



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the Planning Committee**

From: **Ken Hetherington, Manager, Planning Division**

Meeting Date: **August 29, 2016**

Subject: **Report PLPD16-060**
“Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016”

Purpose

A report to inform Council on the “Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016” and staff’s response.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report PLPD16-060 dated August 29, 2016, of the Manager, Planning Division, as follows:

- a) That Report PLPD16-060 be received for information, and
- b) That Council authorize staff to forward a letter summarizing the City of Peterborough’s comments on the “Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016”, as described in Report PLPD16-060, to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing prior to October 31, 2016.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budget and financial implications resulting from the approval of the report recommendations. However, if the proposed Growth Plan is approved, staff anticipates significant costs will be incurred in the future associated with the preparation of watershed plans and infrastructure master plans. Such costs will need to be reflected in future development charge by-law updates and will be subject to future budget approval processes.

Background

In February 2015, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing launched a coordinated review of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Greenbelt Plan, as required under their respective legislation. Together, these four plans are intended to manage growth, protect agricultural lands and natural environment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support economic development in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH).

Of the four plans under review, only the Growth Plan applies within the City of Peterborough. Accordingly, the City of Peterborough's response to the coordinate review, as detailed in Report PLPD15-029 dated May 25, 2015, focused solely on the Growth Plan.

On May 10, 2016, the Ministry released the *Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016*, for public consultation. The plan is available for public review and comment on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry (EBR Registry Number: 12-7194) until October 31, 2016.

Based on feedback received through the coordinated review process and the recommendations of a government-appointment advisory panel, the proposed Growth Plan contains a number of new policy directions that are intended to build upon the influence that the current Growth Plan has on planning and development.

Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006

The current Growth Plan came into effect in 2006. In 2009, Council adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 142 to bring the City's land use planning policies into conformity with the Growth Plan.

According to the Ministry, the Growth Plan sets the direction for accommodating growth and development in the region by requiring municipalities to use land and resources more efficiently, reduce outward growth, use existing infrastructure to fullest potential, and create complete communities. To achieve these goals, the current Growth Plan includes policies that require the City to conduct its planning in a way that:

- is in accordance with population and employment forecasts established in the Growth Plan (see Table 1);
- plans to achieve a minimum of 40% of annual residential development occurring within the built-up portion of the city;
- achieves a minimum population and employment density of 150 persons and jobs per hectare in the City's Urban Growth Centre (UGC) (i.e. downtown commercial

core) as defined in the Growth Plan and illustrated on Schedule A1 – City Structure of the Official Plan by 2031;

- achieves a minimum average population and employment density of 50 persons and jobs per hectare across the City's Designated Greenfield Area (DGA);
- directs major office and institutional employment to urban centres and near transit;
- plans for industrial and commercial uses close to transportation facilities such as highways, rail and airports; and
- coordinates growth with infrastructure management and investment.

Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016

The proposed Growth Plan, while maintaining a similar structure to the original Growth Plan, contains a number of new policies that are summarized below.

Building Complete Communities

The Ministry describes complete communities as communities that are more compact, reduce the costs of infrastructure, offer access to healthy local food and provide a range of employment and housing opportunities. Some of the new components of the proposed Growth Plan related to promoting complete communities include:

- Changing the definition of a complete community to clarify municipalities' ability to plan for complete communities at varying scales ranging from city-wide to neighbourhood scale;
- Requiring municipalities to:
 - Identify strategic growth areas;
 - Integrate infrastructure and public service facility planning based on the full life cycle cost for those facilities;
- Added emphasis on creating communities that: exhibit good urban design; provide enhanced access to public service facilities, parks and healthy local food; integrate active transportation (e.g. walking, cycling); mitigate and build resilience from the impacts of climate change; and, integrate green infrastructure (e.g. parks, forests, trees, ponds, etc.) and low impact development (i.e. on-site stormwater filtration and infiltration measures); and

- Planning for diversification of the community's housing stock.

Community Hubs

The proposed Growth Plan encourages public service facilities (e.g. libraries, recreation centres, emergency services, health and education services, etc.) to be co-located with other public services in community hubs. More particularly, such hubs should be located in existing facilities and in locations that are easily accessible by transit and active transportation in order to promote cost effectiveness and long-term viability.

Development Targets

A key feature of 2006 Growth Plan was the inclusion of minimum density targets for development in the City's undeveloped, DGA and its downtown UGC as well as an annual target for residential development within the existing Built-up Area. Under the proposed Growth Plan, these targets would be as follows:

- Urban Growth Centre – plan to achieve an average density of 150 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031 (unchanged);
- Designated Greenfield Area – plan to achieve an average density of 80 residents and jobs per hectare (up from 50); and
- Intensification – direct 60% of all annual residential development to the existing built-up area (up from 40%).

Additionally, the current Growth Plan provides opportunity for “outer ring” communities like Peterborough to employ an alternative intensification target subject to provincial approval; however that opportunity would be removed under the proposed Growth Plan.

Employment

The proposed Growth Plan encourages municipalities to identify Prime Employment Areas which would receive greater protection from conversion to other uses compared to Employment Areas as described in the current Growth Plan. Generally, Prime Employment Areas should be identified near major goods movement facilities such as Highway 115 and are to be protected for uses that are land extensive or have low employment densities such as manufacturing, warehousing and logistics. Where necessary, the Province may also identify Prime Employment Areas. Sensitive land uses such as residential, institutional uses, and retail, commercial and office uses that are not ancillary to a primary employment use are to be prohibited. Prime Employment Areas that are located in the DGA are to be excluded from the DGA density target calculation.

Additionally, the Plan proposes to reduce the size of what is considered a major office from 10,000 square metres (107,640 square feet) and 500 or more employees to 4,000 square metres (43,050 square feet) and 200 or more employees. The current Growth

Plan indicates that major office and appropriate major institutional development **should** be located in urban growth centres, major transit station areas or areas with frequent transit service or existing or planning higher order transit service (e.g. subways, streetcars and bus rapid transit). The proposed Growth Plan, on the other hand, indicates that these facilities **will** be directed to urban growth centres, major transit station areas or other strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service (i.e. service that runs at least 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening every day of the week).

Transportation

The proposed Growth Plan contains a number of policies that are intended to prioritize investment in transit and planning development in ways that support transit. These policies include identifying Major Transit Station Areas and Priority Transit Corridors, implementing minimum density targets around Major Transit Station Areas, and planning for Mobility Hubs (i.e. significant major transit station areas with significant transit service levels and development potential). Based on definitions provided in the Plan, it would appear that the concept of Priority Transit Corridors and Mobility Hubs would not be apply to Peterborough since the City does not have any existing or planned transit services that meet the service levels identified in the Plan. Generally, these concepts only apply to municipalities within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area that are subject to Metrolinx's Big Move plan.

With respect to Major Transit Station Areas, the area around the City's downtown bus terminal is considered a Major Transit Station Area and is required to be identified as such in the Official Plan. Notwithstanding that the proposed Growth Plan identifies minimum density targets for these areas, the proposed Plan does not impose a new minimum density target on the City's Major Transit Station Area.

General transportation concepts contained in the current Growth Plan will continue to apply including establishing public transit as the first priority for transportation infrastructure planning and investment, and coordinating transportation and land use planning to foster connectivity, transit and active transportation.

New transportation concepts in the proposed Growth Plan that would apply to Peterborough include:

- A requirement to adopt a complete streets approach to road design which ensures the needs and safety of all road users (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists) are met; and
- A requirement to integrate active transportation (i.e. human-powered travel) networks into transportation planning to ensure continuous linkages between strategic growth areas and key destinations.

Watershed Planning and Natural Heritage Systems

The proposed Growth Plan places significant emphasis on protecting, improving and/or restoring water quality and quantity. Accordingly, to achieve this goal, the Plan requires municipalities to undertake watershed and subwatershed plans that will identify and require protection of water resource systems, key hydrologic features and areas, and their functions. In accordance with the proposed policy, watershed and subwatershed plans will need to be completed:

- to inform the completion of water, wastewater, and stormwater master plans;
- to coordinate planning for potable water, wastewater, and stormwater systems among municipalities that share an inland water source or receiving water body (such as the Otonabee River);
- prior to the approval of proposals for large-scale development proceeding by way of secondary plans, plans of subdivision and vacant land plans of condominium; and,
- prior to any settlement boundary expansion.

Additionally, the proposed Plan builds on the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) which requires municipalities to identify natural heritage systems (i.e. systems of natural features, areas and linkages) by requiring municipalities to include natural heritage systems in their Official Plans that are to be mapped by the Province.

To protect key hydrologic features and areas and key natural heritage features, the Plan prohibits certain types of development and prescribes mitigative measures such as minimum development setbacks. However, these prescribed measures do not apply to features and areas that are located within a settlement area boundary (such as the City of Peterborough) nor to natural heritage features outside of settlement areas that are not included in the natural heritage system identified by the province. In these cases, the policies of the PPS will continue to apply.

If a natural heritage system has not been identified within a settlement area and the Province identifies one, the municipality will be required to establish policies to ensure the connectivity, diversity and functions of the natural heritage features and areas are maintained, restored or enhanced.

Presently, the City of Peterborough does not explicitly identify a natural heritage system in the Official Plan but instead identifies a series of natural areas on Schedule C of the Plan. Staff anticipates that as part of the current Official Plan Review, these natural areas will form the basis for identifying a natural heritage system. Given that most of the city's land base is considered to be settlement area, staff anticipates that the natural heritage policies of the PPS will continue to apply within the city.

Cultural Heritage

Generally, the proposed Growth Plan relies on policies in the PPS to ensure conservation of cultural heritage resources. However, as proposed, the Plan will require municipalities to work with stakeholders, First Nations and Metis communities to develop and implement official plan policies and strategies for identifying, using and managing cultural heritage resources. Staff have no concern with this provision and note that local First Nations were prominent in the development of the City's Archaeology Policy.

Infrastructure Planning

The proposed Growth Plan advances the current Plan's direction for integrated infrastructure planning by requiring infrastructure master plans for:

- sewage, water and stormwater management systems;
- waste management systems;
- electricity generation, transmission and distribution systems;
- communications/telecommunications systems;
- transit and transportation corridors and facilities; and
- oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

Planning for infrastructure is to be based on long-range scenario-based land use and financial planning evaluations and must be informed by other plans such as asset management plans, community energy plans, watershed plans and environmental assessments, as applicable. Planning for infrastructure is intended to be used as a tool for directing growth and development, to provide financially sustainable infrastructure and services, and to ensure resiliency from the impacts of climate change. Generally staff has no objection to this concept but note that such planning will require coordination across many divisions within the City, coordination with external stakeholders and infrastructure service providers, and significant time and financial resources.

Climate Change

In addition to building community resiliency to climate change, the proposed Growth Plan also seeks to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging communities to meet their energy demands through either low-carbon or carbon-free forms of energy and by off-setting any local emissions of greenhouse gasses that cannot be eliminated. To do this, the plan requires municipalities to develop official plan policies that identify actions that will reduce greenhouse emissions and address climate change adaptation goals as described in the Ontario Climate Change Strategy, 2015 and Action Plan.

Agriculture

Through the proposed Plan, the Province is committing to identify an agricultural system consisting of prime agricultural areas, rural areas and elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector including agricultural infrastructure and transportation networks, agricultural services, farm markets, distributors and processing. The Plan requires that the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to those elements that support agriculture be maintained and enhanced.

Although little land is designated for agricultural use in the city of Peterborough, the city is home to a number of businesses and services that contribute to the viability of the region's agricultural sector. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the City will be required to ensure sufficient land use protection is provided for such uses.

Additionally, the Plan encourages municipalities to implement strategies to sustain and enhance the agricultural system and the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector by:

- providing opportunities to support local food, urban and near-urban agriculture and protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts;
- considering impacts on the agricultural system in planning decisions; and
- undertaking long-term planning for agriculture and preparing regional agri-food strategies.

Settlement Area Boundary Expansions and Excess Land Identification

Settlement Areas are built up areas where development is concentrated with a mix of land uses as well as lands that are designated in an official plan for development. Generally, settlement areas are intended to only contain enough land to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of an official plan. Consistent with the existing Growth Plan and the PPS, a settlement area boundary expansion can only be considered as part of a municipally-initiated and led comprehensive review. The proposed Growth Plan provides additional direction on considerations for this review including requirements for:

- a land needs assessment based on a Provincially-established methodology;
- watershed and capital asset management plans and infrastructure master plans; and,
- agricultural impact assessments and minimum distance separation compliance.

Additionally, the proposed Plan requires Outer Ring municipalities such as Peterborough to use a Provincially-established land needs assessment methodology to identify and

prohibit development on any excess lands (i.e. lands not required to accommodate growth to the horizon of the Plan).

Implementation

Where appropriate, the Province is committing to identify, establish, or update:

- the built boundary;
- the size and location of urban growth centres;
- prime employment areas;
- priority transit corridors and planning requirements for such corridors;
- the agricultural system for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- the natural heritage system for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- a methodology for assessing land needs; and
- guidance on watershed planning.

However, the Plan does not establish a timeline for when these activities may be complete.

Subject to completion of the current review period and any amendments made to the Plan as a result of consultation, the proposed Growth Plan will come into effect on a date to be specified by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Typically, municipalities would have three years to bring their official plans into conformity with the new Growth Plan in accordance with Section 12 of the Places to Grow Act, 2005. However, in this case, the Minister is proposing to extend that deadline to five years.

Notwithstanding that municipalities may have five years to update their official plans in response to the new Growth Plan, all municipal planning decisions made following the new Growth Plan coming into effect must conform to the Growth Plan regardless of whether the matter was commenced before the Plan's effective date. The only exception to this will be for matters that were previously exempt from the Growth Plan, 2006 by Ontario Regulation 311/06.

City of Peterborough Comments

Complete Communities

Generally, staff agree that complete communities are good communities. Since the Growth Plan first came into effect in 2006, there has been some public sentiment that all new developments, particularly suburban (greenfield) subdivisions and secondary plan areas, should be developed to be complete communities to the greatest extent possible. In staff's opinion, the concept of complete community must vary in scale and application across the GGH given the variety of communities in the GGH. In Peterborough's case, given its small size and isolated location compared to other GGH communities, staff suggest that planning for complete community should be considered on a city-wide scale, and/or perhaps on a district scale within the city, rather than on a development by development basis.

The proposed Growth Plan revises the definition for the term complete community. Generally, staff supports the proposed definition as it provides flexibility to plan for complete communities on a variety of scales. However, through the commenting process to the province, staff feel that it is important to ensure that the power to interpret what constitutes a complete community remains a municipal responsibility.

Settlement Area Boundary, Land Needs and Excess Lands

The PPS requires municipalities to make enough land available to accommodate up to 20 years' worth of development. However, the proposed Growth Plan would allow municipalities in the GGH to make enough land available for development to 2041. All land required for development within this planning horizon would typically be identified as part of the City's settlement area (i.e. the area designated for development in the Official Plan). Presently, as a result of Official Plan Amendment No. 142, almost all land within Peterborough's corporate boundary is considered to be part of the City's settlement area even though the land may not have an urban land use designation on Schedule A of the Official Plan.

If approved, Peterborough will be required to use a Provincial methodology to identify excess lands within the City's settlement area that are not required to accommodate growth to 2041. Any identified excess lands will be prohibited from development.

Given that Section 1.1.2 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 already restricts how much land municipalities can make available for development, staff do not feel that it is necessary to identify excess lands. However, if the Growth Plan is approved as proposed, staff is concerned that the identification of excess lands may be used as a means of requiring the City to reduce its settlement area boundary. The City's current settlement area boundary was established in consultation with the Province as part of Official Plan Amendment No. 142. If, as a result of increasing density and intensification

targets, less land is required for accommodating development to the horizon of the plan, staff would want to ensure that this land is not removed from the City's settlement area. The current process to adjust a settlement area boundary is comprehensive and subject to Provincial approval. Under the proposed plan, this process is set to become more detailed. The potential removal of land from an existing settlement area, in staff's opinion, would be unacceptable since the land has already been subject to a Provincially-sanctioned review process.

If the Growth Plan's intent is to push municipalities to reduce their settlement area boundaries, staff would suggest that allowance be given in the plan to identify excess lands as post 2041 growth areas that would not be available for development during the Plan's horizon but would still be considered part of the City's settlement area.

Development Targets

As noted, the Growth Plan imposes density targets on the City's downtown UGC and suburban DGA. Additionally, the Plan requires the City to direct a minimum amount of annual residential development to locations within the City's built-up area.

If approved, the proposed Plan will increase the minimum DGA density target from 50 residents and jobs per hectare to 80 residents and jobs per hectare and will increase the annual residential intensification target from 40% to 60% of all new residential units being directed to the built-up area.

When the City adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 142 to implement the 2006 Growth Plan, staff expressed concern that both the DGA density target and the annual intensification target will be difficult to achieve. Specifically, staff was concerned that the city's lower than average household size and its high proportion of seniors and post-secondary students who are not counted in the census will make it difficult to achieve 50 residents and jobs per hectare without drastic change in building form. Additionally, staff was concerned that as development sites in the built-up area are redeveloped, it will become increasingly difficult to sustain a minimum annual intensification target. As a result of this concern, OPA 142 contained a policy signifying Council's intent to review the DGA density target with the province.

To date, the City has had some success achieving both of these targets however this success has not come easy. Staff has found, particularly in planning to achieve 50 residents and jobs per hectare in the DGA, that the development community has had some struggles in achieving the density target while still fulfilling the market's demand for ground-oriented housing. In light of the proposed new targets, staff is even more concerned that these more aggressive targets will be exceedingly difficult to achieve and are unsustainable over the long term unless radical change occurs in Peterborough's development industry.

When the Growth Plan was first approved in 2006, Peterborough's downtown UGC, which is focused on the city's commercial core area, had a density of approximately 100

residents and jobs per hectare. In order to meet a similar average density of 80 residents and jobs per hectare across the vastly larger DGA, staff feel that a major shift is needed away from ground-oriented housing (e.g. singles, semis, towns and walk-up apartments) to mid- and high-rise dwellings where appropriate infrastructure exists or can be provided. In short, newly developing neighbourhoods will need to look radically different and be significantly denser than older residential neighbourhoods. Staff feels that such a shift will cause an imbalance in new housing supply, will erode the affordability of ground-oriented housing, and could act as a deterrent to new development.

Both the existing Growth Plan and the proposed Growth Plan contain flexibility for municipalities in the Outer Ring to seek approval from the Province for an alternative DGA density target. In both plans, Peterborough was excluded from such consideration because of the presence of the downtown UGC. In staff's opinion, Peterborough should have the same flexibility to seek an alternative DGA density target as other Outer Ring municipalities because of our unique demographics and relative isolation from other Urban Growth Centres.

If the Growth Plan is approved as proposed, staff feel that the limit of the DGA should be adjusted to exclude those lands that have been built since 2006. If those lands that were built under the previous density target are included in the DGA, newly developing areas will need to be planned for even higher densities in order to make up for existing lower density developments.

With respect to intensification, staff does not believe it is reasonable to expect that 60% of all new residential units will be built within the existing built-up area on an annual basis to the horizon of the Plan or beyond. Presently, given the relatively small amount of residential construction occurring annually in Peterborough (typically 300 to 400 new units annually) and the limited number of development sites available within the city's built-up area, staff finds that the city's intensification rate can vary greatly from year to year depending on the number and scale of projects occurring in the built-up area. In recent years, a single project in the built-up area can skew the City's intensification rate upwards to 60% one year only to be balanced by a rate of 30% or less the following year.

Similar to the density target for the DGA, both the existing and the proposed Growth Plan contain flexibility for Outer Ring municipalities to seek an alternative intensification target from the Province. Under the proposed Growth Plan, however, the City of Peterborough would now be excluded from such consideration because of the presence of the downtown UGC. In staff's opinion, Peterborough should have the same flexibility to seek an alternative intensification target as other Outer Ring municipalities because of our unique demographics and relative isolation from other Urban Growth Centres.

Should the Growth Plan be approved as proposed, staff feel that the limit of the built-up area should be adjusted to include those lands that have been built since 2006. Doing so may provide some additional opportunities for intensification that are currently not

available in the built-up area. Section 5.2.2 of the proposed Plan provides flexibility for the Province to adjust the built boundary.

Employment

The proposed Growth Plan introduces the concept of Prime Employment Areas which are intended to house and protect land extensive and low density employment uses near major goods movement facilities. Presently, staff would suggest that neither of the City's two industrial parks, Peterborough Industrial Park or the Major Bennett Industrial Park, should be characterized as Prime Employment Areas because they do not fit the Growth Plan's vision of a Prime Employment Area. In staff's opinion, Peterborough's existing industrial parks are better suited to remain in their current Employment Area classification because they contain a variety of employment uses, some with relatively high employment densities.

If Peterborough were to identify land within its planning jurisdiction as Prime Employment Area, the only candidate area within the City would be along the south side of Highway 115 at Bensfort Road, in the Coldsprings Planning Area. Currently, most of the highway exposure in the Coldsprings area is designated and zoned for residential use. In staff's opinion, however, given the nature of uses with Peterborough's current employment areas, it would be more appropriate to plan for Employment Areas rather than Prime Employment Areas. Planning for Employment Areas would maintain flexibility to host a greater variety of uses in such areas and would better position Peterborough to capitalize on employment development opportunities as they arise.

With respect to the proposed new definition for Major Office and the stronger language in the Plan that directs Major Office uses to the Urban Growth Centre, staff is generally satisfied that the Official Plan is consistent with the Growth Plan's direction. It is noted that the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law does contemplate office development in areas outside of the downtown however those offices are either smaller than what would be considered to be a Major Office or they are associated with and ancillary to another primary use such as industry.

Three of the City's largest employers, namely Trent University, Sir Sandford Fleming College, and the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, are institutional uses. The proposed Growth Plan requires major institutional development to be directed to urban growth centres, major transit station areas or strategic growth areas with frequent transit service. None of the employers noted above have their primary location within these areas. Accordingly, staff is concerned that the proposed Plan may limit expansion and development opportunity for these employers.

The proposed Growth Plan does not define major institutional development. In staff's opinion, this term should be defined in the plan to facilitate interpretation of the Plan. Although staff supports the promotion of institutional development in the Central Area,

staff would not support the restriction of expansion and development opportunity at existing major institutions.

Transportation

The proposed Plan requires municipalities to adopt a complete streets design approach when constructing, reconstructing or refurbishing streets. Although staff supports the principle of complete street design, staff is concerned that the Plan could be interpreted to apply to all forms of road work. Often, the City undertakes projects such as sewer replacement and pavement rehabilitation that involves road work however this work does not include additional enhancements that affect street design. If the City is required to apply a complete streets approach to all road work, the cost of completing regular maintenance work will increase significantly. Accordingly, staff suggest that the Plan needs to provide municipalities the flexibility to interpret how complete streets principles will be implemented. Should the plan be approved without such flexibility, staff would recommend that the Province establish a stable source of funding to support municipal implementation of complete streets.

Implementation

As noted previously, the Plan commits the Province to provide a number of tools to aid in Plan implementation including a land-needs assessment methodology and guidance on watershed planning. Unfortunately, a timeline is not provided for when these aids will be available. The Plan proposes a strict prohibition on the approval of new major developments such as large-scale plans of subdivision and secondary plans until watershed planning is complete. In the absence of guidance from the Province on this issue, the City may need to move forward with completing watershed plans and other infrastructure master plans in order to ensure the timely availability of development land. Staff anticipates that such planning will take significant time, staff resources and funding to complete; some plans could take at least year to complete once budget funding is available. In order to prepare for such work, the City will need to review and update its development charge by-laws to provide a mechanism to fund this work.

To provide a reasonable timeframe for the City to complete watershed plans and other infrastructure master plans without restricting the City's ability to maintain an adequate supply of development land, the Growth Plan should include a phased timeline for having such plans in place following which development prohibitions would take effect. Additionally, staff would encourage the Province to provide any supplementary tools and direction for implementing the Plan either concurrent with the Plan's approval or as quickly as possible thereafter.

Presently, the City is in the process of preparing a new Official Plan. If a new Growth Plan comes into effect prior to the adoption of a new Official Plan, the City will need to ensure that the new Official Plan conforms to the new Growth Plan. However, if the City adopts a new Official Plan prior to a new Growth Plan coming into effect, the City will

have five years to update the Official Plan in response to that Growth Plan. Regardless of when the Official Plan is updated to reflect a new Growth Plan, all planning decisions made following the Growth Plan coming into effect will have to conform with that Plan.

Implications for Peterborough

In 2006 when the Growth Plan was first approved, the Plan was viewed by many as a helpful re-introduction of Provincial direction in land use planning after a decade of provincial de-regulation; the Growth Plan was going to help GGH municipalities by instilling a coordinated approach to addressing planning issues that were unique to the region. For Peterborough, the identification of an Urban Growth Centre in the city's downtown acknowledged that Peterborough has an important role in accommodating a portion of the substantial population and employment growth that was forecast for the region.

Since that time, and in light of the proposed Growth Plan, staff's opinion on the Growth Plan has evolved. While staff still agrees with most of the Plan's principles, staff feels that the proposed Plan may actually hinder the City's ability to plan in accordance with community priorities and desires. Peterborough, because of its identification as an Urban Growth Centre, has generally been required to plan under the same rules as other larger GGH cities including Markham, Vaughan, Milton, Hamilton and Kitchener. While the current Growth Plan does offer some flexibility for the Province to consider imposing an alternative intensification target for Peterborough, the proposed Plan would remove that flexibility.

Because Peterborough is planning under the same rules as these other municipalities, our urban landscape, particularly in new greenfield sites, is becoming more similar to these other communities. Moving forward under the proposed Growth Plan, the suburban landscape in Peterborough will consist of significantly more mid- and high-rise residential buildings and fewer single-detached homes. These neighbourhoods will be more in keeping with new suburban neighbourhoods across the GGH than with the existing community. While increased densities when coupled with transit investment should help to enhance transit accessibility in the community, staff anticipates that increased densities will also create pressure to provide additional arterial street capacity throughout the community.

Through the Official Plan Review process, the community has expressed a desire for a more compact, transit-friendly community. However, staff feels that the proposed DGA density target will create new neighbourhoods that both diverge from community expectation and erode the community's historic character and sense of place.

Table 2 attached hereto illustrates the difference in anticipated scale of growth between Peterborough City-County and other Regions in the GGH with Urban Growth Centre municipalities. In staff's opinion, Peterborough does not face the same growth-driven planning issues that other urban growth centre-municipalities in the GGH face and

therefore it is not appropriate to plan Peterborough in the same way as those municipalities.

In addition to fostering a relatively uniform standard of development across the GGH, staff anticipates that the proposed Growth Plan may also affect the availability of building lots in Peterborough in a couple ways. First, by requiring infrastructure master planning, watershed planning, scenario-based land use planning, full life cycle costing of infrastructure, and the identification of excess lands, the Plan appears to signal the need for the City to prioritize areas of development (particularly greenfield areas). As a result, staff feels there is a real possibility that some of the City's planned greenfield growth areas may need to be identified as excess lands and withheld from development until other growth areas develop.

Traditionally, the City has not withheld areas from development if adequate infrastructure exists or can be readily provided in order to maintain healthy competition in the home building industry. Presently, most building lots in Peterborough are created by a small group of developers who either retain the lots for themselves or sell the lots to a small group of builders with whom they have long-standing relationships. These developers, for the most part, have secured land in each of the City's planned greenfield growth areas in order to ensure long-term continuity of their businesses.

Should the City need to prioritize areas for development, some developers and their home building partners may be unable to develop their lands until other areas develop first, thus restricting or even eliminating their ability to participate in the industry for a period of time. Should this occur, staff anticipates that some builders (and their trades) may leave the community to find work and that the affordability of new housing will erode.

Second, by requiring new greenfield developments to achieve an average density of 80 residents and jobs per hectare, the Plan will force the development industry to drastically change the nature of housing that it provides. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation consistently reports that single detached housing is the dominant form of new housing being created in Peterborough annually. City building permit records show that since 2000, approximately 54% of all new units created across the City have been single detached or semi-detached homes. According to a recent report released by Ryerson University's Centre for Urban Research & Land Development titled "Will GTA Homebuyers Really Give Up Ground-Related Homes For Apartments?" (August 15, 2016), GTA consumers show a strong affinity for ground-related housing, specifically single-detached housing. If the development community must shift away from ground-oriented housing to meet a new DGA density target, it will be doing so in spite of a traditionally strong market demand for that housing.

Under the current Growth Plan, the development community has adjusted to meet a DGA density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare by providing a mix of lower and higher density housing, particularly medium density units in row housing and three to five storey developments. However, if the proposed Growth Plan is approved with a new density

target, much higher density developments will be required despite a limited market for that type of housing in Peterborough. As a consequence, staff anticipates that some developers may either withhold bringing developments forward until market conditions favour higher density housing or they may look to build in other communities where they are not subject to the higher density target. In either scenario, housing affordability would be negatively impacted and potentially the health of Peterborough's home building industry as well.

Summary

The proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016 builds upon sound principles found in the current Growth Plan which include the notion of compact, complete communities that integrate planning for growth, infrastructure, service delivery and environmental protection. Generally, staff supports the proposed plan and feels that the new plan is well positioned to address those issues that have emerged in land use planning since 2006. However, staff is also concerned that the Plan may result in a loss of community identity both here in Peterborough and across the GGH and may create an imbalance in Peterborough's home building industry to the detriment of both the industry's health and housing affordability. Based on the discussion herein, staff recommends that the following actions be taken before or concurrent with approval of the proposed Growth Plan:

- that clarification be provided in the Plan to ensure municipalities' right to determine what is a complete community;
- that consideration be given to removing provisions for identifying excess lands in the Outer Ring and/or that clarification be provided in the Plan to ensure that identified excess lands will not be removed from an established Settlement Area Boundary;
- that the City of Peterborough be given the flexibility to seek an alternative density target for Designated Greenfield Areas and an alternative intensification target for the Built-up Area similar to other Outer Ring municipalities because of the City's unique demographics and relative isolation from other Urban Growth Centres;
- that the limit of the Built Boundary be adjusted to include lands that have been developed since 2006;
- that any Provincial identification of Prime Employment Areas be done in consultation with municipalities;
- that major institutional development be defined in the Plan;

- that flexibility be provided in the Plan to enable municipalities to determine how complete streets principles are implemented;
- that a phased timeline be included in the Plan for the completion of watershed plans and infrastructure master plans; and,
- that the supplementary direction to be provided by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and/or the Province to aid municipal implementation of the Plan be released concurrent with approval of the Plan or as quickly as possible thereafter.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:

Table 1 – Population and Employment Forecast for City of Peterborough, 2001-2041
Table 2- Forecasted Population Growth in select GGH Regions, 2001 to 2041

Table 1 – Population and Employment Forecast for City of Peterborough, 2001-2041

	2001	2011	2021	2031	2041
Population	74,000	79,000	84,000	103,000	115,000
Employment	37,000	41,000	42,000	52,000	58,000

Table 2: Forecasted Population Growth in select GGH Regions, 2001 to 2041

	Population 2001 (000s)	Forecasted Population 2041 (000s)	Difference (000s)	% Growth
Peterborough City and County	130	191	61	47%
York Region	760	1,790	1,030	136%
Halton Region	390	1,000	610	156%
Waterloo Region	456	835	379	83%
City of Hamilton	510	780	270	53%