



**ADMINISTRATION REPORT  
ADMIN2013-04**

To: Committee of the Whole Council  
Date: July 29, 2013  
Subject: EG Post Secondary Project  
Draft Foundation Plan and Public Feedback  
Origin: Administration

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT Administration Report ADMIN2013-04, dated July 29, 2013 regarding the EG Post Secondary Project, Draft Foundation Plan and Public Feedback, be received;
2. THAT the Draft Foundation Plan for the EG Post Secondary Initiative, attached as Appendix 1, be modified to address comments received;
3. THAT the modified Draft Foundation Plan be endorsed;
4. THAT staff be authorized to proceed into Phase 3 – Outreach and Partnership Building, as outlined in Appendix 3, and to retain the required resources in accordance with the Town’s Procurement Policies and Procedures.

**PURPOSE**

On May 6, 2013, Council resolved that the EG Post Secondary Project - Draft Foundation Plan be shared with stakeholders for information and comments, and that staff be authorized to advance into Phase 3 – Outreach and Partnership Building as soon as the Foundation Plan had been finalized and endorsed by Council.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the feedback received from stakeholders and recommend endorsement of the modified Draft Foundation Plan. Once the Draft Foundation Plan is endorsed, staff will proceed with the Outreach and Partnership Building Phase of the Project.

**BACKGROUND**

In January 2013, Council endorsed the Phase 2 Foundation Work Plan and in March 2013, the Town contracted the services of Delta/Snowdon & Associates to Develop the Foundation Plan – Build the EG Story.

The EG Story was presented to Council at a workshop on April 15, 2013 in a presentation titled “A Knowledge Network for a Growing Community - Post-Secondary Education in East Gwillimbury” and comments were solicited from Council and members of the public. The input

from that session was used to finalize the draft EG Story which in turn resulted in preparation of the broader Foundation Plan.

***The Foundation Plan...the basis from which to launch many conversations***

The Foundation Plan presented in May is intended to set the stage for the Town to secure its position as the HUB for post secondary education within York Region. The report emphasizes the following key components,

1. **The Best Place...**to fulfill a growing need
2. **The Future Hub of York Region PSE...**creating new and diverse possibilities for learning
3. **The Opportunity...**to realize wide-ranging positive impact

All provide the fundamental business case for the initiative in terms of socio-economic benefits, city-building advantages and overall positive contributions to the Town and the larger Region. The report includes background information including statistics, economic trends & indicators, demographics and financial projections as well as general supporting research and interview findings.

The Foundation Plan sets out a strong and compelling argument for the establishment of a York Region post secondary institution in East Gwillimbury. It will be an important tool to build broad support and help to establish key partnerships.

The Foundation Plan provides a wealth of research and interview findings that may be utilized in a number of ways, but will primarily be used as a basis from which to develop presentations, proposals and various messages to a variety of audiences including government officials, educational institutions and the public.

***Detailed Public Feedback was received on all aspects of the EG Post Secondary Project***

Subsequent to the May 6<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, staff solicited comments and input to the Foundation Plan to stakeholders previously involved in the Post Secondary Project consultation and the general public through a posting of documents on the website.

Comments were received in person or in writing from Council members and members of the public. Although the number of submissions was limited, the level of detail and extensive nature of the comments indicated a very thorough review of the document.

A summary of the comments received has been prepared and is attached to this report as Appendix 2. The comments are separated into three main categories: formatting, content and process recommendations.

The following messages came through as recurring themes:

- Strengthen the rationale for EG as the right place for a post secondary education institution
- Find ways of separating the uniqueness and benefits of EG from other locales
- Don't focus on a 'University' but instead on a variety of other post secondary education offerings

It is recommended that all of the comments in Appendix 2 be endorsed and that the Foundation Plan be modified to address these comments. The modified Foundation Plan will be used as we proceed into Phase 3 – the Outreach and Partnership Building Phase of this project.

Phase 3 will garner valuable 'perspectives' from other members of the public including those of the student population, businesses and other interested residents. It is anticipated that this outreach will take the form of 'social media' exchange, website and public sessions.

The Partnership Building aspect of the next phase will focus on building working relationships with existing post secondary learning institutions, other municipalities, Regional and Provincial representatives/stakeholders. This would also include consideration of preliminary land use/campus design for which special expertise will be required.

### **NEED FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

All agendas, reports and minutes are made available to the public through posting on the Town's website. Additionally, the Town has made available a special section on the website for information specific to the Post Secondary Attraction project. Current postings include the Visioning Session, Presentations to Council and Workshops, including the EG Story and the Draft Foundation Plan.

As referenced above, Phase 3 of the work plan focuses on Outreach and Partnership building and as such will include a significant effort in the area of external communications and public engagement.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Council has assigned funds (\$375,000) for the EGU Attraction Program as a key initiative for 2013 as part of the Budget process. Expenditure of these funds is subject to specific approvals throughout this process. The Phase 1 (2012) activities cost approximately \$20,000. Phase 2 of the work plan has cost approximately \$25,000 sourced in part from CFDC funding and in part from the Town's approved budget.

Staff anticipate that Phase 3 works, including the retention of required advisors and consultant services, will require access to approximately \$120,000. Such funds will finance advisory and consulting services (+\$60,000) and land use, campus design and marketing (+\$60,000). Any additional funding and resources necessary will be subject to subsequent report(s) to Council.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN**

This initiative supports the pillar “Manage Growth for a community that is environmentally responsible, profitable and provides healthy places to live, work and play and learn” as it provides guidelines that ensure business development and job creation form an integral part of the Town’s projected growth. The post-secondary institution remains an important element of the Town’s economic growth and has been included as a primary objective in both the new Official Plan and the Town’s Economic Development Strategy. The Region’s recent economic development action plan also includes a post-secondary strategy which will be a 2013 project involving area municipalities.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Appendix 1 - Draft Foundation Plan – EG Post Secondary Initiative
- Appendix 2 – Public Feedback on the EG Post Secondary Project
- Appendix 3 - Phase 3 - Outreach and Partnership Building

This report has been reviewed by the Senior Management team.

Prepared and Recommended by:

Prepared & Approved by:

*Original signed by*

*Original signed by*

Donna Ingram, Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Office of the CAO

Carolyn Kellington, MCIP, RPP,  
General Manager, Development Services

Approved for Submission:

*Original signed by*

Thomas R. Webster  
Chief Administrative Officer

## APPENDIX 1

# DRAFT FOUNDATION PLAN



Town of  
**East Gwillimbury**

## ***FOUNDATION PLAN EG POST SECONDARY INITIATIVE***

***THE HUB OF TOMORROW'S KNOWLEDGE NETWORK***

***DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION***

SUBMITTED BY

DELTA CONSULTING GROUP

&

SNOWDON & ASSOCIATES

MAY 6, 2013

**Full Copy of Report Provided Separately**

## **APPENDIX 2**

# **Public Feedback on the EG Post Secondary Project**

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### **OVERALL COMMENTS**

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- Comments from the respondents on the Foundation Plan were positive
- Comments were received from Council members and three members of the public
- Although not a significant number of respondents, comments were extensive and detailed
- One of the respondents indicated that “the Draft Plan provides compelling arguments for locating a post-secondary institution in East Gwillimbury. It builds a case for adopting a knowledge-network approach to serve a variety of fields of study, while drawing upon existing strengths. Finances, demographics and other key factors are wisely viewed from a long term perspective.”
- One comment shared during Council, and subsequently by others, is that it was not clearly understood how the Foundation Plan was to be used as we move forward with this project.

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### **FOUNDATION PLAN DOCUMENT COMMENTS**

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Comments received fell into the following three general categories: Formatting; Content; and Process.

#### **Formatting**

- Replace the acronym PSE throughout with Post Secondary Education
- Re the Visual Aids and Call Outs – clarify for the reader - explain up front what these are, where they originated and how they will be used. Perhaps box them to be separate within the document.
  - Source and date them where they refer to quotes from Council resolutions, etc. for ease of reference in future
- Re page 32 and 33
  - Indicate appendix name/number
  - Source of document
  - May be dated, notice reference to 2010 re Ryerson under Arts and Culture
- Spell out SMEs (subject matter experts)
- Spell out OECD

#### **Content**

- Location
  - The concept of where an institution could be located continues to be important. The Foundation Plan discusses several options being available. Those who have

been involved from the community have preferences regarding Queensville and / or Green Lane. The Official Plan included the University in Queensville.

- Draft Foundation Plan
  - Lack of common understanding as to how this document will be used (include rationale and usage as part of the executive summary)
  - Regarding the depiction of EG in the middle (hub) of everything – use a map showing EG in the centre of everything (ROMP map)
  - Careful about rationalizing marketing costs – what gets EG big returns for fewer dollars?
- EG Story
  - Overall may be too much emphasis on economic benefit
  - Identifying in first para the vision of a new institution - University of York Region at East Gwillimbury may be closing the door to other options such as colleges
  - Highlight or emphasize the ‘blank slate’ available theme
  - Market the past (temple – cultural link) and the future water treatment or technology
  - EG has been the first in history with many things such as website, recyclables, Leed buildings, etc.
  - What is it that makes EG unique in the Province?
    - as the reference states in the Key Factors of the EG Story – move the first of the Building Blocks on page 6 up to why EG is unique
    - Identify tangible advantages to EG
    - Land availability may be the only ‘concrete’ demonstrated advantage – are there others
    - What do we have that our competition does not have?
- The multi-nodal concept is not unique and is in fact something that could be created almost anywhere
- Building Partnerships and a Campus – Planning a Pathway
  - The draft plan makes the case for building partnerships and leveraging community and regional strengths. For example it explains that shared infrastructure, such as libraries can benefit the community and the campus. It is suggested that the plan, or a document developed in a subsequent phase include more specifications of the pathway and timeline for building partnerships and for building the campus. For example in the case of libraries, this could include which municipal libraries could be partners and the broad strokes of reciprocal agreements. In addition to the partnership building information, the pathway specification could include the steps and timelines for providing physical development of the campus (including municipal approvals, servicing the land,

installation of broadband, etc.) setting up academic policies, procedures and services and engaging faculty and staff.

- Positive Impact – rephrase the second bullet for clarity regarding construction activity
- Vision and Commitment
  - residents will ask and Council/the Town must be able to answer the question about why funds are being spent on development of a PSE
  - The scope identified may be too wide/broad. Social Sciences, humanities and fine arts are the focal point of York University. A strong Business/MBA program, research, engineering studies are the future educational growth opportunities. Community colleges and Ryerson have created their programs for job and career opportunities. Universities and programs are tightly controlled by the University Boards and have not been very receptive to outside influence i.e. business input. This is going to become a major issue for Universities. Many are questioning their value proposition. Provincial politicians and University Boards need to be strongly encouraged to listen to input and not continue down the ‘university tenure path’ as their key concern.
- Drivers of Change – phrasing regarding the ‘predictions of the demise of transitional colleges and universities’ is not positive enough as a driver of change.
- Don Tapscott quote re lifelong learning helps support the ‘city building’ capacity message.
- Green Lane has not yet been planned!
- Is Green Lane inviting enough for fostering an atmosphere of higher learning
- Second paragraph under Scenario needs to be reformatted – break it up and provide some examples.
- Planning Context – add a connection to growth in general – paragraph 2
- Planning Context Part 1 Visual Aids – first bullet requires a map – EG may be in the centre from east to west but is not from north to south.
  - Technically should not use this when marketing to those who know where EG is – such as the Region and Province
- Part 2 - Central Concept
  - Recommend that the University of York Region not be used as a proper name (limiting alternatives such as College)
    - Alternatively, design a catch phrase that can be used
  - A post secondary institution can take many forms
    - Full fledged undergraduate university

- Online learning centre (similar to University of Arizona)
  - Specialty post graduate think tank institution like Pembina Institute
  - Centre of excellence with a focus on a particular skill or training or specialty such as robotics / agriculture /medicine
  - Research facility associated with a corporation
- The best of these options creates a community where the exchange of ideas takes place
- Building Blocks
  - First paragraph under building is the ‘nut’ or ‘heart of it’ in terms of ‘why EG’
  - Add reference to agriculture and marshlands as features of EG
  - Although transportation is referenced in passing, no detail has been included about the value, breadth or penetration
    - With regards to transportation, aside from the need for linkages to the rest of York Region and beyond – it is suggested that steps be taken to keep commuting times reasonable. For example, agreements could be sought with transit authorities to provide a series of express and semi-express buses to directly link the campus to regional centres (Richmond Hill, Unionville, Woodbridge, etc), TTC subway station and GO train stations.
  - Regarding businesses in close proximity, don’t repeat again the ones that were referenced earlier in the document
  - Emphasize EG as being a ‘blank slate’
  - Highlight driving north better/easier than driving south
- Part 3
  - Impact Benefits
    - Regarding impact benefits
      - the focus is on the economic benefits of EG and then answer the question of what does the Region need versus generic
      - Thoughts that the economic benefit to EG would be negligible if Green Lane were chosen and that students would not remain in the area, they would leave at the end of the day and that their spending would occur in Newmarket
    - Regarding Phase – in impacts of establishing a new institution
      - Is there a cost of what the Town would spend – the municipality’s role is a flexible one – may have context
      - What is the projected cost to the Town coffers (via taxpayers) and time line
      - What are the projected returns to the Town coffers (to taxpayers) and time line
      - What are the risks in terms of costs and returns in amounts and timelines

#### Impacts - Costs and Considerations

- Other than the \$750,000 in lieu of taxes, how much of the estimated \$353M annually filters back into the hands of the Town and the EG Taxpayer. And is this over and above that which is estimated due to the projected population increases which are not PSEI dependent?
- All very important information to have at public meetings and information sessions
- Final comments on PSE Impacts
  - Add expression of values and the creation of life long learning
- Appendix A

#### Population page 20 – immigration and age demographic

- Suggestion that clear local demand for a post secondary education institution may not materialize for another generation due to projected population (dip in 20-39 year olds and peak in the 40-60 year range)
- With regards to students and where they will come from – recommendation that while the institute would certainly be viewed as the ‘local’ university/college, it would be reasonable to expect it to draw students from across York Region, the rest of the GTA, Barrie and beyond. By way of comparison, UOIT in Oshawa attracts a significant number of students from Scarborough, many from Unionville and Richmond Hill and some from overseas. The expectation of a broad geographic base of students would have an impact on other factors such as transportation and student recruitment.
- Appendix B  
Direct Institutional Spending
  - Page 27 – Where will students live? The Foundation Plan indicates that students may live at home, in rentals or in private off campus rentals. For simplicity, estimates assume that all students live off-campus. While the simplification of calculations is understood, it is suggested that the campus master plan include, from the beginning, specific provision for residences which are conveniently located on campus, with access to all needed infrastructure – even if they are built at a later date. If instead residences are subsequently built away from the campus, the student experience might not be enhanced.
- Appendix C  
Key Messages
  - Apart from land availability, Province targeted key messages not compelling for EG because they can be equally applicable to any other probable location

#### Process

- Rationale and usage of the Foundation Plan

- Numerous interviews were conducted by the company that developed the Foundation Plan. Will those interview notes be made available in some form?
  
- Public Consultation
  - Recommendation for full and transparent public consultation
  - Theory that the population can be split into those who are in favour, those against and those who “don’t care, don’t know or don’t care to know” and that many of the people attending public meetings will fall into the ‘opposed’ category
  - Answers should be available for the following types of questions
    - What is this going to cost us?
    - Are we going to pay for it now, yet the benefits will be for someone else’s kids
    - How do we get this money back, and by when?
    - How will this affect my property values?
    - What about traffic congestion?
  - If it’s in Queensville and students want to get to Newmarket – what roads will they use? If they use public transport there will be more buses. Where will they run to and from?
  - 1600 additional jobs is not a large number compared to the approximately 25,000 additional required in the long term plans, and there is no certainty that any given number will be filled by EG residents. Are there other uses for the land that might produce a better tax payer return? Houses? Businesses?
    - Do I really want the place full of rowdy young people, far from parental controls?
  - Recommendation was made to state the facts and ask for concerns as a style to be used in public meetings to solicit concerns from those opposed.
    - ‘EG will pursue a post secondary institution and we want to learn about any concerns of the Community so they can be taken into account and addressed in our plans’
  - With regards to using various forms of media to include as many means of participation as possible via email, mail, fax, individual and group discussions, surveys, Twitter, Facebook, etc. and that the results be published.

## APPENDIX 3

### PHASE 3 - OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

