TO: Chair and Members 
Economic Development and Planning Committee  
WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE  

COMMITTEE DATE: March 2, 2010  

SUBJECT/REPORT NO:  
Establishment of Regional Tourism Organizations (PED10065) (City Wide)  

SUBMITTED BY:  
Tim McCabe  
General Manager  
Planning and Economic Development Department  
PREPARED BY:  
David Adames (905) 546-4132  

SIGNATURE:  

RECOMMENDATION:  

a) That Council receive Report PED10065, “Establishment of Regional Tourism Organizations”.

b) That staff be directed to report back to Council on the next phase of the establishment of the Regional Tourism Organizations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  

The Province announced the creation of new tourism regions with the February 2009 release of the "Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study". On December 18, 2009, the Ministry of Tourism announced the formal creation of thirteen "Regional Tourism Organizations" (RTOs). On January 27, 2010 the Ministry of Tourism and Culture issued the formal Request for Expressions of Interest for organizations to submit proposals to create an RTO for one of the Regions by March 1, 2010.
Hamilton is part of RTO #3 which also includes the County of Brant, Halton Region, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nations. Over the past year, the Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors has been discussing and monitoring the issue of the tourism regions. Also over the past year, Tourism Hamilton has been meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Tourism as well as representatives of Tourism Burlington, Tourism Brantford and Halton Region. At the January 2010 Tourism Hamilton Board meeting, the Board provided direction to David Adames to continue to work collaboratively with other RTO #3 stakeholders to represent Hamilton's interests in this important development for the City's tourism partners. Meetings and discussions with colleagues are underway.

While exact roles and responsibilities of the RTOs are still being formulated, the creation and funding of RTOs will enhance and augment investments that tourism businesses, municipalities and other stakeholders are making in tourism. The RTO will be able to perform functions that local destination marketing/management organizations have been unable to undertake due to mandate, funding and resource allocation. It is expected that each RTO will develop a business plan and that RTOs will be involved with regional marketing, product development, training and research.

Tourism Hamilton will continue to perform and deliver on our priorities while partnering with the new RTO to increase our overall capacity. We will share information, seek your input and report back in the coming weeks as the RTO takes shape.

*Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable*

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS** (for Recommendation(s) only)

**Financial:** Staff will report back to Council on any financial implications on the establishment of the RTO as more information becomes available.

**Staffing:** Not applicable

**Legal:** Not applicable

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND** (Chronology of events)

- **Summer 2008**  
  Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study released a discussion paper – Mapping Ontario’s Tourism Future: A starting Point for Discussion www.tourismstudy.ca

- **Sept 2008**  
  Cabinet shuffle – new Minister of Tourism – Monique Smith
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Values: Honest, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork

Fall 2008  Community consultation on discussion paper – 13 sessions held 500 people attended. 189 written submissions received. Ministry also consulted with 18 other government ministries

Feb 2009  Discovering Ontario – A Report on Future of Tourism was released with 20 recommendations including:

- Ontario will become one of the world’s preferred places to visit and aim to double tourism receipts by 2020
- The creation of tourism regions across the province – map included identifying 11 proposed regions
  - Region 3 – Halton, Hamilton, Brant
- The regularization of Destination Marketing Fees
- Developing new markets
- Investment in tourism product
- Strategically marketing – review of OTMPC
- Improve infrastructure
- Leader in tourism education, customer service

April 2009  New provincial budget announced including implementation of HST as of July 2010
- $40 million allocated for creation of Tourism Regions

May 2009  Regional Planning sessions held to discuss the creation of tourism regions

Sept 2009  Halton and Hamilton submit expression of interest to create and manage the Halton/Hamilton Tourism Region. Grand River Country submits expression of interest to create region to encompass all counties involved in Grand River Country

Nov 2009  Meeting with Assistant Deputy Minister Kurts to discuss expression of interest – Halton/Hamilton

Nov 16, 2009  Minister announces additional $25 million in funding for two years starting in 2010. Money to flow to regions in addition to $40 million previously announced. Fall budget bill includes an amendment to the Retail Sales Tax Act that would allow for collection of a Regional Tourism Levy (RTL) by 2012/13. RTL would be voluntarily collected by each region if majority of hoteliers agreed. RTL if
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Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors
Tourism Burlington
Tourism Brantford
Ontario Ministry of Tourism
Regional of Halton

**ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

The Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors has been discussing and monitoring the establishment of the RTOs and has provided input to the Province as part of the consultation process. As more information becomes available, Tourism Hamilton and staff will provide an update to Council.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

Not applicable.

**CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN** (Linkage to Desired End Results)


**Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization**

- More innovation, greater teamwork, better client focus
- Council and SMT are recognized for their leadership and integrity
- Opportunity to work with neighbouring communities.

**Financial Sustainability**

- Delivery of municipal services and management capital assets/liabilities in a sustainable, innovative and cost effective manner
- Ability to tap into new funding sources for tourism.

**Intergovernmental Relationships**
Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

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- Acquire greater share of Provincial and Federal grants (including those that meet specific needs)
- Maintain effective relationships with other public agencies
- Work with Ontario Ministry of Tourism.

**Growing Our Economy**

- A visitor and convention destination
- Will provide enhanced marketing programs.

### APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

None.

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