



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☐	Decision Request ☒	Councillor Activity ☐
--------------------------------------	---	--	--

To: Committee of The Whole

Submitted by: _____
Mark Phillips, CAO

Date: February 6, 2025

Subject: Wind Farm Related Matters

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

DECISION REQUEST

Cumulative Visual Effects Study

That Council provide direction to staff to continue with the proposed visual intrusive study for windfarms as directed or not to carry out this work.

BACKGROUND

At the November 2024 Council meeting the following direction was provided to staff regarding a wind farm proposal, specifically the Bear Lake application as it was presented to Council for first reading at that time.

MOVED BY COUNCILLORS B. MORTON AND MCLEAN THAT COUNCIL POSTPONES FIRST READING AND REQUESTS STAFF COME BACK WITH INFORMATION INCLUDING A CUMULATIVE VISUAL EFFECTS STUDY FOR THE PROJECT. MOTION CARRIED

At the January 2025 meeting of Council the following recommendation was made directing staff as noted in the motion.

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR IVEY AND LEARY-PINCH THAT COUNCIL DIRECT THE CAO TO REVIEW POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY (MPS), SUCH AS WINDMILL HEIGHT, VOLUME AND OTHER MEANS WHICH MAY SERVE TO LIMIT THE

TOTAL VOLUME OF WIND TURBINES WITHIN THE WEST HANTS REGION OVER TIME. MOTION CARRIED.

Property ☐	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☒	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
-----------------------------------	--	---	---------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---

DISCUSSION

Cumulative Visual Effects Study

After the November Council meeting the municipality received correspondence from the Provincial Planning Department regarding the MPS and LUB amendments forwarded by Council. In response the amendments were approved and further amended by the province as authorized and imposed by Minister Lohr. Most notably the change in setback requirements and the removal of the consideration of visual intrusive impacts on the landscape from the MPS.

Further, as it relates to the first reading and the application, the applicants for the Bear Lake project have withdrawn their initial application for the project. They have resubmitted and the application will be forwarded to PAC/HAC for review.

With regards to the study, the Planning Department staff reached out to qualified firms for proposals to complete a study of this nature. In return, staff received one proposal at the cost of \$60,845.00 plus applicable taxes. If awarded the study's completion date was anticipate to be August 2025.

I request further direction from Council regarding the execution of the cumulative visual impact study. Does Council wish to proceed with this study?

MPS / Municipal Planning Strategy

To date staff have not had the capacity to consider possible amendments related to height, volume and other means to limit the total volume within the West Hants Region due to scheduled vacations and current workload.

NEXT STEPS

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Visual Effects Study of Existing and Proposed Wind Farms – submitted by Dillon Consulting Limited

Value : \$60,845.00 plus applicable taxes

ALTERNATIVES

ATTACHMENTS

- Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs Letter, January 14, 2025 - West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law amendments RE Large Scale Wind Turbine Setbacks

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

N/A

Report Prepared by: 
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer



Department of Municipal Affairs

8th Floor North, Maritime Centre
1505 Barrington Street
PO Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

Via Email: mphillips@westhants.ca

File No.: 09-20-0003

Log No.: 24-048

January 14, 2025

Mark Phillips
CAO
West Hants Regional Municipality
76 Morison Drive
PO Box 3000
Windsor, NS B0N 2T0

Dear Mark Phillips:

**Re: West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law amendments re
Large Scale Wind Turbine Setbacks**

Approved by the Council of West Hants Regional Municipality: September 26, 2024

Pursuant to Section 208(6) of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has approved, **with amendments**, the above-noted documents.

The amendments made by the Minister are to bring the Municipal Planning Strategy closer in alignment with the provincial interest outlined in the Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth, Clean Power Plan, and the Green Hydrogen Action Plan to implement legislated goals in the *Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act*.

Subsection 208(8) requires that Council cause a notice to be published in the local newspaper or on the Municipality's website advising that the documents are in effect on the date of the notice and stating where the documents may be inspected.

For your records, enclosed are two copies of the Planning documents, each with a copy of the Minister's approval of the documents, with amendments.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please feel free to contact either Saira Smith, Senior Planner (Saira.Smith@novascotia.ca / 902-424-2394), or me.

Kind regards,

Christina Lovitt, MCIP, LPP, PMP
Provincial Director of Planning
(Christina.Lovitt@novascotia.ca / 902.943.0408)

c: Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant, WHRM (vlake@westhants.ca)
Kari Fougere, A/Director of Planning and Development, WHRM (kfougere@westhants.ca)

Encl.
/ss*kz