

Town of Petawawa

Official Plan Review 2022-2023

Draft Policy Directions Report

June 2023



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1. Introduction

The Town of Petawawa is undergoing an Official Plan Review where changes will be made to meet the Town's long-term needs while conforming to the Planning Act and remaining consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS). The Official Plan (OP) for the Town of Petawawa was adopted by Town Council on January 21, 2002, approved by the County of Renfrew on January 28, 2004, and subsequently approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on July 15, 2004.

The Town's OP was last updated in 2013 and approved in 2014. Under section 26 of the Planning Act, it is required to be updated every ten years. The OP Review provides an opportunity to consolidate previously approved Official Plan Amendments and any new legislative changes that may have occurred since the last update of the OP.

This Policy Directions Report (PDR) provides a recommended approach that is reflective of the existing context and Town's aspired future. The updated OP will provide the goals, objectives, and policies for land use planning to 2051. The preliminary policy directions identified in the PDR are intended to engage further discussions throughout the Official Plan Review process.

1.1 Project Context

The updated OP will establish innovative and contemporary policies to reflect the changing characteristics and demographics of the community and manage growth and development for 20 years from date of approval of the updated OP and is also referred to as the planning horizon. It will also contain policies that bring the OP into conformity with the County of Renfrew Official Plan and conform with provincial policy documents such as the 2020 PPS and the Planning Act.

The OP Review has been divided into four phases that will guide the creation of an updated OP. The workplan allows for the project to be completed and adopted by Council by fall 2023. The phases are identified as follows:

Phase 1 – Project Initiation & Project Management

- Project initiation meeting with Town
- Preparation of a consultation and engagement strategy
- Special meeting of Town Council to initiate the project under Section 26 of the Planning Act

Phase 2 – Background Issues Review & Vision

- Background information review;
- Stakeholder Meeting #1;
- Pre-consultation meeting with County of Renfrew;
- Review of Growth Projections; and
- Background Review and Policy Gaps Report.

Phase 3 – Policy Directions

- Policy Directions Report;
- Public Focus Group Meeting;
- Stakeholder Meeting #2;
- Council Briefing; and
- Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment.

Phase 4 – Official Plan Review and Project Completion

- Public Open House;
- Statutory Public Meeting;
- Draft and Final Official Plan policies and mapping; and
- Presentation to Council.

This PDR focuses on the Town’s key areas of interest for policy updates, as well as feedback received from key stakeholders and the public. This includes the following:

- Encouraging economic development;
- Promoting housing affordability and options, such as tiny homes;
- Ensuring consideration for neighbourhood compatibility;
- Undertaking a comprehensive review of industrial and commercial lands; and
- Advancing sustainable growth, urban agriculture, and an environmental focus.

Following the completion of this PDR, the Project Team will draft the updated Official Plan.

1.2 Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) is issued under the authority of Section 2 of the Planning Act and provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Recognizing Ontario’s diversity of urban and rural communities, the 2020 PPS provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural and built environment. The 2020 PPS provides municipalities with a framework for long-term planning that balances economic growth with a healthy and sustainable environment. Growth and development within urban and rural settlement areas are highlighted in the 2020 PPS. It recognizes wise management of land uses, achieving efficient development patterns, and avoiding significant or sensitive resources and areas that may pose a risk to public health and safety, while ensuring agricultural land sustainability. The 2020 PPS encourages municipalities to permit and facilitate a range of housing options including new development, as well as residential intensification to respond to current and future needs. It also provides municipalities with a framework for long-term planning that balances economic growth with a healthy and sustainable environment, including the wise use of and management of resources.

Since the current OP was last updated in December 2013, a notable component of the Official Plan Review will be to implement policies of the 2020 PPS related to population, housing, and employment objectives key to Ontario's long-term success.

1.2.1 Bill 97 (Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023) & Draft Provincial Planning Statement

It is noted that on April 6, 2023, the Province released Bill 97, including the proposed Provincial Planning Statement, intended to replace the 2020 PPS and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. If enacted, these policies would represent a significant shift in how municipalities across Ontario plan for growth and development. Should the Province pass Bill 97, the proposed policies for the Official Plan Review would need to be reviewed for conformity.

1.3 County of Renfrew Official Plan, 2020

As per Section 27 of the Planning Act, the Town's updated OP must conform to the policies of the County of Renfrew Official Plan, 2020. A key consideration for the Town, in relation to the County of Renfrew Official Plan, is how future population, housing, and employment growth will be accommodated, including delineating settlement boundary areas. Through this Official Plan Review the Town is undertaking a Growth Management and Land Needs assessment to help inform policy formulation. At the time of writing this report, this work is underway and will be reported to the Town in a separate document.

1.4 Vision and Guiding Principles

During Phase 1 and 2 of the Official Plan Review, the Project Team undertook engagement activities to inform key stakeholders and the public about the project, and to establish a vision and objectives as part of the background review process. The completed consultation activities include:

- **Pre-Consultation Meeting with the County of Renfrew:** On January 19, 2023, the Project Team met with the County of Renfrew to provide an overview of the Official Plan Review and discussion regarding conformity with the County of Renfrew Official Plan.
- **Section 26 Council Meeting:** On March 8, 2023, a Special Meeting of Council was held as required under section 26 of the Planning Act. WSP prepared a presentation to officially launch the Official Plan Review and presented project goals and work plan with Council.
- **Stakeholder Meeting #1:** On March 29, 2023, the first Stakeholder Meeting was held for stakeholders representing seniors, Military Family Resource Centre, commercial businesses, airport, horticultural society, developers, builders, aggregates, health, Town Councillors, and residents. WSP presented to the group which included a set of discussion questions focused on project goals and objectives for the Town.

The Project Team received feedback and direction through ongoing consultation activities, which helped form the vision and guiding principles. The vision is supported by objectives and guiding policy. The vision and guiding principles will continue to be refined, through further consultation and engagement activities as part of this process.

1.4.1 Vision

The purpose of identifying a vision for the Official Plan Review is to establish what is currently important to the Town and what should be considered in the future. The proposed vision for the Town is defined as follows:

“The Town of Petawawa will be a community that focuses on growing sustainably, promoting diversity, and building a resilient and attractive community within Renfrew County. The Town’s long-term economic growth will be strengthened and diversified featuring employment, innovative housing, and tourism sectors and leveraging the Town’s natural heritage.”

1.4.2 Guiding Principles

The Project Team has developed several guiding principles for the updated OP. The guiding principles are intended to provide high-level direction. The updated OP will be based on the developed guiding principles.

Prioritizing Residential Intensification and Affordability

- Accommodate a range of housing types with consideration of unit sizes, particularly one- and two-bedroom units at achievable densities;
- Seek opportunities for mixed use areas permitting residential and commercial uses;
- Encourage intensification within serviced areas, where feasible;
- Identify lands for future residential growth;
- Explore opportunities for sustainable residential development such as tiny homes;
- Support both ownership and rental housing options; and
- Encourage the conservation AND redevelopment of the existing housing supply.

Providing Long-term Economic Growth

- Identify existing employment lands for redevelopment or intensification opportunities;
- Seek lands for new industrial parks;
- Identify aggregate resources as an economic driver for the Town;
- Promote opportunities for diversified tourism which leverages the cultural and natural assets within the Town; and
- Strengthen and diversify the Town’s economic base within servicing limitations.

Complete Community

- Implement urban design policies, including age-friendly policies that promote elements of healthy communities;
- Create a “downtown” or “main street”;
- Enhance and maintain the Town’s parks, trails, and recreation uses;
- Strengthen the Town’s transportation network; and
- Explore opportunities for rural and urban agriculture (e.g., edible gardens).

Sustainability and Climate Change Resiliency

- Promote a climate change resiliency lens to ensure continued quality of the natural, built, and human environments;
- Ensure that development occurs in a sustainable manner which considers natural water systems, environmentally sensitive areas, and hazard lands;
- Support energy conservation and efficiency measures that improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Promote climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns;
- Encourage the use of green infrastructure and low-impact development; and
- Protect the existing forest cover and increase the forest cover to improve carbon capture and help prevent soil erosion.

The PDR will also provide some initial discussion of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, for relevant policies to be addressed in the updated OP.

2 Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment

Note to the Town: To be added once the assessment is complete. The Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment will include population and employment growth forecasts and vacant land supply and needs analysis. Information on the Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment will be added once the assessment is completed.

3 Policy Directions

This section of the PDR summarizes policy directions that are intended to respond to the gaps and opportunities acknowledged by the Background and Gaps Report, consultation and engagement activities, Town staff, stakeholders, and the community. The policy direction recommendations are intended to protect local and Provincial interests while taking into consideration the Town’s existing context and its future needs. These policy directions are meant to facilitate further discussion as part of upcoming consultation and engagement activities and to help guide OP policy development.

3.1.1 Residential Growth and Intensification

The updated OP will implement policies that encourage residential growth and intensification with a range of densities within existing neighbourhoods. Some intensification in the form of townhouses and multi-storey buildings may help to address the housing needs of a diverse population. There is a need to correlate residential intensification with the expected growth for the Town in upcoming years; this includes housing for the Garrison Petawawa troops, their families, and supporting personnel, as well as new residents attracted to the Town's natural beauty seeking a balanced lifestyle. With the potential for new employment opportunities, there will also be a need to house new employees to the Town. The updated OP should also encourage the addition of "gentle density" which is a concept that promotes intensification through infill development that complements an existing neighbourhood. It is recommended that areas for intensification are identified and that a variety of housing types are permitted. The following residential growth and intensification policy directions include:

Policy Direction #1 – Build on existing policies and the vacant land and land needs assessments to identify where residential growth should occur.

Policy Direction # 2 – Expand on existing OP policies that encourage appropriate forms of residential intensification where there is sufficient existing or planned infrastructure.

Policy Direction #3 – Develop policies to support compact built form.

Policy Direction #4 – Growth is to be located where there is current and future servicing.

Policy Direction #5 – Develop density targets for intensification and greenfield development.

Policy Direction #6 – Implement policies that support complete communities.

Policy Direction #7 – Encourage mixed-use development.

Policy Direction #8 – Create a downtown or main street with permissions, as appropriate, for higher residential density with at grade commercial uses.

3.1.2 Housing

The Town's updated OP will need to establish clear policy directions that focus on the existing and future housing supply. Given the recent housing policies addressed in the 2020 PPS. As a result of the changing needs of residents, several factors need to be considered for the updated OP, which includes but is not limited to:

- Housing Mix;
- Affordability; and
- Short Term Rentals.

Updated housing policies will encourage increased housing options, facilitate the development of more diverse and complete neighbourhoods.

Housing Mix

It is recommended that the current housing policies be revised to permit the development of a variety of housing options as defined in the PPS. The range of housing types can include, but is not limited to, stacked townhouses; triplexes; multi-residential buildings; mixed-use developments; Additional Residential Units (ARUs); and tiny homes. As defined in the PPS, housing options may also refer to various housing arrangements and forms. Section 2 of the Planning Act states that adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing, is a Provincial interest.

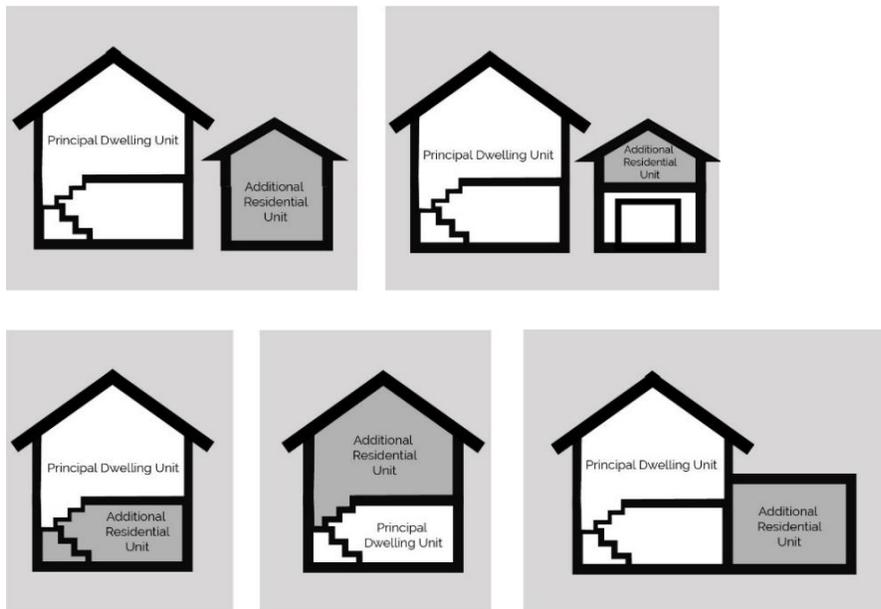
Policy Direction #1 – Support a provision for a full range of housing types, forms, and tenure to increase a variety of housing and affordability ranges for all residents of Petawawa.

Policy Direction #2 – Implement policies aimed at increasing the rental housing supply which includes the creation of ARUs and purpose-built rental units, where permitted.

Additional Residential Units

Additional Residential Units (ARUs) are characterized as self-contained residential units with kitchen and bathroom facilities subsidiary to the main dwelling. The Town's current Official Plan will be updated to include ARU policies and terminology consistent with the 2020 PPS and with the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23), where 2 ARUs in addition to the principal dwelling unit are permitted as shown in Figure 1. ARUs are permitted within a single detached, semi-detached, or row house dwellings. The Town's current Zoning By-law permits ARUs in unserviced lands where specific minimum lot size requirements are met as exceptions, and where appropriate servicing and relevant planning considerations have been met.

Figure 1: Additional Residential Units (Source: Municipality of Central Elgin)



The updated OP should consider the addition of “gentle density” within the existing community with ARUs. ARUs are also permitted within structures accessory to the principal dwelling such as a stand-alone garage or a separate structure on the property.

Policy Direction #1 – Add OP policies to allow ARUs in residential areas where full municipal services are provided.

Policy Direction #2 – The updated OP will need to implement the provisions related to ARUs as part of Bill 23.

Tiny Homes

The existing OP and Zoning By-law do not explicitly address or provide a definition for tiny homes. Tiny homes are single unit detached dwellings under 500 square feet (46.5 square metres) that are permanent structures. Tiny homes can be considered as a primary dwelling unit or as a secondary dwelling on a property with an existing house. There is potential to promote tiny homes as an affordable housing option with the potential to consider the development of tiny home villages.

Policy Direction #1 – Add a definition for tiny homes.

Policy Direction #2 – As appropriate, revise the OP to permit tiny homes where residential uses are permitted and consider the site plan approval process, required development agreements, and potential mix of uses.

Affordable Housing

The Town’s OP needs to be updated to be consistent with the affordable housing policies and definition in Bill 23. The updated OP shall establish detailed policies regarding how the Town can support the development of affordable housing. This shall include creating a Town-wide policy that prioritizes less expensive housing options such as ARUs, tiny homes, purpose-built rental housing and townhouses or multistorey apartments in identified areas served by local amenities. Affordable housing has not been defined in the current OP.

There is also an opportunity to identify the difference between affordable housing and attainable housing in the updated OP. Bill 23 defines affordable housing units as a residential unit that is no greater than 80 per cent of the average purchase price depending on the location of the housing (e.g., Ottawa) which can remain out of reach for many potential homebuyers.

Canada Mortgage and Housing (CMHC) defines attainable housing as costing no more than 30% of a household’s gross, pre-tax income. More broadly, attainable describes the ability of households to enter and advance through the housing spectrum within the local housing market.

The Town is currently completing a comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment. The updated OP will consider the policy information and recommendations which will be identified in the study.

Policy Direction #1 – Enhance existing OP affordable housing policies, Section 18.2 (1), into sections related to residential uses in the updated OP.

Policy Direction #2 – Add definitions for affordable housing and attainable housing.

Policy Direction #3 – Add a policy that refers to the County of Renfrew Housing and Homelessness Plan (Revised 2019) including incorporating affordable housing targets, when they are established.

Short-Term Rental Accommodation

Short-term rental accommodation (including bed and breakfasts, cottage rentals, apartment rentals, single room, or an entire house) is an increasingly popular option with the growth of home-sharing platforms. This is a type of rental lodging that is short-term and does not extend beyond 28 days. However, it is important that new policies are implemented to address key concerns raised by the Town including appropriate locations, licensing, mitigation of potential land use compatibility conflicts, and continued stability of existing neighbourhoods. Moreover, Section 2.2 (36) of the County of Renfrew OP establishes criteria for the local municipalities to consider when deciding appropriate locations for short-term rental accommodations.

Policy Direction # 1 – Undertake an analysis to determine impacts and potential appropriate areas for Short-term accommodation.

Policy Direction #2 – Identify the required steps to permit short-term accommodation.

3.1.3 Employment Growth & Economic Development

The Planning Act identifies the adequate provision of employment opportunities as a provincial interest by promoting sustainable economic development. The PPS, 2020 asserts that planning authorities, such as the Town, should promote economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and a broader mix of uses to meet long-term needs. This includes advancing opportunities for a diversified economic base and encouraging growth through compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support livable and resilient communities.

The new OP will need to advance these objectives related to economic growth to promote a complete community through capitalizing on the Town's growing commercial and industrial sectors.

Policy Direction #1 – Establish policies directed to attract a diverse labour force to accommodate the Town's businesses by ensuring a range of housing options, human and social services, cultural opportunities, and parks and open spaces are provided.

Policy Direction # 2 - Promote the development of green industries, including industrial uses and environment-focused professional and technical office uses and services.

Policy Direction # 3 - Include policies that support and promote tourism and cultural attractions to enhance the quality of life for Town residents, from day-to-day activities to major events that are supported by local businesses.

3.1.4 Employment Uses

The PPS, 2020 defines “employment areas” as areas designated in an Official Plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. While there is no section dedicated to employment uses in the current OP, there are existing policies that address commercial and industrial land uses. The new OP will need to focus on employment uses and provide policies for their protection and changing nature as employment trends.

Policy Direction #1 – Implement policies to address home-based occupations and home industries.

Policy Direction #2 – Update the current OP employment policies.

3.1.5 Urban Agriculture

While the current OP does not address urban agriculture, this is an area of importance for municipalities to ensure that opportunities for this land use be permitted throughout the Town, especially in the current time where food security continues to be an evolving concern. The Town can align existing and new agricultural policy with Section 1.7.1 of the 2020 PPS where an emphasis has been placed on providing opportunities to support local food access and production. The community continues to demonstrate an interest in enabling agricultural policies, where appropriate land use, lot size, and buffering are met.

Policy Direction #1 – Develop an urban agriculture policy that discusses food production within an urban context including a variety of forms such as gardening (container gardening, balconies, rooftops, and community gardening).

Policy Direction #2 – Implement policies for urban agriculture, where appropriate and supported by planning rationale.

3.1.6 Energy Conservation & Climate Change

The Town’s current OP states that new development should be designed to take advantage of solar orientation, prevailing winds, wind breaks and planted vegetation, topography, housing design and clustering of buildings, bicycling, walking areas and landscaping to promote energy conservation. However, the OP does not include policies related to climate change. The 2020 PPS requires that planning authorities must implement policies that support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate. The updated OP will need to consider the evolving impacts of energy conservation and climate change to require innovative solutions to better building design, energy, ratings, heating system designs, and insulation standards. This can also include considering how to ensure adaptability and resiliency against the challenges of climate change, but also ensure that communities are well-designed, encourage a sense of place and provide high-quality public spaces.

Policy Direction #1 – Create a climate change section to the updated OP. Add definitions for climate change and natural hazards.

Policy Direction #2 – Implement sustainable urban design within the public realm, incorporating principles of green infrastructure, where feasible.

Policy Direction #3 – Promote sustainable infrastructure measures for better water quality through water conservation and wastewater and stormwater management.

Policy Direction #4 – Implement policies that support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns.

Policy Direction #5 – Develop policies that enable future climate change adaptation, innovation, and mitigation as criteria for the development standards.

3.1.7 Natural Heritage and Environmental Protection

There is an opportunity to enhance the current policies on natural heritage to encourage protection from future development. The updated OP shall conform with existing policies related to natural heritage and environmental protection in the 2020 PPS. Significant changes were made in the 2020 PPS related to natural heritage, including updated definitions. If new natural heritage features are identified, they shall be added to existing policies and schedules, as required.

Policy Direction #1 – Update current OP policies and definitions to be consistent with 2020 PPS definitions.

Policy Direction # 2 – Update the Town’s land use schedule to identify natural heritage features and to reflect the County of Renfrew Official Plan Schedule “B”.

3.1.8 Transportation, Parks, and Recreation

Parkland Dedication

Provisions in Sections 42 and 51.1 of the Planning Act allow for Ontario municipalities to require, through a by-law, the conveyance of a certain amount of land to the municipality for parkland from developments or plans of subdivision (or to provide cash-in-lieu of land). Since the adoption of the current OP, a number of changes were made to the Planning Act, particularly from the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23). These changes include but are not limited to:

- A change in the alternative conveyance rate from one hectare of parkland per 300 residential units to one hectare of parkland per 600 residential units;
- The exemption of not-for-profit housing, affordable and attainable housing from parkland conveyance requirements; and
- Increased restrictions on the use of funds collected from cash-in-lieu dedication.

Policy Direction #1 – Ensure updated policies align with Section 3, Urban Community, of the County of Renfrew OP.

Transportation

Section 15, Transportation, of the existing OP contains clear transportation objectives that support the creation and maintenance of an efficient road system. The current policies also ensure cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

Active Transportation

In general, the Town has expressed a desire for improved pedestrian access, active transportation, and trail connections. This includes a continued improvement of roads, sidewalks, and paved shoulders. The 2020 PPS directs that municipalities should plan for safe, healthy public streets and spaces that encourage the use of active transportation (i.e., walking or cycling, with or without mobility aids) and foster social interaction. Section 11, Parks and Open Space, and Section 15, Transportation, of the Town's current OP contains policies that are aimed at achieving goals set out in the 2020 PPS, which should be carried forward into the updated OP. The Town should also align new active transportation policies with the Renfrew County OP and Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy, which was revised in 2017.

Policy Direction #1 – Update policies to align with the Town of Petawawa Active Transportation Report.

3.1.9 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

As per Section 2.5.6 of the 2020 PPS, planning authorities must engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting, and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources. The Town's current OP does not contain policies regarding the role of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage and archaeology. There is an opportunity to incorporate policies which direct that Council consider the interests of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

Policy Direction #1 – Update current policies to be consistent with Section 2.5.6 of the 2020 PPS.

3.1.10 Mineral Aggregate

Areas of mineral aggregate are identified on Schedule A of the current OP. There will be a need to bring existing policies, specifically related to buffering, in conformity with the PPS. The Town shall continue to ensure that major aggregate deposits remain available for existing and future use. Looking to the future, the Town must also minimize extraction impacts on adjacent uses and the natural environment from extractive operations.

Policy Direction #1 – Update current policies to align with aggregate policies from the PPS.

Policy Direction #2 – Update designated Mineral Aggregate Resource areas in Schedule A, as required.

3.1.11 Implementation, Administration, and Official Plan Format

Consideration for planning administration, implementation, and interpretation ensures that key Provincial, County, and other legislative policies are incorporated. There is an opportunity for

implementing innovative solutions to produce an updated OP that is easy to use and interpret. The policies of the OP will generally be rewritten, however there may be an opportunity to carry forward certain policies which already conform to or implement the various Provincial and County documents.

Policy #1 – Review public notification and consultation policies to drive more meaningful, effective, and inclusive public involvement in planning decisions.

Policy #2 – Incorporate policies related to consultation with Indigenous communities.

Policy #3 – Implement indigenous engagement policies from the County of Renfrew OP and 2020 PPS.

Policy #4 – Develop policies that are performance or results-based, where appropriate, so that development applications can be evaluated in a flexible, but consistent manner, to enable good development.

Policy #5 – Create an updated OP document that is streamlined and has improved formatting.

Policy #6 – Update the list of required information and materials to be submitted as part of a complete application.

Policy #7 – Add a glossary of definitions to the updated OP.

Policy #8 – Add a Land Acknowledgment recognizing the Algonquins of Ontario territory and treaty rights.

4 Next Steps and Conclusions

Following the completion of the PDR, Phase 4 of the OP Review will commence. Phase 4 focuses on developing a draft of the Town's updated OP and will include:

- Drafting policies for the updated OP;
- Draft updated OP mapping and schedules;
- A Public Open House to present the Draft OP;
- A Statutory Public Meeting to allow Council and members of the public to make formal comments on the OP;
- Preparation of the Final OP; and
- A presentation to Council for adoption of the Final OP.

The Policy Directions outlined in the PDR establish revisions to the existing OP policies, the addition of new policies in relation to Provincial planning policy, and recommendations from Stakeholders and the community.