

COUNTY OF RENFREW

DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT REPORT

TO: Development and Property Committee
FROM: Craig Kelley, Director of Development and Property
DATE: November 10, 2020
SUBJECT: Department Report

INFORMATION

1. **Residential and Condo Sale Statistics**

Attached as Appendix I are the statistics for the residential and condo sales for all the municipalities within the County of Renfrew.

2. **Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Policy Update**

Attached as Appendix II is an AMO Policy Update advising that the Province of Ontario has announced an additional \$680 million to improve and expand broadband and cellular access across the province.

3. **Ontario Provincial 2020 Budget Announcement**

Attached as Appendix III is a summary from the Municipal Finance Officers' Association of Ontario on the Provincial Budget 2020 which was announced on November 5, 2020: "Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover." Of particular interest to the Development and Property Department are the following:

(a) Tourism, Hospitality, Arts

(i) Under Support

- Investing \$100 million over two years for the Community Building Fund to support community tourism, cultural and

sport organizations that are experiencing significant financial pressures due to the pandemic;

- Providing one-time emergency funding of \$25 million for Ontario's arts institutions to help cover operating losses incurred as a result of COVID-19;
- Providing \$60 million in one-time grants of up to \$1,000 for eligible main street small businesses — in retail, food and accommodations, and other service sectors with fewer than 10 employees, to help offset the unexpected costs of personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Helping small businesses create and enhance their online presence to reach more customers through the \$57 million Digital Main Street program.
- \$9 million through the new Reconnect Festival and Event Program to support municipalities and event organizers during COVID-19.

(ii) Under Recover:

- Committing to provide Ontario residents with support of up to 20 per cent for eligible Ontario tourism expenses to encourage them to safely discover Ontario in 2021, the year of the Ontario staycation;
- Connecting workers in the tourism and hospitality sector and others most affected by the pandemic to training and jobs with an investment of \$180.5 million over 3 years, including a skilled trades strategy, an additional \$100 million of dedicated investments through Employment Ontario for skills training, a redesigned Second Career program and \$59.5 million to acquire in-demand skills.

(b) Forestry

Under “technical amendments” the budget states, “amendments to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994 to enable forestry activities on Crown land to be conducted under the Act without requiring authorizations or being subject to orders under the Endangered

Species Act, 2007. This amendment would avoid duplications in approvals.”

[Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act](#) (Budget Measures) includes wording changes to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) that removes the duplication of protection of endangered species on Crown land. If passed, the Bill will enable forestry activities to continue on Crown land without going through an Endangered Species Act (ESA) permitting process after the exemption that has been in place since the inception of the Act, and extended multiple times, expires. This aligns with the input put forward by the County of Renfrew on Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Number 019-1020 (attached as Appendix IV), and is a positive outcome for the local forest sector.

Other budget measures that may benefit the local forestry sector include changes to industrial electricity pricing and a Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund.

RESOLUTIONS

4. Local Immigration Partnership Municipal Engagement Working Group

Recommendation: THAT the Development and Property Committee recommend that staff be directed to work with the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Municipal Engagement Working Group to determine if there is a future role for a member of Council.

Background

The Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Renfrew and Lanark serves a large rural region in northeastern Ontario and is funded by the federal government through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and represents a community-wide multi-sectorial partnership to create a welcoming environment for immigrant newcomers. Through research and planning that informs responsive and coordinated local action, the LIP encourages integration as a two-way process between community members and newcomers. Helping newcomers develop a sense of belonging while valuing their contributions benefits everyone by fostering a diverse, inclusive and vibrant rural region.

Funded by the federal government through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the LIP recently secured another five years of funding to support improved settlement outcomes for new Canadians living in or considering moving to the region. For the remaining 4.5 years of federal funding, the LIP is focussed on six pillars to create welcoming workplaces, schools and communities: municipal engagement, employer engagement, youth engagement, community relationships with Indigenous Peoples, anti-racism, and Francophone immigrant support. Each of these pillars requires a working group to steer the research and design the program responses.

The mandate of LIPs across the country is to conduct research, identify gaps in settlement support, develop and design a program response to solve gaps, and enable community partners to carry out program responses.

County of Renfrew councillor support and involvement in the Municipal Engagement Working Group would provide the LIP with:

- (i) A united regional voice representing civic leaders would leverage government funding and community resources by demonstrating that Renfrew County is in the business of welcoming new talent and new families to work and live in the region; and
- (ii) A rise to action required to create a welcoming regional environment for newcomers to Canada—in communities, workplaces and schools.

Both would give weight and direction to the LIP's secondary migration strategy: to support civic leaders and employers who are poised to revitalize our rural region and who are invested in developing community-driven solutions to workforce development by attracting new residents and becoming a more welcoming and productive community overall.

Ms. Chela Breckon will provide an update on the Renfrew County Local Immigration Partnership.

5. Economic Development Division

Attached as Appendix V is the Economic Development Division Report, prepared by Mr. Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development, providing an update on activities.

6. **Ottawa Valley Tourist Association**

Attached as Appendix VI is the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association Report, prepared by Mr. Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development, providing an update on activities.

7. **Enterprise Renfrew County**

Attached as Appendix VII is the Enterprise Renfrew County Report, prepared by Mr. Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development, providing an update on activities.

8. **Forestry and GIS Division**

Attached as Appendix VIII is the Forestry and GIS Division Report, prepared by Mr. Jason Davis, Manager of Forestry and GIS, providing an update on activities.

9. **Algonquin Trail Advisory Committee**

Attached as Appendix IX is the Algonquin Trail Advisory Committee Report, prepared by Mr. Jason Davis, Manager of Forestry and GIS, providing an update on activities.

10. **Real Property Assets Division**

Attached as Appendix X is the Real Property Assets Division Report, prepared by Mr. Kevin Valiquette, Manager of Real Property Assets, providing an update on activities.

11. **Planning Division**

Attached as Appendix XI is the Planning Division Report, prepared by Mr. Charles Cheesman, Manager of Planning Services, providing an update on activities.

ADDENDUM TO DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY REPORT

Prepared by: Craig Kelley, Director of Development and Property

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

RESOLUTIONS

1. Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) – COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream

Recommendation: THAT the Development and Property Committee recommend to County Council that the County of Renfrew apply to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) – COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream for renovation of the Council Chambers for required physical and technical infrastructure to ensure compliance with COVID-19 health advice that would allow County Council to continue to operate in Council Chambers.

Background

Attached as Appendix XII is correspondence that has been received from the Ministry of Infrastructure advising of the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream of the ICIP.

The County of Renfrew Municipal Allocation for projects is capped at \$255,699. Staff had begun conceptual conversations with the architects on suitable designs that would enable County Council to gather in chambers to conduct the business of the Corporation. We estimate those costs to be in the \$300,000 range. Staff is exploring efficiencies of scale by employing the resources of the contractor(s) who are currently on site completing the renovations required under the Service Delivery Improvement Project (SDIP). Under the posted regulations, activities that have been started or contemplated as part of SDIP are deemed ineligible. As the Council Chambers project has not finalized nor started in earnest, we feel the project is eligible under the terms that we are aware of in the Category 2 stream of the Fund.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION REPORT

Prepared by: Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Economic Impact of County of Renfrew Trails

A study of the economic impact of the County of Renfrew trails: K&P Recreational Trail and the Algonquin Trail section of the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail is now underway. Economic Development Services has engaged the Ontario Trails Council (OTC), developers of our Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail Management Plan, to undertake this study to enable us to fully understand the economic return our investment in trails brings to the residents, ratepayers and businesses in Renfrew County and the Ottawa Valley. The first phase of this study will be completed by December 31, 2020. In this COVID-19 crisis environment it is very evident that trails and all the outdoor recreation opportunities we have in Renfrew County are very valuable resources. Over the immediate and long term, this study will provide greater clarity on the return on investment created by investments in trails.

2. Second Survey of Effects of COVID-19 Crisis on Local Businesses

On November 2, 2020, Economic Development Services distributed version 2 of the Spring survey to measure the harm to local business caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The new survey will enable us to have an accurate current picture of the business harm caused by the crisis locally. It will also provide more information on the specific challenges businesses face as Phase 2 of the crisis spreads across the County, nationally and internationally. Businesses are also again being asked to provide ideas for what forms of assistance upper-tier governments can provide to help sustain their business, the employees and the owners through Phase 2.

3. **Socio/Economic/Environmental Impact of Chalk River Nuclear Laboratories Study Local Elected Leaders Focus Group Consultation**

All County Councillors will have received an invitation to participate in a focus group consultation to be conducted by MDB Insights, the consultants engaged to perform this study. We hope members of Council are able to participate in this important and very interesting assessment of Chalk River Laboratories operations on the socio/economic/environmental impacts on Renfrew County, Pontiac County, Ontario and Canada.

4. **New Social Media Economic Development Channels**

An updated OttawaValleyWood.com website and a new Virtual Taste of the Valley Directory and Map will be launched soon. This will coincide with a Christmas Shop the Valley campaign to encourage more local direct, local on-line and curbside pickup and delivery shopping versus travelling out of the County or shopping on-line from distant suppliers.

OTTAWA VALLEY TOURIST ASSOCIATION REPORT

Prepared by: Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Latest Resident Sentiment Data to Travel

The latest report on Canadian resident's sentiment towards "*feeling safe to travel*" and "*level of welcome towards visitors*" as of October 27, 2020 is included below.

Specifically in Ontario, resident sentiment towards "*feeling safe to travel*" dropped slightly in late September and early October as the number of COVID-19 cases began to increase but improved again towards the end of the month:

Category	Sept 15	Oct 27
Communities near me	74%	73%
Communities in my province	62%	60%
Other parts in Canada	40%	38%
United States	8%	10%
Internationally	9%	10%

Specifically in Ontario, resident's sentiment about the "*level of welcome towards visitors*" dropped in late September and early October but has begun to improve again. Notably, "*level of welcome towards visitors from communities near me*" has improved slightly over September 1 levels.

Categories	Sept 1	Oct 27
Communities near me	53%	55%
Communities in my province	47%	43%
Other parts in Canada	41%	35%

Categories	Sept 1	Oct 27
United States	8%	8%
Internationally	12%	8%

The “*receptivity of advertising*” is slightly more positive in Urban residents versus Rural residents but is still perceived negatively province-wide:

Net Level of Happiness	Rural	Urban
From other communities near me	-11	-1
From other parts of my province	-23	-10
From other parts of Canada	-31	-18
From the United States	-76	-58
From other countries	-71	-53

Source: Destination Canada, Canadian Resident Sentiment, October 20 and 27, 2020, which are attached as Appendices OVTA-I and OVTA-II.

2. **International Travel Trade Efforts**

Due to the on-going pandemic and continued closure of the Canadian border, our international travel trade efforts have been re-aligned to embrace new virtual marketing and sales efforts. These efforts allow us to maintain the traction we have gained in international markets over the past number of years, remain top of mind with our key international partners and identify new domestic opportunities.

Through our Ontario’s Highlands Travel Trade Partnership, the Ottawa Valley and its travel trade partners have been represented in webinars with Destination Canada’s Australia and Germany offices, as well as Bienvenue Québec’s virtual marketplace. The Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) also participated in the virtual Travel and Leisure show held in September, which included a trade and consumer component.

A focus on sales efforts to domestic agents and receptive tour operators has been prioritized until international travel resumes. As a result, Omega

Tours, a Canadian-based tour operator, recently picked up a number of our itineraries including the Canadian Canoe Route, Wonders of our Earth and [Sugar Maple Trail](#) for promotion to the domestic market.

3. **Marketing Focuses on Local and Nearby Markets**

As Phase 2 of the COVID-19 crisis expands, our tourism marketing will focus on local and nearby markets to respect government and local health unit guidance. Local tourism opportunities will be featured in the County Economic Development Christmas Shop the Valley campaign, encouraging residents to consider offering a Christmas gift of a local product, tour, experience, sports activity, excursion or adventure available over any of the four seasons from our many tourism operators.

ENTERPRISE RENFREW COUNTY REPORT

Prepared by: Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Starter Company Plus Final Intake 2020/2021

The final intake for Starter Company Plus has concluded with twenty-five potential clients considering the program initially and eighteen applicants moving forward to join Starter Company Plus for the four months of business training that began on November 9, 2020.

2. Webinar on Health and Safety and Employment Standards

Fourteen businesses registered to attend a Health and Safety and Employment Standards webinar offered by the Ministry of Labour that focused on Health and Safety issues related to COVID-19 as well as the recent changes to the Employment Standards. This was part of Enterprise Renfrew County's on-going series of workshops for businesses to help them stay abreast of regulatory changes and best business practices. Our next workshop will address Human Resources Challenges, Labour, Occupational Health and Safety and information about wage relief and incentives for employers. This webinar will be delivered in collaboration with the Small Business Advisory Centre in Smiths Falls on December 2, 2020.

FORESTRY AND GIS DIVISION REPORT

Prepared by: Jason Davis, Manager of Forestry and GIS

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Forestry Activities

- (a) Below is the Forestry Activity Tracker information for the month of October 2020:

Summary	County Forester Hours	County Forester %	Forestry and Trails Tech. Hours	Forestry and Trails Tech. %
Management of County Forests	127	95	51	43
Industry Support	0	0	0	0
Species at risk	0	0	0	0
Trails	0	0	68	57
GIS	N/A	0	0	0
Municipal Support	0	0	0	0
Education and Public	3	2	0	0
Learning/Conference/Workshop	1	1	0	0
Admin/Other	2	2	0	0
Total	133	100	119	100

- (b) The County Forester participated on a career panel at the online “Dream Big Renfrew County” career discovery expo for local young women grades 7-12 and their parents.
- (c) Tree marking and layout continued to ready tracts for 2021 harvest tender scheduled to close on December 3, 2020.
- (d) Staff attended a Certification Working Group meeting for updates and information on the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certificate under the Eastern Ontario Model Forest, which the Renfrew County

Forest is part of. The standards for certification have been in review and undergoing consultation for more than two years, with new standards expected before the end of the year.

- (e) Staff is gathering information about carbon offsets, and the potential for future income from the Renfrew County Forest in forest carbon projects. Some community forests in Ontario have recently signed up for forest carbon projects, and although very preliminary, staff hope to learn from their experience. Once more information is known, it will be shared with Committee to evaluate if this kind of project would be compatible with other objectives of the Renfrew County Forest, and the County of Renfrew as whole.

2. GIS

Attached as Appendix FORGIS-I is the GIS Activity information for the month of October 2020. GIS staff worked on a total of 80 GIS projects.

RESOLUTIONS

3. K&P Recreational Trail Logo

Recommendation: THAT the Development and Property Committee recommend to County Council that the K&P Recreational Trail logo be accepted for the County of Renfrew owned portion of the K&P Recreational Trail.

Background

Attached as Appendix FORGIS-II is the proposed logo that was approved by the K&P Management Advisory Committee on October 30, 2020. The draft design for the signs would be similar to the Algonquin Trail signs and will replace the current K&P Recreational Trail signs on an as needed basis.

ALGONQUIN TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Prepared by: Jason Davis, Manager of Forestry and GIS

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

An electronic meeting of the Algonquin Trail Advisory Committee was held on November 5, 2020.

INFORMATION

1. Request for Quotations

Request for Quotations were requested and received as follows:

- (a) **DP Trails-2020-02** – Supply and delivery of Quarry Limestone Crusher Dust to the Algonquin Trail from approximately 1.7 kilometres from Turcotte Road towards Main Street in Cobden, Township of Whitewater Region.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • G.P. Splinter Forest Products, Pembroke, Ontario | \$36,400.00 |
| • H&H Construction Inc., Petawawa, Ontario | \$57,809.89 |
| • McCrea Equipment Rentals, Pembroke, Ontario | \$63,200.00 |
- Amounts Exclude HST

The quotation has been awarded to G.P. Splinter Forest Products.

- (b) **DP Trails-2020-03** – Supply and delivery of Quarry Limestone Crusher Dust to the Algonquin Trail for approximately 1 kilometre between Lochiel Street and Renfrew Avenue East, Town of Renfrew.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • G.P. Splinter Forest Products, Pembroke, Ontario | \$12,982.50 |
| • McCrea Equipment Rentals, Pembroke, Ontario | \$21,250.50 |
| • H&H Construction Inc., Petawawa, Ontario | \$29,101.80 |
- Amounts Exclude HST

The quotation has been awarded to G.P. Splinter Forest Products.

(c) **DP Trails-2020-04** – Supply and delivery of Quarry Limestone Crusher Dust to the Algonquin Trail for approximately 750 metres from Paquette Road to the Petawawa River Bridge, Town of Petawawa.

- H&H Construction Inc., Petawawa, Ontario \$28,800.00
Amount Excludes HST

The quotation has been awarded to H&H Construction Inc.

(d) **DP Trails-2020-05** – Supply and build ‘Structure Approaches’ to the Algonquin Trail for approximately 450 metres south of Daniel Street, Town of Arnprior.

- G.P. Splinter Forest Products, Pembroke, Ontario \$22,300.00
- McCrea Equipment Rentals, Pembroke, Ontario \$56,031.00
Amounts Exclude HST

The quotation has been awarded to G.P. Splinter Forest Products.

In all the above quotations, the procurements have followed the processes set out in Corporate Policy GA-01 Procurement of Goods and Services.

2. **Timberline Snowmobile Club Grant Application**

The Timberline Snowmobile Club has advised County staff that they were unsuccessful in their grant application from the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) funding stream to improve a portion of the Algonquin Trail in the City of Pembroke and the Township of Laurentian Valley from Greenwood Road to the Canadian National (CN) spur line merge. The improvements to the Algonquin Trail would have included gates, grading and structure improvements.

On October 29, 2020 the County was informed that the Timberline Snowmobile Club could receive a portion of the grant money but requires additional funding of \$32,430.90 (before taxes) to complete the project and has requested the County of Renfrew supply these funds.

Staff reviewed the 2020 Algonquin Trail expenses to date and future expenses and determined that it would have been able to accommodate the request for the top-up of approximately \$32,000 from the 2020 budget.

These funds were to brush the Algonquin Trail from the Village of Chalk River to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Highway 17 crossing to the Garrison Lands, which can be accommodated in 2021.

On October 30, 2020, Snow Country Snowmobile Club informed County of Renfrew staff that the Board of Snow Country had determined the level of risk involved with completing a section of trail where snowmobile use had not been determined as an acceptable use was too high, and therefore were not moving ahead with the project and refused the OFSC funding.

Our Committee passed a resolution that redirects funds from the Garrison Petawawa/Chalk River section of the trail to the section of the Algonquin Trail within the City of Pembroke from an area near Mackay Street, east towards Rankin Street in order to move forward with opening this section of the trail for passive transportation. Work will include grading, packing and the application of stone dust on the Trail.

3. Purchase Update

The purchase of the fourth phase of the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail is proceeding. On October 22, 2020, Warden Debbie Robinson and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk Mr. Paul Moreau executed the following seven legal agreements, which are now in the possession of our legal firm, Borden Ladner Gervais to transfer another set of properties to the County of Renfrew.

- (a) Fourth Amendment to the Asset Donation Agreement;
- (b) Allocation of Transfer Value Agreement;
- (c) Acknowledgement & Direction authorizing the registration of the Renfrew Lands, as described on the “in preparation” transfer;
- (d) Direction re: Title;
- (e) Purchaser’s Bring Down Certificate;
- (f) Purchaser’s Release and Indemnity;
- (g) Purchaser’s Declaration and Indemnity re GST/HST;
- (h) Purchaser’s Undertaking to Readjust.

REAL PROPERTY ASSETS DIVISION REPORT

Prepared by: Kevin Valiquette, Manager of Real Property Assets

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Real Property – Projects Update

Attached as Appendix RP-I is a summary report of all projects currently underway that involve the Real Property Assets Division. Details on each project are included in the comments section.

2. Real Property – 2020 Capital and Capital Under Threshold Projects

Attached as Appendix RP-II is a summary report of capital and capital under threshold projects approved in the 2020 budget.

3. Service Delivery Improvement Project (SDIP)

- Phase 1 (Development and Property and Public Works) area 2nd floor is scheduled for turnover this month pending occupancy approval.
- Phase 1B (Court Room and waiting area) is scheduled for turnover December 15, 2020.
- Front reception area is scheduled for turnover December 1, 2020.
- The Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) has vacated the ground floor leased space effective October 31, 2020.
- Demolition of the RCDHU space which will house the new Social Services and Emergency Services Departments started November 2, 2020.
- Demolition of the west wing ground floor (Public Works) will be started in the next two weeks. This area will provide Boardrooms and Collaborative Space areas.
- Exterior work continues.
- Staff continues to work with the architect and contractor on designs for the Council Chambers and will present updated options at the time of the Committee meeting.

PLANNING DIVISION REPORT

Prepared by: Charles Cheesman, MCIP, RPP, Manager of Planning Services

Prepared for: Development and Property Committee

November 10, 2020

INFORMATION

1. Planning Division Activity Tracker

Attached as Appendix PLAN-I is the Activity Tracker for October 2020. In October, the Planning Division opened 7 new severance applications and prepared 15 planning checklists for general inquiries (pre-consultations).

For the period January – October 2020, the County of Renfrew opened 81 severance applications compared to 88 over the same period in 2019. With respect to decisions, 65 decisions were rendered from January – October 2020 compared to 124 rendered over the same period in 2019.

Planning staff received 28 General Inquiries in September and 29 in October, which works out to almost one every day over that period.

2. Services Provided by the County of Renfrew Planning Division

At the October session of the Development and Property Committee, Vice-Chair Hunt requested an outline of the planning services we provide. This information is provided below:

- Preparation, implementation, and maintenance (e.g., amendments and updates) to the County of Renfrew Official Plan
- Approval of local Official Plans and local Official Plan Amendments
- Approval of Plans of Subdivision/Condominium
- Approval of Part Lot Control Exemption By-laws
- Approval of Consent Applications
- Provision of professional advice and services to local municipalities (e.g. general planning advice; preparation of Official Plans, Comprehensive Zoning By-laws and amendments to these documents; site plan review; Local Planning Approval Tribunal representation)

- General Inquiries/Pre-Consultations to the general public and land development professionals such as lawyers, real estate agents, surveyors, land developers, planning consultants
- General planning advice and assistance to the public and land development professionals
- Planning advice to the Development and Property Committee and County Council (e.g., on updates to provincial legislation, including the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement)
- Mapping Support

Some of these services are paid directly to the County in the form of application fees (e.g., severances, plans of subdivision); some are charged to the municipalities who then recoup the costs from applicants (e.g., zoning by-law amendments and site plan reviews); some are charged directly to the municipality (e.g., Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Updates); and some are free services supported by the County levy (e.g., General Inquiries).

All our application fees, hourly rates and other fees are outlined in our Tariff of Fees By-law No. 8-19.

RESOLUTIONS

3. County of Renfrew Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 31

Recommendation: THAT the Development and Property Committee recommend that County Council receive the attached November 10, 2020 draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 31; AND FURTHER THAT the draft OPA 31 be circulated in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act to local municipalities, prescribed agencies, including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and that a designated period of time for comments be set out; AND FURTHER THAT upon completion of this circulation and subsequent review by this Committee and County Council, an electronic statutory public meeting be held on a future date yet to be determined.

Background

Attached as Appendix PLAN-II is a draft of the bold and strikethrough version of OPA 31. This document is based on discussions over the summer with the Ministers of Natural Resources and Forestry and Municipal Affairs

and Housing and their staff members, and with this Committee and County Council.

The purpose of OPA 31 is to make changes to the recently approved County of Renfrew Official Plan in a way that will address the unique geography and characteristics of the County of Renfrew and be consistent with the local context policy framework of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).

Also attached as Appendix PLAN-III is a chart outlining the changes proposed in OPA 31. No maps have been included in this package. The only change to the map schedules is that the sand and gravel constraint layer was removed from Schedule B Map 3 – Mineral Aggregate and Mining Resources. The additional lands designated Agriculture by Minister's modification were not removed from the Schedule A. It is the County planning staff position that these lands were assessed and deemed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) to be prime agricultural lands under the PPS. This assessment by OMAFRA included site inspections. It is our position that any removal of these lands would have to be based on a justification report prepared by a qualified person.

Also, the lands identified as Significant Wildlife Habitat (deer wintering yards) by Minister's modification in the final approved Plan in March 2020, were not removed from the Schedule B Map 4 – Natural Heritage Features. This is a PPS issue. However, there are certain triggers before requiring an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and also some flexibility in the EIS policies themselves, as indicated by item 8 on the attached chart.

OPA 31 would come into effect upon adoption by County Council (subject to any appeals), and would not require Ministerial approval. A PowerPoint presentation will be made by the Manager of Planning Services at Committee.

BY-LAWS

4. Request for Delegation of Authority for the Giving of Consents by the Township of Whitewater Region

Recommendation: THAT the Development and Property Committee recommend that pursuant to Section 54 of the Planning Act, County Council pass a By-law to

delegate the authority for the giving of consents to the Council of the Township of Whitewater Region.

Background

Attached as Appendix PLAN-IV is a letter from Mayor Michael Moore of the Township of Whitewater Region requesting that County Council pass a By-law under Section 54 of the Planning Act to delegate the authority for the giving of consents to the Township.

The reasons given by the Township for the request is that it would provide for greater local decision making, offer a “one window” approval process, and possibly decrease time frames and costs for proponents.

Section 54(1) of the Planning Act states that the Council of an upper-tier municipality may, by by-law, delegate to the council of a lower-tier municipality the authority for the giving of consents under Section 53 in respect of land situate in the lower-tier municipality.

Only three other municipalities in the County have delegated consent authority (the Township of McNab/Braeside and the Towns of Arnprior and Renfrew) and these were all granted well over 30 years ago; the delegation of consent authority is not a common practice in the County.

Two of the three municipalities, the Towns of Arnprior and Renfrew, have very few severance applications (about an average of 4 a year, compared to an average of 25 a year for Whitewater Region). In the case of the Township of McNab/Braeside, the County of Renfrew Planning Division prepares a planning report for the municipality for each consent application.

The Town of Deep River had consent giving authority until recently when it opted to return this function back to the County.

The Township of Whitewater Region has a Committee of Adjustment already in place that deals with minor variances. This same Committee would also take on consent giving authority if this function was delegated to the Township. The Township has on staff a Registered Professional Planner (Mr. Ivan Burton MCIP, RPP) to ensure that the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the County Official Plan, local zoning by-laws and good planning practices are followed in the performance of this

important role. As part of this delegation, the Township Planner would be responsible for all severance-related pre-consultations i.e., County Planning Division staff would no longer accept General Inquiries for severance proposals in the Township. However, we would still be responsible for approval of plans of subdivision and General Inquiries related to those types of development.

The Township would also take on all the administrative functions associated with consent giving authority e.g., intake of applications, public notices, agency circulation, inquiries from the public, lawyers, surveyors, and real estate agents, decisions, issuance of certificates, appeals, etc. We note from the Township's letter that Mr. Burton is an Accredited Committee Secretary-Treasurer (ACST) professional, a designation issued by the Ontario Association of Committees of Adjustment. Attached as Appendix PLAN-V is a draft consent delegation by-law that spells out the terms and conditions of the delegation.

(a) Financial Implications

Between 2015 and the middle of October of this year the County of Renfrew received 150 consent applications from the Township of Whitewater Region (out of a total of 819 applications). These applications generated \$134,200 in revenues to the County over that period. That represents about \$22,000 per year, or a little over 18% of annual revenues from all consent applications (\$727,400) over that period. As a percentage of all sources of revenue to the Planning Division, severance fees from the Township of Whitewater Region represent 11% of the total revenues (based on data from 2015 to 2018).

Therefore, delegating consent giving authority to the Township of Whitewater Region will have a financial implication to the County. The resulting revenue shortage would have to be made up from the County levy.

(b) Other Implications to Consider

In addition to the financial implications, there are other implications to consider in delegating consent authority to the Township,

including the precedent that this may set for other municipalities, and the potential for the further erosion of efficiencies in the delivery of this service at the upper-tier.

Because we are the consent granting authority for 14 of the 17 lower-tier municipalities in the County, we enjoy an economies of scale that enable us to devote the necessary staff people to the intake, processing, and planning review of each consent application. This level of staff input results in an efficient and effective administration of these files. Delegating a part of the County consent giving authority may affect these economies of scale and, further, may not comply with the provincial direction to improve and enhance service delivery.

Another factor to consider is the effect this might have on the consistent application of County of Renfrew Official Plan policies across the County.

However, another implication is that the delegation of consent granting authority to the Township of Whitewater Region would free up capacity within the existing County Planning Division staff complement to provide enhanced service to the other municipalities (e.g., by increasing the turn-around time on general inquiries/pre-consultations).