

Region of Peel

APPROVED AT REGIONAL COUNCIL  
January 25, 2007

***PL-B. Planning Policy and Research***

***PL-B1. Overview of the 2007 Regional Official Plan (ROP) Review***

Received

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DATE: January 4, 2007

SUBJECT: **PLANNING POLICY AND RESEARCH**  
**OVERVIEW OF THE 2007 REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN (ROP) REVIEW**

FROM: Nick Tunnacliffe, Commissioner of Planning

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## OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this report is to provide a context for the upcoming February 15, 2007 public meeting on the Regional Official Plan (ROP) five-year review by providing information on the provincial requirements for official plan conformity, and the process that staff propose to follow in order to meet the requirements set out in the *Planning Act* by June, 2009. It is also intended to provide background information for the purposes of pre-consultation including upcoming open houses.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006 (Bill 51)*, which amends the *Planning Act* ('the Act'), requires that Council revise the official plan to ensure that a) there is conformity with provincial plans; b) the official plan has regard to the matters of provincial interest in section 2 of the Act; and c) the official plan is consistent with policy statements issued under subsection 3(1) of the Act.
- The last update to the ROP, the Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU), was a scoped review that was initiated in March, 2002 through a public meeting.
- Provincial plans and policies have been released since the last update to the ROP, including the Places to Grow Growth Plan in 2006, the Greenbelt Plan in 2005 and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005.
- The review of the ROP is to ensure conformity with provincial initiatives. The key topics proposed for the review include: managing growth, transportation, natural heritage, Greenbelt conformity, water resources, agriculture, energy, the Regional housing strategy, employment land policies, integrated waste management, air quality protection, official plan monitoring and planning tools, and policy updates.
- The Region must bring its official plan into conformity with the Places to Grow Plan, however, staff will work towards bringing ROPAs forward earlier to provide a context for area municipal OPAs which must also meet the June 2009 deadline. The *Greenbelt Act, 2005* also requires the Region to bring the ROP into conformity with the *Greenbelt Plan*.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Background

Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act*, which was amended by the *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006 (Bill 51)*, requires that if an official plan is in effect in a municipality, the council of the municipality shall not less frequently than every five

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years, revise the official plan as required to ensure that it: a) conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them, b) has regard to matters of provincial interest listed in section 2 of the Act and c) is consistent with policy statements issued under section 3 of the Act. The Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU), the last update to the ROP, was initiated in March, 2002 through a public meeting. The ROPSU was a scoped review containing four focus areas: Environment, Human Services, Regional Structure and Transportation rather than a comprehensive revision of the ROP.

Since the last review of the ROP, the Places to Grow Growth Plan, 2006, the Greenbelt Plan, 2005, and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005 have been released. The official plan must be brought into conformity with these documents. The *Places to Grow Act, 2005* states that official plan conformity must occur by June 16, 2009.

### 2. 2007 ROP Review Process

On October 26, 2006 Regional Council adopted Resolution 2006-1058, which approved the holding of a special meeting of Regional Council on February 15, 2007 at 9:30 am to discuss the revisions that may be required to the ROP. This meeting will fulfill the requirements of Section 26 (3) of the Act.

Attached as Appendix I are the proposed steps for the regional official plan review. The review will be guided by the five principles of the Regional Official Plan and the Planning Matrix; it will avoid both duplication and infringement on area municipal planning efforts. Due to the timelines established by *Places to Grow*, it is the Region's intent to have the plan amendments adopted by Council before the June 16, 2009 deadline to provide context for area municipal official plan conformity amendments which also must meet the June 16, 2009 deadline. This will be completed through a series of steps and potentially a series of OPA's adopted during the process.

Building on the successful relationship established through the Planning Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) between the Region and Area Municipal staff, it is proposed that the Committee work collaboratively on the ROP review and act as the steering committee for the review. TAC members will work together to study and analyze various issues integral to the implementation of *Places to Grow* across Peel Region. A draft of this report was circulated to Area Municipalities for comment; their comments were received and considered.

### 3. Provincial Initiatives and Drivers

Several provincial initiatives require changes to the Official Plan to ensure conformity. These requirements are explained below:

#### a) The Provincial Growth Plan: Places to Grow

The Provincial Growth Plan: *Places to Grow: Better Choices, Brighter Future* was approved under the *Places to Grow Act* on June 16, 2006. It is the Province's framework for implementing the creation of stronger, more prosperous communities by better managing growth in the Province by 2031. The release of the *Places to Grow Growth Plan* provided specific policy direction in certain areas while leaving other areas to subsequent processes such as sub area assessments. Specific policy direction was provided in areas such as: growth forecasts, intensification policies and targets (40 per cent target for built areas), density targets for growth centres (UGC's) and designated greenfield areas (200 units per hectare for UGC's and 50 units per hectare for greenfield

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areas). Staff will analyze the impacts of these targets on Peel Region in partnership with the area municipalities. However, details on a number of Places to Grow components have not yet been finalized by the Province and/or are to be undertaken in collaboration with municipalities. These components include: assessment of the need for new greenfield land, the determination of the approximate size of the UGCs and assessments over a broad area including a regional economic analysis, identification of provincially significant employment areas; further work on the proposed transportation network; implications of projected growth for water and wastewater servicing; identification of natural systems; identification of prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas; and identification of significant mineral aggregate resources.

### b) The Greenbelt Plan, 2005

A Greenbelt Plan was established under Section 3 of the *Greenbelt Act* and came into full force and effect on December 16, 2004. This Act requires municipal decisions to conform to the Greenbelt Plan and further requires that municipalities amend their official plans to conform to the Greenbelt Plan. Approximately 45 per cent of Peel Region is covered by the Greenbelt Plan's designations. Almost all of the Greenbelt in Peel is in the Town of Caledon with the exception of a small area in Northwest Brampton along the Credit River. Greenbelt Plan conformity will be addressed through the ROP review.

The Greenbelt Plan includes lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP). On lands outside the NEP and ORMCP, the Greenbelt Plan establishes a Protected Countryside designation that sets out policy areas for an Agricultural System, a Natural System and Settlement Areas. The Regional Official Plan will be reviewed in light of these new policy areas and new policies and amendments identified and considered in consultation with the area municipalities and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This process will be similar to those undertaken for Provincial plans in the past, an example of which was the Region's Oak Ridges Moraine Conformity exercise.

### c) The Provincial Policy Statement, 2005

The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions made by municipal councils after March 1, 2005 "be consistent with" the policies of the new PPS. The new PPS introduces several key policy changes that will need to be considered. These include more policy emphasis on growth management, intensification and redevelopment; protection of employment areas; transit supportive land uses; protection of natural heritage systems and water resources. The PPS also includes new policies for affordable housing and establishes a new role for municipalities to co-ordinate planning matters that cross municipal boundaries. These new requirements will be reviewed in consultation with the Province and the area municipalities and incorporated into proposed amendments to the ROP as required. Many of these policy areas are also addressed by *Places to Grow*; when there is a conflict between the PPS and the Growth Plan, the Growth Plan will prevail.

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**d) The *Clean Water Act*, 2006**

The *Clean Water Act*, 2006 is the Province's source water protection legislation that responds to recommendations from the Part Two Report of the Walkerton Inquiry directing that drinking water supplies be protected at source. The *Clean Water Act* was given Royal Assent on October 19, 2006 and will be proclaimed by the Spring of 2007.

Within Peel Region, source protection plans will be prepared for all watersheds, most of which are in the Credit-Toronto-Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Region (CTC Region). These plans will be required to identify vulnerable areas within the watersheds, activities that pose significant threats to drinking water supplies and land uses and activities that are to be prohibited or regulated to ensure significant threats cease.

The *Clean Water Act* will require the Region to amend the ROP to conform with approved source protection plans when these are completed. The previous ROPSU process had identified the need to examine water resource protection policies; now that the *Clean Water Act* has been passed the Region has an opportunity to develop and implement such policies. Given the timing of the source protection planning process, amendments to the ROP to implement source protection plans may need to be completed after 2009, the target date for completion of the Region's other ROP amendments.

**e) The *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act*, 2006 (*Bill 51*)**

The *Planning Act* was amended on October 19, 2006 to direct municipal councils in Ontario to revise their official plans to ensure conformity with provincial plans, have regard to matters of provincial interest and be consistent with provincial policy statements. The Region's Official Plan will be reviewed to determine the needs for amendments that will address *Bill 51*.

**4. Potential Areas of Discussion**

The new provincial plans, legislation and policies are the focus of this official plan review. In addition, there may be other emerging issues or related housekeeping matters that will require other revisions to the official plan during this review. The combination of these requirements generates the following key areas for conformity discussion during the official plan review.

- Managing Growth
- Transportation
- Natural Heritage
- Greenbelt Conformity
- Water Resources/Source Protection
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Regional Housing Strategy
- Employment Land Policies
- Integrated Waste Management
- Air Quality
- Monitoring Policies
- Planning Tools and Policy Updates

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**5. Consultation and Collaboration**

The Planning Technical Advisory Committee will act as a steering committee for the ROP Review and will provide input during the review process. They will work collaboratively together to build on the success of the ROPSU process and assist in the establishment of a plan that will benefit the entire Region.

Section 7.3.5 of the ROP notes that public involvement is a vital part of the planning and decision making process. The public is an integral partner and their involvement is critical to the success of the ROP Review. The public includes organized interest groups and the general public. The role of the public is to help identify areas of interest and/or concern that should be addressed through the review process and to assist in ensuring that this process leads to positive change.

Target audiences of the consultation and communications process will include Regional Councillors, employees at the Region and the area municipalities, ministries of the federal and provincial governments, Peel citizens, special interest groups and other associations and community groups.

Open houses have been set up in all three of the area municipalities on the following dates: January 18, 2007 at the Brampton Civic Centre, January 22, 2007 at the Caledon Community Complex and on January 31 at the City of Mississauga Central Library. All of these open houses will run from 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. and are intended to answer questions that the public may have regarding the review and invite interested parties in advance of the February 15 formal public meeting.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the requirements of the new Provincial legislation, policy and plans, the Region will need to review and update many sections of the ROP. The main purpose of this review is to meet provincial conformity requirements.

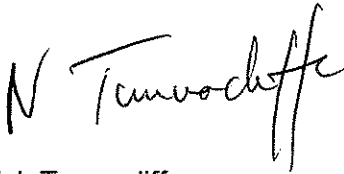
The open houses and the public meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to identify areas of interest and/or concern which should be addressed in the revision of the ROP.

With the completion of the development of the ROP Review framework document, Regional staff is now focusing efforts on undertaking major tasks identified in Appendix II.

January 4, 2007

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Commissioner of Planning

**Approved for Submission:**



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c. Legislative Services

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## Region of Peel 2007 ROP Review Framework

*-Milestones-  
 As of January 1, 2007*

Date	Meeting/Event
October 19, 2006	Regional Council approved Recommendation GC-210-2006 to allow a special meeting of Regional Council on February 15, 2007 to discuss revisions that may be required to the Regional Official Plan (ROP).
November 29, 2006	November TAC Meeting – Discuss ROP Review Framework
December 22, 2006	Final sign off date for staff report on: <i>ROP Review Public Meeting</i>
January 2007	TAC Meeting to discuss the Places to Grow work plan
January 18, 2007	<i>ROP Review Public Meeting</i> Staff Report to General Committee
January 18 – February 8, 2007	Stakeholder Consultation Meetings
January 18, 2007	Public Open House – Brampton (Brampton Civic Centre)
January 22, 2007	Public Open House – Caledon (Community Centre)
January 31, 2007	Public Open House – Mississauga (Mississauga City Central Library)
February 15, 2007 @ 9:30 am	ROP Review Public Meeting of Regional Council
April 12, 2007	Final sign off date for staff report on ROP Review
May 3, 2007	Report back to General Committee on status of ROP Review and consultation process
Fall 2007 / Winter 2008	Release of Potential Discussion Papers on as outlined in Appendix II
Spring/Summer 2008	Development of draft ROP policies
Late 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPAs) ready for review</li> <li>• Consultation on draft ROPAs through:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public open house</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Updated website</li> <li>• Area municipal and agency circulation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
March 2009	Statutory Public Meeting and Council Adoption of ROPAs
April 2009	Provincial Approval Process

## Potential Focus Areas for Official Plan Review Discussion

### a) Managing Growth:

This area of discussion stems largely from the requirements of *Places to Grow*. Some of the key components of this initiative include, among other key items:

- Establishment of targets for intensification and density
- Determine policies to encourage intensification , especially in urban growth centres and intensification corridors, and their contributions to the regional structure
- Designation of “designated greenfield areas”
- Policies pertaining to expansion of settlement area boundaries
- Incorporation of the built boundary into the ROP
- Support UGC’s and delineate their boundaries
- How the Region and local area municipalities will accommodate and allocate the population and employment growth targets contained in Places to Grow;
- An examination of how the Region will meet the requirement that by 2015, 40 % of all new residential development will be occurring within the built boundary;
- The Minister of Public Infrastructure and Renewal, in consultation with municipalities that have urban growth centres, will determine the approximate size and location of urban growth centres.
- How a minimum density of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare will be achieved across the entire Greenfield area in the region.

### b) Transportation

The transportation requirements and policies found in *Places to Grow* and the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* will require revisions to the Region’s Long Range Transportation Plan, and transportation-related Regional Official Plan policies and schedules including goods movement and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies as well as Schedule D – Regional Structure, Schedule E – Major Road Network, Schedule F – Regional Right-of-Way Requirement and Schedule G – Major Transit Corridors. To update these policies and maps as well as enhance the protection of key transportation corridors, the Region needs to consider or expand its various studies on goods movement, transportation demand management, active transportation, boundary area transportation issues and Pearson Airport area transportation issues. The Region must also implement policies that will support major transit station areas and intensification corridors and designate them in the ROP.

**c) Natural Heritage**

The Region's Natural Heritage policies must be updated to reflect the revisions to the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* and the *Greenbelt Plan, 2005*. The Regional mapping of the natural heritage systems should also be reviewed to ensure that it is up-to-date. Regional staff will need to monitor the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Renewal and Ministry of Natural Resources identification of the Greater Golden Horseshoe natural system in Peel and related provincial and conservation authority initiatives (Natural Spaces, Toronto Region Conservation Authority Terrestrial Natural Heritage System Strategy, Credit Valley Conservation Terrestrial Ecosystem Enhancement Model and Natural Areas Inventory) and consider how these initiatives could translate to policy for the ROP.

**d) Greenbelt Conformity**

The ROP will require an amendment to include a Protected Countryside land designation and other geographic specific policies related to the Greenbelt Plan. An implementation process, similar to Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan conformity exercise, will also be required.

**e) Water Resources**

The Region must review the ROP policies in relation to implementation requirements set out in watershed plans. It is also a requirement that the Region implement the Oak Ridges Moraine watershed plan recommendations. Policy 3.4 of the Regional Official Plan (Water Resources), which outlines the goals and objectives of the interrelated water systems found in the Region will be reviewed and updated to reflect new policies in the Provincial Policy Statement and Places to Grow Growth Plan. One of the policies found in Places to Grow, which will need to be addressed, is that of water conservation.

The Plan's water resources policies will be reviewed and updated to consider recommendations contained in watershed plans, as appropriate and new provisions and guidance contained in provincial legislation (e.g., the *Clean Water Act* and *Water Taking and Transfer Regulation*). In addition, the Region will need to update Schedule D2 and Figure 13 (related to aquifer vulnerability) or create new ROP mapping. The Region should also consider whether the implementation requirements set out in recent watershed plans require any related ROP revisions.

**f) Agriculture**

The Region of Peel must review its agriculture policies so that they conform to the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2005* and the *Greenbelt Plan, 2005*. Implementation of the GTA Agricultural Action Plan may also necessitate updates to the Regional Official Plan. Also, Peel's agricultural systems and policies need to be examined within the broader GTA agricultural context.

### **g) Energy**

Section 4.2.4 of *Places to Grow*, entitled *A Culture of Conservation*, is the main driver related to changes to the ROP regarding energy, more specifically, energy conservation. Some of the major items that require attention are the opportunities for alternative energy generation and distribution; energy demand management; and energy-efficient buildings and land-use patterns.

### **h) Regional Housing Strategy**

The *Provincial Policy Statement* (2005) and *Places to Grow* (2006) both contain policies requiring that the full range of housing needs of the regional market areas to be addressed. The PPS references the need to establish and implement minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households. The PPS also states that new housing will be located where infrastructure and public services are or will be available to service the needs of current and future residents. The Growth Plan has a specific reference that requires upper tier municipalities to develop a Housing Strategy in consultation with lower tier municipalities, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and other appropriate stakeholders. This Housing strategy must set out a plan for meeting the full range of housing needs, including policy implications for the ROP. The Region will work closely with area municipal staff and a range of stakeholders to ensure the strategy addresses the need of current and future residents and that any appropriate policy changes are implemented through the ROP.

### **i) Employment Land Policies**

The Provincial Policy Statement and *Places to Grow* provide policies aimed at the protection of employment lands. As the Region grows it is crucial to ensure that employment lands are available to allow for expected employment growth and to provide live/work opportunities in Peel.

Through the ROP review the Region, in consultation with the Area Municipalities, will be considering several employment related topics, including: a strategy to protect the vacant and occupied employment land supply; ensuring the full economic potential for the Lester B Pearson International Airport (LBPIA); the planning for additional employment land designations; a strategy to address road congestion and goods movement; a strategy to address road congestion and goods movement.

### **j) Integrated Waste Management**

*Places to Grow* requires municipalities to implement *integrated waste management through*: enhanced waste reduction, composting, and recycling initiatives and the identification of new opportunities for source reduction, reuse and diversion; a comprehensive plan with integrated approaches to waste management; the promotion of reuse and recycling of construction materials; and the consideration of waste management initiatives within the context of long term regional planning, and in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities. Peel Public Works staff has commenced a review of the Region's Waste Management Strategy. The results of

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this review will be applied to the context of this Regional Official Plan Review and may result in amendments to the plan's existing waste management policies.

**k) Air Quality**

*Places to Grow* sets out requirements related to air quality in section 4.2.4 - A Culture of Conservation. This section discusses air quality protection, including the reduction of emissions from municipal and residential sources. The Region's Clean Air initiative will be examined to determine if the Regional Official Plan's existing air quality policies should be reviewed.

**l) Monitoring Policies:**

The Region must revisit and update the monitoring policies found in the ROP as well as those listed in *Places to Grow*. These policies will assist in the determination of the success of the fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the Official Plan.

**m) Tools and Other Policy Updates:**

The *Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006* outlines new tools for planning in Ontario, such as: community improvement plans; addition of sustainability goals and principles; PPS consistency and whether related ROP revisions are required, specifically the revision of s. 7.9.2.8 of the ROP to reflect the comprehensive review policies of the PPS and settlement boundary expansion policies of the growth plan.

Furthermore, TAC members may address other areas in *Places to Grow*, such as cultural heritage conservation, that contribute to the overall conformity exercise.