

Council provides input on County's Draft Land Needs Analysis

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Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A Special Council Meeting was held in Shelburne on Monday (March 21), which started with Mayor Wade Mills declaring March 21 as World Down Syndrome Day.

Council then went into closed session to discuss confidential matters related to the Town.

Next, Council heard a report from the Town planner, Steve Wever, concerning the County of Dufferin Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) - Land Needs Assessment.

This assessment, concerns the Official Plan of the County and bringing it into conformity with the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe as required by the Places to Grow Act and the Planning Act.

Part of the MCR is a Land Needs Assessment to determine if there are sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted Growth up until 2051.

To this end, the County has requested all municipalities to supply their input, via five questions from the County, by March 31, 2022.

The County forecasts a growth to 18,328 persons by 2051 for the town of Shelburne. This figure is potentially in line with Shelburne's plan for a growth to 15,000 persons by 2041. A total of 3,054 new dwellings will be required to accommodate the growth by 2051.

Currently, Shelburne has an intensification target of 38 per cent. This represents the percentage of new residential units within the existing built-up area of the Town in the form of infilling, redevelopment of existing buildings, under-used land and additional residential units within existing homes. To meet the County's target of 40 per cent to 2051, Shelburne's target would need to increase to 48 per cent. This would require, 1,466 new residential units.

The estimated capacity within the built-up area is only 513 leaving a shortage of 953 units. This would mean increased residential densities and building heights within the built-up area to reach 48 per cent.

This also means that 1,588 residential units would be needed in the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA), which is the residential area not in the core of Shelburne's built up area.

Again, this is a problem, as only 398 units are available, creating a shortfall of 1,190 units.

The County forecasts 3,380 new jobs to the year 2051, many of which will be commercial or institutional jobs. They predict only 492 industrial jobs, with a present capacity of 709 jobs. Leading the County to conclude that no new industrial lands are required.

The existing commercial and institutional land will only accommodate 1,560 jobs of the forecast 1,945, leaving a shortage of 385 jobs.

They County recommends the Town increase employment densities and ensure that future residential settlement expansions consider commercial institutional needs.

The County's 5 questions for the MCR Land Needs Assessment (LNA) are:

1. How do the projections outlined in the LNA meet with your vision of the community over the next 10, 20, and 30 years?

The essence of the question is whether or not the community would like to exceed growth projections or are they too aggressive.

The town planner, Mr. Wever acknowledged that the population projections are in line with those of the Town, but that it is unclear if and how the additional forecast to 2051 could be accommodated on remaining land within the current municipal boundary.

Without an expansion, Shelburne would have to plan for significantly higher density development and more intensification than previously planned.

He also feels it is unclear how the draft 48 per cent intensification target could be reasonably achieved, or how it would affect the character of Shelburne.

It would mean a much more urban Downtown Core than previously planned and would require a bypass for the heavy truck traffic now present in the core.

Mr. Wever also feels that the proposed 65 people and jobs per hectare by the County for the Shelburne West area could be achieved.

2. Are servicing expansions planned that would ensure continued uninterrupted growth?

Although Environmental Assessments are in the works for water and waste water infrastructure, improvements are expected to be required to accommodate forecast growth to 2041. The additional forecast to 2051 will require future updates.

These needs could affect the pace and timing of developments.

3. Are there constraints (or opportunities) to land development or servicing that should be additionally considered?

Again, Mr Wever pointed out the lack of a bypass to elevate the truck traffic through the downtown core, which affects the viability of mixed-use pedestrian-oriented development at a higher density.

Also, transportation options in the community and regional connections to higher order transit are lacking.

(4) What efforts has your Municipality taken, (or plans to take) that would increase the speed at which development can take place (i.e. zoning to permit more as-of-right development)?

The Town has initialized standardized development agreements, instituted Development Charges cost sharing and credit agreements, as well as adopted a community improvement plan in 2019.

There are servicing studies and annual allocation reviews. There is the Shelburne West Secondary Plan, a Parks and Recreation Master Plan and a Transportation Master Plan.

(5) For Municipalities where the LNA outlines a need for an expansion to settlement boundaries, can you outline the specific geography where you would like to see those expansions take place (or would be best suited)?

This answer was simple for the Town ? Shelburne West Urban Expansion Areas (the only remaining land within the town boundaries).

Having heard this report and being in agreement with it, Council voted to accept it and to forward it to the County as well as any

other municipalities requesting it.

This concluded the Special Council Meeting and it was adjourned.