

Town of Wasaga Beach

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February 3, 2023

Minister Steve Clark
Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
L9X 1N6

Dear Minister Clark:

RE: Amendment No. 7 to the County of Simcoe Official Plan
Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Posting 019-6113

The Town of Wasaga Beach (the Town) thanks you for the opportunity to provide comments on Amendment No. 7 to the County of Simcoe Official Plan (OPA 7) that was adopted by the County of Simcoe (the County) on August 9, 2022 that was posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) website under ERO number 019-6113 on December 5, 2022.

The Town recognizes the current housing supply shortage across the Province of Ontario (the Province) and the construction of new homes continues to fall short of our current and projected rates of population growth. We agree that governments at all levels need to make wise long-term decisions that meet the needs of current and future residents; and the creation of all housing types must be part of the solution.

In the spirit of creating 1.5 Million Homes in Ontario, this letter provides comments on how Wasaga Beach can contribute to that goal with responsible planning and good use of available and serviceable lands. This letter is divided into five topics:

- 1) Comment on the Town's capacity to absorb growth;
- 2) Comments on County of Simcoe OPA#7;
- 3) Comments and suggested edits to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- 4) Comments on developing Province of Ontario lands in Wasaga Beach for housing; and,
- 5) Opportunities for a Minister Zoning Order (MZO) or a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Order (CIHAO).



1) Comment on the Town's capacity to absorb Growth

In your letter of December 12 you ask for feedback on “population and employment forecasts allocations, the hierarchy of growth” and “the location of future development lands” in our community. Please know that where County OPA #7 allocates a population projection of 38,090, Wasaga Beach is confident we can grow to a population of 50,000 by 2051. Our current population is 24,682 and we currently have water and sewer servicing capacity to service a population of 35,000 people. With upgrades to pumping stations and some modernization, the water and sewer system can accommodate up to 50,000 people. The whole of the Town of Wasaga Beach is within the “Urban Boundary” and we are creating five separate ‘Growth Nodes’ as ‘Complete Communities’ within our built up area. Moving forward, our immediate goals are to develop Beach Area 1 as a World Class Tourist Destination, to expand our creative economy, and to secure a high school. Contained in Attachment 1 to this letter are staff reports as well as the Town of Wasaga Beach letter to the County of Simcoe dated November 24, 2021 which promotes the growth of the Town and explains the Town's capacity to absorb growth over the next 30 years in a responsible and well planned manner.

2) Comments on County of Simcoe OPA#7

The Town respectfully requests the following changes to OPA 7:

2.a The Ministry assign the Town a minimum population of 46,640 that could be adjusted to as high as 51,970 for 2051 in Policy 3.2.4-Table B of OPA 7.

OPA #7 currently assigns a projected population of 38,090 to the Town of Wasaga Beach to the year 2051. The Town requested the County assign the Town of Wasaga Beach a revised 2051 population of 46,640 in the Land Needs Assessment (LNA) that forms the basis of the population targets of OPA 7. More recent data project a population of approximately 50,000 for the Town of Wasaga Beach by 2051.

This projected population is supported by new community amenities that are anticipated to be completed in the short to medium term, such as the Town's new Twin Pad Area/Library that is currently under construction, the recently opened casino in the Town's west end, two



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new elementary schools (one of which includes a recreation facility that would be shared with the Simcoe County District School Board) and the projected new secondary school that is anticipated for 2030.

From a servicing perspective, the Town's existing water and wastewater systems are currently well-suited to support a population of 46,640 persons and with minor upgrades, would be able to support a greater population upwards of 50,000 by 2051.

2.b. That The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (the Ministry) designate the Town of Wasaga Beach a Category One Municipality in proposed Policy 3.2.3-Table A of OPA 7.

The Town of Wasaga Beach is currently listed as a Category Two Municipality in proposed Policy 3.2.3-Table A of OPA 7, to conform to Schedule 8-Simcoe Sub-Area of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.(the Growth Plan) . Therefore, to effect the Town's requested change to be listed as a Category One municipality in Policy 3.2.3-Table A of OPA 7, the Growth Plan must be amended to designate the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Primary Settlement Area (PSA) in Schedule 8- Simcoe Sub Area. Our request to be designated as a PSA in the Growth Plan is further explained later in this letter.

2.c. The Ministry amend OPA 7 by deleting Policy 3.2.10 in its entirety

At the outset it is noted that Policy 3.2.10 in OPA #7 is a result of Growth Plan Policy 6.3.5 which directs that within the Simcoe Sub-Area, the re-designation of Rural lands can only be re-designated per Section 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan. For urban municipalities, such as the Town of Wasaga Beach, Policy 6.3.5 "freezes" lands that are currently designated as Rural from being developed to accommodate future growth within their boundaries. In effect, "freezing" lands currently designated as Rural within urban municipal boundaries from development contradicts the shared Provincial and regional goals of containing sprawl. The Town of Wasaga Beach has within its boundaries several privately-owned properties which are currently designated "Rural" in its Official Plan and, pursuant to *Growth Plan* policies, are restricted from being re-designated as development lands. These properties within the Town's boundaries can be readily serviced and per the goals of the *More Homes for Everyone Act (Bill 109)* and the *More Homes Built Faster Act (Bill 23)*, can be developed sooner



rather than later. Town of Wasaga Beach staff worked with County of Simcoe staff to create OPA #7 policy 3.2.10 which effectively would allow the re-designation of these serviceable Rural lands in compliance with the policies of the Growth Plan, provided certain conditions are met. In this regard, the Town of Wasaga Beach is in favour of Policy 3.2.10.

However, we recommend that the Province consider an edit to Section 6.3.5 of the Growth Plan to allow development on these Rural designated lands “within settlement boundaries”, thus alleviating the need for County of Simcoe OPA #7 policy 3.2.10 and resulting in these readily serviced lands being brought on stream for development much sooner than the window of a five year review of Municipal Comprehensive Plans.

In Wasaga Beach, we anticipate that allowing development on lands designated Rural within our settlement boundaries would result in approximately 2,000 – 2,500 dwellings being brought to market sooner than through a 5 year update to a Municipal Comprehensive Review. We also anticipate that the projected number of dwelling units will increase with the inclusion of second units and garden suites. To provide substance to these projected 2,000 to 2,500 dwelling units, we advise that on two of these “Rural” designated properties, the Town has processed applications for pre-consultation for a total of 1,300 proposed dwelling units. We view this as a strong indicator that the market would bring these serviceable lands on-stream for development in the near term.

3) Comments and Suggested Edits to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Town respectfully suggests the following edits to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe:

3.a. The Town of Wasaga Beach as a “Primary Settlement Area in Schedule 8: Simcoe Sub-Area”

Section 6.3 of the Growth Plan stipulates that Primary Settlement Areas (PSA’s) must plan for Strategic Growth Areas, plan for Complete Communities and ensure the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces to create attractive/vibrant spaces. The Town of Wasaga Beach has identified five Strategic Growth Areas within its



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urban boundary and the first of those strategic areas, Downtown Wasaga Beach, is already established. As a high growth full-service community, the Town of Wasaga Beach effectively meets the criteria of being a PSA without actually being identified as a PSA within the Growth Plan. The direction of growth in Wasaga Beach is designed to both conform to, and to complement the goals of the Growth Plan.

The Town has long held the goal of becoming a Complete Community, as defined by the Growth Plan. Being formerly recognized as a PSA is vital to directing the additional funding that is required to facilitate the provision of Federal and Provincial services (such as, but not limited to Service Canada and Service Ontario offices, hospitals and other community health service centres including walk-in clinics) that would allow the Town to fully develop into a Complete Community for current and future residents.

Despite not being formerly recognized as a PSA in the Growth Plan, through our current and proposed Official Plan intensification policies, the Active Transportation Plan, Wayfinding Plan, Downtown Development Master Plan with its accompanying Urban Design Standards and Economic Development Strategy, it is very evident the Town meets each of the Provincial policy objectives to be designated as a PSA. It is noted that County Planning staff have previously offered to support the Town in its quest to being designated as a PSA.

The Town recommends to the Province that it amend the Growth Plan to list the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Primary Settlement Area in both Schedule 8 and the Definitions section of the Growth Plan, so that OPA 7 can be amended to identify the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Category One Municipality, as described earlier.

4) Comments on developing Province of Ontario lands in Wasaga Beach for housing

The geographic area of the Town of Wasaga Beach is approximately 60.23 square kilometers. As shown in the maps enclosed as Attachment 2, approximately 23.3% (comprising approximately 14.09 square kilometers) of all these lands within Town boundaries are currently owned by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and other Provincial Ministries. Of the Provincially-owned lands shown as hatched in Attachment 2 are several parcels that were



previously developed and expropriated in the late 1960s to early 1970s as part of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park. After the previously developed parcels were expropriated, the buildings on them were demolished, yet these parcels were never re-developed (and thus, remain vacant) and are not utilized as part of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park. These lands can be readily serviced with Municipal sanitary and water infrastructure. Therefore, as these lands are prime opportunities for development, we believe that Infrastructure Ontario (IO) is the best-positioned Provincial entity that can market them to be developed to further the goals of the *More Homes for Everyone Act (Bill 109)* and the *More Homes Built Faster Act (Bill 23)*.

5) Opportunities for a Minister Zoning Order (MZO) or a Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Order (CIHAO).

Specifically, in accordance with Policy 3.26.7-Table F of OPA 7, the Town is directed to accommodate an additional 72.7 hectares of Employment Lands within its boundaries as defined in the Growth Plan to accommodate jobs for current and future residents. Most of the lands suitable as Employment Lands within Town boundaries are under considerable pressure from developers for uses other than Employment Lands.

The Town is currently undertaking the completion of a new Official Plan along with a West Wasaga Secondary Plan (WWSP) that aims to accommodate employment lands in the Town's "west end", while achieving an appropriate balance with surrounding residential land uses, and a new Comprehensive Zoning By-law. However, implementing the policies/provisions of these documents is expected to take up to a year or more. This is especially true if the new Official Plan, West Wasaga Secondary Plan and Zoning Bylaw are appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). We believe that a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) or Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Order (CIHAO) are tools that could be used to secure our required employment lands and possibly affordable housing in a much more efficient manner than through completing the new Official Plan, West Wasaga Secondary Plan and new Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw.

Therefore, the Town requests a meeting between Town representatives and Ministry staff to discuss and explore the opportunities for a Minister Zoning Order (MZO) or a Community



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Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Order (CIHAO) pertaining to Employment Lands and possibly affordable housing within the Town's "west end". Lastly, we believe the MZO and CIHAO tools could potentially be utilized in other area within Town boundaries as well.

Thank you for your consideration of these reasonable and responsible requests that Council for the Town of Wasaga Beach believe are consistent with our shared goals/objectives towards the creation of all housing types that facilitate the creation of complete communities for current and future Ontarians.

Sincerely,

Andrew McNeill

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew McNeill".

Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Wasaga Beach

c.c. Premier Doug Ford
Members of Council
Laura Borland, Acting Director of Legislative Services & Clerk
Doug Herron, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Jocelyn Lee, Director of Finance and Treasurer
Nathan Westendorp, Director of Planning/Chief Planner,
County of Simcoe

Encl.

Attachment 1- Staff Reports and Town of Wasaga Beach Letter to
County of Simcoe November 24, 2021

Attachment 2- Provincially Owned Lands Within Town of Wasaga
Beach



Attachment 1
Staff Reports and Town of Wasaga Beach Letter to
County of Simcoe November 24, 2021

STAFF REPORT



TO: Council

FROM: Doug Herron, Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

SUBJECT: Amendment to Schedule 8 of "A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe"
The Town of Wasaga Beach as a "Primary Settlement Area"

DATE: November 23, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to send written correspondence to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing formally requesting an amendment to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Office Consolidation 2020) to identify the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Primary Settlement Area on Schedule 8 Simcoe Sub-Area, and be recognized as such within the policies of Section 6 Simcoe Sub-area,

AND THAT a copy of the Clerk's correspondence to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing be provided to the County of Simcoe, including a request that County Council support the Town's request and send a letter of support to the Minister.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its regular meeting of May 25, 2021, Council adopted the following resolution: "That the Town of Wasaga Beach resolves that it be identified and acknowledged as a "Primary Settlement Area (PSA)" in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The resolution was forwarded to Simcoe County as part of a larger resolution from Council in response to the on-going Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). In their initial response to the Town's comments on the MCR, County staff along with their consultant Hemson Consulting, noted that through the MCR process, they do not have the authority to amend the Growth Plan and to identify the Town as a Primary Settlement Area (PSA). Town staff met with County staff on October 15, 2021 to further discuss the Town's comments on population allocations under the MCR, the Town's growth potential and the matter of the Town's resolution to be identified as a PSA.

During the October meeting, County planning staff noted that they understand the Town's evolution toward a complete community and indicated that, 'in principle', they are supportive of Council's resolution and discussed an appropriate process to forward the matter to the Province and to secure formal support for the initiative from the County.

Based on advice from the County, Staff recommend to Council that it petition directly to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to amend the Growth Plan to include the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Primary Settlement Area within the Simcoe Sub-Area of the Growth Plan and that it seek County Council support of the Town's petition to the Province with a resolution from County Council.

Form: WB-SR2010

BACKGROUND

The “Places to Grow Act, 2005” enables the creation of regional growth plans which serve to guide both government investments and land use planning policies. The first of the growth plans is the “A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” plan. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) was first enabled in 2005 and is commonly described as the ‘Growth Plan’ or ‘GGH’.

Amendment No.1 to the GGH was brought into force in 2012. Amendment No.1 established the County of Simcoe as the “Simcoe Sub-area” with specific policies related to employment areas, growth areas and population targets. Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan added Schedule 8 which identifies among other matters, the creation of “Primary Settlement Areas” within the County of Simcoe. In advance of bringing Amendment No. 1 into force, the Province sought input from local municipalities. The Town of Wasaga Beach opted to ‘not’ be established as a Primary Settlement Area in the Growth Plan due to the density provisions requirements of the plan at that time

There were seven primary settlement areas established – Collingwood, Midland/Pentanguishene, Orillia, Barrie, Alcona, Bradford and Alliston. Per the Growth Plan, municipalities identified as Primary Settlement Areas (PSAs) will:

- 1) Identify and plan for strategic growth areas within the settlement area (ie. within Wasaga Beach);
- 2) Plan to support the achievement of complete communities within primary settlement areas;
- 3) Ensure the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within primary settlement areas through site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are transit supportive.

Since 2012 when the Town opted to ‘not’ be identified as a PSA, Wasaga Beach has adopted all three of the above noted Growth Plan criteria into its planning policies and into its decision making. It is now ready to be included as a Primary Settlement Area.

DISCUSSION

Meeting the Criteria for a PSA

With regard to item No. 1) above, the Town of Wasaga Beach has identified five strategic growth areas within its boundaries. The first of the five areas, the Downtown growth node is fully established within the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, enjoys Urban Design Guidelines, along with development incentives in the Downtown Community Improvement Plan. The four other nodes have been identified as “Old Mosley Village”, “Schoonertown”, Springhurst Village (45th Street and Mosley), and the Sunset Village (Mosley roundabout) areas.

With regard to item No. 2) above, the current development policies for the Downtown node, along with the policies currently being designed for the four other nodes, ensconce the Growth Plan definition of ‘complete community.’ Specifically, growth policies for the growth node areas in Wasaga Beach are designed to promote opportunities for housing and quality of life for all ages, with convenient access to daily living activities such as work, and services, with a full range of transportation options designed into ‘complete streets.’

Finally, with regard to item No. 3) above, the intent behind establishing the five growth nodes in Wasaga Beach, is to adapt the future growth of the Town to incorporate the guiding principles of the growth plan to allow for urban intensification while mitigating urban sprawl. A second and equally important aspect of establishing the growth nodes is to allow for urban intensification within the boundaries of Wasaga Beach, while at the same time, protecting the low density character of established neighbourhoods, and protecting the cottage feel and 'built in a forest beside a beach' nature of the Town.

Overall Growth Plan Compliance

The policies of the Growth Plan are guided by twelve "Guiding Principles" which are lengthy to include in this report. Nonetheless, the Guiding Principles listed within Section 1.2.1 of the Growth Plan are evident in the responsible decisions the Town has made since 2012 to align itself with the goals and directions of the Growth Plan.

The Town of Wasaga Beach has created a local transit service which has since connected with Collingwood, has morphed into a local transit loop to include Stayner, and has since morphed again with the County adopting its' own regional transit service linking all three municipalities and others. The Town has secured a location for a new high school, and is self-financing a new twin pad arena and a new 30,000 square foot library, both of which are currently under construction. The Town has recently adopted an "Economic Development Strategy" with a key goal of diversifying its employment and industry categories. The Town has adopted growth policies which prioritize 'intensification and higher densities in strategic nodes which allows it to make efficient use of land and infrastructure. The establishment of strategic nodes within Wasaga Beach is purposefully intended to support a range of housing options to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households. Wasaga Beach has planned and built water and wastewater servicing capacity to accommodate a population of 35,000 people, and is expandable with minor upgrades to service a population of 50,000 people.

Based on these decisions, Wasaga Beach as a settlement area within the County of Simcoe Sub-Area, is capable of expanding its population and complying with Growth Plan urban intensification policies, while maintaining its character as a desirable place to live and grow.

ANALYSIS

Based upon growth and development policies and the Town's capabilities to absorb a population of up to 50,000 people by 2051, the Town is well suited to be identified as a Primary Settlement Area within the Simcoe Sub-Area of the Growth Plan. Much of the Town's growth policies and responsible decisions with regard to intensification and provision of services leading to 'complete community' are aligned with the three Growth Plan criteria for Primary Settlement Areas.

Based on discussion with County staff, the MCR process, although relevant to the discussion of identifying the Town of Wasaga Beach as a Primary Settlement Area, does not include the authority to the County to render the decision. County planning staff advised they are supportive in principle to Wasaga Beach being identified as a Primary Settlement Area within Schedule 8 of the Simcoe Sub-Area of the Growth Plan.

In acting upon the May 25, 2021 resolution of Council, the recommended approach is to forward a petition directly to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing from both the Town of Wasaga Beach and from the County of Simcoe.

CONCLUSION

Insofar as the Town of Wasaga Beach has and is developing growth policies which align with the guiding principles of the Growth Plan, and has adopted strategic growth nodes into its planned development, and is capable and suited to absorb high levels of population growth to 2051, while at the same time adhering to 'complete communities' as defined within the Growth Plan, staff recommend to Council that it petition the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to amend the Growth Plan and identify the Town as a Primary Settlement Area. Staff also recommend to Council that it forward a formal request to the County of Simcoe to support the Towns' request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Herron, MCIP, RPP, MPA
Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

Enclosures

Report to Council – May 25, 2021
Report to Coordinated Committee – October 14, 2021

STAFF REPORT



TO: Council

FROM: Doug Herron, Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

SUBJECT: County of Simcoe "Municipal Comprehensive Review"
Allocation of Population, Housing and Employment to the Year 2051
County of Simcoe Request for Information

DATE: May 25, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

THAT, pursuant to the Hemson Memo dated April 16, 2021 and titled "Local Area Municipal Input to the Municipal Comprehensive Review", that Council resolve the following:

That the Town of Wasaga Beach resolves that it be identified and acknowledged as a "Primary Settlement Area (PSA)" in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;

AND THAT, further to the request from the County of Simcoe via the Hemson Memo, the Town of Wasaga Beach resolves that, in concert with being identified as a Primary Settlement Area, and consistent with the Towns' growth and intensification policies for Growth Nodes, and consistent with well planned water and sewer servicing capacities available to accommodate growth and intensification, the Town of Wasaga Beach be assigned an 'Intensification Density Target' greater than the current assigned target of 20 persons and jobs per hectare and more appropriately in the range of 35% to 40% of persons and jobs per hectare:

AND THAT, the Clerk be authorized to forward the above resolution to the County of Simcoe as a formal comment from the Town of Wasaga Beach in response to the June 8, 2021 Notice of Public Meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recommendations of this report are a response to the April 16, 2021 Memo request (Appendix A) from Hemson on behalf of the County of Simcoe.

The County of Simcoe is currently performing an update to its Official Plan. The purpose of the update is to plan for growth out to the year 2051. The County is performing this update through a "Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR)" process which is a requirement of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. In preparing for the MCR, the County is seeking both information and feedback from its member municipalities.

In addition to the April 16, 2021 memo request, the County of Simcoe has also scheduled a public meeting for June 8, 2021 to secure comments on the MCR driven Official Plan update (Appendix B – Notice of Statutory Public Meeting).

The Growth Plan projects that between the years 2021 and 2051, the County of Simcoe will expand its population from 357,000 to 555,000 and will expand its employment (number of jobs) from

117,000 to 198,000. In performing the MCR study, the County will be devising policies to allocate a significant portion of this projected growth to Primary Settlement Areas (PSAs) with “some growth allocated to each local area municipality”. Under the current Growth Plan, the PSAs are identified as Barrie, Orillia, Midland/Penetanguishene, Collingwood, Innisfil, New Tecumseth and Bradford West Gwillimbury. Despite its population size, urban form, and available sewage and water capacity, Wasaga Beach is not identified as a Primary Settlement Area and is identified as a ‘settlement area’.

This report examines current Town of Wasaga Beach growth policies such as the creation of growth nodes, the current and projected servicing capacities, population growth projections over the next 30 years, and the recommendations of the Economic Development Strategy. Based on these criteria, this report concludes that there is merit to the Town of Wasaga Beach pursuing being identified as a Primary Service Area within the Growth Plan and that based on these local growth policies, Wasaga Beach is capable of meeting intensification targets of 35% to 40% of persons and jobs per hectare over the next 30 year planning window.

BACKGROUND

To understand the rationale for the recommendations in this report, it is beneficial to review the Provincial policy structure which guides growth in Ontario. The Province creates the directions for growth through legislated documents which include the *Ontario Planning Act*, the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). The recommendations for this report are primarily guided by the policies of the Growth Plan which itself has been recently amended. Until recently, the Growth Plan contained policies which directed growth out to 2031. In 2020, the Province amended the Growth Plan to plan for growth out to 2051. For clarity, the planning community references the various iterations of the Growth Plan as the “2017 Growth Plan” projecting growth to 2031, and the “2020 Growth Plan” projecting growth to 2051.

In compliance with the 2017 Growth Plan, the County of Simcoe has recently completed an update to the Simcoe County Official Plan (SCOP) which projects development out to the year 2031. In preparing to comply with the current 2020 Growth Plan, the County is performing a new update to its Official Plan to project growth out to 2051. The Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) is the process underway to update the SCOP to 2051.

In following the top down approach, many member municipalities in Simcoe County, including the Town of Wasaga Beach, have either recently, or are currently, updating their Official Plan to project growth to 2031. Once completed, the Town will be required to perform a second Official Plan update to further comply with the results of the MCR, in projecting growth out to 2051.

Currently, the bulk of the planning analysis performed by Town of Wasaga Beach staff and the consulting team hired to assist the Town with the update to its Official Plan has been focused on the projecting local growth policies out to the 2031 planning window. With the County MCR study underway and seeking input on planning for growth out to 2051, staff are taking the opportunity to review the potential for growth out to the 2051 planning window. In performing this analysis, it is evident that the Town enjoys the ability to grow to a population of 40,000 to 50,000 persons by the year 2051.

ANALYSIS

Growth Plan Principles of Growth

The two main principles of the 2020 Growth Plan under discussion in this report are: contain sprawl by requiring intensification within built-up areas, and strive that each municipality grow as a 'complete' community. The Growth Plan requires all municipalities to establish Official Plan policies which satisfy these Growth Plan principles. The first principle is attained by establishing density targets to achieve minimum numbers of persons and jobs for hectare as a measurement of the principle. As noted above, this report primarily responds to the County letter request by identifying what the Town of Wasaga Beach is willing to accept as intensification targets to guide its growth over the next 30 years.

The second principle espouses what is defined as 'complete communities', essentially places with opportunities for all ages, with access to most necessities for daily living, with a mix of jobs, stores and services, a full range of housing, transportation and public service facilities.

County of Simcoe Request for Concurrence on Intensification Targets

Hemson, on behalf of the County of Simcoe has forwarded to the Town of Wasaga Beach a 9 page memo (Appendix A) requesting the Town submit to the County varied and detailed information ranging from: 1) Intensification Targets, 2) Employment Strategy, 3) Watershed Strategy, 4) Climate Change Strategy, 5) Water and Wastewater Servicing. The 1st item, Intensification targets, is the subject of this report. Staff in Planning and in Public Works are currently assembling the requested information on the four other topics.

With regard to intensification targets, the current policies of the Simcoe County Official Plan direct that Wasaga Beach is to achieve growth equivalent to 32 persons and jobs per hectare in greenfield areas, and growth equivalent to 20 persons and jobs per hectare in intensification areas. Greenfield areas are areas within the Town boundary which were not yet developed in 2012 when the Growth Plan was established. Intensification areas are those areas which had been developed up to 2012.

Town staff, in conjunction with GSP Planning Consultants have been preparing the update to the Official Plan to bring it into compliance with the 2017 Growth Plan to the planning window of 2031. Staff have previously reported to Council with project updates. The attached "Growth Management Executive Summary" (Appendix C) to the Official Plan update was reported to Committee in 2018. Under the subheading 'Setting Targets for Future Growth...' on page three of the Executive Summary, it was identified as early as 2018 that the commercial nodes and corridors in Wasaga Beach could absorb an intensification ratio of between 35% to 40% projected out to the year 2041. This is a marked increase to the 2017 Growth Plan and Simcoe County Official Plan intensification target of 20%. Based upon information available in 2018, and in relation to servicing capacity studies, it was estimated that intensification within the growth nodes and corridors (River Road West, Old Mosley Village, Schoonertown, 45th and Mosley, and the West End Roundabout) would result in approximately 2644 new residential units and 123,022m² of new commercial g.f.a. The projected number of new units within Beach Area1 and for those properties fronting onto Main Street are estimated at 2000 new residential units. The synopsis for new units within the growth node and areas is estimated to be 4,600 future dwelling units. It is the projections for these extra units which lends to the conclusions that the Towns growth policies would accommodate intensification targets of 35% to 40%.

Servicing Capacity

Below are summaries of the status of the water and waste water servicing capacities available to the Town of Wasaga Beach. The following section is provided from Public Works and is drawn from the 2019 Year End Report on the "Water Supply Works and Water Pollution Control Plant – Capacity Allocation Update". Although technical in nature, the report indicates that both water and waste water system plants are designed and capable of absorbing a growth of 300 dwellings units a year. For future growth scenarios beyond the current capacities, the plants are designed to accommodate both plant and system expansions to allow for future population growth. Note that the current capacity planning does not project out to the year 2051. Nonetheless, the intention is to design the related components of the plants to accommodate future upgrades by sizing them now, and installing the upgrades when population growth warrants expansion to the system capacities. For example, the current design project for the bio solids component of the waste plant will be based on the 3.25% annual growth rate that Wasaga Beach has consistently enjoyed. Based on the current and planned servicing capacities, the Town of Wasaga Beach is capable of absorbing population growth up to and exceeding 40,000 persons when measured in terms of persons per dwelling unit and commercial uses.

Water Supply and Distribution System

A review of historical water demands indicate a downward trend in both demand per unit and also in the maximum day factor. The maximum day factor is the maximum day demand (MDD, the highest recorded single day demand in a calendar year) divided by the average day demand (total treated water demand for the year divided by the number of days in the year).

Current hydraulic reserve capacity is 14,318 m³/day. The hydraulic reserve capacity is defined as the design capacity minus the actual existing recorded maximum day flow. The design capacity for the water supply is 31,415 m³/day. As such, the existing demand is currently approximately 54% of the design capacity.

The uncommitted hydraulic reserve capacity is obtained by subtracting the equivalent flow commitments to registered and draft approved residential, commercial and industrial lots from the existing hydraulic reserve capacity. A detailed listing of future committed developments as of April 2020 is available in the 2019 Water and Wastewater Capacity Allocation Update Report as prepared by Ainley & Associates. The number of projected units for each development is expressed as number of equivalent residential units. The number of unconnected approved lots is currently 6,129 and includes:

- Existing Unserviced – Connection Available
- Existing Residences – Connection Not Yet Available
- Committed Developments – Approved and/or Under Construction
- Committed Developments – Draft/Site Plan Approved

It is noted that it will take a number of years for the 6,129 Connections Available and Committed Units to actually connect to the system. Based on the current projected MDD/unit (current 3-year historic MDD/unit plus 30%) and a projected 300 new units per year the water hydraulic reserve capacity would allow for growth for approximately 31 years, until 2050.

Wastewater Treatment and Collection System

A review of historical wastewater flows indicates that the Average Daily Flow (ADF) per unit is fairly consistent.

The water pollution control plant design capacity (ADF) is 15,433 m³/day and the current hydraulic reserve capacity is 8,972 m³/day. The hydraulic reserve capacity is defined as the design capacity minus the actual existing recorded 3-year average day flow.

The historic ADF indicates that the water pollution control plant (WPCP) is operating at **42%** (3 year average ADF / design ADF) of its capacity.

The highest recorded historical monthly ADF is 43% of average day design. The highest recorded historical peak flow is 55% of peak flow design.

The uncommitted hydraulic reserve capacity is obtained by subtracting the equivalent flow commitments to registered and draft approved residential, commercial and industrial lots from the existing hydraulic reserve capacity. A detailed listing of future committed developments as of April 2020 is included in the 2019 Water and Wastewater Capacity Allocation Update Report as prepared by Ainley & Associates. The number of projected units for each development is expressed as number of equivalent residential units. The number of unconnected approved lots is currently 14,536 and includes:

- Existing Unserviced – Connection Available
- Existing Residences – Connection Not Yet Available
- Committed Developments – Approved and/or Under Construction
- Committed Developments – Draft/Site Plan Approved.

Note this includes both Phase I and Phase II of Council by-law commitment for sanitary sewage treatment capacity for Clearview Township.

The uncommitted hydraulic reserve capacity of the Wasaga Beach Water Pollution Control Plant after allocating the unconnected approved lots is 323 m³/day.

It is important to note that upgrades are currently underway and/or planned for the following components of the Water Pollution Control Plant in 2021:

- Headworks / Inlet Building
- Biosolids System Upgrades
- Tertiary Filter Upgrades (Disk Filter Technology)

Population projections and related design parameters under consideration for the aforementioned upgrades is reflective of the annual growth trends experienced over the last 15 years (i.e. 3.25% annual increase).

Benefits of Designation as a "Primary Settlement Areas"

The 2020 Growth Plan directs that the County of Simcoe is to achieve a minimum density target of 40 persons and jobs per hectare across the whole of its jurisdiction. The Growth Plan also directs that the County of Simcoe is to direct 'a significant portion of growth...to communities where development can be most effectively serviced, and where growth improves the range of

opportunities for people to live, work, and play in their communities, with a particular emphasis on primary settlement areas.” In effect, the purpose of the Municipal Comprehensive Review is to allow the County to determine how it will allocate population and employment, and ultimately infrastructure growth among its member municipalities for the next 30 years.

The Growth Plan further emphasises that Simcoe County is to allocate growth forecasts “such that a significant amount of population and employment growth is directed to ...municipalities that contain primary settlement areas. Further, the 2020 Growth Plan requires that municipalities with primary settlement areas must devise growth policies which:

- 1) Identify primary settlement areas;
- 2) Identify and plan for strategic growth areas within primary settlement areas;
- 3) Plan to support the achievement of complete communities within primary settlement areas;
- 4) Ensure the development of high quality urban form and public open spaces within primary settlement areas through site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places that support walking and cycling for everyday activities and are transit-supportive.

In assessing these four primary settlement stipulations against the current and proposed Node Intensification policies, the Active Transportation Plan, the recent Wayfinding Plan, and the Downtown Development Master Plan and its supporting urban design standards, it is evident that the Town of Wasaga Beach has adopted growth policies compliant to being identified as a primary settlement area.

In terms of sustained population growth, Wasaga Beach has historically enjoyed an averaged population growth of approximately 3,000 persons per five year census period. The latest census is currently being performed and it will be in the summer of 2022 when Census Canada releases the population census data and the actual population growth since 2017 can be confirmed. Nonetheless, projecting an average growth of 3,000 persons per census period results in Wasaga Beach realizing a population of approximately 41,675 persons by 2051. This number is considered conservative as Wasaga Beach continues to realize a higher than average number of building permits issued in recent years. The bottom line is that Wasaga Beach continues to be an attractive place for people.

DISCUSSION

Not discussed above but worthy of note, is that the 2020 Growth Plan emphasizes that the intensification targets are minimums and that municipalities are well within their ability to plan for higher growth. In this regard, the Town of Wasaga Beach could opt to not pursue a primary service Area designation and still adopt a 35% to 40% intensification target for its intensification nodes. The risk to the Town is that in doing so, it may impact the ability of the Town to achieve the sustained averaged growth which it has consistently realized over the past 20 years, and which has been higher than the overall average growth for the County, the Province, and Federal averages over this same period of time. As noted above, pursuant to the 2020 Growth Plan, the County of Simcoe is required to allocate the bulk of the projected growth over the next 30 years to municipalities which contain primary settlement areas.

Due to staff being focused on preparing Official Plan updates to the 2031 window of growth, there has been minimal research at the local level to project the impacts of growth out to 2051. Nonetheless, ignoring the recent factors influencing growth in Wasaga Beach such as the COVID

Pandemic driven real estate rush, the Wasaga Beach housing market remains a strong presence in the south Georgian Bay market area. The Town continues to pursue new services such as the new twin pad arena and library, community school partnerships with the Simcoe County District School Board, master planned neighbourhoods, new tourism and multi-storey housing development at Beach Area 1, a more modern corporate branding, solid financial planning for future water and sewer services, new permanent employment opportunities in industries such as the casino, and livable residential/commercial nodes. As such, the Town of Wasaga Beach is anticipated to continue to thrive as a high-growth municipality offering a 'complete community' way of life.

CONCLUSION

Although the Town is currently planning for its growth to the 2031 horizon, there is sufficient information available to the Town through its current projections for servicing capacity, and through its intensification policies, to draw the conclusion that the Town will realize a growth in population in excess of 40,000 persons by the year 2051. The County of Simcoe is currently seeking input from the Town as it prepares its growth policies projected out to the year 2051. Relying on the criteria in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, there is merit to the Town in being identified within the Growth Plan as a "Primary Settlement Area" within the Simcoe Sub-Area. The merit is in having the projected growth and increase in population ensconced into the Simcoe County Official Plan.

The County of Simcoe has scheduled a public meeting for June 8, 2021 and is seeking comment and input from the Town as it performs a "Municipal Comprehensive Review" as an exercise in updating its Official Plan policies. Staff recommend that the Town of Wasaga Beach provide comment to the County of Simcoe that it be identified as a "Primary Settlement Area" and that it is capable of accommodating higher density intensification targets in the range of 35% to 40% than the current intensification target of 20%.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Herron
Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

Concur with Recommendation
George Vadeboncoeur, CAO

Attachments - Schedule A: Hemson Memo, April 16, 2021
Schedule B: County of Simcoe Notice of Public Mtg
Schedule C: T. of W.B., Growth Mgmt Executive Review – Feb 2018

STAFF REPORT



TO: Development Services Section of Coordinated Committee

FROM: Doug Herron, Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

SUBJECT: County of Simcoe "Municipal Comprehensive Review"
Preliminary Land Needs Assessment and Growth Forecasts
Request for Feedback

DATE: October 14, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Memorandum from Hemson Consulting Ltd. entitled "Municipal Comprehensive Review – Public Information Session – Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment" dated October 1, 2021 be referred to staff for review and comment.

BACKGROUND

In compliance with the 2017 Growth Plan, the County of Simcoe has recently completed an update to the Simcoe County Official Plan (SCOP) which projects development out to the year 2031. In preparing to comply with the current 2020 Growth Plan, the County is performing a new update to its Official Plan to project growth out to 2051. The Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) is the process underway to update the SCOP to 2051.

In response to a request from the County for input on the MCR, Council passed the following motion at its meeting on May 25, 2021:

"THAT, pursuant to the Hemson Memo dated April 16, 2021 and titled "Local Area Municipal Input to the Municipal Comprehensive Review", that Council resolve the following:

That the Town of Wasaga Beach resolves that it be identified and acknowledged as a "Primary Settlement Area (PSA)" in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;

AND THAT, further to the request from the County of Simcoe via the Hemson Memo, the Town of Wasaga Beach resolves that, in concert with being identified as a Primary Settlement Area, and consistent with the Towns' growth and intensification policies for Growth Nodes, and consistent with well planned water and sewer servicing capacities available to accommodate growth and intensification, the Town of Wasaga Beach be assigned an 'Intensification Density Target' greater than the current assigned target of 20 persons and jobs per hectare and more appropriately in the range of 35% to 40% of persons and jobs per hectare:

AND THAT, the Clerk be authorized to forward the above resolution to the County of Simcoe as a formal comment from the Town of Wasaga Beach in response to the June 8, 2021 Notice of Public Meeting."

Attached is the staff report dated May 25, 2021 that formed the basis of the recommendation.

Currently, the bulk of the planning analysis performed by Town of Wasaga Beach staff and the consulting team hired to assist the Town with the update to its Official Plan has been focused on the projecting local growth policies out to the 2031 planning window. With the County MCR study underway and seeking input on planning for growth out to 2051, staff are taking the opportunity to review the potential for growth out to the 2051 planning window. In performing this analysis, it is evident that the Town enjoys the ability to grow to a population of 40,000 to 50,000 persons by the year 2051.

Hemson Consulting Ltd. (Hemson) has been hired by the County to undertake a Land Needs Assessment (LNA) and growth forecast for each of the 16 lower-tier municipalities in the County. Hemson issued a report dated October 1, 2021, entitled "Municipal Comprehensive Review – Public Information Session – Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment". This report formed the basis of public information sessions held by the County in early October to outline the draft LNA. Attached are copies of the Hemson Report and the Slide deck used at the information session.

Hemson is forecasting that the Town will grow to 37,980 by 2051 and have employment opportunities for 8,320 people. Significant growth is projected for municipalities in the south part of the County. In the section dealing with "Infrastructure Capacity to Support Growth", the authors of the report indicate, "... detailed County-wide studies of the infrastructure capacity to support growth are unavailable at this time. That said, the ultimate capacity of water and water/wastewater infrastructure has been considered and will continue to be assessed as part of the LNA process."

Currently the Town has sewage treatment capacity to grow to 38,000 and is reviewing what is required to increase treatment capacity to accommodate 50,000 people. With respect to the provision of fresh water, the current demand by the 24,450 residents is approximately 54% of the design capacity.

The public information session was held on October 5th via Zoom where the draft Land Needs Assessment prepared by Hemson was presented. The County is receiving input on the draft LNA until November 12, 2021.

DISCUSSION

The writer attended the information session hosted by the County on October 5, 2021 as did two members of Council. The writer intends on reviewing the information in the Hemson October 1st, report and the material presented at the information session and prepare a report for Council's consideration prior to the November 12, 2021 deadline. The writer has also arranged a meeting with County Planning staff to discuss the Town's position in detail. The CAO will also be attending.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Herron
Director of Planning and Economic Initiatives

Attachments - Schedule A: MCR Staff Recommendation Report, May 25, 2021
Schedule B: County of Simcoe Notice of Public Information Session
Schedule C: Hemson, MCR, Growth Management and Land Needs Assessment, Oct. 1, 2021
Schedule D: County of Simcoe Draft Land Needs Assessment Presentation deck, Oct. 5, 2021



November 24, 2021

Mr. David Parks
Director of Planning, Economic Development,
Transit and Airport Services
County of Simcoe
1110 highway 26
Midhurst, ON
L9X 1N6

Dear Mr. Parks:

RE: Town of Wasaga Beach 2051 Population Projections Municipal Comprehensive
Review and Land Needs Assessment

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Land Needs Assessment (LNA) as part of the County's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).

Town of Wasaga Beach Council passed the following resolution at its Regular Council meeting held on November 23, 2021:

"That Council authorize staff to forward comments to Simcoe County regarding land Needs Assessment as part of the County's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review in the substantial form as contained in this staff report.

And further that Council recommends to Simcoe County that the Municipal Comprehensive Review assign to the Town of Wasaga Beach a population target ranging between 40,000 and 50,000 people to the year 2051"

In preparation for this resolution, Town Planning staff completed an analysis of Building Permit data for the period of 2017-October 2021. Over this timeframe, the Town issued Building Permits for a yearly average of 285 dwelling units. Based on the 2016 Census Canada average household size of 2.6 persons and a yearly average of 258 new dwelling units until 2051, which concluded in a year-round population of 46,610 residents. The Town recognizes that growth projections are "best estimates" based on a multitude of assumptions and that some years will naturally see Building Permits issued for a much higher number of units than the above-mentioned average (such as in 2021 where Building Permits for a total of 400 units were issued (through to only October). Therefore, Town Council has adopted a resolution that it be assigned a 2051 population target of 40,000-50,000 people.

Staff recommend that Council adopt a resolution that Simcoe County through its Municipal Comprehensive Review assign to the Town of Wasaga Beach a 2051 population target of 40,000-50,000 people.

Furthermore, Council and Staff confirm that from an infrastructure perspective as well as a land needs perspective, the Town of Wasaga Beach is well positioned to accommodate this growth within its boundaries while generally maintaining its current small-town character as well as preserve sensitive landscapes.

Please consider these comments when preparing the final Land Needs Assessment (LNA) as part of Simcoe County's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Vadeboncoeur". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "V".

George Vadeboncoeur
Chief Administrative Officer

- c. **Mayor and Council**
Doug Herron, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Attachment 2
Provincially Owned Lands Within
Town of Wasaga Beach



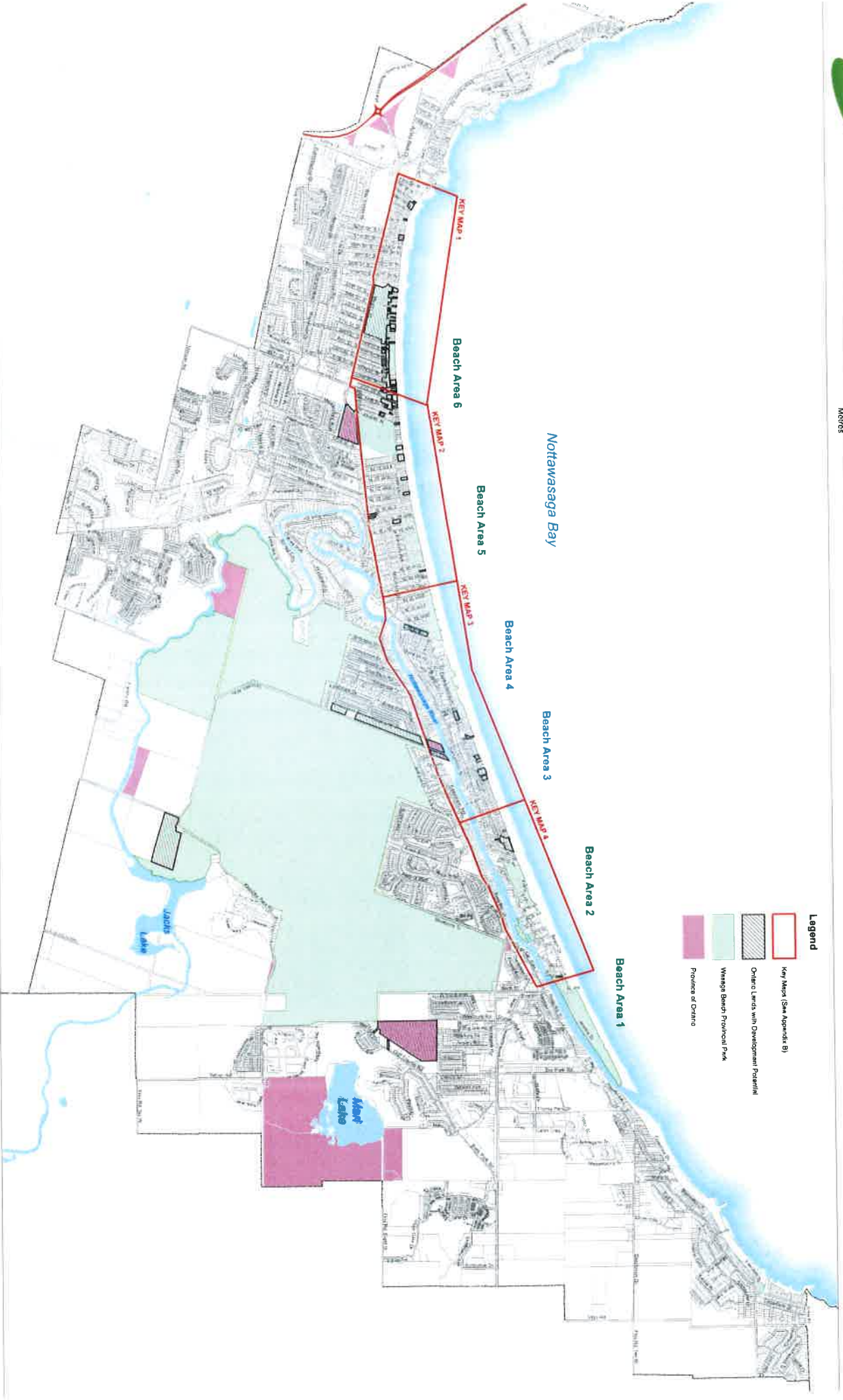
Town of Wasaga Beach

Provincially Owned Lands Within Town of Wasaga Beach (Page 1 of 2)

0 1,250 2,500 5,000
Meters



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Legend

- Key Maps (See Appendix B)
- Ontario Lands with Development Potential
- Wasaga Beach Provincial Park
- Province of Ontario



Town of Wasaga Beach

Provincially Owned Lands Within Town of Wasaga Beach (Page 2 of 2)

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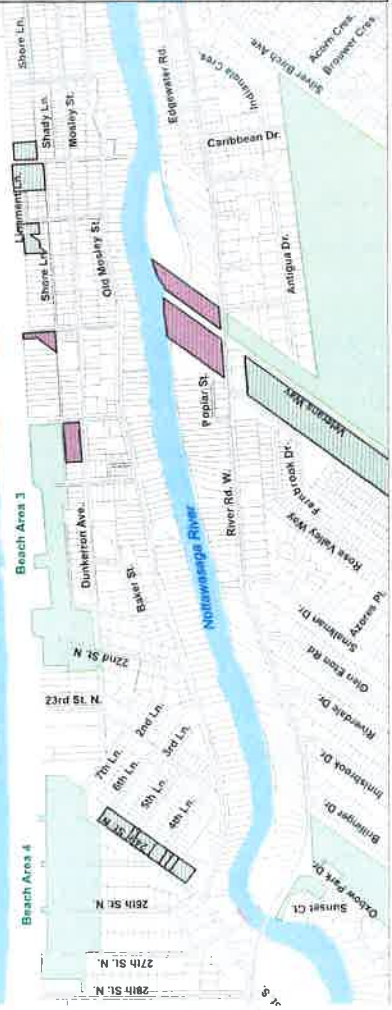
KEY MAP 1

Nottawasaga Bay



KEY MAP 3

Nottawasaga Bay



KEY MAP 2

Nottawasaga Bay



KEY MAP 4

Nottawasaga Bay

