



## PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM:** T. WIERZBA, PLANNER  
K. SUGGITT, RPP, MANAGER OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, POLICY AND ANALYSIS

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

**RE:** ADDITIONAL MATERIAL - REPORT TO CITY BUILDING COMMITTEE DATED OCTOBER 8, 2019 - GROWTH MANAGEMENT OPTIONS AND LAND USE POLICY DIRECTIONS

**DATE:** OCTOBER 28, 2019

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That a report was presented to the City Building Committee on Tuesday October 8, 2019 concerning Growth Management Options and Land Use Policy Directions. The purpose of the Memorandum is to provide additional clarity and responses to matters raised by the members of City Building Committee and members of the public at that meeting specifically related to:

- Development in the Secondary Plan Areas
- Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology (LNA)
- Forecasted unit mix and density
- Settlement Area expansion in the future

### **Development in the Secondary Plan Areas**

The City is forecasted to grow to a population of 253,000 by the year 2041. 20% of the City's total population by then is anticipated to be located in the secondary plan areas. The remaining amount of population is to be accommodated in the balance of City (i.e. the already built-up area). In order to achieve this split of where development will occur, the City must allocate resources (i.e. staff time and effort and financial) to each area so that applications can be processed and infrastructure put in place to meet the expectations that go along with having lands designated for urban development (i.e. within an urban settlement area boundary).

Development activity forecasts for the secondary plan areas have changed significantly from the planning and infrastructure exercises completed in 2014 when the Secondary Plans were approved. The pace of development has not been in accordance with what was originally anticipated notwithstanding the significant and collaborative efforts of the development industry and City. The City has been granting planning approvals over the last couple of years, but building activity has not materialized as expected. There is no blame associated with this statement. There is however, a need to recalibrate to reflect the current state. Staff estimate that forecasts are at least 2 years behind the 2014 projections.

For example, in October 2017, based on input from the development industry, it was anticipated that 2600 units would be registered by the end of 2019. Forecasts provided by the development industry in Q2 2019 indicate 800 units will be registered by the end of 2019. It should be noted that the actual number of units registered to date in 2019 is 525 and these are all contained within one plan of subdivision in the Salem Secondary Plan Area. Registrations are important triggers for building permits, occupancies, water rates and ultimately other elements of community building. This is also a significant trigger for financial payments that the City relies on to fund various capital projects.

There is significant undeveloped land within the current settlement area boundary. The Hewitt's Secondary Plan has a total of four phases; and only phases one and two can begin to be developed due to servicing and financial impact trigger policies contained within the Secondary Plan. To date phase one is about 98% under application and phase two is just under 25% under application. The Salem Secondary Plan has a total of three phases and only applications within the first phase are being processed to date for a total of about 50% of the land area is under application in phase one. Given the adjusted development timeframes noted above and even with modestly optimistic forecasts, it does not appear that current secondary plan area lands will be built out until midway into the next planning horizon (+/- 2036).

In time, the full extent of the secondary plan areas (i.e. all lands within the municipal boundary) will be developed, but it is not happening in the same time frame initially anticipated. Bringing additional lands into the settlement area boundary sets an expectation that City resources (staff and financial) will be dedicated to bringing those lands to development ready status within the timeframe of the planning horizon of the new Official Plan (i.e. to the year 2041). Given the noted significant deviation from forecasted development timing, the amount of land still to be developed in the secondary plan areas, and the overall allocation of total population to the secondary plan areas, staff believe that it is appropriate to recalibrate the timing of development in the lands outside the current settlement area boundary.

#### **Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology (LNA)**

The Land Needs Assessment (LNA) is one part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) that is a requirement when completing a new Official Plan. The Province developed the standard methodology based on the Growth Plan, 2017 to be used for all conformity work. Since then a new Growth Plan (2019) has come into effect and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing have been holding consultation meetings in early October to review the methodology for any required changes as a consequence of the new Growth Plan.

The City has embarked on the preparation of an entirely new Official Plan in a time of continued Provincial change. Our current policy documents need to be updated and the process of updating should not be delayed as there is always something changing at the Province. City staff have been in regular communication and have support from staff at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the approach the City has taken. While Ministry staff are holding the consultation meetings on the LNA methodology, the message the City has been given by Ministry Staff is that the methodology is being revised to reflect the Growth Plan, 2019, and not fundamentally changed. As such, staff believe that even with a revised LNA methodology, the City's land need will be similar to what has been calculated now and reflected in the Report to City Building dated October 8, 2019. Staff continue to update the Province on the progress of the new Official Plan and have been clear in communicating to the Province that policy matters in process, such as the City's OP project, must be allowed to proceed under the current methodology, with conformity to the new methodology occurring at a later date. If this approach is not ultimately chosen, staff and the consultant team will make the necessary adjustments to the LNA and still believe that the proposed intensification first policy approach can be justified.

#### **Forecasted Unit Mix and Density**

The unit mix proposed for Barrie represents an intentional shift to higher densities. As per Report to the City Building Committee dated October 8, 2019, the unit mix forecast City-wide over the 2016-2041 period is: 19% low density, 25% medium density, and 56% high density. This means that 44% of all the units forecasted to be built throughout Barrie over the 2016-2041 period will be low and medium density, ground-related housing types (i.e. single detached, semis, & townhouses). The remaining 56% of units will be high density housing (i.e. primarily apartments, but also includes single detached dwellings with accessory apartments). Please refer to page 8 of the Report to City Building Committee dated October 8, 2019 for the definitions of the various density levels.



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As the Built-Up Area (BUA) of the city is already largely developed, it is recognized that it would be difficult to accommodate 19% of future growth as low density housing. Therefore, a separate unit mix is needed for the BUA and the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) of the City, as outlined in the table below. The forecast illustrated below reflects development occurring after the new Official Plan is in effect, rather than looking back to the year 2016.

2022-2041 Forecast Unit mix by Density			
Unit Mix by Density Type	BUA	DGA	City-Wide
Low Density	4%	22%	13%
Medium Density	23%	26%	24%
High Density	73%	53%	63%

The unit mix outlined in the table above appears to accommodate more high density housing types than the unit mix proposed in the Report. Despite this, 48% of the housing growth forecast for Barrie’s DGA lands, which includes the Salem and Hewitt’s secondary plan areas, is ground-related housing. Further, the table above assumes that a large share of the low and medium density housing types which are draft approved in the active phases of the Secondary Plan areas will already be built out by 2022, with higher density housing types being built later in the forecast period, likely between 2031 and 2041. This explains, in part, the difference between the unit mix described in the Report and the unit mix in the table above. Given the pace of development described above in this memorandum, it is highly unlikely that the majority of low and medium density housing would be built out by 2022.

Under Scenario 3 described as the recommended growth option in the Report to City Building Committee dated October 8, 2019, the density of each housing type will be higher than the density of each housing type under scenario 1, but there will still be the same mix of housing types. Figure “A” attached, illustrates different housing types and densities. From the illustration, it is clear that it is possible to have ground related development (i.e. low and medium density) at 80 to 105 units per hectare or at 32 to 43 units per acre. The difference in density range per housing type will affect how much land is needed to accommodate the total City-wide units.

The density range for each housing type across the City has yet to be established as staff need to further explore the impact of new Community Area lands being created through the potential conversion of employment area lands as well as consider input from the community that focused on built form and appropriate transitions. This represents a conscious shift to higher density ranges within each housing type. This in turn reduces the need for additional Community Area lands.

### **Settlement Area Expansion in the Future**

The City can initiate a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) at any time. This current MCR was completed within a year. Therefore, staff believe it is possible to initiate an MCR and settlement area boundary expansion at any time in the future and have the work completed in a timely manner. Given the current activity in the secondary plan areas, there is no urgency to expand the settlement area boundary right now when there would be no actual building taking place on those lands for at least 10 to 15 years or longer, and the technical work can be completed well before then.

Once land is brought within the urban settlement area boundary, there is an expectation that work will be undertaken by the City to make these lands *available* for development within the planning horizon of the new Official Plan (i.e. to the year 2041). The development industry can leverage this expectation.



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There are also provisions in the Growth Plan, 2019 that allow for settlement area expansions of up to 40 hectares to proceed without the need for an MCR. Again, staff believe there is no urgency to expand the settlement area boundary now for Community Area lands when a 40 ha expansion could occur without extensive technical work should the need arise sooner than anticipated.

As such, the City has at least these two approaches to expand the settlement area boundary in the future, should the current and forecast building activity in the secondary plan areas take off and begin to outpace the available land supply.

### **Next Steps**

Planning Staff are meeting with land owners who wish to provide input to the recommended growth scenario. These meetings are being held with secondary plan area landowners as well as landowners with property in other areas of the City including those with employment area land conversion requests. These meetings will be ongoing, even after the growth scenario is determined by Council. Contact with the landowners as the new Official Plan policy is being created will also continue.

The minutes of the City Building Committee from Tuesday October 8, 2019 will be considered by General Committee on Monday October 28, 2019 and the recommendation is expected to be finalized by Council on Monday November 4, 2019. The Report to City Building Committee dated October 8, 2019 recommends an intensification first approach to accommodating future population and recommends expanding the settlement area boundary for employment uses only. The community vision and what we have heard from the community for a vibrant and resilient City are supported by a built form that creates that vision. There are short-term infrastructure and long-term maintenance commitments that impact the City that are well served by Scenario 3.

For more information, please contact Michelle Banfield, RPP, Director of Planning & Building Services at x5466.