

Peel 2041, Regional Official Plan Review (Peel 2041) Work Program

Introduction

The Region of Peel Official Plan (ROP) was adopted by Council on July 11, 1996 and approved with modifications, by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 22, 1996.

The Peel Region Official Plan Review (PROPR) was the most recent update to the ROP and was initiated in February 2007 through a public meeting. Regional Council adopted seven Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPAs) supported by policy work in thirteen focus areas to conform to the Places to Grow Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), 2006; Greenbelt Plan, 2005; Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005 and recent *Planning Act* amendments.

Since the seventh and final ROPA from PROPR was completed in 2010, a number of Provincial plans, policies, and legislation have been introduced to which municipalities must conform. In particular, Amendment 2 to the Growth Plan extends the planning horizon from 2031 to 2041 to ensure municipalities appropriately plan for infrastructure. The following provides more detail on recent Provincial legislation, plans, and policies that will require the ROP to conform to:

- 1) Amendment 2 to the Growth Plan came into effect on June 17, 2013. The Minister of Infrastructure has established that official plans must be amended to conform to Amendment 2 by June 17, 2018. The Region will aim for conformity in 2014 given the pace of growth in Peel and the need to plan for appropriate infrastructure. The 2031 A forecasts (1.64 million population and 870,000 jobs) are to be implemented where amendments or requests for amendments commenced before June 17, 2013. The 2031 B forecasts include 1.77 million population and 880,000 jobs and will be used for Peel 2041 which represents more realistic long-term growth.
- 2) The Province began its five-year review of the PPS in 2010 and released a draft of the PPS in September 2012. The draft PPS builds upon the 2005 PPS, a few examples include: strengthening land use planning and healthy/active communities, considering potential impacts of climate change adaptation and mitigation, strengthening stormwater management requirements, clarifying that planning infrastructure can go beyond the 20 year time horizon, permitting additional uses on farms and providing flexibility for agricultural uses, and requiring identification of natural heritage systems. The final release of the PPS could alter the work of some of the focus areas in the work program.
- 3) The *Clean Water Act*, 2006 is the Province's source water protection legislation that responds to recommendations from the Part Two Report of the Walkerton Inquiry recommending that drinking water supplies be protected at source.

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- 4) The *Lake Simcoe Protection Act*, 2008 provides the legislative framework for protecting the Lake Simcoe watershed. The Act requires the ROP to be revised to conform to policies in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, June 2009.
- 5) The *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act*, 2011 amended various Acts, including the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* now requires municipalities to amend their official plans to include policies to permit second units.
- 6) The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, 2005 does not prescribe municipal official plans to be amended to specifically reflect regulations issued under AODA but the *Planning Act* lists accessibility as a matter of provincial interest.

The Region of Peel held a public meeting involving Regional Council on May 23, 2012 and held three open houses on May 1, 2013 in Mississauga and May 8, 2013 in Caledon and Brampton. Comments received have confirmed the requirements to conform to the recent Provincial updates to plans, policies, and legislation as noted above. And is consistent with Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act*, which requires the council of the municipality that adopted the official plan shall, not less frequently than every five years after the plan comes into effect as an official plan or after that part of a plan comes into effect as part of an official plan,

- a) revise the official plan as required to ensure it,
 - (i) conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them, as the case may be,
 - (ii) has regard to the matters of provincial interest listed in section 2, and
 - (iii) is consistent with policy statements issued under subsection 3(1)

Peel 2041, Regional Official Plan Review (Peel 2041) Approach

Peel 2041 is guided by the Planning Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and consists of senior-level Region and area municipal planning staff. The Region of Peel Growth Management Committee (GMC) will also provide policy guidance and recommendations to Regional Council. Staff is aiming for two ROPAs for Council adoption, although this may change depending on progress of research, policy development, and consultation.

The City of Brampton is currently undertaking a review of its official plan. The Region and area municipalities will coordinate their work through the Planning TAC. The relationship between the Region and area municipalities is guided by the five principles in section 1.3.2 of the ROP:

- a) The Plan must be strategic in nature, setting broad, high-level, long-term policy directions for Peel and incorporating the strategic objectives of the area municipalities;
- b) The Plan should aim to disentangle area municipal, regional and provincial activities in planning, eliminate duplication and not complicate area municipal planning efforts. To accomplish this, the Plan must remain focused on the responsibilities mandated in the Regional Municipality of Peel Act;

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- c) The Plan must add value to the planning and development process in Peel. The Plan must not duplicate or infringe on area municipal planning efforts and must have a distinct, complementary and productive role;
- d) The Plan should not act as a vehicle for Regional involvement in matters that are established as area municipal planning and servicing responsibilities; and
- e) The Plan must be prepared with a view to having the Province delegate authority to the Regional, area municipal and/or conservation authority level.

Work Program – Focus Area Descriptions

The following work program provides further details for each of the Peel 2041 focus areas. The work program may need to be refined to address further issues during the Peel 2041 process. The current draft PPS was used to define the work program but the final release of the PPS may refine the work program. The focus areas of Peel 2041 are: Growth Management; Climate Change; Health and Planning; Aging; Housing; Transportation; Water Resources; Agriculture; and Greenlands System Planning. Two ROPAs are planned for Peel 2041 but may change if there are revised timelines to respond to circumstances such as extra consultation or further required research.

Through the course of preparing the work program Accessibility was identified as a possible focus area. The ROP's accessibility policies are covered under the housing, transportation system, parkland, open space and trails and human services sections. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) became law on June 13, 2005, and while there is no requirement prescribing municipal official plans to be amended to specifically reflect regulations issued under AODA, the *Planning Act* lists accessibility as a matter of provincial interest. The accessibility policies will be reviewed, updated and/or clarified. Staff from each focus area will be responsible for reviewing and updating accessibility policies.

The focus areas will be coordinated to ensure efficiencies, complementary policies and staff will work together to address commonalities. For example population and employment allocations in the growth management focus area will be an input to the road network modelling component of the transportation focus area. And transportation is one of several considerations when determining how to allocate growth.

Some focus areas may require more research and policy work while other focus areas may involve minor policy work. Staff will work together to ensure these are accounted for during the Peel 2041 process. The following are the general responsibilities that may apply to the focus areas:

- Consult with Peel's area municipalities on an ongoing basis
- Identify requirements for provincial conformity
- Develop and implement a strategy, as required, to engage in required research

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- Debate issues, while focusing on consensus building for positive change.
- Address desired outcomes and products.
- Prepare and review any Terms of Reference for required studies.
- Participate on consultant selection, as required.
- Develop discussion papers and related background studies and use these to consult with area municipal partners, and then with the public and stakeholders.
- Review and comments on required studies.
- Ensure that appropriate connections between focus areas are identified and acted upon.
- Report on progress.
- Review and prepare any required reports to Council.
- Guide the preparation for any required ROPAs.
- Consult with the public and stakeholders on any important issues or decisions.
- Respond to and appropriately address concerns raised through the communication, consultation and engagement focus area.

Engaging with stakeholders is an essential component of Peel 2041. Stimulating discussions, consulting on discussion papers and interacting with stakeholders all form key components of this focus area. The feedback received through this work is used to inform policy decisions throughout Peel 2041. In addition, the consultation performed through this focus area meets the requirements for consultation as stated in the *Planning Act*. The main deliverable is to create and implement a Communication, Consultation and Engagement (CCES) Strategy.

The CCES Strategy outlines two streams of communication, consultation and engagement. The first stream is general communication and engagement for Peel 2041. Information is distributed through the Peel 2041 web pages, notifications are sent out to stakeholders on consultations, meetings and proposed amendments, and stakeholders are encouraged to participate throughout the process. The second stream is consultation and engagement for each of the focus areas and their discussion or background papers. This will be done through a combination of workshops, targeted stakeholder meetings, open houses and public meetings. Consultations with area municipal staff are completed first, followed by consultations with stakeholders and the public. Input received from these consultations will be used as input to policy decisions made through Peel 2041.

The following are descriptions of work to be undertaken within each Peel 2041 focus area.

a) Growth Management:

Growth Management is a key component of Peel 2041 and will address faster population growth than originally forecasted to 2031 as well as extending the planning horizon for both population and employment forecasts to 2041. The new Regional forecasts, as established by Amendment 2 of the Growth Plan, will be allocated to the area municipalities and specific growth management policy areas.

The allocation of growth will be guided by considerations that address the following aspects of growth: planning, finances, servicing, housing, employment, environment and resources. These considerations were established based on internal staff consultations,

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Regional Council input, background research (e.g. recent demographic trends, water and wastewater studies) and stakeholders' input.

The foundation for the allocation of growth forecasts to the area municipalities and Growth Plan policy areas is the Regional Land Budget. It will be an updated version of the land budget developed during the ROPA 24 process. It reflects a new 2011 base year and will include two planning horizons – 2031 and 2041. The 2031 planning horizon addresses updated growth targets while the 2041 horizon is a new planning horizon introduced by Amendment 2 of the Growth Plan. The Regional Land Budget will provide quantitative validation of growth distribution to area municipal and growth management policy levels. The area municipalities will provide significant input into this allocation, particularly when it comes to assessing growth in specific areas of each municipality.

The Growth Management component of Peel 2041 will culminate in a proposed amendment that will address the growth forecasts as well as growth management policies. However, staff does not expect significant changes to the policies since the current ROPA 24 policies were settled at the Ontario Municipal Board in 2012 and have just started being implemented. A more comprehensive review of the growth management policies will be undertaken after a 10-year review of the Growth Plan which is expected to occur in 2016. The current amendment will not include any settlement boundary expansions. If settlement expansions are required as a result of the new 2031 growth targets, such expansions will be processed through separate amendments.

b) Climate Change:

With the adoption of the Climate Change Strategy in June 2011, Regional Council signalled its support for moving forward to prepare for the impacts of climate change, by better understanding how the Region and its partners would need to adapt to the changing climate, and by identifying actions to reduce our impact on the environment. The strategy also identified a number of research projects and policy directions, one of which is to update the Regional Plan in the following areas:

- Address the impacts of climate change when planning for regional infrastructure and services
- Address the impacts of climate change when planning for existing and future communities
- Recognize the importance of urban forest management as a means of adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change.
- Commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by incorporating a greenhouse gas emissions target in the ROP.

In addition, the draft PPS identified climate change as a matter of provincial interest and municipalities are directed to address climate change in their policy documents.

c) Health and the Built Environment:

In 2005, the State of the Region's Health Report titled "Focus on Overweight, Obesity and Related Health Consequences in Adults" highlighted that sprawling, auto-oriented

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development patterns contribute to the high prevalence of obesity and low rates of physical activity in Peel. Subsequently, the following milestones were achieved to foster more health promoting community designs in Peel:

- Healthy Development Index (HDI) was developed in 2009 as a framework to provide consistent, quantifiable standards to inform planning decisions.
- This led to enabling and supporting policies on public health issues to be developed for ROPA 24.
- Building on the HDI and Official Plan policies, the Health Background Study (HBS) framework was created in 2011 in order to better integrate the considerations of health impacts into the existing land use development approvals process.
- Area municipal Councils passed resolutions supporting the implementation of the HDI/ HBS framework by directing area municipal staff to consult with Peel Public Health on future planning studies and plans.
- Regional Council passed resolution 2012-1292 stating that "...the Region of Peel advocate for local, provincial and federal policy changes that create supportive environments for healthy living"; building on the 2011-2014 Term of Council Priority.

However, through early implementation of the HDI/HBS, it was noted that the tools can only be applied within the parameters of guidelines as it is not a requirement under the current ROP.

Therefore the Region's work on the potential public health impacts of proposed plans and development needs to be included in the ROP. This includes amendments to the ROP to strengthen the use of the HDI/HBS beyond use as primarily reference tools. This entails creating policy language that more purposefully supports local area municipalities to consistently implement the tools that promote health outcomes as well as municipal goals related to sustainability and the development of complete compact communities. A technical report will form the foundation of the policy analysis as well the experience from municipal staff who are using the reference tools will inform the direction of the amended policy.

d) Age-friendly Planning:

Planning for an aging population was added as a focus area of Peel 2041 as a result of input in the initial consultation phase. Over the next twenty to thirty years, a significantly larger proportion of Canada's population will be in older age groups and Peel's population will closely follow this trend. The percent of Peel's population 65 years and older will increase from 10.5% in 2011 to 21% in 2031. The impacts of an aging population has garnered attention by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Health Agency of Canada and by Regional Council through the Term of Council Priority 11 (ToCP 11).

ToCP 11 is designed to assess the impacts of an aging population on the delivery of Regional health and human services. By extending the work being done through ToCP 11 into the ROP, there is an opportunity to strengthen existing indirect aging policies currently dispersed throughout the ROP. Current indirect aging policies touch on a number of different areas within the ROP including:

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- Aging in Place;
- Housing Options and Affordability;
- Accessibility Housing and Transportation;
- Creating Complete Communities; and
- Human and Health Services

By examining research completed by WHO, the federal and provincial governments, and by looking at case studies, the Region can strengthen the ROP's policies on aging and become a leader in planning for an aging population.

e) Housing:

Amendments to the *Planning Act* resulting from the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act*, 2011 (Bill 140), require municipal official plan policies to permit the creation of second units in single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, and rowhouse dwellings, as well as in ancillary structures. It is expected that the work plan for Peel 2041 will be focused to address specific policy gaps related to second units.

Currently the ROP includes policies that encourage and support the area municipal official plans to permit second units in new and existing residential development. Therefore these policies will be updated to reflect the recent changes to the *Planning Act*.

Staff will consider the directions in the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan (PHHP) and assess the need for new or updated housing policies as required.

In response to Regional Council Resolution 2013-397 on May 9th 2013, where Council requested a breakdown of the effect on Regional services resulting from second units on a per capita basis, Regional staff has undertaken research on secondary suites as an implementation action of the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan. This research will be beneficial to the Region and the area municipalities, and staff will report back to Council as information is available.

f) Transportation:

The transportation component of Peel 2041 will result in two major deliverables: an update of the Long Range Transportation Plan, and an updated set of transportation policies and schedules/figures.

The update of the Long Range Transportation Plan will recommend the transportation network required to support population and employment growth to 2041. Transportation staff will provide input on the transportation implications in the development of 2041 growth scenarios and will then feed the final product (growth projections) into the Regional Travel Demand Forecasting Model to determine Regional Road improvements required to meet future needs.

The policies and schedules component will involve a comprehensive review of the existing Transportation section of the ROP to ensure the changing needs and priorities for Transportation Planning in Peel are met.

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Recently completed Regional studies that may result in policy modifications include the Regional Road Characterization Study, Strategic Goods Movement Network Study, Freight TDM Study, Active Transportation Study, and others.

Provincial documents to be consulted during this review include the Ontario Cycling Strategy and Freight Supportive Guidelines. Additionally, conformity with the revised PPS, will be required.

g) Water Resources:

The ROP policies related to water resources will be reviewed and updated, to conform to provincial legislation, plans and policies. Consideration will also be given to updated data and studies; as presented in conservation authority watershed plans and best practices from other jurisdictions.

The review will serve to incorporate the policies of the draft PPS which clarifies how water quality and quantity will be protected, improved, or restored. Staff is also proposing to incorporate the applicable policies contained in plans prepared under the *Clean Water Act*, the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* and the watershed plans for the Oak Ridges Moraine. Further, Regional water resources policies will be reviewed to seek opportunities to update and strengthen policy direction for stormwater management and acknowledge the approved Ontario Great Lakes Strategy and *Great Lakes Protection Act*, if needed.

h) Agriculture:

The Region of Peel recognizes and values the contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy and cultural heritage of the Region. This review of the ROP agricultural policies is to ensure conformity with the direction provided for the protection of agricultural lands in the PPS. A Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) is being undertaken jointly with the Town of Caledon to ensure that Schedule B in the ROP is consistent with this Provincial guidance for the identification of prime agricultural areas. The LEAR may recommend mapping updates to the Prime Agricultural Areas within the ROP.

The protection of the Region's agricultural resource areas and the viability of the sector, ensures local food production and a healthy rural economy. In order to support the agricultural sector in adjusting and adapting to market demand and opportunities, the review will identify if there are policy revisions needed to support new agriculture and agri-food opportunities in the Region.

i) Greenlands System Planning:

The ROP currently contains policies to develop a Regional Greenlands Strategy outlining tools, actions and resources to address natural heritage systems planning needs and to identify a regional natural heritage system. The updated PPS is expected to more formally direct municipalities to identify natural heritage systems in their planning documents.

The Greenlands System policy review will update the natural heritage system policies in the ROP to provide up to date planning guidance at the regional level. This updated

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policy guidance will be developed to align and support current and future natural heritage system initiatives at the local levels.

Regional staff is also aware of the direction at the area municipal level to review the feasibility of adding Urban River Valley (URV) designations in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan. Peel 2041 is an opportunity to monitor and address the area municipal Greenbelt URV reviews subject to Area Municipal and Regional Council direction.

Conclusion

Recent Provincial updates to plans, policies, and legislation including Amendment 2 to the Growth Plan, the draft PPS, the *Clean Water Act*, 2006, the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act*, 2008, and the *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act*, 2011 requires the ROP to conform. Peel 2041 will include input from area municipal initiatives and extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public. Peel 2041 will build on the ROP as a strategic policy framework that guides growth and development while protecting the environment and manages the Region's resources.

