

APPROVED AT REGIONAL COUNCIL
October 26, 2006

PL-C. Planning Policy and Research

PL-C2. Statutory Public Meeting to Consider a Review of the Regional Official Plan

RECOMMENDATION GC-210-2006:

That a Special Meeting of Regional Council be held on February 15, 2007 starting at 9:30 a.m. to determine the need for a revision of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) to fulfill the requirements of Section 26(1) of the Planning Act in order that public input can be taken into account;

And further, that the Regional Council meeting scheduled for February 15, 2007 commence immediately following the Special Meeting;

And further, that a copy of the report of the Commissioner of Planning, dated September 29, 2006, titled "Statutory Public Meeting to Consider a Review of the Regional Official Plan", be forwarded to the area municipalities, Conservation Authorities having jurisdiction in the Region of Peel, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and parties that have requested notification.

Approved

2006-1058

DATE: September 29, 2006

SUBJECT: **PLANNING POLICY AND RESEARCH
STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING TO CONSIDER A REVIEW OF
THE REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN**

FROM: Nick Tunnacliffe, Commissioner of Planning

RECOMMENDATION

That a special meeting of Regional Council be held on February 15, 2007 starting at 9:30 a.m. until the meeting is closed to determine the need for a revision of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) to fulfill the requirements of Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* in order that public input can be taken into account;

And further, that a copy of the report of the Commissioner of Planning, dated September 29, 2006, titled "Statutory Public Meeting to Consider a Review of the Regional Official Plan", be forwarded to the Area Municipalities, Conservation Authorities having jurisdiction in the Region of Peel, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and parties that have requested notification.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The *Planning Act* requires that, not less frequently than every five years, a special meeting of Council to be held to determine the need for a revision to the official plan.
- The last update to the Region of Peel's Official Plan, the Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU), was initiated in March, 2002 through a public meeting.
- As part of the ROPSU, Council has adopted eight amendments, of which four are in effect now.
- Several Provincial plans have been released since the last update to the ROP, including Places to Grow in 2006 and the Greenbelt Plan in 2005.
- The Region has until June, 2009 to bring the ROP into conformity with the Places to Grow Plan. The *Greenbelt Act, 2005* requires the Region to bring the ROP into conformity with the Greenbelt Plan.
- A draft of this report was circulated to Area Municipalities for comment and was discussed at the Planning Technical Advisory Committee meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2006.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* requires the Council of a municipality that has adopted an official plan to, not less frequently than every five years; hold a special meeting of Council, open to the public, to determine the need for a revision of the official plan.

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The Regional Official Plan Strategic Update (ROPSU), the last update to the ROP, was initiated in March, 2002 through a public meeting. Therefore, it is timely and appropriate for the Region to hold a public meeting in February 2007 to initiate the process of reviewing the ROP to address the Places to Grow Plan and to consider the need to review other aspects of the ROP.

The ROPSU was carried out as a scoped review of four focus areas: Environment, Human Services, Regional Structure and Transportation, rather than a comprehensive revision of the ROP. Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPAs) in these focus areas were produced and passed by Regional Council through the ROPSU process, and these include:

- ROPA 7 – Conformity with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, which is now in effect;
- ROPA 8 – Updated Population and Employment Forecast, which is now in effect,;
- ROPA 9 – Amendment to Schedule G to relocate the symbol for “Proposed GO Rail Station” in Northwest Mississauga, which is now in effect;
- ROPA 11 – Human Services Policies, which are now in effect;
- ROPA 13 – Amendment to Schedule A on Core Areas of the Greenlands System, which is under appeal;
- ROPA 15 – Expansion of the Regional Urban Boundary to include North West Brampton, which is under appeal; and
- ROPA 16 – Transportation Network and Policies, which are under appeal.

ROPA 10, which relates to the proposed GO rail station in Bolton and ROPA 14 that relates to the Gateway District Policies in Mississauga are in process. ROPA 12, which relates to underground telecommunications facilities, was withdrawn on the recommendation of the Planning Department by Regional Council on September 14, 2006 under Resolution 2006-906.

2. Regional Official Plan Approach and Successes

The ROP is strategic in nature, reflecting the respective roles and responsibilities of the Area Municipalities and the Region of Peel. The ROP directs Regional involvement in development matters where Regional or Provincial interests are concerned (e.g. expansions to the Regional Urban Boundary). The policies of the ROP have been highly regarded and upheld in Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and Joint Board decisions. The results of 10 hearings before the OMB or the Joint Board since the ROP has been approved involve site-specific applications in which ROP policies were challenged, tested, or reviewed to facilitate the OMB in making a decision. The low number of amendments to the ROP indicates that the policies and format of the plan are protecting Regional interests well and that the division between local and regional matters is sound. The decisions of administrative tribunals indicate that the policies of the plan are reasonable and represent good planning practice.

3. Mandated Regional Official Plan Conformity

Provincial plans and policies such as the Places to Grow Growth Plan, 2006, the Greenbelt Plan, 2005, and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005 have been released since

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2002 which provide policy directions that must be addressed by the Region in the official plan through the course of the next review.

a) The Growth Plan: Places to Grow, 2006

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal released the Places to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area (GGH) on June 16, 2006 under the *Places to Grow Act, 2005*. The growth plan addresses a range of planning issues and provides policy direction on: transportation and infrastructure planning, land use planning, urban form, housing, water and waste water systems, waste management, natural heritage and resource protection.

The proposed growth plan has several specific provisions that the Region must comply with, including setting a long-term planning horizon to 2031, allocating provincially set population and employment forecasts to lower-tier municipalities, allocating provincial intensification and density targets for Urban Growth Centres and future Greenfield areas, and developing a housing strategy.

The *Places to Grow Act* requires municipalities to bring their official plans into conformity with the growth plan by June, 2009. As a result of the requirements that stem from the growth plan, many of the sections in the current ROP will need to be reviewed and modified to pursue these directions.

b) The Greenbelt Plan, 2005

The *Greenbelt Act* led to the establishment of the Greenbelt Plan in December, 2004. The 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, which is mostly in Caledon, is covered by the Greenbelt Plan's designations and will require amendments to the ROP.

c) Clean Water Act

The *Clean Water Act* (Bill 43) is the Province's proposed source water protection legislation which responds to the recommendations that came from the Part Two Report of the Walkerton Enquiry directing that drinking water supplies be protected at source. Bill 43 received second reading on May 18, 2006 and is expected to pass as early as fall 2006. If passed, the *Clean Water Act* will require the Region to amend the ROP to conform with approved source protection plans. The Ministry of the Environment has also released several technical guidance modules containing new standards for the identification of vulnerable areas (e.g. wellhead protection areas). When completed, the source protection plans and new Provincial standards will need to be reviewed and incorporated through appropriate amendments to the ROP as part of the ROP review.

d) 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 such as 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

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includes new policies for affordable housing, energy, and air quality and establishes a new role for Regional Municipalities to coordinate planning matters that cross municipal boundaries. These new requirements will be reviewed in consultation with the Province and the Area Municipalities and incorporated into the Regional Official Plan review as required.

Emerging issues that need to be appropriately considered in the ROP review include: review of ROP implementation and monitoring policies, significant woodlands study, incorporating the work of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Agricultural Action Plan, and emerging areas of study such as obesity and energy as they relate to regional planning. The ROP review will provide an opportunity to further align the ROP with the matrix of Regional and Area Municipal planning responsibilities.

4. Proposed Direction

Based on the requirements of new Provincial legislation, policy and plans, it will be necessary to review and update many sections of the ROP. Staff recommend that a review of the ROP is necessary, but that the scope of such a review be considered further and be subject of an additional report to Council at the time of the proposed special public meeting that should be held to fulfill the requirements of Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

Building on the successful relationship established through Planning Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) between the Region and Area Municipal staff, it is proposed that the Committee work collaboratively on the ROP review. This will provide the forum for overall guidance of the ROP review. A draft of this report was circulated to Area Municipalities for comment and was discussed at the TAC meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2006. Staff will work with TAC to propose the scope of the ROP review for consideration at the public meeting and will subsequently prepare a work plan for the ROP review for consideration through a report to Council after the public meeting in 2007.

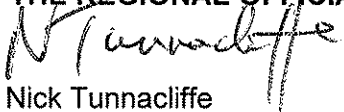
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The anticipated activities associated with the ROP review will be undertaken by staff and consultants, and the proposed 2007 Business Plan and Budget make provision for the work.

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

Nick Tunnacliffe
Commissioner of Planning

Approved for Submission:



D. Swarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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c. Legislative Services 

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