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**Subject:** Draft Glendale District Plan

**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**Report date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That staff **PROVIDE** a presentation to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to seek endorsement for the Glendale District Plan;
2. That after endorsement has been received by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, staff **PREPARE** a report for the Planning and Economic Development Committee seeking approval for the Glendale District Plan; and
3. That Report PDS 15-2020 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the City of St. Catharines for their information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to present a draft of the Glendale District Plan for information.
- The study area of the Glendale District Plan is approximately 700 hectares, generally bound by Queenston Road to the north, the Niagara Escarpment to the south, Concession 7 Road to the east, and the Welland Canal to the west. The QEW bisects the study area and includes the Glendale Ave interchange.
- The Glendale District Plan was developed in collaboration with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) and the City of St. Catharines. It has also been informed by input from a Technical Advisory Committee, a Community Focus Group and a series of public engagement exercises.
- The vision directs the transformation of the Glendale settlement area into a vibrant and complete community; a community that celebrates its district character and builds on the unique attributes and assets of the area.

- The District Plan sets out nine key directions to achieve the vision. Each key direction includes strategies and recommendations to be further investigated through the update to NOTL's Glendale Secondary Plan and the ongoing work of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

## **Financial Considerations**

Costs associated with the district plan have been accommodated within the Planning & Development Services 2019 & 2020 Operating Budget.

## **Analysis**

Policies in the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe require the efficient use of land and infrastructure by promoting intensification with a focus on strategic growth areas. District Plans are foundational instruments for planning these growth areas and are expected to support the achievement of complete communities, a thriving economy, and a clean and healthy environment. As the Plan is implemented over time, it will attract new investment and build upon the district's existing assets, making it more prosperous and enjoyable for all.

Glendale was chosen for a District Plan because of its prominent location along the QEW, acting as a gateway to a large part of Niagara. It also has cross jurisdictional boundaries, Provincial interest, Federal interest, regional anchors, a higher education institution, and a varied mix of existing land uses, as well as vacant/underutilized urban lands. Glendale will benefit from a District Plan to direct future growth and guide the transformation of the area into a vibrant, compact, complete mixed-use urban environment.

The District Plan will bridge a gap between the Regional Official Plan and the local municipal Official Plan. It provides an opportunity to coordinate resources and a land use concept and demonstration plan that illustrates how the Glendale area can grow and evolve over time.

### *Glendale District Plan Vision*

*"Glendale Niagara District Plan will be a vibrant and complete community for people of all ages, lifestyles, and abilities - a place to live, work, play, learn and grow. Its urban*

*districts, with a mix of uses, will protect, integrate and celebrate the natural and rural surroundings reflecting the distinct character of the area.*

*Glendale Niagara District Plan will be framed by connection to green space along the Welland Canal, the creek valleys, the Niagara Escarpment and agricultural lands.*

*Glendale Niagara District Plan will put mobility first with a robust transit system, cycling trails and pedestrian routes seamlessly connecting areas north and south of the QEW highway.”*

### *Glendale as a Complete Community*

A complete community relies on density and diversity through a variety of land uses and built form, an activated public realm, and walkable, connected streets. It must also establish a population that will support local services, facilities and commercial offerings.

The success of a community is measured by how people interact with it. A complete community meets the daily living needs of its residents and provides options for remaining within the community throughout an individual’s life cycle.

The vision for Glendale is a community with a full range of land uses. The study area already contains a number of key elements that will support a complete community. There are lower density residential dwellings, a Regional outlet mall that serves the Regional market needs, an employment area to provide jobs, a cluster of hotels, Niagara College providing higher education and business synergies, and open spaces for passive and active recreation space. The District Plan will continue to build upon these assets.

The District Plan will also encourage new uses to support and complement the existing assets. The Main Street will provide a different experience providing more local commercial uses in a neighbourhood setting. Mixed-use development will add housing options to the study area. The transit hub will combine various modes and bring operators to a single site to provide a more efficient transit service. Additional green space will be woven through the study area providing opportunities for off-road connections and active transportation. New community facilities will become a central focus for recreation, services and public gathering spaces.

The Glendale land use concept and demonstration plan provides general land use direction to support the existing assets, promote new mixed-use, compact development and illustrates how the Glendale area can develop into a complete community.

### *Key Directions*

The Glendale District Plan is comprised of nine key directions that reflect the vision and provide a path forward for the creation of a complete, vibrant community. Each direction includes a detailed description, design guidance and strategies to achieve the direction and vision of the District Plan.

**Key Direction 1:** Protect and enhance the landscape/natural features. This key direction encourages passive recreational opportunities and connection to the natural environment while protecting and enhancing these features and biosystems.

**Key Direction 2:** A convergence for the area's trails and active transportation facilities. Trails and active transportation facilities are recognized as important for promoting healthy lifestyles and connectivity in the Glendale area.

**Key Direction 3:** Provide an accessible and connected transit system to serve the Glendale area, the greater Niagara Region and beyond. The creation of a multi-modal transit hub will centralizes transit operation and provide opportunities for shared parking facilities, car share, bike share and on-demand transit.

**Key Direction 4:** Create a strategy to build on the existing assets within Glendale and linking Glendale with the greater NOTL and the Region. There is currently a number of assets within and surrounding Glendale that will contribute to a successful urban district.

**Key Direction 5:** Create a "*Main Street*" from the Outlet Collection of Niagara to the adjacent urban neighbourhood. The Main Street will be a key component in achieving a complete community by offering local commercial uses, restaurants, cafes and other retail uses to serve the surrounding neighbourhood.

**Key Direction 6:** Provide a diverse range of housing ensuring choice and affordability. Offering diversity of housing will provide the opportunity to stay within or close to the neighbourhood as housing needs change over time.

**Key Direction 7:** Create public/civic space as a focus for Glendale. The District Plan recommends a community hub and integration of high quality public spaces as a central focus to the community.

**Key Direction 8:** Use sustainability measures related to resiliency and climate change. This key direction encourages the implementation of sustainability measures such as low impact development techniques and green infrastructure design to assist in mitigating climate change and make Glendale more resilient.

**Key Direction 9:** Coordination of infrastructure review, capacity and upgrades. This key direction encourages ongoing monitoring and collaboration with the major stakeholders in the area to ensure that infrastructure capacity is available and ready when development applications are submitted.

#### *Implementation and Next Steps*

Given the majority of the lands are within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Regional Planning staff intend to first present the Glendale District Plan to the NOTL Planning Committee of the Whole on June 8, 2020 with a request to receive the local Council endorsement, and then will bring the District Plan back to Regional Council for endorsement.

Once endorsed, the Glendale District Plan will provide the foundation for the vision of the Glendale community and land use intent. Further solidifying this vision, the District Plan will be implemented through a future amendment to the Regional Official Plan where the vision, objectives and key directions are embedded into policy. This policy direction will ensure that future decisions within the Glendale study area are consistent with the vision and direction of the District Plan, as well as any other implementing strategies as a result of this plan.

The Region will also 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. The Secondary Plan update will include supporting technical studies, such as Transportation Review, a Function Servicing Strategy and Subwatershed Study, to test the land uses and ensure that the final plan is both feasible and achievable. The Region will work closely with staff at NOTL to undertake this update.

As further detailed in the planning policy review section of this report, the lands within the City of St. Catharines are subject to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's (MNR) decision on the deferral. If the decision amends the Niagara Escarpment Plan designation to Urban Area it would be the first step towards implementing the land use concept as shown in the District Plan. Since these lands are relatively small and all owned by one landowner, the landowner would need to make the required planning applications to the City and Region to implement the vision of the District Plan. This will also require consideration of an urban boundary expansion.

The success of the Glendale District Plan relies on ongoing collaboration amongst the key partners and stakeholders. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) membership will be reviewed to determine continued participation. The TAC will continue to meet to discuss the strategies and recommendations of the District Plan and how they can be achieved.

#### *Planning Policy Review*

A planning policy analysis of current planning policy documents was undertaken to support the District Plan.

The urban area of Glendale is settlement area for the purposes of reviewing the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and A Place to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Both of these Plans encourage 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, employment, recreation, parks and open spaces. They also encourage transportation choices that increase the use of active transportation and transit before other modes of travel.

The Region is preparing an Urban Structure that will be implemented as part of the Region's new Official Plan process. Within this Urban Structure, the Region will designate 'Strategic Growth Areas' (SGA). SGAs are to be planned to accommodate a significant portion of population and employment growth and further the establishment of a complete community. Glendale has been identified within the draft Urban Structure as a SGA.

The remainder of the study area are lands outside of the urban boundary. They are designated 'Protected Countryside' and 'Niagara Escarpment Plan Area' in the Greenbelt Plan. 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 agricultural land and has restrictions for non-agricultural uses.

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'.

The Southwest Glendale area is subject to a request to re-designate the lands from Escarpment Protection Area to Urban Area through the Provincial Coordinated Plan Review (2017). This request was deferred by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), with a request for additional information to support the request. A decision on this deferral has not yet been made.

#### *Engagement and Consultation*

There was a very significant collaborative engagement effort associated with the preparation of the Glendale District Plan involving input from a Technical Advisory Committee, a Community Focus Group and the general public.

A Technical Advisory Committee was struck at the start of the project with membership from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the City of St. Catharines, various departments at Niagara Region, Niagara College and various government agencies to provide specialized input into the development of the plans and key directions of the District Plan.

A Community Focus Group was established in January 2019 to provide an opportunity for additional input on the draft District Plan. Approximately 18 members of the public agreed to participate in the Community Focus Group, representing a wide range of community interests. Input from this group assisted in understanding the local views of the District, as well as the opportunities and challenges faced by the people that live, work and own property in the study area.

#### Public Consultation Summary:

Phase 1 consultation included a visioning exercise held in June (2 days) and August (1 day) 2018. A representative group of residents, agencies, interest groups, business and government leaders participated in the visioning exercise, in order to ensure that the

District Plan reflects the collective input for the future condition of Glendale as it grows and expands.

Phase 2 also included public engagement at three Public Information Centres (PIC) to collect input at strategic points throughout the study process.

- PIC 1 (January 2019) kicked off the Phase 2 process and presented preliminary background information on the study area.
- PIC 2 (March 2019) presented two land use concept options for consideration.
- PIC 3 (November 2019) presented the draft Preferred Concept Plan, Demonstration Plan and the key directions. This consultation effort included an online text-based survey and mapping-based crowdsourcing platform to collect input on the draft concept and demonstration plan.

#### *Summary of Input from Public*

The input collected on the land use concept, demonstration plan and key directions revealed a general excitement regarding future development proposed in the District Plan.

Opportunities identified related to improving the active transportation network, providing more neighbourhood related commercial uses and amenities, and increasing the amount of green open spaces and linkages.

The challenges included existing and increased traffic issues and congestion, concerns regarding the potential for taller building heights and the need to connect Glendale north to south of the QEW.

The survey responses provided important insight into what is important for the Glendale area. Providing more affordable and mixed-use housing ranked as the highest priority by those that provided input via the online survey. Access to amenities like shops, schools and community uses was a close second.

Input collected throughout both Phases of the Glendale District Plan process has been considered in the creation of the District Plan. Public input will also be carried forward to the update of the Secondary Plan.

### *Individual Consultations and Correspondence*

In addition to the broader consultation program noted above, many individual meetings were held with Niagara College, the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, and Niagara Region Native Centre. These meetings allowed for collaboration on various projects that are ongoing in the study area. This collaboration resulted in identifying the respective land holdings as Special Study Areas on the Plan.

The Friends of Laura Secord (FoLS) provided written comments for suggestions on how to celebrate the history of the Glendale area. There are several areas that this input can be incorporated through future study and improvements. Suggestions provided by FoLS has been incorporated into Key Directions 2 and 5 and the Transportation Review sections of the District Plan.

The Niagara Escarpment Commission provided comments regarding their opposition to showing Southwest Glendale as Medium Density Residential on the Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan. Staff's response, as detailed earlier in the report, is to show the area as a Special Study Area recognizing the outstanding decision of MNRF and the need for various levels of planning approvals to allow development to occur.

The project team met with several land owners and key stakeholders at several points throughout both phases of the Glendale District Plan process. Comments related to their individual properties have been taken into consideration and changes made, where appropriate. In some cases, additional justification and technical support will need to be submitted to support the proposal. Staff will continue to work with and engage the landowners in the study area through the detailed technical review and update to the Secondary Plan.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

The draft of the Glendale District Plan is being presented for information. No alternatives are applicable.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The endorsement of the Glendale District Plan will strategically implement aspects all four of Council's priorities.

Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth:

The District Plan will contribute to economic growth and prosperity within the Glendale area through strategies that recognize and build on the existing assets and promote new assets.

**Healthy and Vibrant Community:**

The District Plan provides the vision and direction to growth Glendale into a healthy, vibrant and complete community through a mix of land uses and built form.

**Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning:**

The District Plan directs a pro-active approach to growth and infrastructure planning by recommending strategies for phasing, implementation and monitoring.

**Sustainable and Engaging Government:**

The District Plan encourages sustainable and engaging government through an ongoing Technical Advisory Committee consisting of major stakeholders in the area, additional public consultation through the Secondary Plan update and encouraging sustainable practices through land use and design.

**Other Pertinent Reports**

PDS-C 21-2018 to advise the Committee of the commencement of the Glendale Niagara District Plan; and,

PDS-C 31-2018 to provide an update on the District Plan study after the first workshop sessions.

PDS 34-2018 to provide information on the conclusion of Phase 1 of the Study, and to request endorsement of the Phase 1 vision and authorization to proceed to Phase 2.

PDS 12-2019 progress update on Phase 2 of the Glendale project.

PDS-C 18-2019 to provide an update on the shift in scope of Phase 2 of the Glendale project.

Glendale Niagara District Plan information and reports can be found here:

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/glendale-niagara-district-plan/default.aspx>

The Phase 1 final report can be viewed here:

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/glendale-niagara-district-plan/pdfs/glendale-district-plan-phase-one-final-report.pdf>

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**Appendices**

Appendix 1          Draft of the Glendale District Plan