

# Staff Report



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To	<b>City Council</b>
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Monday, January 17, 2022
Subject	<b>Shaping Guelph: Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment</b>

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## Recommendation

1. That the Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment be endorsed and that the recommendations be incorporated into the draft Official Plan amendment for further consultation.
  2. That Council request approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a modified minimum intensification target of 46% of all residential development occurring annually.
  3. That Council endorse a modified population forecast for the year 2051 of 208,000 and a modified settlement area boundary for the City of Guelph that includes the Dolime Quarry annexed lands within the designated greenfield area of the city for inclusion in the draft Official Plan amendment.
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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

To provide Council with the preferred growth scenario for Guelph to the year 2051 and outline the recommendations for implementation of the projections, targets and policy directions of A Place to Grow.

### Key Findings

The Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment provides a preferred growth scenario that optimizes the use of land and infrastructure, provides for a diverse mix of land uses and aligns with the Council-endorsed vision and principles for growth.

The preferred growth scenario provides the greatest balance between meeting market demand for certain forms of housing while supporting compact, transit-supportive development that aligns with the City's endorsed vision for growth.

To accommodate the Dolime Quarry annexed lands within the city's settlement area boundary, it is recommended that the City request modifications to the population forecast and intensification target. The forecast population for 2051 is recommended to be increased by 5000 persons to 208,000. The minimum intensification target is recommended to be 46% rather than the required 50%.

Strategic growth areas have been identified as areas to focus intensification and higher-density mixed uses to support transit, active transportation and walkable communities.

Downtown, which is the urban growth centre and the recommended protected major transit station area, has the appropriate range and mix of both housing and employment planned through the Downtown Secondary Plan to achieve a recommended density target of 200 residents and jobs per hectare by the year 2051.

Employment areas are identified, and density targets are recommended, to ensure the availability of sufficient land in appropriate locations to support forecasted employment growth.

Recommendations for amendments to the Official Plan policies and land use designations are proposed to implement the preferred growth scenario and growth management strategy and to conform to A Place to Grow.

### **Financial Implications**

Shaping Guelph is funded through PL0054 approved capital budget for costs associated with consultant services and community engagement.

The fiscal impact assessment of the preferred growth scenario is currently being developed with input from ongoing Master Plans. The assessment will be presented to Council in Spring 2022 prior to Council's decision on the municipal comprehensive review which is planned for June/July 2022.

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### **Report**

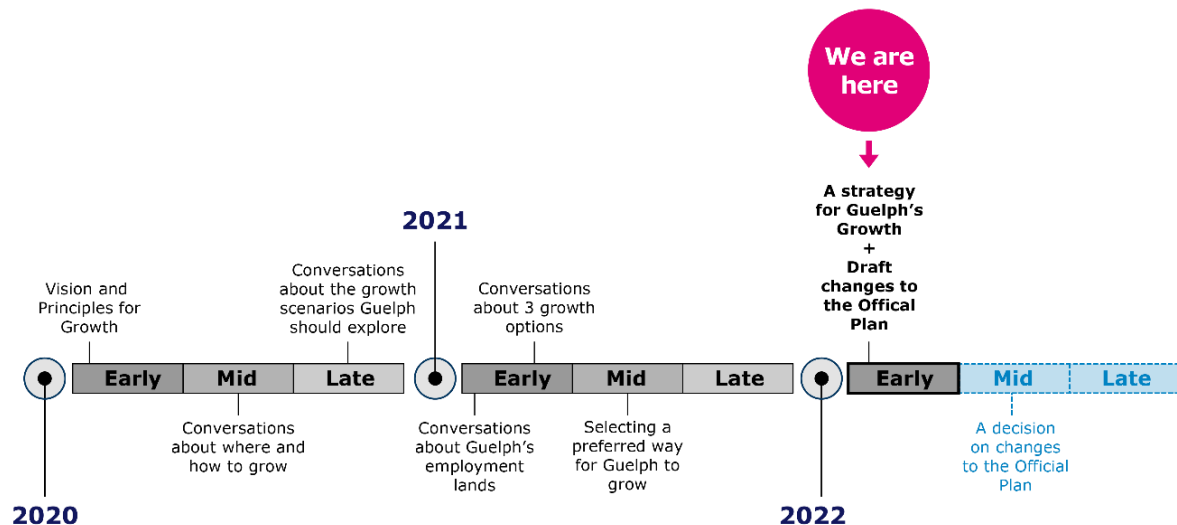
This report provides highlights of the strategy for Guelph's growth and a summary of the preferred growth scenario. The full report including evaluation criteria and recommendations are contained in "[Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment](#)".

### **Background**

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

### **Project Milestones and Background Reports**

Shaping Guelph is the City's municipal comprehensive review process to develop a growth management strategy for the City and bring the Official Plan into conformity with A Place to Grow. The following figure provides the timeline and milestones for Shaping Guelph.



The Shaping Guelph process includes several technical background studies:

- 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)
- A technical brief that analyzes the city’s long-term population and housing growth potential, [Long-Term Population and Housing Growth, Shaping Guelph](#) (December 2021)

### Preferred Growth Scenario

In spring 2021, three growth scenarios were developed based on technical analysis and community and stakeholder input. The following growth scenarios, as outlined in the [Shaping Guelph – Growth scenarios and urban structure](#) Council information report, were considered:

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.

In July 2021, City Council endorsed the settlement pathway for the Dolime Quarry which included annexation of the lands into the city’s boundary. The annexation was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on December 6, 2021. Since the settlement pathway involved increasing the city’s land area, the municipal comprehensive review (Shaping Guelph) needed to adjust to understand how these

lands will contribute to meeting the minimum forecasts and targets and to the achievement of the City's vision for growth. As a result, the three growth scenarios were modified to consider the Dolime lands. For each of the scenarios, an increase to the city's forecasted population is recommended to accommodate the intended development of Dolime as per the settlement pathway endorsed by Council. The modified scenarios are addressed in Section 2.4.3 of the [Growth Management Strategy report](#). The settlement pathway that led to the annexation is considered as a required component of the city's land area for the municipal comprehensive review. This respects the rationale for the annexation of the quarry to protect Guelph's drinking water.

Following consultation and a detailed analysis of the scenarios in accordance with the evaluation criteria, the preferred scenario is a modified Scenario 2 with a population forecast of 208,000 and an alternate minimum intensification target of 46%.

The modified Scenario 2 provides for an increase in medium density housing within the Built-up Area, includes partial redevelopment of Rolling Hills and has a designated greenfield area density target based on secondary plan mid-range assumptions. As of 2051, the designated greenfield area housing mix is 29 per cent low density, 32 per cent medium density and 39 per cent high density housing.

From 2022 to 2051, 46 per cent of annual housing growth is allocated within the Built-up Area with 3 per cent low density, 20 per cent medium density, 62 per cent high density households and 15 per cent accessory apartments.

Scenario 2 is recommended as the preferred scenario as it provides the greatest balance between meeting market demand for certain forms of housing while still supporting compact development in both the designated greenfield area and the delineated built-up area. Further explanation of this preferred scenario is provided in Section 3.2 and Appendix A in [Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment](#).

## **Recommendations for the Municipal Comprehensive Review Official Plan Amendment**

To implement the growth management strategy and preferred growth scenario, amendments to the Official Plan are recommended. These include updating the vision and principles for growth using the Council-endorsed vision and principles, modifying forecasts and targets, updating land use policy and designations, amending the urban structure by introducing strategic growth areas and establishing a boundary for the protected major transit station area.

The growth management strategy recommends:

- Updating the population and employment forecast for 2051 to 208,000 people and 116,000 jobs
- Setting a minimum intensification target for the built-up area of 46% of all residential development occurring annually
- Setting a designated greenfield area density target of 68 people and jobs per hectare
- Establishing strategic growth areas based on the existing nodes and corridors and setting targets for development in these areas (Attachment 2, Figure 1).

- Establishing a boundary for the protected major transit station area that is coincident with the existing boundary for downtown (the urban growth centre) as established in the Downtown Secondary Plan (Attachment 2, Figure 1) and setting a density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare for downtown for the year 2051.
- Establishing Employment Areas and setting targets for development in these areas (Attachment 2, Figure 2)

The recommendations for land use policy and designation amendments include:

- Splitting the Mixed-use Corridor designation into two designations to allow for increased height and density in appropriate areas
- Changing maximum net density for high density residential within strategic growth areas
- Increasing permitted maximum height within the Downtown where height and density bonusing provisions previously applied
- Increasing permitted maximum height and density for Mixed-use Corridor designated sites within the proposed Stone Road and Silvercreek Parkway strategic growth areas
- Increasing permitted maximum height and density for Commercial Mixed-use Centre designated sites within strategic growth areas
- Decreasing the permitted maximum height in the Low Density Residential designation for the greenfield area to 4 storeys
- Increasing the maximum net density within the Low Density Residential designation in the delineated built-up area along arterial roads to 60 units per hectare.

The recommendations for the Reserve Lands designation include:

- The Reserve lands designation for lands within the Dolime Quarry annexed area are recommended to be designated as Special Study Area. The policies would set out the studies to be completed to support a future land use for these lands along with requirements to be met prior to development occurring.
- The land uses for the Reserve lands designation for lands within the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan area will be established through the Clair-Maltby Secondary Plan. The municipal comprehensive review supports the conversion of employment designations in this area to other land uses.
- The Reserve lands designation for lands within the Rolling Hills residential area south of Clair Road East is proposed to be placed into residential land uses categories with a mixed office/commercial designated site to provide for future services, commercial or office use in the area (Attachment 2, Figure 3).

It represents good planning to remove the reserve lands designation from the Rolling Hills area. This area is within the delineated built-up area and is subject to the policies of A Place to Grow that encourage intensification throughout the built-up area. The proposed amendments respect the existing form of development and allow for some change to occur where services would be available prior to 2051. It is recommended that appropriate land use designations be established to allow for

intensification to occur in areas where servicing can be extended or available to ensure that opportunities for growth are distributed equitably throughout the city, that heritage properties are conserved, and to meet objectives for transit supportive development and housing mix and to provide housing in proximity to services (consideration given to access to commercial and institutional facilities such as places of worship and schools). The natural heritage system provides natural boundaries within Rolling Hills for establishing where change could occur.

The preferred growth scenario and the recommended Official Plan amendments support the distribution of growth throughout the city, with an equitable provision of a range and mix of housing options through all neighbourhoods. It also provides for higher densities to support transit priorities and access to services for residents through modes of travel that do not depend on private automobiles.

### **Next Steps**

In Q1 2022, the draft Official Plan amendment to implement the growth management strategy and to address the requirements of the municipal comprehensive review will be released for engagement. A statutory open house and public meeting of City Council will be held in late Q1 2022. Indigenous engagement is planned to continue through Q1/Q2 2022. A recommended Official Plan amendment is anticipated to be brought to City Council for adoption in Q2 2022 prior to submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval in accordance with the provincial deadline of July 2022.

### **Financial Implications**

Shaping Guelph is funded through PL0054 approved capital budget for costs associated with consultant services and community engagement.

The fiscal impact assessment of the preferred growth scenario is currently being developed with input from ongoing Master Plans. The assessment will be presented to Council in Spring 2022 prior to Council's decision on the municipal comprehensive review which is planned for June/July 2022.

### **Consultations**

Engagement was conducted from April to June 2021 and included an online questionnaire, a town hall, a Council workshop, stakeholder roundtables, youth sessions at local secondary schools, an Indigenous sharing circle and consultation with the Planning Advisory Committee. Participants provided feedback on the growth scenarios and the proposed evaluation framework to evaluate the growth scenarios. Full details are contained within the [City of Guelph Growth Scenarios Community Engagement Summary Report](#) (June 2021).

Several letters were received during the consultation period. A summary of the comments received through these letters along with a staff response are provided in Attachment 3.

### **Strategic Plan Alignment**

Shaping Guelph aligns with the following priority areas of the Strategic Plan:

Powering our Future –planning for growth to 2051 recognizes the importance of a healthy supply of employment lands and ones that support innovative employment uses.

Sustaining our future – planning for growth to 2051 prioritizes the protection, conservation, and restoration of the city’s natural heritage system. It also recognizes the City’s role in responding to climate change and preparing for Guelph as a net-zero carbon future

Navigating our Future – planning for growth to 2051 recognizes the importance of connecting existing and future neighbourhoods with all modes of transportation

Building our Future – planning for growth to 2051 is centered on providing housing and employment options and services for current and future residents.

## **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Shaping Guelph: Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Assessment Presentation

Attachment-2 Recommendations for Municipal Comprehensive Review Official Plan Amendment

Attachment-3 Shaping Guelph Growth Scenarios Responses to Comments

## **Departmental Approval**

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