



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

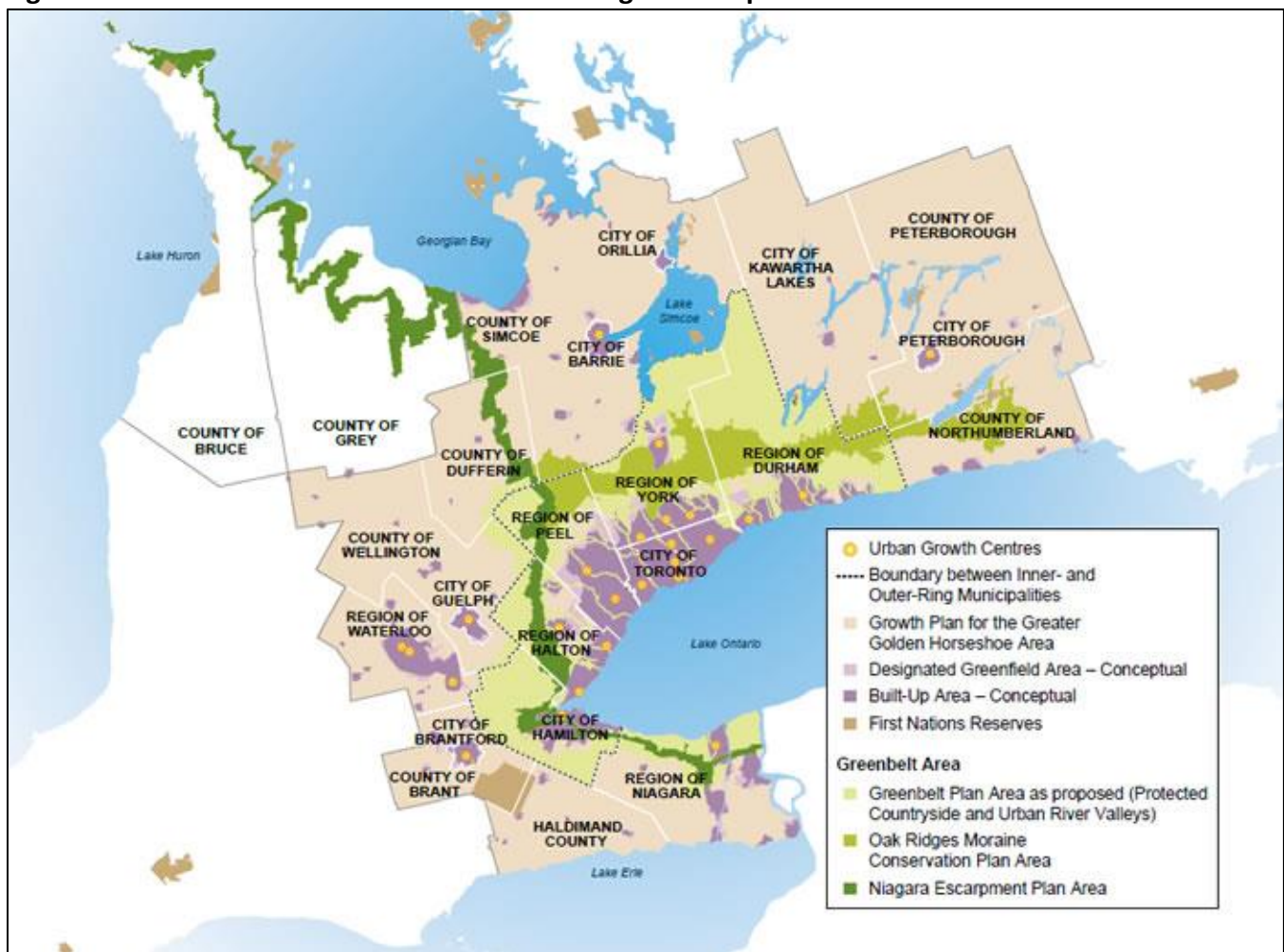
COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee
From: Mark Paoli, Manager of Policy Planning
Date: May 31, 2017
Subject: **PROVINCIAL PLAN UPDATES**

1.0 Background:

The province released updates to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (the Growth Plan) and the Greenbelt Plan on May 18, 2017. The extent of the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Greenbelt Plan are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The Greater Golden Horseshoe and Niagara Escarpment Area



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

2.0 Main Changes

The main changes identified in our initial reviews of the updated Plans are described below.

2.1 Main changes common to the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan Updates

- As of July 1, 2017 all decisions on planning matters are required to conform with the Plans;
- The County will be required to amend its Official Plan to conform by 2022;
- An agricultural impact assessment is required for new mineral aggregate operations in prime agricultural areas; and
- The positive or negative effects on agri-business need to be considered in planning decisions.

2.2 Main Changes in the Growth Plan Update

- The alternative intensification and greenfield density targets in the County Official Plan will apply until we amend the Official Plan to conform with the updated Provincial Plans;
- The conformity amendment will be a municipal comprehensive review undertaken by the County in consultation with member municipalities under the province's approval authority;
- The municipal comprehensive review will be a major project and will include:
 - Land budget (forecast vs supply of designated land) in accordance with provincial methodology that has not yet been released;
 - Map schedule changes to conform with:
 - An agricultural system (delineating prime agricultural and rural areas) that the province has not yet released;
 - A natural heritage system that the province has not yet released.
 - Analysis to justify either keeping the current alternative intensification and greenfield density targets or requesting the Minister to approve different targets (note: employment areas will be excluded from the greenfield density target);
 - Technical analysis and policy development on a number of matters including but not limited to:
 - The need for and appropriate direction of settlement area expansions and/or employment land conversions
 - Prime employment areas
 - Employment strategy including a minimum employment areas density target
 - Excess lands in settlement areas
 - Housing strategy
 - Infrastructure risks and vulnerabilities related to climate change.

2.3 Main Changes in the Greenbelt Plan Update

- The province did not expand the Greenbelt in Wellington County in this update;
- The updated Plan commits the province to exploring Greenbelt expansion in the future;
- The policy direction that requires Urban Centre expansions to be on municipal sewage and water services was retained;
- Major development in key hydrologic areas (significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers and significant surface water contribution areas) will require the applicant to demonstrate that hydrologic functions shall be protected, and where possible improved or restored; this new policy direction will not apply to agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses where the impervious surface is 10 per cent or less.
- Municipalities will collaborate with the province to identify the main parts of the agri-food network and functional and economic connections to the agri-food network shall be maintained and enhanced.

3.0 Summary:

These updated Provincial Plans were released two weeks ago (at time of writing) and the sections above noted the most important changes that we identified in our initial review. Our review will continue. Staff will participate in provincial training and stakeholder sessions and will continue to have discussions with member municipalities.

Achieving conformity with these Plans in the County Official Plan will be a significant effort; however, much of this work cannot begin until critical information (land budget methodology, agricultural system maps and natural heritage system maps) is released by the province.

We will provide additional reports as new information becomes available.

Recommendation:

That the report "Provincial Plan Updates" be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Paoli
Manager of Policy Planning