



## Administrative Report

### Office of the Manager, Planning Services

**To:** Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council  
**From:** Rebecca Belanger, MCIP, RPP  
Manager, Planning Services  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 06, 2023  
**Subject:** County of Essex Official Plan Review Update 2023  
**Report #:** 2023-0906-IPS-R29-RB

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#### Purpose

To provide County Council with an update on Official Plan Review work that has been completed to date and next steps in the process.

#### Background and Discussion

This Official Plan Review is being undertaken in 3 phases:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<i>Background Review &amp; Growth Projections</i>	<i>Growth Management &amp; Policy Direction Reports</i>	<i>Draft &amp; Adopt New Official Plan</i>

Phase 1 is complete, and a Background Report dated September 2022 and a Growth Analysis Report dated October 2022 were delivered and presented to County Council on January 18, 2023.

The County Official Plan is one of the most important policy documents that Council adopts. It will serve as a “road map” for Essex County to responsibly manage growth and change over the next 30 years. It will guide and provide direction to landowners, residents, developers, homebuilders, investors, owners of businesses, non-profit groups, and the community at large on matters that shape how neighbourhoods, employment districts,

waterfronts and rural landscapes respond to and take advantage of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

The County is forecast to grow by more than 70,000 persons over the next three decades, adding between 2,300 and 3,900 people per year to the County's population to the year 2051. Employment is projected to grow by over 30,000 jobs, at a rate of growth that is more than double what has been experienced during the last 15 years.

The overall health, well-being and prosperity of people living in this region will be impacted and shaped by how we manage this growth, how we use our land, and by the vision, goals, policies and designations that are contained within the County's Official Plan.

Phase 2 of the work plan is nearing completion, and NPG Planning Solutions is finalizing the Growth Management and Policy Directions Reports (the deliverables for this phase of the review).

Individual meetings have been held with senior planning staff from each local municipality, and with senior planning staff from the County of Essex and the County Planning Advisor, to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information is being used in the technical analyses and assessments that are being undertaken during Phase 2.

Meetings have also been held with the Technical Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC), the Essex County Federation of Agriculture and the Windsor/ Essex Homebuilders Association.

A presentation was also made to the Regional CAOs, and a Section 26 public meeting was held to obtain important input and feedback.

On September 6, 2023, the Consultant (NPG Planning Solutions) will be presenting a PowerPoint to County Council, which provides an overview of the draft Growth Management and Policy Directions Reports that are being finalized as part of Phase 2. This presentation to County Council will include a summary of:

- what was heard during the TPAC meetings, the Section 26 meeting and other meetings held during this phase;
- the technical work completed to date, based on four growth management options (and the rationale for using more than one option and the corresponding best practices);

- the key takeaways from this analysis and what it means going forward;
- major policy areas in the existing County Official Plan that are working and with no major changes needed;
- major policy areas that will need to be addressed as part of the new Official Plan, to ensure compliance with the Planning Act, to maintain consistency with the PPS, and to address the opportunities, challenges and issues identified during Phase 1;
- the importance of partnerships and building on success.

The following represents the key dates and milestones for the remaining work that will be completed during Phase 2:

- September 13<sup>th</sup> – Community Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting;
- Last week of September – Draft Growth Management and Policy Directions Reports will be circulated to TPAC for input and feedback;
- October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> – Public Workshop, TPAC Meeting, and Indigenous Community and City of Windsor Staff engagement;
- Last week of October – Growth Management and Policy Directions Reports will be finalized and released;
- November 1, 2023 – County Council Meeting, Phase 2 “wrap-up” and launch of the Phase 3 work plan (including a High-Level Overview of what will be included in the new County Official Plan).

A copy of the Consultant’s PowerPoint Presentation will be made available in advance of the September 6, 2023 County Council meeting.

## **Financial Implications**

The Corporation maintains an Official Plan Review Reserve. Costs associated with activities in 2023 have been approved by County Council as part of the 2023 Budget. The project remains within budgetary targets.

## Consultations

The County's Planning Advisor and the County Consultant have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive Report number 2023-0906-IPS-R29-RB from the Manager, Planning Services with regard to the County of Essex Official Plan Review process.

## Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rebecca Belanger*

Rebecca Belanger, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Planning Services

Concurred With,

*Allan Botham*

Allan Botham, P.Eng., Director, Infrastructure and Planning Services

Concurred With,

*Sandra Zwiers*

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
1	Powerpoint Presentation- NPG Planning Solutions <i>(to be circulated to County Council prior to September 6 meeting)</i>