

For Immediate Release September 29, 2020

## Council Connect: Highlights from the September 29, 2020 Special Meeting of Council

The purpose of the meeting was to present Council with a copy of the Draft New Official Plan and outline next steps in the public and agency consultation and input process.

### What is the Official Plan?

The Official Plan is a document passed by Council in accordance with the *Planning Act* that contains goals, objectives and policies that are primarily intended to manage and direct physical change in the Town over a 25-year horizon. It includes policies that enhance the quality of life and quality of place in the Town, while promoting a healthy, livable and complete community. The Official Plan also includes policies to support the wise use of natural resources, community services, infrastructure (including water, wastewater, stormwater, roads and active transportation) while encouraging a strong economy and addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Official Plan is used by Council, municipal staff, the public, government agencies and other affected stakeholders when making decisions with respect to land use planning and growth in the Town. The Official Plan must be consistent with Provincial policies (the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement) and conform to the County of Essex Official Plan. Once the new Official Plan is adopted by Town Council, it is the County of Essex that gives final approval to it.

### Why is it being changed?

Land use planning in Tecumseh is currently governed by three separate Official Plans pertaining to the three former municipalities (the Town of Tecumseh, the Village of St. Clair Beach and the Township of Sandwich South) that amalgamated in 1999 to form the new Town of Tecumseh. These Official Plans are proposed to be replaced by a new Official Plan encompassing all lands in the Town.

The draft new Official Plan is intended to articulate a clear, cohesive vision for the Town of Tecumseh and to reflect new policy objectives of Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement 2020 and alignment with the County of Essex Official Plan (2014). The Plan is based on principles that recognize that the long-term prosperity and social well-being of the Town depends on maintaining strong, sustainable and resilient communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy.

### What are the next steps?

Public and agency input on the draft document is the next step in the process and public consultation will be conducted in a modified way to adhere to public health guidelines during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Town will proceed with alternative forms of consultation, including the use of electronic meetings. In order to ensure adequate opportunities are available for public consultation and input, the following process for public and agency engagement was reported to Council this evening:

- 1) The holding of a Public Information Centre using the Zoom platform (late October);
- 2) The use of PlaceSpeak, which is an on-line community consultation platform available to the Town that provides a venue for offering input and dialogue (beginning early October);
- 3) Consultations with First Nations and Metis Community by providing the draft new Official Plan and seeking input and holding of zoom meetings if desired (October);

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- 2 -

- 4) Following the public consultation, discussions to be held with the County of Essex (Approval Authority) and the Essex Region Conservation Authority to address public comments, if necessary (early November);
- 5) The holding of a Statutory Public Meeting by Council on the Zoom platform in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act (early December).

Upon completion of the foregoing consultation process, Administration will prepare a Report summarizing comments and identifying suggested revisions to the draft new Official Plan. The document will then be brought forward to Council for consideration of any final revisions followed by formal adoption. Once adopted, it will be forwarded to the County for consideration of its final approval.

#### **How do I participate in these electronic meetings and/or provide comments?**

Full details on the scheduling of meetings and ways for the public to provide comments will be posted on our website ([www.tecumseh.ca](http://www.tecumseh.ca)), our social media channels and through notices in the local media. Anyone wishing to provide comments may do so through the dedicated Official Plan page on the Town's website ([www.tecumseh.ca/newofficialplan](http://www.tecumseh.ca/newofficialplan)).

The next Regular Meeting of Council is Tuesday, October 13, 2020. The meeting is scheduled to be held electronically. The live stream will be available on our website at [www.tecumseh.ca](http://www.tecumseh.ca). The agenda for the Regular Meeting of Council will be made available on Thursday, October 8, 2020.

Information on this and all Town of Tecumseh news and events is available at [www.tecumseh.ca](http://www.tecumseh.ca), Twitter (@TownofTecumseh), and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/townoftecumseh](http://www.facebook.com/townoftecumseh)).

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