



1593 Four Mile Creek Road
P.O. BOX 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
905-468-3266 • FAX: 905-468-2959

www.notl.com

The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

SUBJECT: Public Meeting – Glendale Secondary Plan Official Plan Amendment
DATE: 2024-10-15
REPORT #: CDS-24-168
PREPARED BY: Kirsten McCauley, MCIP, RPP
DEPARTMENT: Community & Development Services

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Executive Summary

Public engagement is an important part of the planning process. The Town is holding a Public Meeting in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act* to receive input from the public and Council. Staff is reviewing the information submitted and collecting comments. No recommendation is being made at this time.

The Town, in collaboration with the Region, has been reviewing and preparing a new Glendale Secondary Plan that aligns with the vision of the Glendale District Plan work. The Secondary Plan has been informed by several technical studies: natural heritage/subwatershed study, transportation study, infrastructure study, commercial/employment study, and fiscal impact study. In addition, a set of urban design guidelines have been prepared, which provide direction for development and design intent.

Input on the Secondary Plan was collected through three Public Information Centres (“PIC”), two Community Focus Groups, three Technical Advisory Committee meetings, a Town Council update and a workshop, an Urban Design Committee meeting, and numerous landowner meetings.

The final draft of the Secondary Plan has been informed by the technical studies and input through the process. The Town is now initiating the formal Official Plan Amendment process through this Statutory Public Meeting.

The intent is to bring forward the final Secondary Plan for approval by the end of 2024. The Region has indicated that, given their extensive involvement in the plan creation and process, approval of the Official Plan Amendment will be exempt from Regional approval. However, pending changes to the Region’s responsibilities under the *Planning Act* anticipated to be proclaimed later this year, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing may become approval authority.

Location

The Glendale Secondary Plan study area includes the boundaries of the Glendale urban settlement area, and generally follows Homer Road to the west, Queenston Road to the north, Concession 7 Road to the east and the Niagara Escarpment to the south. The QEW runs directly through the centre of the Glendale area, the Welland Canal is just outside the boundary to the west, and the Niagara District Airport is in close proximity to the north. The boundary of the study area is illustrated on **Figure 1**.

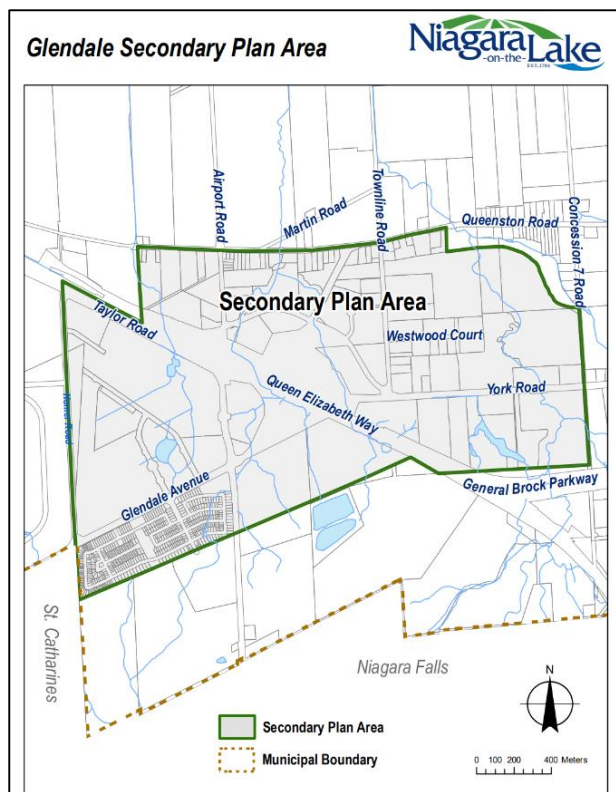


Figure 1: Secondary Plan Boundary

Background

The original Glendale Secondary Plan was approved by the Niagara Region in 2011. Since this time, there has been a number of changes to this plan as well as the planning policy framework at the Provincial and Regional levels, and a lack of action to fulfil the plan.

As a result, the Region, in partnership with the Town, undertook the Glendale District Plan to provide high-level guidance for this important growth area. The District Plan was endorsed in 2020 by both the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Council and Regional Council. The District Plan consisted of a shared vision with key directions for transforming the Glendale area into a mixed use, vibrant, and complete community.

An update to the existing Secondary Plan was identified as the next step to implementing the direction of the District Plan at the local level. At that time, it was identified that any consulting work required to complete the update would be coordinated by Niagara Region on behalf of the Town.

The Region retained a consulting team, led by The Planning Partnership, to lead work on the update to the Secondary Plan. Regional and Town Staff representatives managed the

consulting team's work on the project. The endorsed District Plan land use concept and demonstration plan was used as a starting point for the Secondary Plan update.

Secondary Plan Update Process

The draft updated Secondary Plan sets out a land use framework for the development of future land uses in this area. The Secondary Plan Update was completed in three phases to implement the direction of the District Plan and to ensure alignment with Provincial, Regional and local policy. A Secondary Plan is implemented via an Official Plan Amendment.

Phase 1 consisted of a background review and identified existing conditions. It focused on tasks related to data collection, interested party, and public consultation, and initiating the component studies. This phase culminated in the Background Report that was shared on the project webpage and via the first PIC. The work in Phase 1 set the basis and understanding of the study area.

Phase 2 considered options to the land use concept, informed by the initial findings of the technical studies, population and employment projections and urban design direction. The second phase focused on resolving the issues affecting the lands. Phase 2 concluded with the presentation and discussion of the revised Land Use Concept, Council workshop and PIC.

Phase 3 is the creation of the policy framework and preferred land use plan for the Secondary Plan. This phase is informed by the final technical studies and input throughout the process. The Secondary Plan is now being presented for formal input at the Statutory Public Meeting.

The Secondary Plan has been informed by various technical studies, including:

- **Background and planning review** coordinates all technical studies to ensure alignment and prepare policy direction to ensure the land use direction is realized.
- **Transportation assessment** identifies the benefits, impacts, accessibility, and infrastructure requirements for all transportation modes in a manner that aligns with projected needs.
- **Infrastructure study** reviews existing municipal servicing capacity and identifies any infrastructure upgrades required to implement the proposed land use and population projections.
- **Natural heritage/subwatershed study** reviews the natural heritage features and environmental constraints within the study area. This study includes three main review components: environmental features, stormwater management, and groundwater.
- **Commercial/employment lands study** assesses the potential market opportunities for new commercial and employment opportunities to serve the existing and future residents and visitors.
- **Urban design guidelines** make recommendations for creating a comfortable, well-designed community and public realm. The urban design direction will balance the land use with high-quality urban design.
- **Financial impact study** evaluates the growth-related impact of the Glendale study area. The study will assess local and regional municipal capital and operating budget requirements related to the development of the study area and consider the timing of infrastructure and facility investment as it relates to servicing development in Glendale.

Policy Review

The following provides a general overview of the policy framework regarding this Amendment. A full policy review will be completed and included in the future recommendation report.

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* identifies matters of Provincial interest that Council shall have regard to in carrying out its responsibilities under the *Planning Act*. Subsection 3(5) of the *Planning Act* requires that decisions of Council shall be consistent with provincial policy statements and shall conform with provincial plans that are in effect.

The *Planning Act* provides the ability to amend a municipal official plan and outlines the process to do so.

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020

The subject lands are located primarily within a "Settlement Area" under the Provincial Policy Statement (the "PPS").

The PPS indicates growth and development are intended to be directed to Settlement Areas. The Town is encouraged to develop healthy, livable, and safe communities by:

- accommodating an appropriate range and mix of uses;
- efficiently using land and public infrastructure;
- promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, intensification, and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns;
- supporting active transportation; and
- preparing for climate change.

The PPS also states that planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of uses, including employment and institutional uses, to meet long-term needs. Opportunities should be provided for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses. The Glendale employment area has been identified within the study area boundary.

Policies also require protection of natural features and areas for the long term, promotion of parks, trails and open space, and ensuring availability of infrastructure to support development.

Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024) is a streamlined province-wide land use planning policy framework that replaces the PPS, 2020, and the Growth Plan, 2019, and comes into effect on October 20, 2024.

As subsection 3(5) of the *Planning Act* requires that decisions of Council shall be consistent with provincial policy statements and shall conform with provincial plans that are in effect, the future Staff recommendation will be based on the policies and direction of the PPS, 2024.

Greenbelt Plan, 2017

The development portion of the subject lands are identified as being "Towns/Villages" within the "Protected Countryside" in the Greenbelt Plan.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), 2020

The development portions of the subject lands are within a "Settlement Area" and "Designated Greenfield Area" with respect to the policies of the Growth Plan.

The Growth Plan sets out policies and direction for managing growth in the Designated Greenfield Area, which supports the achievement of complete communities. The Growth Plan states that municipalities should be supporting the achievement of "complete communities" that:

- feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and public service facilities;
- improve social equity and quality of life;
- provide convenient access to transportation options, public services, open spaces/parks, and food options;
- provide for a compact built form and vibrant public realm; and
- mitigate climate change.

Glendale has been identified by the Region as a strategic growth area ("SGA"). The Growth Plan defines an SGA as "within settlement areas, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic growth areas include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas."

The Secondary Plan is supported and informed by a Subwatershed Study ("SWS") as required through the Growth Plan policies. A subwatershed study "considers existing development and evaluates impacts of any potential or proposed land uses and development; identifies hydrologic features, areas, linkages, and functions; identifies natural features, areas, and related hydrologic functions; and provides for protecting, improving, or restoring the quality and quantity of water within a subwatershed."

Niagara Official Plan, 2022

The subject lands are located within the Glendale District Plan area identified in the Regional Official Plan. The District Plan promotes a range of housing in terms of built form and affordability, a mix of land uses, promotes sustainability and resiliency through development, and encourages high-quality public and private realm through strong urban design direction.

The NOP identifies the Glendale District as an SGA. An SGA has the highest priority for development and intensification and is planned to be a complete, vibrant mixed-use community. It is also intended to be a primary location for major public service facilities, major institutional uses, high density and mixed-use development, office, commercial, and recreation uses. The Glendale SGA is to be planned by secondary plan and achieve a minimum density target of 100 persons and jobs per hectare.

Housing policies direct for a diverse housing stock with a range of tenures, sizes, types, and supports to be made available to meet the needs of our communities.

The Glendale employment area is identified as a knowledge and innovation employment area type on Schedule G of the NOP. This classification recognizes the proximity to and opportunity for synergy with Niagara College. Knowledge and innovation employment areas are planned to accommodate higher density type employment uses, such as research and development and offices use.

The NOP provides extensive policy direction for natural heritage areas, including protection of features and areas, enhancing biodiversity, connectivity, and encouraging measures to mitigate climate change.

The entirety of the Glendale urban area is within the airport area of influence as shown on Schedule J1. Conflict between the airport lands and surrounding land uses shall be minimized. Building height restrictions and the proximity of the Niagara District Airport have been examined through the Secondary Plan work.

The NOP also recognizes that designing and building healthy communities that encourage active lifestyles, varied housing options, social connections, protection of the natural environment and access to clean air, water, and healthy food will improve overall physical and mental health of its residents.

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Official Plan, 2017 Consolidation, as amended

The subject lands are located within the Glendale Secondary Plan Area (Special Policy Area A-7). Accordingly, the policies of the existing Glendale Secondary Plan are in force and effect for the subject lands. The Official Plan Amendment proposes to delete the existing Secondary Plan and replace it with the new Secondary Plan document.

The Glendale Secondary Plan will update policies and mapping to ensure alignment with the Council-endorsed District Plan and policies for the Glendale District outlined in the NOP.

The plan's vision states that Glendale will be a beautiful, healthy and complete urban community that fulfills its role in the urban structure of the Town and includes a full array of opportunities to live, work, learn and play. Glendale aspires to be a diverse community that is inclusive, accessible, compact and well connected through all modes of travel. Future development in Glendale will put mobility first with a robust transit system, cycling trails and pedestrian routes seamlessly connecting areas north and south of the QEW. Glendale will be framed by connections to green space along the Welland Canal, the creek valleys, the Niagara Escarpment and adjacent agricultural lands. Future development in Glendale will contribute to protecting, integrating and celebrating the natural and rural surroundings reflecting the distinct character of the area.

Policy framework was established based on the following key parameters for the Glendale Secondary Plan:

- Design for a complete community with a mix of land uses and full range and mix of housing options.
- Conserve natural heritage features and areas and design appropriate transitions to these areas.
- Provide urban design direction for transitions from higher to lower densities within the community.
- Support for economic development and competitiveness by protecting the employment

area for employment uses.

- Provide opportunity for a range of commercial uses through stand alone and mixed-use development as a fundamental part of a complete community.
- Encourage and facilitate the coordinated development, maintenance, and expansion of public service facilities in community hubs and identify potential for future schools and transit facilities.
- Design for a high-quality public realm to support active transportation, trails, parks and open space.
- Support water and energy conservation, plan for efficient land use and development, support alternative transportation modes and embrace the use of green infrastructure.
- Plan for the impacts of a changing climate and identify actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change adaptation.
- Plan for a well-connected, attractive, and functional multi-modal transportation system with a full spectrum of mobility options.

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Proposed Official Plan (2019)

Council adopted a proposed new Official Plan in November 2019. The proposed Official Plan has not been approved and is therefore not in effect but represents Council intent. The subject lands are within the existing 2011 Glendale Secondary Plan in the proposed Town Official Plan.

Consultation

Public Notice was provided as required by the *Planning Act* for the Statutory Public Meeting.

Staff and Agency Comments

A Technical Advisory Committee was created for this project, consisting of Staff from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Region, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Area, City of St. Catharines, Niagara College, Niagara District Airport, all four School Boards, and other various agencies, to review and provide input at each phase.

In addition, the Secondary Plan and technical studies were circulated to Town Departments and external agencies for review and comment. As of the date of completion of the report, the commenting period is still open. Staff expect to receive comments by October 18, 2024. Comments will be summarized and provided as part of the recommendation report.

Public Comments

The project team has completed several points of engagement. PICs were held on November 7, 2022, June 2, 2023, and August 14, 2024, to receive input at the various touchpoints/phases of the project. Two community focus group meetings were held in advance of PIC 2 and PIC 3 to receive input and have focused discussions on the information to be presented. The Feedback was considered and incorporated through the process.

Several meetings have been arranged throughout the project with various landowners, as well as Niagara College, Niagara Region Native Centre, Niagara District Airport, and Niagara Transit Commission. The initial draft of the urban design guidelines was shared with the Town's Urban Design Committee on November 22, 2023. A progress update on the Glendale Secondary Plan update was presented to Council at a special meeting on September 25, 2023.

All public comments received through the public meeting process will be shared as part of the recommendation report.

NEXT STEP / CONCLUSION

Following the Statutory Public Meeting, all comments received will be considered through the final review. Any revised materials will be made publicly available. Once the review process has concluded, a staff recommendation report will be prepared and presented at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

The intent is to bring forward the final Secondary Plan for approval by the end of 2024. The Region has indicated that, given their extensive involvement in the plan creation and process, approval of the Official Plan Amendment will be exempt from Regional approval. Please note that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) has indicated that changes to the Region's responsibilities under the *Planning Act* are anticipated to be proclaimed and come into force later this year. Should proclamation of these provisions occur prior to the adoption and approval of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, MMAH may become approval authority.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Appendix I** – Draft Glendale Secondary Plan