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Region of Peel
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REPORT
Meeting Date: February 28, 2012
Regional Council

DATE: February 6, 2013

REPORT TITLE: **PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS THE REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW**

FROM: Norma Trim, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

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RECOMMENDATION

That a public meeting be scheduled to commence at 9:30am on May 23, 2013 prior to the regularly scheduled Regional Council meeting to discuss revisions that may be required to the Regional Official Plan to fulfill requirements of Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* and to obtain public input;

And further, that a copy of the report of the Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services, dated February 6, 2013, titled "Public Meeting To Discuss The Regional Official Plan Review", be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga, the Town of Caledon, and Conservation Authorities having jurisdiction in the Region of Peel as well as all other municipalities adjacent to the Region of Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The *Planning Act* requires that, not less frequently than every five years, a public meeting be held to discuss revisions that may be required to an official plan
- It is expected municipal official plans will be required to conform once the new Growth Plan forecasts are finalized by the Province
- A growth management workshop is scheduled for April 18, 2013 for Council input on a framework for a growth management strategy
- The Province has released a draft of the new Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and once it is finalized the Regional Official Plan needs to be amended to conform
- A review of the draft PPS has indicated some of the following areas the Official Plan would have to conform to: climate change adaptation and mitigation, improving water resource policies, review of prime agricultural area boundaries, identifying natural heritage systems, and supporting Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan.
- The Region's work on public health impacts of proposed plans and development needs to be included in the Official Plan
- Staff is consulting with the area municipalities and other Regional departments to identify further issues for study

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DISCUSSION

1. Background

Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* requires that Council shall not less frequently than every five years after the official plan or sections of the official plan comes into effect to hold a public meeting to discuss further revisions that may be required to the official plan.

The Peel Region Official Plan Review (PROPR), which was the most recent update to the Regional Official Plan (Official Plan) was initiated in February 2007 through a public meeting. Through PROPR, Council considered seven ROPAs supported by policy work in fifteen focus areas to conform to the Places to Grow Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), 2006; Greenbelt Plan, 2005; Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005; and recent *Planning Act* amendments.

It is appropriate for Regional Council to hold a public meeting, proposed for May 23, 2013, to initiate the next Official Plan review because it has been six years since the previous public meeting on PROPR and during that time there has been changes to Provincial policy direction (such as Amendment 2 to the Growth Plan and proposed changes to the PPS) and progress on planning matters, such as the Region's leadership on health and planning issues.

2. Regional Official Plan Approach and Successes

The Official Plan, required by the *Planning Act,* provides policy direction on various matters of provincial and regional interest (e.g. protection of regionally and provincially significant greenlands, expansions to the Regional Urban Boundary, population and employment growth forecasts). The Official Plan is strategic in nature and ensures that the respective roles and responsibilities of the area municipalities and the Region in planning matters are respected. The Official Plan provides a long-term strategic policy framework supporting the more specific objectives and land use policies in the area municipal official plans.

Collaboration and consultation played a significant role in the development of the original Official Plan in 1996 and the two subsequent reviews of the plan. This includes collaboration with area municipal staff through working groups and the Planning Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and regular communication and consultations with staff from the Province and Conservation Authorities.

Regional staff also consults internally with Public Works, Human Services, Health Services and Finance. As part of an official plan review process, staff also consults with agencies, stakeholders and the general public through newsletters, stakeholder workshops, open houses, the Region's website and public meetings.

The significant amount of collaboration and consultation during the last Official Plan review, the PROPR process, led to only one appeal of ROPA 20, 22, 23, 24, and 25 which was subsequently withdrawn or mostly settled at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) on June 25, 2012. Only those policies related to the Strategic Infrastructure Study Area (SISA) which protects the GTA West Corridor in Caledon and the North-South Corridor in West Brampton, were deferred to a later date for consideration by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) in conjunction with ROPA 26. Also, ROPA 21B was appealed in June 2012 and settlement discussions are under way.

3. Matters Proposed for this Official Plan Review

A number of emerging issues have been identified as potentially requiring consideration for the upcoming Official Plan review. Based on initial consultation, below are some issues for consideration during this Official Plan review. Staff has consulted with other departments and area municipal staff and have responded to concerns by narrowing the scope of the proposed Official Plan review to three areas: 1) Update the Official Plan to reflect new Growth Plan forecasts; 2) Conform to the new PPS; 3) Address health and planning issues.

a) Growth Plan Forecasts Review

In June 2006, the Growth Plan was released by the Province. The 2021 and 2031 population and employment forecasts from the Growth Plan were allocated to the area municipalities through ROPA 24.

The Ministry of Infrastructure has initiated a review of the population and employment forecasts and in November 2012 released Proposed Amendment 2 to the Growth Plan. Amendment 2 contains a revised planning horizon to 2041 which shows Peel's forecast of 1.97 million people and 970,000 jobs. There is also a 2036 forecast with 1.87 million people and 920,000 jobs in Peel. Provincial staff has consulted with Regional and area municipal staff on Proposed Amendment 2 at a technical and policy level. On July 5, 2012 Regional Council received a report on an update of the Growth Plan Forecast Review and associated issues (Council Resolution 2012-902).

Council received a further report on this matter on January 10, 2013 at which time Council adopted recommendations to support staff's position on the Proposed Amendment 2 (Council Resolution 2013-24). Staff recommended that the 2031 forecasts be updated from 1.64 million people and 870,000 jobs to 1.766 million people and 975,000 jobs to reflect the technical report prepared by Hemson Consulting in support of Proposed Amendment 2. Also, Council directed staff to organize a growth management workshop, which has now been scheduled for April 18, 2013 for Council and stakeholder input on a framework for a growth management strategy.

The new forecasts contained in Proposed Amendment 2 to 2036 and 2041 will have to be appropriately allocated to the area municipalities so that growth can be effectively managed. It is expected the Province will require municipalities to conform to the new forecasts once finalized and released.

b) Provincial Policy Statement Review

The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions made by municipal councils that affect a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS. The Province began its five-year review of the PPS in 2010 and released a draft of the PPS in September 2012. The draft PPS builds upon the 2005 PPS, a few examples include: strengthening land use planning and healthy/active communities; consulting with aboriginal groups; considering potential impacts of climate change adaptation and mitigation; strengthening stormwater management requirements; promoting land use compatibility of lands adjacent to planned and existing corridors; clarifying that planning for infrastructure can go beyond the 20 year time horizon; supporting long-term planning for employment areas; requiring consideration of life-cycle costing of infrastructure; providing new and revised definitions for agricultural; and, requiring identification of natural heritage systems.

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Staff has reviewed the draft PPS and provided staff level comments prior to the November 23, 2012 Provincial deadline. These comments were confirmed through a Council report approved on January 10, 2013 (Council Resolution 2013-26).

A review of the draft PPS has indicated that the following areas will require conformity to the Official Plan. Once the PPS is finalized and in effect staff will review the PPS and amend the Official Plan as necessary to conform.

- **Climate Change** – Various sections of the draft PPS address climate change. The Peel Climate Change Strategy was adopted by Regional Council on June 23, 2011 (Resolution 2011-618). This Official Plan review presents an opportunity to implement action 1.2 of the Strategy, which is to ensure that climate change is considered as official plans are being updated. It is also an opportunity to continue demonstrating municipal leadership addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation.

- **Water Resources** – The draft PPS clarifies how water quality and quantity will be protected, improved, or restored. There are other recent Regional and Provincial initiatives the Official Plan will have to conform to. This includes the *Clean Water Act* (Bill 43), 2006, and the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* (Bill 99), 2008.

  The *Clean Water Act* (Bill 43), 2006 is the Province's source water protection legislation which responds to the recommendations that came in the Part Two report of the Walkerton Enquiry recommending that drinking water supplies be protected at source. It is anticipated that source protection plans affecting Peel Region will be approved in 2013 and will be reviewed and incorporated through appropriate amendments to the Official Plan.

  The *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* (Bill 99), 2008 provides the legislative framework for protecting the Lake Simcoe watershed. The Act requires the Official Plan to be revised to conform to designated policies contained in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, which came into effect in June 2009.

  In addition, policy direction in the Official Plan on watershed planning and storm water management may be considered for inclusion in this review.

- **Agriculture** – The draft PPS clarifies how prime agricultural areas shall be protected for the long-term. A Land Evaluation Area Review study is being performed by the Region and Town of Caledon to ensure that the Official Plan is consistent with Provincial guidance for the identification of prime agricultural areas. The results may recommend mapping updates to the Prime Agricultural Areas within the Official Plan and Town of Caledon Official Plan.

- **Natural Heritage Systems Planning** – The draft PPS notes that natural heritage systems will be identified. The Official Plan currently contains policies to develop a Regional Greenlands Strategy outlining tools, actions and resources to address natural heritage systems planning needs and to identify a regional natural heritage system. This Official Plan review also provides an opportunity to coordinate planning roles and policies for natural heritage planning in the Region.

- **Housing** – The draft PPS notes housing needs in accordance with provincial policy statements such as the Ontario Housing Policy Statement should be coordinated, integrated and comprehensive.

The Province has released, "Building Foundations: Building Futures – Ontario's Long– Term Affordable Housing Strategy" (LTAHS) in November 2010. The vision of the strategy is "to improve Ontarians' access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing, and provide a solid foundation on which to secure employment, raise families and build strong communities". The LTAHS also requires Service Managers to develop a Local Housing Plan, which will support this broad vision. More details on the development of Peel's Local Plan are provided through the staff report titled; Update on Peel's Housing and Homelessness 10 Year Plan, to be presented to Regional Council on February 28, 2013.

Several pieces of legislation, including the Housing Services Act, 2011 and the Ontario Housing Policy Statement will provide additional context and direction to support development of the Local Plan. The Local Plan will inform the work plan for this Official Plan review.

Supporting the Strategy is the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act* (Bill 140) which brought forward amendments to various acts, including the *Planning Act*. The changes to the *Planning Act* include the need for municipalities to amend their official plans to include policies to permit second units. The Official Plan will need to be amended to conform to Bill 140 and the amended Planning Act requirements for second units.

- **Transportation** – The draft PPS describes a multi-modal transportation system such as maintaining and improving connectivity within and among transportation systems where possible. Also it mentions major goods movement facilities and corridors shall be protected for the long term. A number of transportation studies have been recently approved or are currently underway that relate to the draft PPS transportation sections. These studies and their recommendations may result in changes to the Regional Official Plan's transportation policies and schedules. Recently endorsed studies include the Long Range Transportation Plan, Active Transportation Plan and Goods Movement Strategic Plan.

  Studies currently being undertaken include the Regional Road Characterization study (RCS) and Strategic Goods Movement Network Study (SGMNS). The RCS will recommend design requirements and develop a map of road characters responsive to context for each Regional Road with design guidelines that include access control. The SGMNS will recommend a network of routes in Peel that support the efficient movement of goods.

c) Health and Planning

In 2005, the State of the Region's Health Report titled "Focus on Overweight, Obesity and Related Health Consequences in Adults" (Peel Public Health 2005) highlighted that sprawling, auto-oriented development patterns contribute to the high prevalence of obesity and low rates of physical activity in Peel. In 2009 the Healthy Development Index (HDI) was prepared by a team of researchers at McMaster University and The Centre for Research on Inner City Health at St. Michael's Hospital under the direction of Peel Health. The HDI is a framework to provide consistent, quantifiable standards to inform planning decisions. It consists of seven elements: density, service proximity, land use mix, street connectivity, road network and sidewalk characteristics, parking, aesthetics and human scale.

In 2009 enabling and supporting policies on public health impacts and issues were developed for ROPA 24.

Building on the HDI, the Health Background Study Framework was completed in 2011 and supports the Official Plan policies by establishing a mechanism to more easily integrate considerations of health impacts into the existing land use development approvals process.

Building on the 2011-2014 Term of Council Priority to promote a supportive environment for healthy weights and the Healthy Peel By Design Symposium, Regional Council passed resolution 2012-1292 on November 8, 2012 stating that "...the Region of Peel advocate for local, provincial and federal policy changes that create supportive environments for healthy living."

All three area municipal Councils have passed resolutions supporting the implementation of the HDI and Health Background Study Framework by directing area municipal staff to consult with Peel Public Health on future planning studies and plans. Also, City of Mississauga and Brampton Councils have directed staff and Peel Public Health staff to investigate options for partnership with the Canadian Institute of Planners and Ontario Provincial Planners Institute to develop further ways of implementing health criteria into the planning process. In addition, Town of Caledon Council has invited a representative from Peel Health to sit on the Mayfield West Phase 2 Secondary Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group and the Bolton Residential Expansion Study Stakeholders Group.

The Region's work on proposed public health impacts of proposed plans and development needs to be included in the Official Plan. Regional staff will consider refinements to the existing two Official Plan policies on health and planning and potential additions based on the HDI and Health Background Study Framework's implementation strategy.

4. Proposed Direction

Staff recommends that a public meeting be held to discuss revisions that may be required to the Official Plan. Based on the upcoming changes to the Growth Plan and PPS, it will be necessary to review and update sections of the Official Plan to achieve conformity. Staff recommends that this review be scoped to ensure only essential changes are made to the Official Plan as detailed in this report. A report summarizing the results of the public meeting will be prepared. Also, Council will be presented with a workplan following the summary report on the public meeting.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consists of Regional and area municipal staff and continues to successfully collaborate on a range of planning issues. A draft of this report was circulated to area municipal staff for comment and revised accordingly. Staff will work with TAC to ensure the scope of the Official Plan review is consistent with the direction in this report and to develop a workplan for Council's consideration.

Also Peel staff from other departments such as Public Works, Human Services, and Health Services will be consulted.

The City of Brampton will be initiating their official plan review as well in 2013 with a public meeting. Regional and area municipal staff will ensure meetings are coordinated where possible and issues are discussed to support area municipal initiatives.

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The anticipated activities associated with the Official Plan review will be undertaken by staff and consultants, and the 2012 and 2013 Budget makes provision for the work.

CONCLUSION

It is timely to hold a public meeting to discuss revisions that may be required to the Official Plan. This review will be focused on three areas: 1) new Growth Plan population and employment forecasts; 2) conformity to the new PPS policies; 3) health and planning issues. Accordingly, staff recommends a public meeting be held on May 23, 2013.

Norma Trim
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Approved for Submission:

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c. Legislative Services

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