

Report

Report to:	Mayor and Council
Date:	January 17, 2023 PBD-2023-03
Title:	Grassy Brook Secondary Plan: Project Initiation Report

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:

1. Council receive this report regarding the initiation of the secondary plan process for the Grassy Brook area.
2. Council authorize staff to develop a Terms of Reference and advertise a Request for Expression of Interest for participation in a Community Focus Group to seek out interested persons to participate and provide regular input over the course of the development of the Secondary Plan.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to formally advise Council of the initiation of the Grassy Brook Secondary Plan (GBSP) that would ultimately be implemented through an Official Plan Amendment. Council has budgeted for the creation of a secondary plan for the Grassy Brook area. Dillion Consulting Ltd. has been retained as the lead in its preparation. The secondary plan will create a vision for the subject lands and provide policies/directions that will ensure its successful implementation and the development of a complete community.

Additionally, staff are seeking Council's authorization to solicit the interest of community members to sit on a "Community Focus Group" (CFG) to participate and provide input throughout the secondary plan process.

Background

The overall objective of the secondary plan is to have a complete community that is planned, designed, and developed to be walkable, transit supportive, and respectful of the natural environment while meeting the City's 2051 employment and housing targets. The secondary plan will also ensure growth occurs in a coordinated and efficient manner in accordance with a transparent process.

The secondary plan process will identify opportunities and constraints for the development of the subject lands and the location, extent and sensitivity of the existing environmental, social, cultural, and economic features in the study area. Mitigation measures for any impacts to the environment will also be determined. Staff have

retained the services of Dillion Consulting Ltd. to complete the secondary plan and the necessary background studies.

Analysis

Study Area

The Grassy Brook area is located east of the QEW and is bordered by the Welland River to the north and Lyon's Creek to the south. It is comprised of approximately 495 ha (1,223 ac) of land, all within the City's Urban Area Boundary (see Schedule A). Current land uses within the area include residential, open space, agricultural, resort commercial, and environmental protection/conservation areas. The land is currently unserved until the completion of the new South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant which will be located within the study area. Additionally, the new South Niagara Falls Hospital is to be located west of study area, both are to be significant drivers of growth for this area.

As the last unplanned and unserved, greenfield area in the City, a secondary plan will provide an appropriate planning framework for the Grassy Brook area which will consider infrastructure investment, land use compatibility and a proactive direction for both employment and residential development.

The secondary planning exercise is to be undertaken in accordance with regional and provincial policy direction as contained in the Provincial Policy Statement 2020, Provincial Growth Plan (2020), as well as the recently approved Niagara Region Official Plan.

Employment Needs

The GBSP area will contain a new Employment Area as identified by the City's Employment Lands Strategy adopted by Council in December 2021 (through PBD-2021-79) to help accommodate the City's 2051 jobs forecast. The Province approved the Region's Official Plan in November, 2022 identifying the lands west of Stanley Avenue through to the QEW and north of Reixinger Road to north of the Welland River as an "Employment Area".

The secondary plan area includes the identified location for the new South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant. The location of compatible employment uses and potential residential uses, beyond the area of influence of the wastewater treatment plant, will be addressed through the secondary plan process. The identification of residential lands will help residential needs as identified in the City's Housing Needs Study and meet the City's 2051 housing targets.

Public Engagement

Technical Advisory Committee

Consultation with stakeholders will be important throughout the secondary plan process. To help solicit feedback, the GBSP will be guided by a Technical Advisory Committee. This committee will be composed of City and Regional staff and other technical experts.

Community Focus Group

A Community Focus Group (CFG) is proposed to further enhance public engagement throughout the Secondary Plan process. A CFG would provide an opportunity for a selected group of individuals to express their views in detail, to hear opinions of others, and to collectively develop resolutions which is not possible using conventional public engagement methods. The CFG will meet throughout the plan's development to establish goals, objectives, a vision statement and provide input.

The Focus Group would consist of a cross section of the community with 10-12 members representing new and long term residents, youth and seniors, business owners and developers. An invitation for interested persons to submit their names for participation on the Community Focus Group via "Request for Expression of Interest" will be advertised. In order to ensure a good cross section of the community and a balanced representation on the CFG a terms of reference will be prepared by Staff which will guide the composition of the group based on the profile of and self-described interests of each individual.

Regardless of structured meetings and events for input, any member of the public may make comments at any time in the process for staff's consideration. All comments of the CFG and all other public engagement activities will be reported back to Council throughout the secondary plan process.

Next Steps

Dillion Consulting Ltd. has begun the required background analysis and studies for the secondary plan which includes a Subwatershed Study, Archaeological Assessment, Servicing Study, Transportation Study, and many more and will bring forward an update to a future meeting of Council.

Financial Implications/Budget Impact

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Grassy Brook Secondary Plan has an approved budget allotment of \$725,000 and the Niagara Region has committed \$200,000 towards this amount.

Strategic/Departmental Alignment

The development of the Grassy Brook Secondary Plan is consistent with the Vibrant and Diverse Economy, Healthy Safe and Liveable Community, and Diverse and Affordable Housing priorities.

List of Attachments

[Schedule 1 - PBD-2023-23](#)

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Submitted by:
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Status:
Approved
- 11 Jan
2023

SCHEDULE 1

