



To: Mayor Cornell and Members of Council

From: Shawn Persaud, Director of Planning & Development
Planning & Development Department

Report Number: PD-010-21

Meeting Date: 02-24-2021

Subject: New Tiny Zoning By-law – Communications Engagement Strategy

Recommendation

That Planning & Development Report PD-010-21 and the appended Communications Engagement Strategy be received as information.

Background/Analysis

The new Township of Tiny Official Plan was recently approved, with modifications, by the County of Simcoe. The next step in the Township's planning program is translating the new Official Plan into a new Zoning By-law.

At the November 30th, 2020 Council meeting, Council directed staff to proceed with retaining MHBC Planning (MHBC) to lead the new Zoning By-law project. MHBC was one of three consulting firms that bid on the Township's request for proposal for the project. MHBC is the same firm who lead the new Official Plan project. MHBC and the Township Planning & Development Department will be working to prepare a New Tiny Zoning By-law over the next 12 months (estimated timeline).

Due to the challenges that the COVID-19 Pandemic poses to public participation and public engagement, staff and MHBC felt it necessary to prepare a Communication Engagement Strategy (attached to this Report) for Council's information to outline the methods that are planned to ensure that opportunities continue to exist for meaningful public participation and engagement.

Options/Alternatives

1. Proceed as recommended in this Report; or
2. Take other action as directed by Council.

Financial Implications

N/A

Relationship to Strategic Plan

- Deliver Exceptional Municipal Services
- Build Economic Prosperity & Opportunity

Conclusion

That Planning & Development Report PD-010-21 and the appended Communications Engagement Strategy be received as information.

Prepared and Submitted By:



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Financial Implications Reviewed By:



Haley Leblond, Acting Director of Finance

Report Approved By:



Tim Leitch, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix 1 – Communications Engagement Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS
& ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY



New Tiny Zoning By-law

Our File: 0765AE
February 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The new Township of Tiny Official Plan was approved, with modifications, by the County of Simcoe on January 26, 2021. The next step in the Township's planning program is translating the new Official Plan into a new Tiny Zoning By-law. The Zoning By-law is the Township's primary tool to regulate the use of land in the municipality. The Zoning By-law divides all land in the Township into various zone categories (e.g., residential, agricultural, commercial), establishes what uses are permitted and identifies standards about the location, massing and height of buildings and structures. The New Tiny Zoning By-law must, in accordance with the *Planning Act*, conform to the Township's new Official Plan.

The Township has retained MHBC Planning, a planning consulting firm, to lead the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project. MHBC Planning is the same firm who lead the new Tiny Official Plan project. MHBC and the Township Planning & Development Department will be working to prepare the New Tiny Zoning By-law over the next 12 months (estimated timeline).

Like most planning documents, the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** should be prepared with the full participation and engagement of the residents, business owners, and associations of the community. The purpose of this Communications & Engagement Strategy is to set out the proposed approach and methods that will be employed to ensure that all residents are informed, engaged and consulted during the preparation of the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** for the Township.

2.0 LEGISLATION & OUR APPROACH

The *Planning Act* sets out the minimum legal requirements for the preparation, consideration, public notice and public consultation as part of passing a new Zoning By-law for the Township that implements a new Official Plan. Section 34 (12) of the Act requires that, before passing a new Zoning By-law,

- Council shall ensure that sufficient information and material is made available to enable the public to generally understand the zoning proposal that is being considered;
- Hold at least one (1) public open house giving the public an opportunity to review and ask questions about the information and material made publically available; and,
- Hold at least one (1) public meeting (typically referred to as the statutory public meeting) for the purpose of giving the public an opportunity to provide input and comments and to “make representations in respect of the proposed by-law”.

As the new Official Plan defers to the requirements of the Act, notice requirements of the public meeting and open house regarding the proposed new Zoning By-Law are described in Section 34 (13) and in regulations thereto. These include:

- Notice of the public meeting and open house can be given together or separately;
- Notice for a new Zoning By-law, as it applies to the entire municipality, must be given by publishing a notice in a newspaper that is, in the opinion of the Clerk, of sufficiently general circulation that it would give the public reasonable notice of the public meeting or open house;
- All persons and public bodies that have requested the municipality be provided direct written notice;
- Direct notice of the public meeting and open house to a list of municipalities (e.g. County), agencies and public bodies (e.g. School Boards), utilities (e.g. HydroOne), and First Nations;
- Open house can be held no later than 7 days before the statutory public meeting;
- Notice of the open house and public meeting must be provided at least 20 days prior to the holding of the meeting.

This proposed Communications and Engagement Strategy for the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project will exceed the minimum requirements of the Act and will see the Township use a full range of tools and techniques to ensure that the community is advised, informed, and has multiple avenues to participate, provide input and see their comments considered. MHBC and Township Planning Staff believe that the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** will benefit from informed public participation and such participation will help Council, Staff and MHBC prepare a by-law that better reflects the communities' interests and expectations.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this Strategy describe how the Township will ensure the community is informed, advised and engaged.

3.0 COVID-19

Covid-19 changes how we do everything; but the pandemic does not change the Township's commitment to fully informing and engaging the community as a foundation of preparing the New Tiny Zoning By-law.

On January 12, 2021 the Province declared its second Emergency Order under *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* including a full Stay-at-Home Order. While municipalities are deemed essential businesses, like most other municipalities, Tiny has closed its Municipal Administration Office with many services provided virtually where possible. Council and Committees of Council have continued throughout the pandemic and in respect of protecting the health of the broader community, have occurred virtually with full public participation through the use of Zoom meetings and virtual participation.

As a 1-in-100 year event, the Township is intent in following the full requirements of the Province and the advice and guidance of the Medical Officer of Health. As the Province and the Medical Officer update and revise the orders and guidance as vaccinations roll out into 2021, and the Ontario community tackles Covid-19, the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project will be guided by the best medical advice and practice available at the time along with meeting Council's obligations to fully engage the community in the preparation of the **New Tiny Zoning By-law**.

4.0 HOW WE COMMUNICATE

The following are the various ways and means that the Township will employ to communicate with the community and public at large to encourage engagement and participation in the project.

4.1 Website

A dedicated **New Tiny Zoning By-law** webpage has been created on the Township website (www.tiny.ca). The project website will contain all the information available about the project including work plan and schedule, status and updates, notices, newsletters, reports and technical memorandums, information about how to stay involved and engaged, and methods for providing comments and inputs to the process. The project webpage is intended to be the “one stop shop” for residents, business owners, and associations to get their information about the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project.

The webpage is www.tiny.ca/NewTinyZoningBylaw

4.2 TinyConnect

TinyConnect is a free notification system that helps residents, business owners, and associations stay informed about important municipal information. Once registered, members can receive optional notifications by text message, voice call, email and/or on a TTY/TDD device. Registration can be completed online (www.tinyconnect.ca) or by filing out a form and returning it to the Township Office.

The Township will create a special optional subscription for TinyConnect users for the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project called “New Tiny Zoning By-law” so that notifications regarding project milestones, notice of the public release of documents, and notices of public consultation events will be sent directly to subscribers.

4.3 Midland Mirror

In keeping with the *Planning Act*, notices for the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** will be provided in the Midland Mirror and in the Township's monthly Community Page. Notices will be provided for the project commencement, how to stay informed and involved, release of documents for public comment, and the notices for the required public open house and statutory public meeting.

Notices will meet the legal requirements of the Act, but will also provide information in a clear and visually appealing manner to ensure the notices "catch the eye" of residents.

4.4 Newsletters

Regular one page update newsletters will be created at appropriate milestones of the project and posted on the dedicated project webpage and notice provided through Tiny Connect. The newsletters will provide residents, business owners, and associations with a sense of what has happened so far, where we are in the process, and what's coming up.

4.5 Dedicated Project Email

The Township has created a dedicated project email address (newzoningbylaw@tiny.ca) for residents, business owners, and associations to directly contact Township Staff and the Project Consultant and to provide input and comments regarding the drafting of the New Tiny Zoning By-law. Staff will monitor and record each of the emails received and provide the emails to the Project Consultant for consideration, evaluation and response as part of the project.

Each and every comment received will be considered throughout the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project process.

4.6 Social Media

The Township will use its various social media accounts (e.g. Twitter) to push out communications and notices about the **New Tiny Zoning By-law**. In order to raise its profile and encourage and drive community interest and participation.

5.0 ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

In addition to communicating full and complete information about the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** through the numerous methods listed in Section 4 above, the Township intends to directly engage and consult with the community in the following manner throughout the project.

5.1 Duty to Consult

The Township is committed to meeting its obligations to consult directly with First Nations and other Indigenous organizations throughout the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project. Tiny has a unique and important relationship with Beausoleil First Nation and will prioritize reaching out and directly consulting with Chief and Council through-out the process. In addition to providing notices, Staff and/or the Project Consultant will make themselves available for presentations and direct dialogue on Christian Island (or by virtual means) at the request of the First Nation Council. As partners in the community, the Township will meet its duty to consult obligations with the Beausoleil First Nation, Huron-Wendat Nation and Metis Nation of Ontario on nation-to-nation basis.

5.2 Online Survey

A survey and questionnaire will be prepared and posted on the Township website and the dedicated Project webpage with notice of the survey provided through Tiny Connect and the other communication methods noted above. The Online Survey will provide easy connection and completion through an online survey company such as Survey Monkey. This survey and questionnaire will concentrate on zoning issues that are important to the public and stakeholders. The survey and questionnaire will be prepared following the Council Workshop and will serve the purpose of seeking comments on Technical Memorandum #1 and understanding what is important to residents, businesses, association and visitors to the Township.

5.3 Open House(s) – Virtual or In-person

Two Open Houses are identified in the **New Tiny Zoning By-law** project Work Plan at critical stages in the process.

The first Open House will be scheduled following the preparation and release of the “First Draft” of the new By-law. The Open House will provide residents and business owners with an opportunity to review and compare the draft changes from the existing Zoning By-law with the proposed new By-law. The Open House

will also provide attendees with an opportunity to discuss the proposed changes with the project team and Township Staff on a one-on-one basis. It is proposed that the first Open House will be held in the summer months to maximize the number of residents that can attend the Open House and provide input. As noted above, this strategy recognizes that the Open House format may need to be modified to address current and future social distancing protocols resulting from the COVID-19 emergency. If necessary, the Open House will be held virtually and tailored to that delivery mechanism. This could include scheduled and arranged meeting times with residents for the one-on-one discussions with Township and MHBC staff. A copy of the First Draft of the New Zoning By-law will also be made available on the Township website as noted above so that members of the public can review and provide comments.

Following Open House #1 and the commenting period on the First Draft of the Zoning By-law, MHBC will review the comments that have been provided and these comments will be considered for incorporation into the “Second Draft” of the Zoning By-law. Once input is received from Staff and reviewing agencies, the Second Draft will be provided to the public for further review and comment. The Second Draft of the Zoning By-law will be presented to Council with the intent of receiving direction to proceed to the final Open House and Statutory Public Meeting. At this meeting, Council will be provided with information related to the key modifications to the Zoning By-law that have been undertaken as part of the Review. Following the release of the Second Draft of the Zoning By-law, MHBC will respond to public and agency comments that have been received. A comment response table will be prepared and posted on the website to ensure that all comments have been reviewed and considered.

The second Open House, the statutory Open House, will provide the public with an opportunity to review the “Third Draft” of the Zoning By-law prior to proceeding to the Statutory Public Meeting. This Open House will provide Township Staff and the Project Consultants with an opportunity to hear public comments, to discuss additional and necessary changes to the Zoning By-law and to address comments prior to the Statutory Public Meeting. The second Open House will provide residents with an opportunity to see how their comments have been incorporated into the document. Again and as noted above, the venue and method for Open House #2 will be modified as necessary and as required by Covid-19 protocols in effect at the time.

5.4 Statutory Public Meeting

The Statutory Public Meeting with Council will be held to review the final draft Zoning By-law and to give the public an opportunity to provide comments before Council. This meeting will consist of a presentation by MHBC of the key modifications that have been incorporated as part of the Zoning By-law, followed by an opportunity for members of the public to provide comments. As necessary and as required by Covid-19 protocols in effect at the time, the format and method for the statutory public meeting may be modified.

6.0 REVIEW IMPROVE REVISE

In these pandemic times, and in recognition that the Township is committed to following the Provincial Covid19 rules and protocols, it will be necessary to review, improve and revise this Communications and Engagement Strategy on a regular and on-going basis. Luckily, in these connected times, residents, business owners and associations have a wealth of on-line and electronic methods of continuing to participate and provide input into the preparation of the Township's new Zoning By-law. The Township is committed to providing the best and safest methods for ongoing and continued engagement and participation in the **New Tiny Zoning By-law**.