

## **Staff Report 2024-0249**

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Meeting Date: May 14, 2024

Subject: Future Caledon Official Plan – Proposed Modifications

Submitted By: Bailey Loverock, Senior Policy Planner, Strategic Policy Planning

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council endorse the proposed modifications outlined in this report and requests the approval authority of the Future Caledon Official Plan to include the proposed modifications as part of the approval process.

That a copy of Staff Report 2024-0249 be sent to the Region of Peel and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- This report provides a discussion of the proposed modifications to the Future Caledon Official Plan which were tabled at the March 26, 2024 Council meeting.
- The Future Caledon Official Plan was adopted by Council on March 26, 2024 and has been submitted to the Region of Peel for approval.
- The Future Caledon Official Plan will guide the most significant period of transformation in the Town of Caledon's history. It balances the protection and conservation of the Town's abundant natural and cultural heritage and rural and agricultural communities, with planning for significant urban growth to the year 2051.
- The Plan has been prepared to conform with existing Provincial legislation, plans and policies, as well as the Region of Peel Official Plan, as approved by the Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023.
- A motion, attached in Schedule A, containing a number of modifications to the plan were proposed related to valley and stream corridor protection, on-farm diversified use event policies, and evaluation criteria for development applications.
- The motion was referred to staff for a May 14, 2024 report.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Background**

On March 26, 2024 Council approved BL-2024-014, a by-law to adopt Future Caledon, a new Official Plan for the Town of Caledon. At the March 26, 2024 Council meeting a motion proposing modifications to the Future Caledon Official Plan was referred to May 14 Planning and Development Committee.

**Proposed Modifications from March 26, 2024**

The wording of the March 26 motion is contained in Schedule A. The following is a more detailed discussion of the modifications proposed in the motion.

Valley and Stream Corridor Policies

The natural environment system policies in Future Caledon were required to conform to the Region of Peel Official Plan and were drafted to implement Peel policies, while maintaining a “made in Caledon” approach. Some concerns were expressed by residents with respect to the protection of valley and stream corridors in the Future Caledon Official Plan Natural Environment System policies in comparison to the policies of the current Caledon Official Plan. It is important to note that while all valley and stream corridors were not included in within the Natural Features and Areas land use designation of the Future Caledon Official Plan, a significant proportion of those valley and stream corridors proposed to be designated as Supportive Features and Areas were protected as Key Hydrologic Features as required by Provincial Plans. The Provincial Plans also do not permit development in Key Hydrologic Features, which overrides any policies in the Future Caledon and the Region of Peel Official Plan.

**Proposed Modification 1:** Policy 13.3.1 is proposed to be modified to include all valley and stream corridors in the Natural Features and Areas designation in Future Caledon. Staff have no concerns with this modification as it will provide greater clarity that the policies of the Future Caledon Official Plan are intended to protect all valley and stream corridors as an important component of the Natural Environment System. Staff recommends support for this modification.

**Proposed Modification 2:** Policy 13.4.1 is proposed to be modified to remove certain valley and stream corridors from the Supporting Features and Areas designation. This modification is necessary if proposed modification 1 is supported as all valley and stream corridors would be designated as Natural Features and Areas. Staff recommends support for this modification.

**Proposed Modification 3:** Policy 13.12.1 is proposed to be modified to clarify the intent of the policy to ensure that if areas meeting the definition of Supporting Features and Areas, and not only Natural Features and Areas, key natural heritage features, or key hydrologic features, if not adequately mapped, evaluated or protected, will be protected by the policies of the Future Caledon Official Plan, if identified through an evaluation in support of a development application or a local subwatershed study. This modification is minor and clarifies the intent of the policy by specifically referencing the applicable designations. Staff recommends support for this modification.

**Proposed Modification 4.** A new Policy 13.12.12 is proposed to be added which would notes that the implementation of all mapped Natural Features and Areas and Supporting Features and Areas will be required through appropriate zoning, and that all valley and stream corridors will be placed in a zone that prohibits development.

Staff suggest a revision to the proposed modification contained in Schedule A by changing the last sentence to read “appropriate zone that prohibits all development, except those in accordance with Section 13.3.3. of this Plan” Section 13.3.3 sets out uses that may be appropriate within natural areas as follows:

- a) forest, fish and wildlife management;
- b) conservation and flood or erosion control projects, but only if they have been demonstrated to be necessary in the public interest and after all reasonable alternatives have been considered;
- c) essential infrastructure exempted, pre-approved or authorized under an environmental assessment process;
- d) passive recreation;
- e) minor development and minor site alteration;
- f) existing uses, buildings or structures;
- g) expansions or alterations to existing buildings or structures;
- h) accessory, uses, buildings, or structures; and,
- i) a new single residential dwelling on an existing lot of record, provided that the dwelling would have been permitted by the applicable planning legislation or zoning by-law on May 23, 2014. A new dwelling built after May 23, 2014 in accordance with this policy will be deemed to be an existing building or structure for the purposes of subsections g) and h) above.

Staff recommends support for this modification, as revised above.

#### On-Farm Diversified Uses

Prior to the adoption of Future Caledon, staff heard from members of Council and members of the public that on-farm diversified use policies were of significant interest for rural Caledon residents and those in the farming community. The policy contained in Future Caledon was developed to balance the desire to permit on-farm diversified uses to support the long-term viability of farming in Caledon, subject to appropriate criteria, while addressing provincial policy direction, and responding to the concerns of rural Caledon residents regarding the impacts of event venues on the rural community. Policies were drafted to outline the conditions in which on-farm diversified uses could be permitted. Policies also outlined the need for a Special Events Licensing By-law to be developed for events including weddings and other celebrations that have the potential to attract a significant number of guests.

**Proposed Modification 5:** Policy 17.4.11 speaks to the type of events that would not be permitted through implementing zoning, until a Special Events Licensing By-law is passed by the Town and is in effect. This policy is proposed to be modified to include specific reference to corporate events. This would add an example of a type of event that is recognized earlier in the section (Policy 17.4.5 c) and staff are of the opinion that this change would be minor and in keeping with the intent of the policy. Staff recommends support for this modification.

Evaluation Criteria

**Proposed Modification 6:** This modification proposes to add a previously removed policy from an earlier draft version of the Future Caledon Official Plan, from Section 27.3, Evaluation Criteria. The proposed policy, contained in Schedule A, identifies the criteria used to evaluate all development applications. In an effort to streamline the Official Plan and facilitate implementation, this policy was removed by staff. Staff are not opposed to the reintroduction of this policy. This policy will assist in explaining to the user what is required to support development applications, while not limiting other requirements identified elsewhere in the Plan for specific areas of Caledon or in specific circumstances. Staff recommends support for this modification.

**Conclusion**

As directed by Council in Staff Report 2024-0072 Recommendation Report: 2024 Future Caledon Official Plan, staff are monitoring the approval process for the 2024 Future Caledon Official Plan. In the event that the approval authority proposes modifications to the Plan, staff will prepare a report to Council with recommendations concerning any proposed modifications.

It is recommended that Council support the proposed modifications outlined in this report and request that these modifications be implemented by the approval authority in the approval of the Future Caledon Official Plan.

**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

Complete the Official Plan Review to set long-term direction to build complete communities and protect our natural and cultural heritage.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Schedule A:** Motion on proposed modifications to the Future Caledon Official Plan considered at the March 26, 2024 meeting of Council