

City of North Bay
Report to Council

Report No.: CSBU 2017 - 20

Date: April 6, 2017

Originator: Beverley Hillier, Manager, Planning Services

Subject: North Bay Official Plan Review

Recommendation

1. That, in accordance with Section 26 of the Planning Act, a Special Committee Meeting of Council be held for the purpose of discussing a review and update of the North Bay Official Plan;
2. That Council initiate and endorse, in principle, the preliminary Work Plan for the North Bay Official Plan Review as shown in Appendix A to Report to Council CSBU 2017-20;
3. That a copy of the Report to Council CSBU 2017-20 be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for its information.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an introduction to the Official Plan Review process;
- Seek direction from Council to formally begin the Official Plan Review as presented in the preliminary work plan for the North Bay Official Plan Review.

Background

An Official Plan is a policy document that guides a municipality's land use objectives and goals to direct future growth and development. The policies within the Official Plan are intended to balance the inter-relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in planning to enhance the quality of life of North Bay's citizens. These policies are related to land uses, heritage, culture, the natural environment, transportation and infrastructure. The City's Official Plan is also used to guide the development of municipal services and programs.

On September 8, 2009 the City of North Bay's Official Plan was approved by Council. The Plan received final approval with modifications by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in January 2012. It is based on the findings of background studies and public consultation with the primary goal of maintaining and enhancing the quality of life of North Bay citizens. This Plan was created to form the policy framework to be used by Council and Staff to make well informed land use decisions in North Bay.

An Official Plan is given its authority through the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* establishes policies, regulations and procedures that must be included in a municipality's Official Plan. Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* requires that municipalities conduct a mandatory review of established Official Plans.

Prior to July 1, 2016, municipalities were required to undertake a review of their Official Plans every five years. The *Planning Act* now requires a review of new Official Plans after 10 years and then every five years thereafter.

Required Official Plan Review

Although the requirement to complete a formal Official Plan review has now been extended, the City of North Bay is required to ensure our planning documents conform to provincial plans and policy. In particular, the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011 (GPNO) came into effect after the Official Plan was adopted in 2009, meaning it has not yet been incorporated into the Official Plan. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs' deadline for municipalities, including the City of North Bay, to incorporate the GPNO was March 3, 2016. Planning Staff originally planned to incorporate this as part of the five year review.

As a formal five year review is no longer required, the City must now complete a provincial plan conformity exercise under a separate review. This review will include an update to incorporate the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario as well as additional changes made to provincial legislation in land use planning since 2009. These additional changes are described below.

Analysis

North Bay's Official Plan Review

Through the Review the Official Plan will be updated to reflect current provincial policy and include other general updates identified by Staff. In particular, the Official Plan Review will look at the following:

- Updating policy to conform to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (GPNO) 2011
- Updating policy to confirm to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2014
- Introducing Second Unit policy to conform to the Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act (SCTAHA) 2011
- Updating the City of North Bay's Parks Plan 2009
- Planning Act amendments through the Smart Growth for our Communities Act 2015
- Integrating Plans and Studies that have been completed for the municipality, where appropriate (eg. Age Friendly Community, Active Transportation)

In order to assist with the review a number of background studies will be required. This would include an update to the 2009 Population, Household and Employment Forecast. The current forecast is based on 2006 Census information. The proposed review would allow the forecast to be updated to include information from the 2011 and 2016 Census. This more accurate and up to date forecast will aid in preparing land use planning policies for the Official Plan Review.

Work Plan

Planning Staff have prepared a preliminary work plan for the Official Plan review to ensure the City is meeting its legislative requirements. The work plan is expected to be completed within approximately 2-3 years of the initiation of the formal process. The length of the process is subject to the completion of background studies, some of which are dependent on the full release of the 2016 Statistics Canada Census results in November 2017.

This preliminary work plan is to be endorsed by Council so that Staff can formally initiate the process. The complete preliminary work plan is attached as Appendix A.

The work plan to complete the necessary amendments will be undertaken in four (4) phases:

- Phase 1: Issue Identification and Direction
- Phase 2: Policy Development
- Phase 3: Official Plan Amendment Preparation
- Phase 4: Official Plan Amendment Finalization

It is anticipated that the work plan may be revised based on input received from the Special Meeting of Council, departments, agencies and stakeholder groups.

Assistance from Consultant(s)

The Official Plan Review will be led and managed by the Planning Department. Consultants may be required throughout the Official Plan Review process to provide technical support and expertise for the completion of reviews and studies that support policy development.

Public Consultation

Each phase of the Official Plan Review will include consultation with the public, agencies and stakeholders in accordance with the Planning Act, and as determined by Council. Open Houses and statutory public meetings under the Planning Act will be held at strategic points throughout the process.

Partnerships

Throughout the Official Plan Review process, Staff will be consulting and partnering with stakeholders, where appropriate, to ensure resulting policy is reflective of community needs. For example, DNSSAB and other community agencies would be consulted on policies related to secondary suites.

Next Steps

Special Meeting of Council

As noted above, the Planning Act requires that a Special Meeting of Council be held at the beginning of the process to discuss revisions that may be required in the Official Plan Review.

It is anticipated that the Special Meeting of Council will be scheduled for Spring 2017. As outlined in the Planning Act, the intent of the meeting is to hear submissions and views from the public in the consideration of topics to be included in the Official Plan Review.

In accordance with the Planning Act the Notice of the Meeting is required to be published in the newspaper at least once a week, in each of two separate weeks, at least thirty (30) days prior to the Special Meeting of Council. Notice of the Special Meeting of Council will also be provided to commenting agencies, stakeholders/community groups and any interested party as well as posted on the City's website.

Financial Implications

The majority of the tasks in the Official Plan Review process will be completed in house by City Staff. However, background studies required for certain policy development will need to be completed by outside parties as Staff do not have the necessary expertise, including the Population, Household and Employment Forecast Study Update.

The Official Plan review program has been included in the 2017 and 2018 Capital Budget. Engaging an consultant to complete required studies will proceed though the formal Request for Proposal process and presented to Council for approval at a subsequent date. Where possible, funding sources and partners will be identified and targeted if the submission of a funding application has the potential to reduce the costs associated for the City.

Options

Option 1:

1. That, in accordance with Section 26 of the Planning Act, a Special Committee Meeting of Council be held for the purpose of discussing a review and update of the North Bay Official Plan;
2. That Council initiate and endorse, in principle, the preliminary Work Plan for the North Bay Official Plan Review as shown in Appendix A to Report to Council CSBU 2017-20;
3. That a copy of the Report to Council CSBU 2017-20 be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for its information.

This is the recommended option. This option will allow Planning Staff to begin the Official Plan Review process. The Official Plan Review will allow the City to meet legislative requirements to ensure the Plan is in conformity with Provincial plans and policy.

Option 2:

1. That Council not support the Official Plan Review and process as outlined in Report to Council 2017-20.

This option is not recommended as the City has a legislative obligation to bring the Official Plan into conformity with Provincial Plans and legislation and it is appropriate to consider other land use planning updates as necessary through this process.

Recommendation

Option 1 is the recommended Option.

1. That, in accordance with Section 26 of the Planning Act, a Special Committee Meeting of Council be held for the purpose of discussing a review and update of the North Bay Official Plan;
 2. That Council initiate and endorse, in principle, the preliminary Work Plan for the North Bay Official Plan Review as shown in Appendix A to Report to Council CSBU 2017-20;
 3. That a copy of the Report to Council CSBU 2017-20 be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for its information.
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Respectfully submitted,

Beverley Hillier, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Planning Services

BH/KF/dlb

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attach(s) Appendix A

We concur with this report and recommendations.

John Severino, P. Eng., FEC, M.B.A.
Managing Director, Community Services

A. Keith Robicheau
Chief Administrative Officer

Personnel designated for continuance: Beverley Hillier, Manager of Planning Services
Kathleen Fralic, Development Planner

