



Alternative formats and communication supports available upon request. Please contact accessibility@brantford.ca or 519-759-4150 for assistance.

Date February 5, 2019 **Report No.** 2019-88

To Chair and Members
Committee of the Whole – Community Development

From Paul Moore
General Manager, Community Development

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item ☐
Item For Consideration ☒

2.0 Topic Implications of the Proposed Growth Plan Amendment on the City of Brantford Official Plan Review [Financial Impact – none]

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2019-88, Implications of the Proposed Growth Plan Amendment on the City of Brantford Official Plan Review, BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to update the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that Council wishes to proceed with the Alternative Targets for Intensification and Density as requested in July and October of 2018.

4.0 Purpose and Overview

On January 15, 2019, the Province of Ontario (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Growth Secretariat) issued a proposed amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, also known as “Places to Grow” or simply the “Growth Plan”. The purpose of this Report is to update Council on the potential impacts of the proposed amendment to the Growth Plan could have

on the City's ongoing Official Plan Review. This Report also seeks direction from Council to update Provincial Staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that Council wishes to proceed with the alternative intensification and density targets as submitted to the Minister in July and October of 2018.

The new City of Brantford Official Plan currently being prepared must conform to the Growth Plan. The Official Plan Review includes a Municipal Comprehensive Review process that must be conducted in accordance with Growth Plan requirements.

As part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review process, a draft land needs assessment has been completed which has determined:

- appropriate intensification and density targets for future population and employment growth;
- the current land supply available to accommodate population and employment growth;
- the amount of additional land required to accommodate growth; and
- how much additional land from within the Boundary Adjustment Lands may be added to Brantford's Settlement Area.

In accordance with the Growth Plan and Council direction, the City has requested from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing permission to use alternative intensification and density targets which are key inputs to the land needs assessment. In June 2018, Planning Staff presented alternative intensification and density targets for future growth for Council consideration. The alternative targets were endorsed by Council and submitted to the Province to guide the development of land use concepts, draft servicing strategies and high level transportation network options. Council later endorsed a revised alternative density target presented by Planning Staff in September 2018 in response to Provincial Staff input. Based on the work completed to date, and the extensive analysis to determine appropriate targets to guide growth, Planning Staff are of the opinion that the alternative targets as requested remain valid, and continuing the Official Plan Review program on the basis of the completed draft land needs assessment is the best course of action to avoid further delay and additional cost to the Official Plan Review.

Furthermore, the Official Plan Review and Boundary Adjustment Lands Master Plan relate to other city-initiated growth management studies such as the

Transportation Master Plan and Master Servicing Plan, which ultimately provide key inputs to the Development Charges Report and By-law. Any delays to the Official Plan Review will delay the completion of these studies as well.

In addition to this Report, Planning Staff have prepared comments to the Province regarding the proposed Growth Plan amendment for Council's consideration in Report 2019-85, City of Brantford Comments on the Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Report 2019-85 will also be considered at the February 5, 2019, Committee of the Whole – Community Development meeting, in order to meet the February 28, 2019 deadline for submitting comments to the Province.

5.0 Background

The City of Brantford Official Plan is a key policy document that guides where and how the City will grow and intensify. It contains policies and maps that are used to identify where various land uses can be located, such as residential, commercial, institutional, mixed-use, industrial employment lands, parks and natural areas, as well as major infrastructure required to service the community. Brantford's current Official Plan was approved in 1987, and has since been subject to over 200 amendments and three formal reviews. In addition to amendments initiated by the City or approved through the development application process, the City is required to periodically review the Official Plan and amend it as necessary to ensure it conforms to updated Provincial legislation and applicable plans such as the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan was first introduced in 2006 and included targets for intensification in the Built-up Area and Designated Greenfield Area density that were added to Brantford's Official Plan through a City-initiated amendment.

The latest, ongoing City of Brantford Official Plan Review was first initiated in 2013 to replace the existing Official Plan with a new document instead of amending the current version. The first draft of a new Official Plan was released for public comment in July 2016. The Official Plan Review was then put on hold, as requested by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, while the municipal boundary between the City of Brantford and County of Brant was adjusted to add lands to the City for future growth. The Draft Official Plan (Version 1, July 2016) acknowledged that the population and employment projections for Brantford established by the Province in the Growth Plan could not realistically be accommodated within the City's former municipal boundary. To address this issue, a Restructuring Order approved by the Province in December 2016 transferred 2,719 gross hectares of land from the County to the

City, effective January 1, 2017. The Official Plan Review was also delayed in view of proposed changes to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, issued by the Province in draft form in May 2016. A new, updated Growth Plan came into effect on July 1, 2017. The City then resumed the Official Plan Review to update and expand upon the Draft Official Plan (Version 1, July 2016) by incorporating the Boundary Adjustment Lands and to bring the document into conformity with the updated Growth Plan. The new Official Plan will guide the growth of the City to the year 2041.

The City of Brantford is a single-tier municipality in the “Outer Ring” of the Greater Golden Horseshoe. For upper- or single-tier municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, an Official Plan Review involves a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process conducted in accordance with Growth Plan requirements. The MCR process requires the City to undertake various technical studies to support the development of the new Official Plan, including establishing an urban structure to identify strategic growth areas within the municipality, employment land strategy and conversion analysis, housing and intensification strategy, land needs assessment, Settlement Area expansion justification, and refinement of the Natural Heritage and Agricultural systems. These studies collectively comprise the Municipal Comprehensive Review that is approved by the Province (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing) through its approval of the Official Plan under Section 26 of the Planning Act.

The Growth Plan (2017) included significant increases to the intensification and density targets that need to be accommodated within the Official Plan and input to the land needs assessment, but also introduced new policy through which alternative targets could be requested. The City requested permission to use alternative targets in July and October of 2018, discussed in more detail in Section 8.0 of this Report. This work was supported by the technical studies conducted for the Official Plan Review, particularly the housing and intensification strategy and draft land needs assessment which had to be fine-tuned to ensure it followed the finalized Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, issued by the Province on May 4, 2018.

The Province has now announced that it will be making further changes to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. On January 15, 2019, it posted the following proposals to the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) with a 44 day commenting period closing on February 28, 2019:

- Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (ERO #013-4504);

-
- Proposed Modifications to O. Reg 311/06 (Transitional Matters – Growth Plans) made under the *Places to Grow Act*, 2005 to implement the Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (ERO #013-4505);
 - Proposed Framework for Provincially Significant Employment Zones (ERO #013-4506); and,
 - Proposed Modifications to O. Reg 525/97 (Exemption from Approval – Official Plan Amendments) made under the *Planning Act* to implement the Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (ERO #013-4507).

As noted previously, this Report considers the implications of the proposed Growth Plan amendment on the Official Plan Review. Report 2019-85 outlines Planning Staff's comments to the Province in response to the ERO posting.

6.0 Corporate Policy Context

One of the four main pillars of Brantford's Community Strategic Plan is "Managed Growth and Environmental Leadership." It includes the following Long-Term Desired Outcomes:

- *"Brantford will be recognized for its environmental stewardship and protection of its natural assets."*
- *Brantford will be known for managing growth wisely, ensuring optimization of its infrastructure while protecting and enhancing our heritage and natural assets."*

Completing the Official Plan Review is one of the Strategic Actions identified in the Community Strategic Plan to help achieve the above noted Long-Term Desired Outcomes. Related Strategic Actions include the review and implementation of the Transportation Master Plan and the Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Master Servicing Plan in conjunction with the Official Plan. This work, including the incorporation of the Boundary Adjustment Lands into the new and updated plans, follows the Strategic Action to explore opportunities for expansion of boundaries, achieved through the annexation of land from the County of Brant effective January 1, 2017.

7.0 Input From Other Sources

The work plan for the Official Plan Review includes a series of Public Information Centres (PIC) for the purposes of sharing information and gathering feedback and input from the public and development stakeholders throughout the process. At the most recent PIC held on January 17, 2019, the City presented options for Settlement Area expansion in the Boundary Adjustment Lands and draft land use options within those areas. A recap of the land needs assessment and other technical analyses that form the basis of the options was also provided. Planning Staff advised at the PIC that they would be reporting on how the proposed Growth Plan amendment may impact the Official Plan Review to Committee of the Whole – Community Development in February.

Planning Staff have met with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Ontario Growth Secretariat and Western Municipal Services Office to discuss issues and concerns related to Growth Plan, 2017 implementation and the ongoing Official Plan Review, including the City's request for alternative intensification and Designated Greenfield Area density targets. Planning Staff also participated in some Implementation Working Group Sessions hosted by the Ministry.

In response to the latest proposed Growth Plan amendment, the Province has requested additional meetings with Planning Staff to address concerns related to the impact the proposed amendments may have on the current Official Plan Review process, and to discuss how the City might like to proceed with its submitted request for alternative targets. Again, Planning Staff advised that they would be reporting on this matter to Committee of the Whole – Community Development in February, and will continue to engage with the Province to minimize any further disruptions to the work program and to address any implementation or transitional matters in advance of the amended Growth Plan coming into effect.

8.0 Analysis

Planning Staff has considered the potential implications the proposed Growth Plan amendment, if it does come into effect, may have on the ongoing Official Plan Review. The most significant implication is in relation to the targets for intensification within the Built-Up Area and density within the Designated Greenfield Area. In addition, the new City of Brantford Official Plan would have to include appropriate policies and designation to ensure the Provincially

Significant Employment Zone as delineated by the Province is protected from conversion to non-Employment uses.

8.1 Intensification and Density Targets

As part of the ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review process, Brantford's ability to achieve the Growth Plan (2017) targets for intensification within the Built-Up Area and density within the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) were examined. The analysis concluded that the Growth Plan (2017) targets are not feasible for Brantford, and alternative targets were recommended in Report CD2018-071, *Official Plan Review – Status Update and Request for Alternative Intensification and Density Targets*, presented at the June 5, 2018 Committee of the Whole – Community Development meeting, and approved by Council at its meeting on June 26, 2018.

In accordance with Council's direction, a request to use the Brantford specific targets was submitted to the Province on July 9, 2018. Based on feedback from Provincial Staff at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a revised DGA density target was then recommended in Report CD2018-123, *Official Plan Review – Revised Alternative Designated Greenfield Area Density Target*, presented at the September 25, 2018 Committee of the Whole – Community Development meeting, and approved by Council at its meeting on October 2, 2018. The revised alternative density target request was submitted to the Province on October 4, 2018. The intensification and density targets established in the existing City of Brantford Official Plan currently in effect will remain in place until the new Official Plan is approved and in effect.

8.1.1 Built Boundary

The intensification target is the percentage of all new residential development in Brantford that is to occur annually within the City's Built-up Area.

Existing Official Plan	Current Growth Plan (2017)	Brantford's Requested Alternative Target	Proposed Growth Plan Amendment
40%	50% to 2031, then 60% to 2041	45% to 2031, then 50% to 2041	50% to 2041

Table 1: Minimum Intensification Targets

As indicated in Table 1, the proposed Growth Plan amendment would establish a minimum target of 50% annually to the year 2041, applicable to Brantford. The Province has removed the two-step graduated target, and lowered the 2041 target to 50%. The proposed Growth Plan target is now in line with the City's requested alternative target of 50% from 2031-2041.

In summary, the proposed change in the intensification target for development in the Built-up Area are more in keeping with the City's requested alternative target, however the City would still have to receive permission from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to use the alternative target, as the City is requesting a gradual increase of 45% annually to the year 2031.

8.1.2 Designated Greenfield Area

The Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) density target is calculated as the minimum number residents and jobs combined per hectare that the City will plan to achieve by the year 2041, measured across the entire DGA excluding designated Employment Areas, protected natural heritage features, cemeteries, railway and hydro corridors, and the Highway 403 right-of-way. These excluded areas are referred to as "take-outs" in the Growth Plan (2017) implementation guidelines.

The following Table 2: Minimum DGA Density Targets outlines the current, requested alternative, and proposed targets.

Existing Official Plan	Current Growth Plan (2017)	Brantford's Requested Alternative Target	Proposed Growth Plan Amendment
50 residents and jobs / ha	80 residents and jobs / ha	52 residents and jobs / ha	50 residents and job / ha

Table 2: Minimum DGA Density Targets

As indicated in Table 2, the current Growth Plan (2017) requires that the DGA be planned to achieve a minimum density target of 80 residents and jobs per hectare by the year 2041. This target is a significant increase over the 50 residents and jobs per hectare established in the existing City of Brantford Official Plan under the previous Growth Plan requirements.

The City has requested an alternative DGA density target of 52 residents and jobs per hectare, which is now more in line with the proposed Growth Plan amendment as applicable to Brantford.

Given that the City's requested alternative DGA density target (52) is now slightly higher than the minimum target in the proposed Growth Plan amendment (50), if the amendment was to be approved and in effect, the City would no longer require permission to establish the target of 52 residents and jobs per hectare in the new Official Plan and to use the target of 52 to finalize the relevant sections of the draft land needs assessment undertaken as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review. Permission from the Minister would no longer be required when planning to achieve a higher density target than the Growth Plan requires.

Planning Staff are of the opinion that regardless of the option to plan to achieve a lower target (50 versus 52), that the City continue to move forward with the Official Plan Review, Boundary Adjustment Lands Master Plan, and Updates to the Transportation and Servicing Master Plans using the alternative DGA density target of 52 residents and jobs per hectare, as requested in October 2018.

Although the 2 residents and jobs per hectare variance seems minor, it is important to consider that the target is measured across the entire DGA, and the City would need to redo significant portions of the land needs assessment and housing strategy to justify a new lower target. It is

important to consider that the land needs assessment and other components of the Municipal Comprehensive Review that are dependent on the results of the land needs assessment (e.g. Settlement Area expansion analysis) took more than one year to complete and account for approximately 46 percent (\$723,000) of the overall work plan budget.

Furthermore, it is important to consider that the proposed amendments to the Growth Plan are draft and should the City wish to abandon the request for alternative targets and use the targets presented in the draft amendment instead, it would be necessary to wait for the Province to finalize the amended Growth Plan before any further work should be completed in order to minimize costs. Staff estimates that this could ultimately delay the completion of the Official Plan Review, and other growth related studies by a minimum of 8 - 12 months, and would have a significant financial impact that has not been budgeted.

8.1.3 Summary of Comments and Concerns

Based on discussions with Provincial Staff, Planning Staff is confident that the Province is prepared to grant permission for the alternative targets requested by the City under the Growth Plan (2017) currently in effect, recognizing the significant amount of work already completed. As noted previously, the requested targets form the basis for the work conducted to date, and further inform the options for Settlement Area expansion in which land use options have been prepared and were presented to the public for review and comment in January. These options are currently under evaluation to determine which option is preferred and will be carried forward into the Master Plan/Secondary Plan for the Boundary Adjustment Lands. The current Official Plan Review timeline would present a preferred option for the consideration of the Committee of the Whole – Community Development in April.

As noted previously, the Municipal Comprehensive Review and Master Plan/Secondary Plan are input to the various policies and maps that will be contained in the new Draft Official Plan. It is anticipated that a Draft Official Plan will be presented at a Statutory Open House in the Fall of 2019 for public comment, and finalized for Council for adoption in early 2020. Once Council adopts the new Official Plan, it will be sent to the Province for approval.

Furthermore, Council's endorsement of the preferred Settlement Area and land use option in April is a critical milestone in the Official Plan Review

timeline, required in order to keep related City-wide master plan programs on schedule. The Official Plan Review has an iterative relationship with the Transportation Master Plan and Master Servicing Plan. The Official Plan Review consulting team includes joint transportation and servicing consultants with the Master Plans in order to facilitate the exchange of information and shared analysis. For example, transportation and servicing considerations are factors in the intensification analysis, the evaluation of Settlement Area expansion options and land use concepts, and infrastructure strategy. The allocation of population and employment growth identified through the Land Needs Assessment and the Master Plan/Secondary Plan is input to the network modelling undertaken as part of the Transportation Master Plan and Master Servicing Plan. The Official Plan Review process contributes to the list of capital projects to be identified in the Master Plans, some of which will be reflected in the Draft Official Plan's transportation and servicing policies and maps. Lastly, the list of capital projects is input to the Development Charges Study.

It is the opinion of Planning Staff that to avoid further delay and additional cost to the Official Plan Review, and to related city-initiated growth management master plans, the City should continue the Official Plan Review program on the basis of the completed draft land needs assessment and alternative intensification and density targets previously requested by the City in July and October of 2018, supported and justified by the work conducted in the Municipal Comprehensive Review report, *"Envisioning Brantford – Municipal Comprehensive Review – Part 1: Employment Strategy, Intensification Strategy, Housing Strategy and Draft Land Needs"* issued in December 2018.

9.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this Report. However, further delays in the Official Plan Review and related City-wide master plan programs can add unanticipated cost to the project budgets.

10.0 Conclusion

The proposed amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe issued by the Province, if approved would provide some additional flexibility to municipalities implementing the Growth Plan policies. More specifically, the amendment would reduce the minimum targets to be established in the Official Plan for intensification in the Built-up Area and density

in the Designated Greenfield Area, while continuing to allow municipalities to either exceed the Growth Plan targets or request a lower alternative. The City of Brantford has already submitted a request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for permission to use alternative targets. These Council approved alternative targets are more in line with the targets proposed in the Growth Plan amendment. Based on the work completed to date, and the extensive analysis to determine appropriate targets to guide growth, Planning Staff are of the opinion that the alternative targets as requested remain valid, and continuing the Official Plan Review program on the basis of the completed draft land needs assessment is the best course of action to avoid further delay and additional cost to the Official Plan Review.



Alan Waterfield, Senior Planner
Long Range Planning



Nicole Wilmot, Manager
Long Range Planning



Paul Moore, General Manager
Community Development

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required ☐ yes ☒ no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk ☐ yes ☒ no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? ☐ yes ☒ no