

# CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Centre Regional Planning Agency

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## **TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE COMMITTEE**

COG Forum Room

2643 Gateway Drive

**Monday, October 3, 2016**

12:15 p.m.

### AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Members of the public are invited to comment on any items not already on the agenda (**five minutes per person time limit, please**). Comments relating to specific items on the agenda should be deferred until that point in the meeting.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 12, 2016 TLU Committee meeting are *enclosed*.

4. OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

This time is provided for open discussion of issues by members.

5. FOLLOW UP ON JUNE 6, 2016 CBICC PRESENTATION - introduced by Todd Kirsten, presented by Jim May

This item provides a potential approach to addressing expedited development plan reviews by pre-positioning parcels that could meet the needs of potential economic development prospects in the Centre Region. The TLU Committee should receive the presentation, discuss the potential of this approach, and identify any next steps if there is consensus to move forward.

At the June 6, 2016 meeting, Mr. Vern Squier reviewed a number of issues, from his perspective, that could positively contribute to economic development activities in the Centre Region. Mr. Squier indicated that economic development prospects are most interested in financial incentives, forgiveness, or waivers; however, he reiterated the importance of timely development plan review and advocated for willingness on the part of the Centre Region municipalities to expedite reviews while maintaining the integrity of the development review process.

A potential approach to improve the development plan review process could be to “pre-position” properties that have existing infrastructure, zoning, and other approvals in place so that these parcels are attractive to potential economic development prospects. Pre-positioning parcels could mean that fewer review processes are necessary to develop the property and would require considerable coordination with multiple partners. For example, the municipality, property owner, consultants, and development plan reviewers must be on board for this to be a successful approach.

Pre-positioning parcels for development when they have the appropriate zoning in place, have the majority of major infrastructure available, and do not require hearings for special exceptions, variances, etc., can remove some of the complexity of local reviews without diminishing the municipal role of representing the public interest. This approach can also improve some aspects of the development review process; however, it cannot overcome many barriers to expeditious development review, including:

- Elimination of state or federal permitting requirements (highway occupancy permits for example)
- Lack of staff capacity at the municipality or with consultants
- The fact that the development review process can be time consuming, particularly if it requires multiple regulatory approvals
- Municipal regulatory authority will continue to reside with municipalities, and regulations and processes will continue to vary between municipalities.

Some specific questions for the TLU Committee to consider in discussing this item include:

- Is there adequate marketing from the property owner, municipality, and CBICC or others to solicit potential economic development prospects for specific parcels?
- Is the proposed use consistent with the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan?
- Are the majority of major utilities in place (water, sewer, transportation, communication) and are major improvements required?
- Does the proposed use create adverse impacts on adjacent properties?
- Are property owners, consulting engineers and architects committed to expedited schedules and complete submittals?
- Are the municipalities committed to expedite schedules and potentially completing these development plan reviews prior to other plan reviews?

Other potential discussion items:

- Who leads this approach?
- Most Centre Region municipalities can complete development plan reviews prior to other processes and approvals outside of municipal or regional authority being completed. How can the Region encourage state agencies to improve the timeliness of permitting for development plan reviews?

- An observation many municipal reviewers communicate is the poor quality of development plan submittals from consulting engineers and architects. Similar observations are common for the lack of timely response to comments. How willing is the local consulting community to correct these issues?
- Capacity of the CRPA and municipal staffs to make the commitment to take on additional work and/or expedited reviews given other commitments in the community. Are the municipalities willing to commit additional staff, defer other work to accommodate this approach, or schedule work to be completed in future years?
- Should parcels outside the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area (RGB and SSA) be given consideration for pre-positioning?

Action: The COG TLU Committee should receive the presentation, provide any comments, and determine any actions moving forward.

Next steps: To be determined

Attachments: None

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Matter of Record - The next TLU Committee meeting will be a joint meeting with the CRPC and is scheduled for November 3, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. This meeting will be used to revisit the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Program (CHIP) process. Currently, the CHIP has identified priority project through the 2018 calendar year. This cycle would be a good time to reassess the priorities and initiate any changes to the CHIP process in future years. This was discussed by the TLU Committee at its August 1, 2016 meeting. The next TLU Committee meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2016 at 12:15 p.m.
- b. Matter of Record - The next Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 22, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Patton Township Municipal Building. Agenda items will include discussion of the repurposing of federal earmarked funds; and reports about the federal Roadway Functional Classification System update, Public Participation Plan, and performance measures for the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.

7. ADJOURNMENT