

## REPORT

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2019

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** February 5, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Information Report - Province of Ontario, Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

**LOCATION:** Town wide

**WARD:** Multiple Wards:

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Planning Services report "Information Report - Province of Ontario, Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe", be received.
2. That Planning Services report "Information Report - Province of Ontario, Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" dated February 5, 2019 be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing by the commenting deadline of February 28, 2019.
3. That Planning Services report "Information Report - Province of Ontario, Proposed Amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" dated February 5, 2019, be forwarded to the Region of Halton, City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills and the Town of Milton for information.

#### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- On January 15, 2019, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing proposed changes to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.
- The proposed changes are posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario and the province is seeking feedback until February 28, 2019.
- The proposed changes to the Growth Plan would apply across six broad categories:

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- Employment Planning
  - Settlement Area Boundary Expansions
  - Small Rural Settlements
  - Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems
  - Intensification and Density Targets
  - Major Transit Station Areas
- Three additional proposals accompany the proposed Growth Plan changes:
    - Proposed Framework for Provincially Significant Employment Zones
    - Proposed modifications to the transition regulation (O. Reg. 311/06, Transitional Matters - Growth Plans) and the exemptions regulation (O. Reg. 525/97, Exemption from Approval – Official Plan Amendments)
  - This report presents a summary and discussion on the proposed changes with a focus on the Growth Plan and the Provincially Significant Employment Zones.
  - Highlights of the provincial engagement process and the proposed modifications to the regulations are also provided.
  - The purpose of this report is to recommend comments that could be provided to the province regarding the proposed changes to the Growth Plan.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On January 15, 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing released proposed changes to the provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (Growth Plan) on the Environmental Registry of Ontario under ERO Number 013-4504 and searchable on-line at <https://ero.ontario.ca/>

The province has posted the draft amended Growth Plan at:  
[http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page20924.aspx#\\_Toc481588422](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page20924.aspx#_Toc481588422)

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan were accompanied by three additional proposals:

1. 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)

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2. 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)
3. Proposed Framework for Provincially Significant Employment Zones (ERO 013-4506)

The province has stated that the changes are intended to:

*“Address implementation challenges with the Plan that were identified by the municipal and development sectors and other stakeholders, and*

*To provide greater flexibility and address barriers to building homes, creating jobs, attracting investments and putting in place the right infrastructure while protecting the environment.”*

The province is seeking feedback on these proposals with a commenting deadline of February 28, 2019. Comments may be submitted online through the Environmental Registry online form, by email at [growthplanning@ontario.ca](mailto:growthplanning@ontario.ca) or by mail to:

Ontario Growth Secretariat  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay Street  
23rd Floor, Suite 2304  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Questions about the proposed changes, the consultation process and consultation documents may be directed to [growthplanning@ontario.ca](mailto:growthplanning@ontario.ca).

#### **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

The purpose of this report is to recommend comments that could be provided to the province regarding the proposed changes to the Growth Plan. The report presents a summary and discussion on the proposed changes with a focus on the Growth Plan and the Provincially Significant Employment Zones. Highlights of the provincial engagement process and the proposed modifications to the regulations are also provided.

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## **Provincial Engagement Process**

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing received input from key stakeholders at a stakeholder forum and a series of implementation working sessions regarding the Growth Plan held in the fall of 2018. The sessions were organized around the following topics:

- Planning for Employment
- Agricultural and Natural Heritage Systems Mapping
- Planning for Major Transit Station Areas
- Intensification and Density Targets
- Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

The purpose of each session was to discuss specific, practical, workable solutions to challenges with implementing Growth Plan policies within the topic. Each session consisted of a presentation brief from ministry staff, small group facilitated discussions and report back plenary sessions intended to highlight solutions.

Working Group participants included lower-tier and upper-tier municipal staff with detailed, technical knowledge about Growth Plan policies as well as counterparts from the conservation authorities. Participants also included representatives from the development industry and Non-Governmental sectors.

Town staff participated in each session with as many as 4 representatives depending on the topic. The results of these sessions were to be considered by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to help inform changes to the policy framework.

## **Overview and Purpose of the Proposed Changes to the Growth Plan**

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan would apply across six broad categories:

- Employment Planning
- Settlement Area Boundary Expansions
- Small Rural Settlements
- Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems
- Intensification and Density Targets
- Major Transit Station Areas

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As stated by the province, the purpose of the proposed changes is as follows:

*“The overall goal of the proposed changes is to streamline growth management planning in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to achieve the following outcomes:*

*More Streamlined Process - Provide greater flexibility so that municipalities will be able to move forward faster on the implementation of the Plan and meet the deadline to update their official plan to conform with the Plan by July 1, 2022.*

*More Land for Housing - Respect the ability of local governments to make decisions about when and where to add new land for housing, to ensure that there is enough housing supply to meet demand.*

*More Housing and Jobs Near Transit - A more flexible framework for focusing investments around transit infrastructure will enable municipalities to plan to increase the supply of housing and jobs near transit faster and more effectively.*

*Greater Local Autonomy and Flexibility for Municipalities - Ensuring that municipalities will have the ability to implement the Plan in a manner that better reflects their local context while protecting the Greenbelt.”*

### **Discussion on the Proposed Changes to the Growth Plan**

The following sections discuss the broad changes contained in the proposed amendment to the Growth Plan with the exception of “Small Rural Settlements” which do not directly affect Oakville.

The proposed changes for “Settlement Area Boundary Expansions” do not directly impact the Town of Oakville but there are implications for the Region of Halton in terms of:

- Providing cost effective servicing through the servicing allocation programs, and
- Comprehensive study work underway through the region’s ongoing Official Plan Review and their Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS).

### **Market Demand and Housing Supply**

A key change proposed for the Growth Plan is the introduction of language related to housing and market demand. It is a theme that emerges throughout the amendment. For example in Section 1.2, the vision statement “the GGH will offer a wide variety of choices for living” is replaced with “the GGH will have sufficient

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housing supply that reflects market demand and what is needed in local communities.”

The market is not typically a land use planning matter and the meaning of “market demand” is not clear since the amendment does not include a definition of the term. As a new theme emerging in the Growth Plan, it is unclear how this is meant to inform other parts of the amendment.

### Recommendation

Town of Oakville staff recommends that as a new theme in the Growth Plan, additional background, tools and guidance to assist Planning authorities to determine market demand should be developed. To date, an integral analysis of the various factors defining and impacting market demand, housing supply and community needs is missing.

### ***Intensification Strategy in the Delineated Built-up Area***

Another change proposed to the Growth Plan is in Section 2 – Where and How to Grow. Subsection 2.2.2.3 (formerly 2.2.2.4) requires municipalities to develop a strategy to manage growth within the delineated built-up area, which must address a number of criteria that currently includes clause (a) “encourage intensification generally to achieve the desired urban structure.” A proposed change would delete and replace this reference with a new clause (c) “encourage intensification generally throughout the delineated built-up area.”

The rationale for this proposed change is unclear. Staff notes that while the Growth Plan does not use the term “urban structure” elsewhere, various other policies of the Growth Plan mandate the organization of planning and development around an urban structure, which is fundamental to the practice of good planning for complete communities in Ontario. For instance, the Growth Plan requires:

- Focusing growth within settlement areas to the built-up area and to strategic growth areas, to locations of existing and planned transit and to areas with existing and planned public service facilities (2.2.1 Managing Growth)
- Identifying strategic growth areas and applying minimum intensification and density targets (2.2.2 Delineated Built-up Area)
- Identifying nodes and corridors including urban growth centres, major transit station areas, priority transit corridors and areas of existing and future planned transit and planning for these areas to accommodate intensification through minimum density targets (2.2.3 Urban growth Centres, 2.2.4 Transit Corridors and Station Areas).

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A municipality's urban structure provides the framework for managing growth and is the basis for the timely and efficient provision of infrastructure to support growth, as well as aligning transportation with land use. An urban structure establishes the basis for official plan policy and for making good planning decisions to support and achieve provincial objectives.

While this is not a fundamental change to the policy, Town staff is of the opinion that the reference to urban structure is appropriate.

#### **Recommendation**

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the reference to urban structure be maintained in policy 2.2.2.3(a). If the proposed change is made, Town staff recommends that it would be helpful to add language such as “at appropriate locations,” or “where it can reasonably be accommodated” consistent with the direction provided in other policies that recognize not all locations may be appropriate for intensification, and the level of intensification that may be appropriate at any location will depend on various considerations.

#### ***Achieving Complete Communities***

Under Managing Growth, Section 2.2.1.4, there is direction to support the achievement of complete communities, a fundamental concept of the Growth Plan and Ontario's land use planning framework. The proposed amendment would remove references to “ensure development of high quality” environments and “site design and urban design standards.”

This change, if approved, suggests a shift away from achieving the provincial interests expressed in Section 2(r) of the *Planning Act* which includes “the promotion of built form that (i) is well-designed, (ii) encourages a sense of place, and (iii) provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant”

#### **Recommendation**

Town of Oakville staff recommends that this change not be carried through in the amendment. The province is encouraged to implement changes that promote harmonization and alignment within its own land use planning framework.

The message that the province should be achieving plan coordination and policy alignment has been delivered consistently by the Town of Oakville and the Halton Area Planning Partnership (HAPP) Joint Submissions. HAPP is comprised of Halton Region and the local municipalities of City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, and the Town of Oakville.

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The tools of plan coordination and policy alignment, along with clarity and certainty are key ingredients to managing growth, delivering development and building infrastructure in a timely and cost-effective manner. These tools are already available to the province and could be used more effectively, for example, to address recent provincial concerns expressed around housing supply.

### ***Intensification and Density Targets***

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan would revise the policies that establish minimum intensification and density targets for municipalities. For Oakville, within Halton, the following targets would take effect:

- At the next municipal comprehensive review (MCR), a minimum of 50% of all residential development occurring annually within Halton will be within the delineated built-up area. This is a reduction from 60% in the current policies.
- The Region of Halton will plan to achieve a minimum density target that is not less than 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare. This is a reduction from the current policies which require a minimum density of 60 residents and jobs per hectare across the designated greenfield area in the Region's current urban area boundary, and 80 residents and jobs per hectare across any lands added to the Region's urban area boundary through a future MCR.

During previous provincial engagements on the Growth Plan, including the 2015 Coordinated Plan Review and the 2016 Proposed Growth Plan, the town and HAPP were generally supportive of increased density and intensification targets.

### ***Transit Oriented Development***

The proposed amendments would allow upper- and single-tier municipalities to delineate and plan for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) in advance of an MCR provided *Planning Act* requirements regarding official plan policies are met.

In addition, the proposed amendments would expand the radius of MTSAs from 500 metres around existing or planned stations/stops to a range of 500 to 800 metres.

However, at the same time, the proposed changes would allow the Minister to approve a lower minimum density target for an MTSA, according to criteria that reflect local conditions.

In Oakville, the Bronte GO station is identified as an MTSA in the Growth Plan and is required to be planned for 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare. As part of the town's ongoing Official Plan Review, staff has initiated the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area Study and the town has contracted a multi-disciplinary team consulting team to complete an area specific plan for the area.



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### ***Employment Planning***

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan for employment planning would allow municipalities a one-time window to convert employment lands to non-employment uses in designated employment areas in advance of an MCR provided there is a need, and where it will maintain a significant number of jobs on the lands.

The current Growth Plan requires employment land conversions to be considered only through an MCR which occurs typically at five-year intervals and must be undertaken by the Region. This timing is viewed as a potential delay to advancing development on certain lands.

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan for employment planning also include the introduction of Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZ). At the same time, the proposed Growth Plan changes would delete the Prime Employment Area designation along with the requirement for upper-and single-tier municipalities to develop an employment strategy.

The PSEZ consultation document, selection criteria and proposed mapping for Oakville is attached in Appendix A and is discussed in the following sections.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is seeking feedback on the proposed PSEZs, criteria for selection, proposed mapping, need for additional zones and/or changes to the boundaries. The ministry is also seeking input on whether:

- The identified provincially significant employment zones have adequately identified employment areas that would support commercial and industrial activities and the needs of the emerging economy; and
- Employment areas that overlap with major transit station areas should be included in the provincially significant employment zones at this time.

Once identified as a PSEZ, the process and tests for converting to non-employment uses would follow the same required MCR process and criteria that are set out in the current Growth Plan.

### ***Provincially Significant Employment Zones***

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan are intended to identify provincially significant employment zones (PSEZ) that would receive enhanced protection for employment uses. The PSEZ would apply to employment areas that:

- Are designated employment areas and are inside existing settlement area boundaries (i.e., no Greenbelt lands are included in provincially significant employment zones);

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- May be vulnerable to conversion pressures (e.g. to residential conversion);
- May be facing encroachment by sensitive land uses that could threaten the existing employment uses; or
- Are needed in the region to attract new investment and retain existing industries.

The Town of Oakville is supportive of protecting employment lands of provincial significance. However, staff is of the opinion that introducing another layer of mapping and policy related to planning for employment, in addition to those contained in the local and regional official plans, may have the opposite effect from what the province is trying to achieve in terms of being open for business.

A third layer of employment land mapping and policy, in some locations, might frustrate the establishment of new employment uses that would generate new jobs by introducing additional red tape

If the province continues with the proposed approach, clear and direct guidance would be required to interpret and streamline implementation of the province's policy framework, to the upper- and single-tier municipalities, to the local municipalities.

The Town of Oakville appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Minister's request for feedback on the proposed PSEZ criteria and mapping for Oakville as shown in Appendix A.

Appendix B contains mapping of areas within the Town of Oakville that staff is recommending not be included in the proposed PSEZ. The following key facts provide additional context to the town response and recommendations.

The Town of Oakville has two official plans in effect:

- 1) The Livable Oakville Plan, which applies to the lands south of Dundas Street and to the lands north of Highway 407 which came into effect in May 2011; and
- 2) The 2006 Official Plan, which applies to the lands north of Dundas Street up to Highway 407. Two secondary plans known as the North Oakville East Secondary Plan and the North Oakville West Secondary Plan remain as amendments to the 2006 Official Plan.

The Town of Oakville initiated its Official Plan Review in May 2015 with a Special Public Meeting seeking Council and public input to the process.

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To date the following studies have been completed that impact employment planning and have resulted in amendments to the Official Plan:

- A town-wide Urban Structure Review was completed in 2017.

On September 26, 2017, Town Council adopted Official Plan Amendments (OPAs 15, 317 and 318) for a revised Urban Structure section introduced into the Town of Oakville's Official Plan – the Livable Oakville Plan.

The adopted amendments also provide for revisions to the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans to align them with the changes to the Livable Oakville Plan.

On April 26, 2018, the Region of Halton approved OPAs 15, 317 and 318 with modifications, to establish a town-wide urban structure. At the time of approval, the town-wide urban structure was deemed to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014, to conform to the Regional Official Plan, 2009 and the Growth Plan, 2017.

Subsequent to the Region's approval, OPA 15 was appealed to the Local Planning and Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) by one appellant. Those matters are ongoing with the LPAT.

- A town-wide Employment and Commercial Review was completed in 2017 and was a comprehensive assessment of the lands designated to accommodate the town's long-term employment and commercial needs.

The review identified Oakville as a strong attractor for knowledge-based sectors and showed a distribution of employment on employment land that was highly concentrated in the office sector.

The review also identified a healthy supply of employment land to meet the town's long term demand for employment well beyond 2041.

- The Speers Road Corridor Study was completed in 2017 and provided a detailed analysis to confirm long-term land uses and suitable opportunities for intensification in the context of its continued function as an employment area.
- On April 16, 2018, Town Council adopted:
  - OPA 26 to update commercial- and employment-related policies in the Livable Oakville Official Plan, and

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- OPA 27 to introduce specific policies to the Livable Oakville Plan for the employment lands pertaining to the Speers Road Corridor.
- As of the date of this report, OPA 26 and 27 are awaiting approval from the Region of Halton.

#### Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area

The Bronte GO Station is located between Speers Road and Wyecroft Road, west of Third Line. This is along the Lakeshore West GO line which is identified as a provincial Priority Transit Corridor in the Growth Plan. The Bronte GO Station is also identified as a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) in the Growth Plan and is required to be planned to accommodate 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare.

As part of the town's ongoing Official Plan Review and to implement the Growth Plan, staff initiated the Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area Study in June 2018. The approximate study area is identified in Appendix B, Area A.

The town has contracted a multi-disciplinary team consulting team to complete an area specific plan for this MTSA. This study is examining, among other matters, the opportunities to accommodate new growth, intensification and a mix of uses, including non-employment uses, in conjunction with service improvements under the Lakeshore West GO Expansion.

Under the proposed changes to the Growth Plan and the proposed PSEZ mapping, the Bronte GO MTSA is identified within the Oakville (QEW), PSEZ Number 19 (Appendix A).

#### Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the Growth Plan and to support faster development around MTSA's on priority transit lines to support increasing housing supply, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the Bronte GO MTSA in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified around the Bronte GO MTSA be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area A.

#### North Oakville Urban Core Areas

The town's Urban Structure identifies the North Oakville Urban Core Areas as "Nodes and Corridors" and "Nodes and Corridors for Further Study". Generally, Nodes and Corridors are key areas of the Town identified as the focus for mixed use development and intensification and comprise the town's Strategic Growth Areas as that term is defined in the Growth Plan.

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The North Oakville Urban Core Areas are located in a part of Oakville where land use is governed by the North Oakville East Secondary Plan. The plan identifies urban core areas as areas intended to accommodate mixed-use, transit supportive development which is the densest in North Oakville. Current land use designations and policies for these lands permit a range of uses beyond pure employment.

Under the proposed changes to the Growth Plan and the proposed PSEZ mapping, portions of the Trafalgar Urban Core Area (at Trafalgar Road and Burnhamthorpe Road East) and portions of the Neyagawa Urban Core Area (at Neyagawa Boulevard and Burnhamthorpe Road West) identified within the 401 407 (Meadowvale), PSEZ Number 18 (Appendix A).

#### Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure and the North Oakville East Secondary Plan, along with key provincial plans including the Growth Plan and the 2041 RTP, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include any portion of the North Oakville Urban Core Areas in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as Trafalgar Urban Core (Area B-1) and Neyagawa Urban Core (Area B-2) be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area B.

#### Speers Road Corridor

The town's Urban Structure identifies the Speers Road Corridor as an Employment Mixed Use Corridor. The recently completed Speers Road Corridor Study (OPA 27), in conjunction with the Employment Commercial Review (OPA 26), recommended changes to the land use designations and policies that recognize the corridor's primary function as an Employment Area and that support the existing cluster of business and economic activities. These activities include manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. The OPAs also recommended changing the Office Employment designation within the corridor to Business Employment.

At a higher level, the Speers Road corridor is also identified:

- In the province's 2041 RTP as part of the Frequent Rapid Transit Network, Project # 58 Harvester / Speers / Cornwall, and
- In the Region of Halton Mobility Management Strategy (completed 2017) as a Regional Transit Priority Corridor.

Under the proposed changes to the Growth Plan and the proposed PSEZ mapping, the Speers Road Corridor is identified within the Oakville (QEW), PSEZ Number 19 (Appendix A).

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### Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure, the findings of recent town studies and implementing OPAs, as well as key provincial and regional plans including the Growth Plan, the 2041 RTP, the Region of Halton's Mobility Management Strategy, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the Speers Road Corridor in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as the Speers Road Corridor be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area C.

### Supporting Areas of Business and Economic Activity

Appendix B, Area D identifies three edge locations proposed to be included within the Oakville (QEW), PSEZ Number 19 (Appendix A). These areas support the nearby traditional employment areas:

- Area D-1, currently developed in Business Commercial uses and status confirmed through the Employment Commercial Review (OPA 26),
- Area D-2, currently designated Core Commercial and developed in commercial land uses and activities, and
- Area D-3, currently developed in smaller scale local business uses.

### Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure, the findings of recent town studies and implementing OPAs, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the town identified Supporting Areas of Business and Economic Activity in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as the Supporting Areas of Business and Economic Activity be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area D.

### Winston Park - Core Commercial

Appendix B, Area E identifies two locations proposed to be included within the 401 407 (Meadowvale), PSEZ Number 18 (Appendix A). The town's Urban Structure identifies these lands as Major Commercial Areas which are intended to provide concentrations of commercial facilities serving a broader area within the region.

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In terms of land use, these areas are within a traditional employment area called Winston Park but represent long-standing areas designated Core Commercial and currently developed in commercial land uses and activities.

Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the Winston Park - Core Commercial lands in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as Winston Park - Core Commercial be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area E.

North Oakville – Transitional Area

Appendix B, Area F identifies locations proposed to be included within the 401 407 (Meadowvale), PSEZ Number 18 (Appendix A). The town's Urban Structure identifies these lands as Residential Areas which are intended to include housing as well as a range of compatible facilities such as schools, places of worship, recreational and commercial uses that serve the residents.

The North Oakville East Secondary Plan intends for the Transitional Area to provide for an interface and buffer between the more intensive concentration of employment uses in the north and the adjacent residential uses in the south.

Recommendation

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the Transitional Area in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as Transitional Area be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area F.

Natural Area and Parkway Belt West Plan

Appendix B, Area G identifies Natural Area and Parkway Belt West Plan locations proposed to be included within the Oakville (Oakville East), PSEZ Number 17 (Appendix A).

The town's Urban Structure identifies these lands as Parkway Belt and Natural Heritage System which are intended to be protected from development or where development would be limited by provincial policy.

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The Livable Oakville Plan provides similar protection and permissions for limited development through the Natural Area and Parkway Belt Designations.

### **Recommendation**

In order to continue to implement the town's Urban Structure, and to be consistent with existing levels of protection and provincial permissions for limited development, Town of Oakville staff is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to include the Transitional Area in the proposed PSEZ.

Town of Oakville staff recommends that the lands identified as Natural Area and Parkway Belt West Plan be removed from the proposed PSEZ in accordance with town mapping in Appendix B, Area G.

### ***Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems***

Previously released provincial mapping of Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems does not apply until it has been implemented in upper- and single-tier official plans. These municipalities may refine the provincial mapping before incorporating it into their official plan. Until that process is complete, existing official plan mapping applies. For upper-tier municipalities, the initial implementation of provincial mapping may be done separately for each lower-tier municipality. Any subsequent changes to the mapping may only occur through a municipal comprehensive review.

### **Proposed Modifications to Regulations**

This section summarizes proposed modifications to the regulations based on information posted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario. As of the date of this report, staff was continuing to review the proposed modifications. Additional input to the province arising from this review will be submitted to the Province by the commenting deadline of February 28, 2019.

### ***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***

This modification proposes to align the transition regulation with the Growth Plan amendment, if approved:

- Change references to "the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017" to "the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 as amended by Amendment 1";



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- Delete provisions that had been added to the regulation on June 28, 2017 to support implementation of a phased-in designated greenfield area density target; and
- Delete the provisions that had been added to the regulation on May 4, 2018 to support implementation of a standard method to calculate the amount of land needed for development to the horizon of the Growth Plan, known as a land needs assessment.

The province is also seeking input on whether any specific planning matters (or types of matters) in process that should be addressed through the transition regulation. This could include, for example, official plans or official plan amendments that have been adopted and are currently under appeal.

Prescribing such matters or types of matters in the regulation could allow them to be approved in conformity with an earlier version of the Growth Plan and/or provide for an exemption from some policies in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 as amended by Amendment 1, if approved.

***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***

The purpose of the regulation is to facilitate the proposed amendments to the Growth Plan that would allow municipalities the flexibility to make changes to their official plan to implement the Agricultural System for the Greater Golden Horseshoe mapping or the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan mapping before their next municipal comprehensive review, while ensuring that the Minister's approval would be required for these changes.

This topic was covered previously in this report under the sub-heading "Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems". The flexibility in the modification is aimed to address the mapping of the systems that was imposed on municipalities in February 2018 that did not allow for a transition period from existing mapping and ignored work that had been done at the local level.

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## **NEXT STEPS:**

Town of Oakville staff welcomes the opportunity to recommend comments to the province regarding the proposed changes to the Growth Plan. If further information is required, town staff is available to clarify and assist.

## **CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **(A) PUBLIC**

There are no public impacts from this report and no notice requirements.

### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no financial implications from this report.

### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

There are no effects on other departments and users from this report.

### **(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- be the most livable town in Canada

### **(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

Consideration of the sustainability goals and objectives of the Livable Oakville Plan are part of all town reviews of provincial initiatives.

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Proposed Provincially Significant Employment Zones

Appendix B – Town Response to Provincially Significant Employment Zones

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