



Environmental Registry of Ontario

# Proposed Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number	019-1680
Notice type	Policy
Act	Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Notice stage	Decision
Decision posted	August 28, 2020
Comment period	June 16, 2020 - July 31, 2020 (45 days) Closed
Last updated	August 28, 2020

This consultation was open from:

**June 16, 2020  
to July 31, 2020**

## Decision summary

Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is now in effect. The amendment includes changes to the population and employment forecasts, the horizon year for planning, and other policies to increase housing supply, create jobs, attract business investment and better align with infrastructure.

## Decision details

Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ('A Place to Grow', 'the Plan') works in conjunction with the new market-based Land Needs Assessment Methodology (ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number [019-1679: Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1679)) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1679>).

The Minister has made the following decisions with respect to growth forecasts, mineral aggregate operations, provincially significant employment zones within major transit station areas, alignment with PPS (Provincial Policy Statement) 2020, and transition.

## **Growth Forecasts**

A Place to Grow supports the More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan to increase housing supply, create more jobs, attract business investments and better align our infrastructure.

To ensure coordinated planning for growth across the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) and to support the achievement of complete communities, A Place to Grow currently provides population and employment forecasts for all upper- and single-tier GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) municipalities. These forecasts are used for planning and managing growth to the horizon of the Plan. The forecasts are a key input into the land needs assessment methodology that municipalities use to determine the quantity of land needed to accommodate growth. The Minister has updated the Distribution of Population and Employment for the GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) (Schedule 3) and removed Schedule 7, in accordance with policy 5.2.4.7 of A Place to Grow.

## **Forecasts as Minimums**

Municipalities are now required to use the growth outlook in Schedule 3 as the updated forecasts or use higher forecasts as determined through the municipal comprehensive review as part of this round of conformity exercises to meet the conformity deadline of July 2022.

## **New Plan Horizon Year**

The Plan horizon is now extended to 2051 to ensure municipalities have sufficient land to support the fostering of complete communities, economic development, job creation and housing affordability. The new horizon is consistent with the long-range planning approach of previous growth plans and better aligns with the land supply requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

## **Land Needs Assessment**

The government developed a new market-based Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ('Methodology') which supports implementation of A Place to Grow. Refer to ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number 019-1679: Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe) (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1679>) for further information.

## **Mineral Aggregate Operations**

Policy 4.2.8.2a) related to mineral aggregate resources in A Place to Grow will not be revised as proposed under ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) Posting 019-1680. It will remain as it is currently in the Plan.

## **Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) in Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs).**

Employment policy 2.2.5 within A Place to Grow is revised with respect to the planning of MTSA (Major Transit Station Area)s within a PSEZ (Provincially Significant Employment Zone). The policy amendment allows conversions of employment areas to non-employment uses within a PSEZ (Provincially Significant Employment Zone) that is located within a delineated MTSA (Major Transit Station Area). This change will allow for mixed-use developments to be initiated faster around MTSA (Major Transit Station Area)s to encourage more transit-oriented development and intensification around MTSA (Major Transit Station Area)s. This does not change municipal zoning by-laws or other conversion policies within A Place to Grow.

Mapping of an MTSA (Major Transit Station Area) still requires provincial approval and this exercise can encourage transit-oriented development while protecting and enhancing employment opportunities.

## **Alignment with Provincial Policy Statement, 2020**

Changes have been made to align terms and definitions with the new PPS (Provincial Policy Statement), 2020, which came into effect on May 1, 2020. These changes, except for the change to the definition of ecological functions which will remain as it is currently in the Plan, were made to ensure that A Place to Grow reflects up to date references to the new PPS (Provincial Policy Statement) and maintains consistency across the planning system with things such as definitions and planning horizons. A policy revision to 5.2.3 requires planning authorities to co-ordinate planning matters with Indigenous communities to ensure appropriate engagement is undertaken.

## Transition

The Minister has also made the following housekeeping modifications to the Growth Plan transition regulation (O. Reg. 311/06) to facilitate implementation of Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow:

- Provide that rules that required conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 would now require conformity with the Plan as amended by Amendment 1; and
- Provide that where the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal has completed a hearing but not yet issued a decision in respect of a matter required to conform with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019, those decisions are required to conform with the Plan as it read before Amendment 1.

Subject to the limited transitional rules mentioned above, the Minister has not amended any other new transitional rules. Policies in Amendment 1 need to be used in most decisions immediately after they come into effect, including in the current municipal comprehensive review. These policies come into effect on August 28, 2020. The date by which municipalities must conform with the policies in A Place to Grow remains July 1, 2022.

Comments  
received

Through the  
registry  
**137**

By email  
**6,608**

By mail  
**2**

[View comments submitted through the registry \(/notice/019-1680/comments\)](/notice/019-1680/comments)

Effects of  
consultation

The Ministry received 6,747 submissions regarding ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) Posting 019-1680. The Ministry also held several meetings with Indigenous communities.

There was support for updating the Schedule 3 growth forecasts, extending the horizon to 2051, and harmonizing the Plan with the PPS (Provincial Policy Statement), 2020. There was also some support for the greater flexibility for planning around major transit station areas with respect to provincially significant employment zones.

Most municipalities supported extending the horizon to 2051, updating Schedule 3 based on the reference forecast and the harmonization of A Place to Grow with the PPS (Provincial Policy Statement), 2020. They had mixed reaction to using interim forecasts and forecasts as minimums. There were also concerns with allowing employment land conversions in major transit station areas and with allowing new mineral aggregate operations, wayside pits and quarries within habitats of endangered and threatened species in the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan.

Agricultural, environmental and some in the municipal sectors, as well as Indigenous communities, were concerned that some of the policy changes would increase urban sprawl and result in the loss of agriculturally and environmentally significant lands. They also expressed significant concern that the policy amendment related to mineral aggregate resources would negatively impact species at risk and the biodiversity of the region.

Indigenous communities also expressed strong opposition to the proposed mineral aggregates policy change as well as concerns with how some of the policy changes such as updated forecasts could impact Aboriginal and treaty rights.

As a result of feedback received, the final amendment differs from the proposed amendment by:

- Updating Schedule 3 to reflect the reference forecast;
- Removing the proposed amendment to policy 4.2.8.2a) with respect to mineral aggregate operations, wayside pits and quarries;
- Maintaining the existing definition of “Ecological Functions” which reflects the definition found in the Greenbelt Plan, 2017 rather than PPS, 2020; and
- Including a new policy which states higher forecasts developed by municipalities through their municipal comprehensive review will not apply to Provincial ministries and agencies.
- Includes a new market-based Land Needs Assessment Methodology that allows municipalities to reflect changing market conditions.

## Supporting materials

### Related links

[A Place to Grow: Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe)  
(<https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe>)

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[Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](https://www.ontario.ca/page/land-needs-assessment-methodology-greater-golden-horseshoe)  
(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/land-needs-assessment-methodology-greater-golden-horseshoe>)

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[Hemson Technical Report, Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051](https://www.hemson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/HEMSON-GGH-Growth-Outlook-Report-26Aug20.pdf)  
(<https://www.hemson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/HEMSON-GGH-Growth-Outlook-Report-26Aug20.pdf>)

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### Related ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) notices

[Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](/notice/019-1679)  
(</notice/019-1679>)


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## View materials in person

Important notice: Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, viewing supporting materials in person is not available at this time.

Please reach out to the Contact listed in this notice to see if alternate arrangements can be made.


Ontario Growth Secretariat  
777 Bay St, Suite 2304  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2J8  
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 [416-325-1210](tel:416-325-1210)

## Connect with US

### Contact

#### Ontario Growth Secretariat

 [416-325-1210](tel:416-325-1210)

 [growthplanning@ontario.ca](mailto:growthplanning@ontario.ca)

## Original proposal

ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) number	019-1680
Notice type	Policy
Act	Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Posted by	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Proposal posted	June 16, 2020
Comment period	June 16, 2020 - July 31, 2020 (45 days)

## Proposal details

### Proposal Details

#### Description of Policy

This proposal is for Proposed Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ('A Place to Grow', 'the Plan'). It is recommended that Proposed Amendment 1 be read in conjunction with A Place to Grow. This proposal works in conjunction with a proposed new Land Needs Assessment Methodology, that is also currently posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario at ERO number **019-1679: Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe** (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1679>).

#### Growth Forecasts

A Place to Grow supports the *More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan* to increase housing supply, create more jobs, attract business investments and better align our infrastructure.

To ensure coordinated planning for growth across the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) and to support the achievement of complete communities, A Place to Grow currently provides population and employment forecasts for all upper- and single-tier GGH municipalities. These forecasts are currently used for planning and managing growth to the horizon of the Plan. The forecasts are a key input into the land needs assessment methodology that municipalities use to determine the quantity of land needed to accommodate growth. The provincial government, including its agencies such as Metrolinx, and municipalities also use the forecasts to inform infrastructure and financial planning as well as economic and business investment strategies.

The Minister has initiated a review and update of the Distribution of Population and Employment for the GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) (Schedule 3), in accordance with policy 5.2.4.7 of A Place to Grow. The forecasts are being updated and extended to 2051 through a proposed amendment to the Plan. Additional policy changes are being proposed as outlined below. Details of all the changes to the Plan can be found here [[link \(https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-06/Proposed%20APTG%20Amendment%20%28ENG%29%200.pdf\)](https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-06/Proposed%20APTG%20Amendment%20%28ENG%29%200.pdf) ].

In fall 2019, the government issued a request for proposals for revised population and employment forecasts for A Place to Grow. Following that competitive process, the services of Hemson Consulting ('the consultant') were procured and a series of technical and advisory meetings were held. For more detailed background information about the proposed updated growth forecasts and the methodology behind them, please view "Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051" available at [<https://www.hemson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HEMSON-Schedule-3-Forecasts-FINAL-16JUN20.pdf>] (<https://www.hemson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HEMSON-Schedule-3-Forecasts-FINAL-16JUN20.pdf>)].

In addition to the updated forecasts, a related policy change is proposed to specify that municipalities would use the forecasts in the Plan or higher forecasts determined through the municipal comprehensive review as part of their long-term planning work.

The Ministry is considering amending A Place to Grow with one of the following growth outlooks: The Reference Growth Forecast, High Growth Scenario, or Low Growth Scenario for the forecast numbers. The Reference Forecast represents the most likely future growth outlook and is the result of extensive modelling and analysis. The Reference Forecast forms the basis of the draft report **Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051** (<https://www.hemson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HEMSON-Schedule-3-Forecasts-FINAL-16JUN20.pdf>). The High and Low Scenarios illustrate possible growth prospects under a set of variable assumptions about the future economic outlook. The Ministry is seeking feedback on the forecast and the two scenarios.

Municipalities would be required to use the selected growth outlook as the updated forecasts or use higher forecasts as determined through the municipal comprehensive review as part of this round of conformity exercises to meet the conformity deadline of July 2022. The effective date of Proposed Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow, if approved, will be determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as part of the approval.

## **New Plan Horizon Year**

Another proposed change is an extension of the Plan horizon from 2041 to 2051 to ensure municipalities have sufficient land to support the fostering of complete communities, economic development, job creation and housing affordability. The new horizon is consistent with the long-range planning approach of previous growth plans and better aligns with the land supply requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

## **Growth Outlook to 2051**

The economic, social and demographic conditions in the GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) point to substantial growth in the GGH over the next 30 years. Under the Reference Forecast, the GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) is forecast to grow to close to 15 million people and 7 million jobs by 2051.

## **Land Needs Assessment**

The government is also consulting concurrently on a proposed new Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ('Methodology') which supports implementation of A Place to Grow. The proposed new Methodology would provide an outcome-based approach to assessing community area and employment area land need to the Plan

horizon. It provides a streamlined approach to land budgeting activities by outlining the key components, at a minimum, that would be addressed as part of local land needs assessment processes. Recognizing that local needs are diverse, the proposed new Methodology aims to provide the key factors to be considered as municipalities plan to ensure that a sufficient and appropriate mix of land is available to accommodate:

- a. all housing market segments, to avoid supply shortages;
- b. market demand;
- c. all employment types, including those that are evolving; and
- d. all infrastructure services that are needed to meet the complete communities objectives to the horizon of the Plan.

As part of this work, municipalities could refer to background information on housing growth by type prepared as part of the review and update of A Place to Grow's population and employment forecasts. Refer to **ERO 019-1679: Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe** (<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1679>) for further information.

## **Mineral Aggregate Operations**

Proposed Amendment 1 also includes a proposed change to A Place to Grow policies related to mineral aggregate resources. Mineral aggregate resources play a crucial role in the development of housing and municipal infrastructure. Ensuring adequate aggregate resources are available is critical to achieving the success of A Place to Grow. The proposed changes would make it easier to establish new mineral aggregate operations closer to market throughout the GGH (Greater Golden Horseshoe) outside of the Greenbelt.

## **Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) in Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs)**

In May 2019, changes to A Place to Grow provided new policies to enable municipalities to convert lands within employment areas to non-employment uses without provincial approval so as expedite new housing construction as part of the government's More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan. However, to ensure certain employment areas were not converted locally without provincial involvement, the provincially significant employment zones PSEZ (provincially significant employment zones) were introduced with

policy that provides the employment area lands located in a PSEZ (provincially significant employment zones) could only be converted to non-employment uses through ministerial approval.

As a tool to support economic development, PSEZ (provincially significant employment zone)s are utilized to provide provincial land use protections for employment areas that require provincial involvement in the support of retaining and expanding existing businesses as well as attracting new business investments. While each PSEZ (provincially significant employment zones) is unique in nature, all zones must contain a significant number of jobs.

In light of the unique nature of each zone and to address the government's objective of intensification around major transit station areas MTSA (major transit station area), Proposed Amendment 1 proposes to change an employment policy within A Place to Grow with respect to the planning of MTSA (major transit station area)s within a PSEZ (provincially significant employment zone). Notably, the policy amendment would allow conversions of employment areas to non-employment uses within a provincially significant employment zone that is located within a MTSA (major transit station area). This proposed change would allow for mixed-use developments to be initiated faster around MTSA (major transit station area)s. This does not change municipal zoning by-laws or other conversion policies within A Place to Grow.

Mapping of an MTSA (major transit station area) still requires provincial approval and this exercise can encourage transit-oriented development while protecting and enhancing employment opportunities.

The next phase of work, which will begin shortly, will examine how PSEZ (provincially significant employment zone)s can support post-COVID economic recovery and support the retention and expansion of existing industrial and manufacturing operations and how the zones can attract investment. The government continues to view PSEZ (provincially significant employment zone)s as an important tool and looks forward to engaging with businesses, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations and the development industry to maximize opportunities within a PSEZ (provincially significant employment zone).

## **Alignment with Provincial Policy Statement, 2020**

Given the most recent changes to the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, (PPS) proposed Amendment 1 proposes to change A Place to Grow policies to ensure continued alignment with the new PPS (Provincial Policy Statement),

which came into effect on May 1, 2020. These changes, which are mostly technical in nature, would ensure that A Place to Grow reflects up to date references to the new PPS (Provincial Policy Statement) and maintains consistency across the planning system with things such as definitions and planning horizons. A proposed policy revision would also require planning authorities to engage on planning matters with Indigenous communities to ensure appropriate engagement is undertaken.

## Transition

It is proposed that the Minister would make the following housekeeping modifications to the Growth Plan transition regulation (O. Reg. (Ontario Regulation) 311/06) to facilitate implementation of Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow, if approved:

- Provide that rules that required conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 would now require conformity with the Plan as amended by Amendment 1; and
- Provide that where the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal has completed a hearing but not yet issued a decision in respect of a matter required to conform with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019, those decisions are required to conform with the Plan as it read before Amendment 1.

Subject to the limited transitional rules mentioned above, the Minister is not proposing any other new transitional rules. This would mean that the policies in Proposed Amendment 1, if approved would need to be used in most decisions immediately after they come into effect, including in the current municipal comprehensive review. The date by which municipalities must conform with the policies in APTG (A Place to Grow) will remain July 1, 2022.

## Other public consultation opportunities

Feedback can be provided by

- email at [growthplanning@ontario.ca](mailto:growthplanning@ontario.ca)
- Environmental Registry online form
- mail to:

Ontario Growth Secretariat  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing 777 Bay Street  
23rd Floor, Suite 2304  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

The consultation closes on July 31, 2020.

## Notice regarding collection of information

Any collection of personal information will be in accordance with subsection 39(2) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. It will be collected under the authority of the *Places to Grow Act, 2005* for the purpose of obtaining input on the proposed amendment to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

If you have questions about the collection, use, and disclosure of this information please contact:

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Senior Information and Privacy Advisor  
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 2J3  
416-585-7094

## Organizations and businesses

Comments or submissions made on behalf of an organization or business may be shared or disclosed. By submitting comments, you are deemed to consent to the sharing of information contained in the comments and your business contact information. Business contact information is the name, title and contact information of anyone submitting comments in a business, professional or official capacity.

## Individuals

Personal contact information will only be used to contact you and will not be shared. Please be aware that any comments provided may be shared or disclosed once personal information is removed. Personal information includes your name, home address and personal e-mail address.

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## Supporting materials

## Related files

[Proposed Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe \(https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-](https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-)

[06/Proposed%20APTG%20Amendment%20%28ENG%29\\_0.pdf](#)  
pdf (Portable Document Format file) 981.87 KB

## **Related ERO (Environmental Registry of Ontario) notices**

**[Proposed Land Needs Assessment Methodology for A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe \(/notice/019-1679\)](#)**

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## **Related links**

**[A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe \(https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe\)](https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe)**


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Canada

 **[416-325-1210](tel:416-325-1210)**

## **Comment**


**Commenting is now closed.**

**This consultation was open from June 16, 2020  
to July 31, 2020**

Connect with  
us

Contact

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