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**Subject: Initiation Report: Regional Official Plan Amendment 13 (ROPA 13)  
Transportation Policies**

**Report To: Planning and Development Committee**

**Meeting Date: Wednesday February 22, 2017**

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## **Recommendations**

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.
2. That a copy of this report **BE CIRCULATED** to the local municipalities.

## **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the intent to initiate an Amendment to the Regional Official Plan (ROP) to replace and enhance the existing transportation policies in Chapter 9 of the ROP with comprehensive policies developed as part of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP).
- Transportation policies currently existing within Chapter 9 of the ROP are outdated and must be revised.
- Updating the transportation policies within the ROP is a key component of the implementation of the TMP recommendations.
- Regional Official Plan Amendment 13 (ROPA 13) will equip Niagara with current and sound transportation policy to ensure best practices are utilized across the region.
- Although the Region will be preparing a new ROP, this Amendment is required in order to ensure consistency between the TMP and the current ROP. It is expected that this section will be carried over to the new ROP with only minor changes if required.

## **Considerations**

### **Financial**

The cost of the work associated with this Amendment was funded within the Planning and Development Services' 2016 operating levy budget. More specifically, \$35,000.00 was allocated from the Planning and Development Services Department budget to the TMP for the development of draft transportation policies.

## **Corporate**

Planning and Development Services is working collaboratively with Public Works and Public Health on the development of the transportation policies.

## **Governmental Partners**

Local planning and public works departments will be engaged throughout the development of the draft transportation policies. ROPA 13 will be distributed to all appropriate government agencies, including Provincial agencies through the one-window review process, for review and comment. All received feedback will be considered towards the development of new transportation policies.

## **Public and/or Service Users**

To date, the TMP has completed three of its four sets of public information sessions as a part of its public consultation process. During the TMPs fourth set of public information sessions, the public will be informed of the upcoming draft transportation policies.

ROPA 13 is being initiated under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, as it is considered an update to conform to provincial policy. Amendments under Section 26 require that an open house and statutory public meeting at Committee be held to receive feedback on the draft policies. The statutory open house and public meeting are anticipated to be held in March and April of 2017. All public input will be considered during the development and review of the policies and will be addressed in the staff recommendation report. The recommendation report is anticipated to be brought forward to Planning and Development Services Committee for consideration in Q3 of 2017 to align with the endorsement of the TMP.

## **Analysis**

The TMP is a comprehensive study that directs how the Niagara Transportation Network will be designed, the modes that will utilize it (pedestrian, cyclist, transit, rail, air, freight, automobile), and the investments needed to achieve it. The TMP provides direction and insight towards the creation of the new transportation policies for Niagara's ROP.

ROPA 13 is intended to be brought forward with the TMP. The Amendment will be replacing the existing transportation policies in Chapter 9 with new comprehensive regional policies. The Amendment will be brought forward under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, as it is considered an update to the Official Plan to conform to provincial policies. ROPA 13 will enact new policies that will align with and conform to new Provincial legislations and regulations, including the anticipated revisions to the Growth

Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Amendment will equip Niagara with current and sound transportation policy to ensure best practices are utilized across the region.

ROPA 13 will include policies to address the following transportation elements:

- Transportation Systems;
- Regional Road System (including road allowances and right-of-ways);
- Public Transit;
- Railroads, Marine, and Airports;
- Active Transportation; and,
- Complete Streets and Transportation Demand Management.

The transportation policies within the Amendment will implement the direction and recommendations identified by the TMP. In 2015, the TMP project scope included the development of transportation policies. ROPA 13 is intended to be brought forward in 2017 in coordination with the TMP. The background work for the new ROP will be starting in 2017 and will, at minimum, take 2-4 years to complete. To have new transportation policies on hold for 2-4 years is not the best approach at this time.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

### **Complete transportation policies update through the new ROP process.**

Should Council decide to not endorse the initiation of ROPA 13, the transportation section can be addressed during the review and update of the ROP. The new ROP process has not yet commenced and will take, at minimum, 2-4 years to complete. Given the timing of the new ROP in relation to the completion of the TMP, staff believes updating our transportation policies through ROPA 13 is most advantageous.

## **Origin of Report**

This report was brought forward by staff to inform Council of the initiation of ROPA 13, which will replace and enhance the existing transportation policies in Chapter 9 of the ROP with comprehensive policies informed by the TMP.

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

Not applicable.

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**Submitted by:**

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Commissioner,  
Planning and Development Services

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**Approved by:**

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Chief Administrative Officer

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**Appendices**

None.