
Subject: Memorandum of Understanding for Planning Function and Services between Niagara Region and Local Area Municipalities

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Recommendations

1. That the Regional CAO **BE AUTHORIZED** to sign the 2019 update to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Planning Function and Services between Niagara Region and Local Area Municipalities, attached as Appendix 1;
2. That a copy of report PDS 42-2019 and the executed MOU **BE DISTRIBUTED** to the Local Area Municipalities; and
3. That staff **IMPLEMENT** the MOU, as amended, in collaboration with Local Area Municipalities.

Key Facts

- In March 2019 (PDS 4-2019), staff received direction from Regional Council to circulate the updated 2019 MOU for Planning Function and Services between Niagara Region and Local Area Municipalities and request endorsement from all 12 local area municipal Councils.
- The 2019 updated MOU has been endorsed by all 12 local area Councils, attached as Appendix 2.
- This revised MOU sets the foundation for undertaking transformational changes into the future and confirms the framework within which the Region and local area municipalities will function and provide planning services in Niagara.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial impacts to the Region as a result of the updated MOU.

Analysis

In September 2017, staff informed Regional Council that the MOU and associated Protocol between NPCA and the Region required updating. Work commenced to update the MOU to:

- confirm the framework (roles and responsibilities) within which the Region and local area municipalities will function and provide planning services,
- be a leading instrument of continuously improving service and relationship management,
- integrate the recommendations of the Protocol with respect to new Regional responsibilities,
- include directions on fairly new matters, such as: pre-consultation meetings, review exemptions, complete applications, commenting timelines, urban design, and
- recognize new legislation, process changes, relationships, resources and growth.

In March 2019 staff provided information to Committee and Council on the updated MOU and recommended circulation of the MOU to the local area municipalities for their authorization. Staff have now received endorsement from all 12 local area municipalities and are now bringing back the updated MOU for endorsement by Regional Council (see Appendix 2).

Alternatives Reviewed

A review of comparable-purposed MOUs from across the Province has been undertaken to understand the practices of other two-tier municipalities. No common standard was determined.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

“Sustainable and Engaging Government” is a strategic priority of Regional Council. Revising the MOU will improve upon the delivery of planning services across the region and provide more certainty in the planning process for current and future property owners.

Other Pertinent Reports

- Report PDS 4-2019- Memorandum of Understanding for Planning Function and Services between Niagara Region and Local Area Municipalities
- Report PDS 2-2018 - Protocol for Planning Services Between the Regional Municipality of Niagara and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority – January 10, 2018
- Report PDS-49-2017 – MOU Planning Services in Niagara – November 8, 2017
- Report PDS-43-2017 – Review and Update of the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Area Municipalities, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and Niagara Region, and the 2008 Protocol for Plan Review

and Technical Clearance between the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) and Niagara Region – September 15, 2017

- Memorandum PDS-C 4-2014 – Local Area Municipal Response to the 2014 Update to the Memorandum of Understanding for improving the Planning Function in Niagara – May 14, 2014
- Report PW 1-2014 Building Relationships, 2014 Update to the Memorandum of Understanding for Improving the Planning Function in Niagara – January 7, 2014
- Report PPW 10-2007 Memorandum of Understanding – Planning System in Niagara

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Appendices

Appendix 1	Memorandum of Understanding
Appendix 2	MOU Authorization from Local Area Municipalities