

Council Memo



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Wednesday, April 21, 2021
Subject	Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy – Growth Scenarios Council Workshop

This memo provides an overview of the agenda and discussion topics for the April 21, 2021 Council workshop on Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy. Information to support Council’s participation in the workshop including background information on A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (APTG), Guelph’s Official Plan, the scope of the City’s municipal comprehensive Official Plan Review (Shaping Guelph), and a brief overview of the three growth scenarios, growth scenario evaluation framework, and proposed urban structure to be discussed at this workshop is provided in this memo. Additional background information on the growth scenarios and proposed urban structure is within the [Shaping Guelph – Growth scenarios and urban structure](#) Council information report.

Workshop Agenda

1. Purpose of the workshop (5 minutes)
2. Overview of APTG, the Shaping Guelph process, and growth scenarios – background presentation and workshop discussion 1 (60 minutes)
3. Overview of proposed growth scenario evaluation framework – background presentation and workshop discussion 2 (20 minutes)
4. Overview of proposed urban structure – background presentation and workshop discussion 3 (30 minutes)
5. Wrap-up and next steps (5 minutes)

Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of this Council workshop is to seek Council’s input on:

- Three scenarios for growth
- Proposed growth scenario evaluation framework and
- A proposed urban structure.

Overview of APTG 2019

In May 2019, the Province released A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (APTG). Amendment 1 to APTG was approved with an effective date of August 28, 2020. APTG guides growth and development within the Greater Golden Horseshoe over the next 30 years. APTG requires that Guelph plan for a population of 203,000 and an employment base of 116,000 jobs in 2051.

Guelph's Official Plan includes a population of 175,000 people and 92,000 jobs to 2031. Key considerations for Guelph under APTG will be to update our Official Plan to 2051 to:

- Accommodate a population of 203,000 and an employment base of 116,000 jobs in 2051. The population and employment forecasts within APTG are fixed. Municipalities are legislated to update their Official Plans to accommodate these forecasts
- Plan for a minimum residential intensification target of 50 per cent within the built up area (BUA)¹
- Plan for a minimum designated greenfield area (DGA)² density target of 50 persons and jobs per hectare
- Plan for a minimum urban growth centre³ (Downtown) (UGC) density of 150 persons and jobs per hectare to 2031
- Establish an updated urban structure, including the delineation of strategic growth areas (SGAs)⁴ (formerly intensification areas) and the delineation of Guelph's major transit station area (MTSA)
- Identify the appropriate type and scale of development in SGAs, and
- Continue to integrate land use planning with infrastructure planning.

¹ APTG defines built-up area as "the limits of the developed urban area as defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target". The limits of the built-up area are based on the developed urban area as of 2006.

² APTG defines designated greenfield area as "land within settlement areas (not including rural settlements) but outside of delineated built up areas that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of APTG".

³ APTG defines urban growth centres as "existing or emerging downtown areas shown in the Growth Plan and as further identified by the Minister on April 2, 2008".

⁴ APTG defines strategic growth areas as "within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic growth areas include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas".

Overview of the Shaping Guelph process

In October 2019, Council endorsed a process for Guelph to conform to APTG – Guelph’s municipal comprehensive Official Plan review (MCR). The MCR is known as Shaping Guelph: Growth Management Strategy (Shaping Guelph). Figure 1 shows the timeline for Shaping Guelph.

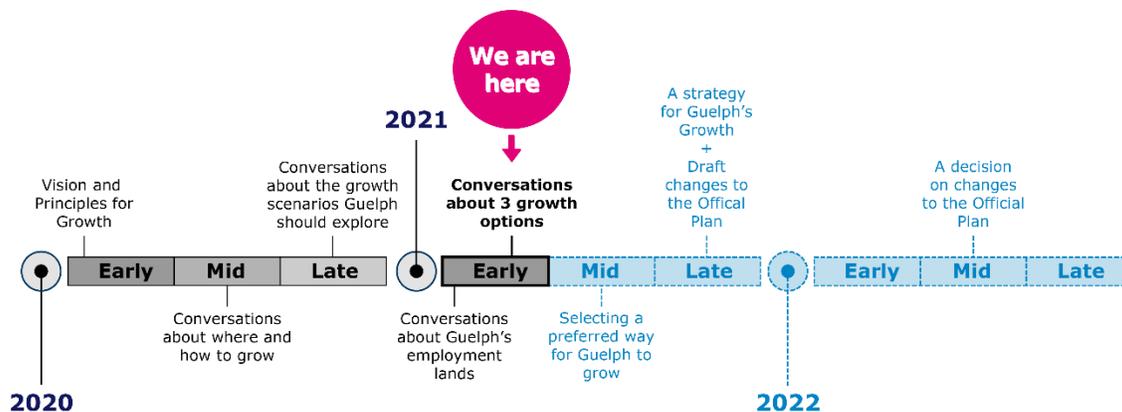


Figure 1 – Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy timeline

The Shaping Guelph process includes several technical background studies that have been and will be prepared throughout 2020 and 2021. These are:

- Confirmation of a vision and principles for growth. A [draft vision and principles for growth](#) was endorsed by Council in June 2020 and has been used to inform work on the background studies
- A residential intensification analysis (RIA). The RIA was completed as background to the housing analysis and strategy and is contained within it
- An [employment lands strategy](#) (ELS)
- A [housing analysis and strategy](#) (HAS)
- Growth scenario planning, based on a land needs assessment.

An overview of the scope of each of these studies was provided in report [IDE-2019-91](#).

Workshop discussion 1 – growth scenarios

Throughout 2020 community and stakeholder conversation were held to gain input into where and how Guelph should grow as well as input on growth scenarios that should be explored. We heard that:

- New housing should be balanced between the BUA and the DGA but that more housing should be added within the BUA rather than expanding the city’s urban boundary. A growth scenario that directs more than 50 per cent of new housing units in Guelph’s BUA should be explored

- There is a preference for more housing downtown but that growth also needs to be balanced across all nodes and corridors. A growth scenario that considers new nodes and corridors should be explored
- Existing Official Plan permissions for maximum building heights should be maintained but there should be opportunities to increase densities through gentle intensification. A 2051 housing mix that provides more medium density housing as well as considers the market demand for grade related housing should be explored.

In consideration of the community and stakeholder input and the technical analysis completed through the ELS, HAS, and [Shaping Guelph – Growth scenarios and urban structure](#) Council information report, the following growth scenarios have been prepared for consideration:

Scenario 1 – Meeting the minimum forecasts and targets of APTG using the Official Plan urban structure, heights and densities and land uses as the guide

Scenario 2 – Adding more medium density housing to the city-wide housing mix

Scenario 3 – Increasing the minimum built-up area target and adding more low and medium density housing to the city-wide housing mix

For all scenarios:

- The minimum forecasts and targets of APTG are met
- There are alternatives being explored through the Water Supply Master Plan to increase the city’s water supply capacity to accommodate growth to 2051. New supply sources will be reviewed through the Water Supply Master Plan and will evaluate any environmental impacts to the surface water systems in and around the city
- There is the ability and capacity to ensure effective and efficient wastewater treatment and biosolids handling to 2051 through smart planning, new technologies and future capital investment
- No settlement boundary expansions are considered or proposed as Guelph’s settlement boundary is coincident with its corporate boundary. Any expansion of the settlement boundary would require lands being added to Guelph’s corporate boundary (e.g. annexation). Expansions of Guelph’s corporate boundary are not within the scope of Shaping Guelph
- The densities and land uses from the Guelph Innovation District Secondary Plan are unchanged
- The Council endorsed preferred community structure for the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan Area is unchanged

Table 1 provides an overview of key factors of each of the growth scenarios including the BUA target, DGA target, and city-wide housing mix. The Growth Scenarios Technical Brief (see April 9 Council Memo available on the [Shaping Guelph webpage](#)) provides a comprehensive overview of each of these scenarios, including an overview of water supply and wastewater treatment capacity.

Table 1 – Comparison of key factors between growth scenarios

Key factor	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
BUA target	50%	50%	55%
DGA target	66 persons and jobs per hectare	66 persons and jobs per hectare	64 persons and jobs per hectare
2051 city-wide housing mix	10% low density 22% medium density 57% high density 11% accessory apartments	11% low density 26% medium density 52% high density 11% accessory apartments	14% low density 27% medium density 48% high density 11% accessory apartments

Council will be asked for their thoughts and reactions to each of the growth scenarios.

Workshop discussion 2 - proposed growth scenario evaluation framework

A series of proposed evaluation criteria has been developed based on themes from the Provincial Policy Statement, APTG, Guelph’s Community Plan, Strategic Plan, and Official Plan. These themes are:

- Complete communities/livability
- Growth management
- Economic growth
- Transportation, infrastructure, financing
- Cultural/natural heritage, and
- Public health and safety

Within each theme a number of planning objectives and evaluation questions are provided to assess and evaluate each growth scenario. The evaluation framework applies a climate change lens to the themes and links to climate change are woven throughout the criteria.

Council will be asked for their thoughts on the evaluation framework to identify what criteria may be missing that is essential to inform the selection of a preferred growth scenario.

The [Shaping Guelph – Growth scenarios and urban structure](#) Council information report provides a comprehensive overview of the evaluation framework.

Workshop discussion 3 - proposed urban structure

The Official Plan includes a plan for growth based on a “nodes and corridors” model. Nodes and corridors throughout the city and the downtown are identified as priority areas for growth. The location of these areas are shown on Figure 2 below.

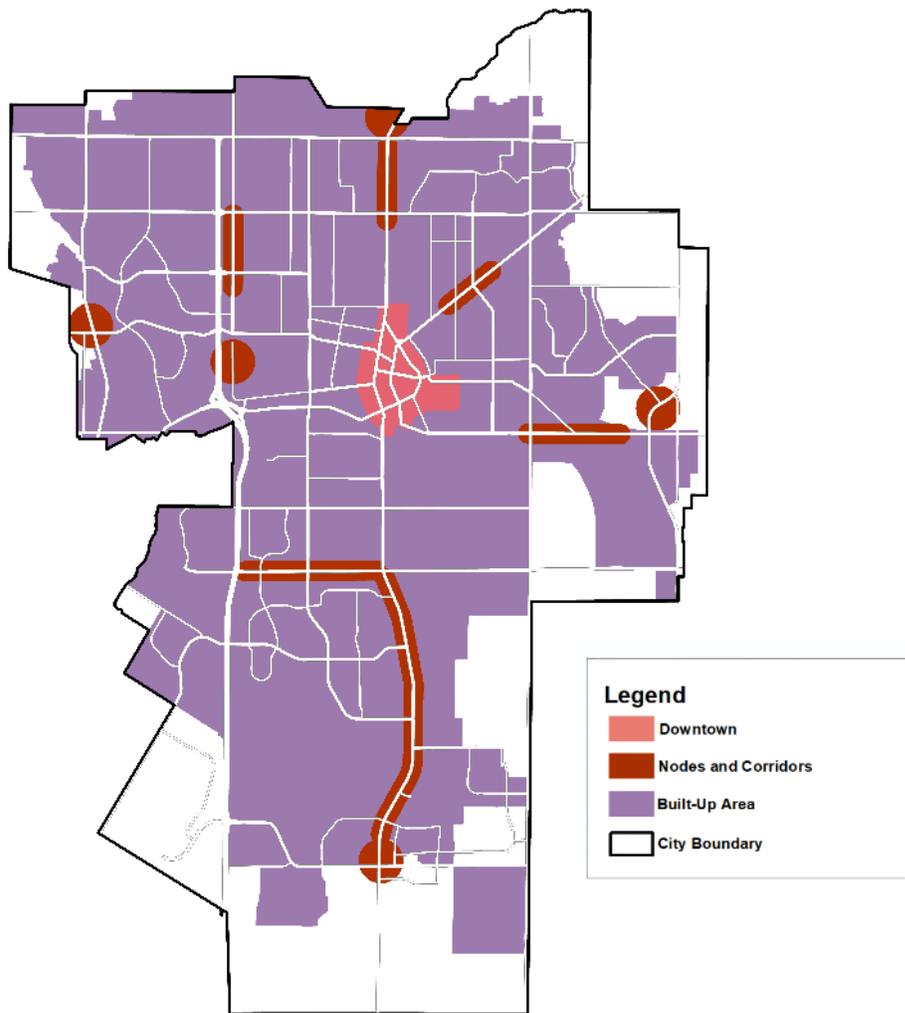


Figure 2 – Guelph’s existing nodes and corridors

Through community and stakeholder conversations throughout 2020 we heard that this model for growth is working well. We heard that growth should continue to be directed to strategic areas throughout the city. As part of the HAS and RIA it was confirmed that there is capacity and opportunities to continue to accommodate growth in the nodes and corridors. Additionally, there is capacity to accommodate growth in other areas of the BUA as well as planned opportunities for concentrations of growth throughout the DGA.

To plan for growth beyond 2031, the existing urban structure has been reviewed and updates proposed, as shown in Figure 3, that conform to APTG, consider the technical analysis from the HAS and RIA and community and stakeholder input. Figure 3 continues to direct growth to strategic areas throughout the city (shown on Figure 3 as strategic growth areas) and generally throughout the BUA, providing opportunities for multi-modal transportation connections (e.g. walking, cycling, transit, vehicular) and help to prioritize infrastructure and financial investments. The proposed urban structure also includes employment areas, a major transit station area around Guelph’s central station, the downtown as an urban growth centre, the BUA and the DGA.

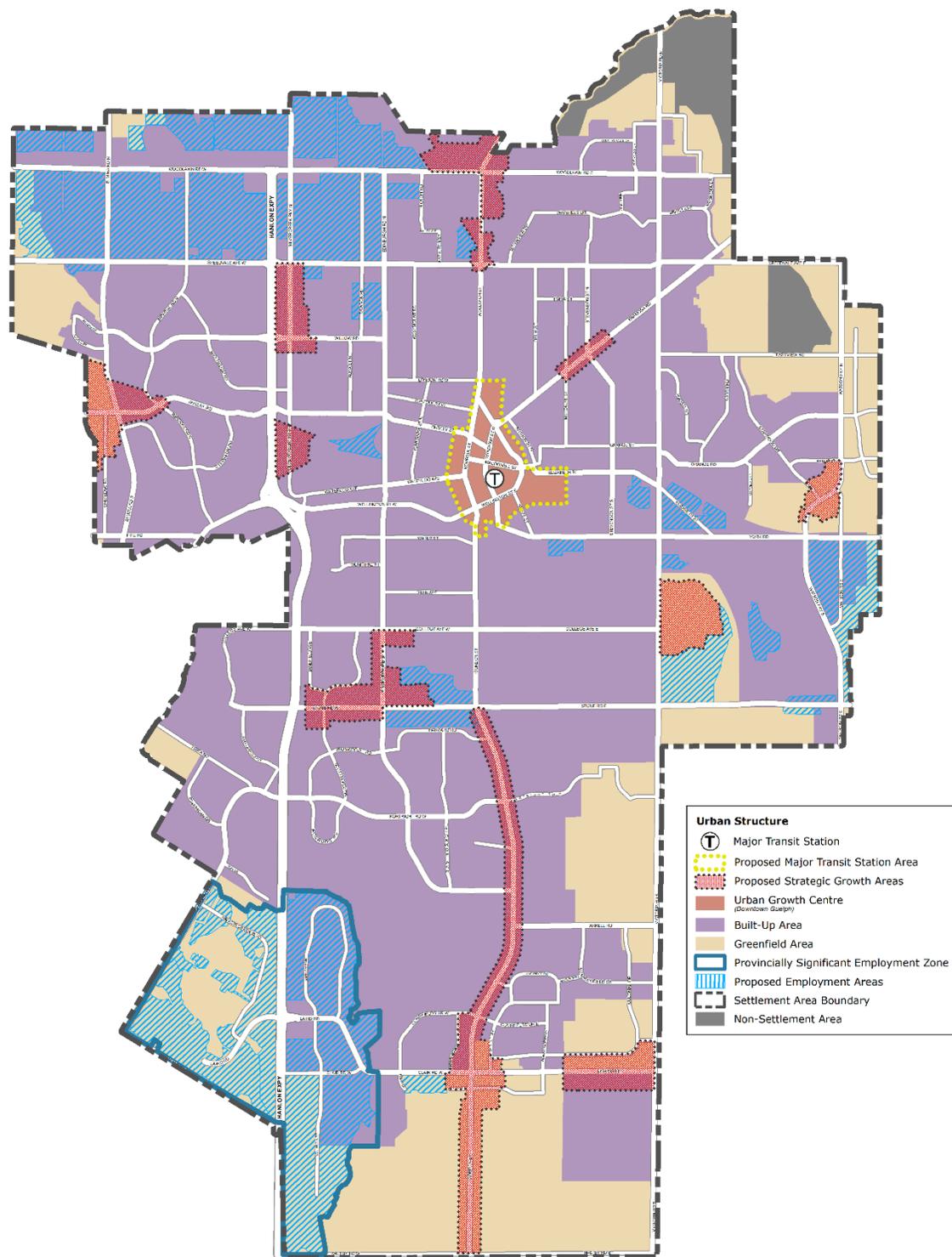


Figure 3 – Proposed urban structure

Council will be asked for their thoughts on the proposed strategic growth areas shown in the proposed urban structure. Specifically Council will be asked whether any areas on the proposed urban structure should not be considered a strategic growth area. Council will also be asked whether there are other areas of the city that should be considered a strategic growth area.

The [Shaping Guelph – Growth scenarios and urban structure](#) provides details on the inputs and considerations that informed the proposed urban structure.

Wrap-up and next steps

Community and stakeholder engagement on the information presented at the Council workshop is planned throughout April. Engagement will include a public town hall, series of stakeholder roundtable discussions, and opportunities for input [online](#).

Input gathered at the Council workshop and community and stakeholder engagement will be used by staff and consultants to inform the selection of a preferred growth scenario and completion of the APTG required land needs assessment. At this time, it is anticipated that a preferred growth scenario and land needs assessment will be presented to Council in early summer 2021 for endorsement to guide the development of Guelph's growth management strategy.

Attachments

Attachment-1 April 2021 Council Workshop Presentation

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