

INFORMATION ITEMS

Week Ending August 5, 2016

REPORTS

1. Bill 73 – Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015; Municipal Implications of Changes to the Planning Act
2. Ontario Regulation 144/16 made under the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-Carbon Economy Act, 2016 (Cap and trade Program)

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATIONS

1. Ontario Municipal Board Reform
2. Inclusionary Zoning
3. Intercity Bus Modernization
4. Let's Talk Housing
5. Federal Government Infrastructure

CORRESPONDENCE

1. GRCA *Current*, August 2016

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

1. Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Committee - Resignation from Skylar Grayson

ITEMS AVAILABLE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE

1. None

INFORMATION REPORT



TO City Council

SERVICE AREA Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services

DATE August 4, 2016

**SUBJECT Bill 73 – *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015*;
Municipal Implications of Changes to the *Planning Act***

REPORT NUMBER 16-60

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF REPORT

To outline the changes to the *Planning Act* enacted by Bill 73 – *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015*.

KEY FINDINGS

A few immediate administrative changes have been made by staff in keeping with Bill 73 regulations. Following further comprehensive review by staff any additional recommended changes will be brought forward in a separate report to Council in the fall of 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this time.

BACKGROUND

In October 2013, the Provincial government announced a review of the “Land Use Planning and Appeal System” and “Development Charges in Ontario”. Between 2013 and 2015, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) consulted with municipalities, the public and other stakeholders on what changes were needed related to land use planning in the context of ensuring it is “predictable, transparent, cost-effective and responsive to the changing needs of communities.” The resulting changes were passed by Bill 73 in December 2015 and the related final regulations came into effect July 1, 2016.

REPORT

Bill 73, the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* received Royal Assent on December 3, 2015. The Act makes changes to both the *Development Charges Act* and *Planning Act* in order to:

- Help municipalities fund growth;
- Give residents a greater, more meaningful say in how their communities grow;

INFORMATION REPORT



- Protect and promote greenspaces;
- Make the development charges system more predictable, transparent and accountable;
- Make the planning and appeals process more predictable;
- Give municipalities more independence and make it easier to resolve disputes.

Some changes to the *Planning Act* came into force when the Bill was passed on December 3, 2015. These amendments include:

- Restricted ability of ministries other than the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to be added as a party to an Ontario Municipal Board appeal.
- An extended review cycle of the Provincial Policy Statement from 5 to 10 years.
- Removed the references to "referral" in Subsections 4(1) and 4(2) of the *Planning Act*, as the Minister does not have powers for site plan approvals that could be delegated.
- Section 22.1 has been added to the *Planning Act* to provide certainty that when new policies or laws come into effect, applications for official plan amendments are subject to the previous policies or laws only if the required supporting material (i.e. complete application) has been submitted prior to the transition date.

A number of new or revised *Planning Act* regulations came into force on July 1, 2016. Most of the regulations are needed to implement a number of the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* changes to the *Planning Act*. Other changes are being made to update and simplify some of the direction in the existing regulations.

The new and revised *Planning Act* regulations will:

- enhance complete application requirements for official plan and zoning by-law amendments, minister's zoning order amendments, and plans of subdivision;
- update and simplify notice requirements to make them easier to access and understand;
- require the record sent to the Ontario Municipal Board following an appeal of a minor variance to include the minutes of a public hearing;
- change the name of the "development permit system" to "community planning permit system", and put in place a five year "timeout" for requests to amend the system after it is established, unless permitted by the municipality;
- include technical changes to update and modernize the regulations, such as improving consistency of the language used in the regulations and in the legislation
- set out specific rules for planning matters that are in process when the *Planning Act* changes came into force on July 1, 2016.

INFORMATION REPORT



Attachment 1 sets out the changes that are now in effect and identifies those that have an immediate or potential future impact on City planning processes. Many of the changes result in no immediate effect or change required to our current municipal processes. Further details about the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* and its implementation, can be found on Province's website at the following link: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page11014.aspx>.

Next Steps

Staff will bring a report to Council outlining any further recommended changes to City procedures resulting from these regulatory changes in the fall of 2016.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

- 3.1 Ensure a well-designed, safe, inclusive, appealing and sustainable city.
- 3.3 Strengthen citizen and stakeholder engagement and communications.

DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATION

Staff in Planning, Clerks and Legal Services have met to discuss the changes to the *Planning Act* and City implications. A future report will outline any further recommended changes to current processes.

COMMUNICATIONS

None at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Summary of *Planning Act* Changes

Report Author

Katie Nasswetter
Senior Development Planner

Reviewed By

Sylvia Kirkwood
Manager of Development Planning

Approved By

Todd Salter
General Manager
Planning, Urban Design and
Building Services
519-822-1260, ext. 2395
todd.salter@guelph.ca

Recommended By

Scott Stewart, C.E.T.
Deputy CAO
Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise
519-822-1260, ext. 3445
scott.stewart@guelph.ca

INFORMATION REPORT

Attachment 1

Summary of *Planning Act* Changes

<i>Planning Act</i> Change	City Implications
1. Planning Advisory Committees (PACs) (Section 8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All upper and single tier municipalities in S. Ont. are required to establish PACs • All PACs must have one citizen member (not exclusively Councillors) • Council must establish make up of PAC and which matters the PAC would review/provide input on • PAC recommendations are advice, and not binding • Municipalities can add new responsibilities to existing committees to meet the requirement for PACs or existing committees may be determined to meet the intent of this provision if they currently provide advice on planning matters 	Staff to consider options for a future recommendation to Council.
2. Enhanced Requirements for Public Input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OMB required to have regard to all information received by the municipality for non-decision appeals, including written and oral public submissions • Applies to Official Plans (OP), Official Plan Amendments (OPA), Zoning By-laws (ZBL), Zoning By-law Amendments (ZBLA), Subdivisions, Consents and Minor Variances (MV). 	No action required.
3. Requirement to Explain Effect of Public Input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality must explain effect of public input (if any) on planning decisions • Notice of decision must now include explanation of effect of public input on Council's decision • Local discretion given in how to explain • Applies to OP, OPA, ZBL, ZBLA, Subdivision, Consent and MV. 	<p>Action Taken: A clause has been added to decision notices clarifying that all written and oral public input is taken into consideration for each decision on these planning matters.</p> <p>Planning recommendation reports already outline public input and how it was considered.</p>
4. Enhanced Notice Provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory change permits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ notice by email ○ request owners of multi-tenant (7+) buildings post the notice where all tenants can see it 	<p>Action Taken: A clause has been added to public notices requesting owners to post in multi-tenant buildings</p> <p>Staff to consider alternatives</p>

INFORMATION REPORT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ modernized newspaper and written notices, simpler notices permitted that direct people to where to find more info, including appeal rights. ○ Simpler property sign notices • Change allows municipalities to develop OP policies that set out alternative notice procedures (who receives, how given, timing for public meetings) by using alternative notice provisions for a broader list of processes and application types • Applies to OP, OPA, ZBL, ZBLA, Subdivision, and Consent 	regarding simplifying current notices and related procedures
5. Requirement to include Public Consultation Policies in Official Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPs must include description of measures and procedures for informing and obtaining public input • Can be specific to the needs of the municipality or simply reflected legislated requirements (should be considered together with alternative municipal notice requirements) • Applies to OP, OPA, ZBL, ZBLA, Subdivision, and Consent 	Staff to consider together with alternatives notice requirements
6. Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) Review Cycle changed from 5 to 10 years.	No action required.
7. New requirement to submit draft OP/OPAs to MMA 90 days prior to Notice of Public Meeting.	No action required at this time.
8. Upper and Lower Tier conformity required for OPs and OP updates	No action required.
9. 10 year review cycle for new OPs	No action required at this time.
10. 2 year "Time-out" – new OPs and ZBLs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No privately initiated applications to amend a new OP or ZBL for 2 years unless supported by municipality • Only applies to comprehensive ZBLs passed within 3 years of new a OP • Does not apply to OP changes through a 5 year review • Municipality must pass a motion to allow to proceed within 2 years; motion can be site-specific, a specific class of application or all applications 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration when future new OP and future ZBL come into effect.</p>

INFORMATION REPORT

11. New Provincial Interest in Built Form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall have regard to "Built form that is well designed, encourages a sense of place, provides for public places that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant" • Built environment policies required in OP 	<p>No action required.</p> <p>Guelph already has OP policies addressing built form and urban design.</p>
12. Protection of Employment Lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities no longer required to revise their employment land policies/designations at time of OP update (still encouraged to keep up to date) 	<p>No action required at this time.</p>
13. 90 day "time-out" for OP/OPAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval authority and applicant can agree to a pause of up to 90 days in 180 day decision timeline for approving OPA • Either party can initiate time out; both parties need to agree to it • Time-out starts when one party gives written notice to the other ahead of the 180 day period expiry • Either party can terminate time-out at any point • Municipality to decide whether to notify interested parties/public about time-out 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration for future OPAs.</p>
14. Development Permit System Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renaming Development Permit System to Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) • 5 year "time-out" for CPPS • Requiring Use of CPPS (authority to MMA or upper-tier municipalities) for specific purposes 	<p>No action required at this time.</p>
15. Complete Application Requirements for OPAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to clarify transition applications for OPAs are subject to previous policies/legislation only if the complete application was made prior to transition date. 	<p>For consideration for any OPAs underway prior to July 1, 2016.</p>
16. Changes to Appeal Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Appeal of OPs/OPAs for specific Provincial Approvals (includes boundaries of vulnerable areas as defined in the Clean Water Act, Greenbelt, forecasted population and employment growth in Growth Plan, etc.) • No appeal of second unit policies • No ability to appeal entire new OP • Clearer reasons for appeals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Appellant needs to explain the reasons for an appeal in respect of provincial/local policies ◦ OMB has ability to dismiss all or part of appeal without hearing if issues have not 	<p>No action required.</p>

INFORMATION REPORT

previously been identified in appeal letter	
17. Limit open-ended appeals for non-decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes allow approval authorities the option to establish a time limit (20 days) for additional appeals following a non-decision appeal of OP/OPAs. Notice needs to be provided to all those who would receive Notice of Decision 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration for future non-decision appeals, a notice would need to be established for this purpose.</p>
18. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) – a 60 day “time-out” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Council to determine after an appeal is made, whether ADR is appropriate prior to sending the appeal record to the OMB Includes conciliation, mediation, etc to attempt to work out dispute and avoid hearing Notice must be given to all appellants 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration for future appeals.</p>
19. 2 year “time-out” for Minor Variances (MV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes ability to apply for MV for 2 years following passing of applicant-initiated ZBLA, unless permitted by Council through resolution Resolution by Council can be site specific, class specific or general 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration for future minor variance process changes.</p>
20. Additional criteria for Minor Variances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New authority for province to establish additional minor variance criteria through provincial regulation New municipal authority to establish additional minor variance criteria through municipal by-law (follow zbla procedure to do so) 	<p>No action required at this time.</p> <p>For consideration for future minor variance process changes. Province expects to provide additional guidance on MV criteria.</p>
21. Reporting for Density Bonusing and Parkland Fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required annually, made available to public. 	<p>For consideration by Finance to ensure annual reporting requirements met.</p>
22. Alternative Parkland Dedication Rate for Cash-in-lieu dedications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum alternative parkland rate changes from 1 ha for every 300 units to 1 ha for every 500 units for cash-in-lieu No change to standard rate based on percentage of land in a development 	<p>For consideration during review of the City’s Parkland Dedication By-law and related OP policies.</p>
23. Parks Plan Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in consultation with school boards, in all municipalities prior to adopting or updating alternative parkland OP policies Not required if municipalities only use standard 2% and 5% dedication rates 	<p>For consideration during review of Parkland Dedication By-law.</p>

INFORMATION REPORT



TO City Council

SERVICE AREA Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services

DATE August 4, 2016

SUBJECT Ontario Regulation 144/16 made under the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-Carbon Economy Act, 2016 (Cap and Trade Program)

REPORT NUMBER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of the Province's regulation for a Cap and Trade system to manage carbon emissions.

KEY FINDINGS

The regulation will not impact the Corporation nor the community directly, nor will the Corporation be eligible for mandatory or voluntary participation for the foreseeable future.

The regulation will raise the price of carbon-based fuels – principally diesel, gasoline, and natural gas – and this cost increase will be passed down the value chain to end consumers including the Corporation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of diesel, gasoline, and natural gas will rise by approximately 5% in 2017 and will continue to increase in subsequent years as the cap on carbon emissions is successively reduced. The 2016 Corporate operating budget for these items is approximately \$6 million, making the expected 2017 budget impact an increase of \$300,000.

BACKGROUND

On May 18, 2016, the Province of Ontario passed Ontario Regulation 144/16, implementing a Cap and Trade system to manage carbon emissions. The regulation takes effect July 1 of this year. The purpose of this memo is to outline the effect of the regulation on the Corporation and the community at large.

REPORT

The Act allows for both mandatory and voluntary participation in the Cap and Trade system. The two categories of participation are based on threshold levels of

INFORMATION REPORT



greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as expressed in equivalent tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂e). Mandatory participation requires that the GHG emissions for a facility be 25,000 tonnes CO₂e or higher. Voluntary participation requires that the GHG emissions for a facility be between 10,000 and 25,000 tonnes CO₂e.

The aggregate GHG emissions of the Corporation across all facilities were 5,128 tonnes CO₂e in 2015. This is well below the level necessary to be eligible for mandatory or voluntary participation. Given that the growth in fossil fuel consumption in the Corporation is very low, the Corporation is not expected to be eligible for any form of participation for the foreseeable future.

Although the Corporation will not participate directly, the Cap and Trade program is expected to have indirect effects. The purpose of the Act is to place a price on carbon emissions, and thereby create a market incentive to reduce those emissions. It is anticipated that this will effectively raise the price of carbon-based fuels. Although the Corporation and other enterprises in the community are not expected to pay the new carbon price directly by participating in the Cap and Trade system, this cost will likely be passed down the value chain to end consumers. This means that the costs of carbon-based fuels – principally diesel, gasoline, and natural gas – will likely increase. For example, the price of gasoline is expected to rise by about 4.3 cents per litre in 2017, which would amount to an increase of about 5% based on current pump prices.

Our 2016 Corporate operating budget for fossil fuels is significant, being approximately \$5 million for vehicle fuels and about \$1 million for natural gas. Increases are expected to continue in subsequent years as the carbon cap is reduced.

The proceeds of the Cap and Trade system will be deposited in a so-called Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account. This will be used to fund green projects that reduce greenhouse gas pollution such as public transit, clean-tech innovation for industry, electric vehicle incentives, social housing retrofits and measures to help homeowners and businesses save energy. More detail on the Province's plans in this respect was released in the Climate Change Action Plan. The Corporation has a number of initiatives that would benefit from this funding, principally under the Community Energy Initiative and the Corporate Energy Strategic Business Plan. The linkages between corporate programs and Provincial climate policy will be identified and elaborated via the CEI Update, approved by Council on April 25, 2016 and scheduled to be completed in 2017.

At present it does not appear that corporate programs will yield carbon credits that might be sold to participants in the Cap and Trade system, thereby enhancing project economics. Past experience with the MicroFIT program of the Independent Electricity System Operator indicates that where provincial incentives are provided, the resulting carbon credits will accrue to the Province rather than the project proponent.

INFORMATION REPORT

In summary, the Cap and Trade regulation is expected to impact neither the Corporation nor the community directly. It will likely lead to cost increases for fossil fuels, but these are expected to be modest in the short term, and the program will also provide investment funds to help consumers migrate to lower-carbon alternatives.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

Innovation in Local Government

- 2.1 Build an adaptive environment, for government innovation to ensure fiscal and service sustainability
- 2.3 Ensure accountability, transparency and engagement

City Building

- 3.2 Be economically viable, resilient, diverse and attractive for business

DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATION

The City's work to analyze and respond to consultations on climate change and assess and access potential funding opportunities is done in collaboration with:

- Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise
- Public Services
- Office of the CAO

COMMUNICATIONS - N/A

ATTACHMENTS - N/A

Report Author

Alex Chapman
Program Manager, Energy



Approved By

Mario Petricevic
General Manager
Facilities Management
519-822-1260, ext. 2668
mario.petricevic@guelph.ca



Recommended By

Scott Stewart, C.E.T.
Deputy CAO
Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise
519-822-1260, ext. 3445
scott.stewart@guelph.ca

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
OMB Reform	Municipal Affairs	NA	<p>The Ministry of Municipal Affairs is reviewing the scope and effectiveness of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), an important part of the province's land use planning system.</p> <p>The government is developing a consultation paper that will be released in fall 2016 for further comment.</p> <p>In the meantime, the province is seeking views on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurisdiction and powers: this could include what matters can be appealed and who may appeal them, the use of local appeal bodies and how much deference should be given to municipal decisions. • Meaningful citizen participation and local perspective: this could include who has access to hearings, how to ensure the ability of the public to participate, how to ensure that the process is affordable, unrepresented parties and the role of the citizen liaison office. • Clear/predictable decision making: this could include how to ensure fairness, adjudicator education and training and standardized decision format(s) • Hearing procedures and practices: this could include the formality of hearings, how expert evidence is heard and what evidence should be allowed at hearings. 	Staff level	At this time, the ministry is seeking feedback on the development of the consultation paper. Full consultation opportunities will be provided once the consultation paper is drafted and released to the public.	Planning	http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page14965.aspx

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternative dispute resolution: this could include the use of mediation or other alternatives to traditional hearings or adversarial procedures as part of the appeal system.• Timely processes and decision making: this could include the timelines for scheduling hearings and the issuing of decisions.				

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
Inclusionary Zoning	Municipal Affairs and Housing	August 16, 2016	<p>As part of the update to the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, and to help address Ontario's growing "affordability gap", the province is taking steps to make affordable housing a part of the land use planning process.</p> <p>On May 18, 2016 Ontario introduced legislation that would, if passed, allow municipalities to require private sector developers to include affordable housing units in their development proposals through inclusionary zoning. For example, if a municipality chose to use this tool, new housing proposals would need to include a certain number of affordable units in order to be approved.</p> <p>If passed, the proposed legislation for inclusionary zoning would help to achieve a number of outcomes:</p> <p>Serve more people: Inclusionary zoning would create affordable housing that serves the needs of low- to moderate-income families and individuals.</p> <p>Increase the supply of affordable units.</p> <p>Meet local needs: Inclusionary zoning would help municipalities meet affordable housing objectives and targets set out in their housing and homelessness plans and official plans.</p>	Staff response	A staff level response will be provided as the consultation is technical in nature, requiring specific technical comments (as opposed to policy feedback). Additionally, the use of inclusionary zoning to address affordable housing issues is being discussed in context of the Affordable Housing Strategy that is coming to Council in July.	Planning + Intergovernmental	http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page13790.aspx

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
Intercity Bus Modernization: Creating Opportunities and Connecting Ontario Communities	Ministry of Transportation	August 22, 2016	<p>The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is proposing a plan to reform the intercity bus regulatory regime. Via the EBR and in-person consultation sessions, MTO will be seeking feedback from communities, the intercity bus industry and members of the public</p> <p>Consultation on intercity passenger travel links with a broader government commitment to consult on a provincial approach to the sharing economy</p> <p>Guelph's many commuters, in and out of the city, will potentially benefit from improvements to this industry. The changes may facilitate non-auto transportation, which helps reach mode-share targets and emission reduction objectives in Guelph</p>	Staff submission to the EBR registry and potential GM email response to the Ministry	Interdepartmental staff level response will ensure a cross-department approach and positioning of response	Engineering and Capital Infrastructure Services	http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/transit/intercity-bus.shtml

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
Let's Talk Housing	Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development (Federal Consultation)	October 21	The Federal Government is developing a National Housing Strategy. Input is requested.	Staff to complete the survey	<p>The City's Affordable Housing Strategy will be returning to Council later in the fall. The City is reliant on the actions of senior levels of government to make impactful actions to address our community's affordable housing needs identified through the City's Affordable Housing Strategy work.</p> <p>City staff will be monitoring the progress of the National Housing Strategy as it progresses and will provide updates as applicable and appropriate.</p>	Planning	https://www.letstalkhousing.ca/

Provincial/Federal Consultation Alert							
Title	Ministry	Consultation Deadline	Summary	Proposed Form of Input	Rationale	Lead	Link to Ministry Website
Federal Government Infrastructure	Infrastructure Canada	September 16	The Government of Canada is seeking community input on its identified priorities of Communities, Green Infrastructure, Public Transit and Social Infrastructure.	Communications will promote community participation through its social network channels	Municipalities will have opportunities to respond formally as the Federal Government proceeds with their policy work. Citizen engagement is requested at this stage	Communications and IG	http://www.infraconsults.ca/

GRCA General Membership

Chair Helen Jowett

Vice-Chair Chris White

Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon and Southgate and Town of Grand Valley

Guy Gardhouse

Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North

Pat Salter

Township of Centre Wellington

Kelly Linton

Town of Erin, Townships of Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch

Chris White

City of Guelph

Bob Bell, Mike Salisbury

Region of Waterloo

Les Armstrong, Elizabeth Clarke,
Sue Foxton, Helen Jowett,
Geoff Lorentz, Jane Mitchell,
Joe Nowak, Wayne Roth,
Sandy Shantz, Warren Stauch

Municipality of North Perth and Township of Perth East

George Wicke

Halton Region

Cindy Lunau

City of Hamilton

George Stojanovic

Oxford County

Bruce Banbury

County of Brant

Brian Coleman, Shirley Simons

City of Brantford

Dave Neumann, Vic Prendergast

Haldimand and Norfolk Counties

Bernie Corbett, Fred Morison

EAB strategy update

An update to the GRCA's EAB strategy was presented to the GRCA board in July, and Emerald Ash Borer is expected to cost the GRCA \$5.8 million over the next nine years.

Most of this expense is to remove dead and dying ash trees that pose a hazard to people who use GRCA land for recreation.

The ash borer insect is deadly to ash trees and is expected to kill all untreated ash trees in the watershed. EAB is confirmed throughout the Grand River watershed, with the exception of Luther Marsh, where it has not yet been found in monitoring traps.

In total, 176 ash trees on 19 GRCA properties have received an expensive treatment. It is hoped that most of these trees will survive the outbreak.

By February 2016, 2,000 ash trees had already been removed, with most removals taking place at Byng Island and Elora Gorge. Plans are underway to manage all areas where infested trees are a hazard.

The 2016 EAB budget of \$430,000 covers detection and risk assessment (\$25,000), hazard tree management (\$340,000), ash tree treatment (\$15,000), replacement planting (\$30,000) and public outreach (\$20,000). Strategy, monitoring, assessment and revision is covered through existing budgets. Most of the funding in 2016 will come from the GRCA reserves.

GRCA hazard tree strategy

The GRCA has implemented a new tree risk management strategy, which is an update to a plan created 10 years ago.

The 20-page plan outlines a methodology for assessing and dealing with tree risk. It involves risk assessment based on the level of risk posed by individual trees.

The plan also outlines risk ratings for each property, tree risk rating zones and individual tree hazard assessment criteria. Tree hazard inspections and assessments are carried out by a

number of GRCA staff, in order to identify and mitigate tree hazards.

Several GRCA departments play a role in land management and also managing tree risk on GRCA properties throughout the watershed.

Whitemans and McKenzie creeks at Level 2

On July 21, water users in parts of Brant, Oxford, Norfolk, Six Nations, New Credit and Haldimand were asked to reduce their consumption by 20 per cent, because of continued dry conditions.

Whitemans Creek has been in a Level 2 condition since Thursday, July 7 and McKenzie Creek has also been moved to a Level 2. The rest of the Grand River watershed remains in a Level 1 condition.

The request comes from the Grand River Low Water Response Team, which has noted that water levels in the McKenzie and Whitemans creek subwatersheds have dropped to below half of the average summer flow.

In addition, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is asking anglers to refrain from fishing in Whitemans Creek, which is an important trout habitat. Low water levels and warm water temperatures can put the fish population under stress, which can be compounded by fishing.

Grand reservoirs provide up to 95 per cent of flows

While the watershed received some much-needed rain during July, showers have been scattered and mostly in the central part of the watershed.

The soil is very dry and the rain that fell absorbed quickly or ran off in the urban areas.

Flows are being maintained in the Grand and Speed rivers using discharge from the large reservoirs. At Doon in south Kitchener, 95 per cent of the water in the Grand River is from the



reservoirs and at Galt it is 60 per cent, while half the river water at Brantford is from the reservoirs. During the summer, discharges from the reservoirs help maintain flows for water supply, aquatic habitat and water quality.

Fire restrictions in place at Grand River Parks

Due to very dry conditions, fire restrictions were in place at most Grand River Parks in starting in early July.

The fire restrictions have been imposed by municipalities in the Grand River watershed. Specific details are listed on each park's webpage on www.grandriverparks.ca and these restrictions are being updated as conditions change.

In addition, a total open burning ban was in place at Guelph Lake Park during Hillside Festival, July 21 to 25, due to the dry conditions. The only exception to this was the sacred fire at the Aboriginal Circle which was in place throughout the weekend.

Take newsletter survey

As part of the GRCA's commitment to open communication, the effectiveness of our three newsletters is being reviewed.

We are asking people to complete a brief online survey at <http://svy.mk/2a0TbHo>. The three newsletters are:

- **GRCA Current**, a monthly digest
- **Grand Actions**, an eight-page, bi-monthly newsletter distributed both electronically and in print format.
- **The Grand**, a tabloid-sized newsletter produced annually and distributed to more than 200,000 homes in the Grand River watershed by local newspapers.

More information can be found on www.grandriver.ca/newsletters.

Olympic rowers trained at Guelph Lake Park

The Canadian Olympic Men's Rowing Team returned to Guelph Lake for a training camp this summer before leaving to compete at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

The team was at Guelph Lake Park from July 21 to Aug. 1, practicing three or more



Day campers in Cambridge got a few lessons in nature from the Mill Creek Rangers on July 19 in Soper Park. The rangers are high school students who spend the summer making improvements to Mill Creek, which flows through Puslinch Township and into the the Grand River in Galt.

times a day. They were making final preparations for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Aug. 6 to 13.

This training camp was hosted by the Guelph Rowing Club, which has its home base at Guelph Lake.

New canoeing program

The canoe is an iconic Canadian symbol and the GRCA has dipped a paddle into new waters by offering an evening canoeing program.

The first of these programs was July 12 at Laurel Creek Park and it was so successful that it will be offered again on Tuesday, Aug. 9 and Monday, Aug. 22. It allows people to spend a couple of hours on the water learning some basic paddling.

Farmers urge others to try cover crops

Local producers who have tried cover crops are urging others to give them a try, too.

The GRCA's Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP) offered an incentive payment this spring to farmers for overwintering cover crops in Waterloo Region and Brant and Wellington counties. Over 100 producers in

Waterloo and Wellington received the cover crop incentive during the last three years. In Brant County, 16 producers received the incentive payment this past spring.

Cover crop program applications can be submitted now for payment in spring 2017. The GRCA administers the program and most funds come from municipal governments. More information is available on the GRCA website or by contacting the GRCA at 519-621-2761.

This issue of *GRCA Current* was published in August, 2016.

It is a summary of the July 2016 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority board and committees, as well as other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest.

The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes distribution, photocopying and forwarding of *GRCA Current*.

Next board meeting:

Aug. 26 at 9:30 a.m.,
GRCA Administration Centre

Subscribe to GRCA Current:

www.grandriver.ca/subscribe

View meeting agendas:

<https://calendar.grandriver.ca/directors>

View coming events:

www.grandriver.ca/Calendar