An introduction to engaging in the review of your official plan

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RECORDING NOTICE: This webinar is recorded and will be made available to the general public on the HC Link website.
Civic Engagement:

- **What is it?** The encouragement of the general public to become involved in political processes with respect to issues which affect them.

- **Why do it?** To provide informed and meaningful input into priority setting, decision-making, program development, and/or service delivery.

- **Why an OP Review?** To ensure that community priorities are addressed through policy development & planning at the municipal level.
## Continuum of Civic Engagement

<table>
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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Promise</th>
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<td>To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner.</td>
<td>&quot;We will keep you informed.&quot;</td>
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<td>To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions.</td>
<td>&quot;We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns.&quot;</td>
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<td>To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.</td>
<td>&quot;We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making.</td>
<td>&quot;We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible.&quot;</td>
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<td>To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.</td>
<td>&quot;We will implement what you decide.&quot;</td>
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Source: IAP2: Auditor General of BC
Goal:

To become an informed group of community stakeholders that is equipped to effectively engage in the review processes for local Official Plans.
Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the Land Use Planning system in Ontario
- To offer an understanding of the purpose and effect of Official Plans
- To raise awareness about how you can get involved in an Official Plan review process
- To refer to a variety of tools that can assist you in reviewing Official Plans for policies that support healthy communities
What is policy?

- A policy is a guiding principle or a plan of action agreed to by a group of people with the power to carry it out and enforce it.
- Public policy influences the ways in which society and governments respond to and think about issues that impact our well-being.
- Policies, at various levels, shape our daily lives by regulating our actions.
Why engage in an OP review?

- A local policy document that guides land use planning in our communities
- An opportunity to have input into a public process, and to express local values and interests in policy
- To offer a Healthy Communities perspective – recognition of the relationship between land use planning and health
Ontario Planning System

1) Local Land Use Planning
2) Roles and Responsibilities
3) Public Participation and Advocacy
Ontario Planning System

- Planning Act
- PPS
- Provincial Plans

Province of Ontario

Approval authority

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

OMB

Adjudication

Municipal Government
upper tier

MSO

Municipal Government
local

Elected Representatives

Citizens
Tools of Land Use Planning

1) The Planning System
   - The Planning Act (and other legislation)
   - Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)
   - Regional Growth & Greenbelt Plans

2) Official Plans (OPs)

3) Implementation of OPs
   - Zoning By-laws
   - Minor Variances
   - Land Division
The Planning Act

The Planning Act sets out the ground rules for land use planning in Ontario and describes how land uses may be controlled, and who may control them.
The Act provides the basis for:

- Considering **provincial interests**
- Preparing **official plans**
- **Local autonomy** in decision-making
- Regulating and controlling land uses through zoning by-laws and minor variances
- **Plans of subdivision** or a **land severance**
- The **rights of** local stakeholders to **appeal** decisions to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)
The Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS (2014) contains clear, overall policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development.

The PPS promotes a policy-led planning system that recognizes the complex inter-relationships among and between environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning.
The three main policy sections in the PPS are:

- Building strong healthy communities
- Wise use and management of resources
- Protecting public health and safety
Official Plans

Official Plans are local policy documents that focus on the physical aspects of land use planning but also link to social and economic goals. An OP is a comprehensive, long range plan that is developed with a 20 year planning horizon in mind.
Types of Policy

- Some policies set out positive directives, such as “settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development.”
- Other policies set out limitations and prohibitions, such as “development and site alteration shall not be permitted.”
- Other policies use enabling or supportive language, such as “should,” “promote” and “encourage.”
An Official Plan is:

- Made up of text and maps
- Implemented through a series of tools
- Reviewed for updates every five years
- Amended by application as required
Considerations

- Approval authority
- Relationship between upper tier and local plans
- Zoning by-laws must conform with official plans
- Appeal process
Roles and Responsibilities

- Municipalities
- Planners
- Elected Representatives
- Residents and other stakeholders
Public Participation

How can local stakeholders get involved in the land use planning process?
To get involved….

- Educate yourself about local official plans
- How might the OP affect your community?
- Participate in Open Houses and public meetings
- Make verbal and written submissions
- Work with council and municipal staff to resolve any concerns
OP Review Process

Three stages:

1) Data Collection and Background Review

2) Policy Formulation

3) Policy Refinement and Final Adoption
1) Data Collection and Background Review

- Pre-consultation meetings, stakeholder meetings, initial public consultation
- Background Report
2) Policy Formulation

- A Draft Policy Report will bring together policy options and recommendations for consideration.
- Steering Committee and Council will provide feedback to staff/consultant.
3) Policy Refinement and Final Adoption

- Revised policies will be prepared and circulated to Provincial ministries

- Public open house to review the draft revised Official Plan and provide comments or concerns for consideration in the final document*

- Official Plan revised and presented to Council and the public - final comments received
Advocating for Healthy Communities

Advocacy is telling your story to someone through various means, with the express purpose of compelling that person to do something. It is the act of speaking or disseminating information intended to influence individual behaviour or opinion, corporate conduct, or public policy and law.
Advocacy Tools

Legislation

- Part 1, under Provincial Administration, outlines matters of Provincial interest
- Site Plan Control By-Laws
- Zoning By-Law
Advocacy Tools

Policies

- PPS - sections 1.5.1 Healthy, Active Communities; 1.1.3 Settlement Areas; 1.4 Housing; and 1.6.7 Transportation Systems

- Official Plans
Advocacy Tools

People and Partnerships

- Public Health Units and staff
- OPHA Built Environment Workgroup
- Provincial groups
- Local governments and staff
- Media
- Community groups and organizations
Resources

http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page186.aspx
Resources

Ontario Professional Planners Institute

Calls to Action that advocate a position on healthy communities
Resource Links

- Citizen’s Guide to Land Use Planning
  [http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page338.aspx](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page338.aspx)

- The Planning Act

- Provincial Policy Statement

- Ontario Professional Planners Institute
  [http://ontarioplanners.ca/Policy/Healthy-Communities-bull-Sustainable-Communities](http://ontarioplanners.ca/Policy/Healthy-Communities-bull-Sustainable-Communities)
Questions?

Comments?
Tools

- Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit – *Guidelines for Reviewing Official Plans*

- Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit – *Healthy Community Design: Policy Statements for Official Plans*
  

- Hastings & Prince Edward HU – *Building Complete & Sustainable Communities*