

DATE: September 14, 2020

REPORT NO: PD-115-2020

SUBJECT: **Recommendation Report**
Local Road Policies – Request to begin Public Consultation Process

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OVERVIEW:

- West Lincoln is receiving an increasing number of requests to extend or open unopened/mud road allowances within the Township.
- There are currently no policies in the Township's Official Plan to help guide staff with these types of requests.
- Township Planning Staff have put together a DRAFT set of policies for road extensions/openings to start the public meeting process.
- Staff are seeking direction from Committee and Council to begin the public consultation process for these DRAFT policies.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Report PD-115-2020 regarding "Local Road Policies – Request to begin Public Consultation Process" dated September 14th, 2020, be RECEIVED, and;
2. THAT, Council direct Staff to begin the public consultation process for the proposed DRAFT policies.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #3

- **Strategic, Responsible Growth**

BACKGROUND:

Township Staff have recently been experiencing an increase in the number of requests to extend or open unopened/mud road allowances within the Township. Currently, the Township's Official Plan does not contain any policy to help guide the Township, including what criteria should be used to determine if it is in the Township's best interest to extend or open a road allowance. Township Planning Staff have put together a draft official plan amendment to start the discussion towards addressing this gap in policy.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Township Planning Staff looked at other municipalities to try and get a sense of the best practice was for extending or opening road allowances. Unfortunately, Township Planning Staff were unable to find any Official plan policies from other municipalities that deal with extending or opening road allowances. Staff were able to find sample mapping that a DRAFT Schedule 'F' – Infrastructure & Transportation has been based off of (attachment 2). As such, Staff have attached draft Official Plan policies to address road extension and opening road allowances (attachment 1). Staff are looking for direction from Committee and Council to begin the public meeting process to receive feedback for these draft policies.

These policies aim to make the process of extending/opening a road clearer in terms of what is required and who is responsible for covering the expenses involved in the process. For example, if a member of the public wishes to open or extend a road, the studies required and construction of the road is proposed to be at their own expense. If the road is in the rural area, there is a proposed additional requirement that the road extension/opening must provide some sort of benefit for agricultural purposes.

Township Planning Staff have provided relevant Provincial, Regional and Local Policy for road extensions/openings below:

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS)

The PPS outlines how to manage and direct land use in a way that achieves efficient and resilient development and land use patterns. The PPS states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term (1.1.1.a), avoid development and land use patterns which may cause environmental concerns (1.1.c), ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs (1.1.1.g) and promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity (1.1.1.h).

The PPS also states that when planning for infrastructure it shall be integrated with land use planning and growth management so that they are financially viable over their life cycle, and available to meet current and projected needs (1.6.1).

A Place to Grow, 2019 (APTG)

The APTG outlines how to plan for growth and development in a way that supported economic prosperity, protects the environment and helps communities achieve a high quality of life. THE APTG policies direct development towards the existing urban or hamlet boundaries within a municipality. Infrastructure is encouraged to occur in a way that is economically viable and sustainable while helping to move people and goods (3.2.2.2.a & c).

The APTG also outlines that transportation should be provided to accommodate agricultural vehicles and equipment, as appropriate (3.2.2.2 e).

Regional Official Plan, 2014 (ROP)

The Niagara Region's Official Plan has further refined the policies from the PPS and APTG. The ROP directs the majority of growth and development to Niagara's existing Urban Areas, such as Smithville (4.A.1.1) and supports uses that enable farmers to improve their agricultural practices in a number of ways (5.A.7).

The ROP's Section on Infrastructure outlines objectives for the Region's infrastructure that help to optimize the use of what's existing (8.A).

Township Official Plan (OP)

The Township's OP contains policies for the Agricultural Area, Growth Management and Infrastructure. Some objectives the Township has for the Agricultural Area is to promote and protect a viable agricultural industry for the production of crop resources and livestock operations, support a pattern of agricultural land holdings that avoid fragmentation of ownership, and minimize the impact of non-farm uses on the agricultural area (Section 4.2).

The Growth Management Section of the Township's Official Plan primarily directs and encourages growth to occur within the urban boundary of Smithville in West Lincoln.

Section 14.5 of the Township's OP speaks to roads in the Township. These policies indicate that the existing roads plan for West Lincoln (Schedule F, as seen in attachment 1) is intended to ensure an adequate system for the movement of people and goods within and through the Township. It specifies that no buildings or structures will be permitted on any lot that does not have frontage and direct access to an open improved public road which is maintained on a year-round basis (14.5.1.d).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications relating to this report at this time.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

These policies have been developed in consultation with the Township's Public Work's Department.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, as West Lincoln receives an increased amount of requests from the public to extend or open road allowances, Staff are of the opinion that there needs to be guiding policies that can be followed when these type of inquiries are made.

Staff have compiled draft policies that they would like to begin the public meeting consultation process, and that ultimately some form of new road opening policy should be completed to add into the Township Official Plan for implementation purposes.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft OPA By-law – Unopened Roads & Draft OPA Amendment No. XXX – Unopened Roads
2. OP Schedule F – September 2020

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