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## **MEMORANDUM**

**PDS-C 7-2019**

**Subject: Niagara Region's draft comments: Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan  
(ERO 013-4504, 013-4505, 013-4506, 013-4507)**

**Date: February 20, 2019**

**To: Planning and Economic Development Committee**

**From: Isaiah Banach, Manager, Long Range Planning**

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On January 15, 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) released a proposed amendment to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (the "Growth Plan").

The Growth Plan plays a significant role in Regional planning; it directs where and how municipalities grow. The *Planning Act, 1990* requires all municipal planning decisions to conform with the Growth Plan.

The deadline to provide comments to the Province on the proposed amendment is February 28, 2019. The Region is preparing a submission, with input from local planning Directors and Managers.

Attached to this memo is Regional staff's preliminary comments. At the time of writing, these comments are draft; they were developed to share with local staff, which was done on February 8, 2019. On February 14, 2019, a roundtable meeting was held with planning Directors and Managers.

The following are some of the key comments arising from the Region's initial review of the amended Growth Plan:

- The amendment proposes new Natural Heritage System policies and applies the Region's mapping to those policies. If implemented, this would lead to conflicts, mainly in the Region's rural areas. We will suggest ways to resolve the conflict until the new Regional Official Plan is adopted at which time the problem will be resolved permanently.
- New provincially significant employment zones are proposed in the GTA, although none are proposed in Niagara. Staff suggest that Niagara be granted the authority to designate provincially significant employment zones in the Gateway Economic Zone, without amending the Growth Plan.
- Prioritizing transit-supportive land use permissions for parcels adjacent to or near higher order transit facilities.

- Clarifying number of jobs and scale of employment uses where terms 'similar' and 'significant' are referenced.
- Improving economic competitiveness by enabling uses ancillary to the principle use of major goods movement facilities on adjacent or nearby lands.

Prior to February 28, 2019, the Region, with input from local planning staff, will update the draft material for submission. In addition to comments on the draft Growth Plan, the submission will include a copy of the Region's Coordinated Plan Review comments, initially submitted to the Province in 2016. The Province requested that comments provided to the previous parliament be resubmitted for their consideration.

Further details on the proposed amendment to the Growth Plan can be viewed on the MMAH website and the Environmental Registry of Ontario:

- <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page20926.aspx>.
- <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4504>;
- <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4505>;
- <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4506>;
- <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4507>.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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**Isaiah Banach**

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Planning & Development Services  
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Attachment:

- Niagara Region's preliminary draft comments: Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan