

February 13, 2019

Chair and Members of the Committee of the Whole
The Township of Muskoka Lakes
1 Bailey Street
Port Carling, ON
P0B 1J0

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Official Plan Review Request for Proposal

Friends of Muskoka congratulates the Township for embarking on its Official Plan review process, and are very pleased that the draft Request for Proposal (RFP) acknowledges that “community engagement and participation in the process is paramount to the success of this project.” We look forward to taking an active role in the review on behalf of our supporters, since the next Official Plan will be setting the course for the Muskoka we all love for the next 20 years.

We are delighted to see that the Purpose and Objectives of the Official Plan review includes the “development of an appropriate and sustainable recreational carrying capacity model and related policy for the diverse and wide-ranging number of lakes and rivers in the Township.” We believe a recreational carrying capacity model is a crucial tool to protect our lakes from over-development.

While we agree the Official Plan review should update policies related to waterfront commercial properties, we believe that these properties should remain primarily for the travelling and vacationing public (as in the current Official Plan C.12.5.8), and that development at waterfront commercial properties should protect and preserve the natural heritage resources of the Township (as mandated by the District’s Official Plan Amendment 47, C1.1). We recommend the following revisions (in strike-out and red):

“Update policies related to the establishment and redevelopment of waterfront commercial properties taking into account their varied characteristics and forms of tenure, to ensure they remain economically viable and primarily for the travelling and vacationing public, and protect and preserve the natural heritage resources of the Township.;

We agree the Official Plan review should “update existing environmental policies to reflect the requirements of current legislation, including District of Muskoka changes to the Lake System Health Program”. This would also include current provincial requirements to consider climate change in decision-making, and we recommend this be specifically mentioned with this revision (in red):

