

TEMAGAMI LAKES ASSOCIATION

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To the Mayor and Town Council:

The TLA board has become very concerned about the direction of the recent Draft “Terms of Reference for the Preparation of the Statutory Review of the Entire Official Plan” (DToR v4 of Apr. 11, 2018), coming from the PAC Committee. We recognize the necessary and sensitive nature of reviewing the Official Plan for the Municipality of Temagami and the challenges of integrating the needs and interests of the various stakeholders into a single, unified document. We also believe the work accomplished during the previous OP review developed important and enduring policies that have ensured the sustainable future of the Municipality for everyone involved.

The original OP addressed Lake Temagami concerns in accordance with the Tenets for Temagami, which is a collaborative accord between the Town, LaTempRA, and the TLA. Subsequent OP’s were amended every 5 years based on the original OP. The Tenets and principles espoused therein regarding mainland development, protecting the Skyline Reserve, and preserving the “unique” character of Lake Temagami with island-only development, were at the heart of previous OP’s treatment of the Lake Temagami Neighborhood.

The Board of Directors and Members of the TLA look forward to once again working with all stakeholders and the Town Council during the OP review process. We also offer the following suggestions.

1. The TLA has strongly supported the current OP because it is a detailed road map, based on many years of collaborative effort, which built upon the TLUP and previous OP’s. The current DToR, which calls for an entirely new OP, specifies reexamination of very fundamental issues (Tenets, Mainland Development, Urban vs Rural Neighbourhoods, etc.) that could be corrosive to the unity that has held our community together since amalgamation.

While recognizing Town Council's prerogative, we feel strongly that amending the existing OP would be more effective and efficient, less controversial and divisive, and ultimately less-costly to the taxpayers. As we always have in the past, the TLA will cooperate with other stakeholders to help build the community, while vigorously defending the Tenets.

2. *The TLA Board of Directors are entirely sympathetic to the need for Temagami to prosper economically, as it's our community, too.* TLA members have both a huge emotional attachment to and economic impact on the Town. Therefore, the TLA Board of Directors recommends the Tenets of Temagami remain an anchoring document in amending the existing OP to align it with the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statements of 2014.

We concur that the town needs an economic readiness policy and that evolving Provincial interests, as stated in section 1.4.1 of the DToR, need to be addressed. We also agree that archeological and heritage culture preservation is important, and policies that support wind, solar, and geothermal energy, on a not-to-interfere basis with Skyline and Ecological Buffer Reserves specified in the Tenets for Temagami, and Vegetative Buffers referenced in DToR Section 1.4.2(c), are beneficial for all. The TLA is eager to work closely with the PAC, just as we worked with the Town and other stakeholders in developing the first OP.

3. Section 1.4.2 of the DToR (“Local Interest Needing Review”) lists many of the core issues relevant to Lake Temagami’s unique character as being subject to review. Not only is this inconsistent with previous OP’s, but it conflicts with written understandings among stakeholders at the different stages of Amalgamation that the Tenets would be upheld, and with a local government study that produced recommendations adopted by the Council beginning in 1998.

Specifically:

- Points (a) through (m): Within each item, it is unclear what will be reviewed as well as the specific rationale for reviewing each item. Some of the items that apply to the Lake Temagami Neighbourhood are unnecessary, whereas the implementation process for Site Plan Control policy should be subject to review.
 - Part A “Tenets for Temagami” [Point (i)] appears to question the Tenets as a core principle. In the past, these have been a touchstone for how the Lake is developed, while preserving its special character.
 - Local Neighbourhood Policies mimicking one another [Point (m)] are not ideal due to the unique requirements and characteristics of each neighbourhood in the Municipality (i.e. an urban neighbourhood is different from and should have different policies from a rural one). Acknowledging Lake Temagami’s unique development history was a key point of compromise in building past OP’s, and a “one size fits all” approach will severely impact Vegetative Buffer Policies (d), Mainland Development Policies (e), Development on Private Roads Policies (h), and other policies that support the legitimate aspirations of Lake Temagami residents for their neighbourhood.
 - A More User-Friendly Official Plan [Point (n)] would be a more-appropriate goal for the Planning and Zoning By-Laws. The OP is a Declaration of Principles, and while it should be easy to understand and every policy should be realistic and implementable, “friendliness” should not be of paramount concern.
4. Finally, the TLA Board strongly recommends reevaluating the timeline for OP development. Not only is there much to consider, but there currently is no Planner or CAO for the Town, which makes the creation, review, and adoption of a totally new plan by Q1 2019 (per section 2.4) an unrealistic goal if all stakeholders’ concerns will be fairly heard, weighed and considered.

Based on the highly seasonal nature of lake residents and Lake Temagami stakeholders, TLA advocates for a longer OP development timeline. Before the DToR is adopted by Council, it should specify realistic delivery dates for the Background Report, Open House, First Draft, and Revision to First Draft – and not just a final adoption date. Additionally, all drafts, debates, and discussions should be recorded and posted electronically for review by the general public. For a plan that will define the future direction of Temagami, rushing in the name of delivering progress is self-defeating.

Therefore, we propose the following timeline to ensure the final product represents the interests and concerns of all stakeholders:

- Summer 2018: Consultation Period for stakeholders to identify and submit key priorities, concerns, and issues.
- Fall 2018 – Summer 2019: Public Review, Open Houses, and Comment Periods, in conjunction with drafting, editing, and making revisions to subsequent draft versions of the OP as they are developed.
- 15 July 2019: Final Draft completed/Final Opportunity for Public Comment
- 30 Sept. 2019: Final Draft ready for Council’s Review.

In conclusion, rather than developing an entirely new OP in a compressed 9-month period, the TLA Board strongly urges Town Council to modify the current DToR to require an amended OP that holds the Tenets for Temagami as the Core Value for the Lake Temagami Neighbourhood, and over a timeframe that gives all stakeholders ample opportunity to negotiate and develop a quality product.

Sincerely,

TLA Board of Directors