
Subject: Recommendation Report for Regional Official Plan Amendment 17 – Glendale District Plan

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Recommendations

1. That Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 17 – Glendale District Plan **BE APPROVED** (attached as Appendix 1 to Report PDS 5-2021);
2. That all parties **BE NOTIFIED** of Regional Council’s decision in accordance with *Planning Act, 1990* requirements;
3. That staff **ISSUE** a declaration of final approval for Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 17, 20 days after notice of Council’s decision has been given, provided that no appeals have been filed against the decision, in accordance with *Planning Act, 1990* requirements; and
4. That this report **BE CIRCULATED** to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the City of St. Catharines.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide Staff’s recommendation for approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment 17 (ROPA 17), which implements the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan.
- The Glendale ROPA covers approximately 700 ha, located primarily within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, with a small portion within the City of St. Catharines.
- ROPA 17 reflects the vision and key directions of the Glendale District Plan as a proactive development strategy which supports growth and economic prosperity. It establishes the long-term commitment to Glendale becoming a mixed use, vibrant and complete community where residents and visitors can meet their daily living needs.
- The inclusion for policy in the Region’s Official Plan will ensure that future decisions within the Glendale plan area are consistent with the vision and direction of the District Plan.

- A statutory public meeting for draft ROPA 17 was held on November 9, 2020 in accordance with *Planning Act, 1990* requirements. All comments received on this matter have been reviewed and considered in staff's recommendation on ROPA 17.
- ROPA 17 is consistent with, conforms with and does not conflict with Provincial policy.

Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The cost to process ROPA 17 has been accommodated within the Planning and Development Services Department 2021 Operating Budget.

In the event Council's decision is appealed to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, additional resources would be needed. In such case, a further report on financial implications will be provided.

Analysis

The Glendale area covers approximately 700 ha located primarily within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, with a small portion located within the City of St. Catharines. The boundary of the amendment area includes Queenston Road to the north, Concession 7 Road to the east, Niagara Escarpment to the south, and the Welland Canal to the west.

The Glendale District Plan is a proactive planning strategy that focuses on growth, the development of a complete community and supports economic prosperity. It was developed as a collaborative effort with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the City of St. Catharines and Niagara College. The process included extensive consultation and engagement with many stakeholders and landowners, a Technical Advisory Committee, a Community Focus Group and the general public. Input from these sources assisted in establishing the vision, key directions and content of the Plan.

The Glendale District Plan was endorsed by Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council on August 24, 2020 and Regional Council on September 17, 2020.

Following this endorsement, the Region initiated ROPA 17. ROPA 17 is the instrument to incorporate policy related to the District Plan's vision and strategic direction into the Region's Official Plan.

The policies of ROPA 17 reflect the shared vision of Glendale becoming a mixed use, vibrant and complete community where residents and visitors can meet their daily living needs.

The amendment includes objectives that incorporate the District Plan's 9 key directions:

- 1:** Protect and enhance the landscape/natural features.
- 2:** A convergence for the area's trails and active transportation facilities.
- 3:** Provide an accessible and connected transit system to serve the Glendale area, the greater Niagara Region and beyond.
- 4:** Create a strategy to build on the existing assets within Glendale and linking Glendale with the greater NOTL and the Region.
- 5:** Create a "main street" from the Outlet Collection of Niagara to the adjacent urban neighbourhood.
- 6:** Provide a diverse range of housing ensuring choice and affordability.
- 7:** Create public/civic space as a focus for Glendale.
- 8:** Use sustainability measures related to resiliency and climate change.
- 9:** Coordination of infrastructure review, capacity and upgrades.

Within the District Plan, each of the key directions includes a series of strategies and recommendations for consideration through the implementation of the District Plan. ROPA 17 policies reflect the strategies of Regional interest, provide direction for the local Secondary Plan process, and support additional ongoing collaboration.

In particular, ROPA 17 policies encourage:

- greater connectivity and active transportation options,
- variety in built form and housing options,
- retention and attraction of businesses to the area,
- a centralized transit station/hub,

- enhanced public and private realm through urban design elements,
- protection of greenspace,
- an activated mixed-use Main Street, and
- inclusion of sustainability measures to address climate change.

Through the policies of ROPA 17, there are a number of studies and implementation measures that have been identified:

- The Region will work with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to update the Glendale Secondary Plan to further assess the land use concept and prepare detailed policy and mapping to implement the direction of the District Plan. As part of this update, technical studies will be undertaken, including:
 - Planning review to refine land use boundaries and confirm population and employment forecasts.
 - Functional servicing study to assess infrastructure capacity.
 - Transportation study to assess the road network, improvements and new connections.
 - Environmental planning study to review and assess the natural heritage features.
 - Commercial lands review to determine the commercial space that can be supported by the forecasted population.
 - Urban design guidelines to provide direction for high quality design in the public and private realm.
 - Phasing plan to determine how the area will logically build out over time based on the servicing and transportation inputs.
 - Fiscal impact assessment to ensure that infrastructure and services are sustainable.
- The District Plan Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan Map will guide the Secondary Plan update and can be used to review development proposals within the Glendale area.
- A feasibility study will be undertaken, in consultation with the local municipalities, the Inter-regional Transit Working Group and any other identified stakeholders, for the transit station/hub location to determine the mix of land uses and site requirements.
- Additional studies that will support economic development and tourism in Glendale.

- The creation of an Eco-park for recreation uses.
- The District Plan to be reviewed every 10 years, but minor refinements consistent with the overall vision are permitted.
- Ongoing implementation work through a Regional Technical Advisory Committee.

The inclusion of these policies in the Regional Official Plan will ensure that future decisions within the Glendale study area are consistent with the vision and direction of the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan.

A copy of ROPA 17 is included as **Appendix 1**.

Policy Review

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020

PPS, 2020 provides direction on land use planning to promote sustainable, strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. It took effect on May 1, 2020.

The PPS encourages efficient development patterns that optimize the use of land, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities by promoting a mix of housing (including affordable and market-based range of residential types), employment, recreation, parks and open spaces. It encourages transportation choices that increase the use of active transportation and transit before other modes of travel. Policies of the PPS also seeks to protect and enhance natural heritage, cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

ROPA 17 is consistent with the PPS, 2020.

A Place to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (“Growth Plan”) provides a strategic, long-range growth management framework for the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. The Growth Plan supports Ontario’s vision of building stronger, more efficient, prosperous communities.

The guiding principles of the Growth Plan focus on achieving complete communities, stimulating economic growth, prioritizing intensification and higher densities to optimize infrastructure investments, and mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change.

The built boundary mapping of the Growth Plan (2008) identified the Glendale settlement area as an undelineated built-up area due to the low existing population within this settlement area. Through a previously-approved conformity exercise, the Region designated Glendale as Designated Greenfield Area to recognize its potential to achieve a contemporary urban community.

Through the District Plan, the Glendale area has been planned as a Designated Greenfield Area to achieve a mixed use, compact and complete community.

ROPA 17 conforms with the Growth Plan.

Greenbelt Plan, 2017

The Greenbelt Plan designates the urban area of Glendale as 'Towns/Villages'. Applicable policies support the achievement of complete communities and provide significant economic, social, and commercial functions to surrounding areas.

The remainder of the lands are designated 'Protected Countryside' and 'Niagara Escarpment Plan Area.' The Protected Countryside lands are further designated as 'Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Area' or Specialty Crop Area by Schedule 2 and 'Natural Heritage System' by Schedule 4. The Specialty Crop Area within the Agricultural System is considered unique prime agricultural land and has restrictions for non-agricultural uses.

ROPA 17 reflects the Greenbelt Plan policy direction. Lands located outside the urban boundary, within the Greenbelt Plan area, reflect the existing local Official Plan land use designations. No changes are being proposed to these permissions.

The amendment includes Special Study Area 2 which contemplates an Eco-park (passive recreational use) adjacent to the Welland Canal. Any future use within this Special Study Area will be considered through consultation with the applicable stakeholders and in accordance with the policies of Greenbelt Plan.

ROPA 17 conforms with the Greenbelt Plan.

Niagara Escarpment Plan, 2017

The Niagara Escarpment Plan serves as a framework of objectives and policies that balance development and protection of the Niagara Escarpment. Map 1 of the Niagara Escarpment Plan designates portions of the southern area of Glendale primarily as 'Niagara Escarpment Protection Area', with a 'Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System' overlay, and a small area is designated as 'Escarpment Natural Area'.

Southwest Glendale and the south portion of the Niagara College site are within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Development Control Area. Lands located within the area of development control require a development permit from the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

The Southwest Glendale area is subject to a request to re-designate the lands from Escarpment Protection Area to Urban Area in the Niagara Escarpment Plan through the Provincial Coordinated Plan Review (2017). This request was deferred by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), with additional information to support the request required. The additional information was provided and is currently being reviewed. A decision has not yet been made.

ROPA 17 reflects the Glendale District Plan direction and includes Southwest Glendale as Special Study Area 3 to indicate that it is subject to the deferral noted above. Although the land use concept and demonstration plan show the lands as being eligible for development, this will not occur if the NEP designation remains Escarpment Protection Area. It is also recognized that Southwest Glendale will require additional planning approvals to permit development on these lands.

ROPA 17, with the inclusion of the Special Study Area policy, does not conflict with the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

Regional Official Plan (ROP)

The ROP designates the urban area of the Glendale District Plan area as 'Designated Greenfield Area' (DGA) on Schedule A – Regional Structure. The DGA requires compact, mixed-use development that contributes towards the Region's density target of 50 persons and jobs per hectare.

The remaining District Plan area is designated as 'Protected Countryside' and 'Niagara Escarpment Plan Areas' on Schedule A and 'Unique Agricultural Area' on Schedule B.

Schedule C designates environmental features throughout the study area as 'Environmental Protection Area' and 'Environmental Conservation Area.' Development and site alteration within these designations is generally not permitted without further study. A policy has been included in ROPA 17 that directs environmental planning study work to be undertaken to fully review the natural heritage system through the Secondary Plan process.

The Region is preparing the new Niagara Official Plan (NOP). As part of the NOP work, the Region is establishing a Regional Structure to strategically direct growth. Within the Regional Structure, the Region will designate 'Strategic Growth Areas' (SGA). SGAs will be areas planned to accommodate a significant portion of population and employment growth to allow for the establishment of a complete community. Glendale has been identified within the draft Regional Structure as a SGA.

ROPA 17 provides the land use and implementing study guidance to support the strategic direction of the Regional Official Plan.

Consultation Summary

Statutory Public Meeting

The *Planning Act, 1990*, requires that a statutory public meeting be held for all amendments to Official Plans. A public meeting was held on November 9, 2020 to present a draft of ROPA 17 to Planning and Economic Development Committee and receive comments from the public.

The Notice of Public Meeting was advertised on October 15, 2020 in newspapers having general circulation in and around the study area. Notice of the meeting was also provided to prescribed agencies and those that had been involved in the Glendale District Plan process. No oral comments were received from the public at the Public Meeting. Several written submissions were received and considered through the review of ROPA 17.

Public and Agency comments

It is important to note that the Glendale District Plan itself is a result of ongoing collaboration between the Region and the local municipalities, as well as extensive consultation including 6 public engagement sessions, 5 Technical Advisory Committee

meetings, 3 Community Focus Group meetings and numerous meetings with stakeholders, agencies and landowners.

Notice of ROPA 17 was provided to the full circulation list of participants in the District Plan process, as well as prescribed agencies.

Comments received generally indicate support for this amendment. Policy refinements, as appropriate, have been made as a result of comments received. None of the refinements change the basis or intent of the amendment.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council received a staff report on ROPA 17 and endorsed the amendment at its meeting on November 25, 2020.

City of St. Catharines staff advised no comments on the amendment as they have been directly involved throughout the District Plan process.

Niagara College issued a letter to the Regional Chair's office advising of the completion of its Campus Master Plan. Within this letter, the College acknowledges the alignment of the Campus Master Plan with the Glendale District Plan direction.

On January 11, 2021, one window comments were received from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Comments have been reviewed and changes made, as appropriate.

All comments received have been reviewed and considered in the Region's recommendation prior to finalizing ROPA 17. The comments received, including a summary table with response, are attached as **Appendix 2**.

Conclusion

ROPA 17 provides direction for strategic growth and the promotion of new mixed-use and compact development. It illustrates how the Glendale area can develop into a complete community, setting a framework for density and diversity through a variety of land uses and built form, an activated public realm, and walkable, connected streets.

ROPA 17 should be supported because it represents the visionary work of the Glendale District Plan. The policies will guide the development of the Glendale area and will support its transformation into a complete, mixed-use, urban community.

Alternatives Reviewed

None recommended – ROPA 17 contains policy direction for the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan. The District Plan had a high degree of consensus and support as a result of the extensive consultation process. ROPA 17 embeds the vision and strategic direction of the District Plan into the Region’s Official Plan.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

ROPA 17 will implement aspects of all four aspects of Council’s priorities by supporting the Region’s focus on growth and economic prosperity. It brings together a pro-active land-use strategy, urban design guidelines, and recommendations for improving sustainability and quality of life.

- Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth
- Healthy and Vibrant Community
- Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning
- Sustainable and Engaging Government

Other Pertinent Reports

PDS 27-2020 - Endorsement of the Glendale District Plan

PDS 30-2020 - Statutory Public Meeting for Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 17 - Glendale District Plan

View the [Glendale District Plan](#) website for more information and to review the endorsed District Plan.

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This report was reviewed by Isaiah Banach, Acting Director of Community and Long Range Planning.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Regional Official Plan Amendment 17

Appendix 2 Public and Agency Comments