



A Place to Grow: Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Read our long term plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, designed to promote economic growth, increase housing supply, create jobs and build communities that make life easier, healthier and more affordable for people of all ages.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Greater Golden Horseshoe

The *Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)* is one of the most dynamic and fast-growing regions in North America. It is the destination of choice for many people and businesses relocating from other parts of Canada and around the world. They settle here because of the high quality of life and the economic opportunities. This is a place of prosperity where, through their skills and talents, people are building a greater future for themselves.

The *GGH* has one of the world's most vibrant and diverse economies – generating upwards of 25 per cent of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)[1], it is the economic engine of Ontario. While the *GGH's* competitive advantage has historically been its location in the heart of the Great Lakes region with close proximity to major United States markets, today the region is widely recognized for its highly-educated workforce and uniquely multicultural population, whose social and economic diversity are critical factors for success in a knowledge-based economy.

The *GGH* contains many of Ontario's most significant ecological and hydrologic natural environments and scenic landscapes, including the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Niagara Escarpment and the other natural areas in the *Greenbelt Area* and beyond. These natural areas support biodiversity, provide drinking water for the region's inhabitants, sustain its many resource-based industries, support recreational activities that benefit public health and overall quality of life, and help moderate the impacts of climate change.

The region also has some of Canada's most important and productive farmland. Its fertile soil, moderate climate, abundant water resources, and proximity to markets support agricultural production that cannot be duplicated elsewhere in the country.

The First Nations and Métis communities within the Great Lakes region have a unique relationship with the land and its resources, which continues to shape the history and economy of the area today. Ontario, including the area covered by the A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, is largely covered by a number of Treaties that provide for treaty rights. In addition, Aboriginal communities may have Aboriginal rights within the Plan area. Ontario recognizes the unique role that Indigenous peoples have had and will continue to have in the growth and development of this region.

As the *GGH* grows and changes, we must continue to value what makes this region unique to ensure the sustained prosperity of Ontario, its people, and future generations. While growth is an important part of vibrant, diversified urban and rural communities and economies, the magnitude of growth that is expected over the coming decades for the *GGH* presents several challenges:

- Increased demand for major *infrastructure* investments driven by population growth, the need to renew aging *infrastructure* and continuing *infrastructure* deficits associated with unmanaged growth, combined with relatively scarce financial resources, means an ever greater imperative to plan to optimize existing assets and make the best use of limited resources by considering full life cycle costs.
- Increased traffic congestion, and the resulting delays in the movement of people and goods in the *GGH*, is costing billions of dollars in lost GDP every year.
- Unmanaged growth can degrade the region's air quality; water resources; natural heritage resources, such as rivers, lakes, *woodlands*, and *wetlands*; and *cultural heritage resources*.
- The impacts of globalization are transforming the regional economy at a rapid pace, which makes long-term planning for employment more uncertain.
- Rates of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular illnesses are on the rise in the region, in part due to growing rates of inactivity linked to low-density and automobile dependent development patterns.^[2]
- People over the age of 60 are expected to comprise over 25% of the population by 2041^[3], which will result in the need for more age-friendly development that can address their unique needs and circumstances. This will include a more appropriate range and mix of housing options, easier access to health care and other amenities, walkable built environments, and an age-friendly approach to community design that will meet the needs of people of all ages.
- The finite supply of quality agricultural lands that feed the region and beyond must be protected to ensure a vibrant rural and productive agricultural economy and a secure food supply for future generations.
- The impacts of climate change are already being felt. Communities and *infrastructure* must be adapted to be more resilient, greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy need to be reduced, and valuable water resources and natural areas need to be protected.

To address these challenges and ensure the protection and effective use of finite resources, A Place to Grow Plan, together with the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, builds on the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) to establish a unique land use planning framework for the *GGH* that supports the achievement of *complete communities*, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment, and social equity.

In implementing these provincial plans, the Province recognizes the importance of consulting with First Nations and Métis communities on planning matters that may affect their rights and interests. Provincial plans must be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

1.2 The growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

A Place to Grow is the Ontario government's initiative to plan for growth and development in a way that supports economic prosperity, protects the environment, and helps communities achieve a high quality of life. The Places to Grow Act, 2005 enables the development of regional growth plans that guide government investments and land use planning policies.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 (Growth Plan, 2006) was the first growth plan to provide a framework for implementing Ontario's vision for building stronger, prosperous communities by better managing growth in this region. It established the long-term framework for where and how the region will grow, while recognizing the realities facing our cities and smaller communities and acknowledging what governments can and cannot influence. It also demonstrated leadership for improving the ways in which our cities, suburbs, towns, and villages will grow over the long-term.

Vision for the GGH

More than anything, the *Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)* will continue to be a great place to live, work and play. Its communities will be supported by a strong economy and an approach that puts people first. This approach protects the Greenbelt and will ensure a cleaner environment is passed

on to future generations. A Place to Grow will support the achievement of *complete communities* with access to transit networks, protected employment zones and an increase in the amount and variety of housing available.

The *GGH* will have sufficient housing supply that reflects market demand and what is needed in local communities. Thriving, livable, vibrant, and productive urban and rural areas will foster community health and individual well-being. The region will be supported by modern, well-maintained, sustainable, and resilient *infrastructure* built in accordance with a broad plan for managing growth. Residents will have easy access to food, shelter, education, health care, arts and recreation, and information technology. Public services will be co-located in community hubs that are broadly accessible.

Getting around will be easy. An integrated transportation network will allow people choices for easy travel both within and between urban centres throughout the region. Public transit will be fast, convenient, and affordable. Automobiles will be only one of a variety of effective and well-used choices for transportation. Transit and *active transportation* will be practical elements of our urban *transportation systems*.

A healthy natural environment with clean air, land, and water will characterize the *GGH*. The Greenbelt, including significant natural features, such as the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment, will continue to be enhanced and protected in perpetuity. The *GGH's* rivers and streams, forests and natural areas will be accessible for residents to enjoy their beauty. Our *cultural heritage* resources and open spaces in our cities, towns, and countryside will provide people with a sense of place.

Natural areas and agricultural lands will provide a significant contribution to the region's resilience and our ability to adapt to a changing climate. Unique and high quality agricultural lands will be protected for the provision of healthy, local food for future generations. Farming will be productive, diverse, and sustainable.

Urban centres will be vibrant and characterized by more compact development patterns that support climate change mitigation and adaptation, and provide a diversity of opportunities for living, working, and enjoying culture.

The evolving regional economy of the *GGH* will continue to mature into an economic powerhouse of global significance. It will function as Canada's principal international gateway.

The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) will be a thriving metropolis with an extraordinary waterfront. The urban areas of the region, including Toronto, will be celebrated centres of influence for commerce, culture, and innovation.

All of this will translate into a place where residents enjoy a high standard of living and an exceptional quality of life.

The implementation of A Place to Grow is supported by Metrolinx (an agency of the Government of Ontario created to improve coordination and integration of all modes of transportation in the GTHA) and The Big Move (the GTHA's first regional transportation plan). The Province has made significant investments in transit projects in the GTHA and beyond, and continues to invest in rapid transit projects to support the regional transit network.

Since the introduction of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in 2006, the region has seen a shift to more compact development patterns, a greater variety of housing options, more mixed-use development in *urban growth centres* and other *strategic growth areas*, and greater integration of transit and land use planning.

Despite these early successes, there is still more work to do. Now is the time to build on the progress that has been made towards the achievement of *complete communities* that are compact, *transit-supportive*, and make

effective use of investments in *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*. At the same time, A Place to Grow will continue to ensure protection of our agricultural and natural areas and support climate change mitigation and adaptation as Ontario moves towards the goal of environmentally sustainable communities.

A Place to Grow (“this Plan”), builds upon the success of the initial Growth Plan, 2006 and responds to the key challenges that the region continues to face over the coming decades with enhanced policy directions.

1.2.1 Guiding Principles

The successful realization of this vision for the *GGH* centres on effective collaboration amongst the Province, other levels of government, First Nations and Métis communities, residents, private and non-profit sectors across all industries, and other stakeholders. The policies of this Plan regarding how land is developed, resources are managed and protected, and public dollars are invested are based on the following principles:

- Support the achievement of *complete communities* that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.
- Prioritize *intensification* and higher densities in *strategic growth areas* to make efficient use of land and *infrastructure* and support transit viability.
- Provide flexibility to capitalize on new economic and employment opportunities as they emerge, while providing certainty for traditional industries, including resource-based sectors.
- Support a range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable* housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
- Improve the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, including integrated service delivery through community hubs, by all levels of government.
- Provide for different approaches to manage growth that recognize the diversity of communities in the *GGH*.
- Protect and enhance natural heritage, hydrologic, and landform systems, features, and functions.
- Support and enhance the long-term viability and productivity of agriculture by protecting *prime agricultural areas* and the *agri-food network*.
- Conserve and promote *cultural heritage resources* to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Métis communities.
- Integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and *infrastructure* – that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate – and moving towards environmentally sustainable communities by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

1.2.2 Legislative Authority

This Plan is issued under the authority of section 7 of the Places to Grow Act, 2005. It was approved through an Order in Council under that Act to come into effect on May 16, 2019. This Plan replaces the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 that took effect on July 1, 2017.

This Plan applies to the area designated by Ontario Regulation 416/05 as the Greater Golden Horseshoe growth plan area. All decisions made on or after May 16, 2019 in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter will conform with this Plan, subject to any legislative or regulatory provisions providing otherwise.

1.2.3 How to Read this Plan

This Plan informs decision-making regarding growth management and environmental protection in the *GGH*. It consists of policies, schedules, definitions, and appendices. It also includes non-policy contextual commentary to

provide background and describe the purpose of the policies.

Relationship with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

The PPS provides overall policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use and *development* in Ontario, and applies to the *GGH*, except where this Plan or another provincial plan provides otherwise.

Like other provincial plans, this Plan builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides additional and more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing specific geographic areas in Ontario. This Plan is to be read in conjunction with the PPS. The policies of this Plan take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise. Where the policies of this Plan address the same, similar, related, or overlapping matters as policies in the PPS, applying the more specific policies of this Plan satisfies the requirements of the more general policies in the PPS. In contrast, where matters addressed in the PPS do not overlap with policies in this Plan, those PPS policies must be independently satisfied.

As provided for in the Places to Grow Act, 2005, this Plan prevails where there is a conflict between this Plan and the PPS. The only exception is where the conflict is between policies relating to the natural environment or human health. In that case, the direction that provides more protection to the natural environment or human health prevails.

Relationship with Other Provincial Plans

This Plan must also be read in conjunction with other provincial plans as defined in the Planning Act that may apply within the same geography. Within the *GGH*, this includes the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Other provincial plans, including the Parkway Belt West Plan and Central Pickering Development Plan under the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994, the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan under the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008 and some source protection plans under the Clean Water Act, 2006, also apply within the *GGH*. Each of these plans applies to certain defined parts of the *GGH* and provides specific policy on certain matters.

Within the *Greenbelt Area*, policies of this Plan that address the same, similar, related, or overlapping matters as the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, or the Niagara Escarpment Plan do not apply within that part of the *Greenbelt Area* covered by the relevant plan except where the policies of this Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, or the Niagara Escarpment Plan provide otherwise.

As provided in the Places to Grow Act, 2005, where there is a conflict between the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation, or Niagara Escarpment Plans and this Plan regarding the natural environment or human health, the direction that provides more protection to the natural environment or human health prevails. Detailed conflict provisions are set out in the Places to Grow Act, 2005.

Horizon of this Plan

While the PPS, 2014 provides for a time horizon of up to 20 years for making sufficient land available to meet projected needs, policy 1.1.2 of the PPS, 2014 provides that a provincial plan may provide an alternate time horizon for specific areas of the province. Within the *GGH*, this Plan provides that the applicable time horizon for land use planning is 2041. While certain policies have specific target dates, the goals and policies of this Plan are intended to be achieved within the horizon of this Plan.

Nothing in this Plan limits the planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* beyond the horizon of this Plan. However, planning for *infrastructure* will not predetermine the form, pattern, or extent of *settlement area* boundary expansions. Planning authorities may also plan for the long-term protection of *employment areas* provided lands are not designated beyond the horizon of this Plan.

Read the Entire Plan

This Plan is to be read in its entirety and the relevant policies are to be applied to each situation. The language of each policy, including the policies in [Section 5](#), will assist decision-makers in understanding how the policies are to be implemented.

While some policies refer to other policies for ease of use, these cross-references do not take away from the need to read the Plan as a whole. There is no implied priority in the order in which the policies appear.

Consider Specific Policy Language

Each policy provides direction on how it is to be implemented, how it is situated within this Plan, and how it relates to other policies. The choice of language in the policies is intended to distinguish between the types of policies and the nature of implementation.

Policies Represent Minimum Standards

The policies of this Plan represent minimum standards. Within the framework of the provincial policy-led planning system, decision-makers are encouraged to go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of importance, unless doing so would conflict with any policy of this Plan.

Defined Terms and Meanings

Italicized terms in this Plan are [defined in Section 7](#). For non-italicized terms, the normal meaning of the word applies. Defined terms are intended to capture both singular and plural forms of these terms in the policies.

Supplementary Direction

Supplementary Direction may be issued by the Minister or by other ministers of the Crown, where appropriate, in accordance with the policies of this Plan to provide technical information and criteria to facilitate the implementation of this Plan.

Guidance Material

Guidance material may be issued to assist decision-makers with implementing the policies of this Plan. Information, technical criteria, and approaches outlined in guidance material are meant to support, but not add to or detract from, the policies of this Plan.

[1] Calculated from Statistics Canada (Metropolitan Gross Domestic Product, 2014) and Conference Board of Canada (Metropolitan Outlook 1 & 2, 2014)

[2] “Improving Health by Design in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area. A Report of Medical Officers of Health in the GTHA”, Mowat, D. et al., 2014

[3] “Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2041: Technical Report (November 2012) Addendum”, Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2013

2 Where and How to Grow

2.1 Context

The *GGH* is a dynamic and diverse area, and one of the fastest growing regions in North America. By 2041, this area is forecast to grow to 13.5 million people and 6.3 million jobs. The magnitude and pace of this growth necessitates a plan for building healthy and balanced communities and maintaining and improving our quality of life while adapting to the demographic shift underway.

To better co-ordinate planning for growth across the region, this Plan provides population and employment forecasts for all upper- and single-tier municipalities in the *GGH*. These growth forecasts are a foundational component of this Plan. They are to be reviewed in consultation with municipalities at least every five years.

This Plan is about accommodating forecasted growth in *complete communities*. These are communities that are well designed to meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, *public service facilities*, and a full range of housing to accommodate a range of incomes and household sizes. *Complete communities* support quality of life and human health by encouraging the use of *active transportation* and providing high quality public open space, adequate parkland, opportunities for recreation, and access to local and healthy food. They provide for a balance of jobs and housing in communities across the *GGH* to reduce the need for long distance commuting. They also support climate change mitigation by increasing the *modal share* for transit and *active transportation* and by minimizing land consumption through *compact built form*.

To support the achievement of *complete communities*, this Plan establishes minimum intensification and density targets that recognize the diversity of communities across the *GGH*. Some larger urban centres, such as Toronto, have already met some of the minimum targets established in this Plan, while other communities are growing and intensifying at a different pace that reflects their local context.

Building compact and *complete communities*, and protecting agricultural lands, water resources and natural areas will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure communities are more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Ontario has recently affirmed its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 in Preserving and Protecting our Environment for Future Generations: A Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan. This target aligns Ontario with Canada's 2030 target under the Paris Agreement.

To support the achievement of *complete communities* that are healthier, safer, and more equitable, choices about where and how growth occurs in the *GGH* need to be made carefully. Better use of land and *infrastructure* can be made by directing growth to *settlement areas* and prioritizing *intensification*, with a focus on *strategic growth areas*, including *urban growth centres* and *major transit station areas*, as well as *brownfield sites* and *greyfields*. Concentrating new development in these areas provides a focus for investments in transit as well as other types of *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* to support forecasted growth, while also supporting a more diverse range and mix of housing options. However, to protect public safety and prevent future flood risks, growth should generally be directed away from hazardous areas, including those that have been identified as Special Policy Areas in accordance with the PPS.

The Growth Plan, 2006 identified 25 *urban growth centres* and this Plan continues to recognize those *urban growth centres* as regional focal points for accommodating population and employment growth. The continued revitalization of *urban growth centres* as meeting places, locations for cultural facilities, public institutions, and major services and transit hubs with the potential to become more vibrant, mixed-use, *transit-supportive* communities is particularly important.

This Plan recognizes transit as a first priority for major transportation investments. It sets out a regional vision for transit, and seeks to align transit with growth by directing growth to *major transit station areas* and other *strategic growth areas*, including *urban growth centres*, and promoting transit investments in these areas. To optimize provincial investments in *higher order transit*, this Plan also identifies *priority transit corridors* and the Province expects municipalities to complete detailed planning for *major transit station areas* on these corridors to support planned service levels.

The region is experiencing a dramatic economic change. Traditional industries, such as manufacturing and agri-food businesses, continue to play an important role, but globalization and technology are also transforming the *GGH's* economy. There has been a shift towards knowledge-intensive, high value-added activities that is increasing the significance of the service and knowledge-based sectors and spurring innovation in other segments of the economy. This change is providing opportunities for a variety of types of businesses to locate and grow in the *GGH*, which is fundamental to ensuring a more prosperous economic future. Therefore, it is important to ensure an adequate supply of land within *employment areas* – both for traditional industries and for service sector and knowledge-based businesses that warrant such locations – and sites for a broad range of other employment uses.

It is important that we maximize the benefits of land use planning as well as existing and future investments in *infrastructure* so that our communities are well-positioned to leverage economic change. It is also critical that we understand the importance of *provincially significant employment zones* and consider opportunities to better co-ordinate our collective efforts across municipalities to support their contribution to economic growth and improve access to transit.

As in many thriving metropolitan regions, many communities in the *GGH* are facing issues of housing affordability, which are being driven primarily by sustained population growth and factors such as a lack of housing supply with record low vacancy rates. This Plan helps to address this challenge by providing direction to plan for a range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable* housing and, in particular, higher density housing options that can accommodate a range of household sizes in locations that can provide access to transit and other amenities. There is also a need for stakeholders to work collaboratively to find opportunities to redevelop sites using more age-friendly community design.

Building more compact greenfield communities reduces the rate at which land is consumed. Communities in larger urban centres need to grow at *transit-supportive* densities, with walkable street configurations. *Compact built form* and *intensification* efforts go together with more effective transit and *active transportation* networks and are fundamental to where and how we grow. They are necessary to ensure the viability of transit; connect people to homes, jobs and other aspects of daily living for people of all ages; and meet climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives. Moreover, an increased *modal share* for *active transportation* and transit, including convenient, *multimodal* options for intra- and inter-municipal travel, supports reduced air pollution and improved public health outcomes.

It is important to optimize the use of the existing urban land supply as well as the existing building and housing stock to avoid over-designating land for future urban development while also providing flexibility for local decision-makers to respond to housing need and market demand. This Plan's emphasis on optimizing the use of the existing urban land supply represents an *intensification* first approach to development and city-building, one which focuses on making better use of our existing *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, and less on continuously expanding the urban area.

Strong, healthy and prosperous rural communities are also vital to the economic success of the *GGH* and contribute to our quality of life. This Plan recognizes and promotes the important role of rural towns and villages as a focus of economic, cultural and social activities that support surrounding rural and agricultural areas across the *GGH*. Opportunities to support a diversified rural economy should be promoted by protecting farmland and the viability of the agri-food sector in rural areas. Healthy rural communities are important to the vitality and well-being of the larger region.

2.1 Policies for Where and How to Grow

2.2.1 Managing Growth

1. Population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 will be used for planning and managing growth in the *GGH* to the horizon of this Plan in accordance with the policies in subsection 5.2.4.
2. Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:

- a. the vast majority of growth will be directed to *settlement areas* that:
 - i. have a *delineated built boundary*;
 - ii. have existing or planned *municipal water and wastewater systems*; and
 - iii. can support the achievement of *complete communities*;
 - b. growth will be limited in *settlement areas* that:
 - i. are *rural settlements*;
 - ii. are not serviced by existing or planned *municipal water and wastewater systems*; or
 - iii. are in the *Greenbelt Area*;
 - c. within *settlement areas*, growth will be focused in:
 - i. *delineated built-up areas*;
 - ii. *strategic growth areas*;
 - iii. locations with existing or planned transit, with a priority on *higher order transit* where it exists or is planned; and
 - iv. areas with existing or planned *public service facilities*;
 - d. development will be directed to *settlement areas*, except where the policies of this Plan permit otherwise;
 - e. development will be generally directed away from *hazardous lands*; and
 - f. the establishment of new *settlement areas* is prohibited.
3. Upper- and single-tier municipalities will undertake integrated planning to manage forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan, which will:
- a. establish a hierarchy of *settlement areas*, and of areas within *settlement areas*, in accordance with policy 2.2.1.2;
 - b. be supported by planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* by considering the full life cycle costs of these assets and developing options to pay for these costs over the long-term;
 - c. provide direction for an urban form that will optimize *infrastructure*, particularly along transit and transportation corridors, to support the achievement of *complete communities* through a more *compact built form*;
 - d. support the environmental and agricultural protection and conservation objectives of this Plan; and
 - e. be implemented through a *municipal comprehensive review* and, where applicable, include direction to lower-tier municipalities.
4. Applying the policies of this Plan will support the achievement of *complete communities* that:
- a. feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and *public service facilities*;
 - b. improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes;
 - c. provide a diverse range and mix of housing options, including second units and *affordable* housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes;
 - d. expand convenient access to:
 - i. a range of transportation options, including options for the safe, comfortable and convenient use of *active transportation*;
 - ii. *public service facilities*, co-located and integrated in community hubs;
 - iii. an appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities; and
 - iv. healthy, local, and affordable food options, including through urban agriculture;
 - e. provide for a more *compact built form* and a vibrant *public realm*, including public open spaces;
 - f. mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to environmental sustainability; and
 - g. integrate *green infrastructure* and appropriate *low impact development*.
5. The Minister will establish a methodology for assessing land needs to implement this Plan, including relevant assumptions and other direction as required. This methodology will be used by upper- and single-

tier municipalities to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan.

6. Based on a land needs assessment undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.1.5, some upper- and single-tier municipalities in the *outer ring* will determine that they have *excess lands*. These municipalities will:
 - a. determine which lands will be identified as *excess lands* based on the hierarchy of *settlement areas* established in accordance with policy 2.2.1.3;
 - b. prohibit *development* on all *excess lands* to the horizon of this Plan; and
 - c. where appropriate, use additional tools to reduce the land that is available for *development*, such as those set out in policies 5.2.8.3 and 5.2.8.4.

2.2.2 Delineated Built-up Areas

1. By the time the next *municipal comprehensive review* is approved and in effect, and for each year thereafter, the applicable minimum intensification target is as follows:
 - a. A minimum of 50 per cent of all residential development occurring annually within each of the Cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia and Peterborough and the Regions of Durham, Halton, Niagara, Peel, Waterloo and York will be within the *delineated built-up area*; and
 - b. The City of Kawartha Lakes and the Counties of Brant, Dufferin, Haldimand, Northumberland, Peterborough, Simcoe and Wellington will, through the next municipal comprehensive review, each establish the minimum percentage of all residential development occurring annually that will be within the *delineated built-up area*, based on maintaining or improving upon the minimum intensification target contained in the applicable upper- or single-tier official plan.
2. Until the next *municipal comprehensive review* is approved and in effect, the annual minimum intensification target contained in the applicable upper- or single-tier official plan that is approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017 will continue to apply.
3. All municipalities will develop a strategy to achieve the minimum intensification target and *intensification* throughout *delineated built-up areas*, which will:
 - a. identify *strategic growth areas* to support achievement of the intensification target and recognize them as a key focus for development;
 - b. identify the appropriate type and scale of development in *strategic growth areas* and transition of built form to adjacent areas;
 - c. encourage *intensification* generally throughout the *delineated built-up area*;
 - d. ensure lands are zoned and development is designed in a manner that supports the achievement of *complete communities*;
 - e. prioritize planning and investment in *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* that will support *intensification*; and
 - f. be implemented through official plan policies and designations, updated zoning and other supporting documents.
4. Councils of upper- and single-tier municipalities may request an alternative to the target established in policy 2.2.2.1 where it is demonstrated that this target cannot be achieved and that the alternative target will be appropriate given the size, location and capacity of the *delineated built-up area*.
5. The Minister may permit an alternative to the target established in policy 2.2.2.1. If council does not make a request or the Minister does not permit an alternative target, the target established in policy 2.2.2.1 will apply.

2.2.3 Urban Growth Centres

1. *Urban growth centres* will be planned:
 - a. as focal areas for investment in regional *public service facilities*, as well as commercial, recreational, cultural, and entertainment uses;
 - b. to accommodate and support the transit network at the regional scale and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit;

- c. to serve as high-density major employment centres that will attract provincially, nationally, or internationally significant employment uses; and
 - d. to accommodate significant population and employment growth.
2. *Urban growth centres* will be planned to achieve, by 2031 or earlier, a minimum density target of:
 - a. 400 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the *urban growth centres* in the City of Toronto;
 - b. 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the Downtown Brampton, Downtown Burlington, Downtown Hamilton, Downtown Milton, Markham Centre, Downtown Mississauga, Newmarket Centre, Midtown Oakville, Downtown Oshawa, Downtown Pickering, Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Downtown Kitchener, and Uptown Waterloo *urban growth centres*; and
 - c. 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the Downtown Barrie, Downtown Brantford, Downtown Cambridge, Downtown Guelph, Downtown Peterborough and Downtown St. Catharines *urban growth centres*.

2.2.4 Transit Corridors and Station Areas

1. The *priority transit corridors* shown in Schedule 5 will be identified in official plans. Planning will be prioritized for *major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors*, including zoning in a manner that implements the policies of this Plan.
2. For *major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors* or subway lines, upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, will delineate the boundaries of *major transit station areas* in a *transit-supportive* manner that maximizes the size of the area and the number of potential transit users that are within walking distance of the station.
3. *Major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors* or subway lines will be planned for a minimum density target of:
 - a. 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by subways;
 - b. 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by light rail transit or bus rapid transit; or
 - c. 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those that are served by the GO Transit rail network.
4. For a particular *major transit station area*, the Minister may approve a target that is lower than the applicable target established in policy 2.2.4.3, where it has been demonstrated that this target cannot be achieved because:
 - a. *development* is prohibited by provincial policy or severely restricted on a significant portion of the lands within the delineated area; or
 - b. there are a limited number of residents and jobs associated with the built form, but a *major trip generator* or feeder service will sustain high ridership at the station or stop.
5. Notwithstanding policies 5.2.3.2 b) and 5.2.5.3 c), upper- and single-tier municipalities may delineate the boundaries of *major transit station areas* and identify minimum density targets for *major transit station areas* in advance of the next *municipal comprehensive review*, provided it is done in accordance with subsections 16(15) or (16) of the Planning Act, as the case may be.
6. Within *major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors* or subway lines, land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of the minimum density targets in this Plan will be prohibited.
7. The Province may identify additional *priority transit corridors* and planning requirements for *major transit station areas* on *priority transit corridors* or *subway lines*, to support the optimization of transit investments across the *GGH*, which may specify:
 - a. the timeframes for implementation of the planning requirements;
 - b. the boundaries of the area that will be subject to the planning requirements; and
 - c. any additional requirements that may apply in relation to these areas.
8. All *major transit station areas* will be planned and designed to be *transit-supportive* and to achieve *multimodal* access to stations and connections to nearby *major trip generators* by providing, where appropriate:
 - a. connections to local and regional transit services to support *transit service integration*;

- b. *infrastructure* to support *active transportation*, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and secure bicycle parking; and
 - c. commuter pick-up/drop-off areas.
9. Within all *major transit station areas*, development will be supported, where appropriate, by:
 - a. planning for a diverse mix of uses, including second units and *affordable* housing, to support existing and planned transit service levels;
 - b. fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, such as *joint development* projects;
 - c. providing alternative development standards, such as reduced parking standards; and
 - d. prohibiting land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of *transit-supportive* densities.
 10. Lands adjacent to or near to existing and planned *frequent transit* should be planned to be *transit-supportive* and supportive of *active transportation* and a range and mix of uses and activities.
 11. In planning lands adjacent to or near *higher order transit* corridors and facilities, municipalities will identify and protect lands that may be needed for future enhancement or expansion of transit *infrastructure*, in consultation with Metrolinx, as appropriate.

2.2.5 Employment

To learn more about [provincially significant employment zones click here](#).

1. Economic development and competitiveness in the *GGH* will be promoted by:
 - a. making more efficient use of existing *employment areas* and vacant and underutilized employment lands and increasing employment densities;
 - b. ensuring the availability of sufficient land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
 - c. planning to better connect areas with high employment densities to transit; and
 - d. integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.
2. *Major office* and appropriate major institutional development will be directed to *urban growth centres*, *major transit station areas* or other *strategic growth areas* with existing or planned *frequent transit* service.
3. Retail and office uses will be directed to locations that support *active transportation* and have existing or planned transit.
4. In planning for employment, surface parking will be minimized and the development of *active transportation* networks and *transit-supportive* built form will be facilitated.
5. Municipalities should designate and preserve lands within *settlement areas* located adjacent to or near *major goods movement facilities and corridors*, including major highway interchanges, as areas for manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities.
6. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, will designate all *employment areas* in official plans and protect them for appropriate employment uses over the long-term. For greater certainty, *employment area* designations may be incorporated into upper- and single-tier official plans by amendment at any time in advance of the next *municipal comprehensive review*.
7. Municipalities will plan for all *employment areas* within *settlement areas* by:
 - a. prohibiting residential uses and prohibiting or limiting other *sensitive land uses* that are not ancillary to the primary employment use;
 - b. prohibiting *major retail* uses or establishing a size or scale threshold for any *major retail* uses that are permitted and prohibiting any *major retail* uses that would exceed that threshold; and
 - c. providing an appropriate interface between *employment areas* and adjacent non-employment areas to maintain land use compatibility.
8. The development of *sensitive land uses*, *major retail* uses or *major office* uses will, in accordance with provincial guidelines, avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on industrial, manufacturing or other uses that are particularly vulnerable to encroachment.

9. The conversion of lands within *employment areas* to non-employment uses may be permitted only through a *municipal comprehensive review* where it is demonstrated that:
 - a. there is a need for the conversion;
 - b. the lands are not required over the horizon of this Plan for the employment purposes for which they are designated;
 - c. the municipality will maintain sufficient employment lands to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
 - d. the proposed uses would not adversely affect the overall viability of the *employment area* or the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan; and
 - e. there are existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* to accommodate the proposed uses.
10. Notwithstanding policy 2.2.5.9, until the next *municipal comprehensive review*, lands within existing *employment areas* may be converted to a designation that permits non-employment uses, provided the conversion would:
 - a. satisfy the requirements of policy 2.2.5.9 a), d) and e);
 - b. maintain a significant number of jobs on those lands through the establishment of development criteria; and
 - c. not include any part of an *employment area* identified as a *provincially significant employment zone*.
11. Any change to an official plan to permit new or expanded opportunities for *major retail* in an *employment area* may only occur in accordance with policy 2.2.5.9 or 2.2.5.10.
12. The Minister may identify *provincially significant employment zones* and may provide specific direction for planning in those areas to be implemented through appropriate official plan policies and designations and economic development strategies.
13. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, will establish minimum density targets for all *employment areas* within *settlement areas* that:
 - a. are measured in jobs per hectare;
 - b. reflect the current and anticipated type and scale of employment that characterizes the *employment area* to which the target applies;
 - c. reflects opportunities for the *intensification of employment areas* on sites that support *active transportation* and are served by existing or planned transit; and
 - d. will be implemented through official plan policies and designations and zoning by-laws.
14. Outside of *employment areas*, development criteria should be established to ensure that the redevelopment of any employment lands will retain space for a similar number of jobs to remain accommodated on site.
15. The retail sector will be supported by promoting *compact built form* and *intensification* of retail and service uses and areas and encouraging the integration of those uses with other land uses to support the achievement of *complete communities*.
16. Existing *office parks* will be supported by:
 - a. improving connectivity with transit and *active transportation* networks;
 - b. providing for an appropriate mix of amenities and open space to serve the workforce;
 - c. planning for *intensification* of employment uses;
 - d. ensuring that the introduction of any non-employment uses, if appropriate, would be limited and would not negatively impact the primary function of the area; and
 - e. approaches to *transportation demand management* that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicle use.
17. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, are encouraged to undertake a co-ordinated approach to planning for large areas with high concentrations of employment that cross municipal boundaries and are *major trip generators*, on matters such as *transportation demand management* and economic development. If necessary, the Minister may identify certain areas that meet these criteria and provide direction for a co-ordinated approach to planning.
18. In recognition of the importance of cross-border trade with the United States, this Plan recognizes a *Gateway Economic Zone* and *Gateway Economic Centre* near the Niagara-United States border. Planning

and economic development in these areas will support economic diversity and promote increased opportunities for cross-border trade, movement of goods, and tourism.

2.2.6 Housing

1. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, will:
 - a. support housing choice through the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan by:
 - i. identifying a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities, including second units and *affordable* housing to meet projected needs of current and future residents; and
 - ii. establishing targets for *affordable* ownership housing and rental housing;
 - b. identify mechanisms, including the use of land use planning and financial tools, to support the implementation of policy 2.2.6.1 a);
 - c. align land use planning with applicable housing and homelessness plans required under the Housing Services Act, 2011; and
 - d. implement policy 2.2.6.1 a), b) and c) through official plan policies and designations and zoning by-laws.
2. Notwithstanding policy 1.4.1 of the PPS, 2014, in implementing policy 2.2.6.1, municipalities will support the achievement of *complete communities* by:
 - a. planning to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan;
 - b. planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
 - c. considering the range and mix of housing options and densities of the existing housing stock; and
 - d. planning to diversify their overall housing stock across the municipality.
3. To support the achievement of *complete communities*, municipalities will consider the use of available tools to require that multi-unit residential developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes.
4. Municipalities will maintain at all times where development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units. This supply will include, and may exclusively consist of, lands suitably zoned for *intensification* and *redevelopment*.
5. When a *settlement area* boundary has been expanded in accordance with the policies in subsection 2.2.8, the new *designated greenfield area* will be planned in accordance with policies 2.2.6.1 and 2.2.6.2.

2.2.7 Designated Greenfield Areas

1. New *development* taking place in *designated greenfield areas* will be planned, designated, zoned and designed in a manner that:
 - a. supports the achievement of *complete communities*;
 - b. supports *active transportation*; and
 - c. encourages the integration and sustained viability of transit services.
2. The minimum density target applicable to the *designated greenfield area* of each upper- and single-tier municipality is as follows:
 - a. The Cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia and Peterborough and the Regions of Durham, Halton, Niagara, Peel, Waterloo and York will plan to achieve within the horizon of this Plan a minimum density target that is not less than 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare; and
 - b. The City of Kawartha Lakes and the Counties of Brant, Dufferin, Haldimand, Northumberland, Peterborough, Simcoe and Wellington will plan to achieve within the horizon of this Plan a minimum density target that is not less than 40 residents and jobs combined per hectare.
3. The minimum density target will be measured over the entire *designated greenfield area* of each upper- or single-tier municipality, excluding the following:
 - a. *natural heritage features and areas*, *natural heritage systems* and floodplains, provided *development* is prohibited in these areas;
 - b. rights-of-way for:

- i. electricity transmission lines;
 - ii. *energy transmission pipelines*;
 - iii. freeways, as defined by and mapped as part of the Ontario Road Network; and
 - iv. railways;
 - c. *employment areas*; and
 - d. cemeteries.
4. Councils of upper- and single-tier municipalities may request an alternative to the target established in policy 2.2.7.2 where it is demonstrated that the target cannot be achieved and that the alternative target will support the diversification of the total range and mix of housing options and the achievement of a more *compact built form* in *designated greenfield areas* to the horizon of this Plan in a manner that is appropriate given the characteristics of the municipality and adjacent communities.
 5. The Minister may permit an alternative to the target established in policy 2.2.7.2. If council does not make a request or the Minister does not permit an alternative target, the target established in policy 2.2.7.2 will apply.

2.2.8 Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

1. *Settlement area* boundaries will be delineated in official plans.
2. A *settlement area* boundary expansion may only occur through a *municipal comprehensive review* where it is demonstrated that:
 - a. based on the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan and a land needs assessment undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.1.5, sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan are not available through *intensification* and in the *designated greenfield area*:
 - i. within the upper- or single-tier municipality, and
 - ii. within the applicable lower-tier municipality;
 - b. the proposed expansion will make available sufficient lands not exceeding the horizon of this Plan, based on the analysis provided for in policy 2.2.8.2 a), while minimizing land consumption; and
 - c. the timing of the proposed expansion and the phasing of development within the *designated greenfield area* will not adversely affect the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan.
3. Where the need for a *settlement area* boundary expansion has been justified in accordance with policy 2.2.8.2, the feasibility of the proposed expansion will be determined and the most appropriate location for the proposed expansion will be identified based on the comprehensive application of all of the policies in this Plan, including the following:
 - a. there is sufficient capacity in existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*;
 - b. the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* needed would be financially viable over the full life cycle of these assets;
 - c. the proposed expansion would be informed by applicable water and wastewater master plans or equivalent and *stormwater master plans* or equivalent, as appropriate;
 - d. the proposed expansion, including the associated water, wastewater and stormwater servicing, would be planned and demonstrated to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts on watershed conditions and the *water resource system*, including the *quality and quantity of water*;
 - e. *key hydrologic areas* and the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* should be avoided where possible;
 - f. *prime agricultural areas* should be avoided where possible. To support the *Agricultural System*, alternative locations across the upper- or single-tier municipality will be evaluated, prioritized and determined based on avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the impact on the *Agricultural System* and in accordance with the following:
 - i. expansion into *specialty crop areas* is prohibited;
 - ii. reasonable alternatives that avoid *prime agricultural areas* are evaluated; and
 - iii. where *prime agricultural areas* cannot be avoided, lower priority agricultural lands are used;

- g. the *settlement area* to be expanded is in compliance with the *minimum distance separation formulae*;
 - h. any adverse impacts on the *agri-food network*, including *agricultural operations*, from expanding *settlement areas* would be avoided, or if avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated as determined through an *agricultural impact assessment*;
 - i. the policies of Sections 2 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) and 3 (Protecting Public Health and Safety) of the PPS are applied;
 - j. the proposed expansion would meet any applicable requirements of the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation, Niagara Escarpment, and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans and any applicable source protection plan; and
 - k. within the Protected Countryside in the *Greenbelt Area*:
 - i. the *settlement area* to be expanded is identified in the Greenbelt Plan as a Town/Village;
 - ii. the proposed expansion would be modest in size, representing no more than a 5 per cent increase in the geographic size of the *settlement area* based on the *settlement area* boundary delineated in the applicable official plan as of July 1, 2017, up to a maximum size of 10 hectares, and residential *development* would not be permitted on more than 50 per cent of the lands that would be added to the *settlement area*;
 - iii. the proposed expansion would support the achievement of *complete communities* or the local agricultural economy;
 - iv. the proposed uses cannot be reasonably accommodated within the existing *settlement area* boundary;
 - v. the proposed expansion would be serviced by existing *municipal water and wastewater systems* without impacting future *intensification* opportunities in the existing *settlement area*; and
 - vi. expansion into the Natural Heritage System that has been identified in the Greenbelt Plan is prohibited.
4. Notwithstanding policy 2.2.8.2, municipalities may adjust *settlement area* boundaries outside of a *municipal comprehensive review*, provided:
- a. there would be no net increase in land within *settlement areas*;
 - b. the adjustment would support the municipality's ability to meet the intensification and density targets established pursuant to this Plan;
 - c. the location of any lands added to a *settlement area* will satisfy the applicable requirements of policy 2.2.8.3;
 - d. the affected *settlement areas* are not *rural settlements* or in the *Greenbelt Area*; and
 - e. the *settlement area* to which lands would be added is serviced by *municipal water and wastewater systems* and there is sufficient reserve *infrastructure* capacity to service the lands.
5. Notwithstanding policies 2.2.8.2 and 5.2.4.3, a *settlement area* boundary expansion may occur in advance of a *municipal comprehensive review*, provided:
- a. the lands that are added will be planned to achieve at least the minimum density target in policy 2.2.7.2 or 2.2.5.13, as appropriate;
 - b. the location of any lands added to a *settlement area* will satisfy the applicable requirements of policy 2.2.8.3;
 - c. the affected *settlement area* is not a *rural settlement* or in the *Greenbelt Area*;
 - d. the *settlement area* is serviced by *municipal water and wastewater systems* and there is sufficient reserve *infrastructure* capacity to service the lands; and
 - e. the additional lands and associated forecasted growth will be fully accounted for in the land needs assessment associated with the next *municipal comprehensive review*.
6. For a *settlement area* boundary expansion undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.8.5, the amount of land to be added to the *settlement area* will be no larger than 40 hectares.

2.2.9 Rural Areas

1. Municipalities are encouraged to plan for a variety of cultural and economic opportunities within *rural settlements* to serve the needs of rural residents and area businesses.

2. *Public service facilities* in *rural settlements* should be co-located and integrated in community hubs, and priority should be given to maintaining and adapting existing *public service facilities* in community hubs to meet the needs of the community, where feasible.
3. Subject to the policies in Section 4, *development* outside of *settlement areas* may be permitted on *rural lands* for:
 - a. the management or use of resources;
 - b. resource-based recreational uses; and
 - c. other rural land uses that are not appropriate in *settlement areas* provided they:
 - i. are compatible with the rural landscape and surrounding local land uses;
 - ii. will be sustained by rural service levels; and
 - iii. will not adversely affect the protection of *agricultural uses* and other resource-based uses such as *mineral aggregate operations*.
4. Where permitted on *rural lands*, resource-based recreational uses should be limited to tourism-related and recreational uses that are compatible with the scale, character, and capacity of the resource and the surrounding rural landscape, and may include:
 - a. commercial uses to serve the needs of visitors; and
 - b. where appropriate, resource-based recreational dwellings for seasonal accommodation.
5. Existing *employment areas* outside of *settlement areas* on *rural lands* that were designated for employment uses in an official plan that was approved and in effect as of June 16, 2006 may continue to be permitted. Expansions to these existing *employment areas* may be permitted only if necessary to support the immediate needs of existing businesses and if compatible with the surrounding uses.
6. *New multiple lots or units for residential development* will be directed to *settlement areas*, but may be allowed on *rural lands* in site-specific locations with approved zoning or designation in an official plan that permitted this type of *development* as of June 16, 2006.
7. Notwithstanding policy 2.2.8.2, minor adjustments may be made to the boundaries of *rural settlements* outside of a *municipal comprehensive review*, subject to the following:
 - a. the affected *settlement area* is not in the *Greenbelt Area*;
 - b. the change would constitute minor rounding out of existing development, in keeping with the rural character of the area;
 - c. confirmation that water and wastewater servicing can be provided in an appropriate manner that is suitable for the long-term with no *negative impacts* on water; and
 - d. Sections 2 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) and 3 (Protecting Public Health and Safety) of the PPS are applied.

3 Infrastructure to support growth

3.1 Context

Well planned *infrastructure* is essential to the viability of Ontario's communities and critical to economic competitiveness, quality of life, and the delivery of public services. This Plan provides the framework to guide and prioritize *infrastructure* planning and investments in the *GGH* to support and accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan and beyond.

The *infrastructure* framework in this Plan requires that municipalities undertake an integrated approach to land use planning, *infrastructure* investments, and environmental protection to achieve the outcomes of the Plan. Co-ordination of these different dimensions of planning allows municipalities to identify the most cost-effective options for sustainably accommodating forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan to support the achievement of *complete communities*. It is estimated that over 30 per cent of *infrastructure* capital costs, and 15 per cent of operating costs^[1], could be saved by moving from unmanaged growth to a more *compact built form*.

This Plan is aligned with the Province's approach to long-term *infrastructure* planning as enshrined in the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015, which established mechanisms to encourage principled, evidence-based and strategic long-term *infrastructure* planning.

This Plan is also aligned with the Province’s municipal asset management regulation. The purpose of the regulation is to improve the way municipalities plan for their *infrastructure* and includes requirements that promote alignment of planning for land use and *infrastructure*. Significant cost savings can be achieved by ensuring that existing *infrastructure* is optimized before new *infrastructure* is built. This principle is integrated into the policies of this Plan and applies to all forms of *infrastructure*.

The *transportation system* for the *GGH* must be planned and managed for the safe and efficient movement of goods and people, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other negative environmental impacts.

Transit is the first priority for transportation planning and investment. The transit network will support and facilitate improved linkages between *strategic growth areas* and other areas planned for a mix of uses and *transit-supportive* densities. System users will benefit from improved linkages between and within municipalities as well as *transit service integration*.

A comprehensive and continuous *active transportation* network will offer a viable alternative to the private automobile for personal travel. Using a *complete streets* approach to roadway design, reconstruction, and refurbishment will ensure that the needs and safety of all road users are considered when planning and building the street network.

To support goods movement, this Plan calls for a co-ordinated goods movement network that links *major goods movement facilities and corridors* to the provincial highway network and areas of significant commercial activity. This Plan also calls for the long-term protection of *planned corridors* and the co-location of *infrastructure* in these corridors where appropriate.

A clean and sustainable supply of water is essential to the long-term health and prosperity of the region. There is a need to co-ordinate investment in water, wastewater, and stormwater *infrastructure* to service future growth in ways that are fiscally sustainable and linked to decisions about how these systems are paid for and administered. Water *infrastructure* planning will be informed by *watershed planning* to ensure that the *quality and quantity of water* is maintained.

The importance of the Great Lakes is reflected in many provincial initiatives, including the Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015 and Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy. This Plan supports these initiatives by providing direction on *watershed*-based, integrated water, wastewater, and stormwater master planning and by restricting future extensions of water and wastewater servicing from the Great Lakes.

Climate change poses a serious challenge for maintaining existing *infrastructure* and planning for new *infrastructure*, however, vulnerability assessments can help to identify risks and options for enhancing resilience. Similarly, comprehensive stormwater management planning, including the use of appropriate *low impact development* and *green infrastructure*, can increase the resiliency of our communities.

Investment in *public service facilities* – such as hospitals, long-term care facilities, libraries and schools – should be planned and located to keep pace with changing needs, maximize existing *infrastructure* and to support the achievement of *complete communities*, co-locating services in community hubs and prioritizing *strategic growth areas* as appropriate.

3.2 Policies for Infrastructure to Support Growth

3.2.1 Integrated Planning

1. *Infrastructure* planning, land use planning, and *infrastructure* investment will be co-ordinated to implement this Plan.
2. Planning for new or expanded *infrastructure* will occur in an integrated manner, including evaluations of long-range scenario-based land use planning, environmental planning and financial planning, and will be supported by relevant studies and should involve:

- a. leveraging *infrastructure* investment to direct growth and development in accordance with the policies and schedules of this Plan, including the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
 - b. providing sufficient *infrastructure* capacity in *strategic growth areas*;
 - c. identifying the full life cycle costs of *infrastructure* and developing options to pay for these costs over the long-term; and
 - d. considering the impacts of a changing climate.
3. *Infrastructure* investment and other implementation tools and mechanisms will be used to facilitate *intensification* and higher density development in *strategic growth areas*. Priority will be given to *infrastructure* investments made by the Province that support the policies and schedules of this Plan.
 4. Municipalities will assess *infrastructure* risks and vulnerabilities, including those caused by the impacts of a changing climate, and identify actions and investments to address these challenges, which could be identified as part of municipal asset management planning.
 5. The Province will work with public sector partners, including Metrolinx, to identify strategic *infrastructure* needs to support the implementation of this Plan through multi-year *infrastructure* planning for the *transportation system* and *public service facilities*.

3.2.2 Transportation – General

1. *Transportation system* planning, land use planning, and transportation investment will be co-ordinated to implement this Plan.
2. The *transportation system* within the *GGH* will be planned and managed to:
 - a. provide connectivity among transportation modes for moving people and for moving goods;
 - b. offer a balance of transportation choices that reduces reliance upon the automobile and promotes transit and *active transportation*;
 - c. be sustainable and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the most financially and environmentally appropriate mode for trip-making and supporting the use of zero- and low-emission vehicles;
 - d. offer *multimodal* access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural, and recreational opportunities, and goods and services;
 - e. accommodate agricultural vehicles and equipment, as appropriate; and
 - f. provide for the safety of system users.
3. In the design, refurbishment, or reconstruction of the existing and planned street network, a *complete streets* approach will be adopted that ensures the needs and safety of all road users are considered and appropriately accommodated.
4. Municipalities will develop and implement *transportation demand management* policies in official plans or other planning documents or programs to:
 - a. reduce trip distance and time;
 - b. increase the *modal share* of alternatives to the automobile, which may include setting *modal share* targets;
 - c. prioritize *active transportation*, transit, and goods movement over single-occupant automobiles;
 - d. expand *infrastructure* to support *active transportation*; and
 - e. consider the needs of *major trip generators*.

3.2.3 Moving People

1. Public transit will be the first priority for transportation *infrastructure* planning and major transportation investments.
2. All decisions on transit planning and investment will be made according to the following criteria:
 - a. aligning with, and supporting, the priorities identified in Schedule 5;
 - b. prioritizing areas with existing or planned higher residential or employment densities to optimize return on investment and the efficiency and viability of existing and planned transit service levels;
 - c. increasing the capacity of existing transit systems to support *strategic growth areas*;

- d. expanding transit service to areas that have achieved, or will be planned to achieve, *transit-supportive* densities and provide a mix of residential, office, institutional, and commercial development, wherever possible;
 - e. facilitating improved linkages between and within municipalities from nearby neighbourhoods to *urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other strategic growth areas*;
 - f. increasing the *modal share* of transit; and
 - g. contributing towards the provincial greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
3. Municipalities will work with transit operators, the Province, Metrolinx where applicable, and each other to support *transit service integration* within and across municipal boundaries.
 4. Municipalities will ensure that *active transportation* networks are comprehensive and integrated into transportation planning to provide:
 - a. safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users of *active transportation*; and
 - b. continuous linkages between *strategic growth areas*, adjacent neighbourhoods, *major trip generators*, and transit stations, including dedicated lane space for bicyclists on the major street network, or other safe and convenient alternatives.

3.2.4 Moving Goods

1. Linking *major goods movement facilities and corridors*, international gateways, and *employment areas* to facilitate efficient goods movement will be the first priority of highway investment.
2. The Province and municipalities will work with agencies and transportation service providers to:
 - a. co-ordinate, optimize, and ensure the long-term viability of *major goods movement facilities and corridors*;
 - b. improve corridors for moving goods across the *GGH* in accordance with Schedule 6;
 - c. promote and better integrate *multimodal* goods movement and *freight-supportive* land use and *transportation system* planning; and
 - d. accommodate agricultural vehicles and equipment, as appropriate.
3. Municipalities will provide for the establishment of priority routes for goods movement, where feasible, to facilitate the movement of goods into and out of *employment areas* and other areas of significant commercial activity and to provide alternate routes connecting to the provincial network.

3.2.5 Infrastructure Corridors

1. In planning for the development, optimization, or expansion of existing and *planned corridors* and supporting facilities, the Province, other public agencies and upper- and single-tier municipalities will:
 - a. encourage the co-location of linear *infrastructure* where appropriate;
 - b. ensure that existing and *planned corridors* are protected to meet current and projected needs in accordance with the transportation and *infrastructure* corridor protection policies in the PPS;
 - c. where applicable, demonstrate through an *agricultural impact assessment* or equivalent analysis as part of an environmental assessment, that any impacts on the *Agricultural System* have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized and to the extent feasible mitigated;
 - d. where applicable, demonstrate through an environmental assessment, that any impacts on *key natural heritage features* in the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas* have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized and to the extent feasible mitigated; and
 - e. for existing or *planned corridors* for transportation:
 - i. consider increased opportunities for moving people and goods by rail;
 - ii. consider separation of modes within corridors; and
 - iii. provide opportunities for inter-modal linkages.
2. The planning, location, and design of *planned corridors* and the land use designations along these corridors will support the policies of this Plan, in particular that development is directed to *settlement areas*.

3.2.6 Water and Wastewater Systems

1. Municipalities should generate sufficient revenue to recover the full cost of providing and maintaining *municipal water and wastewater systems*.
2. *Municipal water and wastewater systems* and *private communal water and wastewater systems* will be planned, designed, constructed, or expanded in accordance with the following:
 - a. opportunities for optimization and improved efficiency within existing systems will be prioritized and supported by strategies for energy and water conservation and water demand management;
 - b. the system will serve growth in a manner that supports achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
 - c. a comprehensive water or wastewater master plan or equivalent, informed by *watershed planning* or equivalent has been prepared to:
 - i. demonstrate that the effluent discharges and water takings associated with the system will not negatively impact the *quality and quantity of water*;
 - ii. identify the preferred option for servicing growth and development, subject to the hierarchy of services provided in policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5 of the PPS, 2014, which must not exceed the assimilative capacity of the effluent receivers and sustainable water supply for servicing, ecological, and other needs; and
 - iii. identify the full life cycle costs of the system and develop options to pay for these costs over the long-term.
 - d. in the case of *large subsurface sewage disposal systems*, the proponent has demonstrated attenuation capacity; and
 - e. plans have been considered in the context of applicable inter-provincial, national, bi-national, or state-provincial Great Lakes Basin agreements or provincial legislation or strategies.
3. For *settlement areas* that are serviced by rivers, inland lakes, or groundwater, municipalities will not be permitted to extend water or wastewater services from a Great Lakes source unless:
 - a. the extension is required for reasons of public health and safety, in which case, the capacity of the water or wastewater services provided in these circumstances will be limited to that required to service the affected *settlement area*, including capacity for planned development within the approved *settlement area* boundary;
 - b. in the case of an upper- or single-tier municipality with an *urban growth centre* outside of the *Greenbelt Area*:
 - i. the need for the extension has been demonstrated;
 - ii. the increased servicing capacity will only be allocated to *settlement areas* with *urban growth centres*; and
 - iii. the municipality has completed the applicable environmental assessment process in accordance with the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act; or
 - c. the extension had all necessary approvals as of July 1, 2017 and is only to service growth within the *settlement area* boundary delineated in the official plan that is approved and in effect as of that date.
4. Municipalities that share an inland water source or receiving water body will co-ordinate their planning for potable water, stormwater, and wastewater systems based on *watershed planning* or equivalent to ensure that the *quality and quantity of water* is protected, improved, or restored.

3.2.7 Stormwater Management

1. Municipalities will develop *stormwater master plans* or equivalent for serviced *settlement areas* that:
 - a. are informed by *watershed planning* or equivalent;
 - b. protect the *quality and quantity of water* by assessing existing stormwater facilities and systems;
 - c. characterize existing environmental conditions;
 - d. examine the cumulative environmental impacts of stormwater from existing and planned development, including an assessment of how extreme weather events will exacerbate these impacts and the identification of appropriate adaptation strategies;

- e. incorporate appropriate *low impact development* and *green infrastructure*;
 - f. identify the need for stormwater retrofits, where appropriate;
 - g. identify the full life cycle costs of the stormwater *infrastructure*, including maintenance costs, and develop options to pay for these costs over the long-term; and
 - h. include an implementation and maintenance plan.
2. Proposals for large-scale *development* proceeding by way of a secondary plan, plan of subdivision, vacant land plan of condominium or site plan will be supported by a *stormwater management plan* or equivalent, that:
- a. is informed by a *subwatershed plan* or equivalent;
 - b. incorporates an integrated treatment approach to minimize stormwater flows and reliance on stormwater ponds, which includes appropriate *low impact development* and *green infrastructure*;
 - c. establishes planning, design, and construction practices to minimize vegetation removal, grading and soil compaction, sediment erosion, and impervious surfaces; and
 - d. aligns with the *stormwater master plan* or equivalent for the *settlement area*, where applicable.

3.2.8 Public Service Facilities

1. Planning for *public service facilities*, land use planning and investment in *public service facilities* will be co-ordinated to implement this Plan.
2. *Public service facilities* and public services should be co-located in community hubs and integrated to promote cost-effectiveness.
3. Priority should be given to maintaining and adapting existing *public service facilities* and spaces as community hubs to meet the needs of the community and optimize the long-term viability of public investments.
4. Existing *public service facilities* that are located in or near *strategic growth areas* and are easily accessible by *active transportation* and transit, where that service is available, should be the preferred location for community hubs.
5. Municipalities will collaborate and consult with service planning, funding, and delivery sectors to facilitate the co-ordination and planning of community hubs and other *public service facilities*.
6. New *public service facilities*, including hospitals and schools, should be located in *settlement areas* and preference should be given to sites that are easily accessible by *active transportation* and transit, where that service is available.

[1] “Building Together: Guide for Municipal Asset Management Plans”, Ministry of Infrastructure, 2012

4 Protecting what is valuable

4.1 Context

The *GGH* contains a broad array of important hydrologic and *natural heritage features and areas*, a vibrant and diverse agricultural land base, irreplaceable *cultural heritage resources*, and valuable renewable and non-renewable resources. These lands, features and resources are essential for the long-term quality of life, economic prosperity, environmental health, and *ecological integrity* of the region. They collectively provide essential ecosystem services, including water storage and filtration, cleaner air and habitats, and support pollinators, carbon storage, adaptation and resilience to climate change.

These valuable assets must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth. This is of particular importance in the fast-growing *GGH*, which supports some of the most diverse vegetation and wildlife in Canada, including the Niagara Escarpment (a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve) and the Oak Ridges Moraine – two of Ontario’s most significant landforms – as well as the Rouge National Urban Park. There are existing legislation and policies in place to identify and protect these features, areas, and sites, including the

Ontario Heritage Act, statements of provincial policy such as the PPS, and provincial plans such as the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation, Niagara Escarpment, and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans.

Through their historic relationship with the lands and resources in this region, Indigenous communities have gained traditional knowledge that is of value to the planning decisions being made today. A balanced approach to the wise use and management of all resources, including those related to water, natural heritage, agriculture, cultural heritage, and mineral aggregates, will be implemented in the *GGH*.

This Plan recognizes and supports the role of municipal policy in providing leadership and innovation in developing a culture of conservation and addressing climate change. As the *GGH* grows, so will the overall demand for water, energy, air, and land. The ongoing availability of these natural resources is essential for the sustainability of all communities.

This Plan requires the identification of *water resource systems* and the protection of *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas*, similar to the level of protection provided in the Greenbelt. This provides a consistent framework for water protection across the *GGH*, and builds on existing plans and policies, including the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and source protection plans developed under the Clean Water Act, 2006. Recognizing that *watersheds* are the most important scale for protecting the *quality and quantity of water*, municipalities are required to undertake *watershed planning* to inform the protection of *water resource systems* and decisions related to planning for growth.

This Plan also provides for the identification and protection of a *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* outside of the *Greenbelt Area* and *settlement areas*, and applies protections similar to those in the Greenbelt Plan to provide consistent and long-term protection throughout the *GGH*.

The *GGH* is home to some of Canada's most important and productive farmland, which is a finite, non-renewable resource. The region's fertile soil, favourable climate, and access to water make it significant on both a national and international scale. This Plan provides for the identification and protection of the *Agricultural System* in the *GGH*. The *Agricultural System* includes a continuous and productive land base, comprised of *prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, and *rural lands*, as well as a complementary *agri-food network* that together enable the agri-food sector to thrive. Many farms within the *Agricultural System* also contain important natural heritage and hydrologic features, and farmers play a vital role in their stewardship. Protecting the *Agricultural System* will support the viability of the agricultural sector as the region grows.

The *GGH* also contains important *cultural heritage resources* that contribute to a sense of identity, support a vibrant tourism industry, and attract investment based on cultural amenities. Accommodating growth can put pressure on these resources through *development* and *site alteration*. It is necessary to plan in a way that protects and maximizes the benefits of these resources that make our communities unique and attractive places to live.

Building compact communities and the *infrastructure* needed to support growth requires significant *mineral aggregate resources*. The Aggregate Resources Act establishes the overall process for the management of *mineral aggregate operations*, and this Plan works within this framework to provide guidance on where and how aggregate resource extraction can occur, while balancing other planning priorities. The *GGH* contains significant deposits of *mineral aggregate resources*, which require long-term management, including aggregate reuse and recycling. Ensuring *mineral aggregate resources* are available in proximity to demand can support the timely provision of *infrastructure* and reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

The *water resource systems*, *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, and *Agricultural System* for the *GGH* also play an important role in addressing climate change and building resilience. Greenhouse gas emissions can be offset by natural areas that act as carbon sinks. Municipalities play a crucial role in managing and reducing Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions and supporting adaptation to the changing climate. The Province will work with municipalities to develop approaches to inventory, reduce, and offset greenhouse gas emissions in support of provincial targets as we move towards environmentally sustainable communities.

4.2 Policies for Protecting What is Valuable

4.2.1 Water Resource Systems

1. Upper- and single-tier municipalities, partnering with lower-tier municipalities and conservation authorities as appropriate, will ensure that *watershed planning* is undertaken to support a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term approach to the protection, enhancement, or restoration of the *quality and quantity of water* within a *watershed*.
2. *Water resource systems* will be identified to provide for the long-term protection of *key hydrologic features, key hydrologic areas, and their functions*.
3. *Watershed planning* or equivalent will inform:
 - a. the identification of *water resource systems*;
 - b. the protection, enhancement, or restoration of the *quality and quantity of water*;
 - c. decisions on allocation of growth; and
 - d. planning for water, wastewater, and stormwater *infrastructure*.
4. Planning for large-scale *development in designated greenfield areas*, including *secondary plans*, will be informed by a *subwatershed plan* or equivalent.
5. Municipalities will consider the Great Lakes Strategy, the targets and goals of the Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, and any applicable Great Lakes agreements as part of *watershed planning* and coastal or waterfront planning initiatives.

4.2.2 Natural Heritage System

1. A *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* has been mapped by the Province to support a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term approach to planning for the protection of the region's natural heritage and biodiversity. The *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* excludes lands within *settlement area* boundaries that were approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017.
2. Municipalities will incorporate the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* as an overlay in official plans, and will apply appropriate policies to maintain, restore, or enhance the diversity and connectivity of the system and the long-term ecological or *hydrologic functions* of the features and areas as set out in the policies in this subsection and the policies in subsections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4.
3. Within the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*:
 - a. *new development* or *site alteration* will demonstrate that:
 - i. there are no *negative impacts* on *key natural heritage features* or *key hydrologic features* or their functions;
 - ii. connectivity along the system and between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* located within 240 metres of each other will be maintained or, where possible, enhanced for the movement of native plants and animals across the landscape;
 - iii. the removal of other natural features not identified as *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* is avoided, where possible. Such features should be incorporated into the planning and design of the proposed use wherever possible;
 - iv. except for uses described in and governed by the policies in subsection 4.2.8, the disturbed area, including any buildings and structures, will not exceed 25 per cent of the *total developable area*, and the impervious surface will not exceed 10 per cent of the *total developable area*;
 - v. with respect to golf courses, the disturbed area will not exceed 40 per cent of the *total developable area*; and
 - vi. at least 30 per cent of the *total developable area* will remain or be returned to *natural self-sustaining vegetation*, except where specified in accordance with the policies in subsection 4.2.8; and
 - b. the full range of existing and new *agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses, and normal farm practices* are permitted. However, new buildings or structures for *agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, or on-farm diversified uses* are not subject to policy 4.2.2.3 a), but are subject to the policies in subsections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4.

4. Provincial mapping of the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* does not apply until it has been implemented in the applicable upper- or single-tier official plan. Until that time, the policies in this Plan that refer to the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* will apply outside *settlement areas* to the *natural heritage systems* identified in official plans that were approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017.
5. Upper- and single-tier municipalities may refine provincial mapping of the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* at the time of initial implementation in their official plans. For upper-tier municipalities, the initial implementation of provincial mapping may be done separately for each lower-tier municipality. After the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* has been implemented in official plans, further refinements may only occur through a *municipal comprehensive review*.
6. Beyond the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, including within *settlement areas*, the municipality:
 - a. will continue to protect any other *natural heritage features and areas* in a manner that is consistent with the PPS; and
 - b. may continue to protect any other *natural heritage system* or identify new systems in a manner that is consistent with the PPS.
7. If a *settlement area* is expanded to include the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* in accordance with the policies in subsection 2.2.8, the portion that is within the revised *settlement area* boundary will:
 - a. be designated in official plans;
 - b. no longer be subject to policy 4.2.2.3; and
 - c. continue to be protected in a manner that ensures that the connectivity between, and diversity and functions of, the *natural heritage features and areas* will be maintained, restored, or enhanced.

4.2.3 Key Hydrologic Features, Key Hydrologic Areas and Key Natural Heritage Features

1. Outside of *settlement areas*, *development* or *site alteration* is not permitted in *key natural heritage features* that are part of the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* or in *key hydrologic features*, except for:
 - a. forest, fish, and wildlife management;
 - b. conservation and flood or erosion control projects, but only if they have been demonstrated to be necessary in the public interest and after all alternatives have been considered;
 - c. activities that create or maintain *infrastructure* authorized under an environmental assessment process;
 - d. *mineral aggregate operations* and wayside pits and quarries;
 - e. expansions to existing buildings and structures, accessory structures and uses, and conversions of legally existing uses which bring the use more into conformity with this Plan, subject to demonstration that the use does not expand into the *key hydrologic feature* or *key natural heritage feature* or *vegetative protection zone* unless there is no other alternative, in which case any expansion will be limited in scope and kept within close geographical proximity to the existing structure;
 - f. expansions or alterations to existing buildings and structures for *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses*, or *on-farm diversified uses* and expansions to existing residential dwellings if it is demonstrated that:
 - i. there is no alternative, and the expansion or alteration in the feature is minimized and, in the *vegetation protection zone*, is directed away from the feature to the maximum extent possible; and
 - ii. the impact of the expansion or alteration on the feature and its functions is minimized and mitigated to the maximum extent possible; and
 - g. small-scale structures for recreational uses, including boardwalks, footbridges, fences, docks, and picnic facilities, if measures are taken to minimize the number of such structures and their *negative impacts*.
2. Outside of *settlement areas*, proposals for large-scale *development* proceeding by way of plan of subdivision, vacant land plan of condominium or site plan may be permitted within a *key hydrologic area* where it is demonstrated that the *hydrologic functions*, including the *quality and quantity of water*, of these areas will be protected and, where possible, enhanced or restored through:
 - a. the identification of planning, design, and construction practices and techniques;

- b. meeting other criteria and direction set out in the applicable *watershed planning* or *subwatershed plans*; and
- c. meeting any applicable provincial standards, guidelines, and procedures.

4.2.4 Lands Adjacent to Key Hydrologic Features and Key Natural Heritage Features

1. Outside *settlement areas*, a proposal for new *development* or *site alteration* within 120 metres of a *key natural heritage feature* within the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* or a *key hydrologic feature* will require a natural heritage evaluation or hydrologic evaluation that identifies a *vegetation protection zone*, which:
 - a. is of sufficient width to protect the *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature* and its functions from the impacts of the proposed change;
 - b. is established to achieve and be maintained as *natural self-sustaining vegetation*; and
 - c. for *key hydrologic features*, *fish habitat*, and *significant woodlands*, is no less than 30 metres measured from the outside boundary of the *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*.
2. Evaluations undertaken in accordance with policy 4.2.4.1 will identify any additional restrictions to be applied before, during, and after *development* to protect the *hydrologic functions* and *ecological functions* of the feature.
3. *Development* or *site alteration* is not permitted in the *vegetation protection zone*, with the exception of that described in policy 4.2.3.1 or shoreline *development* as permitted in accordance with policy 4.2.4.5.
4. Notwithstanding policies 4.2.4.1, 4.2.4.2 and 4.2.4.3:
 - a. a natural heritage or hydrologic evaluation will not be required for a proposal for *development* or *site alteration* on a site where the only *key natural heritage feature* is the *habitat of endangered species and threatened species*;
 - b. new buildings and structures for *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses*, or *on-farm diversified uses* will not be required to undertake a natural heritage or hydrologic evaluation if a minimum 30 metre *vegetation protection zone* is provided from a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*; and
 - c. uses permitted in accordance with policy 4.2.4.4 b):
 - i. are exempt from the requirement of establishing a condition of *natural self-sustaining vegetation* if the land is, and will continue to be, used for agricultural purposes; and
 - ii. will pursue best management practices to protect and restore *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features*, and their functions.
5. Outside of *settlement areas*, in developed shoreline areas of inland lakes that are designated or zoned for concentrations of *development* as of July 1, 2017, infill *development*, *redevelopment* and resort *development* is permitted, subject to municipal and agency planning and regulatory requirements, if the *development* will:
 - a. be integrated with existing or proposed parks and trails, and will not constrain ongoing or planned stewardship and remediation efforts;
 - b. restore, to the maximum extent possible, the ecological features and functions in developed shoreline areas; and
 - c. in the case of *redevelopment* and resort *development*:
 - i. establish, or increase the extent and width of, a *vegetation protection zone* along the shoreline to a minimum of 30 metres;
 - ii. increase the extent of *fish habitat* in the littoral zone;
 - iii. be planned, designed, and constructed to protect *hydrologic functions*, minimize erosion, and avoid or mitigate sedimentation and the introduction of nutrient or other pollutants into the lake;
 - iv. exclude shoreline structures that will impede the natural flow of water or exacerbate algae concerns along the shoreline;
 - v. enhance the ability of native plants and animals to use the shoreline as both *wildlife habitat* and a movement corridor;
 - vi. use lot-level stormwater controls to reduce stormwater runoff volumes and pollutant loadings;

- vii. use natural shoreline treatments, where practical, for shoreline stabilization, erosion control, or protection;
- viii. meet other criteria and direction set out in applicable *watershed planning* and *subwatershed plans*;
- ix. be serviced by *sewage works* which reduce nutrient inputs to groundwater and the lake from baseline levels; and
- x. demonstrate available capacity in the receiving water body based on inputs from existing and approved development.

4.2.5 Public Open Space

1. Municipalities, conservation authorities, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties are encouraged to develop a system of publicly-accessible parkland, open space, and trails, including in shoreline areas, within the *GGH* that:
 - a. clearly demarcates where public access is and is not permitted;
 - b. is based on a co-ordinated approach to trail planning and development; and
 - c. is based on good land stewardship practices for public and private lands.
2. Municipalities are encouraged to establish an open space system within *settlement areas*, which may include opportunities for urban agriculture, rooftop gardens, communal courtyards, and public parks.

4.2.6 Agricultural System

1. An *Agricultural System* for the *GGH* has been identified by the Province.
2. *Prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, will be designated in accordance with mapping identified by the Province and these areas will be protected for long-term use for agriculture.
3. Where *agricultural uses* and non-agricultural uses interface outside of *settlement areas*, land use compatibility will be achieved by avoiding or where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts on the *Agricultural System*. Where mitigation is required, measures should be incorporated as part of the non-agricultural uses, as appropriate, within the area being developed. Where appropriate, this should be based on an *agricultural impact assessment*.
4. The geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the *agri-food network* will be maintained and enhanced.
5. The retention of existing lots of record for *agricultural uses* is encouraged, and the use of these lots for non-agricultural uses is discouraged.
6. Integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning, will consider opportunities to support and enhance the *Agricultural System*.
7. Municipalities are encouraged to implement regional agri-food strategies and other approaches to sustain and enhance the *Agricultural System* and the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector, including the maintenance and improvement of the *agri-food network* by:
 - a. providing opportunities to support access to healthy, local, and affordable food, urban and near-urban agriculture, food system planning and promoting the sustainability of agricultural, agri-food, and agri-product businesses while protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts;
 - b. protecting, enhancing, or supporting opportunities for *infrastructure*, services, and assets. Where negative impacts on the *agri-food network* are unavoidable, they will be assessed, minimized, and mitigated to the extent feasible; and
 - c. establishing or consulting with agricultural advisory committees or liaison officers.
8. Outside of the *Greenbelt Area*, provincial mapping of the agricultural land base does not apply until it has been implemented in the applicable upper- or single-tier official plan. Until that time, *prime agricultural areas* identified in upper- and single-tier official plans that were approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017 will be considered the agricultural land base for the purposes of this Plan.

9. Upper- and single-tier municipalities may refine provincial mapping of the agricultural land base at the time of initial implementation in their official plans, based on implementation procedures issued by the Province. For upper-tier municipalities, the initial implementation of provincial mapping may be done separately for each lower-tier municipality. After provincial mapping of the agricultural land base has been implemented in official plans, further refinements may only occur through a *municipal comprehensive review*.

4.2.7 Cultural Heritage Resources

1. *Cultural heritage resources* will be *conserved* in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in *strategic growth areas*.
2. Municipalities will work with stakeholders, as well as First Nations and Métis communities, in developing and implementing official plan policies and strategies for the identification, wise use and management of *cultural heritage resources*.
3. Municipalities are encouraged to prepare archaeological management plans and municipal cultural plans and consider them in their decision-making.

4.2.8 Mineral Aggregate Resources

1. Municipalities will develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies to conserve *mineral aggregate resources*, including:
 - a. the recovery and recycling of manufactured materials derived from *mineral aggregate resources* for reuse in construction, manufacturing, industrial, or maintenance projects as a substitute for new *mineral aggregate resources*; and
 - b. the wise use of *mineral aggregate resources*, including utilization or extraction of on-site *mineral aggregate resources* prior to development occurring.
2. Notwithstanding the policies in subsections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4, within the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, *mineral aggregate operations* and wayside pits and quarries are subject to the following:
 - a. no new *mineral aggregate operation* and no new wayside pits and quarries, or any ancillary or accessory use thereto, will be permitted in the following *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*:
 - i. *significant wetlands*;
 - ii. *habitat of endangered species and threatened species*; and
 - iii. *significant woodlands* unless the woodland is occupied by young plantation or early successional habitat, as defined by the Province, in which case, the application must demonstrate that policies 4.2.8.4 b) and c) and 4.2.8.5 c) have been addressed and that they will be met by the operation;
 - b. any application for a new *mineral aggregate operation* will be required to demonstrate:
 - i. how the connectivity between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* will be maintained before, during, and after the extraction of *mineral aggregate resources*;
 - ii. how the operator could replace *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* that would be lost from the site with equivalent features on another part of the site or on adjacent lands;
 - iii. how the *water resource system* will be protected or enhanced; and
 - iv. how any *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* not identified in policy 4.2.8.2 a) will be addressed in accordance with policies 4.2.8.4 b) and c) and 4.2.8.5 c); and
 - c. an application requiring a new approval under the Aggregate Resources Act to expand an existing *mineral aggregate operation* may be permitted in the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, including in *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and any

- associated *vegetation protection zones*, only if the related decision is consistent with the PPS and satisfies the rehabilitation requirements of the policies in this subsection.
3. In *prime agricultural areas*, applications for new *mineral aggregate operations* will be supported by an *agricultural impact assessment* and, where possible, will seek to maintain or improve connectivity of the *Agricultural System*.
 4. For rehabilitation of new *mineral aggregate operation* sites, the following apply:
 - a. the disturbed area of a site will be rehabilitated to a state of equal or greater *ecological value* and, for the entire site, long-term *ecological integrity* will be maintained or enhanced;
 - b. if there are *key natural heritage features* or *key hydrologic features* on the site, or if such features existed on the site at the time of the application:
 - i. the health, diversity, and size of these *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* will be maintained or enhanced; and
 - ii. any permitted extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* that occurs in a feature will be completed, and the area will be rehabilitated, as early as possible in the life of the operation;
 - c. aquatic areas remaining after extraction are to be rehabilitated to aquatic enhancement, which will be representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict, and the combined terrestrial and aquatic rehabilitation will meet the intent of policy 4.2.8.4 b); and
 - d. outside the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, and except as provided in policies 4.2.8.4 a), b) and c), final rehabilitation will appropriately reflect the long-term land use of the general area, taking into account applicable policies of this Plan and, to the extent permitted under this Plan, existing municipal and provincial policies. In *prime agricultural areas*, the site will be rehabilitated in accordance with policy 2.5.4 of the PPS, 2014.
 5. Final rehabilitation for new *mineral aggregate operations* in the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* will meet these additional criteria:
 - a. where there is no extraction below the water table, an amount of land equal to that under natural vegetated cover prior to extraction, and no less than 35 per cent of the land subject to each license in the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, is to be rehabilitated to forest cover, which will be representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict. If the site is also in a *prime agricultural area*, the remainder of the land subject to the license is to be rehabilitated back to an *agricultural condition*;
 - b. where there is extraction below the water table, no less than 35 per cent of the non-aquatic portion of the land subject to each license in the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* is to be rehabilitated to forest cover, which will be representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict. If the site is also in a *prime agricultural area*, the remainder of the land subject to the license is to be rehabilitated in accordance with policy 2.5.4 of the PPS, 2014; and
 - c. rehabilitation will be implemented so that the connectivity of the *key natural heritage features* and the *key hydrologic features* on the site and on adjacent lands will be maintained or enhanced.
 6. Except as provided by the policies of this subsection, decisions on planning matters must be consistent with the policies in the PPS that pertain to the management of *mineral aggregate resources*.
 7. Where an application under the Aggregate Resources Act has been received and deemed complete by the Province as of July 1, 2017, any applications under the Planning Act to permit the making, establishment or operation of the pit or quarry to which the Aggregate Resources Act application relates, if approved, will not be subject to the policies of this Plan.

4.2.9 A Culture of Conservation

1. Municipalities will develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies in support of the following conservation objectives:
 - a. water conservation, including through:
 - i. water demand management for the efficient use of water; and

- ii. water recycling to maximize the reuse and recycling of water;
- b. energy conservation for existing buildings and planned developments, including municipally owned facilities, including through:
 - i. identification of opportunities for conservation, energy efficiency and demand management, as well as district energy generation, *renewable energy systems* and *alternative energy systems* and distribution through community, municipal, and regional energy planning processes, and in the development of conservation and demand management plans;
 - ii. land use patterns and urban design standards that support energy efficiency and demand reductions, and opportunities for *alternative energy systems*, including district energy systems; and
 - iii. other conservation, energy efficiency and demand management techniques to use energy wisely as well as reduce consumption;
- c. air quality improvement and protection, including through reduction in emissions from municipal, commercial, industrial, and residential sources; and
- d. integrated waste management, including through:
 - i. enhanced waste reduction, composting, and recycling initiatives, and the identification of new opportunities for energy from waste, source reduction, reuse, and diversion, where appropriate;
 - ii. a comprehensive plan with integrated approaches to waste management, including reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, diversion, and disposal of residual waste;
 - iii. promotion of building conservation and adaptive reuse, as well as the reuse and recycling of construction materials; and
 - iv. consideration of waste management initiatives within the context of long-term regional planning, and in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities.
- 2. Municipalities should develop excess soil reuse strategies as part of planning for growth and development.
- 3. Municipal planning policies and relevant development proposals will incorporate best practices for the management of excess soil generated and fill received during *development* or *site alteration*, including *infrastructure* development, to ensure that:
 - a. any excess soil is reused on-site or locally to the maximum extent possible and, where feasible, excess soil reuse planning is undertaken concurrently with development planning and design;
 - b. appropriate sites for excess soil storage and processing are permitted close to areas where proposed development is concentrated or areas of potential soil reuse; and
 - c. fill quality received and fill placement at a site will not cause an adverse effect with regard to the current or proposed use of the property or the natural environment and is compatible with adjacent land uses.

4.2.10 Climate Change

- 1. Upper- and single-tier municipalities will develop policies in their official plans to identify actions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change adaptation goals, aligned with other provincial plans and policies for environmental protection, that will include:
 - a. supporting the achievement of *complete communities* as well as the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
 - b. reducing dependence on the automobile and supporting existing and planned transit and *active transportation*;
 - c. assessing *infrastructure* risks and vulnerabilities and identifying actions and investments to address these challenges;
 - d. undertaking stormwater management planning in a manner that assesses the impacts of extreme weather events and incorporates appropriate *green infrastructure* and *low impact development*;

- e. recognizing the importance of *watershed planning* for the protection of the *quality and quantity of water* and the identification and protection of hydrologic features and areas;
 - f. protecting the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* and *water resource systems*;
 - g. promoting local food, food security, and soil health, and protecting the agricultural land base;
 - h. providing direction that supports a culture of conservation in accordance with the policies in subsection 4.2.9; and
 - i. any additional policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience, as appropriate, provided they do not conflict with this Plan.
2. In planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of climate change, municipalities are encouraged to:
 - a. develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve resilience through the identification of vulnerabilities to climate change, land use planning, planning for *infrastructure*, including transit and energy, *green infrastructure*, and *low impact development*, and the conservation objectives in policy 4.2.9.1;
 - b. develop greenhouse gas inventories for transportation, buildings, waste management and municipal operations; and
 - c. establish municipal interim and long-term greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that support provincial targets and reflect consideration of the goal of low-carbon communities and monitor and report on progress made towards the achievement of these targets.

5 Implementation and interpretation

5.1 Context

Key to the success of this Plan is its effective implementation. Successful implementation will require that all levels of government, First Nations and Métis communities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and residents work together in a co-ordinated and collaborative way to implement the policies of this Plan to realize its goals.

The timely implementation of this Plan relies on the strong leadership of upper- and single-tier municipalities to provide more specific planning direction for their respective jurisdictions through a *municipal comprehensive review*. While it may take some time before all official plans have been amended to conform with this Plan, the Planning Act requires that all decisions in respect of planning matters will conform with this Plan as of its effective date (subject to any legislative or regulatory provisions providing otherwise).

Except for some minor matters, most planning decisions can affect the achievement of the policies of this Plan. It is therefore in the best interest of all municipalities to complete their work to conform with this Plan, including all official plans and zoning by-laws, as expeditiously as possible within required timeframes. This should include using relevant legislative and regulatory tools and other strategies to plan for a variety of heights, densities and other elements of site design within *settlement areas* to achieve the desired urban form and the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan.

Where a municipality must decide on a planning matter before its official plan has been amended to conform with this Plan, or before other applicable planning instruments have been updated accordingly, it must still consider the impact of the decision as it relates to the policies of this Plan which require comprehensive municipal implementation.

The success of this Plan is also dependent on a range of mechanisms being in place to implement this Plan's policies. Although primarily implemented through Ontario's land use planning system, including official plans, this Plan is not solely a land use plan. Certain policies of this Plan contemplate implementation by both the Province and by municipalities through other related tools, regulations, policies, and guidelines. In addition to the legislative framework provided by the Places to Grow Act, 2005, this includes a wide range of

complementary planning and fiscal tools, including instruments found in the Planning Act and the Municipal Act, 2001.

To continue to make steady progress towards the desired outcomes, the Province will provide information to build understanding of growth management and facilitate informed involvement in the implementation of this Plan. The Province will also ensure ongoing engagement with the public, stakeholders, municipalities, and First Nations and Métis communities on the implementation of this Plan.

Measuring the success of this Plan will require rigorous and consistent evaluation of its progress. The Province will work with its public sector partners, including municipalities and agencies, other stakeholders, and First Nations and Métis communities to compile and share the base of information that is needed to support the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of this Plan.

5.2 Policies for Implementation and Interpretation

5.2.1 General Interpretation

1. The policies and schedules of this Plan should be read in a manner that recognizes this Plan as an integrated policy framework.
2. A *municipal comprehensive review* that is undertaken in accordance with this Plan will be deemed to fulfill the requirements in the PPS to undertake a comprehensive review.
3. References to the responsibilities of the Minister set out in this Plan should be read as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, his or her assignee, his or her delegate pursuant to the Places to Grow Act, 2005, or any other member of Executive Council given responsibility for the Places to Grow Act, 2005.
4. References to the responsibilities of the Province set out in this Plan should be read as one or more members of Executive Council.

5.2.2 Supplementary Direction

1. To implement this Plan, the Minister will, in collaboration with other Ministers of the Crown where appropriate, identify, establish, or update the following:
 - a. the *delineated built boundary*;
 - b. the size and location of the *urban growth centres*;
 - c. a standard methodology for land needs assessment; and
 - d. *provincially significant employment zones*.
2. To implement this Plan, the Province will identify, establish, or update the following:
 - a. *the Agricultural System* for the *GGH*; and
 - b. *the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*.
3. The Province may review and update *provincially significant employment zones*, the agricultural land base mapping or the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* in response to a municipal request.

5.2.3 Co-ordination

1. A co-ordinated approach will be taken to implement this Plan, in particular for issues that cross municipal boundaries, both between Provincial ministries and agencies, and by the Province in its dealings with municipalities, local boards, and other related planning agencies.
2. Upper-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, will, through a *municipal comprehensive review*, provide policy direction to implement this Plan, including:
 - a. identifying minimum intensification targets for lower-tier municipalities based on the capacity of *delineated built-up areas*, including the applicable minimum density targets for *strategic growth areas* in this Plan, to achieve the minimum intensification target in this Plan;

- b. identifying minimum density targets for *strategic growth areas*, including any *urban growth centres* or *major transit station areas*, in accordance with this Plan;
 - c. identifying minimum density targets for *employment areas*;
 - d. identifying minimum density targets for the *designated greenfield areas* of the lower-tier municipalities, to achieve the minimum density target for the upper- or single-tier municipality;
 - e. allocating forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan to the lower-tier municipalities in a manner that would support the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan; and
 - f. addressing matters that cross municipal boundaries.
3. Municipalities are encouraged to engage the public, First Nations and Métis communities, and stakeholders in local efforts to implement this Plan, and to provide the necessary information to ensure the informed involvement of local citizens.
 4. In cases where lower-tier official plans are not updated to implement this Plan in a timely or appropriate manner, upper-tier municipalities are encouraged to act in accordance with subsection 27(2) of the Planning Act.
 5. Single-tier municipalities in the *outer ring* and adjacent municipalities should ensure a co-ordinated approach to implement the policies of this Plan.
 6. Planning authorities are encouraged to co-ordinate planning matters with First Nations and Métis communities throughout the planning process. Municipalities are encouraged to build constructive, cooperative relationships with First Nations and Métis communities and to facilitate knowledge sharing in growth management and land use planning processes.

5.2.4 Growth Forecasts

1. All references to forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan are references to the population and employment forecasts in Schedule 3.
2. All upper- and single-tier municipalities will, through a *municipal comprehensive review*, apply the forecasts in Schedule 3 for planning and managing growth to the horizon of this Plan.
3. The population and employment forecasts and plan horizon contained in the applicable upper- or single-tier official plan that is approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017 will apply to all planning matters in that municipality, including lower-tier planning matters where applicable, until the upper- or single-tier municipality has applied the forecasts in Schedule 3 in accordance with policy 5.2.4.2 and those forecasts are approved and in effect in the upper- or single-tier official plan.
4. Notwithstanding the policies of this Plan regarding planning and managing forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan, including the time horizon for making sufficient land available to meet projected needs, lower-tier municipalities cannot designate land beyond the horizon established in the applicable upper-tier official plan that is approved and in effect.
5. Within *delineated built-up areas*, municipalities may plan for *development* beyond the horizon of this Plan for *strategic growth areas* that are delineated in official plans and subject to minimum density targets, provided that:
 - a. integrated planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* would ensure that the *development* does not exceed existing or planned capacity;
 - b. the type and scale of built form for the *development* would be contextually appropriate; and
 - c. the *development* would support the achievement of *complete communities*, including a diverse mix of land uses and sufficient open space.
6. Outside of a *municipal comprehensive review*, the forecasts in Schedule 3 and Schedule 7 cannot be applied on a site-specific scale as the basis for approving or refusing proposals for *development* that would otherwise conform with all the policies of this Plan.
7. The Minister will review the forecasts contained in Schedule 3 at least every five years in consultation with municipalities, and may revise the schedule, where appropriate.

5.2.5 Targets

1. The minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, including any alternative targets that have been permitted by the Minister, are minimum standards and municipalities are encouraged to go beyond these minimum targets, where appropriate, except where doing so would conflict with any policy of this Plan, the PPS or any other provincial plan.
2. The minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan or established pursuant to this Plan will be identified in upper- and single-tier official plans. Any changes to the targets established pursuant to this Plan may only be implemented through a *municipal comprehensive review*.
3. For the purposes of implementing the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, upper- and single-tier municipalities will, through a *municipal comprehensive review*, delineate the following in their official plans, where applicable:
 - a. *delineated built-up areas*;
 - b. *urban growth centres*;
 - c. *major transit station areas*;
 - d. other *strategic growth areas* for which a minimum density target will be established; and
 - e. *excess lands*.
4. Except as provided in policy 2.2.7.3, the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan will be measured across all lands within the relevant area, including any lands that are subject to more than one target.
5. For each applicable delineated area, the minimum density targets in this Plan are to be implemented through:
 - a. upper-tier official plan policies that identify the minimum density targets and require lower-tier municipalities to undertake planning, such as secondary plans, to establish permitted uses and identify densities, heights, and other elements of site design;
 - b. single-tier official plan policies that identify the minimum density targets and, through secondary planning or other initiatives, establish permitted uses within the delineated area and identify densities, heights, and other elements of site design;
 - c. zoning all lands in a manner that would implement the official plan policies; and
 - d. the use of any applicable legislative and regulatory tools that may establish area or site-specific minimum densities, heights, and other elements of site design.
6. In planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, municipalities will develop and implement urban design and site design official plan policies and other supporting documents that direct the development of a high quality *public realm* and *compact built form*.
7. The minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan do not require or permit:
 - a. in a Special Policy Area that has been approved by the Province in accordance with policy 3.1.4 of the PPS, 2014, *development* that is beyond what has been permitted; or
 - b. in other *hazardous lands*, *development* that is not permitted by the PPS.
8. The identification of *strategic growth areas*, *delineated built-up areas*, and *designated greenfield areas* are not land use designations and their delineation does not confer any new land use designations, nor alter existing land use designations. Any development on lands within the boundary of these identified areas is still subject to the relevant provincial and municipal land use planning policies and approval processes.
9. Any alternative target permitted by the Minister will be revisited through each *municipal comprehensive review*. If a municipality does not request a new alternative target, or the Minister does not permit the requested alternative target, the applicable minimum intensification or density target in this Plan will apply.

5.2.6 Performance Indicators and Monitoring

1. The Minister will develop a set of performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of the policies of this Plan. The Minister will monitor the implementation of this Plan, including reviewing performance indicators concurrent with any review of this Plan.
2. Municipalities will monitor and report on the implementation of this Plan's policies within their municipality, in accordance with any reporting requirements, data standards, and any other guidelines that may be issued by the Minister.

3. The Minister may require municipalities and conservation authorities to provide data and information to the Minister, as collected in accordance with policy 5.2.6.2, to demonstrate progress made towards the implementation of this Plan.

5.2.7 Schedules and Appendices

1. The Minister will review the schedules of this Plan at least every five years in consultation with municipalities, and may revise these schedules, where appropriate.
2. Unless otherwise stated, the boundaries and lines displayed on the schedules are not to scale and provide general direction only.
3. The *delineated built boundary* has been issued for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target in this Plan. The conceptual *delineated built-up area* shown on Schedules 2, 4, 5, and 6 is for information purposes. For the actual delineation, the *delineated built boundary* that has been issued by the Minister should be consulted.
4. The *designated greenfield areas* shown on Schedules 2, 4, 5, and 6 are conceptual. Actual *designated greenfield areas* will be delineated in applicable official plans.
5. The *settlement area* boundaries shown on Schedules 2, 4, 5, and 6 are conceptual. Actual *settlement area* boundaries will be delineated in applicable official plans.
6. The appendices in this Plan are provided for information purposes only.

5.2.8 Other Implementation

1. Where the policies of this Plan require the completion of specific types of master plans, assessments, studies, or other plans, including the equivalent, before a decision can be made, including in respect of matters in process, the policy direction in this Plan may be implemented based on, collectively, existing, enhanced, or new assessments, studies, and plans, provided that these achieve or exceed the same objectives.
2. In implementing the policies of this Plan, municipalities are encouraged to use available tools to reduce or eliminate any *excess lands*.
3. Draft plans of subdivision will include a lapsing date under subsection 51(32) of the Planning Act. When determining whether draft approval should be extended for lapsing draft plans of subdivision, the policies of this Plan must be considered in the development review process.
4. If a plan of subdivision or part thereof has been registered for eight years or more and does not meet the growth management objectives of this Plan, municipalities are encouraged to use their authority under subsection 50(4) of the Planning Act to deem it not to be a registered plan of subdivision and, where appropriate, amend site-specific designations and zoning accordingly.

6 Simcoe sub-area

6.1 Context

While this Plan is to be read in its entirety and all policies are applicable to all municipalities within the *GGH*, this section provides additional, more specific direction on how this Plan's vision will be achieved in the *Simcoe Sub-area*. The *Simcoe Sub-area* is comprised of the County of Simcoe and the cities of Barrie and Orillia.

The policies in Section 6 direct a significant portion of growth within the *Simcoe Sub-area* to communities where development can be most effectively serviced, and where growth improves the range of opportunities for people to live, work, and play in their communities, with a particular emphasis on *primary settlement areas*. The City of Barrie is the principal *primary settlement area*. Downtown Barrie is the only *urban growth centre* in the *Simcoe Sub-area*. The policies in Section 6 recognize and support the vitality of urban and rural communities in the *Simcoe Sub-area*. All municipalities will play an important role in ensuring that future growth is planned for and managed in an effective and sustainable manner that conforms with this Plan. The intent is that by 2031

development for all the municipalities within Simcoe County will not exceed the overall population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 7.

Ensuring an appropriate supply of land for employment and residential growth, and making the best use of existing *infrastructure* is also important to the prosperity of the *Simcoe Sub-area*. Section 6 identifies specific employment areas that will enable municipalities in the *Simcoe Sub-area* to benefit from existing and future economic opportunities. By providing further direction on where growth to 2031 is to occur in the *Simcoe Sub-area*, it also establishes a foundation for municipalities to align *infrastructure* investments with growth management, optimize the use of existing and planned *infrastructure*, co-ordinate water and wastewater services, and promote *green infrastructure* and innovative technologies.

A more livable, compact, complete urban structure with good design and built form will support the achievement of economic and environmental benefits. Through effective growth management, municipalities will ensure that the natural environment is protected from the impacts of growth in the *Simcoe Sub-area*, while providing amenities for the residents and visitors to this area from across the *GGH* and beyond.

6.2 Growth Forecasts

1. In accordance with policy 5.2.4.3, lower-tier municipalities in the County will use the population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 7 for planning and managing growth in the *Simcoe Sub-area* to 2031.
2. Beyond 2031, through the next *municipal comprehensive review*, Simcoe County will allocate the growth forecasts in Schedule 3 to lower-tier municipalities in accordance with policy 5.2.3.2 e) in a manner that implements the policies of this Plan, such that a significant portion of population and employment growth is directed to lower-tier municipalities that contain *primary settlement areas*.
3. The employment forecasts in this Plan include employment located in the *strategic settlement employment areas* and *economic employment districts*.

6.3 Managing Growth

1. *Primary settlement areas* for the *Simcoe Sub-area* are identified in Schedule 8.
2. *Municipalities with primary settlement areas* will, in their official plans and other supporting documents:
 - a. identify *primary settlement areas*;
 - b. identify and plan for *strategic growth areas* within *primary settlement areas*;
 - c. plan to support the achievement of *complete communities* within *primary settlement areas*; and
 - d. ensure the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within *primary settlement areas* through site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are *transit-supportive*.
3. *Primary settlement areas* in the County will be identified in the official plan of the County of Simcoe.
4. The Town of Innisfil, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and the Town of New Tecumseth will direct a significant portion of population and employment growth forecasted to the applicable *primary settlement areas*. The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and the Town of Innisfil, in planning to meet their employment forecasts, may direct appropriate employment to the *Bradford West Gwillimbury strategic settlement employment area* and the *Innisfil Heights strategic settlement employment area* respectively.
5. Any lands that are designated for *agricultural uses* or rural uses in a lower-tier official plan as of January 20, 2017 can only be re-designated for the purposes of development within a *settlement area* subject to the policies in subsection 2.2.8.

6.4 Employment Lands

1. The *Bradford West Gwillimbury strategic settlement employment area*, the *Innisfil Heights strategic settlement employment area*, the *Lake Simcoe Regional Airport economic employment district* and the *Rama Road economic employment district* are identified in Schedule 8.
2. The Minister, in consultation with affected municipalities and stakeholders, has determined the location and boundaries of *strategic settlement employment areas*, and has established as appropriate the following:
 - a. permitted uses, and the mix and percentage of certain uses;
 - b. permitted uses for specific areas within the *strategic settlement employment areas*;
 - c. lot sizes; and
 - d. any additional policies and definitions that apply to these areas.
3. The Minister, in consultation with affected municipalities and stakeholders, has determined the location and boundaries, and established as appropriate the uses permitted in the *economic employment districts*.
4. The Minister may review and amend decisions made pursuant to policies 6.4.2 and 6.4.3. Municipalities in the *Simcoe Sub-area* may request the Minister to consider a review.
5. The County of Simcoe and lower-tier municipalities in the County in which the *strategic settlement employment areas* and *economic employment districts* are located, will delineate the areas and districts, as determined by the Minister, in their official plans.
6. The lower-tier municipalities in the County in which the *strategic settlement employment areas* and *economic employment districts* are located will develop official plan policies to implement the matters determined by the Minister in accordance with policies 6.4.2, 6.4.3, and 6.4.4, as applicable.
7. Although not *settlement areas*, the *strategic settlement employment areas* and *economic employment districts* are subject to policy 2.2.5.5.
8. For lands within *strategic settlement employment areas* and the *economic employment districts* the municipality can identify the *natural heritage systems*, features, and areas for protection.

6.5 Implementation

1. The policies in Section 6 apply only to the *Simcoe Sub-area*.
2. For the *Simcoe Sub-area*, where there is a conflict between policies in Section 6, Schedule 7, and Schedule 8 and the rest of this Plan, the policies in Section 6, Schedule 7, and Schedule 8 prevail.
3. The Minister has identified minimum intensification and density targets for lower-tier municipalities in the County of Simcoe to 2031. These minimum targets are considered to be alternative targets for the purposes of this Plan and will continue to apply subject to policy 5.2.5.9.

Definitions

As defined in this glossary, many of the defined terms in this Plan have the same meaning or are based on the meaning of another provincial document, particularly the PPS, 2014. For convenience, a parenthetical note following definitions indicates where this is the case.

Active Transportation

Human-powered travel, including but not limited to, walking, cycling, inline skating and travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs and other power-assisted devices moving at a comparable speed. (PPS, 2014)

Affordable

- a. in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:
 - i. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
 - ii. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 per cent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area;

- b. in the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:
 - i. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
 - ii. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

For the purposes of this definition:

Low and moderate income households means, in the case of ownership housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 per cent of the income distribution for the regional market area; or in the case of rental housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 per cent of the income distribution for renter households for the regional market area.

Regional market area means an area, generally broader than a lower-tier municipality that has a high degree of social and economic interaction. In the *GGH*, the upper- or single-tier municipality will normally serve as the regional market area. Where a regional market area extends significantly beyond upper- or single-tier boundaries, it may include a combination of upper-, single- and/or lower-tier municipalities. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Agricultural Condition

- a. in regard to *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored, the same range and productivity of specialty crops common in the area can be achieved, and, where applicable, the microclimate on which the site and surrounding area may be dependent for specialty crop production shall be maintained or restored; and
- b. in regard to *prime agricultural land* outside of *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored.

(PPS, 2014)

Agri-food Network

Within the *Agricultural System*, a network that includes elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector such as regional *infrastructure* and transportation networks; on-farm buildings and infrastructure; agricultural services, farm markets, distributors, and primary processing; and vibrant, agriculture-supportive communities. (Greenbelt Plan)

Agricultural Impact Assessment

A study that evaluates the potential impacts of non-agricultural development on agricultural operations and the *Agricultural System* and recommends ways to avoid or, if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts. (Greenbelt Plan)

Agricultural System

The system mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with this Plan, comprised of a group of interconnected elements that collectively create a viable, thriving agricultural sector. It has two components: 1. An agricultural land base comprised of *prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, and *rural lands* that together create a continuous productive land base for agriculture; 2. An *agri-food network* which includes *infrastructure*, services, and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector. (Greenbelt Plan)

Agricultural Uses

The growing of crops, including nursery, biomass, and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including, but not limited to livestock facilities, manure storages, value-retaining facilities, and accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment. (PPS, 2014)

Agriculture-related Uses

Farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity. (PPS, 2014)

Alternative Energy System

A system that uses sources of energy or energy conversion processes to produce power, heat and/or cooling that significantly reduces the amount of harmful emissions to the environment (air, earth and water) when compared to conventional energy systems. (PPS, 2014)

Alvars

Naturally open areas of thin or no soil over essentially flat limestone, dolostone, or marble rock, supporting a sparse vegetation cover of mostly shrubs and herbs. (Greenbelt Plan)

Archaeological Resources

Includes artifacts, archaeological sites, marine archaeological sites, as defined under the Ontario Heritage Act. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act. (PPS, 2014)

Bradford West Gwillimbury Strategic Settlement Employment Area

Location set out in Schedule 8. The *Bradford West Gwillimbury strategic settlement employment area* boundary is determined by the Minister and planned for in accordance with the policies in subsection 6.4.

Brownfield Sites

Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant. (PPS, 2014)

Built Heritage Resource

A building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest as identified by a community, including an Aboriginal community. *Built heritage resources* are generally located on property that has been designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act, or included on local, provincial and/or federal registers. (PPS, 2014)

Compact Built Form

A land use pattern that encourages the efficient use of land, walkable neighbourhoods, mixed land uses (residential, retail, workplace, and institutional) all within one neighbourhood, proximity to transit and reduced need for *infrastructure*. *Compact built form* can include detached and semi-detached houses on small lots as well

as townhouses and walk-up apartments, multi-storey commercial developments, and apartments or offices above retail. Walkable neighbourhoods can be characterized by roads laid out in a well-connected network, destinations that are easily accessible by transit and *active transportation*, sidewalks with minimal interruptions for vehicle access, and a pedestrian-friendly environment along roads to encourage *active transportation*.

Complete Communities

Places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns, and *settlement areas* that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and services, a full range of housing, transportation options and *public service facilities*. *Complete communities* are age-friendly and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts.

Complete Streets

Streets planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists.

Conserved

The identification, protection, management and use of *built heritage resources*, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches can be included in these plans and assessments. (PPS, 2014)

Cultural Heritage Landscape

A defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Aboriginal community. The area may involve features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act; villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways, viewsheds, natural areas and industrial complexes of heritage significance; and areas recognized by federal or international designation authorities (e.g., a National Historic Site or District designation, or a UNESCO World Heritage Site). (PPS, 2014)

Cultural Heritage Resources

Built heritage resources, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people. While some *cultural heritage resources* may already be identified and inventoried by official sources, the significance of others can only be determined after evaluation. (Greenbelt Plan)

Delineated Built Boundary

The limits of the developed urban area as defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target in this Plan.

Delineated Built-up Area

All land within the *delineated built boundary*.

Designated Greenfield Area

Lands within *settlement areas* (not including *rural settlements*) but outside of *delineated built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. *Designated greenfield areas* do not include *excess lands*.

Development

The creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures requiring approval under the Planning Act, but does not include:

- a. activities that create or maintain *infrastructure* authorized under an environmental assessment process; or
- b. works subject to the Drainage Act.

(Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Drinking-water System

A system of works, excluding plumbing, that is established for the purpose of providing users of the system with drinking water and that includes:

- a. any thing used for the collection, production, treatment, storage, supply, or distribution of water;
- b. any thing related to the management of residue from the treatment process or the management of the discharge of a substance into the natural environment from the treatment system; and
- c. a well or intake that serves as the source or entry point of raw water supply for the system.

(Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002)

Ecological Function

The natural processes, products or services that living and non-living environments provide or perform within or between species, ecosystems and landscapes, including *hydrologic functions* and biological, physical, chemical and socio-economic interactions. (PPS, 2014)

Ecological Integrity

Which includes hydrological integrity, means the condition of ecosystems in which:

- a. the structure, composition and function of the ecosystems are unimpaired by the stresses from human activity;
- b. natural ecological processes are intact and self-sustaining; and
- c. the ecosystems evolve naturally.

(Greenbelt Plan)

Ecological Value

The value of vegetation in maintaining the health of the *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature* and the related ecological features and *ecological functions*, as measured by factors such as the diversity of species, the diversity of habitats, and the suitability and amount of habitats that are available for rare, threatened and endangered species. (Greenbelt Plan)

Economic Employment Districts

Areas that have been identified by the Minister that are to be planned and protected for locally significant employment uses. These areas are not *settlement areas*.

Employment Area

Areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. (PPS, 2014)

Energy Transmission Pipeline

A pipeline for transporting large quantities of oil or natural gas within a province or across provincial or international boundaries. *Energy transmission pipelines* do not include local distribution pipelines.

Excess Lands

Vacant, unbuilt but developable lands within *settlement areas* but outside of *delineated built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development but are in excess of what is needed to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan.

Fish Habitat

As defined in the Fisheries Act, means spawning grounds and any other areas, including nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes. (PPS, 2014)

Freight-supportive

In regard to land use patterns, means *transportation systems* and facilities that facilitate the movement of goods. This includes policies or programs intended to support efficient freight movement through the planning, design and operation of land use and *transportation systems*. Approaches may be recommended by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives. (PPS, 2014)

Frequent Transit

A public transit service that runs at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening every day of the week.

Gateway Economic Centre

Settlement areas identified in this Plan, as conceptually depicted on Schedules 2, 5, and 6 that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario.

Gateway Economic Zone

Settlement areas identified in this Plan within the zone that is conceptually depicted on Schedules 2, 5, and 6, that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario.

Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)

The geographic area identified as the Greater Golden Horseshoe growth plan area in Ontario Regulation 416/05 under the Places to Grow Act, 2005.

Green Infrastructure

Natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and *hydrologic functions* and processes. *Green infrastructure* can include components such as natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs. (PPS, 2014)

Greenbelt Area

The geographic area identified as the Greenbelt Area in Ontario Regulation 59/05 under the Greenbelt Act, 2005.

Greyfields

Previously developed properties that are not contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict, or vacant.

Ground Water Features

Water-related features in the earth's subsurface, including recharge/discharge areas, water tables, aquifers and unsaturated zones that can be defined by surface and subsurface hydrogeologic investigations. (PPS, 2014)

Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species

- a. With respect to a species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List as an endangered or threatened species for which a regulation made under clause 55(1)(a) of the Endangered Species Act, 2007 is in force, the area prescribed by that regulation as the habitat of the species; or
- b. With respect to any other species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List as an endangered or threatened species, an area on which the species depends, directly or indirectly, to carry on its life processes, including life processes such as reproduction, rearing, hibernation, migration or feeding, as approved by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; and

places in the areas described in clauses (a) and (b), whichever is applicable, that are used by members of the species as dens, nests, hibernacula or other residences. (PPS, 2014)

Hazardous Lands

Property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of the Great Lakes – St Lawrence River System, this means the land, including that covered by water, between the international boundary, where applicable, and the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard, erosion hazard or dynamic beach hazard limits. Along the shorelines of large, inland lakes, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth and the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard, erosion hazard or dynamic beach hazard limits. Along river, stream and small inland lake systems, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard or erosion hazard limits. (PPS, 2014)

Higher Order Transit

Transit that generally operates in partially or completely dedicated rights-of-way, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve levels of speed and reliability greater than mixed-traffic transit. *Higher order transit* can include heavy rail (such as subways and inter-city rail), light rail, and buses in dedicated rights-of-way.

Highly Vulnerable Aquifer

Aquifers, including lands above the aquifers, on which external sources have or are likely to have a significant adverse effect. (Greenbelt Plan)

Hydrologic Function

The functions of the hydrological cycle that include the occurrence, circulation, distribution and chemical and physical properties of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere, and water's interaction with the environment including its relation to living things. (PPS, 2014)

Infrastructure

Physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development. *Infrastructure* includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, stormwater management systems, waste management systems, electricity generation facilities, electricity transmission and distribution systems, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities. (PPS, 2014)

Inner Ring

The geographic area consisting of the cities of Hamilton and Toronto and the Regions of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York.

Innisfil Heights Strategic Settlement Employment Area

Location set out in Schedule 8. The *Innisfil Heights strategic settlement employment area* boundary is determined by the Minister and planned for in accordance with the policies in [subsection 6.4](#).

Intensification

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a. *redevelopment*, including the reuse of *brownfield sites*;
- b. the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c. infill development; and
- d. the expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

(PPS, 2014)

Intermittent Streams

Stream-related watercourses that contain water or are dry at times of the year that are more or less predictable, generally flowing during wet seasons of the year but not the entire year, and where the water table is above the stream bottom during parts of the year. (Greenbelt Plan)

Joint Development

Agreements entered into voluntarily between the public sector and property owners or third parties, whereby private entities share some of the costs of *infrastructure* improvements or contribute some benefits back to the public sector based on a mutual recognition of the benefits of such *infrastructure* improvements. Approaches to *joint development* may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province.

Key Hydrologic Areas

Significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and significant surface water contribution areas that are necessary for the ecological and hydrologic integrity of a *watershed*.

Key Hydrologic Features

Permanent streams, *intermittent streams*, inland lakes and their littoral zones, *seepage areas and springs*, and *wetlands*.

Key Natural Heritage Features

Habitat of endangered species and threatened species; fish habitat; wetlands; life science areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs), significant valleylands, significant woodlands; significant wildlife habitat (including habitat of special concern species); sand barrens, savannahs, and tallgrass prairies; and alvars.

Lake Simcoe Regional Airport Economic Employment District

Location set out in Schedule 8. The *Lake Simcoe Regional Airport economic employment district* boundary is determined by the Minister and planned for in accordance with the policies in subsection 6.4. *Major retail* and residential uses are not permitted.

Large Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems

Subsurface disposal systems with a design capacity in excess of 10,000 litres per day. These systems are to be designed in accordance with section 22 of “Design Guidelines for Sewage Works, 2008”.

Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs)

An area that has been identified as having life science values related to protection, scientific study, or education; and further identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by that Ministry, as amended from time to time. (Greenbelt Plan)

Low Impact Development

An approach to stormwater management that seeks to manage rain and other precipitation as close as possible to where it falls to mitigate the impacts of increased runoff and stormwater pollution. It typically includes a set of site design strategies and distributed, small-scale structural practices to mimic the natural hydrology to the greatest extent possible through infiltration, evapotranspiration, harvesting, filtration, and detention of stormwater. *Low impact development* can include, for example: bio-swales, vegetated areas at the edge of paved surfaces, permeable pavement, rain gardens, green roofs, and exfiltration systems. *Low impact development* often employs vegetation and soil in its design, however, that does not always have to be the case and the specific form may vary considering local conditions and community character.

Major Goods Movement Facilities and Corridors

The transportation facilities and corridors associated with the inter- and intra-provincial movement of goods. Examples include: inter-modal facilities, ports, airports, truck terminals, freight corridors, freight facilities, and haul routes and primary transportation corridors used for the movement of goods. Approaches that are *freight-supportive* may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives. (PPS, 2014)

Major Office

Freestanding office buildings of approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with approximately 200 jobs or more.

Major Retail

Large-scale or large-format stand-alone retail stores or retail centres that have the primary purpose of commercial activities.

Major Transit Station Area

The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station or stop within a *settlement area*; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. *Major transit station areas* generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

Major Trip Generators

Origins and destinations with high population densities or concentrated activities which generate many trips (e.g., *urban growth centres* and other downtowns, *major office* and *office parks*, *major retail*, *employment areas*, community hubs, large parks and recreational destinations, post-secondary institutions and other *public service facilities*, and other mixed-use areas).

Mineral Aggregate Operations

- a. lands under license or permit, other than for wayside pits and quarries, issued in accordance with the Aggregate Resources Act;
- b. for lands not designated under the Aggregate Resources Act, established pits and quarries that are not in contravention of municipal zoning by-laws and including adjacent land under agreement with or owned by the operator, to permit continuation of the operation; and
- c. associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing, or recycling of *mineral aggregate resources* and derived products, such as asphalt and concrete, or the production of secondary related products.

(PPS, 2014)

Mineral Aggregate Resources

Gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the Aggregate Resources Act suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the Mining Act. (PPS, 2014)

Minimum Distance Separation Formulae

Formulae and guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time, to separate uses so as to reduce incompatibility concerns about odour from livestock facilities. (PPS, 2014)

Modal Share

The percentage of person-trips or of freight movements made by one travel mode, relative to the total number of such trips made by all modes.

Multimodal

Relating to the availability or use of more than one form of transportation, such as automobiles, walking, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail (such as commuter and freight), trucks, air, and marine. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Municipal Comprehensive Review

A new official plan, or an official plan amendment, initiated by an upper- or single-tier municipality under section 26 of the Planning Act that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of this Plan.

Municipal Water and Wastewater Systems

Municipal water systems are all or part of a *drinking-water system*:

- a. that is owned by a municipality or by a municipal service board established under section 195 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- b. that is owned by a corporation established under section 203 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- c. from which a municipality obtains or will obtain water under the terms of a contract between the municipality and the owner of the system; or
- d. that is in a prescribed class of municipal *drinking-water systems* as defined in regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

And, municipal wastewater systems are any *sewage works* owned or operated by a municipality.

Municipalities with Primary Settlement Areas

City of Barrie, City of Orillia, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Town of Collingwood, Town of Innisfil, Town of Midland, Town of New Tecumseth, and Town of Penetanguishene.

Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Features and areas, including *significant wetlands*, significant coastal *wetlands*, other coastal *wetlands* in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E, *fish habitat*, *significant woodlands* and *significant valleylands* in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River), *habitat of endangered species and threatened species*, *significant wildlife habitat*, and significant areas of natural and scientific interest, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area. (PPS, 2014)

Natural Heritage System

A system made up of *natural heritage features and areas*, and linkages intended to provide connectivity (at the regional or site level) and support natural processes which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species, and ecosystems. The system can include *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features*, federal and provincial parks and conservation reserves,

other *natural heritage features and areas*, lands that have been restored or have the potential to be restored to a natural state, associated areas that support *hydrologic functions*, and working landscapes that enable *ecological functions* to continue. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan

The *natural heritage system* mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with this Plan.

Natural Self-Sustaining Vegetation

Vegetation dominated by native plant species that can grow and persist without direct human management, protection, or tending. (Greenbelt Plan)

Negative Impact

- a. In regard to water, degradation to the quality or quantity of surface or groundwater, *key hydrologic features* or vulnerable areas and their related *hydrologic functions* due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities;
- b. In regard to *fish habitat*, any permanent alteration to or destruction of *fish habitat*, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the Fisheries Act; and
- c. In regard to other *natural heritage features and areas*, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or *ecological functions* for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities.

(Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

New Multiple Lots or Units for Residential Development

The creation of more than three units or lots through either plan of subdivision, consent, or plan of condominium.

Normal Farm Practices

A practice, as defined in the Farming and Food Production Protection Act, 1998, that is conducted in a manner consistent with proper and acceptable customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances; or makes use of innovative technology in a manner consistent with proper advanced farm management practices. Normal farm practices shall be consistent with the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 and regulations made under that Act. (PPS, 2014)

Office Parks

Employment areas or areas where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities.

On-farm Diversified Uses

Uses that are secondary to the principal *agricultural use* of the property, and are limited in area. *On-farm diversified uses* include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products. (PPS, 2014)

Outer Ring

The geographic area consisting of the cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Kawartha Lakes, Orillia, and Peterborough; the Counties of Brant, Dufferin, Haldimand, Northumberland, Peterborough, Simcoe, and Wellington; and the Regions of Niagara and Waterloo.

Planned Corridors

Corridors or future corridors which are required to meet projected needs, and are identified through this Plan, preferred alignment(s) determined through the Environmental Assessment Act process, or identified through planning studies where the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Metrolinx, or Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) or any successor to those Ministries or entities, is actively pursuing the identification of a corridor. Approaches for the protection of *planned corridors* may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Primary Settlement Areas

Locations set out in Schedule 8. *Primary settlement areas* are the *settlement areas* of the City of Barrie, the City of Orillia, the Town of Collingwood, the Town of Midland together with the Town of Penetanguishene, and the *settlement areas* of the communities of Alcona in the Town of Innisfil, Alliston in the Town of New Tecumseth and Bradford in the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

Prime Agricultural Area

An area where *prime agricultural lands* predominate. This includes areas of *prime agricultural lands* and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through 7 lands and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. *Prime agricultural areas* are to be identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs using guidelines developed by the Province as amended from time to time. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Prime Agricultural Lands

Specialty crop areas and/or Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands, as amended from time to time, in this order of priority for protection (PPS, 2014).

Priority Transit Corridors

Transit corridors shown in Schedule 5 or as further identified by the Province for the purpose of implementing this Plan.

Private Communal Water and Wastewater Systems

Private communal water systems are *drinking-water systems* that are not municipal water systems and that serve six or more lots or private residences, and

Private communal wastewater systems are *sewage works* that serve six or more lots or private residences and are not owned or operated by a municipality.

Provincially Significant Employment Zones

Areas defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development. *Provincially significant employment zones* can consist of *employment areas* as well as mixed-use areas that contain a significant number of jobs.

Public Service Facilities

Lands, buildings and structures for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by a government or other body, such as social assistance, recreation, police and fire protection, health and educational programs, and cultural services. *Public service facilities* do not include *infrastructure*. (PPS, 2014)

Public Realm

All spaces to which the public has unrestricted access, such as streets, parks, and sidewalks.

Quality and Quantity of Water

Measured by indicators associated with *hydrologic function* such as minimum base flow, depth to water table, aquifer pressure, oxygen levels, suspended solids, temperature, bacteria, nutrients and hazardous contaminants, and hydrologic regime. (PPS, 2014)

Rama Road Economic Employment District

Location set out in Schedule 8. The *Rama Road economic employment district* boundary is determined by the Minister and planned for in accordance with the policies in subsection 6.4. *Major retail* uses are not permitted.

Redevelopment

The creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including *brownfield sites*. (PPS, 2014)

Renewable Energy System

A system that generates electricity, heat and/or cooling from a renewable energy source.

For the purposes of this definition:

A renewable energy source is an energy source that is renewed by natural processes and includes wind, water, biomass, biogas, biofuel, solar energy, geothermal energy and tidal forces. (PPS, 2014)

Rural Lands

Lands which are located outside *settlement areas* and which are outside *prime agricultural areas*. (PPS, 2014)

Rural Settlements

Existing hamlets or similar existing small *settlement areas* that are long-established and identified in official plans. These communities are serviced by individual private on-site water and/or private wastewater systems, contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for development and are subject to official plan policies that limit growth. All *settlement areas* that are identified as hamlets in the Greenbelt Plan, as rural settlements in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, or as minor urban centres in the Niagara Escarpment Plan are considered *rural settlements* for the purposes of this Plan, including those that would not otherwise meet this definition.

Sand Barren

Land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits *sand barren* characteristics) that:

- a. has sparse or patchy vegetation that is dominated by plants that are:
 - i. adapted to severe drought and low nutrient levels; and
 - ii. maintained by severe environmental limitations such as drought, low nutrient levels, and periodic disturbances such as fire;
- b. has less than 25 per cent tree cover;
- c. has sandy soils (other than shorelines) exposed by natural erosion, depositional process, or both; and
- d. has been further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

(Greenbelt Plan)

Savannah

Land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits *savannah* characteristics) that:

- a. has vegetation with a significant component of non-woody plants, including *tallgrass prairie* species that are maintained by seasonal drought, periodic disturbances such as fire, or both;
- b. has from 25 per cent to 60 per cent tree cover;
- c. has mineral soils; and
- d. has been further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

(Greenbelt Plan)

Seepage Areas and Springs

Sites of emergence of groundwater where the water table is present at the ground surface. (Greenbelt Plan)

Sensitive Land Uses

Buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by nearby major facilities. *Sensitive land uses* may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities. (PPS, 2014)

Settlement Areas

Urban areas and *rural settlements* within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets) that are:

- a. built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and
- b. lands which have been designated in an official plan for development in accordance with the policies of this Plan. Where there are no lands that have been designated for development, the *settlement area* may be no larger than the area where development is concentrated.

(Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Sewage Works

Any works for the collection, transmission, treatment, and disposal of sewage or any part of such works, but does not include plumbing to which the Building Code Act, 1992 applies. (Ontario Water Resources Act)

For the purposes of this definition:

Sewage includes, but is not limited to drainage, stormwater, residential wastewater, commercial wastewater, and industrial wastewater.

Significant Groundwater Recharge Area

An area that has been identified:

- a. as a *significant groundwater recharge area* by any public body for the purposes of implementing the PPS, 2014;
- b. as a *significant groundwater recharge area* in the assessment report required under the Clean Water Act, 2006; or
- c. as an ecologically *significant groundwater recharge area* delineated in a *subwatershed plan* or equivalent in accordance with provincial guidelines.

For the purposes of this definition, ecologically *significant groundwater recharge areas* are areas of land that are responsible for replenishing groundwater systems that directly support sensitive areas like cold water streams and *wetlands*. (Greenbelt Plan)

Significant Surface Water Contribution Areas

Areas, generally associated with headwater catchments, that contribute to baseflow volumes which are significant to the overall surface water flow volumes within a *watershed*. (Greenbelt Plan)

Significant Wetland

A *wetland* that has been identified as provincially significant by the Province. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Significant Wildlife Habitat

A *wildlife habitat* that is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or *natural heritage system*. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Significant Woodland

A *woodland* which is ecologically important in terms of features such as species composition, age of trees and stand history; functionally important due to its contribution to the broader landscape because of its location, size or due to the amount of forest cover in the planning area; or economically important due to site quality, species composition, or past management history. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Significant Valleyland

A *valleyland* which is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or *natural heritage system*. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Simcoe Sub-area

The geographic area consisting of the County of Simcoe, the City of Barrie and the City of Orillia.

Site Alteration

Activities, such as grading, excavation and the placement of fill that would change the landform and natural vegetative characteristics of a site. (PPS, 2014)

Specialty Crop Area

Areas designated using guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time. In these areas, specialty crops are predominantly grown such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil usually resulting from:

- a. soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;
- b. farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and
- c. a long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, *infrastructure* and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.

(PPS, 2014)

Stormwater Master Plan

A long-range plan that assesses existing and planned stormwater facilities and systems and outlines stormwater *infrastructure* requirements for new and existing development within a *settlement area*. *Stormwater master plans* are informed by *watershed planning* and are completed in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

Stormwater Management Plan

A plan that provides direction to avoid or minimize and mitigate stormwater volume, contaminant loads, and impacts on receiving water courses to: maintain groundwater quality and flow and stream baseflow; protect water quality; minimize the disruption of pre-existing (natural) drainage patterns wherever possible; prevent increases in stream channel erosion; prevent any increase in flood risk; and protect aquatic species and their habitat.

Strategic Growth Areas

Within *settlement areas*, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating *intensification* and higher-density mixed uses in a more *compact built form*. *Strategic growth areas* include *urban growth centres*, *major transit station areas*, and other major opportunities that may include infill, *redevelopment*, *brownfield sites*, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or *greyfields*. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned *frequent transit* service or *higher order transit* corridors may also be identified as *strategic growth areas*.

Strategic Settlement Employment Areas

Areas that have been identified by the Minister that are to be planned and protected for employment uses that require large lots of land and depend upon efficient movement of goods and access to Highway 400. These are

not *settlement areas*. *Major retail* and residential uses are not permitted.

Subwatershed Plan

A plan that reflects and refines the goals, objectives, targets, and assessments of *watershed planning*, as available at the time a *subwatershed plan* is completed, for smaller drainage areas, is tailored to subwatershed needs and addresses local issues.

A *subwatershed plan* should: consider existing development and evaluate impacts of any potential or proposed land uses and development; identify hydrologic features, areas, linkages, and functions; identify natural features, areas, and related *hydrologic functions*; and provide for protecting, improving, or restoring the *quality and quantity of water* within a subwatershed.

A *subwatershed plan* is based on pre-development monitoring and evaluation; is integrated with natural heritage protection; and identifies specific criteria, objectives, actions, thresholds, targets, and best management practices for development, for water and wastewater servicing, for stormwater management, for managing and minimizing impacts related to severe weather events, and to support ecological needs. (Greenbelt Plan)

Surface Water Features

Water-related features on the earth's surface, including headwaters, rivers, stream channels, inland lakes, seepage areas, recharge/discharge areas, springs, *wetlands*, and associated riparian lands that can be defined by their soil moisture, soil type, vegetation or topographic characteristics. (PPS, 2014)

Tallgrass Prairies

Land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits *tallgrass prairie* characteristics) that:

- a. has vegetation dominated by non-woody plants, including *tallgrass prairie* species that are maintained by seasonal drought, periodic disturbances such as fire, or both;
- b. has less than 25 per cent tree cover;
- c. has mineral soils; and
- d. has been further identified, by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

(Greenbelt Plan)

Total Developable Area

The total area of the property less the area occupied by *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and any related *vegetation protection zone*. (Greenbelt Plan)

Transit Service Integration

The co-ordinated planning or operation of transit service between two or more agencies or services that contributes to the goal of seamless service for riders and could include considerations of service schedules, service routes, information, fare policy, and fare payment.

Transit-supportive

Relating to development that makes transit viable and improves the quality of the experience of using transit. It often refers to compact, mixed-use development that has a high level of employment and residential densities. *Transit-supportive* development will be consistent with Ontario's Transit Supportive Guidelines. (Based on PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan)

Transportation Demand Management

A set of strategies that result in more efficient use of the *transportation system* by influencing travel behaviour by mode, time of day, frequency, trip length, regulation, route, or cost. (PPS, 2014)

Transportation System

A system consisting of facilities, corridors and rights-of-way for the movement of people and goods, and associated transportation facilities including transit stops and stations, sidewalks, cycle lanes, bus lanes, high occupancy vehicle lanes, rail facilities, parking facilities, park-and-ride lots, service centres, rest stops, vehicle inspection stations, inter-modal facilities, harbours, airports, marine facilities, ferries, canals and associated facilities such as storage and maintenance. (PPS, 2014)

Urban Growth Centres

Existing or emerging downtown areas shown in Schedule 4 and as further identified by the Minister on April 2, 2008.

Valleylands

A natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year. (PPS, 2014)

Vegetation Protection Zone

A vegetated buffer area surrounding a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*. (Greenbelt Plan)

Water Resource System

A system consisting of *ground water features* and areas and *surface water features* (including shoreline areas), and *hydrologic functions*, which provide the water resources necessary to sustain healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and human water consumption. The *water resource system* will comprise *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas*. (PPS, 2014)

Watershed

An area that is drained by a river and its tributaries. (PPS, 2014)

Watershed Planning

Planning that provides a framework for establishing goals, objectives, and direction for the protection of water resources, the management of human activities, land, water, aquatic life, and resources within a *watershed* and for the assessment of cumulative, cross-jurisdictional, and cross-*watershed* impacts.

Watershed planning typically includes: *watershed* characterization, a water budget, and conservation plan; nutrient loading assessments; consideration of climate change impacts and severe weather events; land and water use management objectives and strategies; scenario modelling to evaluate the impacts of forecasted growth and

servicing options, and mitigation measures; an environmental monitoring plan; requirements for the use of environmental best management practices, programs, and performance measures; criteria for evaluating the protection of *quality and quantity of water*; the identification and protection of hydrologic features, areas, and functions and the inter-relationships between or among them; and targets for the protection and restoration of riparian areas.

Watershed planning is undertaken at many scales, and considers cross-jurisdictional and cross-*watershed* impacts. The level of analysis and specificity generally increases for smaller geographic areas such as subwatersheds and tributaries. (Greenbelt Plan)

Wetlands

Lands that are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water, as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. In either case the presence of abundant water has caused the formation of hydric soils and has favoured the dominance of either hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants. The four major types of *wetlands* are swamps, marshes, bogs and fens.

Periodically soaked or wet lands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit *wetland* characteristics are not considered to be *wetlands* for the purposes of this definition.

Wetlands are further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time. (Greenbelt Plan)

Wildlife Habitat

Areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific *wildlife habitats* of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their annual or life cycle; and areas which are important to migratory or non-migratory species. (PPS, 2014)

Woodlands

Treed areas that provide environmental and economic benefits to both the private landowner and the general public, such as erosion prevention, hydrological and nutrient cycling, provision of clean air and the long-term storage of carbon, provision of *wildlife habitat*, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the sustainable harvest of a wide range of *woodland* products. *Woodlands* include treed areas, woodlots or forested areas and vary in their level of significance at the local, regional and provincial levels. *Woodlands* may be delineated according to the Forestry Act definition or the Province's Ecological Land Classification system definition for "forest." (PPS, 2014)

Schedules

Appendices

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