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## Report 2024-066

**Report Title:** Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2 – Alternate Notice Provisions

**Committee Name:** Economic Development, Tourism and Planning

**Committee Meeting Date:** May 1, 2024

**Prepared by:** Ashley Yearwood, Senior Planner  
Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Initiatives

**Reviewed by:** Dwayne Campbell  
Director (Acting)  
Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Initiatives

**Approved by:** Jennifer Moore, CAO

**Council Meeting Date:** May 15, 2024

**Strategic Plan Priorities:**  Innovate for Service Excellence  
 Ignite Economic Opportunity  
 Foster a Thriving Community  
 Propel Sustainable Growth  
 Champion a Vibrant Future

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### Recommendation

**That** the Economic Development, Tourism, and Land Use Planning Committee, having considered Report 2024-066 ‘Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2 – Alternate Notice Provisions’, recommend that County Council approve Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2; and

**Further That** the Committee recommend that County Council direct staff to provide notice of the approval to the Township of Alnwick/Haldimand and all prescribed persons in accordance with the *Planning Act*.”

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### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend approval for Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2 – Alternate Notice Provisions (Amendment No. 2). The amendment proposes to include alternate notice provisions for Alnwick/Haldimand property owners and other members of the public interested in receiving notification on development proposals.

This amendment will enable Alnwick/Haldimand to include alternate notice provisions on subsequent official plan and zoning by-law amendments as well as community improvement plans when necessary.

## **Background**

The *Planning Act* requires municipalities to provide public notices for various planning application types (e.g., official plans, zoning by-law amendments, plans of subdivision/condominium, minor variances, and consent/land division). Acceptable public notice under the Act consists of mail delivery, sign posting from a public highway, and/or by newspaper. The *Planning Act* also provides municipalities with the option of implementing alternate notice provisions for new official plans, zoning by-law amendments and community improvement plans if the posting provides reasonable notice of the public meeting or open house.

Until recently, municipalities would typically provide public notice through newspaper postings when a development proposal affects a large area or when sign posting is not appropriate. In September 2023, the newspaper company that serves Alnwick/Haldimand Township (and other small communities across Ontario) announced that it was ending its community newspaper print editions. The community newspaper was the only distributor for Alnwick/Haldimand. As such, the municipality has prepared alternative notice provisions to ensure that residents are kept informed of planning matters within the community.

## **Consultations**

In lieu of a newspaper posting, public notice for this amendment was included with the tax bills to each property owner. Notice was also mailed to property owners who pay taxes through their mortgage and pre-authorized payment plan. These notices were mailed out prior to the public meeting (February 5, 2024) in accordance with the *Planning Act's* public notification requirements.

No written submission was received to date, however the Township received one call requesting confirmation of the public meeting details.

On February 26, 2024, the Township of Alnwick/Haldimand held a public meeting. No comments were received at the public meeting.

## **Discussion / Options**

The Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan establishes general notification policies to all property owners and agencies in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

Amendment No. 2 will add a new policy to include alternate notice provisions for official plan and zoning by-law amendments as well as for community improvement plans that typically affect a large geographical area.

The proposed alternate notice provisions will require the Township to create and maintain a public notification registry that interested members of the public can register to receive an electronic mail (e-mail) containing the public notice for specific planning applications. The alternate notice provisions will also require the Township to post public notices at its Municipal Offices, libraries, municipal website and on its social media sites (refer to Attachment 1).

Application notice for minor variance, consent/land division, site-specific zoning by-law amendment applications will continue to be mailed to all property owners within the circulation radiuses as specified in the *Planning Act*.

### **Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations**

Amendment No. 2 intends to provide the municipality with an alternate tool to provide public notification on specific planning applications in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

The Township's proposed Alternate Notice Provisions identified in Amendment No. 2 has regard for *Planning Act* legislation.

Amendment No. 2 also conforms with the Northumberland County Official Plan ensuring that the alternate notice provisions will maintain public participation and consultation with community residents and businesses.

The adopted amendment is being approved by County Council in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act* and County By-law 2016-58.

The recommendations of the Economic Development, Tourism and Land Use Planning Committee are scheduled to be considered by County Council on May 15, 2024. Once County Council has rendered a decision on Amendment No. 2, and the County Clerk has issued a decision notice, a 20-day appeal period will begin during which time any interested party can submit an appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal. If no appeals are received, County Council's decision will become final (refer to Attachment 2).

### **Financial Impact**

Amendment No. 2 does not pose any financial impacts to the County since the use of alternate notice provisions is intended for specific planning applications where the Township is the decision-making authority.

### **Member Municipality Impacts**

The proposed policies of Amendment No. 2 will allow the Township to email public notices to members of the public interested in receiving notification on development applications. Public Notices will also be posted in municipal buildings throughout the Township as well as on the Township's website and social media pages.

### **Conclusion / Outcomes**

Amendment No. 2 includes policy text amendments that add reference to the Township's notification requirements on specific *Planning Act* applications. The additional policy references are supported by the *Planning Act* and County Official Plan. As such, it is recommended that Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2 be approved as adopted.

### **Attachments**

- 1) Alnwick/Haldimand Official Plan Amendment No. 2 (Alnwick/Haldimand By-law 16-2024)
- 2) Decision Notice