



PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY BUILDING COMMITTEE

FROM: T. WIERZBA, PLANNER

NOTED: A. MILLER, RPP, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES
A. MILLER, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT (ACTING)
M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: OFFICIAL PLAN PROJECT UPDATE AND PRESENTATION

DATE: JUNE 11, 2019

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Building Committee an update on the Official Plan (OP) project. Further, this memo will inform the Committee about upcoming project milestones, when staff will seek direction from Council, and how Council's direction will shape the new OP and the city's land-use policy framework. Staff will supplement this memo with a presentation regarding the above.

Background

Barrie needs a new Official Plan. The City's current OP has been in effect for almost 10 years, has undergone numerous consolidations, and has almost 70 amendments. Further, the Province recently concluded its coordinated policy review. This resulted in the release of [A Place To Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#) ('Growth Plan') to which the City's land-use policies must conform by July 1, 2022. The City's land-use policy framework is therefore out of date. A new OP will allow the City to meet its obligations under the Growth Plan as well as consolidate the numerous secondary plans and amendments into one cohesive document, establishing a new urban community structure for Barrie. This new structure will, as required by the Growth Plan, focus on creating complete communities – neighbourhoods that meet the needs of residents throughout their lives – and by prioritizing intensification where possible. This new urban community structure will be supported by a land-use policy framework which provides clarity, certainty, and direction while allowing for a degree of change and flexibility in an economy transitioning towards knowledge and service oriented employment. Further, a new OP will allow the City to balance and align the needs of the community with that of industry by improving housing affordability, mobility, and resiliency to climate change.

The OP Project

The following provides an overview of the OP project, from kick-off to the conclusion of phase 2; see Appendix "B" for a full project schedule.

Phase 1 – Project Kick-Off

The OP project was initiated on September 5, 2019 through a series of internal/staff only open house drop-in sessions. At each session Planning Staff gave a brief presentation about land-use planning and the OP, and asked city staff to provide their initial thoughts on what the city's new OP needs to achieve and address. From the feedback received – over 100 comments addressing both the OP and Zoning By-Law – it is clear that city staff are eager to participate in the project and collaborate with Planning Staff to ensure that the city's new OP works for the people that implement its policies as well as for the residents of Barrie. Following the internal kick-off, Planning Staff worked with the OP project consultants, Dillion Consulting, to launch the OP project externally/to the public.



PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES MEMORANDUM

Phase 1 – Community Consultation

Two open house events were held on November 28th, 2019. One was open to the general public and one was organized for community stakeholders. The public Open House was well attended, with at least 70 registered residents. Members of Council and senior management were also in attendance. Both Open Houses focused on the Three Pillars of the OP, which are: *Pillar One - Custom Crafted by Barrie, for Barrie*; *Pillar Two – Integrated and Coordinated*, and; *Pillar Three – Meeting our Obligations*. Each pillar was accompanied by a number of questions that guided the conversation with the public and stakeholders. Feedback from these events gave staff an initial understanding of the community's priorities. Following the open houses staff held two Public Information Centers in January 2019. These consultation events focused on gathering feedback on the aforementioned OP pillars and the community's priorities. Finally, staff also facilitated online discussions on BuildingBarrie.ca and hosted a survey to gather community feedback on the OP pillars.

Phase 1 – Data Collection

During the ongoing public consultation events staff were preparing a candidate intensification sites inventory. In mid-January 2019, the candidate intensification site database was provided to the City's land economist consulting team, Watson & Associates Economists LTD. ('Watson'), to be used as part of a broader land needs report. The land needs report examines the city's land supply to determine if there is enough land to accommodate the forecast growth. This concludes Phase 1.

Phase 2 – 'What we heard' & Policy Innovation

Phase 2 of the OP project began in February 2019 and was initiated with a '[What We Heard Report](#)'. This report is a summary of all the public consultation and stakeholder engagement feedback received during Phase 1. The primary focus of Phase 2 was to take the feedback received during Phase 1 and begin to develop ideas on how to address issues raised. This took shape in the form of seven discussion papers authored by Planning staff and released for public review and comment; [the discussion papers are available online at BuildingBarrie.ca/OP2](#). To date staff have received very positive comments from the public about the discussion papers. This indicates that the community's concerns and priorities were well articulated and accurately reflected in the discussion papers.

Phase 2 – Community Engagement

A Places Survey, which focused on gathering feedback on what type of built form the community would like to see more (or less) of in the City, was also posted on BuildingBarrie.ca. Two additional public engagement were planned for Phase 2; a Waterfront City Walk and an Envision Barrie Interactive Screening. The Waterfront City Walk consisted on a staff-facilitated tour of the waterfront. The tour focused on the challenges of planning for a complete community and gathering feedback from the public on what a complete community should look (and feel) like. The final public engagement event, Envision Barrie, was held at Sandbox Centre and focused on gathering feedback on the community's priorities and the challenge of accommodating population and employment growth in a city with a finite land supply and limited financial resources. Planning staff were encouraged to see staff from other City departments attend both public engagement sessions.

Phase 2 – Land Needs Report

During Phase 2 consultation staff held two stakeholder engagement events. These events focused on planning the city's Community Areas and Employment Areas. Community Area are lands outside designated Employment Areas. Employment Areas are lands where the City is to accommodate industrial-type employment (e.g. manufacturing & warehousing). Stakeholder feedback gathered from these events was used to inform assumptions in the land needs report. A draft of the land needs report was completed and provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH) for review and comment at the end of Phase 2. This is a major milestone in the OP project as detailed below.

Provincial Policy and the OP

In Ontario's top-down land-use policy system Provincial legislation and policy documents dictate how municipalities are to plan for growth. In early May 2019 the Province released a new version of the Growth Plan. All land-use planning decisions must conform or not conflict with the Growth Plan as of May 16, 2019.

Growth Plan 2019

The 2019 Growth Plan replaced a 2017 document of the same name. Both the 2017 and 2019 documents have intensification and density targets for different policy areas. To conform to the new Growth Plan the City must plan to accommodate population and employment growth forecasts up to 2041. The City must also plan to achieve an annual intensification target along with density targets for the Urban Growth Centre (UGC), Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) – being Allandale Waterfront GO and Barrie South Go – and all Designated Greenfield Areas (DGA). Appendix "A" illustrates where these policy areas are located throughout the city. The current OP reflects 2017 Growth Plan targets. The new OP will implement the targets of the 2019 Growth Plan. One major change between the 2017 and 2019 Growth Plans are the intensification and density targets. The 2017 Growth plan required the City to increase the rate of intensification – measured by the annual number of dwelling units created in the Built-Up Area – from 40% to 50% by the next Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), and then 60% by 2031 and each year thereafter. The 2019 Growth Plan requires that municipalities plan for 50% intensification after the next MCR to 2041 and beyond. The 2019 Growth Plan also reduced DGA density targets; the City must now plan to achieve, at minimum, an average density target of 50 persons and jobs per hectare by the next MCR and each year thereafter up to and beyond 2041.

Land Needs Assessment Methodology

To ensure municipalities have enough land to meet forecast growth the Province developed a Lands Needs Assessment (LNA) Methodology. The LNA Methodology is a prescriptive, step-by-step process, which tests a municipality's land supply against the anticipated demand (i.e. the population and employment forecasts). Following the LNA Methodology staff worked with Watson to prepare the aforementioned land needs report. This report has been provided to MMAH review and comment. At time of writing Staff are still waiting for feedback from the Ministry.

Land Needs Report

Preliminary results from the land needs report indicate that the City will struggle to meet the required 50% intensification target due to a large amount of growth already allocated to the Salem and Hewitt's Secondary Plan areas. Further, development and intensification potential around the City's two MTSAs is limited, which means that the City may not be able to achieve its MTSA density targets. Finally, the report suggests that the City may not have enough designated land to accommodate forecast employment and residential growth up to 2041. To address this shortfall additional intensification policy or post 2031-lands, or both, may be required. It is important to note that the land needs report is still under review and is not prescriptive. Council will have an opportunity to decide how to react to the results of the land needs report.

Policy Options Report

To assist in decision-making staff will prepare and present a policy options report to Council in the Fall of 2019. This report will propose several policy scenarios along with a recommended 'Made in Barrie' option. Council will have an opportunity to review the policy options provided, but a key decision will need to be made. This decision is critical for the OP project and the City's land-use policy framework as it will set the City's urban structure (e.g. where intensification will occur and at what scale, how the city will accommodate core employment, etc.). This will be articulated through policy in the City's new OP, which will be in effect for at least 10 years with no amendments being permitted for two years after the OP is approved. In summary, Council's decision regarding how to react to the results of the land needs report will have direct, tangible, and lasting impact on the city.

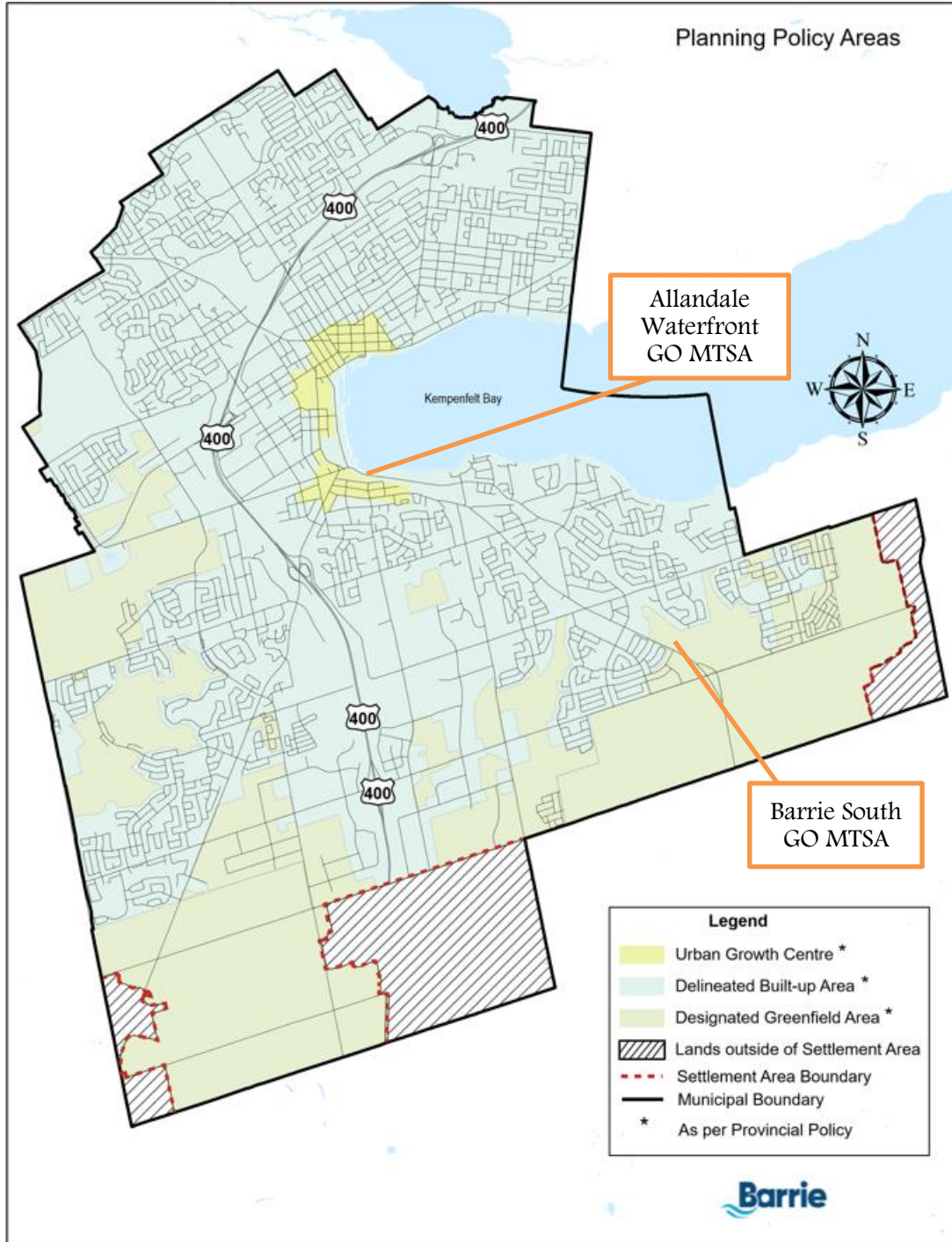


Next Steps

Planning staff are currently working with MMAH to obtain feedback on the land needs report. Once feedback from MMAH has been received staff will develop a policy options report for Council to consider in the Fall of 2019. The policy options proposed in this report will integrate municipal initiatives such as the Allandale Mobility Hub and coordinate with other master plans (e.g. Transportation Master Plan). The scenarios proposed in the policy options report will be tested against market feasibility and the financial implications of each policy option will be considered. Staff will continue to consult and engage with the broader community to collect feedback about policy ideas, solutions, and address concerns over the course of the next phase of the OP project.

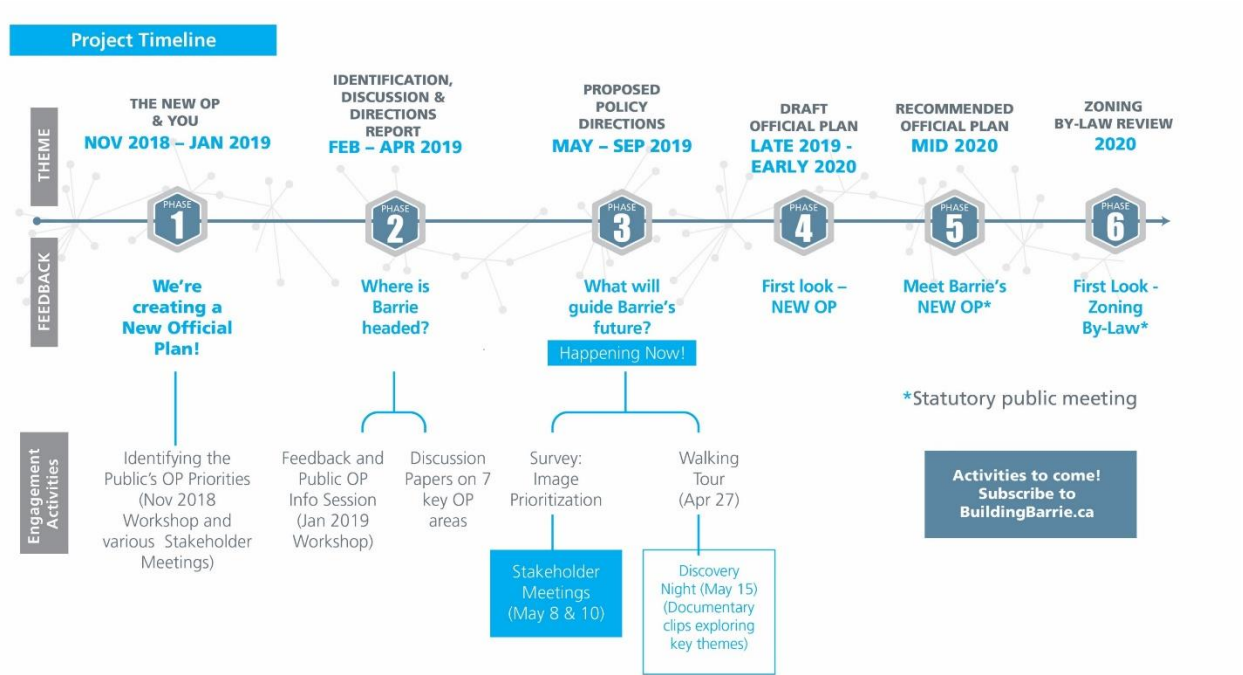
APPENDIX "A"

City of Barrie Provincial Policy Area Map



APPENDIX “B”

OP Project Schedule



SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS