

# TOWN OF PARRY SOUND

## OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS  
MARCH 27, 2010



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## Executive Summary

Attached are meeting proceedings from the Parry Sound Official Plan Review Workshop held on March 27, 2010 at the Stockey Centre.

The purpose of the session was to explore potential futures for Parry Sound and confirm whether or not the goal of the existing Official Plan is still relevant. The existing goal from Official Plan states, in part: "... to maintain and enhance the living environment within the community by preserving the character of the municipality, allowing for increased economic opportunities, and encouraging an appropriate level of growth"

The workshop participants discussed the following broad questions:

1. What is your **vision** for Parry Sound?
2. What makes Parry Sound a special place to live? What do you want to **protect**?
3. **Gaps and Needs:** What types of uses or activities are lacking in the Town?
4. **Growth.** Where should future growth be focused? Where should municipal services be extended to accommodate this growth?
5. **Economic development:** How can we expand the economic base of the Town (opportunities, actions, implementation ideas)?

Below is a summary of the key points from each question.

### 20 year Vision

1. **Downtown revitalization and beautification:** An active and vital core area of our town with a pedestrian oriented, culturally and historically rich Town Centre integrally linked with the waterfront.
2. **Cooperative regional governance:** A regional government that works together to provide services and growth for the Parry Sound Area. This presumes expanded boundaries and area-wide broader government.
3. **Beautiful waterfront:** A pristine waterfront, creating a Mecca for visitors. This assumes government services base relocated from prime development to exterior location close to a service corridor.
4. **Responsible housing and commercial development:** Town should be more aggressive in approaching exterior businesses to relocate to our area.
5. **Green & sustainable.** A progressive focus on green business operations. This might include an institute for Ecology, building on the Biosphere designation.
6. **Recreation amenities.** Fitness trail and recreational areas should be expanded and improved to incorporate a facility that would include pool/senior fitness and youth activities
7. **Balanced housing.** There are lots of different types of housing, at different price points. There are some smaller lot sizes and footage requirements to accommodate affordable housing
8. **Population stability.** Stop population decline and begin to grow.
9. **Senior opportunity:** any type of planned retirement village with activities

### Things to protect, maintain or keep

(The list noted below is not in any priority or special ranking)

- Georgian Bay
- Green ribbon ... fitness trail
- Museum & sailing club
- Clean water
- Library
- Community centre
- Education centre & community college
- Historic downtown
- Quality of life
- Stockey Centre
- Belvedere view... Market square park
- Waubuno Beach
- Salt dock & trails
- Regional services
- Strong business community
- No ugly skyline of high rises
- Strong volunteer community
- Medical facility

### Gaps and Needs

1. Regional cooperation/governance/government
2. New affordable homes for new starters and seniors
3. Vibrant economic development downtown ... public and private investment in downtown core
4. Concentration of business in downtown i.e. grocery store ..Increased commercial development, i.e. Downtown supermarket, more waterfront shops and restaurants and hotel
5. Recreation & sports facility ---pool, activity center
6. More industry/commercial growth - high value jobs. -> Decrease unemployment
7. Build on the arts & culture community. ...Culture & heritage: recognition of importance for character of town
8. Plan for the waterfront --- underutilized (e.g. Public spaces, access etc.)

### Economic Development Opportunities

1. Continue to develop **post secondary education opportunities**: Canadore to partner more closely with local business need, partnering with universities and other Community Colleges to attract student & research \$\$\$\$\$. Potentially, Medical research, training
2. Towns ED unit must focus on **enticing new business and residential development** to the area. ... Promote and emphasize the potential for industry to locate here but provide products globally. E.g. Kropf Industrial, Connor Industries, Shaw Almex.... Also, Promote new green technologies/industries to locate here.
3. **Marketing, promoting and branding the Town**: Marketing plan that articulates our unique identity... What is our Town/regional brand?
4. **Promotion of the natural environment** to create opportunities for eco-tourism: Promoting a Centre for Ecological Research will attract high end jobs and research.... Biosphere-related activities.
5. **Pre-zone commercial/industrial properties** to allow for more rapid development -> identify areas suitable for residential, commercial and industrial growth.
6. **Promote affordable housing** through streamlined municipal policies & approvals, cost effective servicing, which will give our workforce good places to live.
7. Build on **our arts & culture community** -> creative economy & sustainable sector. For example, build on existing stockey centre/festival of the sound asset to promote more of the arts in the town, through affordable housing and post secondary learning

8. Expand **available services** i.e. Health care ...Expand the regional health services, as a requirement for attracting seniors.
9. **Increased Senior population** generates consumer spending ...capitalize on the senior and aging population both locally and out of town by identifying their needs.
10. **Intensification:** Focus on intensifying properties that are already serviced to attract and make development more affordable. decrease lot sizes, decrease square footage requirements, maximize density.



# TOWN OF PARRY SOUND OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS MARCH 27, 2010

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## 1.0 Official Plan and Community Consultation process

The workshop held on March 27, 2010, represents the initial step in the public consultation on the update of the Parry Sound Official Plan. The purpose of the community workshop component was to get input from a cross section of stakeholders on the key issues and opportunities related to future growth in Parry Sound. Approximately 30 residents representing Town Council, various organizations and the public attended the ½ day workshop to contribute their thoughts on the future direction for the Town. The list of attendees is on file at the Town office.

The community workshop was conducted using an electronic meeting system (EMS), an innovative facilitation process developed from research at the Queen's School of Business. The Queen's EMS, called "the Decision Centre", combines expert facilitation with a state of the art group decision support system to enable groups to rapidly accelerate idea generation and consensus building. This facility consists of a network of laptops accessing software designed to support idea generation, idea consolidation, idea evaluation and planning. The tool supports, but does not replace, verbal interaction; typically 25% of interaction takes place on the computers.<sup>1</sup>

In this community workshop, participants were asked, for example, "**Gaps and Needs:** What types of uses or activities are lacking in the Town?" Participants typed in ideas on the laptops all of which appeared on a public screen at the front of the room. These ideas were then discussed and categorized and merged into common themes. The group was then asked "if we could only address five of these in the 2-3 years, which ones are most critical?" Individuals selected his/her top 5 and the overall results were then displayed to the group and further discussed.

The following provides a summary of the proceedings from the workshop. Each participant had the opportunity to "vote" and participate in the various discussions.

## 2.0 Vision

In reviewing the vision and the goal for the Town, a number of questions were considered.

The Town of Parry Sound has been very successful at achieving our goals.  
What are some of the characteristics? What are people saying about us?  
We know Parry Sound has been successful when...  
Step 1: Brainstorm  
Step 2: Vote: What are the SEVEN most COMPELLING elements of this future state...  
Step 3: Clarify and consolidate the similar elements from step 2<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Feedback from groups who have used the Executive Decision Centre process includes: meeting times can be cut in half; participation goes way up; better idea generation and alternative evaluation; a more structured process; and automatic documentation of deliberations. Over 800 organizations around North America use the Centre for meetings such as: strategic planning, visioning, annual planning, focus groups, team building, budgeting, program review, project planning, risk assessment, job profiling, 360 degree feedback, alternative evaluation, new product development and a variety of other meeting types.

<sup>2</sup> The symbol // indicates that two similar ideas have been merged together.

## 2.1. Formulation

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 7)

Number of ballot items: 42

Total number of voters (N): 25

### Total

- 16 1. Downtown revitalization and beautification // An active and vital core area of our town.// A vibrant, pedestrian oriented Town Centre integrally linked with the waterfront //Historically rich and economically sustainable downtown //Support the downtown core.
- 13 2. Cooperative regional council // Regional government must be partnered in order for the municipalities to provide services and growth for the Parry Sound Area.
- 13 3. Beautiful waterfront // Bay shore, pristine waterfront, Mecca for visitors //Better use of cleaned up water front to attract more seasonal residents.
- 10 4. Development both housing and business. Town should be more aggressive in approaching exterior businesses to relocate to our area.
- 9 5. Focus on green business operations // we need to be a green community: build smart to extend service life as much as possible = lower taxes.
- 8 6. expanded boundaries and area-wide broader govt. - Regional?
- 8 7. We need to have an institute for Ecology, building on the Biosphere designation.
- 7 8. Fitness trail and recreational areas should be expanded and improved to incorporate a facility that would include pool/senior fitness and youth activities.
- 7 9. An intensified downtown where we can stroll with our families. Increased bike traffic. Bike racks, etc.
- 7 10. It should have lots of different types of housing, at different price points.
- 7 11. Stop population decline and begin to grow.
- 6 12. Any type of planned retirement village with activities.
- 6 13. Works well with neighboring municipalities to achieve mutual goals.
- 6 14. Protect the Natural Beauty and significant Environmentally Sensitive areas.
- 4 15. Relocate government services base from prime development to exterior location close to a service corridor.
- 3 16. Positive Collaboration with surrounding municipalities.
- 3 17. Improved walk ability throughout community // lots of walking traffic through the downtown.
- 3 18. Reduce the number of commercial zoning differentials to facilitate development.
- 3 19. Developed waterfront with improved public spaces.
- 3 20. A community which provides links for active transportation.
- 3 21. Family oriented activities in the Community.
- 3 22. Reduce lot sizes and footage requirements to accommodate affordable housing.
- 2 23. Full range of housing levels.
- 2 24. Thriving production industry.
- 2 25. Improved public transit, both intercity and local.
- 2 26. Increased short term visitor usage.
- 2 27. Multi-use trail system through town with access to services.
- 2 28. Get surplus property from MTO at PS Drive and zone for industrial uses.
- 2 29. It should be a place where the cottagers want to come in and hang out for an afternoon or evening, and the citizens get to enjoy all the time.
- 1 30. We need ONE high-rise? please?

- 1 31. Best possible use of the natural resources which exist in our community.
- 1 32. A place for migrants from the GTA to come and live (recreation services required).
- 1 33. The treeline should define the skyline of the Town.
- 1 34. Effective local governance in West Parry Sound.
- 1 35. Maintain all existing shoreline road allowance.
- 1 36. Work more closely with developers to achieve more rental accommodations.
- 1 37. A community which protects its natural resources.
- 1 38. Work with rwy companies to effect crossing barriers and get rid of train whistling.
- 0 39. Link the relatively spralling activity centres.
- 0 40. It should have a bus system and a bike trail system.
- 0 42. Sea Plane capital of the world...

## 2.2. Selection

The group looked at the top 22 ideas (>2votes) and merged the similars

### 1. Downtown revitalization and beautification // An active and vital core area or our town.// A vibrant, pedestrian oriented Town Centre integrally linked with the waterfront ///Culturally and Historically rich and economically sustainable downtown

An intensified downtown where we can stroll with our families. Increased bike traffic. Bike racks, etc.

### 2. Cooperative regional council // Regional government must be partnered in order for the municipalities to provide services and growth for the Parry Sound Area. //expanded boundaries and area-wide broader govt. - Regional?

Works well with neighboring municipalities to achieve mutual goals.

Positive Collaboration with surrounding municipalities.

### 3. Beautiful waterfront // Bay shore, pristine waterfront, Mecca for visitors //Better use of cleaned up water front to attract more seasonal residents // Relocate government services base from prime development to exterior location close to a service corridor.

Developed waterfront with improved public spaces.

### 4. Development of both housing and business. Town should be more aggressive in approaching exterior businesses to relocate to our area.

Reduce the number of commercial zoning differentials to facilitate development.

### 5. Green & sustainable. Focus on green business operations // we need to be a green community: build smart to extend service life as much as possible = lower taxes // We need to have an institute for Ecology, building on the Biosphere designation. //Protect the Natural Beauty and significant Environmentally Sensitive areas.

### 6. Recreation. Fitness trail and recreational areas should be expanded and improved to incorporate a facility that would include pool/senior fitness and youth activities

Improved walk ability throughout community // lots of walking traffic through the downtown.

Family oriented activities in the Community.

**7. Balanced housing. It should have lots of different types of housing, at different price points.** //reduce lot sizes and footage requirements to accommodate affordable housing.

**8. Stop population decline and begin to grow.**

**9. Senior opportunity. Any type of planned retirement village with activities.**

**10. A community which provides links for active transportation.**

□

### 3.0 What to protect, keep, maintain?

What makes Parry Sound a special place to live?  
What features of the Town would you like to protect, maintain, keep?  
Note: these are not ranked

- Georgian Bay: public access to...
- Ribbon of green on shoreline ... fitness trail
- Museum & sailing club
- Clean water
- Library
- Community centre
- Historic downtown
- Quality of life
- Stockey Centre
- Belvedere view... Market square park
- Waubuno Beach
- Salt dock & trails
- Regional services
- Strong business community
- No ugly skyline of high rises
- Strong volunteer community
- Education centre & community college
- Medical facility

## 4.0 Needs and Gaps

### Gaps & Needs

What types of uses or activities are presently lacking in the Town that would be desirable?  
If we could only address SIX of these, which ones would they be?

### 4.1. Formulation

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 6) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 17

Total number of voters (N): 30

#### Total

- 23** 1. Regional cooperation/governance/government
- 18** 2. New affordable homes for new starters and seniors
- 18** 3. Vibrant / Interesting Economic development Downtown ... Public and Private Investment in downtown core
- 15** 4. Concentration of business in downtown, i.e. grocery store...Increased Commercial Development, i.e. downtown supermarket, more waterfront shops and restaurants and hotel.
- 14** 5. Recreation & sports facility ---pool, activity center
- 11** 6. More Industry/Commercial growth - High Value Jobs. -> Decrease Unemployment ...clean industry
- 11** 7. Build on the arts & culture community. ...Culture & heritage: recognition of importance for character of Town.
- 10** 8. Plan for the waterfront --- under utilized (e.g. public spaces, access, etc.)  
- Waterfront development on East side of the Small Sound compatible with the community.
- 8** 9. Motivated Leadership ...Forward and aggressive thinking local government
- 8** 10. Business/Residential Partnerships -> better communications on new multi-use development.
- 8** 11. Build on the green wave.
- 8** 12. Post secondary education - continued growth.
- 6** 13. Local, regional, active and intercommunity transportation. ... Access to downtown and waterfront. Bike routes expanded.
- 4** 14. Tourism Advancement
- 4** 15. Culture & heritage: recognition of importance for character of Town.
- 3** 16. More green in streetscaping, i.e. too much asphalt ...our streetscaping is disappearing (boulevards, etc.).

*Prior to voting, the group brainstormed ideas and then merged the similar items. Below in non-bold are the merged items. These items are ordered as they were originally brainstormed (i.e. not as they were ranked by the group). Items that did not have any ideas merged are not included.*

**Recreation & sports facility ---pool, activity center**

Enhanced Community Centre with Pool - opportunities for youth

Pool/recreation complex/waterpark to serve the community as well as act as a tourist attraction

Recreation facility

Sports Complex, i.e. Pool, Ice surface, etc.

**New affordable homes for new starters and seniors**

Housing at various sizes particularly small

Affordable housing

Affordable housing for seniors

**Regional cooperation/governance/government**

Regional Government

Regional Government in order to facilitate and enable growth.

**More Industry/Commercial growth - High Value Jobs. -> Decrease Unemployment**

**...clean industry**

Need for industry to create jobs

**4.2. Refinement and discussion of top needs**

1. Regional cooperation/governance/government
2. New affordable homes for new starters and seniors
3. Vibrant / Interesting Economic development Downtown ... Public and Private Investment in downtown core
4. Concentration of business in downtown i.e. grocery store ..Increased Commercial Development, i.e. downtown supermarket, more waterfront shops and restaurants and hotel
5. Recreation & sports facility ---pool, activity center
6. More Industry/Commercial growth - High Value Jobs. -> Decrease Unemployment ...clean industry
7. Build on the arts & culture community. ...Culture & heritage: recognition of importance for character of Town
8. Plan for the waterfront --- under utilized (e.g. public spaces, access, etc.)  
- Waterfront development on East side of the Small Sound compatible with the community

## 5.0 Growth

### 5.1. *Where should growth be focused?*

Where should future growth be focused?

- Intensification within existing Town (both residential and commercial)
- Along the Waterfront
- New Areas?

#### Discussion Notes (not ranked)

- Residential growth along south mall, north mall / around community college
- Depends on type of development -> may require cooperation with neighbours
- Residential growth on Louisa Street
- Industrial growth on Parry Sound Drive ... MTO lands?
- East side waterfront -> Move govt services away from W/F
- Affordable housing -> must put within reasonable proximity of amenities ... old hospital, St Josephs, William Beatty Schools, west side of Miller St. @ Sequin
- Continued intensification of existing service areas (Rear lot development)
- Industrial area attached to railway, transit routes
- Extended services to other municipalities
- Green policy -> establish efficient use of services
- In sum, "mixed use" with residential blended with commercial (e.g. housing above shops)

### 5.2. *What about municipal services?*

Where should municipal services (sewer, water, roads) be extended to accommodate this growth?

- Must identify areas of servicing that are cost effective
- Need to look outside box to get best return
- Extend services regionally
- Joint trench servicing (multiple utilities share common trench)
- Road Allowance between PS Road and Sequin
- Louisa Street Extension

## 6.0 Economic Development Opportunities

How can we expand the economic base of the Town?  
 What opportunities are there for economic development?  
 What types of activities should be considered?  
 If we could only implement FIVE, which would they be (based on their potential feasibility)

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 5) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 17

Total number of voters (N): 22

### Total

- 17 1. Continue to develop post secondary education opportunities
  - Canadore to partner more closely with local business need, partnering with universities and other Community Colleges to attract student & research \$\$\$\$
  - Medical research, training
- 16 2. The economic development division of the town should be concentrating on enticing new business and residential development to the area.
  - Attract and encourage new businesses ... Promote and emphasize the potential for industry to locate here but provide products globally. i.e. Kropf Industrial, Connor Industries, and Shaw Almex.
  - Promote new green technologies/industries to locate here.
- 13 3. Marketing, promoting and branding the Town: Marketing plan that articulates our unique identity... what is our Town/regional brand?
- 9 4. Promotion of the natural environment to create opportunities for eco-tourism.
  - Promoting a Centre For Ecological Research will attract high end jobs and research.
  - biosphere-related activities
- 8 5. pre-zone commercial/industrial properties to allow for more rapid development -> identify areas suitable for residential, commercial and industrial growth
- 7 6. Promote affordable housing through streamlined municipal policies & approvals, cost effective servicing, which will give our workforce good places to live.
- 7 7. Build on our arts & culture community -> creative economy & sustainable sector
  - We need something like a movie theatre which will attract the cottagers in for a night on the town.
  - Build on existing stockey centre/festival of the sound asset to promote more of the arts in the town, through affordable housing and post secondary learning
  - group of seven artists started here
- 6 8. Expand available services, i.e. health care ...Expand the regional health services, as a requirement for attracting seniors
- 6 9. Increased Senior population generates consumer spending ...capitalize on the senior and aging population both locally and out of town by identifying their needs
- 5 10. Intensification: Focus on intensifying properties that are already serviced to attract and make development more affordable. decrease lot sizes, decrease square footage requirements, and maximize density
- 3 11. Attract new small business through incentives ...Use the taxation system to create opportunities.
- 3 12. Industry Opportunity - Transportation - Unique Access to Rail, Water and 400-series highway

- 3** 13. Accommodation and other service facilities required summer, spring & fall near (water & trails) and winter (trails)
- 2** 14. Diverse educational opportunities at all grade levels to encourage broader range of future markets (e.g. expand range of experiences for our youth beyond seasonal occupations)
- 2** 15. grow our own...make it possible for our youth to pursue careers locally
- 1** 16. Attract those interested in family/genealogical/history research (e.g. archives)

## 7.0 Concluding Thoughts

### Existing Goal from the Official Plan:

“... to maintain and enhance the living environment within the community by preserving the character of the municipality, allowing for increased economic opportunities, and encouraging an appropriate level of growth”

### Comments

- Too vague & passive -> need to be more aggressive
- Character of “region” – need to articulate
- “Allowing for” – too passive... need to promote
- Parry Sound should be recognized as the hub/centre of the region (commercial, economic, cultural)
- Need SMART objectives (specific, measurable, action oriented, timeframed, realistic etc.)
- What exactly is the “appropriate level of growth”? Are we ready for > 1% growth? Plan must be able to accommodate 1% increase