

April 23, 2021

Ann-Marie Norio, Regional Clerk  
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Attention: Ms. Norio,

**Item 14.1 Motion re: Request to Region of Niagara to Delay Official Plan Update**

Please be advised that at their regular meeting of April 19, 2021 Council of the Town of Pelham passed the following:

**WHEREAS the Province of Ontario, through the Planning Act, requires that the Region of Niagara conduct a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) of its Official Plan whereby decisions must be made as to how all of the population and employment growth is to be accommodated in the local municipalities for the years 2031 to 2051;**

**AND WHEREAS since June 2019 the Province has amended a number of Provincial Statutes and policies that impact how municipalities plan for growth including the following:**

- The Provincial Policy Statement,
- A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,
- The Development Charges Act,
- The Planning Act,
- The Environmental Assessment Act, and
- The Conservation Authorities Act;

**AND WHEREAS these significant Provincial changes include:**

- reduced density targets in new greenfield development from 80 persons and jobs per hectare to 50 persons and jobs per hectare,
- reduced intensification targets from 60% beyond 2031 to 50%,
- setting minimum population and employment growth forecasts that can be exceeded subject to Provincial approval,
- extended the planning horizon from 2041 to the year 2051,
- introduced market demand as a consideration in determining the housing mix, and

- revisions to how municipalities fund growth;

**AND WHEREAS** these Provincial changes signal an abrupt shift from the emphasis on creating compact and complete communities to a planning regime that facilitates lower density and car dependent communities;

**AND WHEREAS** several Regions throughout Ontario have declared climate change emergencies and must consider the role of land use planning in their strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;

**AND WHEREAS** these Provincial changes create pressure to convert more class 1, 2 and 3 farmland in to urban uses than would otherwise be necessary which is contrary to Niagara's Official Plan as it relates to the protection of the agricultural system in Niagara;

**AND WHEREAS** ensuring that Ontarians have access to healthy safe food in the future requires thoughtful consideration of the long term impact of converting thousands of acres of prime agricultural lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to urban uses;

**AND WHEREAS** the change of the planning horizon to 2051 by the Province means that future municipal councils and the public will have little power to change decisions where they will grow after 2031 to the 2051 planning horizon;

**AND WHEREAS** in the rural areas internet service is often poor, making it difficult for rural residents to participate in zoom calls;

**AND WHEREAS** Niagara Region has adopted a public engagement initiative for the Niagara Official Plan review that includes public surveys, stakeholder input, direct public input and a Planning Advisory Committee;

**AND WHEREAS** the current pandemic is making effective, in person public consultation impossible at a time when robust, informed public consultation is needed more than ever;

**AND WHEREAS** the nature of work has evolved in response to the pandemic which may cause long term changes to the assumptions underlying the province's Land Needs Assessment.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Pelham Council request the Niagara Regional Chair to write to request the Province to allow the Region to delay its final report on

**its Official Plan Review until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted on the growth concepts and the preferred growth concept;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the Province be requested to allow the new Regional Official Plan which identifies non-discretionary components of a Regional Urban Structure that support local plans and priorities inside the current urban boundaries, exempt from the requirement for in-person consultation with the public;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the Province be requested to suspend the timetable for municipal conformity to the Growth Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement to ensure that the public can fully participate in the process of planning their communities for the growth planning period covering 2031 to 2051;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the Province suspend the deadlines it has set for conformity until the Land Needs Assessment Framework can be revisited to adjust to the significant changes to the nature of work that are reducing office space and parking space needs.**

**AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be circulated to Premier Doug Ford, the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Niagara's Local Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the leaders of the Provincial opposition parties, Niagara's MPP's, and the Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities.**

If you require any further information, please contact the undersigned.

Yours very truly,



Holly Willford, BA  
Acting Town Clerk

cc. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, [doug.fordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)  
The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing [steve.clark@pc.ola.org](mailto:steve.clark@pc.ola.org)  
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Greater Golden Horseshoe  
Barb Wiens, Director of Planning of Development