



PROSPERITY ROUNDTABLE

of Peterborough Region

Plenary Session - June 22, 2009

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Response from Ms. Linda Reed, CAO – City of Peterborough

Ms. Linda Reed, CAO, provided the Prosperity Roundtable of Peterborough Region with an administrative response to Key Observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report.

Community Vision Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Community Vision Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- The City of Peterborough is currently using the Community Vision Statement from the GPA 2020 Report and linking the City's Goals and Strategic Priorities to that Community Vision Statement.
- The City agreed to participate in a review of the Community Vision Statement should there be a decision to proceed with the review.
- The City recognized that 68% of the "Areas of Action" section of the Vision 2020 document were either complete or continuing and a further 15% are linked to the "network or committee" that was recommended. The Prosperity Roundtable could be considered a substitute for that "network or committee".

Based on the percentages identified in the previous paragraph, a substantial number of the items in the "Areas of Action" have progressed and this accomplishment should be acknowledged and celebrated.

Transportation / Infrastructure Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Transportation / Infrastructure Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- The Task Team suggestion to consider a mechanism for public and private infrastructure projects could be addressed more fully once the 2010 budget is approved. The City would be willing to host a meeting with Task Team members to discuss potential projects, if any.
- The City currently uses the private sector for the majority of the capital projects included in the capital budget.
- It is necessary to complete a review of projects to determine if there are any potential public and private partnership projects within the capital budget or the capital forecast.
- The City and County currently work together when required on issues such as the interconnectivity of traffic flows, impact of traffic on the retail sector, ring road system, etc.
- The extent of the collaboration between the City and County Administration on projects of importance to both municipalities is understated in the Report of the Task Team.
- The City is currently completing a Transportation Master Plan in accordance with the requirements of an environmental assessment and the Task Team is encouraged to participate in the public participation component of that process.
- The item on a Regional Transportation Plan identified in the Vision Task Team Report is less likely to be realized in a formal way in the near future. Discussions on needs continue to be exchanged at the staff level and demands on time and resources may result in this being an informal exchange at this time. The needs are met through the County Transportation Master Plan and the City Transportation Master Plan and the cooperation in the development of both plans.

Industrial Land Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Industrial Land Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- Efforts to improve the industrial land opportunities at Trent University and the Peterborough Airport are on-going.
- The creation of pre-existing land holding agreements may be an interesting idea but the risks and benefits associated with that approach would have to be examined and compared with what is currently in place in the Townships.
- The City is comfortable that information required to provide a response to site selectors or interested parties is available and the City will continue to work with the GPA EDC to ensure that the most current information is available.
- The servicing of properties that are zoned industrial but not currently fully serviced is addressed as allowed in the City's budget.
- The City meets with the development community (residential, commercial, and industrial) on an individual basis as required and with the homebuilders' association on an annual basis. The structure of these meetings is already in place.
- The City has worked to ensure that the land development process meets the requirements of the industry and the legislation. The City will consider suggestions that could improve the process providing the changes do not compromise delivery of legislative requirements. The City Planning and Development Department is the "contact point" for developers and that Department co-ordinates the application comments received from a variety of commenting agencies.
- The Task Team comments regarding industrial land tax rates will be discussed under the Municipal Environment Task Team items.
- The City is comfortable that the appropriate contacts between the City and the GPA EDC are in place for the marketing of available industrial properties.

Municipal Environment Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Municipal Environment Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- The City has identified the Planning and Development Department as the contact point for developers. Information on a development application is coordinated through that department. The need to meet land use, engineering, conservation and related requirements is part of the regulatory requirement in Ontario. The Planning and Development Department functions as the key contact for developers to try and coordinate the responses of the various commenting agencies.
- The Task Team wanted to focus on the commercial and industrial tax rate. The City had a policy and implementation plan in place to realign the tax burden between the various classes. The implementation plan as set out in the policy did not appear to be shifting the burden at a rate that was satisfactory. City Council and Administration agreed to work on a revised, multi-year approach. The Task Team provided input to the most recent public participation session of Budget Committee of Council on this topic and the City encourages the Task Team to continue to participate in future public debate on this item. This will be before the Budget Committee of Council meets again in the Fall of 2009 for the 2010 Budget.

Downtown Revitalization Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Downtown Revitalization Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- City Council recently approved the Central Area Master Plan. The City recommends that the Task Team focus on the implementation of the plan. Identifying priorities would be helpful because the funding of implementation is a balancing act based on what the municipality can afford.
- Places to Grow legislation will provide guidance to the residential intensification of the downtown area.
- Providing assistance to reduce the barriers for bringing older buildings up to code is complex and must be considered with other budgetary issues.

Sustainability Task Team

The City of Peterborough Administration provided the following comments in response to the Sustainability Task Team's observations contained in the 2008 Fall Report:

- There is a heightened level of consideration for sustainability issues throughout the various departments of the City. However, the potential for adding a dedicated position as an Energy and Environmental Officer is not likely in the 2010 budget due to financial constraints. Components of the work considered for the dedicated position are included in other positions within the corporate structure.
- The City would have to consider how to integrate an Environmental Advisory Committee as an additional advisory committee into the current advisory and standing committee process of Council. The evaluation of that integration should be discussed further with the Task Team because some of the current advisory committees have included in their mandates aspects that would be considered part of an environmental mandate.

City of Peterborough - Next Steps

- The City encourages the Transportation / Infrastructure Task Team to attend and comment during the public participation component of the Transportation Master Plan process.
- The City encourages participation in the Official Plan Amendment process that will incorporate the Places to Grow policies. This will be before Council in the near future.
- As the Task Teams move forward, it would be helpful for the City if the Prosperity Roundtable developed a process to evaluate and comment on the priority of the various observations. There are times when observations may be contradictory (e.g. tax rates vs. funding incentive programs) and a method of setting priorities would clarify the position of the Prosperity Roundtable.
- The City suggests that future recommendations take into account the current, high level of cooperation between the City and the County.
- The City suggests that the Key Conclusions be revised to incorporate the fact that many of the items are currently being addressed and the recommendations of the Prosperity Roundtable is to ensure that the work continues.

Response from Mr. Gary King, CAO – County of Peterborough

With input from key County staff members, Mr. Gary King, CAO, provided the Prosperity Roundtable of Peterborough Region with an administrative response to Key Conclusions in the 2008 Fall Report.

Introduction

Mr. Gary King, on behalf of the County of Peterborough, began by applauding the ultimate objective of increasing jobs and prosperity in the Peterborough region.

The County agreed with / encourages the consolidation of Task Team's for ongoing activity of the Prosperity Roundtable. It is extremely important that there is a positive mechanism to garner the input of the business community as to their thoughts and needs for the municipal budgeting process and assessment of priorities.

Many of the Prosperity Roundtable recommendations must be viewed within the context of Municipal Fiscal Capacity, and the timing of initiatives must be prioritized.

In response to the Prosperity Roundtable's 2008 Fall Report, the County supports all Key Conclusions as a matter of principal.

The County has some of their own views in terms of how to achieve the desired objectives. Additionally, a number of the Key Observations and recommended actions would need to involve the Townships and the private sector as these areas are out of the County's jurisdiction, or instances where the County has not historically had any involvement (e.g. industrial land options and/or industrial park development).

County of Peterborough – Key Conclusions

Key Conclusion: Importance of refreshing Community Vision – build on GPA 2020 Vision process.

County Response / Observations:

- The GPA EDC is currently preparing a five-year update to its Strategic Plan. This update should provide a conduit to address many vision issues and translate them into annual work plans. Additionally, the update process also has a mechanism for public and Council input before formal adoption.
- The County and City plan on a long-range basis (i.e. 20-plus years).

Key Conclusion: The City and County acting in concert when the opportunity presents itself.

County Response / Observations:

- The City and County make a conscientious effort to work cooperatively and in unison on important projects and service delivery requirements.
- The County is committed to continue to work in unison with the City where applicable.

Key Conclusion: The importance of engaging the business community in providing input in the shaping of the community.

County Response / Observation:

- The County is very supportive of the decision to have the Prosperity Roundtable a permanent and ongoing initiative and as such, it can continue to be a mechanism to ensure the business community's input is received and there is a transfer of information from elected officials.
- The County has conscientiously increased their efforts to enhance communications to the broader public, including the business sector through various means:
 - Development of a Corporate website with regular updates
 - Development of a Newsletter
 - Circulation of Quarterly and Year End Reports to advise of projects and priorities
- The County has representation at the GPA EDC, Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Board and annual Rotary Club presentations to contribute to and ensure on-going two-way communications.

Key Conclusion: The importance of applying a sustainability lens to future development.

County Response / Observation:

- The County supported the Sustainable Peterborough Plan, with representation from the Sustainability Task Team, to move forward with an FCM application for funding to develop a community sustainability plan with certain conditions.
- The County agrees with Mr. Mitchell that the development of a sustainability plan may help to differentiate the region with the potential to establish a competitive advantage.
- There are concerns that the process of a sustainability plan is a duplication of efforts as the County is already implementing best practices to become more sustainable.

Key Conclusion: The importance of efficient interaction of the public and private sector as an important component of providing a competitive advantage.

County Response / Observation:

- There is a need to encourage and enhance interaction and communication between the public and private sector; this will become more important as the Federal government introduces a P3 screening requirement for future projects considered for grant funding.
- The Prosperity Roundtable can serve as a mechanism to create the interaction and communication necessary.

Key Conclusion: The importance of differentiating Peterborough region as a key to establishing a competitive advantage.

County Response / Observation:

- The ability to focus on creating a competitive advantage implies that you are in the same position as your competitors from the beginning.
- Some of our efforts must be dedicated to remaining competitive – ensuring fundamentals are in place (i.e. new hospital, and broadband connectivity).

Key Conclusion: The importance of maintaining and improving quality of life as key to pursuing economic and social growth.

- The County is very supportive of this conclusion – e.g. approved grant funding for YWCA Women’s Shelter, and CT Scan medical equipment.

Conclusion

In regards to the Key Observations, some have been referred to or captured in the previous comments. The following comments address Key Observations, or related areas, that were not captured in the previous comments.

- Key Observations relating to economic development and / or exploring potential opportunities are considered to be within the purview of the GPA EDC and could be placed before the GPA EDC board with the possibility to be forwarded for consideration of Joint Services. i.e:
 - Reserve land availability for industrial purposes
 - Creation of small industrial parcels
 - Consideration of full servicing of land
- Regarding the reduction of industrial land taxes, the municipalities acted very aggressively lobbying the Provincial government to reduce education tax on commercial/industrial properties.
- Many Key Observations relating to Transportation have been discussed between senior staff of the County and City, and select issues have been included within the Terms of Study for the City transportation planning study update.
- The County has been aggressively lobbying for enhanced funding for Highway 7 improvements to the east.
- Additional investment announcements are anticipated as a result of ongoing Build Canada Fund submissions and the recently announced Federal / Provincial Stimulus Fund.
- Prioritization of Prosperity Roundtable work is imperative for County consideration / implementation.

Report to Plenary

Prosperity Roundtable members and additional participants, separated by Task Team, were asked to discuss the response presented by City and County representatives and develop an action plan for the associated Task Team.

Community Vision

Mr. Joe Lipsett, chair of the Community Vision Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Acknowledgement of the hard work of the City and County to assist the Prosperity Roundtable initiative; the Community Vision Task Team has progressed in their initiatives.
- Suggestion that all Task Teams view the bigger picture and only pursue initiatives that are feasible.
- The Prosperity Roundtable initiatives should be prioritized in terms of importance and potential of implementation.
- Initiatives with no potential for implementation should be prioritized as such.
- Any progress should be celebrated with the business and general community.
- Leverage progress to make initiatives more measurable.
- Need to develop a plan that the GPA EDC can execute.
- Education and Training needs to be enunciated in the plan.
- Looking to expand possibilities and facets of input to develop an accurate vision.
- Need to keep monitoring the process to act as a showcase of what has been accomplished.
- Need to keep the vision refreshed on a common basis.
- Need to keep the vision in the public eye to ensure everyone is working toward the same end.
- The Prosperity Roundtable must coordinate priorities, not only between Task Teams but also collectively with the municipalities.
- Need to maximize progress in the known environment, as we are dealing with two different, distinct cultures, business and public.

Sustainability Task Team

Mr. Ian Attridge, chair of the Sustainability Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Appreciative of the feedback from City and County representatives; this will create a forum for on-going discussions.
- There may be some confusion regarding the role of the Sustainability Task Team and the Sustainable Peterborough Steering Committee – two separate entities working to ensure minimal duplication of efforts.
- Potential to set goals for LEED certification for all new buildings – opportunities to provide net operational savings.
- Need for enhanced interaction between Task Teams to identify additional synergies and linkages.
- Potential to include additional economic sectors in the Prosperity Roundtable initiative to help differentiate Peterborough in a larger market – e.g. arts and culture, heritage, agriculture.

- Regarding an Environmental and Energy Officer: this position is critical and will save municipal operating costs that can be used to supplement the position's wage.

Municipal Environment Task Team

Mr. Dan Stanford, chair of the Municipal Environment Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Acknowledged Peterborough is reasonably competitive in terms of their municipal environment - e.g. tax rates.
- Discussed the potential establishment of a summit for best practices within the municipalities to encourage sharing.
- Need for more entrepreneurial thinking.
- Both the City and County reports addressed a one-window development approach; there is a potential for the Municipal Environment Task Team to work collaboratively with the Chamber of Commerce to revise the current development perspective and identify barriers and solutions in a user friendly format.
- GPA EDC could act as a facilitator with development projects, especially regarding rural areas.
- Need to examine the municipal competitiveness and seek areas that could be improved.
- A communications plan is needed to dispel misinformed perceptions.
- Position negative development perceptions to enlighten planning staff to improve the process and showcase success stories.

Downtown Revitalization Task Team

Ms. Fiona Dawson, representing the Downtown Revitalization Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Need to acknowledge the work done on the Downtown Area Master Plan with an emphasis to minimize the duplication of efforts.
- Extremely important to keep the business community involved in the downtown development process.
- Need to identify specific target markets regarding residential development in the downtown core – e.g. new Canadians, youth and young professionals.
 - Studies show 100% of the population growth in 2020 will be attributed to new Canadians.
- Need to focus on transportation in the downtown core to target new entrants to the City.
- Need to focus on incentives to refurbish downtown buildings to allow for additional office space and residential housing.

Industrial Land Task Team

Ms. Laura Lauzon, representing the Industrial Land Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Regarding the creation of pre-existing land holding agreements, held jointly by municipalities; there is a need to conduct additional research to identify existing models utilized by other communities to help prevent the Peterborough area from losing large clients.
- Need to reexamine the possibility of a joint industrial park.
- Need to act in a support role for Trent University and Peterborough Airport developments.

- Need to continuously revisit the budget to address the full servicing of properties to optimize potential development opportunities.
- Need to recognize the development of employment lands that will be serviced with water / sewer south of the Peterborough Airport in Fraserville.
- Acknowledgment of the on-going work of the City and County to encourage continual engagement between the municipal sector and the development sector.
- Need to develop (or identify and promote) feedback opportunities to assist individuals through the land development planning process.

The Industrial Land Task Team identified the following items of the utmost priority:

- Explore potential opportunities for industrial development at Trent University and the Peterborough Airport.
- Consider the creation of small industrial land parcels that are non-prestige.

Transportation / Infrastructure Task Team

Mr. Bruce Danford, chair of the Transportation / Infrastructure Task Team, reported to the Plenary on the observations and discussion developed during the break out session.

Plenary Report Highlights:

- Regarding spending priorities, transportation involves vast amounts of money; the north-south transportation route was not adopted which would have been important to the business community.
- For long range forecasting purposes, it is more important to have a plan as opposed to recommending specific projects.
- The Places to Grow legislation is impacting transportation plans moving forward.
- Acknowledgement of the Airport as a potential key economic driver.
- There is a perception, at the Federal level, that there isn't unanimous support for the Peterborough Airport; there is a need to publicly stand united to change this perception.
- Need for City and County to take a more active role in transportation planning for the business community.