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## **Council-In-Committee Meeting – July 09, 2024**

Subject: Municipal Comprehensive Review/ PPS Conformity – Official Plan Amendment Phase 2 Update

Report Number: CD -24-086

Division: Community Development

Department: Planning

Ward: All Wards

Purpose: For Public Meeting

### **Recommendation(s):**

That staff Report CD-24-086, Phase 2 Official Plan Update – Municipal Comprehensive Review Work Program Update, be received for information.

### **Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update and timeline for the second phase of implementation of the Growth Management Study through the Municipal Comprehensive Review process.

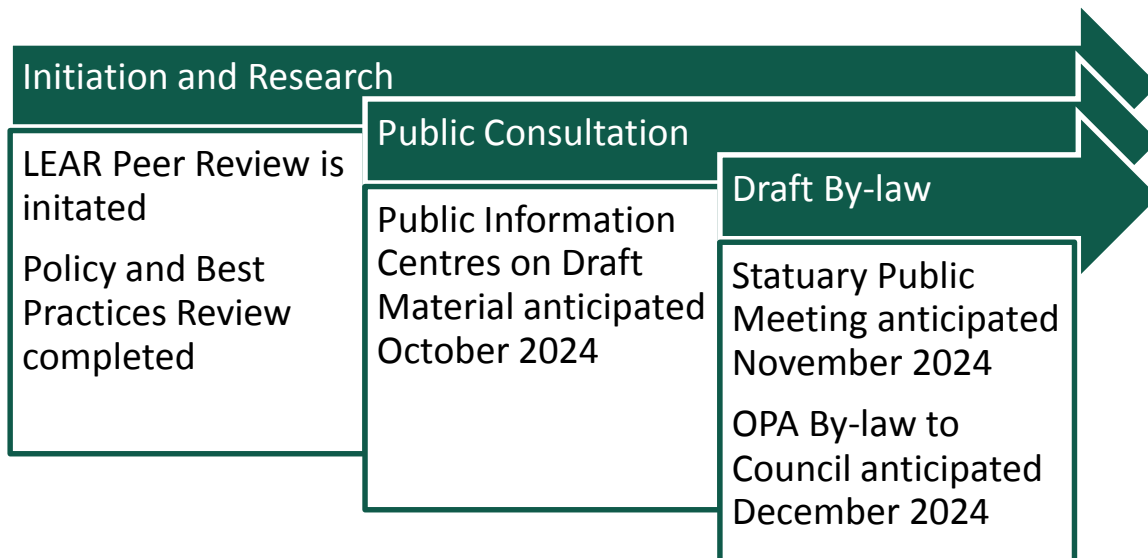
### **Discussion:**

#### **Background**

In June of 2021, the County initiated the Growth Management Study, GROW Norfolk. The by-law intended to implement the GROW Norfolk findings was broken into two parts: the first focused on including the growth information directly from the study and any required changes to the urban settlement boundaries. This was approved by Council in May 2024. The second phase of this process is now being initiated. It is intended to include:

- The completion of Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR), including a peer review of draft documents, with policy updates pertaining to a new land use designation, such as rural land uses;
- The review of hamlet settlement areas;
- The review of policies and land use designations pertaining to Natural Heritage features and Hazard Lands; as well as,
- Other Provincial Policy Statement conformity policy and/or schedule amendments.

The full scope of this work is further explored below.



## Phase 2 Scope of Work

As noted above, Phase 2 of the Municipal Comprehensive Review will involve the review of all the other policies of the Official Plan that are not addressed in Phase 1. As is the case with Phase 1, this review will also be in the context of the Planning Act and provincial policy requirements, including any updates to the Provincial Policy Statement.

### Changes Due to the Royal Assent of Bill 185

The province recently passed new policy changes via Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024. This included changes to appeal rights for third parties on Official Plan Amendments and Zoning By-law Amendments, the removal of the ability to require a pre-consultation meeting, and the reversal of the fee refund mechanism established through Bill 1099, More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022. A brief summary of the changes to planning policy enacted through Bill 185 is attached in Attachment A. Any changes required to the Official Plan due to the enactment of Bill 185 will be incorporated as part of this Phase 2 Municipal Comprehensive Review By-law process.

### Potential Changes Due to Proposed New Provincial Policy Statement

The current version of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, came into force and effect in 2020. In 2024, the Province has proposed a new version of the Provincial Policy Statement, which builds on a previously released draft published in 2023. The new PPS has yet to receive Royal Assent; however, if put into force and effect, it would include modifications that would impact the process of establishing new or allowing expansion in settlement areas. In effect, the draft policy removes the requirement of a municipal comprehensive review to expand any settlement area and proposes alternative conditions which must be met to consider an owner-initiated application for an

expansion. In the current context of Norfolk County, this would impact the applicable processes for hamlet settlement expansion initially anticipated to be a part of Phase 2 of the Municipal Comprehensive Review. Staff will monitor what comes of this draft PPS and will adjust the process identified as part of the Phase 2 work. Should the new PPS come into force and effect prior to this Phase 2 OPA being finalized for council decision, an assessment will be made as to what changes may be needed to the Official Plan can be incorporated at that time. Should there be several changes required to conform, this may necessitate another public meeting and may impact timelines for the project.

### Focus on Agricultural and Natural Heritage Systems

While this review will be comprehensive, particular attention will be placed on the agricultural and natural heritage systems. This will involve the mapping of prime agricultural lands and examining the potential for designating any rural areas in the countryside in which a broader range of uses may be permitted. Additionally, the Natural Heritage related designations and overlays will be reviewed in terms of best practices and a natural heritage systems approach.

### **Public Engagement and Consultations**

Like Phase One, this phase of the project is intended to be completed under Section 26 of the Planning Act. The Planning Act requires that the before revising the Official Plan, Council must consult with the approval authority regarding the revisions that may be needed and hold a special meeting, open to the public, to discuss the revisions that may be necessary.

A Special Council Meeting will be scheduled with advanced notice of said meeting being published in the local newspapers as required to meet statutory timelines. In addition to the statutory requirements, staff will be facilitating two separate Public Information Centres and feedback sessions to accommodate varying schedules in advance of the Special Council Meeting. Additionally, the EngageNorfolk platform will be utilized to facilitate online communication and feedback from the public throughout the process.

Consultation of County departments and local agencies will be an important part of the process. This will include but is not limited to Public Health, Forestry, Development Engineering, Building, the local Conservation Authorities, as well as numerous Provincial Ministries. County advisory committees including the Planning Advisory Committee and the Agricultural Advisory Committee will also be consulted throughout the work program: first during the initial stages of the work program and later when draft recommendations, policy directions and any identified options are ready for discussion. Consultations with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations communities will also take place.

### **Financial Services Comments:**

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations contained in this report.

### **Interdepartmental Implications:**

Future departmental review of the Phase 2 OPA would occur.

### **Consultation(s):**

Future consultation through Planning Advisory Committee, public, stakeholders, and public meetings to occur for Phase 2 OPA.

### **Strategic Plan Linkage:**

This report aligns with the 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priorities: Sustaining Norfolk - Creating a sustainable community and a positive legacy and Building Norfolk - Develop the infrastructure and supports needed to ensure complete communities.

Explanation: The work being completed as a part of Phase 2 of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and the associated conformity and implementing Official Plan Amendment align with pillars of the “Building Norfolk” and “Sustaining Norfolk” priorities including:

- Ensure responsible growth policies and strategies
- Protect and strengthen our agricultural and natural heritage.

The implementation of the associated Official Plan Amendment realizes policies which foster responsible growth intended to facilitate the development of complete communities, while also ensuring that agricultural lands and important components of Norfolk’s natural heritage are respected.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the Phase 2 MCR OPA general work plan is provided for information and public awareness of upcoming next steps. Members of the public will be provided with updates if on the project contact list, and regular updates will be posted on the project’s Engage Norfolk page. The outcome of this work is essential to conforming to Provincial legislation and supporting appropriate growth and development in Norfolk.

### **Attachments:**

Attachment A - Overview of Bill 185 Planning Related Changes

### **Approval:**

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