated in existing draft approved subdivisions, condominiums and site plans;
- There is an approximate 20 year supply of dwelling units that could be accommodated on existing lands in the City that are vacant and designated for residential development;
- In total there is an approximate 43 year supply of residential units in all of the vacant land categories in the PPS. This meets and exceeds provincial requirements;
- There is also an approximate 54 year supply of vacant ICI (Industrial, Commercial, Institutional) lands in the City, which would meet and exceed the projected demand over the 20 year planning period; and

These findings are similar to the results of the Synthesis/Land Use and Settlement Report undertaken as part of developing the current Official Plan in 2004, which also found that land supply exceeded projected demand.

Rural Lot Creation

In addition to dwelling unit supply and demand in the settlement areas, the Official Plan review process has also thoroughly examined the issue of rural lot creation through a number of reports, discussion papers and public input sessions. The reason for this analysis is that as with the urban land supply, the Official Plan must be consistent with the PPS in rural areas, where it calls for efficient development and land use patterns and limited residential development. The current non-waterfront rural severance policies in the Official Plan require the severed and retained parcels to have a minimum size of 2 hectares and a minimum public road frontage of 90 metres and also limit the number of new lots created from a parent parcel to three. These policies have been largely unchanged since the first Regional Official Plan in 1978.

In terms of supply and demand for rural residential lots, the June 24th 2013 Growth and Settlement report determined that the current supply of vacant non-waterfront rural lots along with the potential supply of rural lots under the current severance policies was more than adequate to meet the projected demand over the next 20 years.

During the course of Official Plan review, there was significant public input regarding possibly changing the rural severance policies to permit smaller lots and increase the number that could be created from a parent parcel. This input included people who felt that the policies should be changed to allow more rural development and as well as others who indicated that they should be kept the same to encourage efficient development through intensification. A summary of public input on rural consents was included in the June 24th, 2013 Growth and Settlement Discussion Paper.

In November of 2013, City Council directed staff to include an option as part of the Official Plan review which provides for a minimum lot area of 0.8 hectares, a minimum lot frontage of 45 metres and maximum cap on the number of lots created of six lots from the parent parcel based on the date of adoption of the 2006 Official Plan. This option has been carried forward in to the draft of the revised Official Plan.

Housing and Homelessness Background Study

In support of the Official Plan Review and the development of a Housing and Homelessness Plan for the City, a Housing and Homelessness Background Study was undertaken. From an Official Plan review perspective, this study, through research and consultations with the public and key stakeholders identified and analyzed housing and homelessness issues and brought forth recommendations on Official Plan policies for housing, specifically the requirement to develop policies around second units, which is covered later in this report. Overall, the study determined that:

- There is a need to improve housing options across the housing spectrum, and
- There is a need to improve housing access and affordability for individuals and families with low incomes

To address these issues, the study undertook a review of the existing Official Plan policies, identified gaps and made recommendations where Official Plan policies could be improved to:

- support the maintenance of the existing housing stock;
- increase the supply of affordable housing for households of low and moderate incomes;
- encourage a diversified housing supply;
- support efficient land use and the creation of complete communities, which accommodate a mix of land uses and support transit while maintaining appropriate levels of health and safety; and
- support energy conservation and energy efficient housing

Second Suites

As part of the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act, 2011* being enacted in 2012, municipalities are now required to establish Official Plan policies and zoning by-law provisions allowing second suites in single, semi and row houses as well as in accessory structures in new and existing developments. As part of undertaking the Housing and Homelessness study, the issue of second suites was thoroughly investigated, including:

- Legislative and historical context;
- Need for and benefits of second units;
- Feedback from stakeholders and public consultation; and,
- Potential Impacts of Secondary Suite Policies;

A discussion paper on second suite policy options was brought forward to Planning Committee in October of 2013. The report recommended that the Official Plan contain policies that permit second suites in detached, semi-detached, street townhouses, row dwellings and accessory buildings, subject to among other things:

- A restriction of one second suite per lot;
- Adequate servicing being available;
- Not being located on or adjacent to hazard lands;
- Not causing alterations to the main building exterior that would change the character of the existing neighbourhood; and,
- Satisfying all applicable requirements of the Zoning By-law, Building Code, Fire Code and Property Standards By-law.

Rental Conversion Policies

Another important issue related to housing in the City of Greater Sudbury is the conversion of rental housing to condominium ownership. The current Official Plan contains a policy that prevents the conversion of rental housing to condominium if the rental vacancy rate is less than 3%. During the Official Plan review, it was found that there may be a need for more flexibility and broader considerations in implementing this policy.

Rental housing provides a flexible form of accommodation that supports an active and mobile lifestyle for single individuals and non-family households, namely;

- Rental housing offers individuals, such as seniors or persons living with disabilities, who are unable to cope with the day-to-day upkeep of their homes, relief from the burden of maintenance and repair as well as a greater potential for social interaction with neighbours;
- Rental housing is also often the first step in affordable housing for young adults and people starting out, allowing them to save for homeownership; and
- Rental housing is also a good option for students, new immigrants and workers who only require short-term accommodation in a community.

Adopting rental conversion policies helps ensure an adequate supply of rental housing to meet the needs in the community. Some of the additional policy considerations for rental conversion include:

- support development that is age-friendly including the creation of smaller, unique, flexible and non-traditional housing opportunities for an aging population, promotes 'aging in place' and is in close proximity to amenities and services in the Downtown, Regional Centres, Town Centres and Mixed Use Commercial areas;
- create a safe and secure physical and social environment for Greater Sudbury's aging population with supportive design standards that are flexible and adaptable (sidewalk policies, curb heights, park facilities, etc.);
- provide accessible, affordable and convenient public transportation to Greater Sudbury's aging population to conduct their daily activities;
- support the creation of more affordable housing and long-term care facilities of a senior friendly design with support services for an aging population;

- facilitate 'aging in place' to allow residents to live healthy, independent lives in the comfort and dignity of their own homes;
- support an active lifestyle for an aging population by increasing the availability and accessibility of social and recreational opportunities; and,
- support development that recognizes the short-term and long term demand for an increase in health care service and related economic opportunities in Greater Sudbury.

Conclusion

The purpose of this report was to review and highlight the public consultation, background studies and discussion papers that have been undertaken as part of the Official Plan review in relation to population and employment projections, demographic changes, land supply, housing and second units. The main themes that emerged from this process were:

- The population projected to grow between 6% and 13% between 2011 and 2036;
- The age structure will shift significantly over this period as the population ages, which will have a wide range of effects on how the City grows;
- The current land supply in all categories meets and exceeds Provincial requirements; and
- There is a need to improve housing options, access and affordability, including policies to allow second suites.