

STAFF REPORT: Planning and Building Services Department

REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: May 10, 2010
REPORT NO.: PL.10.37
SUBJECT: Town of The Blue Mountains
 Official Plan Review
PREPARED BY: Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP
 Senior Policy Planner

A. Recommendations

THAT Council does hereby receive Planning Staff Report PL.10.37, Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan Review; and

THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the County of Grey for information purposes.

B. Background**Need for Official Plan Review**

In accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, all municipalities are required to conduct a review of their Official Plan every five years after the plan comes into effect. This review is done to ensure that an Official Plan conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them, has regard to the matters of provincial interest and is consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement (2005)*. In addition, the County of Grey completed their Official Plan five-year review and adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 80 on March 3, 2009, which was forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval, which is pending.

The five-year review is also an opportunity to ensure the Official Plan continues to address local priorities and changing community needs. Since the approval of the *Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan* by the Ontario Municipal Board on September 29, 2006, the Province has introduced several legislative and policy changes including the *Provincial Policy Statement (2005)* and amendments to the *Planning Act* through Bill 51 that affect land use planning at the local level. The County, through Amendment No. 80, adopted policies to focus growth within settlement areas, increase the protection of good agricultural land and areas of significant or sensitive resources and introduced growth management and housing policy sections within their Official Plan.

At the local level, there are a number of initiatives identifying emerging trends which may need to be addressed through this Official Plan Review process including but not limited to, the *Integrated Community Sustainability Plan*, *Housing Needs Study*, *Community Improvement Plan*, *Strategic Planning and Urban Design Study*, *Economic*

Development Strategy, Transportation Study, Road Needs Study and Comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the Lora Bay, Clarksburg, Thornbury and Camperdown Service Area.

Analysis

The *Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan* (approved in 2006) has provided an effective framework for land use planning. A number of new land use planning policy initiatives at various levels of government have been introduced since The Blue Mountains Official Plan was approved. There have also been a number of Amendments made to the Plan since 2006. The Blue Mountains Official Plan Review, will, among other matters as may be directed by Council, focus on the following:

- implementation of changes to the *Planning Act* through Bill 51;
- conformity with the *Provincial Policy Statement* (2005);
- conformity with the *County of Grey Official Plan* resulting from their recent Official Plan Review;
- growth management;
- sustainability;
- healthy communities initiatives;
- natural heritage and natural hazards;
- cultural heritage;
- housing needs;
- intensification;
- transportation and infrastructure;
- urban design; and
- other “technical” and “housekeeping” matters.

Planning Consultant(s)

The process for undertaking the Official Plan Review was approved as part of the 2010 budget process. The Official Plan Review will be led and managed by the Planning and Building Services Department. There will also be an internal municipal advisory team established to assist Planning Staff in advancing this project.

Public Consultation

The Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan Review will include consultation with the public, agencies and stakeholders, in accordance with the Planning Act and as determined by Council. In order to provide effective consultation, information pertaining to the Official Plan Review will be circulated and distributed through a variety mechanisms including notices and updates utilizing such media as the Town’s Website, advertisements in local newspapers and through the Community Engagement e-mail blasts.

Open houses and statutory public meetings under the *Planning Act* will be held at strategic points throughout this project. A mailing list of interested parties, commenting agencies and community groups will be maintained for the purposes of future notification.

Section 26 (3)(a) of the *Planning Act* states that council shall “consult with the approval authority and with the prescribed public bodies with respect to the revisions that may be required”. Town Planning Staff consulted with the County of Grey Planning and Development Department on March 5, 2010, regarding this project. Town Planning Staff provided notice to prescribed public bodies regarding the Official Plan Review on March 31, 2010.

Special Meeting of Council

Section 26 (3)(b) of the *Planning Act* states that Council shall “hold a special meeting of council, open to the public, to discuss the revisions that may be required. The intent of the May 10, 2010, Special Meeting of Council, is to hear submissions and views of the public in consideration of topics to be included in the Official Plan Review.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*, notice of the Special Meeting was published at least once a week in each of two separate weeks, and the last publication took place at least 30 days before the date of the meeting. The notice was published in the Blue Mountains Courier-Herald on March 31, 2010 and April 10, 2010. The notice was also published on April 2, 2010 and April 9, 2010, in the Collingwood Enterprise Bulletin. The notice was also provided to commenting agencies, stakeholders and community groups and posted on the Town’s Website.

Terms of Reference/Request for Proposal

Town Staff are in the process of preparing a preliminary Terms of Reference (TOR) for a Request for Proposal (RFP) for professional planning consulting services for the Official Plan Review. Any other topics for consideration identified at the Special Meeting of Council as the result of input from the public and agencies or as directed by Council, will also be included in the Terms of Reference prior to issuing the Request for Proposals.

The Planning and Building Services Department will report back to the Planning and Building Services Committee at the June 7, 2010, Committee meeting regarding a proposed Terms of Reference and the Request for Proposal. It is unknown at this time whether the proposal submissions will be from multi-disciplinary firms or a group of firms teaming to complete the Official Plan Review. Subconsultants may be retained by the lead consultant where necessary.

C. The Blue Mountains’ Strategic Plan

1. Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.

D. Environmental Impacts

Any environmental policy changes to the Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan, through the Official Plan Review process, will need to be done in a manner which will reflect the most current approaches for protection of the environment.

E. Budget Impact

The Official Plan Review process has been budgeted for and approved as an operating project in 2010, as follows:

YEAR	Consultant	Professional Services	Contract	Software Support	Training	Equipment	Interim Financing	Miscellaneous
2010	60,000							
2011	80,000	42,000						
2012		42,000						
Total:	140,000	84,000						
							Project Total:	224,000

F. Attachments

Nil.

Submitted by:

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