



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Planning and Economic Development Committee

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

DATE: May 5, 2010

RE: **Approval for York Region to act as transition banker for RTO Zone 6**

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 and Dufferin County (Hills of Headwaters).

The RTO Industry Task Force is comprised of three sector representatives from each of the three areas submitted an Expression of Interest to the Ministry of Tourism in March to obtain approval to be designated to establish the non profit Regional Tourism Organization for Zone 6 (including the roles, the governance, funding model and strategic priorities). Approval was granted in April with the expectation that the new Regional Tourism Zone will be incorporated and in place by July 2010.

The Ministry of Tourism has agreed to provide start up funding to retain a facilitator and interim staff to manage the creation of this new tourism organization. The Ministry of Tourism recommends an established organization serve as banker during this interim phase. The RTO Industry Task Force has asked for York Region to enter into an agreement with the Ministry of Tourism as the interim banker until the new RTO tourism organization is established. York Region would act as the banker in the short term (a proposed three to six month period) and would process funds as approved and directed by the Ministry of Tourism and the RTO Industry Task Force.

Regional Tourism staff has consulted with the Regional Finance Department and have been advised that we have the capabilities to provide this service without cost or liability to the Region.

Approval is being requested for the Regional Municipality of York to enter into an agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism to act as the interim banker on behalf of the RTO Industry Task Force responsible for the creation of Provincial Regional Tourism Organization for Zone 6 and for the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services to sign on behalf of the Region.

Regional Tourism staff will continue to assist the RTO Industry Task Force from an administrative perspective and will monitor the agreement and financial expenditures. As well, Regional Council will be kept informed on the development of the Provincial Regional Tourism Organization for Zone 6.

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

Bryan Tuckey

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