



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Mark Paoli, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2013
Subject: **Official Plan 5-Year Review Amendment (OPA 81) – Circulation and Public Meeting**

1. Background:

Council is required to revise its Official Plan every five years to ensure compliance with provincial policies as required. The County has continually updated the Plan, but had not undertaken a formal 5-Year Review.

The County Official Plan 5-Year Review started in February 2010 with a Special Meeting of County Council. Since that time, the main work has been to: review public and agency input on the topics to be addressed; consult with local municipalities and review agencies on certain key topics; compile map schedule updates; and draft policy changes.

At its May, 2012 meeting County Council approved the following Planning Committee recommendation:

“THAT staff be directed to schedule and hold 3 Open Houses in July and August 2012 in order to provide the public with opportunities to review and comment on the County Official Plan 5-Year Review Amendment.

AND THAT the Planning and Land Division Committee be authorized to hold a public meeting under the *Planning Act* in the fall of 2012.”

Open House meetings were held in three different locations:

- Thursday September 6, 2012 at the Sportsplex in Fergus;
- Monday September 10, 2012 at Rockmosa Hall in Rockwood; and
- Wednesday September 12, 2012 at the Library in Harriston.

Materials available for review included: a number of display panels that summarized the main proposed changes; copies of the amendment text and schedules; a set of maps showing natural heritage and natural hazard updates; and a set of airphoto maps showing the proposed settlement boundary corrections.

Additional work since the Open Houses focused on: mineral aggregate area policies; rural employment area policies; confirming proposed major roadways; prime to secondary agricultural area requests; notice to propane operators; provincial comments on settlement expansions, permitted uses in Prime Agricultural Areas, and natural heritage policies; and the effective date for lot creation policies in the Secondary Agricultural Area.

2. Purpose of the Amendment:

The purpose of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is to revise the Official Plan to ensure that it addresses provincial policy and plans, and areas of concern or interest identified through the 5-Year Review.

3. Main Policy Changes:

The revised Draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA 81) contains the detailed changes proposed. The following is intended to provide an overview of the scope of the amendment. Changes are proposed in the following areas of the Plan:

- 1) New policies, definitions and Schedules to conform with the Greenbelt Plan;
- 2) Provincial planning legislation updates – key changes include:
 - a) complete application and pre-consultation requirements;
 - b) exterior design matters may be addressed through Site Plan control;
 - c) Local policy areas to identify propane operations and requirements to provide notice to propane operations; and
 - d) Removal of municipal planning authority over alternative and renewable energy systems.
- 3) Environmental policies and mapping – key changes include:
 - a) Greenlands System natural features and natural hazards map updates to Schedule 'A';
 - b) changing the area criterion for significant woodlands: in the Rural System from 10ha to 4ha, while plantations are considered significant if 10 ha or larger; and in the Urban System, from 10 ha to 1ha;
 - c) adding significant woodlands to the Urban Centre Greenlands System description;
 - c) increasing the extent of areas to be considered in environmental impact studies by increasing the adjacent lands policy to 120m for most features;
 - d) policies recognizing the role of restoration, enhancement, and stewardship for the Greenlands System; and
 - e) identifying the Paris and Galt moraines on Schedule 'B', and adding policies to protect their water resource functions and encourage stewardship.
- 4) expand the Mineral Aggregate Area overlay which is to be shown on a new Schedule 'C' rather than on Schedule 'A', by: including sand and gravel areas of secondary significance; and refining the overlay by excluding wetlands, significant woodlands, and lands within 300m of Urban Centres and Hamlets, except in existing approved areas of extraction.
- 5) Rural System policies – key changes include:
 - a) adding policies that new community service facilities may only be allowed in Prime Agricultural Areas through rezoning where justification of need and analysis of alternative locations is addressed;
 - b) combining the 'Rural Industrial' and 'Highway Commercial' designations in the Rural System into a single 'Rural Employment Area' designation, and allowing business and professional offices as a permitted use. This change would simplify the rural designations, recognize a broader range of employment uses, and provide for higher employment densities and more efficient use of existing designated lands, while stating that all uses need to be consistent with rural servicing levels which rely on private water and sewage systems; and
 - c) changing the policy that limits severances to parcels existing on the date of provincial approval (April 1999) to parcels existing on March 1, 2005.
- 6) Cultural heritage resource policies:
 - a) expanded policy direction about cultural heritage landscapes;
 - b) additional wording on mitigation measures in Heritage Impact Assessments;
- 7) Wording changes that reflect the definition of "infrastructure" in the Provincial Policy Statement and County Official Plan;

- 8) Settlement boundary corrections; and
- 9) Other changes of a technical or housekeeping nature.

Due to ongoing and separate policy projects in the areas of Source Water Protection, Active Transportation, and Second Unit policies, this amendment does not propose significant changes to existing policies on Well Head Protection Areas, transportation systems or accessory residential uses.

4. Conclusion:

Planning staff are satisfied that the proposed amendment should be circulated to County departments, local municipalities, commenting agencies, and individuals or organizations on the mailing list, and should be made available to the public for comment and discussion at a Public Meeting.

The Draft Revised 5-Year Review Amendment (OPA 81) is posted online at:

<http://www.wellington.ca/en/business/fiveyearreview.asp>

5. Recommendation:

That the Draft Revised 5-Year Review Amendment (OPA 81) be circulated for comments, and That staff be directed to schedule and provide Notice of a Public Meeting on OPA 81 at an appropriate time.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Paoli
Manager of Policy Planning