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Report 2025-105

Report Title: Project Funding for County Official Plan Update

Committee Name: Economic Development, Tourism and Planning

Committee Meeting Date: May 7, 2025

Prepared by: Dwayne Campbell
Director
Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Initiatives

Reviewed by: Matthew Nitsch
Director
Finance

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: May 21, 2025

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

Recommendation

“That the Economic Development, Tourism and Planning Committee, having considered Report 2025-105 ‘Project Funding for County Official Plan Update’, recommend that County Council approve \$100,000 in additional funding to complete the County Official Plan Update; and

Further That the Committee recommend that County Council authorize staff to transfer \$100,000 from the Land Use Planning General Reserve to finance the balance of the Official Plan Update.”

Purpose

This report is to obtain Council’s approval to fund the balance of the County Official Plan Update project.

Background

In 2020, Council approved a multi-year budget and workplan for a comprehensive land use review to update the County Official Plan. To date, two amendments - Natural Heritage and Growth Management (Phase 1) - have been adopted and are currently awaiting approval from the Province. Two additional amendments - Growth Management (Phase 2) and Agriculture - are currently in progress. Additional funding is being requested to finalize these remaining amendments and the County Official Plan Update.

Consultations

N/A

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

The County Official Plan is being updated in accordance with the Planning Act which requires municipalities to update their official plans approximately every 5 years or when provincial legislation requires.

Discussion / Options

The initial workplan for the County Official Plan Update was funded as a multi-year project. Due to unavoidable cost increases following the Covid-19 pandemic, changes in provincial legislation, Council's directive for enhanced public engagement, and additional analysis for the Port Hope expansion, the initial project budget has been exceeded. These adjustments reflect our commitment to comprehensive land planning and community involvement, ensuring the project meets current legislation and expectations.

Financial Impact

The initial project budget was \$70,000 per year for three years, supplemented by funding for ongoing projects expected to be integrated into the Official Plan Update, such as the Natural Heritage System Plan and employment lands assessment. To ensure the successful completion of the Official Plan Update, it is recommended that an additional \$100,000 be allocated from the Land Use Planning General Reserve.

Member Municipality Impacts

Some member municipalities are beginning to budget and allocate funding to initiate local official plan updates. These updates will be necessary once the County Official Plan amendments are approved by the province.

Conclusion / Outcomes

As a result of post-Covid-19 cost increases, legislative changes, enhanced public engagement and additional analysis, the initial budget for the County Official Plan Update has been exceeded. The initial budget was \$70,000 per year for three years, plus funding for ongoing projects. An additional \$100,000 from the Land Use Planning General Reserve is recommended to complete the County Official Plan Update.

Attachments

N/A