



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Planning Committee

FROM: Ken Hetherington, Manager, Planning Division

MEETING DATE: May 10, 2010

SUBJECT: Report PLPD10-030
Information Report - Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure's
Growth Forecast Review – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden
Horseshoe

PURPOSE

A report to update Council on the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure's growth forecast review of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report PLPD10-030 dated May 10, 2010, of the Manager, Planning Division, as follows:

That Report PLPD10-030 be received.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No budget or financial implications would result from the decision to approve the above recommendation.

BACKGROUND

At the April 12, 2010 City Council meeting, staff were directed to bring forward a report to update Council on the Province's growth forecast review for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, including opportunities for input regarding the population and employment projections. Report PLPD10-030 provides a summary of the information that has been shared to date by the Province.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) is a provincial plan that came into effect on June 16, 2006 and establishes a policy framework for managing growth in the GGH to the year 2031. With a vision to building stronger, more prosperous, and complete communities, the Growth Plan will guide municipal and provincial decisions on a wide range of issues that include transportation, infrastructure planning, land use planning, urban form, housing, natural heritage and resource protection. The Growth Plan intends to achieve this overall vision through specific policy directions that aim to:

- Revitalize downtowns to become vibrant and convenient centres.
- Create complete communities that offer more options for living, working, shopping and playing.
- Provide greater choice in housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages in life.
- Curb urban sprawl and protect farmlands and green spaces.
- Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices.

Population and Employment Forecasts for Peterborough

The Growth Plan provides population and employment projections for all upper and single-tier municipalities in the GGH and requires them to use these projections when planning for future growth. Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan which presents the projections for the GGH municipalities is attached as Exhibit A. From 2006 to 2031, the City of Peterborough is forecast to grow by:

- An additional 13,000 people to reach a total population of 88,000
- An additional 1,300 jobs to reach a total of 42,000 jobs

The Growth Plan states that the Schedule 3 forecast will be reviewed at least every 5 years.

Policy 2.2.1 of the Growth Plan states:

“2.2.1 Growth Forecasts

- 1. Population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 for all upper and single-tier municipalities will be used for planning and managing growth in the GGH.*
- 2. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal will review the forecasts contained in Schedule 3 at least every five years in consultation with municipalities, and may revise the forecasts.”*

At this time, the Province is only undertaking a review of the growth forecasts presented in Schedule 3 to the Growth Plan.

A review of the Growth Plan policies, including density targets is **not** being contemplated by the Province at this time.

The forecasts in the Growth Plan were developed using Statistics Canada Census data collected in 2001 and disseminated in 2003 – 2004. The Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure is currently undertaking this first review of the Growth Plan population and employment forecasts and has retained Hemson Consulting Ltd. to assist with the process. This review will involve an examination of the methodology and assumptions used to develop the current forecasts and may result in updated forecasts and allocations in light of the 2006 Census and other pertinent demographic data.

Staff were invited to a meeting at the Ministry office on March 9, 2010, at which time the proposed methodology for the forecast review was presented. At this meeting Ministry staff outlined the proposed key work plan components and timeline for the forecast review. The proposed timeline is as follows:

- Review methodology and assumptions to develop current forecasts (February 2010).
- Develop draft revised growth forecast methodology (February 2010)
 - Convene meeting with Municipal Technical Group (March 9, 2010)
 - Convene meeting with outer-ring planning officials (March 9, 2010)
 - Brief Regional Planning Commissioners (March 12, 2010)
- Release draft method and forecasts (targeted release May / June 2010).
 - Public release of report and posting on website and Environmental Registry & circulations to municipalities and key stakeholders for 60 day comment period.
 - Facilitated meetings from municipalities and key stakeholders.
- Release final forecasts (by the end of 2010)

- Potential Growth Plan amendment if required.
 - Full consultation, in accordance with Places to Grow Act, 2005

The Ministry has advised that given the extensive background work that preceded the 2005 forecasts, it is their consultant's view that a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the forecast method is not required. However, some changes to the 2005 method are being considered as part of the review. As well a number of issues about specific methods and assumptions used to prepare the 2005 forecasts and their implications for preparing future updates have been identified and will be considered. For example, it had been suggested that the forecast be tied to more empirical long term projections of the economy and therefore, the various demographic and economic assumptions used in the update will be tied to a defined and quantified economic outlook such as the Ministry of Finance's *Ontario Long-Term Report on the Economy, 2010*. It has also been recommended that the projections for the "outer-ring" municipalities be tied to the overall projections for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, rather than a separate projection.

The proposed forecast method is generally similar to the 2005 method, in that it employs an industry-standard approach that has been developed through previous forecasting exercise for planning purposes in southern Ontario and the GTA. However, specific changes to the method are being proposed, for two reasons: first, so that a greater level of detail and accuracy can be achieved; and second, so that the influence of Growth Plan policies can be better incorporated.

Like the 2005 forecast, the proposed method is structured as a "top-down" model that incorporates assumptions based on national, provincial and regional economic and demographic trends, while also incorporating a number of "bottom-up" factors related to local markets and planning policies. Population and employment would be forecast as larger geographies where relatively independent housing and labour markets are observed. As required, the forecast growth in the larger geographies would then be distributed amongst the various upper and single tier municipal jurisdictions identified in Schedule 3 based on a range of market and planning policy-related factors.

At this point in the Ministry's review process, there are not actual forecasts to present or to provide comments on. The Ministry has provided information related to the proposed methodology for conducting the forecast review and has requested preliminary comments from GGH municipal officials. They have advised that draft forecasts will be

available May / June 2010 and there will be facilitated meetings for municipalities and key stakeholders to provide feedback on the new forecasts.

Submitted by,

Concurred with,

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Attachment:

Exhibit A – Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan