

Staff Report 2024-0269

Meeting Date: May 14, 2024

Subject: Bolton Secondary Plans Review: Phase 1 and Phase 2 Status Update

Submitted By: Shahzad Mir, Community Planner, Strategic Policy Planning, Planning

RECOMMENDATION

That Report No. 2024-0269 dated May 14, 2024, regarding the Bolton Secondary Plans Review Phase 1 and Phase 2 Status Update be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council receive the Background Report, attached as Schedule A to Staff Report 2024-0269, as summarized in this Report and attached as Schedule A, for information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorse the proposed Vision and Guiding Principles, in principle, and direct staff to utilize the Vision and Planning Alternatives Report, attached as Schedule B to Staff Report 2024-0269, as the basis for the development of a Preferred Planning Alternative for the Bolton Secondary Plans Review, subject to further refinement based on public input throughout the public engagement process.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- This report provides a summary of Phase 1 and Phase 2 Highlights which includes the preparation of a Background Report, a Vision and Planning Alternatives Report and community engagement.
- The Bolton Secondary Plan Review Background Report introduced the study and is intended to provide an overview of relevant provincial, regional, and local policies, as well as various background studies related to land use policy and transportation.
- A public survey, as a first phase of engagement, asked a series of questions around visioning and guiding principles, built form and transportation that helped guide the development of two land use alternatives that were brought to the public for further input.
- A Vision and Planning Alternatives report was prepared that highlights a new vision for Bolton for growth and development within Bolton and two options for the strategic growth areas.
- A public open house held on February 22nd, 2024, presented information related to the proposed vision for the Bolton area and two land use alternatives for a Focused Study Area along the Queen Street Corridor.

DISCUSSION

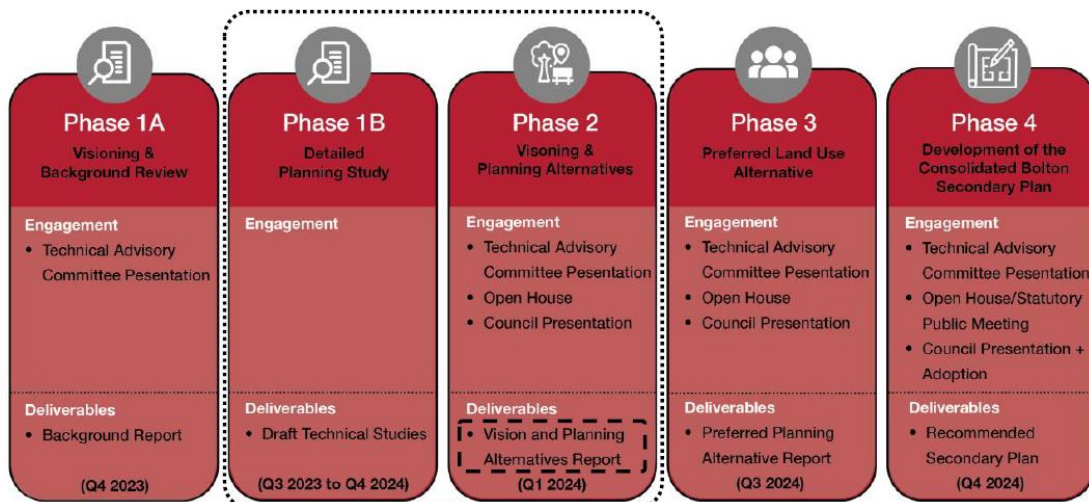
Background

In May 2023, Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Bolton Secondary Plans Review Study.

In August 2023, the Town of Caledon retained a Project Consulting Team led by SGL Planning and Design consultant for the Bolton Secondary Plans Review. The project is being prepared in accordance with a four-phase work program as outlined in the approved Terms of Reference and summarized on Figure 1.

Since August 2023, planning staff and the project team have completed Phase 1A of the Bolton Secondary Plans Review, and have been working on Phase 1B and Phase 2.

Figure 1. Project Phases and Deliverables



WE ARE HERE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Bolton Secondary Plans Review project, and specifically the deliverables completed to date from Phase 1A and Phase 2 which includes:

- a Background Report prepared by SGL Planning and Design;
- a Vision and Planning Alternatives Report prepared by SGL Planning and Design; and,
- a summary of community engagement initiatives.

Background Report

The Background Report introduces the study and is intended to provide an overview of all relevant background information including plans, policies, studies, strategies, and any other pertinent documents from various levels of government that must be considered as the Secondary Plan is being prepared.

Some examples of the relevant background information include applicable Regional and local policies pertaining to:

- population
- housing and employment targets
- natural heritage
- land use patterns
- development density
- transportation network
- development phasing
- stormwater management
- natural environment
- land use compatibility
- air quality
- servicing
- community infrastructure (parks, schools, etc.)

The Background Report reviews and provides initial analysis to inform the policies and land use designations of the consolidated Bolton Secondary Plan, identifies opportunities and constraints, and provides a road map for the study process, engagement opportunities, and a draft vision statement and guiding principles.

Online Survey

As the first phase of community engagement, a survey was posted on the project website asking questions concerning the visioning and guiding principles, built form and transportation. The responses helped guide the development of the vision, guiding principles, and two Land Use Alternatives. There were 114 responses.

The following questions were asked:

- How would you identify your relationship with Bolton?
- How often do you visit businesses or services in the Focused Study Area?
- Ranking aspects, what is most important to you about how Bolton should grow?

- What are three key challenges facing the growth of Bolton, and Caledon as a whole?
- Do you agree with the draft vision for the Bolton Secondary Plan? Is anything missing from the vision?
- Do you agree with the draft Guiding Principles? Is anything missing from the principles?
- What type(s) of built form and mix of uses would you like to see in a Major Transit Station Area?
- What type of building form would you like to see along the corridors such as Highway 50?
- What type of built form do you think is more appropriate in the Neighbourhood Centre designated at the intersection of King Street and Queen Street/Highway 50?
- What type of public spaces would you like to see in areas of intensification?
- What would you like the streets in Bolton to look like? What should they include?

The following provides a summary of results from the Online Survey results:

- A majority of participants live in Bolton.
- Over 50% of participants visit the Focused Study Area one or more times a week.
- The most desired changes to the Focused Study Area include improving walkability, increasing access to retail and shopping, and increasing a range of businesses (Figure 2)
- Participants identified the lack of public transit, attracting more businesses, and increasing housing options as the primary challenges facing Bolton's growth
- Participants agreed with a statement advocating for a strong vision that reflects policy, urban design, and best practices to allow for intensification and development to be successful.
- Participants re-emphasized concerns over the natural environment, town heritage and the need for guiding principles to be firmer and measurable.
- Mixed use buildings with mid- to low-rise built form were the most preferred in the Focused Study Area, as well as a mix of standalone commercial and residential apartments.
- Participants highly desired more parks, and more variety of parks; and
- Participants desired a complete streets approach to street improvements, including dedicated bike lanes, street trees, on-street parking, and wider sidewalks.

A detailed summary of the results is found in the Vision and Planning Alternatives Report.

Figure 2. Most important change desired in the Focused Study Area.



Vision and Planning Alternatives Report

The Vision and Planning Alternatives Report finalizes the vision and guiding principles for the Bolton Secondary Plan and introduces two Planning Alternatives for the Neighbourhood Centre and Focused Study Area. The geographic location of the Neighbourhood Centre and Focused Study Area is shown on Schedule C. The Report introduces the baseline assumptions/common elements for the two Planning Alternatives and present a set of evaluation criteria and measures for evaluating the two Planning Alternatives and summarizes the results of engagement to date.

Vision

The Bolton Secondary Plan establishes a healthy and sustainable vision for the Bolton community as a whole, including the creation of a new transit-oriented community through appropriate intensification along the Regional Road 50 corridor. Balancing the needs for economic, environmental, and social sustainability, the community will develop and re-develop to be resilient, compact and contribute to overall sense of place. Bolton will be well-designed to be transit-supportive integrating a connected natural heritage system. The community will offer a range of transportation and employment choices supported by a diverse mix of land uses and housing in a compact built form to accommodate people at all stages of life.

Guiding Principles

1. Ensure intensification occurs in an appropriate manner achieving a compact and efficient urban form to optimize the use of existing infrastructure and services.
2. Revitalize and/or enhance developed areas, increase the availability and diversity of housing and business opportunities, and create mixed-use, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly urban environments.
3. Ensure a strong sense of place is achieved through a vibrant mix of uses, parks and urban squares, streetscapes, interface between mixed use and right of ways with cohesive look and feel.
4. Reduce dependence on personal vehicles and prioritize active transportation modes of travel by improving transit services and redeveloping a network that encourages walking and cycling and improve overall health for the residents and community.
5. Encourage a high-quality built form and consistent level of urban design for the public and private realm through walkable streets, parks, and open spaces, pedestrian-scale buildings, landscape and urban design elements and other public amenities where appropriate.
6. Support a sustainable community with a diverse mix of land uses in a compact built form to accommodate people at all stages of life with appropriate mix of housing and services.
7. Protect and integrate a connected natural heritage system including natural hazards into the design of the community.
8. Incorporate low carbon energy technologies for buildings, supportive infrastructure for electric vehicles, and green infrastructure to mitigate flood risk and the urban heat island effect in order to achieve the objectives of the Town's Resilient Caledon Action Plan.
9. Provide appropriate buffers of land use separation to ensure compatibility between existing and future industry and redevelopment adjacent to these lands.
10. Transition, while maintaining and enhancing, the existing commercial/retail to a compact walkable built form as part of mixed-use developments.
11. Enhance employment lands and help create development that supports a good range of jobs.

The Planning Alternatives

Two Planning Alternatives have been prepared for discussion purposes and their evaluation against one another will help inform the development of the Preferred Planning Alternative. The Preferred Planning Alternative may have a combination of features from either Planning Alternative.

Planning Alternative 1 – Higher Order Transit is a concept centered around the vision of a second GO Train Station located along Queen Street/Regional Road 50, south of the rail line. The GO Station Urban Centre is proposed as a high-density mixed-use and residential area near the Station. High-density residential and mixed uses are focused within the northern Neighborhood Centre with a transition in height to the existing low-rise neighbourhoods. Medium density residential development is directed to the edges of the Urban Corridor transition down to the low-rise industrial development to the west and residential areas to the east. Planning Alternative 1 is shown on Schedule D.

Planning Alternative 2 – Neighbourhood Node is a concept that focuses on a neighbourhood node approach where neighbourhoods are centred around parks and open spaces. Four walkable medium-density, mixed use neighbourhood have been created, centered around new parks spaces located approximately 400 metres apart. Medium density residential development, permitted up to 12 storeys, is directed to the ends of the Urban Corridor, transitioning down to the low-rise industrial development to the west and residential areas to the east. Planning Alternative 2 is shown on Schedule E.

Open House

The first Bolton Secondary Plans Review public information session was held on February 22, 2024, at the Caledon Centre for Recreation and Wellness. The purpose of this first public information session was to present information related to the proposed vision and two planning alternatives for the Bolton area with a particular focus along the Queen Street Corridor. Approximately thirty attendees participated in the public information session.

Following the presentation, feedback was collected through discussions and an interactive ‘dotmocracy’ exercise where attendees were encouraged to place green sticker dots on elements of the planning alternatives that they supported and red sticker dots on things they did not.

Initial feedback showed that the public was generally supportive of the Bolton GO Train Station and understood the density requirements to support it. There was interest for intensification and more mixed uses within the Focused Study Area, support for higher density mixed use in the Neighbourhood Centre, and support for a complete streets approach along Highway 50/Queen Street. There was one concern around the feasibility of redeveloping the Urban Corridor south of the railway line if the Urban Corridor boundary was not extended to a logical road boundary. There were concerns that surrounding streets do not have capacity for traffic that may occur with higher density land uses, and general lack of support for 25 – 29 storey mixed use development at 12599 Highway 50, 12563 Highway 50, And 2 Industrial Road.

Community Engagement Initiatives

Community engagement is a very important component in this project. Several initiatives have been undertaken to meaningfully engage Caledon residents and stakeholders in the Bolton Secondary Plans Review process. The initiatives are described below.

Project Webpage

The [project webpage](#) was launched in September 2023. Since that time, there have been regular updates to the webpage with new documents, staff reports, and a survey. There is a section on the webpage where people can sign up to be added to the notification list.

As of April 2024, there have been 2690 visitors to the webpage.

Media Releases

Since the launch of the Project, there have been three media releases issued for the project as follows:

Media Release #1 – Project Launch

Media Release #2 – Notice of Online Survey Engagement

Media Release #3 – Notice of the Public Information Session

Project Notification List

As of the end of April 2024, there are 1000 contacts on the Future Caledon Official Plan notification list. Contacts on the notification list receive regular project updates through email, are advised when reports are proceeding to Council and are notified of upcoming engagement events.

Social Media

Since September 2023, the Town's Facebook and Twitter accounts were used to distribute information on upcoming meetings and to make the public aware of the Bolton Secondary Plans Review website, online survey, and project newsletters.

Newspaper Notices

To advertise the February community engagement event, newspaper notices were placed in the Caledon Citizen in February.

Technical Advisory Committee



A technical advisory committee is guiding the Bolton Secondary Plans Review. The role of this committee is to provide comments and data input during the study process, assist with the identification and resolution of issues, and liaise with respective organizations to ensure consistent and accurate input.

The Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of key representatives of:

- Pertinent Town of Halton Hills departments
- The Region of Peel
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Other public agencies, as determined appropriate

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Strategic Plan 2023-2035

This report is directly related to the following priority in Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan:

Community Vitality and Livability

In order for Caledon to build complete communities that support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to access the necessities for daily living and play an active role, the Town will:

- Complete the Official Plan Review to set long-term direction to build complete communities and protect our natural and cultural heritage.
- Complete the Consolidated Bolton Secondary Plan to promote greater intensification and revitalization of the employment and commercial areas.

Details about Caledon's 2023-2035 Strategic Plan can be found at caledon.ca/strategicplan.

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A: Background Report

Schedule B: Vision and Planning Alternatives Report

Schedule C: Map of Neighbourhood Centre and Focused Study Area



Schedule D: Map of Planning Alternative 1 – Higher Order Transit

Schedule E: Map of Planning Alternative 2 – Neighbourhood Node