

November 21, 2019

By E-mail Only to *travers.fitzpatrick@welland.ca*

Travers Fitzpatrick
General Manager of Infrastructure and Development Services
City of Welland
Planning and Building Division
60 East Main Street, Welland, ON L3B 3X4

Dear Mr. Fitzpatrick:

**Re: NorthWest Welland Urban Boundary Expansion Application
City of Welland Local Official Plan Amendment No. 24 and
Proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment
Notice of Incomplete Application**

On November 12, 2019, the Region received the City of Welland's Application to Amend the Regional Official Plan ("NW ROPA") requesting an urban boundary expansion for the area known as Northwest Welland (the "NW Expansion").

We have also been made aware of the City's application for a local official plan amendment for same.

This letter relates to both matters.

The Region has directly supported the work program to consider the NW Expansion. The Region and City have been partnered since that started in 2017, including the Region matching City funding for the background work. Region and City staff have worked proactively to advance the City's application.

The explicit purpose of the NW Expansion work program is to justify a boundary expansion and complete a Secondary Plan, for consideration at the time the Region completes its new Official Plan in 2021.

This is important because, in 2017, at the time the NW Expansion work program was set, urban boundary expansions could only be done concurrently with Region's new Official Plan, in 2021. A boundary expansion could not occur before that.

In May 2019, the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019*, was amended to allow expansions of up to 40 ha in advance of a new Official Plan (policies 2.2.8.5 and 2.2.8.6) and to allow adjustments to urban boundaries in certain cases (policy 2.2.8.4). Specific rules were set out for how these new policies could be applied.

In September 2019, the Region was made aware that the City may seek a single 40 ha boundary expansion for the NW Expansion area. As previously noted, this is a new process which did not exist at the time the NW Expansion program started in 2017; therefore, none of the materials refer to this process.

In September and October 2019, City and Regional staff had several successful meetings to discuss a 40 ha expansion for the NW Expansion. A scoped work program was identified for a 40 ha expansion application, which was set out in a draft Pre-Consultation Form provided by the Region to the City.

At these meetings, the Region recommended that City and Region staff meet with the City's land use planning consultant to discuss the 40 ha expansion work program. That meeting has not yet occurred – the Region would like to do so as soon as possible.

On November 15, 2019, at a meeting with City staff and others, and after receipt of the NW ROPA, the Region was made aware that the City may seek an adjustment to its boundaries for the NW Expansion area, in addition to the 40 ha expansion.

The City's application form for the NW ROPA refers to the 40 ha boundary expansion policies (*Growth Plan, 2019*, s. 2.2.8.5 and 2.2.8.6). The application form makes no mention of the boundary adjustment policies (s. 2.2.8.4) or mapping to identify what lands are proposed for boundary adjustment.

The NW ROPA application does not include the study materials discussed at the meetings held in September and October 2019. In other words, the NW ROPA contains materials based on the 2017 work program and not materials that address the *Growth Plan, 2019* 40 ha expansion and boundary adjustment policies now sought for approval.

As discussed with City staff, a significant amount of the work completed under the 2017 work program can be used for a 40 ha boundary expansion application. There is no need to revisit most of the technical work in order to have a complete ROPA application. However, certain scoped materials remain outstanding and are needed to complete the application. Those materials were discussed with City staff at the September and October 2019 meetings, and are summarized as follows:

- A *scoped* Planning Justification Report that:
 - Justifies a 40 ha boundary expansion and adjustment and how that conforms with the *Growth Plan* policies on same. Amongst other things, this includes satisfying land needs requirements consistent with the Province's September 19, 2017 letter.
 - Provides a draft Official Plan Amendment, with mapping showing the lands proposed for expansion and adjustment in exchange for the NW Expansion area.

- A Phasing Plan to demonstrate how the expansion will be integrated and built-out with the remaining lands.
- A Financial Impact Assessment that analyzes the financial impact of the boundary expansion to the City and Region and provides input and recommendations for the prioritization of local and Regional infrastructure. This was part of the 2017 work program terms and has not been provided.
- *If the City seeks only a portion of NW Expansion lands to be added to the urban boundary before the Region's new Official Plan, a scoped Transportation Assessment and Infrastructure Review to demonstrate that the location of a 40 ha expansion can be logically serviced and connected to the existing urban area and remainder of expansion lands (future phases).*

For the reasons set out above, the Region does not currently view the NW ROPA application as complete. The Region is keen to assist the City in completing its application in accordance with section 14.G of its Official Plan.

The best path forward is to set a meeting as soon as possible with the City's consultant, City staff and Regional staff to address the outstanding items.

We are available to meet any time. Please reach out to Isaiah Banach or Kirsten McCauley directly to set the meeting.

Region approval will be required for the NW Expansion local official plan amendment. The Region cannot provide comments on the local official plan amendment until such time as the above-noted matters are addressed. This can be discussed further at the meeting or through separate correspondence.

We look forward to your response.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Mostacci".

Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner, Planning and Development Services, Region of Niagara

cc: Ms. Tara Stephens, City Clerk, City of Welland
Ms. Rose DiFelice, Manager of Policy Planning, City of Welland
Mr. Doug Giles, Director Community and Long Range Planning, Region of Niagara
Mr. Isaiah Banach, Manager of Long Range Planning, Region of Niagara

Ms. Kirsten McCauley, Senior Planner, Region of Niagara
Ms. Lindsay Earl, Senior Planner, Region of Niagara