



The Regional Municipality of Halton

Report To:	Chair and Members of the Planning and Public Works Committee
From:	Mark G. Meneray, Commissioner, Legislative & Planning Services and Corporate Counsel
Date:	April 9, 2014
Report No. - Re:	LPS28-14 - Commencement of the Five-Year Review of the Region's Official Plan

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council authorize the commencement of the five-year review of the Region's Official Plan as set out in Report No. LPS28-14.
2. THAT the Regional Clerk forward a copy of Report No. LPS28-14 to the City of Burlington, the Town of Oakville, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, Conservation Halton, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Grand River Conservation Authority, Niagara Escarpment Commission, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their information.

REPORT

Executive Summary

- The Region adopted its last substantial review of the Official Plan in December 2009 (ROPA 38).
- The Province recently issued a new Provincial Policy Statement, 2014, and Amendment #2 to the Growth Plan, which extended population and growth forecasts in Halton Region to 2041. The Province is also expected to approve new Source Water Protection Plans and will be soon commencing the 10-year reviews of the Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan, and Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan.
- As these significant policy initiatives will affect the long-range growth and development of Halton Region, it is timely to commence the next five-year review of the Region's Official Plan.
- With the commencement of the five-year review, Regional staff will proceed to develop a comprehensive Work Plan, a Public Engagement Strategy, and an Official Plan Policy Directions Report for Council's consideration.

Background

As Council is aware, there is a legislative requirement to review the Halton Regional Official Plan every five years. The Region completed its last Official Plan review in 2009 through the adoption of ROPAs 37, 38 and 39. The Urban area of the Official Plan has now been approved by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and is in place while a number of policy matters, including aggregates, agriculture and the natural heritage system, remain before the OMB for final approval. These policy matters are anticipated to be resolved by the OMB in 2014.

Section 26 of *The Planning Act* states:

26 (1) – Updating the Official Plan - If an official plan is in effect in a municipality, the council of the municipality that adopted the official plan shall, not less frequently than every five years after the plan comes into effect as an official plan or after that part of a plan comes into effect as a part of an official plan, if the only outstanding appeals relate to those parts of the plan that propose to specifically designate land uses,

- a) Revise the official plans as required to ensure that it,
 - i. conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them, as the case may be,
 - ii. has regard to the matters of provincial interest listed in section 2, and
 - iii. is consistent with policy statement issued under subsection 3(1); and
 - (b) Revise the official plan, if it contains policies dealing with areas of employment, including, without limitation, the designation of areas of employment in the official plan and policies dealing with the removal of land from areas of employment, to ensure that those policies are confirmed or amended.
- (2) Effect of Provincial Plan Conformity exercise – For greater certainty, the council revises the official plan under subsection (1) if it,
- a) amends the official plan, in accordance with another Act, to conform with a provincial plan; and
 - b) in the course of making amendments under clause (a) complies with clauses (1)(a) and (b) and with all procedural requirements of this section.
- (3) Consultation and special meeting – Before revising the official plan under subsection (1), the council shall,
- a) consult with the approval authority and with the prescribed bodies with respect to the revisions that may be required; and

- b) hold a special meeting of council, open to the public, to discuss the revisions that may be required.

Since the approval of the current Regional Official Plan in 2009, there have been or there are scheduled to be, a number of significant provincial policy reviews that will have the potential to impact the official plan. In February 2014, the Province announced a new Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (PPS) that will come into effect on April 30, 2014. All decisions on planning related matters from this point forward must be consistent with the 2014 PPS. The Province has also recently amended the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Amendment No. 2), to extend the population and employment numbers for Halton Region to 2041. The Province is also expected to commence the 10-year policy reviews of the Greenbelt Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Growth Plan throughout 2015 and 2016. As well, Source Water Protection Plans for the three Source Protection Regions within Halton Region (Halton Hamilton, Credit Valley and Lake Erie) are expected to be approved in the very near future.

Discussion

The *Planning Act* requires municipalities to update their official plans at five year intervals to ensure that official plan policies always remain current. As it has now been almost five years since Council's adoption of ROPA 38 in December 2009, it is recommended that Council commence the next review of the Regional Official Plan. With the commencement of this review staff will, as in past years, undertake the development of a comprehensive detailed Work Plan, a Public Engagement Strategy and a Policy Directions Report, which will be submitted to Council for consideration and approval.

The Work Plan will include:

- the completion of all of the necessary background and technical work to support the five-year review process;
- a Provincial policy review and policy scan;
- the details of the methodology and approach to be undertaken in completing the Official Plan review process;
- the timing of the review;
- the growth management strategy for the Region (including Master Plan development and a fiscal affordability assessment);
- an assessment of the Rural areas;
- education and training;
- stakeholder engagement.

The Region is committed to strong, active public engagement. In this regard, staff will be developing a Public Engagement Strategy for the Official Plan review to ensure that all opportunities to maximize public engagement with Halton's citizens about the Region's long-term growth and development are pursued. There will be a minimum of three components to the strategy:

- Engaging the public in important dialogue about our future;

- Keeping Regional Council and Municipal Council engaged and informed about the input being received from the public;
- Ensuring that municipal staff and key agencies are apprised and encouraged to participate in the process in order to ensure consensus.

Lastly, the Policy Directions Report will continue to build on Council's vision for Halton and to refine the principles established in ROPA 38. Halton's vision is that its future landscape will always consist, in large measure, of three principal categories of land uses:

- (1) *settlement areas* with identifiable communities
- (2) a rural countryside with *agriculture* as the preferred and predominant activity, and
- (3) a *natural heritage system* that is integrated within settlement areas and the rural countryside, and which serves to preserve and enhance the biological diversity and ecological functions of Halton Region.

The Directions Report is the first step in the consultation process and will serve to stimulate discussion on changes to the Plan.

FINANCIAL/PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

The Official Plan review will be funded from capital account T8021A.

RELATIONSHIP TO HALTON REGION'S 2011-2014 ACTION PLAN

Key Action

Commence five-year review of the Regional Official Plan.

Key Initiative

Defend and deliver Council's vision for managed and sustainable growth in Halton to meet the requirements of the Places to Grow Plan to 2031 as set out in the Halton Regional Official Plan.

Priority Area

Planning Sustainable Communities.

Respectfully submitted,



Ron Glenn
Director, Planning Services and
Planning Official



Mark G. Meneray
Chief Commissioner, Legislative & Planning
Services and Corporate Counsel

Approved by



Jane MacCaskill
Chief Administrative Officer

If you have any questions on the content of this report,
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Attachments: None