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DATE: January 27, 2009

SUBJECT: **PEEL REGION OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW (PROPR) - DRAFT REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT (ROPA 21) PROPOSING CHANGES RELATED TO NATURAL HERITAGE, AGRICULTURE, AIR QUALITY AND INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT**

FROM: Dan Labrecque, Commissioner of Environment, Transportation and Planning Services  
David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health  
Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That a statutory public meeting be scheduled to commence at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 23, 2009 prior to the regularly scheduled Regional Council meeting, pursuant to Section 17(15) of the *Planning Act* to inform the public and to obtain their input with respect to a proposed amendment to the Regional Official Plan (ROP) as it relates to natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management;

And further, that pursuant to Section 17(16) of the *Planning Act*, one open house be scheduled in each of the area municipalities prior to the public meeting;

And further, that the draft amendment to the Regional Official Plan (ROP) to update policies related to natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management be circulated to appropriate agencies, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon and all other municipalities adjacent to the Region of Peel for their review and comments;

And further, that a final Regional Official Plan Amendment, which takes into consideration the comments received from the statutory open houses, statutory public meeting, and agency consultation, be presented for adoption at a future Council meeting.

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**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- On September 13, 2007, Regional Council endorsed a work program to proceed with a five year review of the Regional Official Plan through the Peel Region Official Plan Review process. The work program identifies 15 focus areas including natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management.
- Attached as Appendix I is the draft amendment related to natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management that staff is recommending for formal consultation under the *Planning Act*.
- The recommended open houses and public meeting will inform the public on the proposed amendment and obtain their input prior to it being considered by Regional Council for adoption.

**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

Following a special meeting of Council in February 2007 to consider the need to review the Regional Official Plan (ROP), Regional Council, in September 2007, endorsed a work program to proceed with the review through the Peel Region Official Plan Review (PROPR) process. The PROPR process has been commenced by Regional Council to address a number of legislative and policy initiatives that have been introduced by the Province since the Regional Official Plan was last reviewed in 2002 through the Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU). The work program for PROPR identifies 15 focus areas through which the ROP is being reviewed to ensure conformity with the provincial initiatives.

The first in a series of draft amendments to the ROP was brought forward to Regional Council on January 22, 2009 to begin formal consultation on policies relating to sustainability and energy. This report brings forward a second draft amendment to the ROP addressing policy related to natural heritage, agriculture, integrated waste management and air quality to commence formal circulation of this amendment (Draft ROPA 21) and to set dates for open houses and a formal public meeting in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

Brief summaries of the public consultation undertaken and the policy revisions being considered in the amendment are provided below. A copy of the draft amendment containing the details of the proposed policy revisions is attached as Appendix 1. The draft amendment incorporates the recommended policy for natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management. For review purposes, the draft amendments are to be read in conjunction with the latest office consolidation of the Regional Official Plan incorporating Amendments 15, 16 and 17 and the proposed amendments in ROPA 20. This information is available on the Region's website.

**2. Natural Heritage**

The Natural Heritage Policy Review component of PROPR addresses the natural heritage policies of the ROP to identify where mapping and policy updates are required to bring the Plan into conformity with recent provincial policy. Both the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and Greenbelt Plan (2005) require the updating of ROP policy for natural heritage. The key policy gaps include policy and mapping updates for the natural heritage features policies of the Greenlands System including amendments to address policy direction in the PPS for significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat and significant valleylands. Policy updates to address the Greenbelt Plan, including mapping of the Greenbelt's Natural

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Heritage System and policies for key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features, will be brought forward in a future amendment through PROPR. A summary of the background research and policy process for natural heritage is provided below.

**a) Background Research and Analysis**

Supporting research for the policy review began in early 2008, with the Peel-Caledon Significant Woodlands and Significant Wildlife Habitat Study. Consultation on the study occurred through the spring and summer of 2008 through a variety of formats and events including open houses, stakeholder meetings and Caledon Council workshops. Initial draft recommendations for the identification and evaluation of significant woodlands and significant wildlife habitat for Peel Region were presented to Councillors, stakeholders and the general public. Regional staff also collected updated mapping data for other Core Areas of the Greenlands System and prepared a recommended approach for the identification of Core valley and stream corridors as further input to the policy review. During this time, Regional staff consulted closely with area municipal, conservation authority and technical review agency staff through a Core Management Team, Municipal Staff Working Group (MSWG), and Technical Advisory Team (TAT) to assist with development of study recommendations and policy options.

**b) Policy Formulation**

The technical study and background research led to the development of a Natural Heritage Discussion Paper which outlined policy gaps and policy options for the ROP. The discussion paper was released in October 2008 followed by an Environment Workshop on November 24, 2008 that was attended by a cross-section of stakeholders. The research, consultation and feedback confirmed that the need to accommodate future growth in Peel will result in additional pressures on the Region's natural heritage features. Policies for significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat and significant valleylands are being clarified in line with direction in the PPS to address the future planning needs in a growing region. Draft amendments also strengthen the role of greenlands securement, stewardship and incentives as policy initiatives that are needed to achieve the Region of Peel's natural heritage objectives. The discussion paper, technical study and consultation summaries of public comments received to date are posted to the Region of Peel's website at [www.peelregion.ca/officialplan](http://www.peelregion.ca/officialplan).

In addition to addressing provincial conformity, the Natural Heritage Policy Review has also provided background research and discussion on future natural heritage systems planning needs in the Region of Peel. A work plan, suggested approach and timing to complete a more comprehensive review of natural heritage systems planning in the Region of Peel is outlined in the Natural Heritage Policy Review Discussion Paper, including how technical modeling studies being completed by the conservation authorities may be considered in the future. A draft policy to proceed with the initiative is recommended to support the future work.

**c) Regional Official Plan Amendment 13 (ROPA 13)**

The mapping of Core Areas of the Greenlands System on Schedule A was updated in the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga in 2005 through ROPA 13 as part of the ROPSU process. ROPA 13 was adopted by Regional Council on December 15, 2005 and is currently under appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. Because mapping

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updates included in ROPA 13 have been incorporated into the proposed PROPR amendment (Draft ROPA 21) for natural heritage, it is recommended that Regional Council repeal ROPA 13 as it will no longer be required. A by-law to repeal ROPA 13 will be brought forward for consideration at the time of adoption of ROPA 21. A map showing the revisions to the Core Areas being proposed through PROPR in the Draft ROPA 21 is attached as Appendix II.

### **3. Agriculture**

Agriculture continues to feature prominently in the economy and as a way of life for farming communities in Peel. Policies in the ROP are being revised or added to address socio-economic and demographic changes. The PPS provides important policy directions to inform this process. An Agriculture Discussion Paper and preliminary policies have been circulated for public review and are posted to the Region's website.

The draft ROPA aims to promote flexibility, diversity and entrepreneurship within the agricultural sector to enable the industry to remain sustainable and financially viable over the long-term. The draft ROPA also recognizes the importance of protecting the Prime Agricultural Area, promoting agriculture-related secondary uses, as well as promoting locally grown produce and protecting the environment.

#### **a) Background Research and Analysis**

The purpose of the Agriculture Discussion Paper was to assess the challenges faced by the industry and to consider policies for protection of prime agricultural lands, and advance measures toward sustainable agricultural activities and agro-related businesses. The discussion paper provides the basis for policies that could strengthen the industry and make it productive and economically competitive.

#### **b) Policy Formulation**

The draft agricultural policies include policy directions released by the Province, inputs based on feedback on the discussion paper and consultation with key stakeholders, and recommendations by staff. The purpose of the policies is to address emerging issues and to guide developments in the agricultural industry so that required objectives can be achieved. Stakeholders at the November 24, 2008 Environment Workshop considered the proposed policies and provided comments emphasizing the need to encourage on-farm diversity and flexibility; and to make financial incentives available, to enable farmers to keep their lands in agricultural production. Extensive consultations were also conducted with Town of Caledon and the City of Brampton staff, as well as other stakeholders and their feedback has been important in shaping the draft policies.

The industry in Peel is experiencing challenges that may affect its future as a financially viable and sustainable sector. Draft ROPA 21 will provide the policy to minimize land use conflicts by protecting agricultural land and enhancing agriculture, agro-related activities and the business of agriculture. The updates to the agricultural policies will be an amendment to the existing policies in Chapter 3 'Resources' of the ROP.

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**4. Air Quality**

Air quality affects human health, the environment and the economy. The Air Quality Policy Review component of PROPR addresses the air quality policies in the existing Official Plan and brings the Official Plan into conformity with new provincial legislation including: the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan); the Energy Conservation Leadership Act (Bill 21); and the Provincial Policy Statement (2005). A summary of the background work and policy formulation process are provided below.

**a) Background Research and Analysis**

A discussion paper was completed in December 2008 addressing the following:

- An overview of air quality pollutants, sources and impacts;
- An assessment of the current air quality situation in Peel Region;
- A summary of key policy directions that inform approaches to improving air quality at a local level and initiatives ongoing in the Region and the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon as identified during interviews with staff;
- A review of best practices; and
- Recommendations for Official Plan policy.

Regional staff consulted closely with the PROPR Air Quality Advisory Committee, which included representatives from all three area municipalities. In addition, a half day workshop was held with key stakeholders to provide comments on the discussion paper and recommended draft Official Plan policies. The Air Quality Discussion Paper was finalized and posted on the Region's website on December 16, 2008 for public comments.

**b) Policy Formulation**

The policy recommendations from the Discussion Paper were reviewed by Regional staff and draft air quality Official Plan policies were developed. The recommended amendments strengthen the current Airshed section of the existing Official Plan and bring the plan into conformity with new provincial legislation. The PROPR Air Quality Advisory Committee, the Regional Air Quality Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee were consulted for input on the draft Official Plan policies. Policies to address air quality strengthen other PROPR focus areas, particularly the sustainability, energy and transportation focus areas. Air quality related policies have been considered, and where appropriate, included in other focus areas.

**5. Integrated Waste Management**

The Integrated Waste Management component of the PROPR reviews the existing waste management policies in the ROP and brings the Plan into conformity with the PPS and Growth Plan. The Growth Plan emphasizes planning for a culture of conservation with references for municipalities to develop the following integrated waste management (IWM) policies: enhanced waste reduction, composting, and recycling; a comprehensive plan with integrated approaches to waste management; promotion of reuse and recycling of construction materials; consideration of waste management initiatives within the context of

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long term regional planning and collaboration with the neighbouring municipalities. A summary of the planning process and draft policies are provided below.

### a) Background Research and Analysis

The PROPR IWM project builds on and is closely coordinated with the work completed by the Waste Management Division's Long Term Waste Resource Management Strategy (LTWRMS). The LTWRMS focuses on waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting for residential uses and identifies policies and programs at the operational level over the long-term. The PROPR IWM project expands on the LTWRMS by conforming to Growth Plan requirements to address the culture of conservation aspects of IWM.

A discussion paper was prepared to consult on policy issues. It included:

- An overview of the existing waste management system in Peel – current levels of waste generation, diversion, and disposal;
- Identified programs and policies from other municipalities that address the Growth Plan's IWM culture of conservation policies;
- A summary of key policy directions related to innovative approaches in Source Reduction and Reuse, Industrial Commercial and Institutional Waste, Construction and Demolition Waste Management, Intensification and Impacts on IWM System Planning, Energy from Waste and Residual Waste, and Municipal Collaboration; and
- Draft policies for the Official Plan.

Regional staff consulted with Waste Management, Real Property Asset Management, and Purchasing staff. The area municipalities were also consulted through the Technical Advisory Committee. A half day consultation meeting was held on January 19, 2009 with stakeholders to provide comments on the Integrated Waste Management discussion paper and draft Official Plan policies.

### b) Policy Formulation

The draft policies were developed from the Integrated Waste Management Discussion Paper and stakeholder consultation meeting. The draft amendments modify out of date policies in the existing Official Plan and bring the plan into conformity with new provincial legislation in the following areas: innovative source reduction and reuse measures, industrial and commercial waste, construction and demolition waste management, impacts of intensification on IWM planning, energy from waste and residual waste, and municipal collaboration.

## 6. Draft Regional Official Plan Amendment (Draft ROPA 21)

Appendix I is the draft ROPA that staff is recommending for consultation. The recommended amendment incorporates policies related to natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management. Revisions and new policies are proposed throughout the ROP including to:

- Chapter 2 The Natural Environment: Section 2.2.3 Airsheds;
- Chapter 2 The Natural Environment: Section 2.3 - Greenlands System in Peel;

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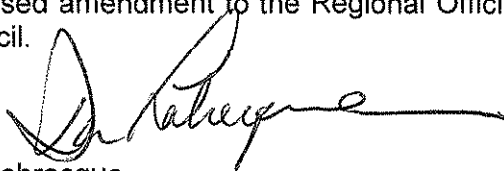
- Chapter 3 Resources: Section 3.2 Agricultural Resources; and
- Chapter 6 Regional Services: Section 6.4 Waste Management

The draft amendment incorporates comments received through extensive consultation with area municipal staff. While area municipal staff have provided preliminary comments, official comments will be provided in response to the circulation of the draft ROPA.

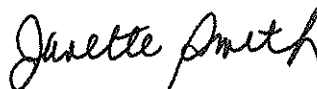
**CONCLUSION**

It is recommended that Regional Council direct that open houses and a public meeting be scheduled to inform the public and obtain comments on the draft amendment to the ROP pursuant to Section 17 of the *Planning Act*. It is also recommended that Regional Council direct staff to circulate the draft amendment for natural heritage, agriculture, air quality and integrated waste management to appropriate agencies, adjacent municipalities, the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton and the Town of Caledon for their review and comments.

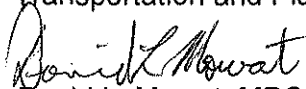
Following consultation on the draft amendment, Regional staff will bring forward a final proposed amendment to the Regional Official Plan for consideration and adoption by Regional Council.



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**Approved for Submission:**



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c. Legislative Services