

Township of Severn Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated December 16, 2022

1. Why is the City of Orillia looking for more land?

The City of Orillia is currently investigating the potential for expanding its municipal boundary as part of its [Municipal Comprehensive Review](#) (MCR) process. An MCR is a long-range land use planning process. As part of the Province of Ontario's *Growth Plan*, all upper- and single-tier municipalities that are governed by the *Growth Plan* are required to bring their Official Plans into conformity with the policies and schedules of the *Growth Plan*. As a single-tier municipality in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), the City of Orillia is provincially mandated to complete this process.

The Province's *Growth Plan* identifies minimum intensification and density targets for urban areas and assigns population and employment forecasts to each municipality in the GGH. The *Provincial Growth Plan* identifies Orillia as a location *to focus* new growth within the Province as Orillia is a fully serviced municipality that can accommodate new growth in a compact built form and more efficiently utilize the City's municipal services, which in turn minimizes the impacts of urban sprawl. As a result of Orillia being designated as a Primary Settlement Area, the City will, at a minimum, need to plan to accommodate 49,000 people and 26,000 jobs by the year 2051.

The MCR process will help Orillia decide how we will manage our expected growth and meet those targets.

2. What is involved?

As part of the MCR process, the City of Orillia is currently undertaking a three-phase Technical Land Evaluation, which is required to comprehensively consider suitable growth scenarios.

Phase One established the background information needed to inform the technical analysis and resulted in a focused study area. The study area identifies lands abutting the City's boundaries and specific lands for further evaluation as candidate areas for possible expansion.

Phase Two involves preparing the Technical Land Evaluation reports to further assess the identified growth scenarios. The report will address the technical feasibility requirements outlined in the *Growth Plan*.

Phase Three will use the findings from the technical analysis to identify a final growth option and draft Settlement Area Boundary Expansion lands for Orillia Council's consideration.

3. Are lands in the Township of Severn area being considered as part of the potential boundary expansion?

Yes, lands in the Township of Severn are being considered for a potential future boundary expansion. At the outset of the Technical Land Evaluation project, the Focused Study Area included all lands within the Townships of Oro-Medonte, Severn, and Ramara. The Township of Ramara was removed from the Focused Study Area due to planning considerations. The scope of the study has been reduced to abutting lands in both the Townships of Severn and Oro-Medonte.

The City of Orillia's consultant, WSP, intends to significantly refine the lands being studied further during the current phase of their work to identify the best lands from a planning perspective for a potential future boundary expansion. The original requirement for lands to accommodate the City's growth was 380 ha., however, the exact amount of land required for a potential boundary expansion is subject to change based on the results of the revised Land Needs Assessment authorized by Orillia Council on April 25, 2022 to review increased intensification and greenfield density targets.

4. How have residents in the affected lands been informed of this potential expansion?

The City of Orillia has been sharing information with the Townships of Severn and Oro-Medonte. Orillia also held a Kick-Off Virtual Public Open House Presentation at the start of the Technical Land Evaluation, which was communicated to respective stakeholders.

In addition, the City of Orillia has communicated the steps of the MCR process through news releases, social media posts, the Weekly Bulletin in *Orillia Today*, emails to stakeholders, a dedicated project webpage at orillia.ca/MCR, and an email mailing list open for public registration.

Before any decisions are made by Orillia Council in 2023, further public and stakeholder consultation will take place, including opportunities to provide input and feedback on the preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation.

To learn more about the process and to sign up for updates, please visit orillia.ca/MCR.

5. Is the Township of Severn participating and what can Township of Severn residents do to become involved?

Orillia is seeking input from any residents who may have an interest in its MCR process, including those from the surrounding townships, such as the Township of Severn. The City of Orillia continues to share information with the Township of Severn and provide updates on the project progress.

Before any decisions are made by Orillia Council in 2023, further public and stakeholder consultation will take place, including opportunities to provide input and feedback on the preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation, which will recommend lands for a potential boundary expansion.

For more information about how to participate in the City of Orillia's MCR process and to sign up for updates, please visit orillia.ca/MCR.

6. I am a Township of Severn resident concerned about the environment and natural features in Orillia that extend into Severn. How will these be protected?

The screening criteria set out in the *Provincial Growth Plan* states that significant natural heritage features and areas and prime agricultural lands should be avoided, but it does not necessarily exclude these lands from future development. However, if these resources were to be included in a potential future boundary expansion, then impacts to these resources would need to be studied and impacts minimized. An Agricultural Impact Assessment would need to be completed to minimize the negative impact on the agricultural system and an Environmental Impact Study would need to be completed to ensure no negative impact on any significant natural heritage feature or area.

The current [City of Orillia Official Plan](#) was approved by the Province. Orillia's Official Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) set out policies for the protection of natural heritage features and their ecological functions identified within the City's limits.

The intent of these protective measures within the City limits is to also ensure development does not impact the protection of natural heritage features that extend downstream and beyond municipal boundaries.

7. When will we know what lands Orillia needs and how long will it take?

On April 25, 2022, Council directed staff to study the implications that higher intensification and designated greenfield density targets might have on a future

boundary expansion and to the existing urban fabric of the City, the timeline for completion of the City's planning study for a potential future boundary expansion is expected to be completed in 2023 – 2024. Please see the revised project timeline.

Before any decisions are made by the City of Orillia Council, further public and stakeholder consultation will take place, including opportunities to provide input and feedback on the preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation. It is anticipated that a Public Open House regarding the options for residential intensification/densification and preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation will be held in Summer 2023 followed by a Council presentation in Fall 2023/Winter 2024.

To learn more about the process and to sign up for updates, including public consultation opportunities, please visit orillia.ca/MCR.

8. If I would like to submit comments about the MCR, how can I do that?

Further public and stakeholder consultation will take place, including opportunities to provide input and feedback on the preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation. Stay up to date on the MCR process, including public input opportunities, by signing up for updates at orillia.ca/MCR.

Comments can also be provided in writing to planning@orillia.ca.

9. Can I appeal or challenge any decisions that are made?

There are no formal appeal rights permitted under the [Municipal Act](#) or the [Planning Act](#) as part of the MCR process. You are encouraged to attend upcoming public input opportunities to provide input and feedback on the preliminary results of the Technical Land Evaluation. Stay up to date on the MCR process, including public input opportunities, by signing up for updates at orillia.ca/MCR.

Comments can also be provided in writing to planning@orillia.ca.

10. If my lands become part of the City of Orillia will my taxes go up? Will I be required to connect to Orillia's municipal sewer and water system?

The current process that's underway is a planning/land use analysis to determine the best lands for a future boundary expansion that could accommodate the City of Orillia's allocated population and employment numbers. This process is not a Municipal Restructuring process (i.e. Annexation). Should annexation move forward, that process can take several years to negotiate the municipal boundary

modification and the impacts on those landowners within a municipal restructuring won't be known until those negotiations have concluded and all affected Councils have approved the municipal restructuring.

11. Why has the timeline for completing the MCR changed?

As a result of City resources required to implement the changes stemming from new provincial legislation (the *More Homes for Everyone Act* and the *More Homes Built Faster Act*), along with the City's 2023 Budget Process and the upcoming Development Charges Study, the timeline for the Municipal Comprehensive Review has been extended to ensure that the City can allocate the appropriate resources required for this significant project.