

TO:	Planning Committee
MEETING DATE:	May 14, 2018
SUBJECT / REPORT NO:	Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan CN: 3-5-02-02 Application: PLOPA20180020 Report - PL 18-27
PREPARED BY:	Matt Bruder, MCIP, RPP Associate Director of Planning and Development
SUBMITTED BY:	Kathleen Dale, MCIP, RPP Director of Planning and Development

RECOMMENDATION:

For the reasons outlined in PL 18-27 it is hereby recommended:

1. The Official Plan Amendment consisting of the updated Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan (PLOPA20180020) BE APPROVED and presented to Council for approval; and
2. That Amendment No. 4 to the Town Official Plan, as adopted, be forwarded to the Region of Niagara for approval.

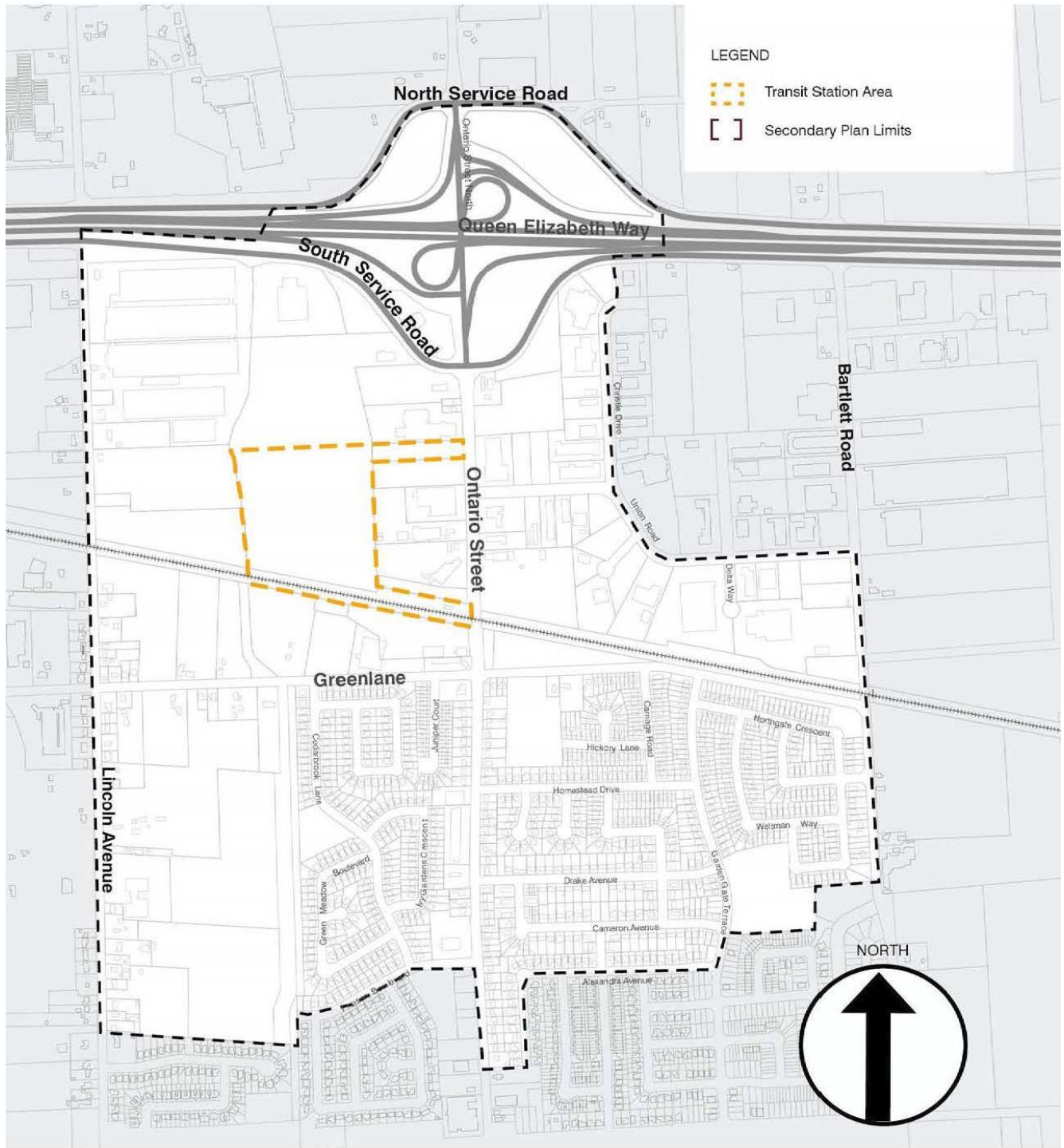
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide a recommendation to the Committee and Council regarding an amendment to the Official Plan Amendment to adopt the Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan will encourage and support the creation of a complete, sustainable community that provides a mix and range of employment, commercial, and residential land uses including a diverse range of housing options, local services and community infrastructure, as well as the design of attractive and accessible public spaces that prioritize the pedestrian experience. The Plan will ensure that development in the area meets the day-to-day needs of residents, integrates existing and new development, accommodates intensification, encourages employment land uses, and supports GO Transit ridership through a generally compact built form. It will encourage connectivity between the future GO station and the community.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Location:

The Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan area is over 254 hectares in size and is located as shown on the map included on page 2.



This area was selected because it encompasses lands that are within a 10 to 15-minute walk (approximately 800 metre radius) of the station site, in accordance with Mobility Hub Guidelines (2011).

Background:

In 2011, GO Transit/Metrolinx completed an Environmental Study Report (ESR) called the “Niagara Rail Service Expansion”. The ESR recommended new or expanded commuter rail service to address increasing congestion levels along the corridor between Niagara-Hamilton and the western GTA. It recommended preferred station locations in Grimsby, St. Catharines,

and Niagara Falls, with a longer-term recommended future station identified in Lincoln (Beamsville).

In 2016, the Province announced that daily GO Train service would be extended into Niagara, with service starting in Grimsby in 2021. In anticipation of this expansion, Niagara Region, in collaboration with the Town, initiated a Secondary Plan study for the transit station area. This process was paralleled in the other Niagara municipalities that would be receiving GO Train service (Grimsby, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls).

A consultant team lead by Dillon Consulting was selected to undertake the Secondary Plan studies. The purpose of the Plan is to promote a more compact built form through redevelopment in proximity to the station site. The plan provides long-range policy guidance for:

- Land use;
- Transportation, including walking, cycling, transit and road networks;
- Urban design and public realm improvements; and
- Implementation.

The main objectives of the plan are as follows:

- Plan for redevelopment along Greenlane Road in proximity to the future GO Transit Station;
- Improve the streetscape and pedestrian realm along Ontario Street and Greenlane Road;
- Protect employment lands and attract new investment;
- Support connectivity and integration of the GO Transit Station;
- Protect stable residential neighbourhoods; and
- Promote active transportation and make efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) underlies these main objectives. TOD is a planning approach to long-term growth around transit stations and along transportation routes. The Provincial Growth Plan provides a policy direction to concentrate residential and employment uses around transit stations to minimize dependence on automobiles and to maximize the number of transit users within walking distance of the stations. The goal of this policy direction is to improve quality of life by creating sustainable and livable pedestrian oriented, mixed-use communities that respect the character of an area while also providing for more compact growth.

Provincial investment in GO Train service in Niagara represents a unique opportunity to proactively plan land use, transportation networks (all modes) and infrastructure around the station area. Successful transit stations are ones where there has been an intentional approach to planning for growth around the station, elevating walkability and access and improving the public realm to create spaces that are vibrant and active. Having more people living and working in close proximity to the station is an important factor in its success.

To support rapid transit expansion, the lands around the GO Transit Station will be planned with mid-rise residential and mixed-use development. This growth will be focused along the north side of Greenlane, which will accommodate a range of mixed-use development. The

intensification of this area will provide a transition between the stable residential lands to the south of Greenlane and the industrial uses to the north of the railway and should incorporate new open spaces and community facilities.

The industrial lands to the north of the railway will be protected for employment use and, where possible, will evolve to provide opportunities for denser forms of employment. New office commercial uses will be directed to locate along Ontario Street, facilitating a street edge while providing for higher density uses in proximity to the GO Transit Station and highway interchange. By 2041, the area has potential to accommodate an additional 1,300 people and 950 employees.

The Secondary Plan process has been ongoing in the midst of some important Provincial legislation updates, specifically the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). The Growth Plan policies speak to the formation and design of compact and complete communities; prioritizing intensification and efficient use of lands and infrastructure through a more compact built form that supports transit viability; a range and mix of housing; the protection of natural heritage; and the integration of climate change into planning and managing growth. As such, the Secondary Plan provides the opportunity to prepare new updated policies in the context of the current Provincial planning policy framework, urban design practices, and market trends, and provide for a form of development which better accommodates future population and economic growth.

Since the February Public Meeting, staff have worked with the consultant and Regional staff to update the proposed secondary plan based on input received both during and after the statutory public meeting. The updated Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan is attached as Appendix A to this report.

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Financial:

The projected is being funded by the Niagara Region.

Staffing:

There are no additional staffing requirements anticipated as a result of the consideration of this report.

Legal:

If Council's decision regarding the application is appealed to the Ontario -add new name LPAT, legal costs could be incurred by the Town.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Open houses and Public information Centres were held in June 2016, June 2017 and November 2017 to provide members of the public with the opportunity to provide comment on the secondary plan. Additionally, the Region provided an online survey on their website for those individuals who were unable to attend the open house sessions.

The draft Secondary Plan was circulated to the required agencies to give them an opportunity to provide comment on the proposed policies. Comments have been received by the project team throughout the Secondary Plan development process.

A project website (www.niagararegion.ca/gohubstudy) was set up to provide ongoing updates and information to the public on the project. The website was updated after each public engagement events and during critical milestones of the Secondary Plan.

The duty to consult Indigenous communities is a requirement under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act* (1982). The Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan also require proponents to consult with First Nations and Metis groups. As part of this secondary planning process staff informed their Indigenous community contacts with information throughout the planning process and as well as offered to meet.

The Statutory Public Meeting was held on February 27, 2018 to provide an opportunity for agencies and individuals to provide input in front of the Planning Committee.

STAFF COMMENTS:

It is required that municipal decisions affecting planning matters shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014), Growth Plan (2017) and Greenbelt Plan (2017). The following policies are particularly relevant to this application.

Provincial Policy Statement:

The lands are located within a settlement area as defined by the PPS.

Policy 1.1.1 promotes healthy, livable and safe communities by promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of municipalities over the long-term and by accommodating an appropriate range of residential and employment (including industrial and commercial uses) to meet long-term needs. Such communities are sustained by:

- Avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns.
- Promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.
- Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.
- Ensuring that necessary infrastructure, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.
- Promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of a changing climate.

Policy 1.1.3.1 states that settlement areas will be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted. Policy 1.1.3.2(a) states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses, which efficiently use infrastructure and public service facilities, support active transportation, are transit supportive (where transit exists or is planned); and are freight supportive. Policy 1.1.3.2(b) states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on a range of

uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated considering existing building stock or areas, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.

Policy 1.1.3.4 states that appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate intensification and development, and compact form, while avoiding or mitigating risks to public health and safety.

Policy 1.1.3.6 states that new development taking place in designated growth areas should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and shall have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities.

Policy 1.4.1 requires an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

- Maintaining the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development.
- Maintaining land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment.

Policy 1.4.3 requires planning authorities to provide for a mix of housing that includes affordable to low and moderate-income households including all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements and all forms of residential intensification. This development is to be directed towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs. It further promotes densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use.

The Secondary Plan provides for a variety of housing types all within a more compact built form that also includes commercial, retail, and other employment land uses. As such, the efficient use of available and planned infrastructure is encouraged by the plan. It also promotes walkability and connectivity through “complete streets” and integrated public space approaches and thus, encourages a more active and healthy lifestyle for its future residents. The draft Secondary Plan conforms to the PPS.

Places to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe:

The Province’s Growth Plan states that communities need to grow at transit-supportive densities, with walkable street configurations. Compact built form and intensification efforts go together with more effective transit and active transportation networks and are fundamental to where and how we grow. They are necessary to ensure the viability of transit; connect people to homes, jobs and other aspects of daily living for people of all ages; and meet climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives. This will result in better use of land and infrastructure.

This Plan sets out a regional vision for transit and seeks to align transit with growth by directing municipalities to plan for intensification around GO stations and the most recent updates provide density targets. Concentrating new development in these areas provides a focus for investments in transit as well as other types of infrastructure and public service facilities to support forecasted growth, while also supporting a more diverse range and mix of housing options.

The subject lands are predominantly identified as a “settlement area”, as defined by the Growth Plan. The main goals of the latest iteration of this plan (2017) are to accommodate forecasted growth in complete communities. These are communities that are well designed to meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, public service facilities, and a full range of housing to accommodate a range of incomes and household sizes. Building compact and complete communities will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure communities are more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Section 1.2.1 contains the following principles, which provide the basis for guiding decisions on how land is developed, resources are managed, and public dollars are invested:

- Support the achievement of complete communities.
- Prioritize compact built form to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability.
- Support a range and mix of housing options to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.
- Improve the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities, including integrated service delivery through community hubs.
- Integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure and moving towards low-carbon communities, with the long-term goal of net-zero communities, by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Growth Plan also directs municipalities on where and how to grow, furthermore the plan states that growth should be directed to locations with existing or planned transit (Policy 2.2.1.2 (c) iii). Particularly relevant to the Secondary Plan, Policy 2.2.2 of the Growth Plan directs municipalities to develop a strategy to achieve intensification throughout delineated built up areas which will:

- Identify the appropriate type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas.
- Identify strategic growth areas to support achievement of the intensification target and recognize them as a key focus for development.
- Prioritize planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities that will support intensification.

Policy 2.2.2 requires that by 2031 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 60% of all residential development occurring annually within the Region will be within the built-up area. Once a new Regional Plan is approved and in effect, and each year until 2031, a minimum of 50% of all residential development occurring annually within the Region will be within the built-up area. Until the Regional Plan is updated and approved, the existing target of 40%

intensification will apply. This is especially important to consider with respect to the limited quantity of vacant urban designated land which is a potential limiting factor for the market potential for such growth within the Town. The Beamsville GO Transit Station Secondary Plan area is predominately designated as Built Up Area and therefore will be required to contribute to the municipality's intensification target.

Policy 2.2.3 of the Growth Plan provides that all areas of compact built form will be planned and designed to:

- Cumulatively attract a significant portion of population and employment growth.
- Provide a diverse and compatible mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses to support vibrant neighbourhoods.
- Generally, achieve higher densities than surrounding areas.
- Achieve an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas.

Policy 2.2.5 indicates that retail and office uses are to be directed to locations that support active transportation and have existing or planned transit. Specifically, major office and appropriate major institutional development will be directed to major transit station areas or other strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service.

Policy 2.2.6 specifies that municipal housing strategies are to be developed that support the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in the Growth Plan by:

- Identifying a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected needs of current and future residents.
- Establishing targets for affordable ownership housing and rental housing.
- Identifying mechanisms, including the use of land use planning and financial tools, to support the implementation of this policy.
- Alignment with applicable housing and homelessness plans required under the Housing Services Act, 2011.

Section 3.2 of the Growth Plan identifies key policies for infrastructure to support growth. This includes:

- Leveraging infrastructure investment to direct growth and development in accordance with the policies and schedules of the Growth Plan, including the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets.
- Providing sufficient infrastructure capacity in strategic growth areas.
- Identifying the full life cycle costs of infrastructure and developing options to pay for these costs over the long-term.
- Considering the impacts of a changing climate.
- Prioritizing areas with existing or planned higher residential or employment densities to optimize return on investment and the efficiency and viability of existing and planned transit service levels.

Policy 4.2.10 requires municipalities to develop policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change adaptation goals. These are to support the achievement of complete communities as well as the minimum growth targets in the Growth Plan and reduce

dependence on the automobile by supporting existing and planned transit and active transportation.

The Secondary Plan is consistent with the Growth Plan policies that pertain to intensification of settlement areas to accommodate forecasted growth in that it will promote a compact built form that will align with the recommended density in the vicinity of major transit stations. As such it is our opinion that development resulting from the Secondary Plan policies will implement direction from the Growth Plan by introducing varying forms of residential land uses supported by commercial/retail/employment land uses that minimizes reliance on the automobile through a more compact, walkable built form, while providing opportunities for further commercial/retail growth and ridership support for the proposed station. It will also provide appropriate transition of built form through implementation of urban design and complete streets guidelines, as explained further later in this report.

Greenbelt Plan:

The western portion of the subject lands are designated by the Greenbelt Plan as within the Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Area as part of the policies of the Protected Countryside.

The applicable policies require protection of these areas while allowing and promoting agricultural uses and activities. It also requires provision of the appropriate flexibility to allow for agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses, normal farm practices and an evolving agricultural and rural economy. This Secondary Plan complies with Greenbelt policies.

Regional Official Plan:

The proposed Secondary Plan needs to conform to the Regional Official Plan (ROP). The Regional policies encourage and promote:

- Developing a framework for developing complete communities across Niagara, including a diverse mix of land uses, a range of local employment opportunities and housing types, high quality public open spaces, and easy access to local stores and services via automobile, transit and active transportation.
- Sustainable, vibrant, complete communities by encouraging mixed and integrated land uses and promoting development that is compact, transit supportive and provides for active transportation.
- Development of mixed use areas (such as downtowns and commercial areas) to provide an attractive streetscape and public realm.
- The provision of affordable housing.
- Social inclusion for all residents with access to housing, commercial goods and services, job opportunities and social services.
- A range of housing types to serve a variety of people as they age.
- Urban design standards, municipal beautification, streetscape improvements, public art and public gardens to ensure communities remain attractive places, enhance the quality of life and encourage tourism.
- Complementary private realm site design that addresses public safety, active transportation and landscaping.

- Directing growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use of existing municipal sewage and water services.
- Plan Intensification Areas to provide a diverse mix of land uses that complement and support the overall residential intensification objective. These may include, employment, commercial, recreation, institutional and other compatible land uses in relative proportions dependent on area characteristics and the intended critical mass of residential development.
- Plan Intensification Areas to attract a significant portion of population and employment growth, relative, to the shape and character of the community.
- Link intensification opportunities with existing or planned future transit hubs and active transportation routes.

It is Staff's opinion that this Secondary Plan is consistent with the policies or direction of the Regional Official Plan. It will provide a highly walkable space that will connect a compact built form with the future GO station and adjacent communities. The built form will consist of a range of land-uses in support of a complete community and transit ridership, including high quality public realm space along the roads coupled with attractive urban and architectural design.

Official Plan:

According to the Town Official Plan, the lands are designated for residential and commercial development. Section 1.2 of the Official Plan notes that a sustainable community is achieved by:

- Providing choices and opportunities for housing, employment, transportation, social, recreational and cultural amenities.
- Making efficient use of infrastructure by focusing on a compact, mixed-use, walkable, bikeable and connected community.
- Promoting urban design guidelines to ensure a high quality of building and site design
- Encouraging design practices that address the accessibility needs of residents with disabilities.
- Identifying opportunities for promoting energy conservation and reducing waste.

Section 1.3 of the Official Plan contains several goals and objectives including:

- Accommodating new and innovative housing types.
- Encouraging local employment so residents can work in close proximity to home.
- Encouraging the development of neighbourhoods which provide a range and mix of housing types and densities.
- Fostering a sense of civic identity through a high standard of urban design in public and private development.
- Facilitating the provision of a full range of goods and services to meet the needs of residents and visitors.
- Providing for housing that is affordable to the community and diverse in an effort to accommodate the broadest range of income levels.
- Encouraging intensification and redevelopment within the urban areas specifically within and in proximity to the Central Business District (CBD).

Section 1.4 references Regional growth studies and identifies numbers of new residents and corresponding dwelling units and employment opportunities that will need to be accommodated by the Town during the life of the Official Plan. The Go Transit Station Secondary Plan area will be a significant location for this growth as it is ideally situated in the vicinity of the QEW which provides a high accessibility.

Section 1.6 provides concepts for guiding future development in urban areas. Section 1.6.4 states that intensification is an appropriate means of accommodating growth since it makes better use of existing serviced land and that the increase in housing units and employment created by intensification is also considered a good approach to maintaining and improving vibrancy in a community.

Section 3.1.13 of the Official Plan refers to Residential Intensification. It indicates that the Town will consider residential intensification subject to the following criteria:

- The development will be characterized by quality design and landscaping, will implement suitable building setbacks to preserve the existing character of the neighbourhood, shall meet current parking standards and meet or improve traffic movements so as not to negatively impact the surrounding neighbourhood from the perspectives of safety or neighbourhood character

Section 3.4 of the Official Plan identifies General Commercial designated lands as components of mixed use nodes and corridors. In these areas, business and commerce are promoted. These areas rely to a greater extent on vehicular traffic for their economic existence. The following objectives for General Commercial Areas are identified:

- Encourage the provision of a sufficient level and variety of retail activity within the Town to satisfy the consumer demands of residents.
- Promote planned development of business and commercial uses consistent with the needs of the Town residents.
- Ensure that commercial development does not have adverse impacts on adjacent land uses, particularly residential uses.
- Foster a vibrant, connected, walkable and bikeable retail and commercial environment.
- Promote opportunities for mixed use development in strategically located nodes and corridors.

Section 3.5.3 outlines the following objectives for development and expansion of the existing industrial base and stimulation for new industrial growth:

- To maintain a supply of industrial lands to meet long term needs as well as to provide employment in the Town.
- To support industrial uses that contribute to the goal to be a centre for agricultural excellence
- To provide a positive image of the Town by providing high quality architectural design, landscape design and site design in all industrial development visible from the Queen Elizabeth Way, Ontario Street and at all gateway locations entering the Town.

Section 4.13 supports energy efficiency and improvements to air quality by encouraging the reduction of energy consumption, endorsing the development of compact and mixed-use neighbourhoods and by promoting innovative forms of alternative and renewable energy, in

land use and development patterns. Policies are included to reduce energy consumption by encouraging reasonably compact forms of development in conjunction with efficient pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular transportation networks along with efficient or renewable energy systems and energy efficient buildings (i.e., LEED design). Guidelines to encourage developments that are inclusive of these characteristics and initiatives are included in the draft Secondary Plan.

The policies in Section 5.1.4 guide economic growth and add stability to the local economy by providing for high quality businesses and services along the QEW and protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future use. They also promote walkable, bikeable neighbourhoods with linkages to open spaces which provide a system of parks, trails and nature-based attractions for appreciating the wide variety of natural and cultural amenities.

In the transportation section (Section 6.1.1), key objectives include the following:

- Develop complete streets which provide the infrastructure support for complete communities where neighbourhoods are well connected to each other, commercial areas, employment areas, and community facilities with a safe and efficient transportation network that accommodates all users on all roads.
- Reduce car dependence, support active transportation and an efficient sustainable transportation system.
- Develop and maintain a suitable road hierarchy within the Town.
- Promote municipal and interregional transit service within and to the Town as well as GO transit service.

With respect to active transportation, walking, hiking and bicycling are all considered valuable means of transportation, and a key component to attract tourism in the Town. Facilities associated with walking, hiking and cycling are related to the physical environment, and, as such, the following objectives and policies reflect the Town priorities:

- Encourage walking, hiking and bicycling, and work towards a safe, user-friendly environment in the Town that will enhance the overall quality of life and will help to promote tourism.
- Ensure a connected network for pedestrians and cyclists linking destinations such as retail areas and employment area to residential areas.
- Promote trail use safety through education and enforcement initiatives.
- Incorporate walking, hiking and cycling in the Town land use and transportation planning activities.
- Encourage and ensure the integration of the variety of trail facilities within the Town, including the Regional Bicycling Network, the Bruce Trail, the Waterfront Trail, the Twenty Valley Trail and other networks outside of the Town with external funding partners.
- Maximize the annual improvements for trails with the aim of completing major continuous segments of the Trail Network in as timely a manner as possible.
- Promote a land use pattern, density and a mix of uses to minimize the length and number of vehicle trips to support current and future use of transit and active transportation.

The Secondary Plan has been developed with the objective of maximizing walkability and access throughout the subject lands. It will produce a high level of connectivity through integration of the built form with trails and road rights-of-way that will be developed with a complete streets approach where all potential users (pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, etc.) will be accommodated.

Section 6.1.6 requires the Town to promote GO Transit commuter service through the Town. Station facilities shall be coordinated with interregional bus services and any local taxi services.

Section 8.6 of the Official Plan identifies urban design policies of which the policies included in the draft Secondary Plan are consistent. Policies are provided for a wide range of land uses as well as for parks and open spaces and gateway locations and the road network, including Ontario Street specifically. The objectives of these policies are to:

- To encourage a compact, walkable and well-connected community.
- To encourage mixed use and a range of housing.
- To provide a linked public open space system.
- To encourage quality architecture and to ensure that buildings provide an appropriate edge to the street.
- To encourage increased density in appropriate locations.
- To provide a range of transportation options, including walking and cycling and encourage complete streets for all users.
- Appropriate design of streets and public spaces in order to enhance and encourage pedestrian and public activity.
- To encourage a strong sense of place and improvements to the public realm.
- New development is to be compatible with established development.
- Protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage landscapes and features.

Considering the above policies, it is staff's opinion that the Secondary Plan is consistent with the Town's Official Plan.

Planning and Development Staff:

The redevelopment of the subject lands will contribute to the identity of the Town. Specifically, the development of a GO Transit Station incorporated with a mixture of industrial, commercial and residential uses will serve to strengthen the viability of Beamsville and the Ontario Street corridor which is the primary entrance into Beamsville. This site includes a significant amount of land that provides development opportunities to accommodate the significant growth anticipated within the Town. It provides prominent exposure to the QEW which is an important attribute for businesses of all types. The Town is predominately a Greenbelt community with limited space available for urban settlement. This provides a challenge with respect to the requirements of the Growth Plan and its intensification targets, as well as its mandate to plan for a range and mix of housing options, including more compact housing options that can accommodate a range of household sizes in locations that can provide access to transit and other amenities.

Better use of land and infrastructure can be made by directing growth to settlement areas and prioritizing compact built form, with a focus on strategic growth areas, including transit station areas such as the proposed. Concentrating new development in these areas provides a focus for

investments in transit as well as other types of infrastructure and public service facilities to support forecasted growth, while also supporting a more diverse range and mix of housing options. As such, the Secondary Plan includes policies that contribute to a compact built form that makes efficient use of the land, transportation network, and servicing capabilities to accommodate this growth without compromising the wellbeing and integrity of adjacent existing communities. It also considers input received from the general public and landowners to reach a balance with respect to land-uses to be included and their orientation.

The draft Secondary Plan provides a vision for the area to become a successful, diverse, walkable, mixed-use neighbourhood. The compact built form of this area will provide a transition between the stable residential lands to the south of Greenlane Road and the industrial uses to the north of the railway and will incorporate new open spaces and community facilities. The draft Secondary Plan includes policies relating to growth management, sustainability and safety, building height and massing, urban design, housing, employment and mixed use, parks and open space, land use compatibility, mobility and transportation and sustainable servicing. Built in to the policies and land use schedules is consideration of potential impacts to the existing community that is adjacent to the site. It does this by including mitigation measures such as including step-back designs for those adjacent to existing low density residential areas so that the highest points will be located as far away from the existing houses as possible.

The draft Secondary Plan includes a comprehensive road network that will incorporate complete streets policies. A complete street is one that accommodates multiple modes of transportation, people of all ages and abilities and supports adjacent land uses. The development of complete streets can create a variety of different benefits and opportunities for communities, such as increased investment into local businesses; improved community health through new opportunities for physical activity; a strong sense of community; increased property values; universally accessibility and more equitable spaces for public participation; and reduction in vehicle traffic and carbon emissions.

The transportation corridors of Ontario Street and Greenlane Road will be complimented by the implementation of public realm design policies. These policies will aim to create a high quality public realm that is attractive, accessible and useful for all road users (i.e., motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, etc.). Also, the Secondary Plan defines an open space framework that links outdoor spaces through the creation of new parks, gateways, streetscape improvements, and active transportation paths to create a unique, beautiful, and healthy public realm environment. The public realm guidelines also direct future investment into new parks, trails, streetscapes (i.e., attractive lighting, benches and other furniture, patios, vegetation plantings, etc.), sidewalks, and green spaces. The visualizations provided in Appendix B provide concepts for how the resulting streetscapes could look.

The draft Secondary Plan incorporates all the identified land uses together with the proposed road and trail network to promote the development of a complete community. Complete communities are an integrated approach to transportation planning, land use planning, and community design to provide a good quality of life and meet the needs of people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and income levels. The goal is to increase flexibility for people to choose where they can live, leading to a greater economic and social inclusion of social housing tenants within the Town.

The Secondary Plan, if approved will assist in meeting the long-term objectives of Provincial policy that support efficient and compact land use by providing flexibility to adjust the built form based on market conditions and mandated growth targets. It aligns with directing growth towards existing settlement areas, while maintaining outside agricultural land. It also celebrates the area as a key destination in the Town and the Region.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

Council has three options with respect to the proposed application. Council may:

1. Approve the application as per the Staff recommendation;
2. Adjourn the application if further information is required; or
3. Refuse the application.

COMMUNICATION/ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW:

The application was circulated to all assessed property owners within the Secondary Plan area and all property owners within 120 metres of the Secondary Plan Limits, as identified earlier in this report (Page 3). Public information sessions were held in June 2016, June 2017 and an additional open house was held in November 2017. A formal public meeting was held before the Planning Committee on February 28, 2018.

Generally, positive feedback was received with respect to the provision of GO Transit service in Beamsville and the resulting proactive planning that is being undertaken with respect to land-use around the proposed station area. There was also generally positive feedback in support of resulting public realm improvements and active transportation network improvements proposed in the plan.

Details regarding each of the PICs, including a brief synopsis of comments received is provided below.

Public Information Centre 1 (June 23, 2016)

The event occurred on the evening of June 23, 2016 at the Fleming Centre located in Beamsville and there were 13 people in attendance. The project was introduced to the public through a presentation and public feedback was collected through an interactive charrette session. Attendees were asked to identify key issues and opportunities within the study area. Part of session required brainstorming key objectives for the plan, as well as identify areas that should be the focus of new growth, improvement, and revitalization. A direct result of this public event was the creation of the six (6) key objectives that create the foundation of the Secondary Plan. The key objectives are listed in the attached Secondary Plan document (Page 16).

Public Information Centre 2 (June 27, 2017)

The event occurred on June 27, 2017, at the Fleming Centre and there were 53 people in attendance. The event was an open house format where members of the public could review information panels on the proposed land use, building heights, road improvements, planned active transportation elements, and public realm improvements. Midway through the event a presentation was given with an opportunity for a question and answer period. Following the

presentation members of the public were invited back to an open house format and were asked to provide their feedback on the panels identifying what they liked, and what they wanted changed, and any potential additional items that should be considered.

Common themes heard:

- Concern in regard to maximum permitted heights proposed along the north edge of Greenlane.
- Desire to understand the expected timeline for future Beamsville GO Train service Enhance active transportation user safety by improving active transportation connections and facilities within the Secondary Plan area, especially along South Service Road.
- Concern with increased vehicle volumes along Ontario Street.
- Opportunity to improve the aesthetics and streetscape of Ontario Street.

Staff Response:

Although there are generally higher building height allowances along the perimeter of the Secondary Plan area, an appropriate transition with the surrounding existing areas, particularly south of Greenlane Road will be provided. Specifically, by implementing complete streets and urban design guidelines along the road corridor, the resulting right-of-way widening, landscaping and tree plantings will mitigate potential visual/privacy impacts resulting from new development. In addition, the Secondary Plan requires consideration for building design elements (i.e., step-back design and strategic window placement) to further mitigate such impacts. The need for shading and shadowing studies to add a further layer to the evaluation of impacts will be determined during subsequent planning development applications. Furthermore, urban design guidelines existing in the Official Plan ensure that the buildings are well designed in terms of building materials and aesthetics, while maintaining consistency with the existing overall character of the area.

The goal of the above mentioned complete streets approach to right-of-way re-design is to improve usability with road allowances for all potential users from vehicular to pedestrian. It also aims to enhance the pedestrian experience by promoting design features that are aesthetically pleasing, optimize accessibility for all, and develop a sense of place through establishment of an identity for the area. This can be accomplished through means such as landscape plantings, provision of street furniture, incorporation of public art and decorative pedestrian crossings/street lighting. Specific to the general concern regarding vehicular traffic, the consultant has undertaken a preliminary analysis of existing and forecasted traffic volumes and movement patterns which has concluded that the road network will be able to support the proposed land-uses of the Secondary Plan. Subsequent to the finalization of the Secondary Plan, development applications that are submitted for the area will be required to include a Traffic Impact Study to further consider traffic conditions at a more detailed level.

With respect to the timing of the implementation of GO services, the timing of the Beamsville GO Station has not yet been finalized since it is based on ridership uptake in the adjacent stations in Grimsby and St. Catharines. Further information in this regard will be made public when it becomes available.

Public Open House (November 1, 2017)

The event occurred on November 1, 2017 at the Fleming Centre and 69 people were in attendance. The purpose of this open house was to provide members of the public an opportunity to review and comment on the revisions that were made to the Secondary Plan since the June 27, 2017 PIC. The open house featured panels reflecting previous comments, as well as schedules which illustrated revised land uses and maximum building heights.

Feedback heard at the open house included:

- Widen Greenlane and Ontario Street to accommodate the anticipated vehicle volumes.
- Desire to have a public transit system which connects residents to the GO station, community destinations, and the broad municipal transit system.
- Ensure a safe and connected active transportation system which connects existing neighbourhoods to the GO station.
- Confirm the arrival of GO Train service prior to committing to too much density for the area.
- Concern with the impact that higher density development will have on adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

Staff Response:

As noted earlier in this report, the recently updated Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Growth Plan both include objectives to accommodate forecasted growth by promoting intensification through a more compact built form that makes efficient use of existing and planning infrastructure services, promotes active transportation, and provides a mix of housing and employment opportunities. In the Secondary Plan area, the importance of maintaining a relatively compact built form remains a priority, even if there was no such transit station planned since it is located in proximity to the QEW, it is relatively close to the Beamsville core and it is located within the urban area. This last point is especially important considering that the Town being largely within a Greenbelt protected area, resulting in limited land to accommodate future growth.

The primary objectives of the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan are to preserve the highly valuable and productive agricultural lands that are outside of identified built up areas in the Region. This strongly coincides with the vision of the Town as a tourist destination and a Centre of Agricultural Excellence which is reflected in the Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law. The Town will inevitably experience growth in the coming years and directing it to the designated built-up/settlement areas will result in keeping the overall rural character of the Town intact.

Statutory Public Meeting (February 28, 2018)

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, a statutory public meeting on the Secondary Plan was held on February 28, 2018. In total, 40 members of the public attended the meeting. The proposed amendment was presented to both City Council and the public. Feedback and resulting action taken by Staff includes:

- There was a request to make a revision to "*Schedule B3: GO Station Secondary Plan Land Use*" and include the Transit Station Area as an overlay. This request would

require removing “Transit Station Area” designation from the land use schedule and replacing it with “Office Commercial” and then overlaying the transit station area. Staff agree with the request and have made the change to “Schedule B3”.

- There was a request to add a policy to the Secondary Plan suggesting that the employment area be evaluated in the Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review study for a possible mixed-use designation. This is largely due to the Town’s finite supply of Employment Lands and the need for preservation. Staff agreed with this suggestion as well and policy wording was added to the Secondary Plan that necessitate a review as part of the Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review Process for any mixed uses proposed on lands current designated for employment.
- There was a request to add stronger language into the Secondary Plan around building materials. The Urban Design section of the secondary plan already provides adequate guidance on Building materials and no change is recommended at this time.
- There was a request to see a cycling lane along Ontario Street. Included within the Secondary Plan is a policy section titled “Active Transportation Connections” which already recommended a new dedicated cycling lane along Ontario Street. Also, Schedule B6 – Active Transportation Network proposes a cycling lane within Ontario Street. Therefore no change to the secondary plan was required.
- There was a request to lower the proposed height of 10 storeys for the site next to the GO station. As noted earlier, the Secondary Plan guides future development into a more compact built form that makes the most efficient use of the land as possible, in accordance with Provincial Policy. The specific area is in close proximity to the future transit station as it is located along the rail lines. It is also important to note that a step-back design would need to be incorporated so that the tallest portion of the building would be located closest to Victoria Avenue and therefore as far as possible from existing dwellings. Further consideration of window placement during future site plan approval along with future landscaping (i.e., tree and shrub plantings) anticipated as part of Regional and Town complete streets/public realm policies will further address privacy concerns. Also, a shadow study is recommended. The proposed height would permit development supporting the goal of a more compact built form within a built-up area, while contributing to a range of housing options and, at the same time, providing potential employment opportunities within a mixed-use design.

Online Survey (May 29, 2017 – June 29, 2017)

From May 2017 through June 2017, Niagara Region undertook an online survey for each of its GO secondary plan areas. The purpose of this survey was to collect public input to better understand which objectives were most valued, as well as gain insight on additional elements that should be further considered. In total, the survey received 1,345 total responses, with 95 (7%) of the respondents selecting Beamsville as their station of interest.

Respondents identified most valued objectives for Beamsville as:

- Support connectivity and integration of the GO station.
- Provide transitional uses to support the evolution of this area over the long-term.
- Improve streetscape and pedestrian space along Ontario Street.

Respondents identified elements requiring further consideration as:

- Need to establish a local transit system which will connect residents to the GO station, the broader region, and the Greater Toronto Area.
- Consider how increased traffic will impact existing neighbourhoods when accessing and parking the GO station.
- Create a safe and inclusive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Protect the rural character of the area by limiting permitted building heights.

ALIGNMENT TO CORPORATE PLAN:

The Economic Development strategy in the January 2015 Corporate Plan is pertinent to the preparation of this Secondary Plan. The Strategy supports the implementation of planning guidelines to develop the area so that it will be a vibrant part of the community that provides significant employment opportunities. It also encourages opportunities to support investment and attract new businesses to ensure that the Town is a sustainable and prosperous Town. The preparation of a new Secondary Plan is consistent with the Corporate Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A Draft Secondary Plan
Appendix B Public Realm Visualizations