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FINAL BUILT BOUNDARY FOR THE PLACES TO GROW PLAN

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 30, 2008 from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current status and delineation of the built boundary based on the *Built Boundary for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006: Winter 2008 Paper* and updated mapping released by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MPIR) on April 2, 2008. As outlined in this paper, both the methodology used to create the built boundary, and the built boundary itself, are considered to be final.

3. BACKGROUND

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe prescribes a 40% intensification target for growth within the built boundary

On January 16, 2006, MPIR released the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan includes polices which support the development of more compact, vibrant, transit-supportive communities.

One of the key polices of the Growth Plan is that “by the year 2015 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 per cent of all residential development occurring annually within each upper- and single-tier municipality will be within the *built-up area*.”

The *built-up area* is defined as “all land within the built boundary”.

The Region, in consultation with local municipalities, has worked with Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MPIR)

On November 27, 2006 PIR released the *Technical Paper on a Proposed Methodology for Developing a Built Boundary for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* which included

preliminary mapping of the built-up area. Comments on the methodology were due to MPIR by January 19, 2007 and comments on the preliminary mapping were due Spring 2007.

On January 10, 2007 staff presented a staff report to Committee identifying six key issues with the proposed methodology:

1. All Regional Centres should be included in the built-up area
2. All Parkway Belt West Lands should be included in the built-up area
3. Cornell Centre should be included in the built-up area
4. Edges of the boundary that are uneven or jagged should be largely contiguous and delineated by a clear boundary aligned with recognizable features.
5. Donut Holes, or pockets of unbuilt areas surrounded by built-up areas, should be included in the built-up area.
6. Unbuilt areas that have been erroneously identified as built-up should be removed from the built-up area.

Following committee recommendations, staff consulted with local municipal staff and forwarded their comments to MPIR on January 19, 2007. In addition to regional comments, comments from the municipalities of East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Markham, Newmarket and Vaughan were included in the package.

Further discussion continued between the Region, local municipalities, and MPIR regarding a preliminary draft of the built boundary and the issue of whether to include Cornell Centre in the built boundary

In January 2007 regional staff received a GIS preliminary draft of the built boundary. All local municipalities were also contacted by MPIR and had the opportunity to obtain this digital data. MPIR requested that regional staff coordinate comments amongst all municipalities.

From February to May 2007 regional staff met with staff from each of the nine local municipalities to co-ordinate the suggested revisions to the boundary. The suggested consolidated revisions were then forwarded to MPIR for their consideration.

In July 2007 Planning Commissioner Tuckey sent a letter to MPIR Assistant Deputy Minister Brad Graham providing additional rationale for the inclusion of Cornell Centre in the built-up area (*Attachment 1*). In November 2007 MPIR Assistant Deputy Minister Brad Graham wrote to Commissioner Tuckey advising that the lands within Cornell Centre do not meet the criteria for inclusion within the built boundary as they were not built as of June 2006 (*Attachment 2*).

The final methodology was released in the Fall of 2007, only permitting limited additional revisions to the built boundary

On November 20, 2007, MPIR released updated mapping, along with the *Proposed Final Built Boundary for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006: Fall 2007 Technical Paper*. The method used to create the built boundary as outlined in the updated technical paper was considered to be final. However, limited revisions to the boundary were to be permitted within the parameters of the methodology.

On January 16, 2008, staff presented a staff report to Committee to provide an update on the current status and delineation of the built boundary in the updated technical paper. This report found that a majority of the Region's comments from the January 2007 report were followed, with the notable exception of including Cornell Centre within the built boundary, and representing Pefferlaw as a dot instead of a line. In addition, the report suggested that further smoothing of the built boundary edges could occur due to changes in the methodology.

In February 2008, Regional Chair Bill Fisch sent a letter to MPIR Minister David Caplan in response to the letter received from the Assistant Deputy Minister in November, regarding the exclusion of Cornell Centre in the built boundary (*Attachment 3*). Regional Chair Fisch re-emphasized the position of York Region and the Town of Markham, that the planning principles and objectives of Cornell Centre merit inclusion within the built boundary. In addition, he explained that it is the Region's intention to include Cornell Centre in all future monitoring of intensification.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The final built boundary mapping is very similar to the boundary that was released in November 2007 (*Attachment 4*). A more detailed analysis, based on currently unreleased detailed digital mapping, will be conducted by staff.

4.1 CORNELL CENTRE

Regional staff and Town of Markham staff strongly support the inclusion of Cornell Centre in the built-up area. As outlined in *Attachment 1*, the inclusion of Cornell Centre is a key component of the Region's planned urban structure and it should be included in the built-up area based on local municipal, regional and provincial policy initiatives.

The final boundary includes some small portions of the Centre; however, the majority of it has not been identified as built-up. This oversight by MPIR is counterintuitive to the Region's and Town's efforts to build a compact, vibrant, transit-supportive community. As such, it is staffs intention to include Cornell Centre in all intensification calculations despite the fact that it is not included in the Provincial built-up area.

4.2 PEFFERLAW

The final methodology for developing the built boundary provides that smaller, unserviced or partially serviced settlement areas which have limited capacity to accommodate significant future growth are represented by a dot because a line will not be required for monitoring purposes. Thus, it is notable that Pefferlaw is represented by a line in the final built boundary, when it remains an unserviced community. The Province's rationale for including Pefferlaw is due to its large spatial extent, however comments from staff and the local municipality have pointed out that Pefferlaw will likely remain unserviced and not attract a significant amount of intensification.

4.3 EDGES

Updates that were included in the final methodology in November 2007 provided the opportunity for further smoothing of the built boundary edge. A preliminary analysis of the final boundary has shown that minor smoothing of the boundary edge has occurred, however only further analysis will determine whether the smoothing was performed to the full extent.

4.4 NEXT STEPS

Detailed digital mapping of the built boundary will be forthcoming from the Province. The built boundary will form the basis for the Region's calculation of its 40% intensification target. The Growth Plan indicates that "by the year 2015 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 percent of all residential development occurring annually within each upper- and single-tier municipality will be within the built-up area."

The Region will be working with the local municipalities in identifying the locations and amount of intensification that will be planned for within each area municipality by 2031. The Region has completed a preliminary intensification forecast which indicates that approximately 85,000 new units within the built boundary would be required to meet the 40% intensification target. Each local municipality will have a role to play in meeting the Region-wide 40% target.

Relationship to Vision 2026

The final built boundary will have direct impacts on the form, structure and density of new residential development in the long term. The impact on new development will in turn speak to many of the Vision 2026 goal areas, including Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture; Responding to the Needs of our Residents; Housing Choice for our Residents; Managed and Balanced Growth; and Infrastructure for a Growing Region.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with the final built boundary methodology and mapping proposed by MPIR. Financial implications associated with growth management and intensification will be reported on at a later date.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Defining the built boundary is one component of the Region's comprehensive growth management exercise that also includes developing revised local municipal forecasts, a land budget exercise, an intensification strategy, updates to the Region's infrastructure master plans and a fiscal impact analysis. Regional staff have consulted extensively with local municipal staff throughout this process.

Intensification units will account for 40% of all growth units at the Regional scale from 2015 on. The final delineation of the built boundary will determine the total built-up area for each local municipality. This information will be used as input in the assignment of local municipal intensification targets.

7. CONCLUSION

The Province has finalized the methodology for determining the built boundary, as well as the boundary itself. Overall the built boundary methodology outlined by MPIR is sound. The methodology allows for a consistent evaluation of the built-up areas across the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Throughout the development process, the Province has addressed many of the consolidated suggested revisions forwarded to them by regional staff and have incorporated them into the final built boundary.

The most significant requested revisions that MPIR did not incorporate into the boundary were the request for the inclusion of Cornell Centre and the removal of Pefferlaw.

It is the Region's contention that the Province's decision to not include Cornell Centre within the built boundary is counterintuitive and does not support the Town's, Region's and Province's vision for compact, vibrant, transit-supportive communities. As such, it is the Region's intention to include Cornell Centre in all intensification calculations despite the fact that it is not included in the Provincial built-up area.

Pefferlaw is an unserved community and despite its large spatial extent, will likely not attract a significant amount of intensification. Thus, the Region disagrees with the Province's representation of Pefferlaw with a line, and that it would be better suited as a dot in the built boundary mapping.

Staff will utilize the built boundary as the basis for the Region's calculation of its 40% intensification target

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager of Growth Management, Economy & Information Research at Ext. 1530, or John Waller, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The four attachments referred to in this clause are included with this report.)