

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Official Plan Review

The Town of Gananoque (Gananoque) is a waterfront community situated on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, straddling the Gananoque River, in Eastern Ontario. Known as the “Gateway to the 1000 Islands”, Gananoque is known for its vibrant waterfront, small town feel and community engagement and pride. According to the 2016 Census, Gananoque is home to just over 5,200 people. In the summer months, Gananoque’s population swells as summer residents and tourists return to the area attracted by the natural environment and high quality of life.

Gananoque, like all communities is navigating considerable change. Climate change, cyclical population changes, an aging population, economic restructuring, housing affordability, heritage preservation, downtown and waterfront revitalization and changing societal norms and expectations present opportunities and challenges for Gananoque.

Gananoque’s Official Plan is a key tool that the community is and can continue to use to navigate these changes. An Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that looks twenty years into the future and establishes a vision of what the community will look like and establishes policies to guide physical change undertaken by the public and private sector consistent with that vision.

The purpose of an Official Plan is articulated in Section 24 of the *Planning Act* (the Act). This section states that an Official Plan shall contain goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environment of the municipality; such policies and measures that are practical to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing; and a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public when land use planning applications are advanced in the community.

Gananoque’s current Official Plan was approved by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 12, 2010. The Official Plan establishes a vision and guiding principles for the community and comprehensive set of policies based on the following themes:

- Our heritage – Planning Lowertown
- Where we live – Planning sustainable residential neighbourhoods
- Where we do business – Planning our commercial lands
- Where we work – Planning for employment lands
- Our rural and open spaces – Planning for balance
- Our environment – Planning for sustainability
- Development constraints – Planning for public health and safety
- Making it work – Our infrastructures
- Implementing the plan – The planning toolkit
- Administration of the Official Plan

Gananoque’s current Official Plan can be found [here](#).

Draft Background Report

PlanGAN – Gananoque Official Plan

Given the long term nature of an Official Plan, consistent change in the external environment and continuous improvement to legislation, policy, plans and regulations, it is a standard municipal practice to periodically review an Official Plan to ensure that it reflects the best available information, continues to reflect the vision and goals of the community and balances that vision and goals with matters of provincial interest in local land use planning.

This practice is enshrined in Section 26 of the Act, which requires that municipalities revise its Official Plan ever 10 years (if a new Official Plan) and every 5 years thereafter (until replaced by a new Official Plan) to ensure that is conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them as the case may be; has regard to matters of provincial interest under Section 2; and is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement that is issued under Section 3 of the Act.

Gananoque has initiated a review of its Official Plan, pursuant to Section 26 of the Act, with the goal of creating a new Official Plan for the community (Official Plan Review). Since the Official Plan came into effect, considerable change has occurred. At the provincial level, this includes changes to the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS). At the local level, new source water protections have been implemented and other studies (e.g. Development Charge Study, Recreation Master Plan) have been completed, providing new insights.

In accordance with the legislation described above, the Official Plan Review will ensure that the Official Plan continues to have appropriate regard to matters of provincial interest articulated in the Act, continues to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and continues to reflect local goals and priorities. The scope of this review includes the following policy themes:

1. Employment, population and housing projections
2. Land supply
3. Growth management
4. Employment areas
5. Housing
6. Parks and Recreation
7. Mobility
8. Infrastructure and public service facilities
9. Climate change
10. Natural heritage
11. Source water protection
12. Mineral resources
13. Cultural heritage and archaeology
14. Natural hazards
15. Human made hazards
16. Administering the plan

The Official Plan Review also provides an opportunity for Gananoque to build relationships with indigenous communities. Gananoque is part of the Crawford Purchase of 1783 and the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat peoples.

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1.2 Purpose:

This Background Report is the first of several reports that will be prepared as part of the Official Plan Review. This report summarizes key information from several different sources, describes the existing provincial policy framework for the above referenced themes as well as the current Official Plan policies. This report is intended to serve as a basis for recommended policy directions and changes.

The balance of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 speaks to growth and settlement related considerations
- Section 3 speaks to the changing climate
- Section 4 addresses the natural environment
- Section 5 addresses source water protection
- Section 6 speaks to economic development
- Section 7 speaks to housing
- Section 8 speaks to parks and open space
- Section 9 speaks to mobility (including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists)
- Section 10 speaks to infrastructure
- Section 11 speaks to cultural heritage
- Section 12 speaks to natural hazards