



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 15-199**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services
Date of Meeting: March 24, 2015
Subject: Employment Land Strategy Review Study – Final Report

Executive Summary:

The Employment Land Strategy Review Study for the City of Kingston has been completed by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., in association with Dillon Consulting Limited. The background and recommendations are contained in a report titled “City of Kingston Employment Land Strategy Review” dated March 2015 (attached as Exhibit A to Report Number 15-199).

The purpose of the study was to undertake a comprehensive review of both City-owned and privately-owned employment lands within the City and to recommend a long term vision and strategy to ensure the provision of an adequate supply of jobs for the City’s growing population. The recommendations of the study will be implemented through the City’s 5 Year Official Plan Update and feed into the preparation of the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law.

There were two public open houses held, one early in the process to identify employment land issues and another meeting to publicly present the draft report. Meetings were also held with stakeholders and those landowners requesting to have their properties considered for conversion from or to employment lands.

This report is being presented directly to Council for endorsement as it is a major policy document that will have long term impacts on land use and economic development in all areas of the City. Upon acceptance of the report and its recommendations, staff will forward the study to the consulting team completing the preparation of the 5 Year Official Plan Update and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review for implementation.

March 24, 2015

Page 2 of 6

Recommendation:

That Council endorse the City of Kingston Employment Land Strategy Review Final Report, dated March 2015, prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., attached as Exhibit A to Report 15-199; and

That the Employment Land Strategy Review Final Report be forwarded to the 5 year Official Plan Update project team and Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review project team for consideration.

Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Cynthia Beach, Corporate & Strategic Initiatives

Denis Leger, Transportation, Facilities & Emergency Services Not required

Jim Keech, President and CEO, Utilities Kingston Not required

Desiree Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer Not required

March 24, 2015

Page 3 of 6

Options/Discussion:

The purpose of the Employment Land Strategy Review is to undertake a comprehensive review of both City-owned and privately-owned employment lands within the City and to recommend a long term vision and strategy to support long term economic growth and to ensure the provision of an adequate supply of jobs for the City's growing population. As well, this policy document will ensure that the City continues to remain competitive and sustainable through its land use planning, phasing and accommodating future land needs in conjunction with infrastructure planning and financial responsibility.

The Strategy reviews and makes specific recommendations on the employment land use policies currently contained in the Official Plan and the regulations to be considered in the future Comprehensive Zoning By-Law. It is important that the City's policies and zoning framework are appropriate, protect employment uses and deal with current and future economic trends. The Employment Land Strategy Review will form part of the background for the City's 5 Year Official Plan Update and the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review.

In addition, the Employment Land Strategy Review is intended to fulfill part of the *Planning Act* requirements for a municipal comprehensive review. The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement requires municipalities to provide for an appropriate mix and range of employment to meet the municipality's long term needs. Municipalities must ensure an adequate supply of land suitable for employment uses by protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses.

The City of Kingston Planning Division initiated an RFP process to retain a consultant to undertake an Employment Land Strategy Review for the City. Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., in association with Dillon Consulting Limited, were chosen to conduct this study.

Objectives

As set out in the RFP, the main objectives of the study were as follows:

- a) To provide an overview of City-owned and privately-owned employment land base and identify any limitations in the industrial land supply (i.e., annual absorption rate, shortage or surplus of overall lands, amount of market ready (serviced) lands, sites of certain size, features, location, etc.) as well as an inventory of existing, vacant industrial floor space;
- b) To consider the best employment land use category of newly acquired City-owned lands;
- c) To review the existing employment area zones, the intent of the industrial land use designations and recent practices in other municipalities in order to provide recommendations for consideration by the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review for appropriate zoning standards that can accommodate a range of evolving employment uses and higher intensity land use through consideration of such matters as lot coverage, building setbacks, landscaping, building heights, parking and loading;

March 24, 2015

Page 4 of 6

- d) To review the Employment Areas policies in the Official Plan with respect to 'complementary uses' and provide any necessary recommendations to strengthen the intent of these uses in the Business Park Industrial, General Industrial and Waste Management Industrial designations;
- e) To examine the pressure to allow the conversion of Employment Area lands to permit a broader range of uses, particularly commercial, and review the existing criteria for consideration of requests for conversion or expansion to the range of permitted uses on employment lands;
- f) To review the Rural Industrial policies in the Official Plan and provide any necessary recommendations on the policy framework designed to limit growth outside the urban boundary and protect the rural area;
- g) To forecast future demand of employment land to 2041 based on absorption rates, existing vacant industrial land supply and the most recent employment projections;
- h) To examine the role of public and private sectors in employment land development;
- i) To create a long-term vision and plan for employment land within the City to ensure employment and residential opportunities are well-balanced;
- j) To recommend strategies to promote and attract employment growth; and
- k) To identify the major trends shaping Kingston's economy and employment.

Considering the changes of some neighbourhoods over the past years, City staff wanted to ensure that this policy review not only considered the quantity of employment lands available to meet the needs of population growth, but also to analyze the feasibility and appropriateness of employment lands. The review was completed with the intent to provide not only enough long term employment lands but also to ensure a level of quality required to attract and retain businesses. The study also considered existing neighbourhoods that have developed over the years and the appropriateness of employment lands in those areas recognizing proximity to sensitive uses.

Consultation

During the study process, meaningful consultation with the public and the development community was considered critical and occurred at the public open houses and in individual meetings with property owners and stakeholders. A dedicated City website page and a dedicated email address were maintained by staff throughout the study process.

The initial public open house was held early in the process to identify any issues from the public/landowner perspective. The initial open house was extensively advertised in the newspaper, on the City website and individual notices were mailed to all land owners of industrial properties. There was an afternoon open house session and an evening session.

At all public sessions and stakeholder meetings and through written communications, it was emphasized that if land owners wanted their properties considered for conversion to another Official Plan designation that the Employment Land Strategy Review was the process that they needed to be involved in to be included in the 5 Year Official Plan Review.

March 24, 2015

Page 5 of 6

City staff also worked closely and met with KEDCO staff on a number of occasions throughout the process. City staff recently received some additional feedback from KEDCO which will be reviewed and incorporated through the Official Plan update and Zoning By-Law consolidation.

Prior to the final public open house, individual meetings were held with key stakeholders and property owners who had requested to be considered for conversion of the Official Plan designations on their properties. On February 25, 2015 a final public open house was held to present the draft report to the public. Comments were received until March 6, 2015.

Recommendations and Discussion

Exhibit A is the City of Kingston Employment Land Strategy Review report provided by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., in association with Dillon Consulting Limited, on their findings and their recommendations. Some of the study's main recommendations include:

- 1) That the City maintain a 5 year supply of serviced and available land at all times to allow for adequate market choice particularly for Business Park lands;
- 2) That the remaining unserviced lands (49 hectares) adjacent to the Cataraqui Estates Industrial Park be serviced by 2021 to ensure that the City has adequate Business Park lands;
- 3) That the Clogg's Road Property and former O.R.C. lands be designated for employment uses and serviced in the next 5 to 10 years. This would require that the City prepare a secondary plan and designate the lands for Business Park in the next few years;
- 4) That the City explore development opportunities with Queen's University and other external partners to expand the shovel ready land supply within Innovation Park;
- 5) That the City expand its urban boundary immediately to include the City owned property (25 hectares) immediate to the north of the St. Lawrence Business Park so that these lands are available for servicing over the longer term and that the "Deferred Area" be planned in detail through a secondary plan or detailed concept in the short to medium term;
- 6) That secondary plans be undertaken for the lands in the Sydenham/401 Area and the Alcan Industrial Area and that the lands be developed in the longer term;
- 7) That a secondary plan be completed for the Old Industrial Area. The northern part of the Wellington Street Extension is required to permit access and to service some of the lands in the Old Industrial Area and also to improve the development potential of the broader area;
- 8) That the City should continue to focus rural employment development in the McAdoo's Lane area and discourage scattered employment development in rural area outside of defined rural development clusters;
- 9) That the 12 sites recommended for conversion to employment designations and the one site recommended for conversion from employment uses be dealt with through the 5 Year Official Plan Update;
- 10) That the recommendations in the policy and zoning evaluation be implemented through the 5 Year Official Plan Review and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law; and
- 11) That the City reviews its marketing approach to employment lands.

March 24, 2015

Page 6 of 6

Staff recommends to Council that the Employment Land Strategy Review, by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., be accepted and that staff be requested to forward the report to the consulting team for the 5 Year Official Plan Update and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law project for implementation. Both the Official Plan Update and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law will have extensive consultation programs and statutory *Planning Act* processes.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

City of Kingston Official Plan

Former City of Kingston Zoning By-Law Number 8499

Former Township of Kingston Zoning By-Law Number 76-26

Former Township of Pittsburgh Zoning By-Law Number 32-74

Notice Provisions:

Notice of this meeting was provided by a Courtesy Notice in the *Kingston Whig-Standard*. There will be further consultation and statutory notices under the *Planning Act* when implementation occurs as part of the 5 Year Official Plan Update and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review.

Accessibility Considerations:

Not applicable

Financial Considerations:

Not applicable

Contacts:

Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services 613-546-4291 extension 3252

Cherie Mills, Manager, Policy Planning, Planning Division 613-546-4291 extension 3289

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Peter Huigenbos, Manager, Real Estate & Land Development

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A City of Kingston Employment Land Strategy Review, dated March 2015

Exhibit B Public Submissions