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PLANNING FOR TOMORROW - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PHASE 3 - FALL 2008

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated April 8, 2008, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Public Engagement Phase 3 components and timing contained in this report be endorsed by Committee and Council.
2. The Regional Clerk distribute this staff report to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the area municipalities for information purposes.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to identify the components and timing for the Phase 3 public engagement process for *Planning for Tomorrow*, the Region's growth management initiative.

3. BACKGROUND

The Region's growth management initiative *Planning for Tomorrow* was commenced in 2005. Public engagement has taken place in two prior phases, in the spring of 2006 and spring of 2007.

The 2006 Phase 1 Public engagement involved 5 town hall meetings and some 8 separate meetings with stakeholders as well as a Sustainability workshop, mailing list and interest articles in local newspapers and website updates. The purpose of the Phase 1 engagement was to:

- become informed about growth management in the Region
- discuss the issues
- raise new issues for consideration.

Regional Council at its meeting of June 22, 2006, endorsed Clause 2 of Report Number 6 which reported on the feedback and next steps.

In the spring 2007, Phase 2 public engagement was undertaken. The purpose of this round of public engagement was to consult and obtain feedback on the Regional growth scenarios, the preliminary assignment of forecasts to the local municipalities and the planning directions.

As part of this Phase, Regional staff hosted 6 Town Hall meetings and an additional 23 consultation sessions with Regional stakeholders and partners, and interested groups throughout May, June and early July, 2007.

Regional Council at its meeting September 27, 2007 endorsed Clause 3 of Report number 7 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee which reported out on the feedback and next steps.

The next Phase of Public engagement, to commence in the fall of 2008 is intended to focus on the preferred growth scenario and emerging planning policy directions and obtain input on a preferred growth scenario based on the additional work.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The 2005 Work plan established the following objectives for the public engagement and consultation process:

- To foster a public/stakeholder discussion on issues and choices facing the Region.
- To begin to create a broad public consensus on the public policy decisions that must be made.
- To discuss issues and identify solutions.
- To ensure that decisions are evaluated against the triple bottom line sustainability, principles of economic development, social equity and environmental value.

The components of growth management require a multifaceted approach to seeking input. The following sections identify Regional staff's recommended direction and follow the proposed Work plan endorsed by Committee and Council in 2005.

4.1 TAKING THE MESSAGE OUT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Previous Public engagement phases have included a range of tools and methods to take the growth management message out to a wider audience. In general, these have worked well, and staff intends to follow a similar course for Phase 3. The components include:

This strategy included the following components:

Technical Advisory Committee

Regional staff continues to meet with local municipal staff to discuss the population and employment projections, intensification targets, land budget and growth scenarios to ensure coordination.

Town Hall Meetings

Phase 3 public discussions will follow a similar public involvement process to Phases 1 and 2, with Town Hall meetings to stimulate discussion of the alternatives and stakeholder meetings with other groups including the BILD, environmental groups, area municipal councils on request and ongoing discussions with area municipal and Provincial stakeholders. As with past sessions, public engagement meetings have been scheduled in municipalities where the greatest growth through intensification and white belt development is projected. These meetings are as follows:

Town of Markham, Canada Room – September 17, 2008
City of Vaughan, Council Chambers – September 18, 2008
Town of East Gwillimbury, Council Chambers – September 23, 2008, and
Town of Richmond Hill, O.M.B. Room – September 24, 2008
Town of Newmarket, Regional Administrative Building – September 25, 2008

Open houses will begin at 6:00 p.m., with a presentation between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and discussion following until 9:00 p.m.

Results of Stakeholder discussions on the scenarios will be brought back to Council in the late fall of 2008 in a “What was Heard” document and results will be posted on the *Planning for Tomorrow* website soon after the meetings.

Area Municipal Councils

Invitations will be sent to the Mayor’s of each local municipality to schedule presentations at local Council meetings, if requested. Local municipal staff will be informed of the Town Hall meetings and invited to attend and participate. Regional Councillor Wong, Chair of Planning and Economic Development Committee, has agreed to provide opening remarks at all Town Hall meetings except the meeting on September 23 in the Town of East Gwillimbury, when he has a prior commitment with the Town of Markham Council. Mayor James Young has agreed to provide opening remarks at this meeting.

Public Notice of the Open Houses, Discussions and supporting materials

Notice for the public meetings will be given in the local newspapers throughout the Region during the last week on August and first week in September. Regional Staff will also work closely with the local municipalities to obtain ad space in the town notice page

in the local papers, as well as posting advertisements on both the Region's website and, where possible, the local municipal websites.

Supporting materials will be available to all Town Hall attendees which will include an information brochure; displays of mapping, key concepts, and statistics; and supporting materials from other Regional departments.

Stakeholder Contact Lists

The stakeholder contact list, which was started in 2006 for the Phase 1 Town Hall meetings and subsequently updated with contacts from the Water and Waste Water and Transportation Master Plan meetings, will be used to circulate invitations for the Town Hall meetings via mail and e-mail. There are currently 1700 contacts on our list.

Website Consultation

The Planning for Tomorrow website will continue to evolve and be updated for the 2008 public engagement sessions. The website provides all of the background information on the growth management strategy; staff reports, publications, including the information brochure for the public engagement; town hall meeting information including meeting times, locations, maps, and a copy of the presentation. The website also provides a forum for providing feedback to Regional staff through the "futureyork" e-mail.

Brochure

A public consultation brochure similar to those created in previous phases will be developed and circulated to all persons on the stakeholder mailing list, and to all participants at each Town Hall and public engagement session. The brochure is used to frame the discussions and provide a high level background of the key policy directions for the Region over the next 25 years as well as the preferred growth scenario.

Communications Strategy

In Phase 2, a Communications Strategy, approved by Regional Council was used as a blueprint for communicating the key messages on Planning for Tomorrow. This strategy was used to provide members of Regional Council with speaking notes, and briefing notes for the Town Hall meetings. A communications strategy is being developed for the public engagement process in the fall.

Additional Stakeholders and First Nation's Consultation

In previous phases, meetings were held with Regional stakeholders including BILD, the School Boards, Human Services Planning Coalition, York Region staff, the Agricultural Liaison Group, York Region Planning Commissioners, York Region Chief

Administrative Officers, the United Way, environmental groups and others. Regional staff intends to proceed with similar meetings in Phase 3.

Consultation with First Nation's will be initiated through a contact letter to representatives from First Nation communities and followed up by meetings with First Nations representatives where possible.

4.2 INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY, GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND MASTER PLANNING

Master Plans for water and waste water, transportation and transit are ongoing and growth scenarios have been evaluated against these plans. A report entitled *Comparative Analysis of Growth Scenarios for Human Services, Environment, Water and Waste water Transportation and 25-year Fiscal and Economic Implications* is also part of this April 30, 2008 agenda.

Regional staff intends to have public information sessions for these Master Plan initiatives in the fall of 2008 after the *Planning for Tomorrow* sessions.

The Region's Sustainability Strategy was released in March 2007. Sustainability principles are being integrated in Regional plans, operations and programs through practical action. In compliance with this Strategy, the preferred growth scenario, as well as all Master Planning initiatives will be undergoing sustainability assessments that consider the following:

- The triple-bottom line assessment to create net gains along environmental, economic and community lines.
- Long-term vision/framework.
- Partnerships, engagement, education and awareness.
- Continuous improvement and innovation in technology.
- Monitoring, target setting and reporting to the public.
- Promotion of sustainable lifestyle and re-evaluation of our consumption and expectations.
- Human Services and 25-year Fiscal and Economic Impact analysis.

Relationship to Vision 2026

The nature of the growth management strategy speaks to all of the goal areas of Vision 2026, but especially to the goals of "Managed and Balanced Growth", "Infrastructure for a Growing Region" and "Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region".

Vision 2026 contemplates the on-going updates required by the changing context of planning in South Central Ontario. Moreover, Vision 2026 stresses the requirement for ongoing stakeholder involvement and engagement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Phase 3 of the Public Consultation is to be undertaken within the approved Planning Department budget allocations and staff complement for 2008.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Area municipalities are being consulted as the Region proceeds with development of the preferred scenario. A number of area municipalities are undertaking their own growth management and official plan update work and consult with Regional staff on an on-going basis.

7. CONCLUSION

Regional Planning Committee and Council endorsed the overall public consultation process for the growth management initiative in 2005. This report articulates the plan and timing for Phase 3 of this consultation, commencing with the five Town hall meetings in September 2008, but the comprehensive program for stakeholder involvement outlined in this report, including website and printed materials, press releases and other media opportunities, presentations and discussions with local Councils and special interest groups.

Regional staff is also meeting with area municipal technical staff on an ongoing basis and will make presentations on request to local municipal Council meetings to present the growth management work.

For more information on this report, please contact Barbara Jeffrey, Manager of Land Use Planning and Environment at Ext. 1526, or John Waller, Director Long Range and Strategic Planning Branch at Ext. 1526.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.