



## Development Services Staff Information Report

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**REPORT:** DS14-2023

**MEETING DATE:** March 28, 2023

**LOCATION:** Woolwich Council Chambers  
24 Church Street West, Elmira

**MEETING TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

### **SUBJECT**

**LOCATION:** All lands within the municipal boundary

**OFFICIAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** All designations

**CURRENT ZONING:** All zones

### **EXPLANATION OF PROPOSAL:**

The Township has initiated an Official Plan Review in response to Waterloo Region Official Plan Amendment No. 6 in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

### **LEGAL NOTICES**

**DATE OF WEBPAGE / ENGAGE WR NOTICE:** January 22, 2023

**DATE OF NEWSPAPER NOTICE:** February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and  
February 23, 2023

**DATE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING** March 28, 2023

### **COMMENTS**

#### **Background**

The Planning Act requires the Township to amend its Official Plan to conform to the Waterloo Region's Official Plan.

Pursuant to the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990 C.P.13, the Official Plans of local municipalities shall be amended to conform with the upper tier plan within one year of the upper tier coming into effect. The Regional Municipality of Waterloo adopted its Regional Official Plan (ROP) Amendment No. 6 on August 18, 2022. The Amendment is now before the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a decision. The Amendment was prepared

to bring the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Official Plan into conformity with the recently amended Provincial plans and their policies (i.e. “Provincial Policy Statement, 2020”, “A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020”) through its Municipal Comprehensive Review. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may approve, modify, or refuse the Amendment. As of the writing of this report, no decision has been made by the Minister. Once the Minister’s decision is made to approve or modify ROP Amendment No. 6, the requirements for the Township of Woolwich Official Plan will be identified. Although not anticipated, the Minister could refuse ROP Amendment No. 6. In this instance, further review will be required to determine the implications for the Township.

In the fall of 2023, the Province enacted Bill 23 – *More Homes Built Faster 2022*. Bill 23 has implications for the Township’s Official Plan as one component of Bill 23 removes planning authority from the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. Implementing the conclusion of planning authority for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo will require updates to the Township’s Official Plan to incorporate the Regional Official Plan policies and mapping into the Township’s Official Plan. No date has been determined as to when this transition will take place. The Province is to appoint a facilitator to advise on implementation of this transition; the facilitator for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo has not been appointed as of the writing of this report. The implementation of Bill 23 will be monitored through the Township’s Official Plan process so updates can be completed once the transition process is defined.

The Township has initiated an Official Plan Review in response to ROP Amendment No. 6 in accordance with the *Planning Act*. A contract was awarded to NPG Planning Solutions Inc. in December 2022 and the project was formally launched in January 2023.

Section 26 (3) of the *Planning Act* requires that before revising an Official Plan, a Special Meeting of Council will be required to inform the public of the upcoming revisions to the official plan. This meeting must be open to the public and notice of the meeting must be published in the local newspaper at least once a week in each of two separate weeks, with the last publication at least 30 days before the date of the meeting. Notice of this meeting has been given through two notices published in the Observer on February 16, 2023 and February 23, 2023. As such this meeting will fulfill the requirements of the *Planning Act* and provide for Council to accept written submissions and give any person who attends the public meeting an opportunity to speak. The Official Plan Review notice will also be posted on the Township website and through a dedicated Engage Woolwich page.

The Township of Woolwich Official Plan Review is targeted for completion in Spring 2024.

This report and meeting is held to fulfill the requirements of Section 26 (3) of the *Planning Act* for a statutory public meeting in undertaking the Township of Woolwich Official Plan Review to conform with all pertinent Provincial plans and policies and the new Region of Waterloo Official Plan; and

To update Council and the public on the Township of Woolwich Official Plan Review including the Project Workplan and Engagement Strategy.

### **NEXT STEPS**

No decision will be made at this public meeting as its purpose is to solicit comments from the community and Council. After this public meeting Township Staff will work alongside the consultant to:

- Prepare and present an Environmental Scan Report and Establishment of Community Visions, Goals and Objectives for consideration by the public and endorsement by Council;
- Prepare and present 3 Background Studies for consideration by the public and endorsement by Council;
- Prepare and present a Policy Direction Report for consideration by the public and endorsement by Council;
- Prepare a Draft Official Plan including mapping;
- Conduct a Statutory Open House (*Planning Act*, Section 17(16)) and Statutory Public Meeting (*Planning Act*, Section 17(15));
- Present recommended finalized Official Plan to Council for final adoption; and
- Forward the adopted Official Plan to the Region of Waterloo for final approval.

The Official Plan Review process will include an inclusive and transparent Public engagement strategy which will include various opportunities for the Township residents, business and property owners to get involved.

### **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

None

**PREPARED BY:** Jeremy Vink    **REVIEWED BY:** Deanne Friess