

Council Memo



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Monday, October 19, 2020
Subject	Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy – Residential Intensification Council Workshop

This memo provides an overview of the agenda and discussion topics for the October 19, 2020 Council workshop on Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy. Background information on A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (APTG), Guelph's Official Plan, and the scope of the City's municipal comprehensive Official Plan review is provided. A summary of community engagement conducted on residential intensification to date will be provided at the Council workshop.

Workshop Agenda

1. Welcome and purpose of the workshop (5 minutes)
2. Background presentation (30 minutes)
 - a. Overview of A Place to Grow 2019 and amendment 1 (10 minutes)
 - b. Planning for growth in the built-up area to 2051 (5 minutes)
 - c. Overview of the municipal comprehensive Official Plan review (5 minutes)
 - d. Current Official Plan residential intensification policies (5 minutes)
 - e. Growth over time – census statistics (5 minutes)
3. Workshop discussion (75 minutes)
4. Wrap-up and next steps (5 minutes)

Welcome and purpose of the workshop

The purpose of this Council workshop is to seek Council's input on residential intensification within Guelph's built-up area. Specifically, comments are being sought on:

- Where housing should be directed within the built-up area
- How much housing should be accommodated in downtown, nodes, corridors, and generally throughout the built-up area and

- Maximum building heights for nodes, corridors, specific areas in the downtown, and generally throughout the built-up area.

Overview of A Place to Grow 2019 and amendment 1

In May 2019 the Province released A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (APTG). The City is required to bring its Official Plan into conformity with APTG by July 1, 2022 through a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) – a City-initiated comprehensive look at its Official Plan.

In June 2020 the Province tabled a proposed amendment to APTG. Staff provided comments on the proposed amendment in July 2020 (Attachment 2). On August 28, 2020 the Province issued a decision on the amendment which is now in force and effect. The amended APTG:

- Extends the planning horizon by 10 years requiring municipalities to plan for growth to 2051 rather than 2041
- Requires that Guelph plan for a minimum population of 203,000 people and 116,000 jobs in 2051
- Continues to require that municipalities update their Official Plans to conform to APTG by July 1, 2022

Together with the amended APTG, the Province tabled a new land needs assessment methodology that municipalities are required to follow to determine the amount of land needed to accommodate growth to 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 the horizon of APTG 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% within our built up area¹
- Plan for a minimum designated greenfield area² density target of 50 persons and jobs per hectare

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".

- Plan for a minimum urban growth centre³ (Downtown) density of 150 persons and jobs per hectare to 2031
- Establish an updated urban structure, including the delineation of strategic growth areas⁴ (formerly intensification areas)
- Identify the appropriate type and scale of development in strategic growth areas, and
- Continue to integrate land use planning with infrastructure planning.

Planning for growth in the built-up area to 2051

Annually, the city provides an [overview of its achievements](#) of Official Plan policies which implement the 2006 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Official Plan currently includes a population forecast of 175,000 people to 2031. The 2006 Growth Plan required that the city accommodate 40% of its annual residential development within its built-up area. This is known as the intensification level target. As of the end of 2019, 6,700 new units have been created in the built-up area. In 2019 42% of new units were constructed within the city's built-up area, exceeding the target.

As part of Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy population forecasts will be updated to align with APTG as amended. According to APTG, we need to plan for a population of 203,000 people by 2051. APTG requires a minimum of 50% of our annual residential development occur within our built-up area. At this time we estimate that approximately 25,000⁵ new residential units would need to be constructed by 2051 city-wide with at least half of these residential units being within the built-up area.

It is important to keep in mind that the Official Plan already plans for growth to 2031. The Official Plan sets out policies and a land use framework to achieve a population of 175,000 by 2031 and accommodate 40% of new residential units in the built-up area. Between 2021 and 2051, we are required to plan for an additional 28,000 people. The Official Plan currently plans for 18,500 new residential units within the built-up area by 2031.

In addition to the number of new units that are planned within the Official Plan, to meet APTG intensification requirements, we know that additional residential units are needed within the built-up area. Next steps include forecasting the number of

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".

⁵ The total number of residential units needed to 2051 may change as work progresses on Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy as we gain a better understanding of anticipated unit type splits and anticipated average persons per different types of units (PPUs).

units needed city-wide and within the built-up area to 2051. This work will be completed as part of the Housing Analysis and Strategy background study and growth scenario planning later this year and into 2021.

APTG continues to require that our urban growth centre (downtown) plan for a density of a minimum of 150 persons and jobs per hectare to 2031. In accordance with the Downtown Secondary Plan, there is capacity to accommodate approximately 6,000 additional residential units downtown. Approximately 2,500 residential units are needed within the downtown to achieve the 150 persons and jobs per hectare density target by 2031. Since 2006, 800 new residential units have been constructed downtown. An additional 500 residential units are approved for construction.

Overview of the municipal comprehensive Official Plan review

Project Scope and timeline

To bring Guelph's Official Plan into conformity with APTG, it is necessary to determine where and how Guelph will grow to 2051, and plan to achieve the built-up area, designated greenfield area, and urban growth centre targets. As per APTG, this will constitute the City's municipal comprehensive review (MCR). Municipalities are required to have their Official Plans updated to conform to APTG by July 1, 2022. Figure 1 shows the timeline for the project.

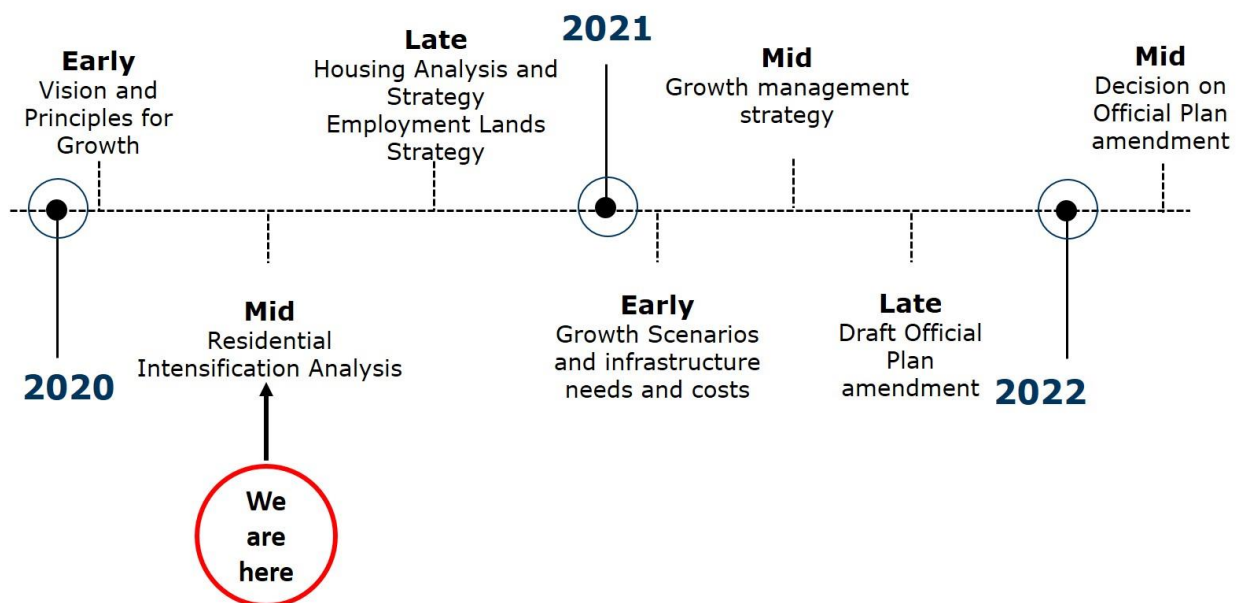


Figure 1 - Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy timeline

Several background studies related to the residential aspects of the MCR have been or will be prepared in 2020 and 2021. These are:

- Vision and principles for growth to the horizon of APTG

- A residential intensification analysis
- A housing analysis and strategy, and
- 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](#).

A [draft vision and principles for growth](#) was endorsed by Council in June 2020 and is being used to inform work on the above-mentioned background studies.

Residential intensification analysis: community engagement

Building on the vision and principles community engagement earlier in 2020, a second series of community engagement was held in late August and throughout September 2020 on the residential intensification analysis. From August 26 to September 24 a survey was available through the city's [website](#) asking the community to share their opinions about locations and amounts of future housing, and preferences for maximum building heights. A roundtable discussion was held on September 17th with key housing stakeholders to gather their perspectives on the same questions asked through the survey. Additionally, a virtual public town hall was held on September 17th which included a staff presentation on the residential considerations of Shaping Guelph Growth Management Strategy followed by a question and answer period. A summary of the results from this community engagement will be provided at the Council workshop.

Current Official Plan residential intensification policies

Intensification areas

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

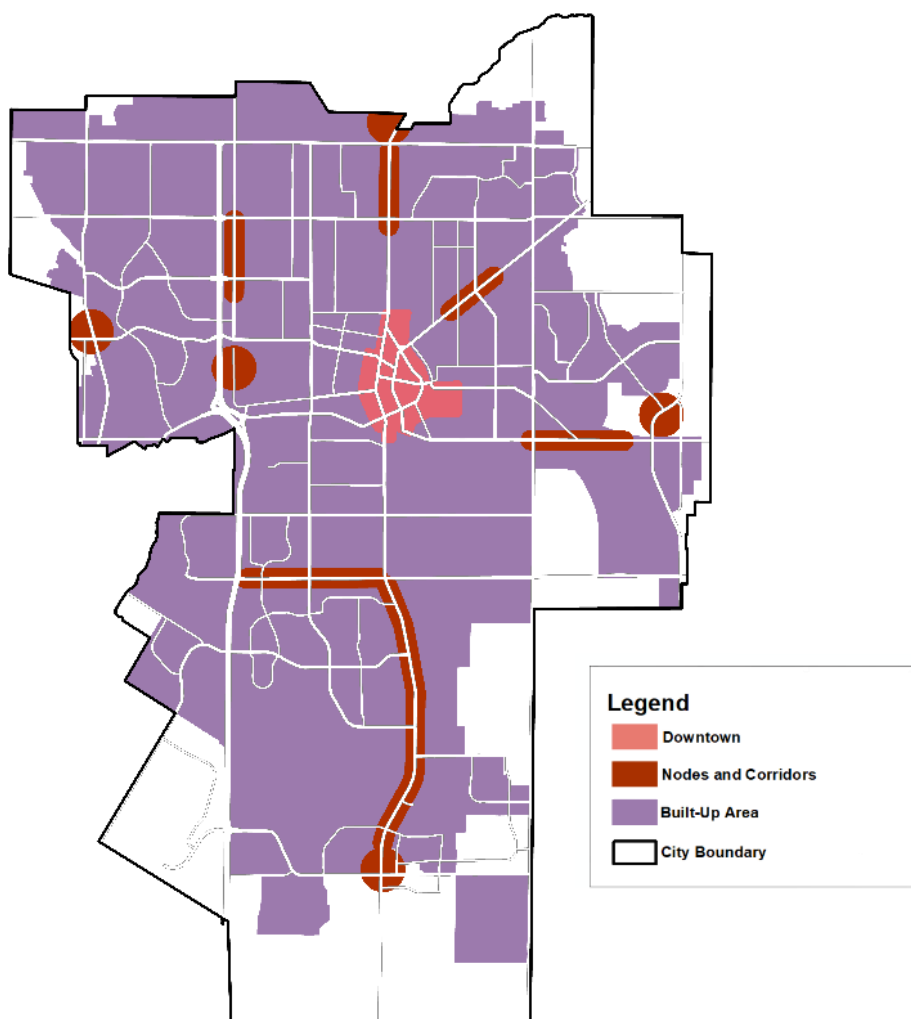


Figure 2: Official Plan intensification areas

Land uses within the intensification areas are mainly medium and high density residential, mixed-use (corridors and centres), and mixed office/commercial. Table 1 provides an overview of the minimum and maximum building heights and densities currently permitted within these land uses.

Table 1 - Official Plan building heights and densities within specific land uses

Official Plan land use	Minimum and maximum building heights	Minimum and maximum densities
Medium Density Residential	2 to 6 storeys ⁶	35 to 100 units per hectare ⁶
High Density Residential	3 to 10 storeys ⁶	100 to 150 units per hectare ⁶

⁶ Increased height and density may be permitted in accordance with the height and density bonus policies of the Official Plan.

Official Plan land use	Minimum and maximum building heights	Minimum and maximum densities
Commercial Mixed-use Centres	Maximum 10 storeys ⁶	100 to 150 units per hectare ⁶
Mixed-use Corridors	Maximum 6 storeys ⁶	100 to 150 units per hectare ⁶
Mixed Office/Commercial	Maximum 4 storeys ⁶	Maximum 100 units per hectare ⁶
Various residential, mixed use, and institutional/office land uses within the Downtown Secondary Plan	2 to 18 storeys ^{6,7}	0.6, 1.0 and 1.5 floor space index ^{6,7}

Growth over time: census statistics for the built-up area

Since 1981 Guelph has seen an increase in its average number of units per hectare from 2.9 units per hectare in 1981 to 5.9 units per hectare in 2016. These figures are gross density which includes areas that cannot be developed and areas that have not yet been developed. Guelph's average household size, however has decreased from 2.8 people per unit in 1981 to 2.5 people per unit in 2016. The mix of housing forms in Guelph is becoming more balanced. In 1981 Guelph's housing mix was comprised of 60% single detached and semi-detached dwellings, 10% duplexes and townhouses, and 30% apartments. Guelph's housing mix in 2016 was comprised of 55% single detached and semi-detached dwellings, 21% duplexes and townhouses, and 24% apartments. In 1986 the majority of households had a primary household maintainer, which is a head of household, between the ages of 25 and 29. In 2016 the majority of primary household maintainers were between the ages of 50 and 54. Additionally, the percent of those under the age of 40 that are primary household maintainers has decreased from 64% in 1986 to 30% in 2016. Staff will provide an overview of these census statistics at the Council workshop.

Workshop discussion

Council discussion and input is being sought on the following three topics

- Where housing should be directed in the built-up area
- How much housing should be accommodated in different areas of the built-up area
- Maximum building heights for different areas of the built-up area

A summary of community input gathered through recent community engagement on these topics will be shared with Council. Council will be asked to react to this input and to provide their comments/validation.

⁷ Minimum and maximum building heights and minimum floor space index varies depending on location and land use.

Topic 1 - Where should housing be directed in the built-up area

As outlined above, the Official Plan includes an urban structure that is based on a “nodes and corridors” model for growth where the nodes and corridors are planned to evolve over time from primarily commercial into mixed-use areas accommodating commercial and medium and high density residential uses. These nodes and corridors are identified as priority areas for growth and could continue to be into the future. Table 2 shows the number of new residential units created in each node, corridor and downtown between 2006 and 2019. During this same timeframe, approximately 180,500m² of non-residential gross floor area was added in the nodes, corridors and downtown.

Table 2 – New residential units and non-residential gross floor area in intensification areas – 2006-2019

Intensification area	Apartments	Townhouse dwellings	Single & semi-detached dwellings	Accessory apartments
Downtown	815	61	6	0
Clair/Gordon node	682	164	23	9
Paisley/Imperial node	503	0	0	0
Silvercreek junction node	2	0	0	3
Watson/Starwood node	141	249	171	21
Woodlawn/Woolwich node	0	0	0	0
Eramosa Rd. corridor	0	0	0	1
Gordon St. corridor	692	227	0	4
Silvercreek Pkwy. corridor	2	0	0	3
Stone Rd. corridor	0	0	0	0
Woolwich St. corridor	17	0	0	0
York Rd. corridor	0	0	1	0

APTG requires that we plan for, identify and direct growth to strategic growth areas. Strategic growth areas may include downtowns and areas along major roads with existing or planned frequent transit. Our existing nodes and corridors and our downtown could be strategic growth areas that could continue to accommodate more housing over the next 30 years. We may also need to look to other areas of the city as strategic growth areas or priority areas for growth.

Community engagement – what we asked and what we heard

We asked the community to describe areas of the city, that in their opinions, could accommodate additional housing and how much housing they thought should be accommodated in that location. We also asked the community to describe areas of the city that should not accommodate additional housing and let us know why.

Staff will provide an overview of what was heard in response to these questions.

Topic 2 - How much housing should be accommodated in different areas of the built-up area

APTG requires that 50 per cent of our new housing be within our built-up area. Our current Official Plan plans for 18,500 new units within our built-up area to 2031. In addition to what is planned, to meet APTG intensification requirements, we anticipate that additional residential units will be needed within the built-up area to 2051. How we distribute additional new housing throughout the built-up area is up to us.

Community engagement – what we asked and what we heard

We asked the community how they thought we should distribute new housing around the built-up area of Guelph. Three options were provided that distributed new housing differently throughout the built-up area. Levels of agreement with each option were sought.

Option 1 prioritized more housing downtown than other areas of the built-up area. To accommodate more housing downtown, building heights/densities may need to increase on some mid-rise buildings downtown. Housing would also need to be added throughout the remaining built-up area outside of downtown.

Option 2 prioritized more housing in existing nodes and corridors than other areas of the built-up area. Downtown would still see some new housing but not as much as in Option 1. Housing would also be added to the remaining built-up area outside of the downtown, nodes and corridors.

Option 3 prioritized more housing in neighbourhoods throughout the built-up area. This housing would be mainly townhouses and low-rise apartments. Some housing would also be added to nodes and corridors, and the downtown.

Staff will provide an overview of what was heard in response to these options.

Topic 3 - Maximum building heights for different areas of the built-up area?

As outlined above, the Official Plan establishes minimum and maximum building heights and densities for different land uses. The Official Plan also currently provides for the ability to increase the height and density of buildings through height and density bonus policies. As a result of changes to the Planning Act in 2019, the city is no longer able to consider increases in height or density through bonusing. This means that any building over the maximum permitted height or density will require an Official Plan amendment. There is no longer any mechanism to secure community benefits through increased heights and densities.

Community engagement – what we asked and what we heard

We showed the community three different maximum building height scenarios for nodes, corridors, downtown, and low density neighbourhoods in the built-up area. The community was asked to rank each scenario and provide comments about their ranking.

The first scenario for nodes, corridors, and low density neighbourhoods within the built-up area presented the existing maximum height permissions from the Official

Plan⁸. The second scenario added between 1 and 4 additional storeys to the existing height permissions creating slightly taller buildings in each area. The third scenario included the tallest building heights by adding 3 to 8 storeys to the existing height permissions. Table 3 summarizes the maximum building heights in each scenario.

Table 3 – Maximum building heights in each scenario

Built-up area location	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Nodes	10 storeys	12 storeys	16 storeys
Corridors	6 storeys	10 storeys	14 storeys
Low density neighbourhoods	3 storeys	3 storeys 4 storeys on major roads	3 storeys 6 storeys on major roads

For downtown, the first scenario presented the existing maximum height permissions from the Downtown Secondary Plan. These heights vary between 2 and 18 storeys, depending on the location of a property⁹. Scenario 2 includes 2 additional storeys on properties which are currently permitted to add these additional storeys through bonusing. Scenario 3 adds 4 additional storeys to the current Downtown Secondary Plan permissions to these same areas. In all scenarios, no buildings are proposed to be taller than 18 storeys. Table 4 summarizes the maximum building heights in each scenario.

Table 4 – Maximum building height scenarios in current bonusing areas of downtown

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
4-8 storeys	6-10 storeys	8-12 storeys
4-10 storeys	6-12 storeys	8-14 storeys
4-12 storeys	6-14 storeys	8-16 storeys

Staff will provide an overview of what was heard in response to these scenarios.

Wrap-up and next steps

Input gathered at the Council workshop will be used by staff and consultants to inform the next stages of the project. At this time, staff are planning to engage the community in November/December on aspects related to the Housing Analysis and Strategy and in December/January on the Employment Lands Strategy. These studies, and community input into them, will be used to guide growth scenario planning work in 2021.

⁸ The Official Plan allows for the maximum building height and density to increase to 6 storeys or 100 units per hectare on lands designated low density residential for properties along arterial or collector roads through Planning Act bonusing. As bonusing is no longer permitted, the existing Official Plan scenario (scenario 1) for low density neighbourhoods does not show the ability to increase heights and densities along arterial/collector roads.

⁹ The Downtown Secondary Plan allows for the maximum building height to increase by 2 storeys or the density to increase on certain properties. As bonusing is no longer permitted, the existing Downtown Secondary Plan scenario (scenario 1) does not show the ability to increase heights and densities on these properties.

Attachments

Attachment-1 October 19, 2020 Council Workshop Presentation

Attachment-2 Staff Comments on A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Amendment 1

Author

Natalie Goss, MCIP, RPP, Senior Policy Planner

Departmental Approval

Melissa Aldunate, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Policy Planning and Urban Design

This memo was approved by:

Krista Walkey, MCIP, RPP

General Manager, Planning and Building Services

Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services

519-822-1260 extension 2395

krista.walkey@guelph.ca

This memo was recommended by:

Kealy Dedman, P. Eng., MPA

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services

519-822-1260 extension 2248

kealy.dedman@guelph.ca