



Staff Report

Planning & Development Services – Planning Division

Report To: COW-Operations, Planning and Development Services
Meeting Date: August 15, 2023
Report Number: PDS.23.078
Title: Official Plan Review Council Working Group – Terms of Reference
Prepared by: Adam Smith, Director of Planning & Development Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report PDS.23.078, entitled “Official Plan Review Council Working Group – Terms of Reference”;

AND THAT Council appoint the Mayor, (1) one member of Council and the Planning and Development Services Committee Chair to serve as the Official Plan Review Council Working Group for the duration of the project term;

AND THAT Council approve the Terms of Reference of the Official Plan Review Council Working Group.

B. Overview

This report is in response to the motion brought forward at the July 12th Council meeting in which Council directed staff to prepare a staff report for Council consideration including a draft Terms of Reference for an Official Plan Review Steering Committee or Working Group, which includes up to 3 Council Members.

C. Background

In 2021, staff received endorsement from Council on the Official Plan 5-Year Review (OPR) project framework including finalization of the RFP for securing consultant services to facilitate the project and approval of a Terms of Reference for the Project Steering Committee. The Steering Committee included two members of Council inclusive of a Chair to guide the project team that consisted of staff from the Town and County alongside the external consultants.

Upon the conclusion of Phase 1 of the project in 2022, the decision was made to eliminate the steering committee and rely on staff to work directly with the consultants on achieving the remaining project deliverables. Rather than marginalize the role of Council in the Official Plan Review, the intent was to expand involvement by committing to regular update reports to Committee of a Whole. From a governance perspective, this would allow for all members of

Council to participate in shaping the direction of the project. In 2023, there have been three staff reports on the subject and they have been effective in supporting Council involvement. For example, Staff Report PDS.23.018 presented to Committee of a Whole on February 21st, 2023 resulted in an expansion of the project scope to include a Housing Needs Assessment based on Council discussion at that meeting.

Staff understand there is Council appetite to pursue changes that may better support their engagement in the project and that a committee or working group inclusive of some members of Council is an appropriate way to proceed.

D. Analysis

As an attachment to this report, staff have drafted a Terms of Reference for a proposed Official Plan Review Council Working Group. Given the current state of the project, a working group model is deemed to be the best fit given the ease at which the model can be established and limited resources required to sustain it. Further, the membership of the Mayor, (1) one member of Council and Chair of Planning and Development Services is reflective of the strategic nature of the project and given the update will require approval by the County of Grey Council, important to have a Council representative that participates at the County level. Lastly, the mandate balances the need to ensure project deliverables can be achieved in a timely manner with needs heard by both members of the community and Council.

Staff have prepared the following rationale to each piece of the Mandate described in the Terms of Reference:

1. *Provide feedback to staff on project activities including but not limited to public engagement and policy development.*

Conducting a wide variety of engagement activities and proposing innovative policy solutions have been prominent themes from Council and the public throughout the term of the project. Ensuring that these pieces are the focus of conversation between staff and Working Group members supports this theme.

2. *Act as a conduit between staff, Council and the community in providing updates on project deliverables.*

The Working Group has the ability to regularly provide insights into how project activities are being received by a number of different stakeholders and potentially identify risks that may not be apparent to administration.

3. *Serve to be ambassadors for the Official Plan Update by promoting public input and constructive dialogue.*

Given the deeper engagement of the Working Group in the project, members of the Working Group will be positioned to have in-depth knowledge of project objectives

and desired outcomes. As a result, they could champion the project in the community and encourage input that aligns with the scope of the Official Plan.

4. *Work in an advisory capacity only with any request to modify project scope and/or approve expenditures subject to Council approval.*

In being consistent with the Council Staff Relationship Protocol Policy, specific direction on the project particularly elements that have budgetary or staff resourcing implications should be made by Council as a whole.

Based on the above principles, staff believe that the Working Group can be a value-add to the administrative team leading the Official Plan Review. The Group can also be a template for future reviews and other projects for Planning and Development Services including the next review of the Official Plan. Based on follow-up from previous discussions at Council regarding the timing for the next review, staff confirm that the initial timeframe of 2026 to embark on this project was a strategic priority of the previous term of Council. If adoption occurs in 2024, the statutory timeline for a subsequent review would be in 2029.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

F. Financial Impacts

There are no direct financial costs associated with the Working Group. However, as composed in the Terms of Reference would require staff resources from both Administration and Planning and Development Services.

G. In Consultation With

Shawn Everitt, CAO

Shawn Postma, Manager of Community Planning

H. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Adam Smith, directorplanningdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca

I. Attached

1. Official Plan Council Working Group Terms of Reference

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Smith
Director of Planning & Development Services

For more information, please contact:
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Official Plan Review Council Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. PURPOSE

The Town of The Blue Mountains (“Town”) Official Plan Review Council Working Group (“Working Group”) has been established to support staff in the delivery of an update to the Official Plan that is responsive to community needs.

2. MANDATE

The Mandate of the Official Plan Review Council Working Group is to:

1. Provide feedback to staff on project activities including but not limited to public engagement and policy development.
2. Act as a conduit between staff, Council and the community in providing updates on project deliverables.
3. Serve to be ambassadors for the Official Plan Update by promoting public input and constructive dialogue.
4. Work in an advisory capacity only with any request to modify project scope and/or approve expenditures subject to Council approval.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee will be comprised of the following:

- Mayor
- (1) Member of Council
- Chair of Planning and Development Services

4. MEETING DETAILS, AGENDA, MINUTES & PROCEDURE

1. The Committee will meet monthly;
2. The Chair will be identified at the first meeting of the Working Group;
3. Agendas shall be prepared by the Executive Assistant to Committees of Council in consultation with the Chair;
4. Staff from Planning and Development Services will provide advisory and technical support specific to the mandate of the Working Group.
5. The Executive Assistant to Committees of Council will be responsible for agenda production and distribution, providing procedural advice, documenting follow-up actions and recording the proceedings of the Working Group.