

9

PLANNING FOR TOMORROW - PHASE 3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated July 16, 2008, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report and *Attachments* be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Committee and Council on the Planning for Tomorrow Growth Management Public Consultation and Engagement Phase 3 work scheduled for the fall of 2008. In addition, this report provides the draft public consultation brochure for Committee and Council information.

3. BACKGROUND

Public Engagement and Consultation planning well advanced

Regional Council at its meeting of May 15, 2008 endorsed Clause 7 of Report Number 6 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, which proposed the Public Consultation and Engagement Phase 3.

Since that time, Regional staff has finalized arrangements for the Phase 3 discussions. Section 4 of this report outlines the arrangements in greater detail.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTATION

A number of opportunities are available to the public, so they can review and comment on the preferred Growth Scenario and Policy directions.

Town Hall, Local Council or Committee's and Special Stakeholder meetings arranged

In accordance with the report endorsed by Committee and Council in April 2008, the dates of the Town Hall 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
Town of Richmond Hill, O.M.B. Room – September 24, 2008
Town of Newmarket, Council Chambers – 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. 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.

A special consultation meeting has been arranged with the York Chapter of BILD (Building Industry and Land Development Association) for October 17, 2008. Further stakeholder meetings will be arranged with targeted groups including the Human Services Sector, Environmental groups, the Region's Agricultural Liaison Group, potentially high school students through the York Region District School Board and York Catholic District School Board and others as requested. As well, Regional staff can be contacted to discuss the work with ratepayers or citizens groups as required.

Results of the Town Hall meetings and stakeholder discussions on the Preferred Scenario will be posted on the *Planning for Tomorrow* website soon after the meetings, and brought back to Council in the late fall of 2008 in a "What was Heard" document.

Invitations were also sent in mid-July to Mayors of local municipalities in York Region advising that Regional staff were available to present the Planning for Tomorrow Preferred Growth Scenario information to their Committees or Council. At the date of writing this report, all nine (9) municipalities have requested presentations. A copy of the letter to each Mayor was also sent to the Clerk of each local municipality.

Regional staff has met with local municipal staff and Commissioners on several occasions about the Planning for Tomorrow consultation, as well as other related planning issues.

A contact letter has been sent to First Nations communities to advise these communities of the Planning for Tomorrow initiatives and seek their input. The contact letter also extended an invitation to meet separately with interested First Nations. Meetings will be arranged with First Nations that indicate a desire to meet with Regional representatives.

Technical Advisory Committee

As part of the population and employment forecast work, Regional staff has met individually with each local municipality to review and refine the forecasts and traffic zone distribution.

In addition, Regional staff continues to meet with their counterparts in adjacent Regions and the Provincial Ministries in ongoing efforts to clarify the growth Plan and its requirements.

Website updates

As in previous phases of the consultation, reports and presentations relating to the growth management exercise, as well as feedback from Town Hall meetings, are posted on the Planning for Tomorrow portion of the Region's website.

The Planning for Tomorrow branding logo has been refreshed with direct access to this area from the Region's home page, where the Planning for Tomorrow banner appears prominently in the page centre. This revision, and the schedule of fall 2008 Town Hall meetings, has been operational since early August.

Visitors to the site are able to access all growth management reports and presentations to Committee and Council, Infrastructure Planning documentation, publications recently released by the Planning Department and the brochures from each of the three public engagements phases. The website also provides a forum for providing feedback to Regional staff through the "futureyork" e-mail. The email address is info@futureyork.ca

Newspaper notice of Town Hall meetings

In accordance with the suggestions of the Planning and Economic Development Committee in April 2008, notices for the upcoming Town Hall meetings were sent electronically to Regional Councillors and their assistants in mid-August with a forwarding request. Further notice of the meetings, in reader friendly wording, appeared in local newspapers the last week in August and early September.

Stakeholder contact list updated

The mailing and stakeholder list has been reviewed and updated. At present, there are approximately 1,800 stakeholders on this list. This list will be used to provide blast Emails of upcoming meetings on the availability of the Preferred Growth Scenario Brochure.

Brochure has been prepared outlining the preferred alternative and key messages

The Planning for Tomorrow 2008 brochure is appended to this report as *Attachment 1*. This document has been prepared to inform our stakeholders of the preferred scenario and its implications, as well as to support the on-going policy direction discussions. An electronic version of this brochure will be available on the website and will be mailed to those stakeholders requesting a hard copy. Additional copies will be sent to Libraries in the Region, Municipal Offices, if permitted, and will be available at the Town Hall meetings and other stakeholder meetings.

Communications Strategy

A Communications Strategy, appended as *Attachment 2*, has been prepared for the Phase 3 Public Engagement and will be used as a blueprint for communicating the key messages on the Preferred Growth Scenario. This strategy will be used to provide members of Regional Council with speaking notes and briefing notes for the Town Hall meetings.

PLANNING FOR TOMORROW BROCHURE KEY MESSAGES

The Planning for Tomorrow 2008 – brochure, as referenced in the previous section, has been appended as *Attachment 1* to this report. In addition to the preferred growth scenario, the brochure also outlines a number of broad policy directions. The Region's Sustainability Strategy, Regional Official Plan, as well as previous input collected from the public and stakeholders have identified these as key areas of interest. A goal of the Public Consultation Phase 3 will be to receive additional ideas regarding the following policy directions:

Protecting our environment

- Protect the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine
- Create a strong, linked Natural Heritage System
- Update agricultural land evaluation
- Update Greening Strategy
- Identify and protect significant woodlands
- Incorporate Greenbelt Plan and Lake Simcoe Protection Strategy into Regional Official Plan

Managing growth

- Proactively plan for 1.5 million residents by 2031
- Ensure minimum intensification of 40%

- New Communities in Whitebelt required
- Create new compact, complete green communities
- Institute careful phasing/sequencing

Diverse economy

- Proactively plan for 800,000 total jobs by 2031
- Continue to implement Economic Development & Tourism Strategies
- Create jobs to match new residents
- Identify additional Employment Lands beyond 2031

Intensification

- Identify areas for intensification for a minimum 40% of total growth (i.e. a minimum of 87,000 units)
- Focus intensification in Regional Centres and Corridors and on transit lines
- Ensure appropriate fit, scale and design
- Require the highest standard of green buildings

Human Services: Quality of Life

- Review of Region's Human Services Strategy
- Create more hospitals, schools and other services to support population growth
- Proactively plan for an aging population

Infrastructure

- Integrate land use planning with Master Plans for Transportation, Water/Wastewater and Pedestrian/Cycling
- Emphasize transit and reduce demand for travel
- Improve road network
- Ensure clean water and state of the art wastewater treatment
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle waste
- Promote energy efficient development
- Reduce water consumption

Quality of Place: New Communities

- Create well designed communities
- Create pedestrian focused environments
- Offer more choice of housing types and modes of transportation
- Provide closer live/work relationships
- Preserve heritage and promote culture

- Develop a new generation of sustainable community design

Fiscal Responsibility

- Municipalities cannot bear the cost of growth alone
- Provincial/Federal Investment is required
- Improve municipal fiscal capacity
- Complete a 25-year fiscal impact analysis of growth
- High quality services at the most reasonable cost

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 has been undertaken within the approved Planning Department budget allocations and staff complement for 2008.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipalities are being consulted as the Region proceeds with development of the preferred scenario. A number of local municipalities are undertaking their own growth management and official plan update work and consult with Regional staff on an on-going basis. Local municipalities have also been invited to request Regional staff to present the Planning for Tomorrow information to their Committees or Council. At the time of writing this report, all nine (9) municipalities have requested presentations.

7. CONCLUSION

An outline of the Phase 3 engagement and consultation was endorsed by Committee and Council in May 2008. The consultation will focus on the preferred minimum 40% growth scenario, as well as policy directions in eight key areas. This report provides more detail of the ongoing arrangements for this consultation, including the attached Planning for Tomorrow 2008 brochure to be used this fall.

Consultation will begin in September with five Town Hall meetings, local municipal Council/Committee presentations, and a wide variety of stakeholder presentations. Extensive consultation with local municipal staff has occurred and will continue. In addition, the Planning for Tomorrow initiative has been showcased on the Region's website and will act as a vital resource to the public consultation process. The website will serve as a hub for information on York Region's growth management initiative, as well as provide instructions for the various ways in which the public can get involved and provide feedback.

For more information on this report, please contact John Waller, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at (905) 830-4444, Ext.1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The two attachments referred to in this clause are included with this report.)