



External Briefing Note

GEORGINA

Subject: Provincial Planning Statement 2024

To: Mayor and Council

From: Alan Drozd, Manager of Planning Policy

Date: **November 20, 2024**

Briefing:

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide Council with an update on the status of the new Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS 2024).

Background

On April 6, 2023, the Province released proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS 2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 (Growth Plan) on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) for a 60-day commenting period ending on June 5, 2023. See link: [ERO 019-6813](#). These included a name change to the “Provincial Planning Statement”.

On May 17, 2023, Council received Report No. [DS-2023-0047](#) concerning the proposed changes to the PPS 2020 and Growth Plan, and adopted a resolution forwarding the subject report and Council’s resolution thereon to the Province of Ontario in response to the ERO posting.

On August 20, 2024, the Province released the final version of the [Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 \(PPS 2024\)](#) which came into effect on October 20, 2024. With the final approval of the PPS 2024, the Growth Plan is no longer in effect.

Analysis

The PPS 2024 is issued under the *Planning Act* and provides the primary provincial wide land use planning direction in Ontario. The Growth Plan was previously issued under *The Places to Grow Act, 2005*. It provided more detailed direction on where and how growth should be accommodated in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The Growth Plan worked together with other Provincial Plans such as the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The provincial plans complement the PPS and provide specific land use policy direction addressing specific geographic areas.

Under the *Planning Act*, planning decisions are required to be consistent with policy statements such as the PPS and are required to conform or not conflict with provincial plans.

Since its original introduction in 2006, the Growth Plan has provided a consistent framework for large scale inter-regional planning in the GGH. In particular, the Growth Plan established population and employment forecasts to 2041 and developed clear approaches for growth management, intensification and settlement area boundary expansions that are now reflected in Regional and local Official Plans. The repeal of the Growth Plan represents the elimination of this consistent inter-regional planning framework for the GGH. It is replaced by a provincial wide planning statement with a more generic focus that may lead to inconsistency in approaches and outcomes across the GGH and the province generally. Very little of the structure and content of the Growth Plan is carried forward in the PPS 2024. The previous dismantling of the Regional planning approval function in certain regions such as York, the reduced jurisdiction of conservation authorities in the planning system and the return of approval authority for local official plans to the Minister creates a more centralized control of the planning system by the Province last seen in the mid 1990's.

Staff have reviewed the final version of the PPS 2024 and note that while there have been some changes, on balance these changes do not materially alter the overview of the draft proposed PPS presented in Report DS-2023-0047 or have any additional significant impacts on the Town. In particular, it is noted that the Town is not listed as one of the *Large and Fast-Growing Municipalities* in the PPS 2024 and is therefore not subject to specific minimum density or watershed planning requirements. Furthermore, the Town is entirely within the Greenbelt Plan area and is therefore subject to its policies which restrict urban area expansions and override provisions of the PPS 2024 which would otherwise allow for an easier path towards settlement area expansions. Provincial Plans like the Greenbelt Plan take precedence over the PPS to the extent of any conflict.

Moving forward, the PPS 2024 represents the Province's overall road map directing development application processing and land use policy development. As with any major change in planning policy direction it will take time to fully assess its implications. Staff continue to monitor the evolving provincial planning policy landscape and will update Council accordingly.

Should you have any comments or questions related to this briefing note, contact me via telephone at 905-476-4301 ext. 2221 or via email at adrozd@georgina.ca.