

DATE: June 14, 2021

REPORT NO: PD-77-2021

SUBJECT: Recommendation Report - RFP for Possible Hamlet Boundary Adjustment in Fulton and Grassie for Consideration of a Rural Employment Area

CONTACT: Brian Treble, Director of Planning & Building

OVERVIEW:

- Numerous discussions have occurred with Regional Planning staff about the potential for a rural employment park area in a hamlet in proximity to Hamilton to compliment the Smithville employment park for uses not requiring full services.
- A Capital account was created in the 2021 budget to commence study work in accordance with Provincial Policy.
- Regional staff and Township staff have been delayed, but have had numerous discussions in order to prepare a draft Terms of Reference which will be presented in a future Planning report in coordination with Phase II of this study.
- Staff are proposing to proceed with Phase I of the study at this time to identify how much land can be supported through Regional growth allocations and then determine where it should be and make recommendations to Township Committee and the Region by the end of the summer of 2021.
- Phase II can occur with a formal RFP once an area is approved for inclusion, and will include the preparation of a Secondary Plan.
- This project must move forward jointly with Regional staff. In order to make Phase I happen quickly, staff seek permission to retain MHBC Planning and commence Phase I immediately.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Report PD-77-2021, regarding "Recommendation Report, RFP for Hamlet Boundary Adjustment in Fulton and Grassie for Consideration of a Rural Employment Area", dated June 14th, 2021, be RECEIVED; and,

2. That, staff be granted authority to proceed with Phase I only, by retaining Dan Currie of MHBC Planning to assist with the Phase I work immediately and prior to ratification of Township Council.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #2 and #3

- **Support for Business and Employment Opportunities for Residents**
- **Strategic, Responsible Growth**

BACKGROUND:

For some time now, staff and Council have had discussions about the opportunity to create a rural employment park within the Township of West Lincoln. Many of the non-agricultural uses found on agricultural properties in West Lincoln are migrating out of the City of Hamilton. As such, the Hamlet of Fulton located at the intersection of Regional Road 20 and South Grimsby Road 18; and the Hamlet of Grassie may be logical hamlets to consider for the placement of a rural employment park.

As a result, in the 2021 budget, Council considered and approved the following capital project “985 – Fulton Hamlet Rural Employment Zone – Boundary Adjustment” with \$125,000. Phase I will cost a small portion of this value with the remainder possibly being required for the Phase II Secondary Plan work when lands are included and that planning work is needed.

CURRENT SITUATION:

In order to move forward with a review of possible employment expansion options for the Hamlet areas of Fulton and Grassie, specifically for rural employment park opportunities, the Terms of Reference must be drafted to address Provincial and Regional policy requirements with the first step being to determine how much land and where to account for market demand. Further, over the course of 2020 and 2021, Township staff have been working with Regional Policy Staff to determine that the following criteria are components of an employment park.

The Term of Reference need to address the following matters:

- market demand
- contribution to the rural character
- purpose of the hamlet to support the agricultural community
- size and viability of the lands being added (unless for technical adjustment to be added to an existing lot)
- vacant land supply of the hamlets
- impacts to the NHS and other environmental constraints
- impacts to the surrounding agricultural community including MDS constraints
- other site context or location considerations
- Criteria for WL would also need to consider a linkage to the ability to accommodate growth including rural employment growth within the Smithville expansion area

All of this work is required in order to support a hamlet adjustment if appropriate for either Fulton or Grassie within Phase I, with this initial assessment needing to be completed prior to the finalization of the Region's MCR/OP 5 year Review at the end of the summer of 2021. Phase II, Secondary Planning will start later following a determination of whether any lands and in what areas the lands have been included for an employment park.

Further, in parallel with this Phase I assessment, in Fulton and/or Grassie, there are two areas marked as Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) in Fulton. Discussions with Regional staff have added a layer of study to evaluate the wetland boundary. The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) will need to be involved in an evaluation of the boundaries of the wetlands should it be appropriate to consider inclusion of these lands. Both areas appear to have changed over time and are no longer properly mapped. Having said that, a simplified environmental mapping review may be required as part of Phase I and will be built into the Terms of Reference.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

A capital budget component was included in the 2021 budget and provided for \$125,000 to complete this work. Phase I work will only be a small portion of this total value.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

The draft Terms of Reference has been discussed jointly with Regional and Township Planning staff in order to ensure a complete analysis to address Provincial and Regional requirements and will be presented in coordination with Phase II of this study.

CONCLUSION:

That Staff be authorized to commission Dan Currie of MHBC Planning to commence only Phase I at this time and that authority be granted to commence Phase I immediately and prior to ratification of Township Council, given the Regional end of summer 2021 deadline.

Prepared & Submitted by:



Brian Treble
Director of Planning & Building

Approved by:



Bev Hendry
CAO