



NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

Appendix 7 - PDS 41-2021

Provincial Policy Review

Settlement Area Boundary Review

Niagara Region
December 2021

GROWING REGION



Provincial Policy Review

The Planning Act, 1990 requires all municipal Council decisions to be consistent with, conform to, or not conflict with the applicable Provincial policy. Regional and local planning staff must provide planning advice and make recommendations under the same requirements.

Below is a summary of some applicable Provincial Policy as it relates to this Report. The recommendations in this Report, and updated LNA, conforms to, is consistent with, and does not conflict with these documents, as applicable.

Provincial Policy Statement (2020)

The PPS, 2020 provides direction on land use planning to promote sustainable, strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment.

Section 1.1 - Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns supplies many of the referenced policies appearing in the SABR Assessment Criteria including:

“1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;

c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

d) avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of settlement areas in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas;

e) promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs; ...

g) ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs;

h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity;”

Respecting the policy context for use in the SABR assessment from a community building perspective, the consistent theme of healthy, livable, safe communities that are

efficiently designed, cost effective, transit-supportive and integrated, underscores the direction expansion consideration should take while reminding and recognizing future expansion needs to be a consideration.

Section 1.1.3 – “Settlement Areas” includes direction for settlement area boundary expansions only at the time of an MCR and only after there has been demonstrated need. New to the 2020 PPS is a policy that refers to satisfying market demand.

Policies of Section 1.1.3 also direct that agricultural land and industry be held in regard of decisions being made concerning expansion. This too is reflected in the SABR Criteria to be used in expansion review.

Other policies of the PPS, such as Housing, Employment, Infrastructure, Transportation and Wise Use and Management of Resources, all provide important direction for the completion of the LNA and the criteria considerations for the SABR.

A Place to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) as amended August 2020

The 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 through appropriate growth management.

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

Policy 2.2.1.5 identifies the Province’s Land Needs Assessment methodology to be used by the Region to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecasted growth to 2051.

Policy 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan speaks to Settlement Area Boundary Expansions.

Specifically, Policy 2.2.8.2 provides the direction for expansions to proceed through the MCR process based on the components and direction of the LNA. Further, Policy 2.2.8.3 requires any expansion be justified based on a comprehensive list of criteria. These policies were used to develop the Region’s SABR criteria and have included consideration for transportation, infrastructure, NES, agricultural lands and operations, and the applicable requirements of other Provincial Plans.

The Greenbelt Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan were also reviewed. The policies of both provide direction for enhancement and protection of the natural and agricultural systems. Expansions into the Greenbelt and Niagara Escarpment areas are prohibited.