

## **OFFICIAL PLAN – PUBLIC MEETING**

Monday, September 15, 2008  
Burford Community Centre  
7:00 p.m.

- Present:** Mayor Eddy, Councillors Schmitt, Simons, Powell, Chambers, Hodge, Coleman and Gatward.
- Regrets:** Councillors Wheat, Haggart and Atfield.
- Others:** Chris Tyrell, John Kennedy, Steven Gammon and Nancy Reid, MMM Group.
- Staff:** Johnston, Moore and Carman

Mayor Eddy welcomed the members of the public to a public meeting on the Update of the Official Plan for the County of Brant.

David Johnston advised that due to the extent of the revisions required to the Official Plan as a result of the Provincial Policy Statement and Places to Grow legislation, a new Official Plan is being prepared, rather than an update. This will allow for a document that is easier to understand and that will conform to and be consistent with the policies contained in the Provincial Policy Statements and the Places to Grow Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Mr. Johnston advised that this meeting would provide an update on the status of the Official Plan, and that specific individual requests will be dealt with following this series of public meetings.

Chris Tyrell, MMM Group, made a presentation outlining the following topics related to the first Working Draft of the Official Plan Review:

1. **Status of the Official Plan Review**  
The first phase of the Review included the identification of issues and options for the Official Plan and public consultation. Council has adopted a Growth Strategy and Development Plan for the County, which has given direction to the consultants. As part of Phase 2 of the Review, the consultants have prepared a first working draft of the Official Plan, which is being released for public and agency consultation. Further consultation will take place with four public meetings, meetings with the Six Nations, and a meeting with the Citizen's Advisory Committee. Phase 3 of the Review includes a final working copy of the Official Plan, which will be considered at a formal public meeting before being adopted by Council.
2. **Overview of the Revised Plan**  
Mr. Tyrell reviewed the six sections of the Official Plan – Introduction; County Planning Strategy; Land Use Designations; Infrastructure, Services and Facilities; Implementation and Administration; and Glossary of Terms.
3. **Summary of Key Changes to the Official Plan**  
The number of changes required to implement new Provincial policy and other ongoing/ completed studies was highlighted, including the Provincial Policy Statement; the Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; Bill 51 – Amendment to the Planning Act; Brant County Master Transportation Plan; Population, Household and Employment Projections; Land Needs Assessment; Infill and Intensification Study; and Comprehensive Employment Lands Study. It was noted that the County's Official Plan must be consistent with and conform to these various policies, legislation and studies.

4. Summary of Key Policy Directions

The County has a surplus of designated land to accommodate the County's projected growth for approximately seventy years. The three main settlement areas in the County are Paris, St. George and Burford, and all three areas have been designated as "Greenfield" areas in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in order to accommodate growth to 2031, at a projected population target of 50,100 and an employment target of 25,000 jobs. Council has recommended that none of the urban settlement areas be expanded, as there is sufficient capacity to accommodate population and employment growth in the long-term. Council has also recommended in their Growth Strategy that growth should be directed to the designated urban areas that are on full services, which results in most of the growth for the County being accommodated in Paris and St. George.

Other key policy directions include the limitations of land division in agricultural lands for residential and other purposes and the establishment of new policies for new planning tools under the Planning Act, such as community improvement plans and the requirement for complete applications. Council must also develop policies to identify intensification, redevelopment and infilling targets, updated servicing policies and the development of a phasing strategy for Greenfield lands that have been designated for future growth.

5. Summary of Key Policy Directions

There are currently 23 land use designations in the Official Plan. These designations are being reduced to 15 designations in the new Official Plan in an effort to make the planning regime more contemporary, correspond to Provincial policy, clarify land uses and be more user-friendly.

6. Unresolved Issues

As this is the first draft of the Official Plan for consultation purposes, there are a number of unresolved issues that need to be addressed. The Provincial target of 40% of growth through intensification may be too aggressive for the County, as this target may impact the community character. It is possible to request an alternative target from the Province. The Provincial target of 50 persons and/or jobs per hectare may also be too aggressive for the County, and again an alternative density target may be sought from the Province.

Other unresolved issues include site specific policy areas and written submissions for site specific changes that will be reviewed individually against the new draft Official Plan.

7. Next Steps

Four public meetings (including this one) are scheduled to review and provide input to the Draft Official Plan. The Citizen's Advisory Committee, consisting of 10-12 people from the community, will be participating in more intensive workshops on the Official Plan when the policy is more refined. This Draft Plan will also be circulated to the Provincial Government and outside agencies, including the Conservation Authorities, for their review and input prior to a final document being prepared for Council's consideration. A statutory public meeting will be held, as required by the Planning Act, before the updated Official Plan can be adopted by Council. It was also noted that the County has requested dialogue with Six Nations several times throughout the process to date and the draft Plan will be circulated to them for their input. In response to a question, it was noted that the existing settlement area for Cainsville has been maintained.

### **Comments from the Public**

Willie Maertens – Mr. Maertens noted his agreement with intensification, but also his concern that the draft Official Plan does not provide for balanced growth. There is a need for an economic model that provides for more commercial and industrial growth and less residential development in order to address the County's infrastructure deficit. This also involves balanced growth in terms of assessment. It is also important to take into consideration the County infrastructure servicing resources, particularly water, that are required for development. Additional water capacity should be directed towards commercial and industrial development.

In response to a question, Mr. Johnston advised that copies of the first draft of the Official Plan would be available for review at each of the Customer Services offices and Library Branches by the end of this week. In addition, the document will be available on the County's website by the end of the week as well. It was also noted that balanced growth is an objective to strive towards. However, the Official Plan is based on a land budget for land use planning. The County currently has three people for each job, whereas the Provincial target is two people for each job. The County also has a policy that development must pay for itself so that these costs are not borne by the taxpayers of the County of Brant.

Jon Lechowicz – Mr. Lechowicz noted the loss of the tobacco industry to the Brant County area, and questioned whether "farming" was classified as a job. He suggested that the Provincial Government should not be dictating what the County does, and that the target of 50 people and/or jobs per hectare is too high. Mayor Eddy pointed out that the County has three representatives from the Burford area serving on the South Central Ontario Region Committee to obtain economic development funds for the area.

Mr. Lechowicz questioned if agricultural lands can be used for gravel pits, since the Ontario Municipal Board seems to favour aggregate production. The protection of farm markets is crucial to the protection of farm land. How will this planning process stop developments like the Brantford Mall project, where it is necessary to use a vehicle to travel between stores. Mr. Lechowicz questioned the definition of a "job" and where this job is located. He suggested that the County is being held back by Provincial regulations on population/employment targets on something that the County could do on our own to meet our own needs.

Ella Haley – Ms. Haley questioned how the Community Citizen Advisory Committee was chosen and how often they meet. Mr. Johnston responded that the representatives on the Committee were chosen from a wide range of socio-economic groups representing as broad a base across the County as possible. The consultant has met with the Committee to receive input on the Draft Official Plan. Mr. Johnston agreed to provide a list of the citizens involved in this Committee.

Ms. Haley noted her concern that Cainsville is considered a special study area. Residents in the area don't want more development as this is a good healthy agricultural area. Rather than permitting development, the residents are interested in expanding the greenbelt to include Cainsville. Mayor Eddy noted that preliminary information from the Province about expanding the Greenbelt is being considered by Council this evening, but that this is a completely separate process from the Official Plan review. In response to a question about Cainsville being a site specific policy area, Mr. Johnston pointed out that any area study for the Cainsville area must be within the designated settlement area.

Ms. Haley referred to a petition signed by approximately 50 people supporting public transportation, particularly between Brantford and Paris and Cambridge. The provision of public transit is one of the recommendations in the County's Draft Master Transportation Plan, and higher densities would support public transit for residents. In response, it was noted that there is a need to balance the densities proposed by the Province and lower densities that are more consistent with the current character of the municipality. While the promotion of walking, cycling, use of trails, etc. is desirable, given the rural nature of much of the County, the road network is critically important.

Ms. Haley questioned the land use designation in the Official Plan for employment lands, noting that this includes heavy industrial, light industrial and special industrial, regardless of location, parameters and siting requirements. Ms. Haley suggested that the definition of Provincial employment targets do not include farming. She questioned whether gravel extraction takes precedence over agriculture and suggested that this is a result of a Provincial Policy Statement to this effect. Mr. Tyrell responded that the resource development designation in the new Official Plan mirrors the extractive designation in the current Official Plan. The aggregate uses noted in the agriculture designation may refer to a wayside pit or quarry. An amendment to the Official Plan would be required to change an agricultural use to a resource development designation. The language in these sections will be reviewed to further clarify the uses.

In response to a question on the deadline for public input, it was noted that submissions can be made at any time, but comments should be submitted within the next month so that an updated draft can be prepared by the end of December, 2008. This updated draft will be circulated to the Province and outside agencies for input before a final draft is prepared for Council's consideration, it being noted that the new Official Plan must be submitted to the Province by June 2009.

Ted Shelegy – Mr. Shelegy questioned whether the Province had taken into account sustainability numbers when establishing targets under the Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, particularly whether there was enough local water resources to sustain the proposed development over a period of time.

Larry Clarkson – In response to a question on the timelines for approval of this Official Plan by the Province of Ontario, Mr. Johnston advised that the County has some options. The County can repeal the old Official Plan and use the new one without Provincial approval, or the County can review both Plans and apply the more stringent of the Plans to any planning application. It was noted that the Province will forward the County's plan to the Six Nations for review, and that Six Nations has in the past shared these documents with the Haudenosaunee.

Howard Snodgrass – In response to a question, it was noted that copies of the draft Official Plan would be available for review by the end of this week, and also will be available at the next public meeting. Any of the background studies utilized in preparation of the draft Official Plan are available for public review, it being noted that most studies are available on the County's website. The Industrial Development Strategy is in draft form at this time, but will be available for review as a draft document within the next two weeks. It was noted that this Strategy is not a formal County policy until it has received the approval of Council.

Richard Tunstall – In response to a question on whether there has been native consultation and the results of this consultation, Mr. Johnston advised that the County has attempted to provide for consultation with Six Nations on several occasions, but they have declined to date to meet. It was also noted that all anticipated growth to 2031 can be accommodated within the designated settlement areas, including Cainsville. Council is not recommending the expansion of any of the urban settlement areas. The County must decide their priorities and allocated growth for each of these urban areas. In response to a question regarding the County requiring conservation initiatives, it was noted that standards can be imposed by the County which would require these initiatives, but this has not been considered by Council at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

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Secretary