



City of Oshawa Growth Management Study

Engagement Summary Report
March 2026

WSP Canada Inc.
25 York Street,
Toronto, ON



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Land Acknowledgement

The City of Oshawa is situated on lands within the traditional and treaty territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Anishinaabeg and the signatories of the Williams Treaties, which include the Mississaugas of Scugog Island, Hiawatha, Curve Lake, and Alderville First Nations, and the Chippewas of Georgina Island, Rama and Beausoleil First Nations.

We are grateful for the Anishinaabeg who have cared for the land and waters within this territory since time immemorial.

We recognize that Oshawa is steeped in rich Indigenous history and is now present day home to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. We express gratitude for this diverse group of Indigenous Peoples who continue to care for the land and shape and strengthen our community.

'Oshawa' stems from an Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) word meaning "a crossing place" and has further translation as "the point at the crossing of the stream where the canoe was exchanged for the trail". When the word Oshawa was chosen as the name of our City, it reflected and recognized the importance of water and land to our community. Our City's name is a reminder of this important and powerful connection between people and place in the past but also of the present and for the future.

As a municipality, we are crossing over. We are committed to understanding the truth of our shared history, acknowledging our role in addressing the negative impacts that colonization continues to have on Indigenous Peoples, developing reciprocal relationships, and taking meaningful action toward reconciliation.

We are all Treaty people.

Executive Summary

The City of Oshawa has completed a Growth Management Study (G.M.S.) as a core component of Imagine Oshawa: the Oshawa Official Plan Review. The G.M.S. addresses long-range, city-building questions that will shape how Oshawa grows to 2056, including how much growth the City should plan for, where it should be accommodated, how it should be phased, and how population and employment growth should be supported by infrastructure, mobility systems, community services, environmental protection, and economic development.

This Engagement Summary Report documents the engagement activities completed to date and synthesizes key messages received from community input. Participants provided direction on both overarching city-building themes, such as long-term vision and aspirations, complete communities, intensification, mobility and inclusion, and detailed technical considerations, including servicing capacity, stormwater and development constraints, land-use compatibility near rail and pipeline corridors, and the need for coordinated employment area planning. This included submissions from the Region, utilities, and other agencies, including technical bodies.

In addition to the themes captured above, several written submissions also included site-specific requests related to urban boundary considerations and future land use, often citing servicing readiness, adjacency to existing development, market feasibility, and alignment with potential Part II planning processes. Site-specific requests are not summarized in this report, but rather responded to in a comment response matrix within the City's covering Staff Report. However, it is noted that themes identified in Section 3 of this Report, titled "What We Heard", broadly captures the various interests of those who made submissions to the G.M.S.

Across all engagement channels, participants emphasized the importance of strengthening clarity and transparency in how growth choices are framed and communicated; prioritizing complete communities with a balanced mix of housing, jobs, everyday amenities, mobility options, and public realm quality; ensuring growth directions are realistic, consider environmental constraints and land use compatibility; are aligned with short- and long-term municipal servicing capacity; and that new communities are planned through inclusive engagement processes that are accessible, reach residents through different mediums, and offer both in-person and virtual consultation opportunities.

Input received to date was used to refine each component of the G.M.S., including the Land Needs Assessment, Intensification Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy, and Growth Phasing and Urban Expansion Options Report, and to support clearer communication of technical concepts, assumptions, and directions as the Official Plan Review progresses.

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1. Introduction

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The City of Oshawa has launched Imagine Oshawa: the Oshawa Official Plan Review, a city-wide initiative that will guide how Oshawa grows and evolves over the long term. The Oshawa Official Plan is the City’s primary land use and city-building policy document, shaping how and where housing and employment are accommodated, how neighbourhoods and corridors may change over time, and how growth is coordinated with transportation networks, municipal infrastructure, parks and community facilities, and environmental protection.

A key component of the Official Plan Review is the Growth Management Study (G.M.S., or “the Study”). The G.M.S. establishes strategic direction related to three core questions:



The G.M.S. includes four separate but related technical studies: Land Needs Assessment, Intensification Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy, and a Growth Phasing and Urban Expansion Options Report. These documents (excluding the Growth Phasing and Urban Expansion Options Report) are accompanied by one-page summaries to communicate key takeaways. Engagement is an essential part of growth management planning because it grounds the technical work in community aspirations and interests regarding how, where, and when growth occurs. Members of the community may experience growth differently depending on where they live, how they travel, the housing choices available to them, access to community services, and local economic conditions. This Engagement Summary Report documents engagement completed for the G.M.S. to date and highlights key messages received.

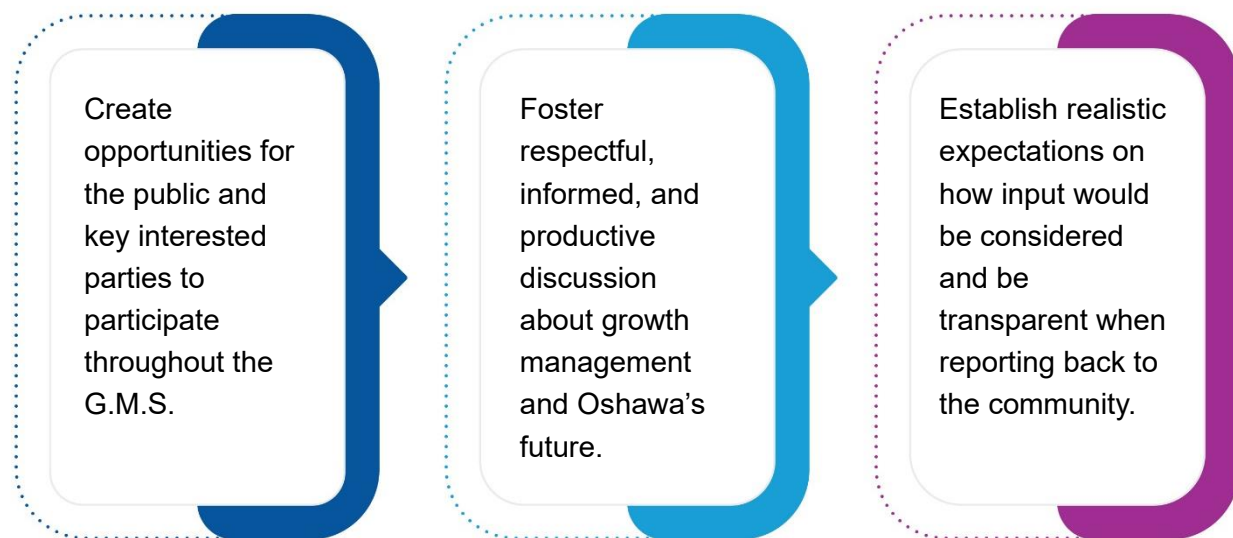


2. Engagement Program

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The City's engagement approach for the G.M.S. was guided by a Communication and Engagement Strategy (C.E.S.). The C.E.S. was prepared to provide a clear roadmap for communications and public engagement throughout the G.M.S., including the preparation of the Land Needs Assessment, Intensification Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy, and Growth Phasing and Urban Expansion Options Report.

The following objectives informed the C.E.S.:



Engagement activities and opportunities were structured to align with the progression of technical work so feedback could be received early, reviewed within the context of emerging findings, and considered through refinement of the technical work.

2.1 Engagement Audiences

The C.E.S. focused on engaging a range of audiences throughout the G.M.S., recognizing that growth management decisions are strengthened when they reflect both policy direction, and community priorities. The following list provides an overview of these audiences and their role:

- **Council:** Members of Council were engaged through the G.M.S.
- **City Staff:** City staff contributed operational and technical perspectives to help ensure growth directions are implementable through City services, infrastructure planning and policy tools.

- **Regional Staff:** Regional staff supported coordination and alignment where growth management intersects with regional policy and initiatives, in particular as it relates to infrastructure planning.
- **Technical Agencies (e.g., Conservation Authority):** Technical agencies provided input on natural hazards, stormwater and watershed considerations, environmental constraints and other regulatory requirements affecting where and how growth can occur safely.
- **Landowners:** Landowners provided perspectives on opportunities and constraints related to growth, including site-specific interests and considerations related to land supply, servicing, and growth phasing.
- **Residents:** Residents and community members provided priorities and concerns related to housing, neighbourhood change, mobility, infrastructure, community services and the overall direction of growth.
- **Developers:** The development community contributed perspectives on feasibility, market dynamics and implementation considerations, including the implications of intensification targets, land supply assumptions, and the timing of servicing.
- **Consultants:** Planning and technical consultants provided professional input on topics such as land needs, employment lands, intensification potential, compatibility requirements and infrastructure coordination.
- **Indigenous Communities:** Indigenous Communities provided input related to the direction of growth planning, including support for intensification-focused approaches, the importance of protecting sensitive environments, and the need to consider cumulative impacts and rights-related considerations.

2.2 Engagement Activities

Engagement activities were organized into three phases to align with the Study's work plan, which are detailed below. The focus of these engagement activities included outreach and awareness-building, review of emerging findings, and final technical review and Council endorsement. The engagement program included both online and in-person methods to improve accessibility and give participants various opportunities to learn about the Study and provide input.

The City's online engagement platform (Connect Oshawa) served as the primary hub for sharing project information, including documents and Study updates, and for collecting feedback. Communications through social media and email updates supported awareness and directed interested parties to the Study webpage. In-person engagement included community pop-ups and a Public Information Centre (P.I.C.).

2.2.1 Phase 1 - Early Outreach and Engagement

Phase 1 focused on building awareness of the Study process, helping participants understand what the G.M.S. is and how it informs the Official Plan Review, and providing early opportunities to share priorities and concerns that could shape the direction of technical work.



Indigenous Community notification and virtual meetings

Indigenous Communities were notified of the commencement of the G.M.S. and were provided an opportunity for early dialogue to inform the level of engagement and communication in later phases. Virtual introductory meetings were scheduled with interested Indigenous Communities, with follow-up engagement occurring at key milestones via email.



Online engagement and Study webpage content

A dedicated Study webpage was managed as the primary hub for Study launch activities, including sharing a Study overview, posting key documents, and providing ongoing updates. Online tools also supported ongoing opportunities for feedback through a centralized, publicly accessible platform, allowing participants to review information outside of scheduled meeting times.



Community feedback

A feedback form/survey was launched to gauge baseline understanding of the Official Plan Review and G.M.S., identify areas of interest, and understand how interested parties prefer to be engaged. Survey input also provided direction on improving clarity and accessibility, including requests for simpler wording, clearer definitions of planning terms, and more inclusive formats for residents with limited access to online tools.



Community pop-ups

Community pop-ups were used to raise awareness of the G.M.S. in high-traffic settings and provide informal opportunities for discussion and questions. The approach supported participation by directing residents to online resources and feedback tools. Two formal pop-ups occurred during Phase 1, and a range of existing community events were leveraged for more informal pop-ups (e.g., attendance at the Peony Festival, Bright and Merry Market, Shape Oshawa event, and other seasonal or community gatherings).



Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (June 19th, 2025)

A T.A.C. meeting was held to introduce the G.M.S. and work plan, present early Study materials, including the Background Discussion Paper, and identify technical considerations and constraints to be addressed through subsequent technical components. The T.A.C. is comprised of representatives from the City, Region, and Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority.

2.2.2 Phase 2 - Development of Findings

Phase 2 focused on sharing findings from the background analysis and gathering feedback on draft recommendations, including how, where, and when growth would be accommodated.



Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (September 3rd, 2025)

A T.A.C. meeting was held to present and discuss the preliminary findings of the Land Needs Assessment, Employment Land Strategy, and Intensification Strategy. The meeting provided T.A.C. members with an opportunity to review key findings, validate assumptions, and offer early input on emerging directions. The feedback received was used to refine the analysis and inform the preparation of the draft reports.



Presentation to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (October 2025)

Feedback received through the Community Pop-ups and Feedback Form in Phase One requested the involvement of the agricultural community in the G.M.S. and greater O.P.R. In response, City Staff presented to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee to introduce the G.M.S. and O.P.R. and gather preliminary feedback, which will inform the future draft Official Plan Amendment.



Economic and Development Services Committee Presentation (October 2025)

A presentation to the Economic and Development Services Committee provided a general update on the Study and emerging findings, supporting transparency and enabling discussion of the Phase 2 Study findings with Committee members.



Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (November 18th, 2025)

A T.A.C. meeting was held to provide an update on the G.M.S. and to seek preliminary feedback on the draft copies of the Land Needs Assessment, Employment Land Strategy, and Intensification Strategy. This session included a high-level overview of the three draft reports, with T.A.C. members providing feedback to refine the findings and policy directions. The meeting also focused on developing criteria to evaluate the phasing scenarios and the proposed approach to the phasing scenarios presented in the final Growth Phasing and Urban Expansion Options Report.



Public Information Centre (November 2025)

A P.I.C. was held to share an overview of the Study, present key insights from the Background Discussion Paper and gather feedback on the draft Land Needs Assessment, draft Employment Land Strategy and draft Intensification Strategy. The Study team hosted the P.I.C. on November 25, 2025, at Oshawa City Hall, which included a drop-in session (with display boards) and a formal presentation. A key input that was heard at the P.I.C. was interest in providing input to the Phasing Strategy and associated criteria.



Online Information (Throughout Phase 2)

All G.M.S. documents, including content from the P.I.C., were posted to the Study webpage, offering an alternative to the in-person P.I.C. and providing a digital feedback option. This approach provided an additional opportunity for members of the community to participate in the Study who may have otherwise been unable to attend the P.I.C. and/or any in-person events.



Economic and Development Services Committee Phasing Memorandum (January 2026)

Feedback was received at the November P.I.C. requesting the opportunity to provide feedback on the phasing strategy component of the G.M.S. In response, a phasing memorandum detailing the proposed criteria and methodology was presented at the January 12th, 2026, Economic and Development Services Committee Meeting. A commenting period followed, closing on February 6, 2026, during which time submissions were received from members of the public, consultants, and landowners regarding the criteria and overall approach of the phasing strategy.

2.2.3 Phase 3 – Endorsement

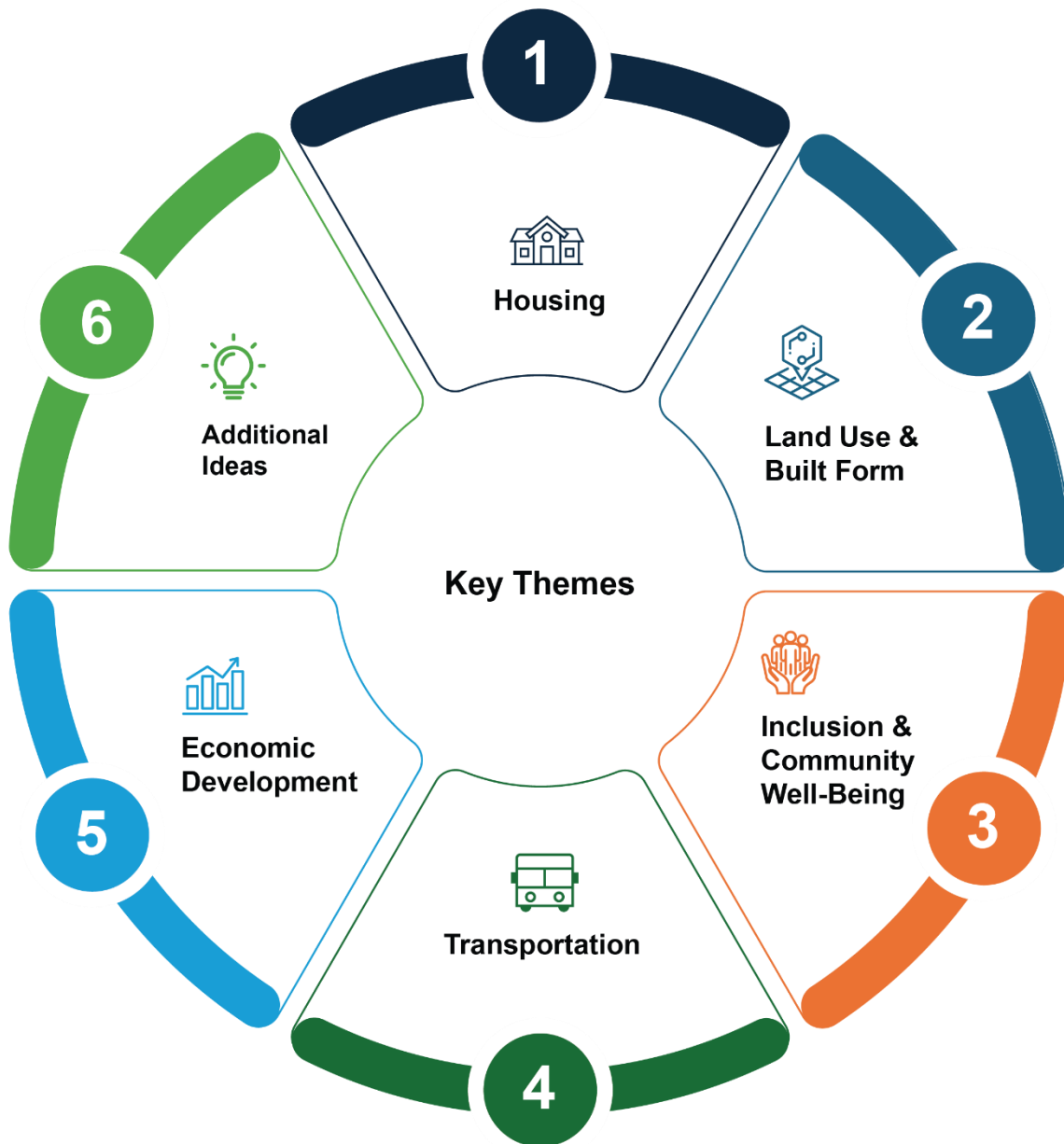
Phase 3 focuses on finalizing the G.M.S. findings and seeking Council endorsement. Engagement activity in this phase supports “reporting back” by ensuring the recommended approach is communicated clearly, represents community expectations, while being technically sound and aligning with provincial direction.



3. What We Heard

3. What We Heard

This section organizes input received through the engagement activities into “Key Themes”. All input to the G.M.S. offered valuable insight into development of the G.M.S. The six “Key Themes” are:





3.1 Housing

- **Housing Options:** Participants expressed interest in developing a range of safe, accessible, and quality housing options that are available to residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Rental Housing:** Participants emphasized that housing solutions should include purpose-built rental forms and support both renters and homeowners with regulatory safeguards to ensure that rental housing is safe and considerate of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Affordable and Inclusive Housing:** Participants expressed a need for more affordable housing typologies for diverse and vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals and families, young adults, and seniors. Feedback highlighted significant affordability pressures and the need for more affordable and attainable housing options to support overall community well-being. Participants also emphasized the need for increasing access to housing support for the unhoused community.

Considerations for Growth Management in Oshawa:

Feedback related to housing shapes long-term growth planning in Oshawa, ensuring it reflects current housing needs, and supports a more diverse, stable, and inclusive housing supply throughout the City. The input related to housing quality, typology, tenures, and neighbourhood stability guides how and where the G.M.S. directs future growth and intensification to advance the community's housing priorities.



3.2 Land Use & Built Form

- **Phased and Sequential Growth:** Participants expressed the need for clearer direction on locations where growth should be prioritized and how it should be phased to ensure orderly and sequential development that is aligned with the provision of housing, jobs, everyday amenities, public service facilities, multi-modal transportation options, and the provision of municipal servicing infrastructure.
- **Infill & Intensification:** There was broad support for intensification, infill, and use of underutilized land, including brownfield sites within the City's existing built-up area, leading to the more efficient use of land and resources to accommodate future growth, while also being more fiscally sustainable.

- **Transit-Oriented Development:** Participants placed an emphasis on focusing growth and intensification in proximity to transit, while supporting the concept of transit-oriented development.
- **Sustainable Growth:** There was support for the orderly and sequential phasing of development in a manner that would align with existing and planned municipal servicing infrastructure capacity and consider long-term servicing costs to ensure greater fiscal responsibility over the long term.
- **Environmental Considerations:** Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring that environmental and hazard constraints, including flood-prone areas, wildlife habitats and other natural areas, are considered when planning for growth and development to ensure the long-term safeguarding of the natural heritage system.

Considerations for Growth Management in Oshawa

This feedback emphasizes the need for clear identification of areas planned for growth and intensification, phasing of development, and the prioritization of existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate future growth. It reinforces linking growth management to the City's built form, fiscal responsibility, safeguarding of the natural environment, and the role of closely aligning land use with the City's mobility network, including transit-oriented development and transit corridor-focused growth.



3.3 Inclusion & Community Well-being

- **Inclusive Community:** Participants highlighted the importance of strengthening community inclusion and quality of life for a diverse range of residents, including youth, seniors, newcomers, people with disabilities, low-income households, people experiencing houselessness, and other vulnerable populations, by ensuring there are adequate community services and supports available.
- **Community Amenities & Cultural Hubs:** Prioritize the development of public service facilities, including cultural hubs, community facilities and services such as libraries, social services, parks, recreation spaces and other social supports to align and serve future growth. Participants emphasized the significance of Oshawa's cultural history and heritage resources and the importance of maintaining and promoting the City's heritage and unique identity.

- **Complete Communities:** Prioritize “complete communities” through land use policy, which was described by participants as having a range of housing options, safe, connected and walkable streets, the integration of community amenities that support daily needs, including parks, commercial uses, gathering spaces, places of worship and other community facilities and amenities that support overall wellbeing. Participants also emphasized fostering an inclusive, welcoming community by prioritizing equity, social inclusion, and accessibility in land use planning decisions.
- **Inclusive Public Realm:** Encourage thoughtful urban design and a high-quality public realm that reinforces the importance of culturally inclusive spaces that recognize local Indigenous Communities and Oshawa’s diverse population.

Considerations for Growth Management in Oshawa:

This feedback reinforces the importance of planning for growth in a manner that supports community well-being and inclusion for all residents of the City, including youth, seniors, newcomers, low-income households, people with disabilities, people experiencing houselessness, and other vulnerable populations. The input shapes how growth management may consider certain community priorities, such as housing, jobs, placemaking, and access to community amenities. Additionally, the G.M.S. considers integrating these community amenities into residential neighbourhoods to advance complete communities, as well as to preserve and enhance Oshawa’s cultural assets, history, and community character.



3.4 Transportation

- **Active Transportation:** Participants emphasized a strong desire to reduce car dependency, while enhancing a safe and connected multi-modal transportation network, including walking, cycling, and public transit options, to encourage sustainable travel.
- **Efficiency and Connectivity:** Participants expressed the importance of transportation efficiency and connectivity, ensuring that people can move safely and easily throughout the City and beyond.
- **Road Safety & Connectivity:** Participants raised concerns related to road safety and traffic management and emphasized the importance of proactively integrating transportation capacity considerations with growth rather than reacting after issues emerge.

- **Land Use Compatibility:** There was emphasis placed on the importance of land use compatibility and safety for development within proximity to rail corridors to protect long-term operations and safety.

Considerations for Growth Management in Oshawa:

This feedback emphasizes the need to plan growth in a manner that improves access to walking, cycling, and transit, to reduce car dependency and support long-term sustainable mobility. Key considerations related to land use compatibility, safety, traffic management, and connectivity reinforce the importance of evaluating transportation capacity and network efficiency when planning for growth to ensure transportation infrastructure is aligned with future development.



3.5 Economic Development

- **Supporting Local Employment:** Participants emphasized the need to leverage local employment opportunities to support the City's growth as a complete community and reduce the need for long-distance commuting. A key consideration in this regard is support for the long-term protection of Employment Areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses.
- **Supporting a Resilient Economy:** Feedback highlighted the importance of planning for an adequate long-term supply of employment land, while also aligning infrastructure investment to ensure employment lands have access to municipal servicing. The importance of locating employment lands near major goods movement corridors and permitting a strategic range of employment-oriented uses was also noted.
- **Employment Lands Intensification:** Participants provided mixed views on employment lands, with support for strong long-term protection of industrial areas, while expressing some hesitation with industrial uses being located within or in proximity to sensitive land uses, such as transit-oriented or mixed-use neighbourhoods. Some participants noted that the long-term protection or conversion of Employment Areas should be assessed against economic trends, land needs, and transit-supportive planning.
- **Alignment with Transit:** There was an emphasis placed on planning for Employment Areas that are accessible to Community Areas, namely planned or existing public transit, corridor intensification, and infrastructure investment to support well-connected, sustainable employment areas.

Considerations for Growth Management in Oshawa:

This input highlights how planning for employment growth supports complete communities and long-term economic competitiveness and resilience. The feedback reinforces the importance of supporting local employment opportunities and planning for a diverse economy that adapts to evolving economic conditions. The G.M.S. establishes clear employment land forecasts based on projected employment needs, jobs and land supply analysis, while also identifying how to balance protecting employment lands while also planning for mixed-use, transit-oriented development in more appropriate land use contexts, such as near major transit stations and corridors.



3.6 Additional Feedback

The following additional feedback was provided:

- **Stronger Communication:** Some participants requested clearer communication protocols and clarity regarding how to stay informed about engagement opportunities and project updates.
- **Engagement Tactics, Awareness and Inclusion:** Participants expressed a desire for more user-friendly, accessible and inclusive engagement tactics. This included improving survey functionality, clarity, and use of examples to support understanding of certain growth management concepts. Additionally, there is a desire to introduce new engagement approaches that broaden participation and reduce barriers to capture a wider range of perspectives, such as multilingual tools and providing offline/in-person alternatives.
- **Clear Definitions and Context:** There was an observed need for clear and simple explanations of planning concepts, technical materials and definitions such as “complete communities” and “affordable housing”, as well as greater information and context to support informed feedback.
- **Transparency and Building Trust:** Participants emphasized the importance of reporting back on what was heard and how community input was used to shape decisions to build trust and encourage ongoing participation from the community during the Official Plan Review process.
- **Integrated Planning:** Participants emphasized the interconnected nature of growth topics and called for integrated planning across housing, jobs, land use, transportation, infrastructure, and community services, supported by alignment with regional planning and development phasing.