

Guide to Changes in Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019

Key Points

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019

The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019* was released on May 2, 2019. It will take effect on May 16, 2019 and will replace the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017*.

There are many proposed changes. A full guide is enclosed, but below are the “Top Five”.

1. *Flexibility to Add Uses to Employment Lands Before a Municipal Comprehensive Review*

Lands within Employment Areas may be converted to a designation that permits non-employment uses in advance of a municipal comprehensive review (“MCR”), provided that there is:

1. A need;
2. No adverse effect on the viability of an Employment Area or achievement of intensification and density targets;
3. Existing or planned infrastructure and public services; and,
4. A significant amount of jobs are maintained.

Note that certain lands will be designated “Provincially Significant Employment Zones”, which can only be converted through a municipal comprehensive review.

2. *Settlement Area Changes in Advance of an MCR*

Adjustments - Settlement Area Boundaries may be adjusted by municipalities without an MCR when:

1. There would be no net increase in land within the settlement area;
2. The adjustment would support the ability to meet intensification and density targets;
3. The normally applicable requirements for a settlement area expansion are met;
4. The land is not a rural settlement or in the Greenbelt; and,
5. The land is serviced and there is sufficient reserve capacity.

Expansions – Settlement Area Boundaries may be expanded without an MCR when:

1. The lands will meet the resident and jobs density targets or the employment area density targets established pursuant to the *Growth Plan*;

2. The normally applicable requirements for a settlement area expansion are met;
3. The land is not a rural settlement or in the Greenbelt;
4. The land is serviced and there is sufficient reserve capacity;
5. The land will be fully accounted for in the next MCR; and,
6. The expansion is no greater than 40 hectares.

An opportunity make “minor rounding out” adjustments to rural settlements has also been created.

3. *Support for Transit Oriented Development*

Upper- and single-tier municipalities may delineate the boundaries of Major Transit Station Areas (“MTSA”) and identify minimum density targets for them ahead of an MCR, provided *Planning Act* requirements regarding official plan policies for MTSA’s are met.

The areas affected by these policies will be expanded from a 500 to 800 metre radius from the Transit Station.

4. *Scaled Intensification and Density Targets*

Targets for Delineated Built-up Areas and Designated Greenfield Areas are now scaled to the degree of urbanization of a municipality.

The former intensification requirement that 60% of all residential development occur within the Delineated Built-up Area is now 50% for more-urbanized areas, with a requirement that existing targets be maintained or improved for less-urbanized areas.

For Designated Greenfield Areas, the density target of 80 residents and jobs *per* hectare has been replaced with 50 for more-urbanized areas, and 40 in less-urbanized areas.

5. *Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System Mapping*

Provincial Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System mapping does not apply until implemented in an applicable upper tier or single tier official plan, and a municipality may refine the Provincial mapping before incorporating it.

Until then, existing official plan mapping applies.

Provincially Significant Employment Zones

A map of Provincially Significant Employment Zones is found [here](#).

Modifications to O. Reg. 311/06

A proposed amendment to a transitional Regulation made under the *Places to Grow Act, 2005* has been released for comment.

It is proposed that the following changes be made to the Regulation so as to not disrupt current planning matters:

- Provide that the following official plan and official plan amendments are subject to the *Growth Plan, 2006* as it read on June 16, 2006:
 - City of Brampton Official Plan Amendments 126, 127, 128, 129, 130 and 133
 - City of Toronto Official Plan Amendment 231
 - Town of Whitchurch–Stouffville Official Plan Amendment 137.
- Provide that the following official plan amendment is subject to the *Growth Plan, 2006*, as amended:
 - Region of Waterloo Regional Official Plan Amendment 2.
- Provide that the following official plan amendment is subject to the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019*, with the exception of policy 2.2.8.6:
 - Region of Halton Regional Official Plan Amendment 47.
- Provide that the following official plan amendment is subject to the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019*, with the exception of policies in subsections 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4:
 - County of Simcoe Official Plan Amendment 2.

Full Guide

Introduction	
Section	Note
1.2	New objective to match housing supply with market demand.
1.2	Removal of the concept of “net zero” communities, replaced with the concept of “environmentally sustainable” communities.
Where and How to Grow	
2.1	Removal of the concept that there is a large supply of land already designated for future urban development which may exceed needs.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Managing Growth	
2.2.1.2.b	Change from growth being limited in “undelineated built-up areas” to being limited in “rural settlements”. “Rural settlements” is a newly defined term. “undelineated built-up areas” is removed as a term.
2.2.1.6.c	<p>Addition of reminder to use lapsing provisions and deregistration of plans of subdivision in situations where excess lands have been identified</p> <p>Note: “excess lands” is defined, but is generally vacant, developable lands, exceeding what is needed to accommodate forecasted growth.</p>
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Delineated Built-up Areas	
2.2.2.1	<p>Removal of the requirement that 60% of all residential development occurring annually occur within the delineated built-up area by 2031. Replaced with targets that scale with degree of urbanization of a municipality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% for Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia, Peterborough, Durham Region, Halton Region, Niagara Region, Peel Region, Waterloo Region, York Region • Maintain or improve upon existing target for Kawartha Lakes, Brant County, Dufferin County, Haldimand County, Northumberland County, Peterborough County, Simcoe County, Wellington County. <p>Removal of the requirement that 50% of all residential development occurring annually occur within the delineated built-up area by the time of the next MCR and up to 2031.</p>
2.2.2.4	Simplification of the alternative minimum intensification target request criteria to being that it is appropriate given the size, location, and capacity of the delineated built-up area.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Transit Corridors and Station Areas	
2.2.4.4	Simplification of the criteria applied to a request for reducing the targeted combined residents and jobs per hectare to: a) prohibited or severely restricted by provincial

	policy, b) there are a limited number of jobs or residents but a major trip generator or feeder service will sustain high ridership at the station/stop.
2.2.4.5	Upper- and single-tier municipalities may delineate the boundaries of major transit station areas and identify minimum density targets in advance of an MCR, if done in accordance with s. 16(15), (16) of the <i>Planning Act</i> . Note: s. 16(15), (16) of the <i>Planning Act</i> deal with the minimum requirements that an OP must meet when identifying planned higher order transit stations and stops or protecting major transit station areas for lower and upper tier municipalities, respectively.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Employment	
All	Removes the concept and definition of “prime employment area” Note: “Prime employment area” is essentially meant to identify land extensive employment uses.
2.2.5.6	Adds a clarification that employment lands may be designated in advance of the next MCR.
2.2.5.8	Adds the concept of land use compatibility between sensitive land uses, major retail uses and major office uses and industrial, manufacturing or other uses particularly vulnerable to encroachment.
2.2.5.10	Allows for the conversion of employment lands to a designation that permits non-employment uses in advance of an MCR, provided that it is demonstrated there is: a need, no adverse effects on the viability of an employment area or achievement of minimum intensification targets, there are existing or planned services in place, a significant amount of jobs are maintained on the lands, and the lands to not include any lands in a provincially significant employment zone.
2.2.5.12	Minister may now identify provincially significant employment zones to support coordination of planning for jobs and economic development at the regional scale. Lands so identified cannot be converted using s. 2.2.5.10.
2.2.5.13	Municipalities will establish minimum density targets for all employment areas within settlement areas that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are measured in jobs per hectare; • Reflect the current and anticipated type and scale of employment that characterizes the employment area to which the target applies; • Reflects opportunities for the intensification of employment areas on sites that support active transportation and are served by existing or planned transit; and • Will be implemented through official plan policies and designations and zoning by-laws.
2.2.5.14	Redevelopment of employment lands should maintain similar amounts of jobs on site.

2.2.5.16.d	Addition of the requirement that non-employment uses in an office park are limited and do not negatively impact the primary function of the area.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Designated Greenfield Areas	
2.2.7.2	Removal of the requirement that all designated greenfield areas meet a minimum of 80 residents and jobs combined per hectare. Replaced with targets that scale with degree of urbanization of a municipality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 50 for Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia, Peterborough, Durham Region, Halton Region, Niagara Region, Peel Region, Waterloo Region, York Region. • Minimum 40 for Kawartha Lakes, Brant County, Dufferin County, Haldiman County, Northumberland County, Peterborough County, Simcoe County and Wellington County.
--	Removal of former s. 2.2.7.4 which granted upper- and single-tier municipalities in the inner ring an exemption from the requirement to meet the 80 residents and jobs combined per hectare target where an official plan was approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017., but, required that over time intensification occur.
2.2.7.4	Simplification of the requirements that must be met in a request for an alternative target in the DGA to being: 1) the target cannot be achieved, 2) the alternative target will support housing diversity, and 3) the alternative target will help achieve a more compact built form.
--	Removal of policies indicating the targets in Official Plans already in effect continue to apply.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Settlement Area Boundary Expansions	
2.2.8.3.e.	The Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan should be avoided where possible when considering a settlement area expansion. Note the addition of a definition below.
2.2.8.4	Settlement area boundaries may be adjusted without a MCR when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be no net increase in land within settlement areas; • The adjustment would support the municipality's ability to meet the intensification and density targets established pursuant to the Plan; • The location of any lands added to a settlement area will satisfy the normally applicable requirements of settlement area expansion; • The affected settlement areas are not rural settlements or in the Greenbelt Area; and • The settlement area is serviced by municipal water and wastewater systems and there is sufficient reserve infrastructure capacity to service the lands.
2.2.8.5	Settlement area boundary expansion may occur in advance of a MCR when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lands that are added will be planned to achieve at least the minimum

	<p>density targets set out in the Growth Plan;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location of any lands added to a settlement area will satisfy the normally applicable requirements of settlement area expansion; • The affected settlement areas are not rural settlements or in the Greenbelt Area; • The settlement area is serviced by municipal water and wastewater systems and there is sufficient reserve infrastructure capacity to service the lands; and, • The additional lands and associated forecasted growth will be fully accounted for in the land needs assessment associated with the next municipal comprehensive review.
2.2.8.6	Settlement area expansion may occur under 2.2.8.5 (above) as long as the amount to be added to the Settlement Area is no larger than 40 hectares.
Policies for Where and How to Grow – Rural Areas	
2.2.9	<p>Minor adjustments may be made to boundaries of the rural settlements without an MCR, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affected settlement area is not in the Greenbelt Area; • The change would constitute minor rounding out of existing development, in keeping with the rural character of the area; • Confirmation that water and wastewater servicing can be provided in an appropriate manner that is suitable for long-term; and, • Sections 2 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) and 3 (Protecting Public Health and Safety) of the PPS are applied.
Policies for Infrastructure to Support Growth – Integrating Planning	
3.2.1.2	Planning for new or expanded infrastructure will be supported by “relevant studies” and no longer requires specifically “infrastructure master plans, asset management plans, community energy plans, watershed planning, and environmental assessments”.
Protecting What is Valuable – Water Resource Systems	
4.2.1.3	<p>Watershed planning, in addition to informing decisions on the allocation of growth, will now inform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of water resource systems; • The protection, enhancement, or restoration of the quality and quantity of water; and • Planning for water/stormwater infrastructure.
Protecting What is Valuable – Natural Heritage System	
4.2.2.4	Mapping for the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan does not apply unless implemented in an applicable OP. Until that time, the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan policies only apply to natural heritage systems identified in upper- and single-tier OPs that are outside settlement areas and were approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017.

4.2.2.5	Mapping for the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan may be refined by upper- or single-tier municipalities at the time of initial implementation of OP, but afterwards it may only be refined through a MCR.
Protecting What is Valuable – Agricultural System	
4.2.6.3	Mitigation measures to limit affect non-agricultural uses on agricultural uses will be based on an agricultural impact assessment.
4.2.6.8	Outside of the Greenbelt, mapping for the agricultural land base does not apply unless implemented in an applicable OP. Until that time, prime agricultural areas identified in upper- and single-tier OPs that were approved and in effect as of July 1, 2017 will be considered agricultural land base for the purposes of the Growth Plan.
4.2.6.9	Mapping for the agricultural land base may be refined by upper- or single-tier municipalities at the time of initial implementation of OP, but afterwards it may only be refined through a MCR.
Implementation and Interpretation – General Interpretation	
5.2.2.1	The Minister can identify, establish, or update, “provincially significant employment zones”.
5.2.2.3	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.
Simcoe Sub-Area	
6.3.5	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 designated for development in accordance with the policies of s. 2.2.8 (Settlement Area Boundary Expansion).
Definitions	
Changed: Designated Greenfield Area	Lands within <i>settlement areas</i> (not including <i>rural settlements</i>) but outside of <i>delineated built-up areas</i> that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. <i>Designated greenfield areas</i> do not include <i>excess lands</i> . Note: Does not include <i>rural settlements</i> .
Changed: Excess Lands	Vacant, unbuilt but developable lands within <i>settlement areas</i> but outside of <i>delineated built-up areas</i> 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. Note: Now includes “vacant, unbuilt but developable lands”.
Removed: Innovation Hubs	Locations that support collaboration and interaction between the private, public and academic sectors across many different economic sectors to promote innovation.

<p>Changed: Major Transit Station Area</p>	<p>The area including and around any existing or planned <i>higher order transit</i> station or stop within a <i>settlement area</i>, or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. <i>Major transit station areas</i> generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.</p> <p>Note: Can now be <u>500 to 800</u> metre radius from a transit station.</p>
<p>Changed: Major Trip Generators</p>	<p>Origins and destinations with high population densities or concentrated activities which generate many trips (e.g., <i>urban growth centres</i> and other downtowns, <i>major office</i> and <i>office parks</i>, <i>major retail</i>, <i>employment areas</i>, community hubs, large parks and recreational destinations, post-secondary institutions and other <i>public service facilities</i>, and other mixed-use areas).</p>
<p>Added: Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan</p>	<p>The <i>natural heritage system</i> mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with this Plan.</p>
<p>Changed: Office Parks</p>	<p>Areas where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities.</p> <p>Note: No longer has to be in an employment area designated in an OP.</p>
<p>Removed: Prime Employment Area</p>	<p>Areas of employment within <i>settlement areas</i> that are designated in an official plan and protected over the long-term for uses that are land extensive or have low employment densities and require locations that are adjacent to or near <i>major goods movement facilities and corridors</i>. These uses include manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities.</p>
<p>Added: Provincially Significant Employment Zones</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Added: Rural Settlements</p>	<p>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 wastewater systems contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for development. 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.</p>
<p>Removed: Undelineated Built-up Areas</p>	<p>Settlement areas for which the Minister has not delineated a built boundary pursuant to this Plan.</p>