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Town of Aurora

Memorandum

Office of the Mayor

Subject: York Regional Council Highlights of December 15, 2022

To: Members of Council

From: Mayor Mrakas

Date: January 31, 2023

Recommendation

1. That the York Regional Council Highlights of December 15, 2022, be received for information.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Friday, December 23, 2022

York Regional Council – Thursday, December 15, 2022

Live streaming of the public session of Council and Committee of the Whole meetings is available on the day of the meeting from 9 a.m. until the close of the meeting. Past sessions are also available at York.ca/councilandcommittee

New provincial housing bill will impact funding of growth-related infrastructure and planning approval process

York Regional Council continues to strongly request the [province consult with municipalities](#) regarding *Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, to ensure efficient planning for livable and sustainable communities and help reach the province's goal of building 1.5 million homes.

[Bill 23](#) amends nine key provincial statutes with varying levels of impact on municipalities. Most significant of these amendments are proposed changes to the [Development Charges Act](#) and [The Planning Act](#), which will limit the ways in which a municipality can finance growth-related infrastructure.

York Region's 2022 Development Charges Bylaw, passed by Regional Council in May 2022, would have helped fund the construction of over 2,700 new community housing units over the next 20 years, an objective aligned with the province's Housing Supply Action Plan.

While Regional Council shares the province's desire to build more housing faster, the exemptions and discounts enacted by Bill 23, consultation with municipal partners could better ensure the financial burden does not fall to existing taxpayers.

On November 10, 2022, Regional Council passed a resolution requesting the province halt Bill 23 to allow for more fulsome analysis and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Ontario's municipalities and other stakeholders. However, the province passed the bill on November 28, 2022, with minor amendments.

Regional Council recognizes the importance of aligning growth and infrastructure to ensure financial sustainability. Growth forecasts are used to determine infrastructure and services required to serve residents and businesses, while planning ensures these services are in the right places at the right time. Regional growth management remains critical for upper-tier municipalities to coordinate growth with infrastructure service delivery and maintain financial sustainability.

York Region continues to work with municipal partners and stakeholders across the province to further understand Bill 23 and to put forward coordinated recommendations to support sustainable planning decisions.

York Region comments on proposed amendments to the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Plan

Regional Council provided [comments on the province's proposed amendments](#) to the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan as part of the provincial goal to have 1.5 million homes built by 2031.

The province [proposes](#) removing 2,995 hectares (7,400 acres) of the Greenbelt in Ontario for housing. These lands are also beyond what has been considered from a servicing (such as infrastructure, water and wastewater and roads) standpoint. Most removals in York Region are from the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and represent additional urban lands above and beyond what has been identified to accommodate Regional growth to 2051.

York Region has confirmed adequate opportunity for housing in the Region to address the province's accelerated growth through intensification and expanded approved urban boundaries, without the need for these amendments as also noted by the [Provincial Housing Affordability Task Force](#).

The Region is requesting the province extend the commenting period on proposed amendments to the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan areas to allow time to collaborate with municipalities on solutions to streamline and accelerate the development of housing without compromising the integrity of these areas.

Province urged to consult further with municipalities on the Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement

Regional Council is requesting the province [slow down consultation](#) on the review of [the Growth Plan](#) and [Provincial Policy Statement](#) to allow for consultation with municipalities and stakeholders including any new policy documents.

The province proposes merging these two planning policies into a new province-wide planning policy document. The integration could inadvertently detract from 30 years of advancements taken by successive provincial and municipal governments to strengthen comprehensive planning in Ontario.

Proposed changes to these two integral provincial planning policy documents require more detailed assessment and consultation which cannot be achieved through the short commenting window.

York Region shares the province's commitment to streamline the development process and increase housing supply, changes to provincial policy of this magnitude can be improved with proper consultation.

York Region has a long history of working with the province and the development industry to create innovative solutions in the public interest and is requesting the province slow down this review and work collaboratively with municipalities to improve housing supply and affordability.

Regional Council approved appointments to Regional committees

Regional Council approved appointments of Council members to the Chair and Vice Chair positions of the Region's subcommittees of Committee of the Whole, plus appointments to the Region's standing committees, boards and task forces.

Regional Council also appointed members to the 2023 to 2026 term of the [Human Services Planning Board](#) and the 2023 to 2026 term of the Newcomer Inclusion Table.

The Human Services Planning Board will continue to advise on the implementation of the [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for York Region](#) and other issues related to its mandate as directed by

Regional Council, including housing and homelessness, seniors services and community safety and well-being.

The [Newcomer Inclusion Table](#), previously called the Community Partnership Council, is a multi-sectoral collaborative group that advises Regional Council and York Region staff on the development and implementation of initiatives to support the successful integration of newcomers in York Region.

Appointments can be found at york.ca/councilandcommittee

2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan

Regional Council received an update on the draft [2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan](#) and referred it to February 2023 for consideration with the 2023 Regional Budget.

The draft Strategic Plan sets out the critical steps needed to ensure alignment on the delivery of York Region's 15 core programs and services in achieving Regional Council's vision of strong, caring, safe communities.

The draft Strategic Plan focuses on four key priority areas, including economic vitality, healthy communities, sustainable environment and good government and 47 performance measures. Once the plan is approved by Council in 2023, progress on the Strategic Plan and performance measures will be reported annually.

York Region to work with Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to develop paramedic and fire station

Regional Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to develop a joint use [York Region Paramedic Response Station and Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Station](#).

Aligned with the [2021-2031 Paramedic Services Master Plan](#), the new station will meet current and future needs to support this growing community. The new station is planned to be located on Aurora Road, west of Highway 48 in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Once complete, it will replace the existing fire and paramedic facility at 15400 Highway 48, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

York Region honours lives lost to COVID-19

Regional Council held a moment of silence on Thursday, December 15, 2022, to pay respect to the 312 York Region residents who [lost their lives to COVID-19 this year](#).

Since 2020, COVID-19 has had an immeasurable impact on how residents learn, work, connect with family and friends and live their daily lives. Health care and other essential workers have put themselves at risk so everyone could continue to have access to the services and care we all need and protecting the health and safety of the community has remained the top priority of Regional Council and York Region Public Health.

In a moment of recognition and acknowledgment, Regional Council extended condolences to the families and loved ones of those who lost the fight against COVID-19 and reaffirmed their commitment to protecting the health and safety of all who live and work in York Region.

Celebrating two-time Olympic gold medalist Rosie MacLennan

Regional Council recognized the outstanding career of Canadian trampolinist and Township of King resident Rosie MacLennan, who announced her retirement in December 2022.

MacLennan represented Canada at four Summer Olympic Games and made history in 2016 when she became the first trampolinist to win back-to-back Olympic gold medals. Beyond competition, she has

served as a champion for females in sport, advocating for greater opportunities for girls and women to pursue a career in professional sports.

Regional Council extended congratulations to Rosie MacLennan on an outstanding career and offered their best wishes to her in retirement.

Crime Stoppers Month

Regional Council recognized January as [Crime Stoppers Awareness Month](#). Regional Council acknowledged the importance of the 2023 theme, which calls on all Canadians to *Stand Up, Stand Together* for our nation's values of inclusion, respect for cultural differences, equal rights and a commitment to social justice.

As a non-profit community organization, [Crime Stoppers of York Region](#) is a partnership of the public, police and media which provides the community with a proactive program to anonymously assist with solving crime.

Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 9 a.m. This is currently planned to be a hybrid meeting, with Members of Council attending either in-person or virtually. The meeting will be streamed on york.ca/live

The Regional Municipality of York consists of nine local cities and towns and provides a variety of programs and services to 1.2 million residents and 54,000 businesses with over 650,000 employees. More information about the Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/regionalservices

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