



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Planning and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Bryan W. Tuckey, Commissioner of Planning and Development Services

DATE: February 3, 2010

RE: **Ontario Ministry of Tourism Regional Tourism Zones and Organizations**

On December 19, 2009 the Ontario Ministry of Tourism announced the formation of 13 new tourism zones and Regional Tourism Organizations (RTO) which placed York Region in Zone 6 with Durham Region (comprised of 8 Municipalities) and Dufferin Country (comprised of 8 Municipalities).

The development of regional tourism zones was a recommendation from the Ontario Tourism Competitiveness *Discovering Ontario* Study. A regional map of Ontario's 13 new tourism zones can be located on the Ministry of Tourism's website at www.ontario.ca/tourism. The Regional Municipality of York is included in Zone 6 as outlined on the attached map.

The Tourism Ministry staff will be issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest in January to identify one Regional Tourism Organization in each tourism zone to lead this Provincial initiative. The Province is looking for the private sector to assume a leadership role in the creation and management of this new RTO.

To support this, Durham, Dufferin and York tourism staff facilitated an industry Task Force consisting initially of 3 sector representatives from each of the three areas to come together on Tuesday January 19, 2010 to start the process on the creation of the Regional Tourism Organization for Zone 6 (roles, the governance, funding model and strategic priorities).

This new Regional Tourism Organization is expected to be in place by July, 2010 when the new HST is implemented.

Regional Tourism staff will assist the Task Force from an administrative perspective and will keep Regional Council and the York Region tourism industry informed on the development of the Provincial Regional Tourism Organization.

For more information, please contact Patrick Draper, Director Economic Strategy and Tourism at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1503 or Brenda McGowan, Program Manager Tourism Development at Ext. 1553.

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Attachment (1)

Memorandum: Ontario Ministry of Tourism Regional Tourism Zones and Organizations (Attachment 1)

