

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Chapter 6 – Section 1. DISTRICT PLANS AND SECONDARY PLANS

SUMMARY

District Plans and Secondary Plans provide a framework for proactive, coordinated and comprehensive growth management planning within defined areas. These Plans are the Region's best planning tool to support the achievement of vibrant, complete and resilient communities that improve quality of life.

- District Plans are prepared by the Region in collaboration with the local municipalities in which they are situated. Their purpose is to strategically direct a significant portion of population and employment growth to specific areas of the Region and help guide the creation of complete communities.
- District Plans will continue to be prepared through an established process for areas that have cross-jurisdictional interests and require regional-level planning. The draft policies of the NOP include direction for preparation and ongoing implementation of these Plans.
- The Region has two existing District Plans: Brock and Glendale. These District Plans will be carried forward into the Niagara Official Plan to ensure future decisions within these areas are consistent with their vision and direction.
- Secondary Plans have a different function than District Plans and are implemented at the local level. Unlike District Plans, they may, or may not, be used to help direct anticipated population and employment growth.
- One purpose of Secondary Plans is to implement the Regional Structure. Secondary Plans will be required for Strategic Growth Areas, newly designated greenfield areas and to implement District Plan direction. In some cases, Secondary Plans will be used for existing greenfield areas and built-up areas, as appropriate.
- Secondary Plans provide a specific land use policy framework that relies on supporting technical information for an identified area of the municipality.
- Proactive secondary planning is essential to managing change that is thoughtfully integrated with the existing community. This process also provides numerous opportunities for public engagement.
- The Region will continue to work collaboratively with the local municipalities on Secondary Plan plans to ensure the creation of strong, healthy, balanced and complete communities.



A Draft Policy set is provided with this sub-section document.

Integration Guide for Sub-sections Reported in PDS 17-2021			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regional Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Archaeology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Employment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Land Needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SABR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aggregates
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Natural Heritage incl.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Systems Options
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	District/Secondary Plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Watershed Planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Urban Design	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Climate Change

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A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (“Growth Plan”), requires all municipalities to plan for forecasted growth. Policy 5.2.5.5 requires upper-tier official plan policies to identify minimum density targets and lower-tier municipalities to undertake planning, such as Secondary Plans, to establish permitted uses and identify densities, heights, and other elements of design.

The Region is committed to improving the quality of life and prosperity for its citizens and recognizes District Plans and Secondary Plans as important tools to achieve this goal.

District Plans are prepared by the Region to strategically direct a significant portion of population and employment growth to specific areas of the Region. District Plans provide proactive planning strategies that focus on growth, the development of complete communities and which support economic prosperity.

The District Plan policies provide criteria to consider new locations and a process for undertaking and implementing these Plans. Through this process, a vision and framework is created for areas with cross-jurisdictional interests that may require regional-scale coordination. The result is a shared vision, proactive land use concept, urban design guidance, and other recommended studies to support the implementation of the Plan.

Consultation is a key component of the District Plan process. This includes extensive collaboration with the local municipalities in which they are situated and consultation with a variety of stakeholders, including the public.

The Region currently has two District Plans: the Brock District Plan and the Glendale District Plan. These District Plans will be carried forward into the Niagara Official Plan to ensure consistent decision-making with the vision and direction set out by these Plans.

The creation or update of a Secondary Plan is the next step to implement a District Plan at the local level through more detailed policy guidance.

While Secondary Plans are a tool for implementing District Plans, they may also be undertaken by the local municipality outside of a District Plan process.

Secondary Plans are implemented through amendment to the local Official Plan. They consist of policies and maps that provide more specific direction for a defined area of the municipality than what is provided in the general policies of the municipality's Official Plan.

Local municipalities will use Secondary Plans as a tool to locally manage growth distribution, intensification and direct land use arrangement to ensure appropriate development and redevelopment occur in specific areas of the community.

The Secondary Plan process provides an opportunity for the municipality to engage residents, business owners and other stakeholders in the creation of a shared vision for how the area will evolve in the future. The process relies on this input, and that of a full understanding of the context of the study area, to demonstrate how change can be managed.

Secondary planning involves many aspects of land use planning and relies on direction from technical studies to evaluate matters such as:

- appropriate policies for different land uses, built-form and a variety of housing options to meet community needs now and in the future,
- the availability and capacity of infrastructure and transportation connections,
- recommendations for protection and conservation of natural heritage features and systems,
- consideration of the long term financial impacts of the community,
- identification of locations for parkland and community facilities, and
- providing urban design direction that will enhance both the public and private realm.

As an example, a technical study would provide input to determine infrastructure capacity and upgrades to ensure availability aligns with land use direction.

Secondary planning is often complimented by urban design direction. Urban design guidance can support intensification by outlining scale, materials and standards used for built form, streetscapes and the public realm. Proactively planning for change that is informed by urban design can ensure intensification is thoughtfully integrated within the neighbourhood context and new development enhances the function and character of the community.

Within the Niagara Official Plan, Secondary Plans will be required to proactively plan for population and employment growth in the Strategic Growth Areas identified through the Regional Structure. Secondary Plans will also be required for designated greenfield areas and new urban areas established through urban settlement area boundary expansions.

In addition to the above, local municipalities are encouraged to prepare Secondary Plans for built-up areas that require a proactive policy approach to address redevelopment pressure or direct intensification opportunities. This tool may also be used to coordinate development for multiple properties and interests.

The Region supports proactive Secondary Plan efforts and will continue to work collaboratively with the local municipalities on these plans to ensure the creation of a strong, healthy, balanced and complete communities.

Although they vary in scale, both District Plans and Secondary Plans require a collaborative effort between the Region, the local municipalities and stakeholders. Each process reviews the planning context of the study area, creates a strategic vision, and evaluates land use against technical studies to inform how much and where growth can occur. Throughout this process, engagement with agencies, stakeholders and the public is continuously occurring.

By using proactive planning tools like District Plans and Secondary Plans, communities have a comprehensive land use direction that manages existing resources and future development in that specific area. These plans provide clarity on what the public should expect and provide more certainty for investment.

Included in this Appendix are draft District and Secondary Plans policies as **Appendix 14.2**.