

Aurora has capacity for nearly 1,000 more residents ahead of Regional review

Aurora has the capacity for 998 new residents in the next few years – a number that could increase pending Regional infrastructure upgrades.

The latest numbers were received by local lawmakers at the most recent meeting of Council, where an update on the Region's anticipated allocation for 8,000 persons-worth was presented.

“Aurora Town Council received an update on the Town's servicing capacity and approved revoking 577 persons-worth of capacity while assigning 855 persons-worth of capacity to approved development applications,” said the Town following the meeting. “York Region, as the upper-tier servicing authority, allocates water and wastewater capacity to each of its nine local municipalities and local Councils then assign that capacity to individual developments.

“Following this update, Aurora now has 998 persons-worth of servicing capacity available to support future projects until York Region infrastructure upgrades are completed in 2028 – 2030.”

Infrastructure upgrades integral to future service allocation include the first phase of the North York Durham Sewage System Expansion; 7,929 persons-worth of capacity have been assigned to Aurora pending the completion of this expansion phase.

“To date, the Town of Aurora has utilized the vast majority of its servicing capacity, with 5,450 persons-worth of servicing firmly committed towards approved developments,” said municipal staff in their report to Council. “This leaves the Town with a remaining balance of 998 persons-worth of servicing capacity, which is equivalent to approximately 314 single detached dwellings. The Town needs to manage the remaining 998 persons-worth until the next phase of York Region infrastructure is completed in 2028-2030.”

Part of this management plan including revoking 577 persons-worth of capacity previously earmarked for development applications now considered inactive.

With Council's approval, this brings the total available allocation to 1,575 persons-worth of servicing.

“To balance development progress with current capacity constraints, staff recommend that Town Council allocate servicing to development-ready projects; this represents a total allocation of 855 persons-worth of servicing across five priority projects and would be subject to a three-year ‘use it or lose it’ provision,” staff reported. “Should a project remain incomplete by 2029, the servicing will revert to the Town for redistribution.”

Developments deemed inactive at press time included projects at 271 Holladay Drive; 15356 Yonge Street (the Readman House); 15296, 15306, and 15314 Yonge Street; and 326 Old Bloomington Road.

Projects benefiting from the servicing reallocation include: 200 Wellington Street West; 25 and 55 Addison Hall Circle; 511 Wellington Street West; 14 and 18 Wellington Street East; and 115 George Street – the site of the now-demolished George Street Public School.

Council was supportive of staff's recommendations, particularly the clause to revoke allocation if it is not used within three years.

“I'm looking forward to seeing when the first ones come forward and they haven't met the timelines and we revoke their approvals and revert back to its original state,” said Mayor Tom Mrakas of projects that have had their servicing allocations approved through settlements made at the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). “I think that's going to be precedent-setting, and I think you're going to see a lot of other municipalities start to move forward with that.”

Allocations settled at the Tribunal were also touched upon by Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim, who questioned whether the Town

would be able to negotiate with these developers if the Town runs out of capacity for other developments.

?I think we've got a couple of options,? replied Marco Ramunno, Aurora's Director of Planning. ?Obviously, there are other applications that may get closer to that sunset clause at a three- or four-year period. We may be in a position where next year we'll report to Council on an annual basis where we may be recommending [Council] revoke allocation from certain applications. The ones that have OLT settlements, it's a little more challenging because we could definitely speak to the applicant, but it may mean another trip down to the Tribunal and have those discussions if they're not going to agree to that.?

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