



## Planning and Development Committee Report

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**To:** To the Chair and Members of the Planning and Development Committee  
**From:** Jennifer Boyer, BES, M.Sc., MCIP RPP, Manager of Policy Planning  
**Date:** March 2, 2021  
**Report:** RPT-21-29  
**Subject:** New Official Plan Municipal Comprehensive Review Technical Analysis - Community Area (Residential) Land Needs Assessment  
**Purpose:** To provide Council revisions to the urban and rural Growth Forecasting Allocations and the preliminary Community Area Residential Land Needs Assessment & Density and Intensification Targets

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### Recommendation

Whereas Council approved Scenario 1 (Growth Plan Reference Scenario) reflecting the most likely population and employment forecast over the long-term planning horizon to 2051 as described in RPT-20-229 dated December 8, 2020;

And Whereas based on feedback from RPT-20-229 staff propose modified rural and urban area Growth Allocation numbers as presented in report RPT-21-29;

And Whereas staff have undertaken an analysis and have determined there is sufficient residential lands (surplus of 395 gross ha) within our current urban settlement areas to accommodate population, housing and population-related employment and that no settlement area boundary expansions or new Designated Greenfield Areas will be required for the Community Area to the year 2051;

And Whereas, the Municipal Comprehensive Review preliminary analysis has determined an appropriate Intensification Housing Target of 20% and Designated Greenfield Area Density Target of 50 people and jobs per gross hectare;

THAT staff be directed to complete the Municipal Comprehensive Review for the purposes the County's New Official Plan based on the technical details outlined in RPT-21-29.

### Strategic Priorities

1. Sustainable and Managed Growth
2. Healthy, Safe and Engaged Citizens
3. Effective Communications.

### Financial Considerations

Completion of the new official plan will be undertaken primarily by County staff, with some portions completed by external consultants such as the Municipal Comprehensive Review and facilitation of public engagement events.

## Background

The County of Brant is currently in the process of preparing a new Official Plan (OP). This process represents a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), in accordance with section 26 of the *Planning Act*. A MCR is part of the OP review process which is used to establish a long-term vision and planning framework for a municipality that fosters a sustainable approach to future residential growth and economic development.

Staff presented at a Special Meeting of Council on December 8, 2020 with RPT-20-229 summarizing the Reference Forecast Scenario for the County of Brant forecasts population to 59,000 people and employment to 26,000 people. Staff recommended the Reference Forecast as the long-range population, housing and employment growth scenario for the County.

### Land Needs Assessment

Population Forecasting forms the starting point for projecting housing need and related land needs. Municipalities may use Schedule 3 Forecasts or an alternate growth scenario. Providing an appropriate growth forecasts is Component 1 of the *Land Needs Assessment* and a critical first step in determining long-term residential and employment land needs.

An assessment of future residential land needs is required as part of the County's Municipal Comprehensive Review and conformity to the Growth Plan. The assessment needs to take into account the Density and Intensification Targets mandated in the Growth Plan. This report provides an updated land need analysis and conclusions regarding the future amount of residential land required based on updated housing unit forecasts and supply information.

## Report

The purpose of this report is as follows:

1. To provide the preliminary findings of our technical analysis as it relates to the Community Area (Residential) Land Needs Analysis;
2. To provide revised growth allocations by urban and rural area, land need by Urban Settlement Area and County Official Plan direction to the year 2051;
3. To determine whether there are sufficient designated residential lands within our urban and rural areas to accommodate population, housing, and population-related employment for our Community Area Land Needs to 2051 (surplus or deficit);
4. To review an appropriate Intensification Housing Target (annual housing within the built-up areas of Paris and St. George), if different than the Growth Plan minimum of 15%; and
5. To review an appropriate Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) Density Target (people and jobs per gross hectare) if different than the Growth Plan minimum of 40 people+ jobs/ha for the County of Brant.

## **Revised Growth Allocations – Rural and Urban Settlement Areas**

Based on feedback and further analysis from the Special Meeting of Council RPT-20-229, December 8, 2020 the Growth Allocations for the urban settlement areas and rural areas have been revised. The revised Population, Housing and Employment Growth Forecasting Allocations document is attached to this report (rev. February, 2021).

The Growth Plan, 2019 and PPS, 2020 identify two types of settlement areas: urban areas and rural settlement areas. For the County of Brant, Paris and St. George represent the County's urban areas in accordance with the Growth Plan, 2019; which is the distribution of growth in the County to the majority of areas with full municipal servicing.

Between 2016 and 2051, the share of the County-wide population forecast has been allocated as follows:

- Paris – 60% (change from 68%);
- St. George - 20% (change from 24%);
- Rural settlement areas and remaining rural areas – 20% (change from 9%).

Revisions to the growth allocations have been made to better align growth potential within the rural and urban areas. These revisions are based on a further review of historical trends as well as anticipated housing demand within the County's urban and rural areas. It is noted that wastewater servicing constraints in St. George may potentially limit the amount of population and employment allocated to this area over the horizon of the Growth Plan and may result in further refinements to the growth allocations by urban and rural area if required.

Paris as a strategic growth area as noted in the Growth Plan, has revised annual housing growth allocation of 145 Units per year. This change is based on the infrastructure capacity, transportation and the ability to slow and manage growth over the forecasted period to 2051.

## **Provincial Policy Objectives**

The residential Land Needs Assessment is undertaken in accordance with Provincial policy, notably the Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), which sets out the growth forecasts to be used for long-range planning and direction on how growth may be accommodated. With respect to residential land needs, the Growth Plan sets out specific policies and numeric targets to implement its planning objectives.

In conjunction with these policies and good planning with respect to growth, these principles include the potential for higher-level of intensification within already developed or "built-up" areas of the community, and also accommodating new growth in undeveloped "greenfield areas" in a more compact, complete community and mixed-use urban form.

In conjunction with the Growth Plan, 2019, the province released an updated methodology for land needs assessment (LNA). Upper- and single-tier municipalities in the GGH are required to use this methodology to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecast growth in conformity with the policies in the Growth Plan, 2019.

The overall policy objectives of the Growth Plan, 2019 and PPS, 2020 for the County of Brant as an Outer Ring Municipality are as follows:

- *Intensification Targets – minimum 15%*
- *Density Targets – 40 people and jobs per gross hectare (Designated Greenfield Area)*
- Land Supply: Sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years; and maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment.
- Planning for Infrastructure: maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units.

## **Land Needs Assessment Methodology & Technical Analysis**

The LNA represents a core aspect of the MCR. It involves a land budget exercise informed by the long-term population and employment forecast to the County to the year 2051. The Province's LNA Methodology (2020) is an attachment to this report.

The results of this technical exercise can only be implemented through the new County of Brant OP and must conform to the policies of the Growth Plan, 2019. The LNA for the GGH provides key components to be completed as municipalities plan to ensure that sufficient land is available to: accommodate all housing market segments; avoid housing shortages; consider market demand; and accommodate all employment.

### **Intensification Targets**

The Growth Plan, 2019 establishes an “intensification first” approach to development and community building. This approach requires municipalities to first demonstrate that they are optimizing existing urban land, infrastructure and public service facilities, before they expand existing urban areas to accommodate future population and employment growth.

Intensification reflects all lands located within the limits of developed urban areas, which are technically referred to as the built-up area (BUA). The BUA includes all primary urban lands which were built as of June 2006, the effective date of the original 2006 Growth Plan.

Under both the Growth Plan, 2019 and the PPS, 2020 *intensification* means 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.

The infill category comprises a small amount of scattered vacant parcels scattered throughout the community which have limited potential to accommodate new units because of required planning changes, in most cases severance. Intensification refers to a much broader category of supply potential, based on the future redevelopment of vacant buildings or underutilized properties.

If an intensification target is higher than the Growth Plan be used, a municipality should estimate the number of units by type likely to be created under current or anticipated conditions. In order to establish a realistic supply of the units that will be achieved to the 2051 horizon, the County needs to estimate the number of units by type likely to be created under current or anticipated housing market conditions.

**The County is exceeding the current intensification target of 15%.** It is anticipated that the County will continue to achieve a higher intensification rate in already built-up areas for several reasons:

- A portion of recent intensification growth has consisted of rounding out of subdivisions (finishing of final phases and adding a higher density component (e.g. towns);
- Demand for 1,380 housing units within the built-up area over the 2022 to 2051 horizon, includes ground-oriented units on remaining vacant lots (single/semi-detached and towns);
- Based on a review of intensification opportunities with active development applications for 1,100 housing units, and further potential to accommodate an additional 2,800 to 4,900 housing units; and
- Across the County, housing preferences by structure type are anticipated to gradually shift from low-density to medium-density and high-density housing forms over the long term. This shift will largely be driven by the aging of the County's population base and rising housing prices relative to household income. It is further noted that to adequately accommodate future housing demand across an increasingly diverse population base, a broader range of new housing typologies by built-form, tenure and affordability will be required across the County's urban areas.

**In accordance with the above, a minimum annual residential intensification target of 20% is recommended for the County of Brant between 2022 and 2051.**

#### **Density Targets within Designated Greenfield Areas (DGA)**

**Between 2022 and 2051, recognizing local and broader regional trends, a minimum annual residential DGA Density Target of 50 people and jobs per gross hectare is recommended for the County of Brant.**

- Approximately 57% of the DGA land area is developed and approved at an average density of 52 people and jobs/ha.
- A density of 50 people and jobs will allow for a range of housing types/forms, as well as more commercial and institutional uses.
- A slightly higher density reduces the need for greenfield lands.

The County of Brant as an Outer-Ring GGH municipality is currently required to plan for a minimum density target of 40 people and jobs per hectare.

How has the County been tracking to the Growth Plan Density Targets so far?

Developed as of 2020	39 people & jobs/ha
Approved (unbuilt)	54 people & jobs/ha
Average Developed/Approved	52 people & jobs/ha

#### **Designated Greenfield Areas**

**The current DGA Land Supply for the County totals 739 gross hectares.**

DGA lands are within settlement areas (not including rural settlements) but outside of delineated BUA lands that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan.

While a significant portion of the GGH growth is being directed to BUA lands, there is still a need for some new development in DGA settlement area boundaries. The Growth Plan requires that DGA lands are planned to achieve a minimum density target on an upper-tier/single-tier municipal-wide basis. Higher densities are to support active transportation and transit, access to amenities and greenspace, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The density characteristics of a new and developing DGA is based on the size of residential lots, mix of housing choices and types and availability of jobs in that area.

The following are included in the DGA land supply:

- All designated residential, commercial and institutional lands –vacant and developed;
- Local roads;
- Internal infrastructure (stormwater ponds, pumping stations); and
- Parks, trails and open space.

## **Density**

Density is a ratio of residents and jobs to a land area. Density targets are a key performance measure. The Growth Plan tabulates density to be the ratio of residents (and jobs) to a certain land area; with density targets of 40, 50, 60, 80, 200, etc. residents and jobs per gross hectare. Municipalities are required to plan in accordance with as per their Official Plans - in order to measure how a growing number of persons and jobs are to be accommodated in a fixed amount of space.

The County must also determine housing unit potential by type within the DGA. Inventories should identify lands that are:

- subject to development applications or approvals;
- vacant, designated and available to receive development applications; and,
- vacant, not designated and potentially available to receive development applications subject to a determination of long-term need over the horizon of the Growth Plan.

For lands subject to development approvals, this requires the inventory of proposed units by type based on municipal development approvals tracking resources. For vacant, designated and available lands, this requires estimating the units by type premised on the density permissions of the official plan. For vacant, not designated and available lands, it is appropriate to assume a density similar to comparable vacant DGA lands.

## **Visualizing Density**

This report includes an attachment entitled “Visualizing Density”, from the Province and Canadian Urban Institute, which highlights visualizing built form looks like in relation to density targets beyond buildings to make complete communities, for information.

## **Housing Supply Potential within Rural Areas**

An estimate of rural dwelling units in rural settlements and outside of urban settlement areas should also be undertaken and included in the overall estimate of potential supply. While such units do not contribute to the achievement of the designated greenfield area density target, they do provide for supply to meet forecast housing needs that must be accounted for prior to assessing the need for settlement area boundary expansions.

## **Community Area Land Needs Assessment and Residential Supply and Demand**

**Based on our technical findings, the County of Brant has a DGA Need to 2051 of a total surplus of 389 gross hectares.**

**Therefore, it is recommended that no settlement area boundary expansions or new Designated Greenfield Areas will be required for the Community Area to the year 2051.**

As identified in the LNA for the GGH, land needs within urban areas are to be considered by **Community Areas** which are areas where most of the housing required to accommodate population, as well as population-related jobs and most office jobs will be located.

The land budget essentially compares the demand and supply of residential units, within a Growth Plan context, to determine if the current supply is sufficient to accommodate future demand. If not, additional greenfield supply is required. The key elements of the analysis are described below.

### **Overview of Residential Land Supply**

The review of the residential land supply is based on information available such as:

- Housing units within registered, draft approved and pending plans of subdivision by community, unit structure type and development status;
- The estimated housing unit potential on designated urban greenfield residential lands for which a draft plan of subdivision has yet to be submitted; and
- Housing intensification opportunities within the BUA outside of active plans, as previously discussed

As of 2020, there is approximately 6,020 housing units that have been approved (unbuilt) on vacant DGA lands in St. George and Paris (on approximately 327 gross ha). A further, 1,165 units have been approved within the BUA of St. George and Paris. The supply of approved (unbuilt) housing units exceeds the housing unit demand for St. George and Paris over the 2021 to 2051 period by approximately 1,190 housing units. In addition, to approve (unbuilt) housing units, the County has received applications with the potential to accommodate 1,750 housing units.

. Major components of the LNA (listed in more detail in the attachment) are:

1. Establish Growth Forecasting Scenario and Housing Forecast
2. Determine Residential Land Supply
  - Review greenfield residential land supply information
  - Review information with respect to infill and intensification
  - Determine overall residential supply potential for the land needs analysis, including greenfield lands and intensification potential
3. Compare supply and demand to identify future land need
  - Determine Greenfield Area unit demand over forecast period
  - Undertake analysis to determine if results will meet Density and Intensification targets set out in the Growth Plan, or if different targets are applicable.
  - Determine greenfield residential land need and if any settlement area boundary expansions are required to accommodate a gross new land need.

## Conclusions

By way of brief summary, the following key conclusions can be highlighted from the preliminary Community Area Land Needs Assessment:

- The County of Brant is forecasted to grow to a total population of 59,000 people and employment of 26,000 people, which is the Reference Forecast shown in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan, 2019 (Amendment 1, Aug. 2020).
- Between 2016 and 2051, the share of the County-wide population forecast has been allocated as follows:
  - Paris – 60%;
  - St. George - 20%; and
  - Rural settlement areas and remaining rural areas – 20%.
- The County is exceeding the current intensification target of 15%. The forecast housing unit mix should be adjusted to include a higher proportion of units for Intensification which reduces the amount of single-detached housing in greenfield areas.
- Between 2022 and 2051, a minimum annual residential intensification target of 20% is recommended for the County of Brant.
- Between 2022 and 2051, recognizing local and broader regional trends, a minimum annual residential (Community Area DGA) Density Target of 50 people and jobs per gross hectare is recommended for the County of Brant.
- The current total Community Area DGA Land Supply for the County is a total of 739 gross hectares.
- Based on our technical findings regarding forecast Community Area land demand to the year 2051, the County of Brant has a DGA Community Area DGA surplus of 389 gross hectares.
- Therefore it is recommended that no settlement area boundary expansions or new DGA lands will be required for Community Areas to the year 2051.

## New Official Plan Schedule and Next Steps

County staff are moving ahead with completing the draft MCR based on the above-referenced growth forecasting assumptions and key findings. The date by which municipalities must conform to the policies in A Place to Grow still remains July 1, 2022, and the Province has confirmed there will be no extension to this date.

The next step of our MCR process is the Employment Area Land Needs Analysis and Employment Strategy; and review of the Employment Land Conversion requests. This will be presented at an upcoming meeting in April, 2021.

Please see the updated Workplan and Schedule attached to this report (v.8, March 2021).

## Updates to Master Plans

The New Official Plan, coordination of public engagement and technical background studies of the MCR are being fully coordinated with other County departments for their input and analysis. The proposed amendment to the Provincial Growth Plan Forecasting affects other departments and their objectives in Corporate Services, Operations and Finance.



The Transportation Master Plan (TMP), currently underway and scheduled for completion in early 2022, will include a review and analysis of the County's future transportation needs based on the adopted growth scenario in the new Official Plan. Based on that analysis, plans for the future road, walking, and cycling networks will be refined as needed and presented to Council for approval along with any required amendment to the new Official Plan.

The New Official Plan is being coordinated with infrastructure master plans such as the Class EA Master Servicing Plans for Paris, Burford, St. George, and Cainsville.

**Report by:** Jennifer Boyer, BES, M.Sc., MCIP RPP, Manager of Policy Planning

**Reviewed and**

**Submitted by:** Pam Duesling, MAES, MCIP, RPP, Ec.D., CMM3, General Manager of Development Services

### **Attachments**

1. March 2, 2021 Presentation – County of Brant MCR – Preliminary Community Area Residential Land Needs & Density/Intensification Targets
2. County of Brant MCR – Population, Housing and Employment Growth Forecast Allocations, January 29, 2021 (rev.)
3. Official Plan Work Plan & Schedule v.8 March 2021
4. Letter from the Province of Ontario, Ontario Growth Secretariat to County of Brant, February 23, 2021
5. Province of Ontario-MMAH Land Needs Assessment Methodology, 2020
6. Visualizing Density, Province of Ontario/Canadian Urban Institute, 2017

### **Copy to**

1. Heather Boyd, Director of Council Services, Clerk
2. Senior Management Team (SMT)
3. Mark Eby, Director of Infrastructure
4. Heather Mifflin, Director of Finance
5. Mat Vaughan, Director of Development Planning
6. Kathy Ballantyne, Director of Parks and Facilities
7. Alyssa Seitz, Planning Administrative Assistant

### **In adopting this report, is a bylaw or agreement required?**

By-law required (No)

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk (No)

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? (No)