



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Rebecca Belanger, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Planning Services

Date: Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Subject: Supplemental Information-Final Draft County of Essex Official Plan

Report #: 2024-1016-IPS-R28-RB

Purpose

To provide County Council with additional correspondence received since the original agenda package has gone out to Council (attached for information). Further, to provide County Council with responses to this additional correspondence including a memorandum from Mary Lou Tanner, lead planning consultant, dated October 14, 2024.

Background and Discussion

The Planning Act requires that all decisions made by Planning Authorities in Ontario are to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement that is in effect at any given time.

The County Team met with Staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 2nd, to discuss how the draft new OP has incorporated the necessary policies to ensure that it is consistent with the new provincial policy direction pertaining to the growth forecasts that have been prepared by the County.

A few additional minor wording changes were incorporated into the final revised draft plan to address technical wording revisions that were identified in the table that accompanied the October 11th correspondence from MMAH.

The details associated with these final revisions are outlined in Ms. Tanner's October 14th memorandum.

We (Ms. Tanner, Mr. Silani, and I) are satisfied that with the revisions as recommended by Ms. Tanner, that the new County Official Plan is fully consistent with the policies of the new Provincial Planning Statement (2024), and it addresses the concerns raised in Mr. Kerr's October 11th

correspondence. These changes are also in keeping with the verbal direction that the County Team received at its October 2nd meeting with MMAH Staff.

Over the next two weeks, the County Planning Team will be meeting with MMAH to ensure that any comments and concerns that the Ministry may still have regarding conformity are all addressed to their satisfaction prior to approval of the document and adoption of the by-law at a later meeting date to County Council.

We were pleased to receive new correspondence from the Windsor-Essex Home Builders Association (dated October 10, 2024) stating that they are *"fully in support of the adoption of the County's new Official Plan at the October 16th meeting"*, and *"delaying the adoption of the County OP at this crucial juncture would unnecessarily hinder several important County and local planning initiatives, including housing strategies, transportation improvements, and the development of secondary plans. Such delays could exacerbate existing pressures on our housing market and slow progress on vital infrastructure projects that are key to accommodating this growth."* They conclude their letter by stating that *"WEHBA strongly supports the timely adoption of the County OP and urges County Council to move forward with the plan as presented. We believe it lays a solid foundation for future growth while addressing key environmental and housing concerns."*

On October 7th, we also received a letter from the Caldwell First Nation stating that *"overall this Official plan contains some very positive and forward-thinking policies. We appreciate the effort that has been put into ensuring that Caldwell is considered and included in planning decisions."* It should be noted that several minor wording changes were requested by the Caldwell First Nation, which have now been made to the final draft of the County Official Plan that is before Council for adoption.

Ms. Tanner, in her October 14th memorandum also describes recent requests for wording changes made by a landowner in the Municipality of Lakeshore (pertaining to a site-specific settlement area boundary adjustment), and from planning staff in the Town of Kingsville. Ms. Tanner provides a detailed explanation as to how those requests have been addressed.

On October 9th the County Team met with all the residents that had appeared as delegations with respect to the County's environmental policies at the September 5th County Council meeting. County Staff explained all of the revisions that have been made to the final draft of the new County Official Plan to address their concerns.

Mr. Silani (the County's OP Planning Advisor) has prepared a memorandum dated October 13th, outlining the key policy changes that are being made in the new County Official Plan and how those new county-wide policies assist

County Council achieve it stated strategic vision *"for a prosperous future for this region – one of responsible growth, affordability, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification."* This memorandum also describes how the new County Official Plan enables County Council to responsibly address its strategic objective of *"not only managing the incredible growth coming our way but harnessing its potential, creating jobs and increasing our housing supply while preserving farmland, greenspace, and the quality of life we hold so dear."*

The County's Official Plan Review Team is proud of the tremendous amount of work that has been completed during the last three years, and we believe that the final draft of the new County Official Plan (with the revisions as set out in Ms. Tanner's October 14th memorandum) is environmentally, fiscally, and socially responsible and fully consistent with the new Provincial Planning Statement (2024).

Should MMAH through their review over the next few weeks, identify any areas of concern regarding conformity with PPS 2024, the County Planning team will respond and address these comments prior to presentation of the by-law for adoption.

Financial Implications

The OP is funded from a dedicated reserve that is contributed to on an annual basis to support a 5-year OP review/updating cycle. While the 2024 Budget for the OP has now been exhausted, the anticipated current year deficit will be funded from the OP Reserve.

Should any additional consulting work or studies be requested for this cycle of the OP, additional funds will need to be requested and approved from County Council.

Consultations

Mary Lou Tanner and Larry Silani, County Official Plan Review Team

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive report number 2024-1016-IPS-R28-RB, Supplemental Information- Final Draft County of Essex Official Plan; and,
 That the new County Official Plan be reviewed in collaboration with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to confirm conformity with PPS 2024, and be considered for adoption at an upcoming meeting of County Council.

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	Title
A	Letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and associated table regarding the County Official Plan dated October 11, 2024
B	Memorandum, NPG Planning Solutions, October 14, 2024
C	Memorandum, Miller Silani Inc., October 13, 2024
D	Correspondence WEHBA regarding the County Official Plan adoption, October 10, 2024
E	Correspondence Caldwell First Nation, received October 7, 2024
F	Lakeshore's Response to a Settlement Area Boundary Changes request
