

## **Staff Report 2021-0430**

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Meeting Date: November 30, 2021

Subject: Region of Peel 2051 Official Plan Comments

Submitted By: Bailey Loverock, Senior Policy Planner, Strategic Policy Planning, Planning Department

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the overview of comments regarding Region of Peel 2051 Official Plan Review, outlined in Staff Report 2021-0430 serve as the Town's comments and therefore be approved;

That staff be directed to prepare a concept plan illustrating the Town's preferred SABE map representing the comments contained in Staff Report 2021-0430, and that the map be brought forward to the Planning and Development Committee for consideration on December 6, 2021; and

That a copy of Staff Report 2021-0430 be provided to the Region of Peel, the City of Brampton and the City of Mississauga.

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Region of Peel's Municipal Comprehensive Review has been underway since 2013 and is scheduled to be complete by 2022.
- A draft Regional Official Plan has been prepared and comments from staff have been compiled.
- 4,400 hectares of Community and Employment Lands have been identified for Settlement Area Boundary Expansion; there are concerns with some of these locations and uses.
- The draft Regional Official Plan can be reviewed at <https://www.peelregion.ca/officialplan/review/draft-policies/>.
- Staff have provided comments on the draft Regional Official Plan as it relates to clarity and appropriate wording, what is a Town or Regional responsibility, appropriate phasing and development process for SABE areas, employment policies that align with the Economic Development Strategy, and effective housing policies.

### **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this report is to receive Council endorsement on Town of Caledon comments on the Region of Peel 2051 Official Plan Review.

#### **Background**

The Region of Peel's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and Official Plan Review commenced on May 23, 2013 with a targeted Official Plan adoption in 2022. The Town has been an active participant and stakeholder throughout the process and have provided and continue to provide input and formal comments to the Region.



In September 2020, staff provided comments to Council on the Region's technical studies that were being undertaken at the time through Staff Report 2020-0312. These comments were provided to the Region, and staff have continued to work with the Region as these studies were completed. In July 2021, Caledon staff provided comments to Regional staff on a preliminary draft of the Official Plan. Since that time, further public consultation and updates to studies have been completed by the Region. Staff have also been participating in meetings with Regional staff to review previous comments and work towards resolution on some issues.

A draft Official Plan has been prepared by the Region, which is informed by the findings of these technical studies, along with Provincial direction and some input from the local municipalities and stakeholders. Updated Official Plan schedules and figures have also been prepared. The Region has circulated this draft for formal review and comment, with comments being due on November 30, 2021. The comments contained in this Report and attached as Schedule 'A' have been provided to Regional staff on a preliminary basis, noting they are subject to Council endorsement and ratification.

The draft document has been reviewed by Town staff in several departments and comments are contained in Schedule A, attached to this report. The comments being provided are focused around some of the following areas:

- Clarity and appropriate wording
- What is a Town or Regional responsibility
- Appropriate phasing and development process for SABE areas
- Employment policies that align with the Economic Development Strategy
- Effective housing policies

The current draft Regional Official Plan is not reflective of the aggregate policy review study that is ongoing. The study, being a joint study between the Town and the Region, is expected to be completed in 2022. Any proposed policy amendments resulting from that study may form part of future Regional or Town Official Plan Amendments.

### **High Level Staff Comments**

#### **Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE)**

At the initiation of the Region of Peel Official Plan Review process, the Region identified a Focus Study Area along the southern limit of the Town of Caledon. The purpose of this Study Area was to establish limits where a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) may occur.

A Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) has been identified in Caledon within the Focus Study Area. Through the Regional work, it has been identified that a total of 4,400 hectares of land is required for the expansion, with 3,000 hectares identified for Community Lands (i.e. residential, parks, commercial, etc.) and 1,400 hectares identified for Employment Lands (i.e. industrial). Once the SABE is approved at the Regional level, these areas will become Designated Greenfield Areas within Caledon's Official Plan. Designated Greenfield Areas are lands within settlement areas (not including rural settlements) but outside of delineated built-up areas that have been designated in an

official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan.

Through the Region's technical work, there were a number of SABE scenarios prepared. Staff has communicated that the Region's preferred SABE scenario (which has been included in the draft Official Plan) would benefit from further review. Staff are of the opinion that the distribution of Community and Employment lands throughout the Focus Study Area could be improved and will continue to have these discussions with Regional staff. Some concerns with the Region's plan include the treatment of the GTA West corridor, transition between sensitive land uses, and community lands shown within the Provincially Significant Employment Zone. At the direction of Committee, to support our submission to the Region of Peel, staff could prepare a concept plan to illustrate the comments included in this report.

### Phasing and Staging

Proposed policies would require Designated Greenfield Areas in Caledon to have growth management and phasing strategies in place. These growth management and phasing strategies are to address issues such as:

- the improvement of live-work relationships
- unit mix and housing targets
- a range of employment types
- the timing and efficient provision and financing of necessary Region and local municipal services
- fiscal impacts to the Region and local municipalities
- staged build-out and logical extensions to development
- priority areas for development
- prolonging agricultural uses
- the sustainable rate of employment growth related to population growth

Phasing plans should allow Caledon to effectively manage and stage 30 years of growth in a responsible and effective manner.

The plan also contains policies that would direct local municipalities to undertake community or neighbourhood block plans to implement the policies of any new Secondary Plans. The purpose of these plans is to:

- co-ordinate the overall delivery of services and infrastructure
- staging and sequencing
- financial and servicing agreements
- provision of transit corridors and stations
- infrastructure and allocation of development priority
- layout of the transportation system
- the location, configuration character, size and urban form of parks
- institutional, commercial and industrial sites
- layout/function of open space corridors, valley lands, woodlands and other natural features, linkages and enhancement areas, including storm water management

While block plans can be a useful planning tool, staff are of the opinion that the Town does not agree with the prescribed use of this tool as it is not a statutory requirement. Staff believe the policies should allow for flexibility, as there may be instances where block planning is necessary, but in some cases the secondary planning process will be sufficient. Staff have recommended that flexibility be built into this policy, and that more details regarding when block plans should be required be provided in the Caledon OP.

### **Employment Lands**

A Future Strategic Employment Area has been identified around Sandhill for the purpose of conceptually identifying and protecting employment areas adjacent to or in the vicinity of future goods movement transportation and transit infrastructure for employment uses beyond 2051. The Regional Official Plan proposes permitting a settlement expansion of Sandhill for dry industrial uses if an assessment undertaken by Caledon, in consultation with the Region, indicates that strategic locations within the settlement do not require an extension of municipal services. The assessment will need to address the requirements of Section 5.5.9 of the draft Regional Official Plan (expansions less than 40 hectare policy) excluding those requirements related to servicing, and other technical matters as may be determined by the Region and the Town including a demonstration of the need for additional land to be designated and the assessment of environmental, transportation, financial and agricultural impacts. Town staff are supportive of this policy direction, but suggest further consideration be given to this area.

1,400 hectares of employment land have been identified within the SABE. The last expansion to employment lands in Caledon resulted in a ten year employment land supply being purchased within approximately two years. The lands were not immediately developed due to the necessary studies, servicing and land use approvals. There was no “shovel-ready” and designated lands for attracting new businesses or retaining existing businesses. From an Economic Development perspective, the designation of closer to 1,700 hectares of employment land could help Caledon retain existing businesses, attract new businesses, and move towards a more balanced tax ratio. Town staff is requesting that Regional Council increase the amount of employment land in the SABE.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will continue to work with Regional staff as they advance towards adoption of a new Official Plan in early 2022. The Provincial deadline for completion is July 1, 2022. The Province is the approval authority for the Regional Official Plan Review and appeal rights are limited.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate Financial Implications associated with this Staff Report.

### **COUNCIL WORK PLAN**

Considering the scale and content of the Official Plan, there are a number of pillars which apply to the Future Official Plan, the most notable being Sustainable Growth, Complete

the Official Plan Review including the Mayfield West Secondary Plan and Bolton Residential Expansion Study.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Schedule A: Comments on the Peel 2051 Official Plan