

Technical Memorandum

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Township of West Lincoln
318 Canborough Street
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Date: April 23, 2020

From: Steve Wever, MCIP, RPP
Associate – Senior Planner

File No.: 19282

Re: **Smithville Master Community Plan
Intensification and Greenfield Density Analysis**

The provincial, regional and local planning framework directs that future population, housing and employment growth shall be focussed in urban settlement areas with municipal services and accommodated through intensification on balance with compact development in greenfield areas.

This growth management approach has been adopted to curb the impacts of urban sprawl and promote the long-term protection of prime agricultural land and farming operations, maximize cost-effectiveness and the efficient use of land and infrastructure, enhance the viability of transportation options including transit services and active transportation, and to support complete community development.

The Township of West Lincoln has adopted this growth management approach through its Official Plan, which directs most new housing, businesses and industries to the urban area of Smithville.

Currently, the Official Plan is based on planning for a Township-wide population of 16,990 people and total employment of 4,930 jobs in the year 2031. Local development activity is outpacing these forecasts, and as of the 2016 census the Township population reached 14,868 people, and 2016 employment reached 4,340 jobs (Hemson, 2019).

Updated growth forecasts have been prepared through the regional growth planning process, Niagara 2041. These forecasts anticipate a Township-wide population of 29,460 people and total employment of 9,550 jobs (Hemson, 2018, 2019).

The Township has initiated a Master Community Plan (MCP) process to plan for accommodating this future population and employment growth through future intensification within the built-up area of Smithville and compact development of mixed land uses in existing and new greenfield development areas of Smithville.

This Technical Memorandum provides an initial review and analysis of planned, available and potential intensification within the built boundary of Smithville as well as existing and future density of development within the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) of the Smithville Urban Area.

The purpose of the intensification and density analysis is to inform and support the establishment of appropriate intensification and greenfield density targets for the Township of West Lincoln through the development of the Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP).

This Memorandum summarizes the current policy framework, provides baseline information on the local context and history of building and development activity in Smithville, reviews intensification and density outcomes of approved and planned infill and greenfield developments, and identifies and evaluates the level of intensification and density of greenfield development required to meet existing or new targets based on growth forecasts to the year 2041.

The following data and documents were reviewed:

- Building permit data summaries and plans of subdivision provided by the Township Planning & Building Department to end of year 2019;
- A Place to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019;
- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020;
- Regional Official Plan, Niagara Region, 2014 Consolidation;
- Niagara Region Report PDS 37-2016, Niagara 2041 Growth Strategy Local Municipal Growth Allocations, November 30, 2016;

- Niagara Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – Draft Updated Forecasts and Local Growth Allocations, Hemson Consulting Ltd., July 27, 2018;
- Niagara Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – Review and Update of MCR Forecast Allocations and Land Needs Assessment Results, Hemson Consulting Ltd., September 9, 2019;
- Niagara Region Employment Inventory Results (2019), Municipal Summary as of March 2020, and associated inventory data and GIS mapping;
- Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, October 2018 Consolidation;
- Township of West Lincoln Zoning By-law No. 2017-70, April 23, 2019 Consolidation;
- Municipal Comprehensive Review for the Smithville Urban Area – Draft Summary, by GSP Group Inc. and Curtis Planning, May 2017;
- Township of West Lincoln Report No. PD-033-20, Information Report – Consultants Presentation for Two Former School Sites being 186 Margaret Street and 132 College Street, Smithville – Future Redevelopment and Intensification, February 10, 2020;
- Township of West Lincoln Report No. PD-021-20, Information Report – Update Relating to Residential Lot Inventory for the Smithville Settlement Area and Compliance Analysis with the A Place to Grow (P2G) Plan, March 9, 2020;
- Township of West Lincoln Report No. PD-015-18, Recommendation Report – Proposed Maximum Height Increase to 6 Storeys in the Commercial Core and High Density Residential Designations of the Township of West Lincoln's Official Plan and Corresponding Zoning By-law Amendment, March 12, 2018;
- Township of West Lincoln Report No. PD-095-18, Technical Report – Proposed Maximum Height Increase in the Commercial Core and High Density Residential Designations of the Township of West Lincoln's Official Plan; and Corresponding Zoning By-law Amendment, June 11, 2018;

- Data Analysis Related to the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, Municipality of West Lincoln, Niagara Region, Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis, March 2019;
- Township of West Lincoln Sustainable Downtown Smithville Community Improvement Plan by RCI Consulting, October 2009;
- Township of West Lincoln Brownfield Community Improvement Plan by RCI Consulting, July 2011.

PART A: INTENSIFICATION

A.1 Current Policy Framework

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) defines “Intensification” as follows:

“Intensification: means the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a) *redevelopment*, including the reuse of *brownfield sites*;
- b) the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c) infill development; and
- d) the expansion or conversion of existing buildings.” (PPS, 2020).

Provincial, regional and local plans provide the following objectives, policies and directives for intensification of existing built-up areas:

1. **Prioritize intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas** to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability (Guiding Principles – Growth Plan, 2019). Strategic Growth Areas are defined in the Growth Plan as follows:

“Strategic Growth Areas

Within *settlement areas*, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating *intensification* and higher-density mixed uses in a more *compact built form*. *Strategic growth areas* include *urban growth centres*, *major transit station areas*, and other major

opportunities that may include infill, *redevelopment*, *brownfield sites*, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or *greyfields*. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned *frequent transit* service or *higher order transit* corridors may also be identified as *strategic growth areas*.”

2. **“Intensification first approach”**: focus on making better use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities, and less on continuously expanding the urban area (Where and How to Grow – s. 2.1, Context, Growth Plan, 2019).
3. **Delineated built-up areas**: as of the **next municipal comprehensive review (MCR)**, a minimum of 50% of all residential development in the Region of Niagara will be within the delineated built-up area (s. 2.2.2.1 (a), Growth Plan, 2019). Figure 1 illustrates the delineated built-up area for Smithville.

Table 1: Intensification Targets

	Current Intensification Target	Required Intensification Target after next MCR
Niagara Region	40%	50% or approved alternative
Township of West Lincoln	15%	To be determined as part of MCR

Source: Growth Plan 2019 (s. 2.2.2.1 (a)) and Niagara Regional Official Plan 2014 (s. 4.C.3, 4.C.4)

4. An **intensification strategy** is required for achieving the intensification target and to identify strategic growth areas, the appropriate type and scale of development in strategic growth areas and transition of built form to adjacent areas, encourage intensification generally throughout the built-up area, ensure lands are zoned and development is designed to support complete communities, prioritize planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities to support intensification, and to be implemented in the Official Plan and Zoning By-law (s. 2.2.2.3, Growth Plan, 2019).

5. **Local Objective: to encourage and facilitate redevelopment, infilling and intensification** within the Urban Settlement Area of Smithville (Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 5.2 (i)).
6. **New and updated Secondary Plans shall identify additional opportunities for infill and intensification** with appropriate compatibility criteria and in keeping with the physical character of those neighbourhoods (Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 5.5 (b)).
7. **Other than lands identified for intensification, the built-up area is intended to remain stable** and any infill development shall be compatible with surrounding land uses and shall take place at the density prescribed by the existing land use (Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 5.6 (b)).

Fig. 1: Smithville Built-up Area

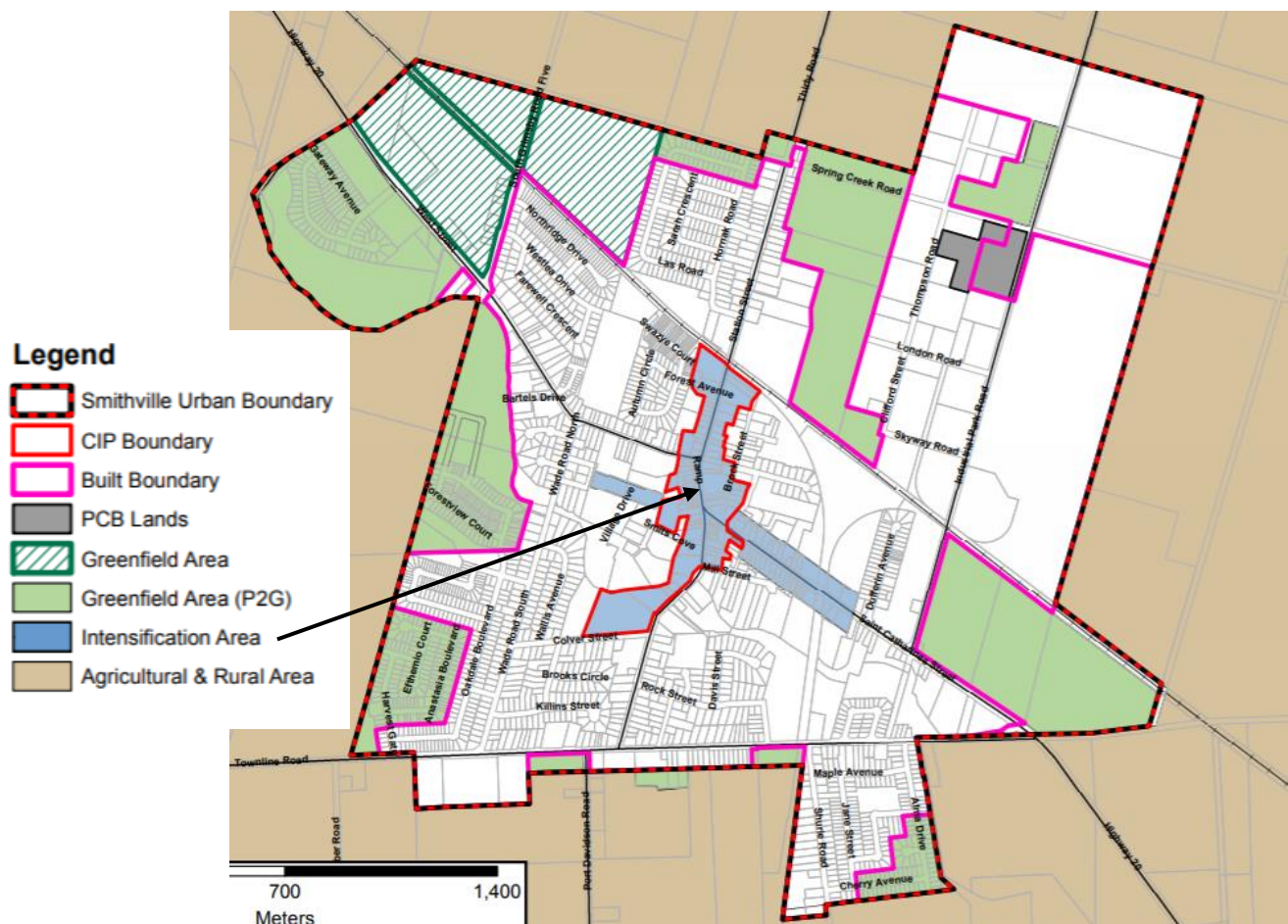


8. Smithville Intensification Area:

- Lands within the built boundary that have already been developed but have the opportunity to be redeveloped or to accommodate additional development through intensification of the site.
- Intended to be designated to accommodate a higher density than currently exists.
- Chosen for intensification based on location, access to transportation corridors, access to municipal services, proximity to community services and commercial uses, and ability to accommodate intensification while maintaining the character of the community, and the ability to be compatible with surrounding land uses.

(Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 5.6 (c)). See Figure 2.

Fig. 2: Smithville Urban Structure



SOURCE: Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, Schedule B-5.

9. Smithville Intensification Strategy:

- Majority of intensification directed to the Intensification Area;
- May set minimum density targets for intensification areas;
- Plan the Intensification Area for a diverse mix of land uses that complement and support a complete community, including employment, commercial, recreation, institutional and other compatible uses;
- Higher density apartment development directed to High Density Residential areas, Mixed-Use areas or the Downtown Commercial Core Area;
- Infill and intensification may be permitted outside of the intensification areas where it respects and reinforces the stability of the residential neighbourhoods and is of a scale and built form that reflects the surrounding neighbourhood;
- Permit and encourage accessory apartments;
- Site plan control required, where applicable;
- Township may offer development incentives to facilitate intensification;
- Integrated planning for infrastructure and public service facilities to support intensification;
- Phasing in of intensification over time on balance with Greenfield development.
(Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 5.9).

10. Compatibility Criteria for Infill/Redevelopment:

- Consistent relationship with adjacent housing forms and arrangement of houses on their lot;
- Building height that reflects the patterns of heights of adjacent housing;
- Similar lot coverage to adjacent housing to ensure that the massing or volume of the new dwelling reflects the scale and appearance of adjacent housing;
- Maintain the predominant or average front yard setback to preserve streetscape edge and character;
- Provide for similar side yard setbacks to preserve the spaciousness of the street;
- Provide a built form that reflects the variety of façade details and material of adjacent housing;
- Limit width of garages;
- Greater variation from existing housing may be considered on larger infill properties where new streets are created, provided the development is designed to create a buffer between existing housing and new dwellings;

- New residential lots shall provide a consistent relationship with existing adjacent housing lots, including compatibility with established character of lot sizes and frontages, incorporate a transition area where possible, and interconnected road network as an extension of the surrounding neighbourhood;
 - Townhouses and other multiple dwellings proposed for infill require an Official Plan Amendment and incorporation of a transition area;
 - Where a proposed development supports the Township's intensification target but does not support the compatibility policies, the compatibility policies prevail.
- (Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 6.6.4).

11. Downtown – Commercial Core

- Density not specifically regulated, intensification and adaptive reuse are permitted with limitations on the location and number of residential units to be established through zoning to protect and preserve the primary commercial and community services functions of the Commercial Core.
 - Minimum building height of 2 storeys, maximum building height of 5 storeys with 1 metre step back required above the second storey.
- (Township of West Lincoln Official Plan, s. 6.7.5).

A.2 Local Context and Historical Building Activity

As summarized in the policy context, the Township's Official Plan directs the majority of intensification to the Intensification Area which includes land within and adjoining the commercial core area of Smithville located along both sides of Station Street south of the CPR line, along both sides of Griffin Street between West Street and Mill Street, along the west side of Canborough Street between Mill Street and Colver Street, and along both sides of Saint Catharines Street between Griffin Street and Dufferin Avenue, as shown on Schedule B-5 of the Official Plan (see Figure 2).

While "strategic growth areas" are not specifically identified or defined in the current Official Plan as this term was more recently introduced by the 2019 Growth Plan, the Township's Official Plan embodies similar directions for the designated "Intensification Area". A summary comparison is provided in Table 2.

In addition to focusing intensification within strategic growth areas, the Growth Plan also directs municipalities to encourage intensification generally throughout

the built-up area. The Township's Official Plan provides for intensification in other parts of the built-up area that are outside of the Intensification Area, though at a more limited density based on the surrounding neighbourhood and subject to compatibility criteria. Existing residential neighbourhoods in Smithville primarily consist of low density, ground-related housing forms such as single and semi-detached dwellings with smaller areas of medium density multi-unit housing forms such as townhouses and two-storey apartment buildings.

Table 2: Strategic Growth Areas and the Smithville Intensification Area

2019 Growth Plan "Strategic Growth Areas"	Township of West Lincoln Official Plan - Smithville "Intensification Area"
Nodes, corridors and other areas identified to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher density mixed uses in a more compact built form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of the Commercial Core node and mixed-use corridors along connecting main streets • Land designated as commercial, medium and high density residential, and institutional, intended for a diverse mix of land uses • Permits a maximum height of up to 5 storeys in Downtown Commercial Core (main front walls are subject to a 1 metre step back above the second storey) and High Density Residential Area (apartment buildings within 25 metres of property line of adjacent low or medium density residential area limited to no greater than 2 storeys above the maximum height in the adjacent designation, and alternate building height can be considered based on supporting impact studies through re-zoning), and 3 storeys in Medium Density Residential Area

2019 Growth Plan “Strategic Growth Areas”	Township of West Lincoln Official Plan - Smithville “Intensification Area”
Strategic growth areas include urban growth centres, major transit station areas, and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or greyfields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no designated urban growth centres or major transit station areas in the Township • Intended as the primary area in Smithville for infill and redevelopment and the expansion or conversion of existing buildings
Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located along major roads, arterials • There are no existing frequent transit services or higher order transit corridors in Smithville / West Lincoln • Community Design policies and design guidelines seek to support and create a pedestrian-friendly and transit-ready community • Sustainability policies encourage compact development and transit supportive development

Past intensification in Smithville has occurred primarily by new residential plans of subdivision and condominium development on larger, vacant or underutilized infill properties in the form of low and medium density housing.

Table 3 summarizes the historic rates of intensification in Smithville from 2003 to 2019.

Table 3: Historic Intensification Rates (Smithville, 2003-2019)

Year	# of Building Permits for New Residential Units			Intensification Rate	
	Built-up Area of Smithville	Smithville Total	West Lincoln Total	Smithville	West Lincoln
2003	102	102	130	100%	78%
2004	66	66	88	100%	75%
2005	90	90	116	100%	78%
2006	47	58	79	81%	59%
2007	6	58	95	10%	6%
2008	18	43	59	42%	31%
2009	20	42	52	48%	38%
2010	35	62	75	56%	47%
2011	13	59	77	22%	17%
2012	4	28	45	14%	9%
2013	14	71	81	20%	17%
2014	11	66	81	17%	14%
2015	7	107	122	7%	6%
2016	5	93	116	5%	4%
2017	41	49	65	84%	63%
2018	31	47	70	66%	44%
2019	49	57	65	86%	75%
Total	559	1098	1416	51%	39%

SOURCE: 2003-2019 Building Permit Data, Township of West Lincoln Planning & Building Department, 2020.

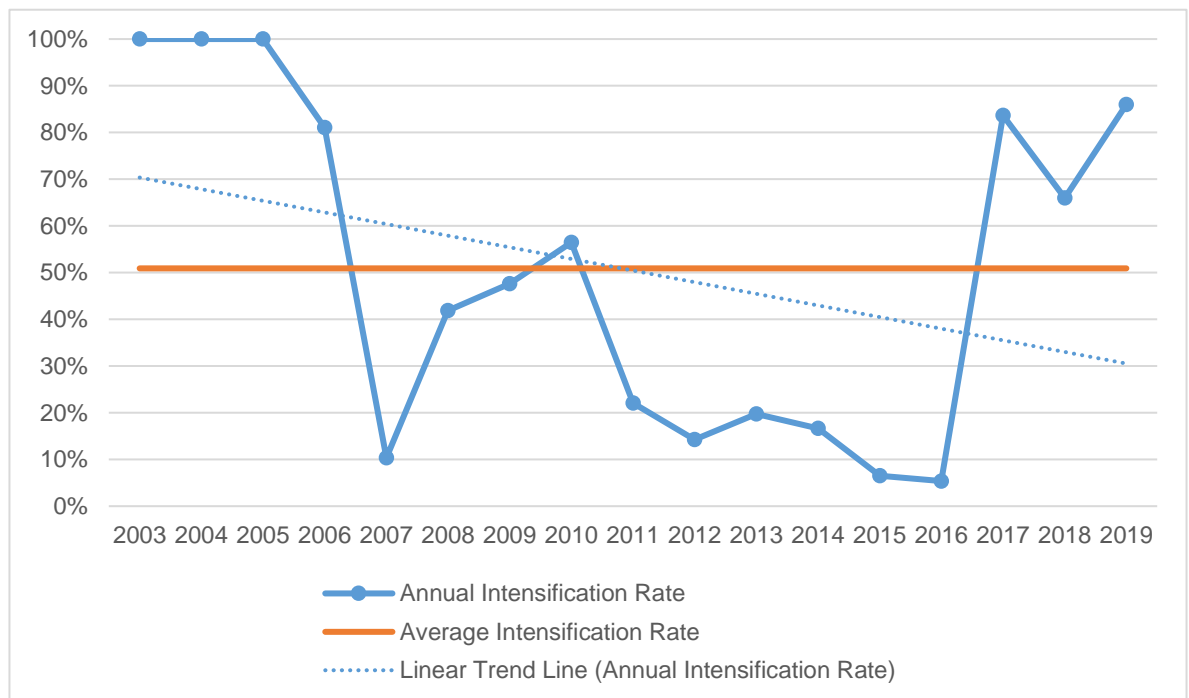
Over the past 17 years, a little more than half (51%) of all building permits issued for new residential dwellings in Smithville were for developments within the built-up area, representing 39% of all permits issued for new dwellings throughout the Township. The annual rate of intensification in Smithville ranged from a low of 5% of all residential units in 2016 to 100% in each of 2003, 2004 and 2005.

The chart in Figure 3 shows the annual intensification rates and the average rate over the period as well as the trend line indicating an overall declining rate despite recent high rates of intensification over the past three years. An overall decline can be attributed to the declining supply of available land for intensification within

the built-up area as the vacant sites with the least constraints to development or redevelopment are built over time.

The supply and availability of land available for greenfield development outside of the built-up area is another variable that affects the intensification rate year-to-year based on a range of factors including urban boundary changes and the supply and availability of land for new development, the timing of new development approvals and activity, servicing and market demands, housing preferences and other broader economic influences.

Fig. 3: Historical Annual, Average and Linear Trend Line Intensification Rates (Smithville, 2003-2019)



As the supply of vacant land for residential intensification within the built-up area is exhausted the balance of available lands for development is supplied in the DGA resulting in a reduced intensification rate.

Over time, continued intensification becomes increasingly dependent on the redevelopment of existing lots and buildings by increasing lot coverages, building

heights and adding residential units by renovating and/or expanding existing buildings, and converting brownfields (former industrial sites) and greyfields (sites containing former commercial or other urban land uses) to residential use.

Other forms of intensification may occur in existing neighbourhoods including the conversion of existing housing to include additional residential units such as basement apartments and the use of accessory residential buildings for detached rental units. The Planning Act was amended in 2012 to require Official Plans to include policies authorizing “the use of a second residential unit” and in 2019 the Act was further amended to modify these provisions to the following:

- 16(3) “An official plan shall contain policies that authorize the use of additional residential units by authorizing,
- (a) the use of two residential units in a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse; and
 - (b) the use of a residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse.”

There is limited data available on the past number of accessory dwelling units approved in Smithville and West Lincoln to indicate the historic level of uptake of the opportunity to create additional residential units in existing homes and accessory residential buildings. Within the built-up area, there are approximately 1,500 existing single detached, semi-detached and townhouse units. As a preliminary estimate, if the uptake of additional residential units to the year 2041 is in the range of 5% to 10% of existing dwellings, this could add 75 to 150 new units over the next 20 years, which is 4 to 8 units annually on average.

Provisions for additional residential units will continue to be part of the intensification strategy for Smithville, and also contribute to the rental housing supply and housing affordability. Updates to current policies and zoning as well as guidelines for additional residential units should be considered to address the new regulations under the Planning Act, along with a registration system or database to track the number and location of units available.

Where redevelopment of existing built or previously used sites is required this can add barriers to intensification including the costs and clean-up associated with older buildings, contaminated lands, upgrades or replacement of aged infrastructure, heritage building or site conservation and restoration requirements,

and lack of land area for stormwater management, parking, loading, waste storage and removal, snow storage, on-site amenities and other facilities.

Therefore, realizing the full intensification potential of certain sites may depend upon whether there is an adequate scale of development permitted in policy and zoning and available incentives and other supports to offset and overcome the added costs and complexities as compared with development of vacant sites and DGAs.

A.3 Approved, Planned and Potential Intensification

The additional and remaining intensification potential in Smithville is estimated in Table 4 including approved and active development applications for the development or redevelopment of land within the built-up area as well as sites that do not have any current applications or proposals for development but may have future intensification potential based on a consideration of the current use, location, Official Plan designations and zoning of vacant or underutilized properties. A total of 26 known or potential intensification sites and areas have been identified and are mapped as shown in Figure 4.

Table 4: Estimated Intensification Potential, Smithville

Intensification Sites – Smithville Built-up Area (See Figure 4)		Official Plan Designation	Units
A1	Colver Street – 0.1 ha vacant lot	Low Density Residential	1
A2	Hornak Road – 0.3 ha vacant lot	Low Density Residential	2
A3	Station Street – 0.7 ha 3 vacant lots	Low Density Residential	3
A4	Station Street / Spring Creek Road – 0.2 ha (potential intensification)	Low Density Residential	3
A5	Townline Road (0.8 ha vacant site)	Low Density Residential	6
B	Olde Town Gateway Estates (approved)	Low Density Residential	117
C	West Street / Fairgrounds - 0.1 ha vacant lot – (potential intensification)	Medium Density Residential	1
D	Brock Street / Erie Ave. - 0.3 ha (potential intensification)	Medium Density Residential	10
E	Olde Town Gateway Estates – Block 47 - 2.9 ha (draft plan approved)	Medium Density Residential	63

Intensification Sites – Smithville Built-up Area (See Figure 4)		Official Plan Designation	Units
F	Dufferin Avenue (1 vacant lot)	Medium Density Residential	1
G	St. Catharines Street - 0.5 ha – Gonnsen – (draft plan approved)	Medium Density Residential	23
H	Mill Street - 0.1 ha (potential intensification)	Medium Density Residential	4
I	Crossings on the Twenty North (draft plan approved)	Medium Density Residential	10
J	Canborough Street - 0.1 ha (1 vacant lot)	Medium Density Residential	1
K	Ellis Street / Tara Place - 1 ha (potential intensification)	Medium Density Residential	30
L	Crossings on the Twenty South (draft plan approved)	Medium Density Residential	24
M	West Street / Station Street / Forest Ave. - 1 ha (zoning application in process for 32 units – north half of site)	High Density Residential	60
N	Smits Cove - 0.5 ha (potential intensification)	High Density Residential	69
O	Griffin Street – 0.2 ha (potential redevelopment)	High Density Residential	35
P	Station Street - 0.3 ha (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	9
Q	West Street - 0.3 ha (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	12
R	West Street / Griffin Street (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	6
S	Griffin Street (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	35
T	Station Street / Griffin Street / College Street (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	15
U	Griffin Street / Canborough Street / St. Catharines Street (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	25
V	Canborough Street (potential intensification)	Commercial Core	20
W	Former School (St. Martin's)	Institutional	90

Intensification Sites – Smithville Built-up Area (See Figure 4)		Official Plan Designation	Units
X	Former School (College Street)	Institutional	102
Y	Townline Road - 0.5 ha (potential intensification)	Institutional	18
Z	Townline Road - 0.5 ha (potential intensification)	Institutional	12
Total Estimated Intensification Potential			807
Total New Residential Unit Forecast, 2016 to 2041 (Hemson, 2019)			5235
New Residential Units in Built-up Area (15%), 2016 to 2041 (Hemson, 2019)			785
Total Permits Issued for New Residential Units (2017, 2018, 2019)			200
Permits Issued for New Residential Units in Built-up Area (2017, 2018, 2019)			121
Total New Residential Unit Forecast, 2020 to 2041			5035
New Residential Units in Built-up Area (15%), 2020 to 2041			755
Intensification Rate based on Intensification Potential, 2020 to 2041			16%
<u>Other Potential Intensification:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional Residential Units: conversions of existing housing to add a second unit and new units in accessory residential buildings 2. Downtown Commercial Core: increased height and density for residential and mixed-use development/redevelopment 			

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A.4 Intensification Target

As noted in the policy context, current Regional and Township Official Plan policies for West Lincoln target 15% of new residential dwelling units to be accommodated in the form of intensification, annually. This target will continue to apply until the Region's MCR is completed and a new target is assigned.

At the Regional level, the current intensification target measured across all municipalities in Niagara Region is 40% and the Growth Plan directs that the Region, through the MCR, is required to increase this target to 50% or to request an alternative target. The Region's intensification target will be subject to Provincial review and approval.

Based on the housing forecasts and allocations to the Township emerging from the Region's MCR, the total forecast housing growth in the Township to the year 2041 is expected to be less than 8% of the total housing growth in the Region as a whole. As such, the level of intensification achieved in Smithville over the full planning period will have a relatively minor impact on the Regional intensification rate.

Table 5 compares various scenarios based on a Township target of 10%, 15%, 20%, 25% or 40% showing the total number of intensification units required in Smithville relative to the estimated supply.

Table 5: Comparison of Intensification Rate Scenarios

Region-wide Intensification Target	West Lincoln Intensification Target	Smithville Intensification Units Required	Additional Intensification Units Required to Achieve Target (Estimated Supply = 807 units)
40% until MCR completed, 50% or approved alternative beyond MCR	10%	504	-303
	15%	755	-52
	20%	1,007	+200
	25%	1,259	+452
	40%	2,014	+1,206

In the first example in Table 5, if 504 residential units are constructed within the built-up area of Smithville by the year 2041, which would use nearly two-thirds of the total estimated local intensification potential, this would achieve an intensification rate of approximately 10% for West Lincoln but only contributes 0.8% intensification Region-wide.

Table 5 illustrates the magnitude of difference in the number of residential units required in the built-up area if the intensification target is set at various rates, with each 5% increment requiring an additional 250 units or 30% of the estimated intensification potential. However, the impact to the Region-wide intensification target is minimal. For example, regardless of whether the Township's intensification target is 10%, 15% or 20% the other area municipalities in the Region would be required to achieve a combined intensification rate of 53% to meet a Region-wide intensification target of 50%.

The results of this analysis indicate that the Township's intensification target should be set based on a further analysis of appropriate height and density considerations that are sensitive to and fit within the local context and the available and potential intensification supply in Smithville, while the impact to target-setting at the Regional level is secondary.

Further, a minor increase in the intensification rate requires significantly more residential units in the built-up area due to the magnitude of the total housing growth forecast for Smithville. With relatively high intensification rates in Smithville since 2003, the total intensification supply is now limited.

The first generation of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which came into effect in 2006, introduced a minimum intensification target that applied beginning in the year 2015 and each year thereafter. As summarized in Table 3, actual intensification rates in West Lincoln were highly variable over the five-year period from 2015 to 2019, ranging from 4% in 2016 to 75% in 2019, for an average annual intensification rate of 30%. Although the 15% intensification target was not met in the years 2015 and 2016, the average annual intensification rate over the past five years is double the target rate of 15%.

The data illustrates that it is not necessary and may be unrealistic to expect that the intensification target will be met every year, and that applying and measuring the target over a longer period is a more practical approach that provides greater

flexibility to account for the relative timing of development within the built-up area and the DGA, which is affected by a number of factors.

Applying this concept of “intensification banking” to measure the average annual intensification rate over the 2015 to 2041 growth period reduces the number of new units required in the built-up area by approximately 65 units from 2020 to 2041, achieving an average annual intensification rate of 15%.

Intensification rates may decrease for a time during the forecast period as a result of the reduced and limited supply of vacant land and infill sites within the built-up area and as more land is added to the DGA via urban expansion. A phasing plan and policies should establish the logical order of development in the DGA and to maintain servicing capacity for intensification within the built-up area with servicing priority to the Intensification Area. The balance of development among the built-up area and the DGA can be controlled through phasing policies and approval conditions, staging of development requirements related to servicing, and ultimately limiting lot registrations and/or building permit approvals annually, where necessary. When adopted and applied in practice, this approach must also consider the following potential impacts and how they can be managed where it affects the timing and pace of individual developments:

- Construction impacts which may be stretched over a longer period of time;
- Costs associated with longer project timelines, inflation and changing market conditions, which can impact the available supply and mix of housing, affordability and project viability;
- Timing of development charges revenues to provide cost recovery for growth-related infrastructure and financing costs.

As the supply of vacant land and infill opportunities within the built-up area is absorbed, continued future intensification in Smithville will rely increasingly on transformative redevelopments of existing built-up properties and buildings within the Intensification Area and corresponding investments in infrastructure and transit services as well as a range of development incentives.

In 2018, Township Planning Staff reviewed potential increases to the 5-storey maximum height provisions in Commercial Core and High Density Residential Designations in the Official Plan as well as angular plane policies and other criteria to plan for taller buildings in the Intensification Area. Appropriate building

height provisions and resulting intensification potential in the Intensification Area will require further review as part of scenario development and evaluation during the MCP process.

To help promote and incentivize intensification, the Township has also developed two Community Improvements Plans (CIPs) – the 2009 Sustainable Downtown Smithville CIP and the Brownfields CIP.

The Downtown CIP establishes five incentive programs aimed at improving commercial building facades, commercial building rehabilitation, infill, intensification and redevelopment, and also provides for incentives through grants and Development Charges exemptions for eligible projects. A Public Realm Action Plan is also identified with directions for improved landscaping in specific areas, development of Township-owned land, sidewalk reconstruction and improved pedestrian connectivity, gateway features, burying overhead wires, signage controls, public art, greenspace, speed limit reduction and community safety zone, intersection improvements, and parking.

The Brownfield CIP is aimed at stimulating private sector investment in the clean-up and redevelopment of former industrial or other previously developed or undeveloped sites that may be contaminated and establishes six related incentive programs. These programs may help to support future intensification of brownfields in Smithville.

Updates to the Downtown CIP and Brownfield CIP should be considered following the MCP process to align with the key directions and desired outcomes and also to refresh and prioritize the promotion and implementation of the incentive programs and public realm improvement initiatives to support intensification and complete community development in Smithville.

PART B: GREENFIELD DENSITY

B.1 Current Policy Framework

The Growth Plan defines “Designated Greenfield Areas” (DGAs) as follows:

“Lands within *settlement areas* (not including *rural settlements*) but outside of *delineated built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to

accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan.
Designated greenfield areas do not include excess lands.
(Growth Plan, 2019).

Provincial, regional and local plans provide the following objectives, policies and directives for DGAs:

1. **New development in DGAs will support complete communities**, active transportation and encourage transit viability and integration (Growth Plan, s. 2.2.7.1);
2. **The minimum density target is 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare** for Niagara Region (Growth Plan, s. 2.2.7.2 a) and the same target currently applies to the Township of West Lincoln and all local area municipalities (Policy 4.C.6.1, Niagara Regional Official Plan, 2014). Not every site will be able to individually achieve that target; however, the Township will closely monitor greenfield developments to meet the overall density target (Township Official Plan, s. 5.6 (d));
3. **The density target will be measured across the entire DGA of Niagara Region**, excluding the following:
 - natural heritage features and areas, natural heritage systems and floodplains, provided development is prohibited in these areas;
 - rights-of-way for electricity transmission lines, energy transmission pipelines, freeways and railways;
 - employment areas; and,
 - cemeteries (Growth Plan, s. 2.2.7.3);
4. **A subwatershed plan or equivalent will inform planning** for large-scale development in DGAs, including secondary plans (Growth Plan, s. 4.2.1.4);
5. **DGAs will be planned as compact, complete communities** by accommodating a range of land uses, making a significant contribution to the growth of Urban Areas as a complete community, providing opportunities for integrated, mixed land uses, creating grid pattern streets, supporting transit and active transportation, ensuring development is orderly, sequential and contiguous with existing built-up areas and ensuring the provision of municipal servicing is in accordance with water and wastewater servicing master plans (Niagara Regional Official Plan, policy 4.C.5.1);

6. **Official Plans shall adopt minimum and maximum densities** including distinctions between net and gross density, include policies for higher densities and a mix of housing, and greenfield development guidelines to support local policy direction for DGAs (Policy 4.C.7.1, Niagara Regional Official Plan);
7. **Greenfield Strategy:**
 - Create more compact, multi-modal, mixed-use communities with a range of housing types;
 - All DGAs will require a Secondary Plan prior to development;
 - Gross density shall be 20 to 30 units per hectare;
 - A subwatershed plan shall be prepared;
 - Incorporate sustainable best practices including:
 - water conservation;
 - green roofs;
 - on-site collection and storage of recyclable waste;
 - renewable energy generation, co-generation and district energy;
 - options for water and sanitary sewer systems;
 - stormwater management;
 - recognition of soil and hydrogeological characteristics;
 - protection of important natural features;
 - mix, density and phasing of land uses;
 - affordability;
 - public facilities;
 - roads and active transportation integration;
 - archaeological assessment;
 - urban design.(Township Official Plan, s. 5.10).

Figure 5 identifies the location of the existing DGAs in Smithville.

B.2 Existing Greenfield Area and Density Context

The DGA in Smithville consists of some existing residential neighbourhoods and other existing land uses that have generally developed over the past ten to fifteen years and is predominantly comprised of vacant land designated for new residential, commercial and employment land uses. Some of the established residential areas in the DGA have an existing density lower than 50 people and jobs per hectare, as some plans for development in the DGA were approved prior

to DGA density targets. Most new and planned DGA developments are achieving the greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.

Figure 5 shows the existing, developed portions of the DGA and the existing greenfield densities of these areas, which have a combined density of 41 people and jobs per hectare.

Fig. 5: Smithville Designated Greenfield Areas



Appendix 1 provides a series of examples to illustrate the range of densities in existing residential neighbourhoods and examples of commercial, institutional and

industrial employment densities in Smithville, including areas within the DGA and within the built-up area.

From 2003 to 2019 there were 539 building permits issued by the Township for new residential dwellings in the Smithville DGA. Single and semi-detached dwellings accounted for 70% of new dwellings in the DGA, followed by townhouses at 18% and triplex dwellings at 12%.

As noted earlier, there is no official data available on the number of additional residential units (e.g. accessory apartments) in existing homes and detached residential accessory buildings. While these add to the number of units and therefore the population and work at home employment in the DGA, it is not anticipated that additional residential units have contributed significantly to the current greenfield density. This may become more of a factor in future developments in the DGA, particularly if new homes are designed to accommodate additional units. Updated Official Plan policies should provide direction on whether additional residential units will be included in determining the for new DGA developments for the purposes of determining conformity with the density provisions and targets.

B.3 Greenfield Development

Vacant land areas remaining to be developed in the DGA are identified in Figure 5. An inventory of approved, planned and potential development in each area is provided in Table 6.

The North-West Quadrant Secondary Plan Area encompasses approximately 34 hectares of land planned for low, medium and high density residential uses with a smaller area designated for commercial development at the north-west corner of West Street and South Grimsby Road 5 and an existing institutional use recognized on the north side of West Street at Streamside Drive.

The North-West Quadrant Secondary Plan anticipates 550 residential units with a population of 1,700 to 1,750 and does not indicate the expected number of jobs. Based on the population estimate, the rate of work-at-home employment in Smithville and the area identified for future commercial land uses, it is estimated that the area will provide approximately 125 jobs. The development of this area is expected to meet or exceed the greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare based on the Secondary Plan forecast and planned development.

There are development approvals for 11 units including 2 semi-detached units and 9 townhouse units in the North-West Smithville Secondary Plan, which will complete the build-out of this portion of the DGA.

The Township has initiated a review of the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan to optimize the location and mix of land uses proposed. Currently, the area is designated for medium density residential uses, restricted industrial uses as a transition between the employment area to the east and existing residential areas to the west, and to recognize an existing institutional use. If residential uses and/or a mix of residential and other land uses are planned for this area, it is anticipated that they will be planned to achieve the greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.

Table 6: DGA Vacant Land Inventory, Smithville

Development Area (in DGA)	Official Plan Designation	Units & Jobs
North-West Quadrant Secondary Plan		
Dunloe Developments – draft plan approved (5.64 ha)	Low and Medium Density Residential Parks & Trail Linkages	125 units
Budd – draft plan proposed	Low and Medium Density Residential Parks & Trail Linkages, SWM	300+ units
Marz Homes – draft plan proposed	Low, Medium and High Density Residential, Parks & Trail Linkages, SWM	200+ units
Total Area: 34 hectares	550 to 625+ units and 125 jobs = 55+ people and jobs per hectare	
North-West Smithville Secondary Plan		
Spring Creek Manor	Low Density Residential	11 units
Total Area: 0.8 hectare	= approximately 50 people per hectare	
Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan (Under Review)		
Spring Creek Road / Station Street	Low and Medium Density Residential Special Institutional Restricted Industrial	To be determined
Total Area: 20 hectares	= 50 people and jobs per hectare to be planned for in Secondary Plan update (Note: exclude Employment Areas from Greenfield Density)	

Development Area (in DGA)	Official Plan Designation	Units & Jobs
East Smithville (New Secondary Plan to be prepared)		
Station Street / Industrial Park Road	Service Commercial Employment Area	To be determined
Total Area: 24 hectares	= 50 people and jobs per hectare to be planned for in new Secondary Plan (Note: exclude Employment Areas from Greenfield Density)	
North-East (Employment Area)		
Industrial Park Road / Spring Creek Road	Employment Area	340 jobs estimated
Total Area: 34 hectares	= 10 jobs per hectare (Note: exclude Employment Areas from Greenfield Density)	
West Street and Townline Road (Vacant Residential Land – 3 Parcels)		
West Street	Medium Density Residential	12 units
Townline Road	Low and Medium Density Residential	39 units
Total Area: 2.9 hectares	= 50 people and jobs per hectare	

Employment areas are netted out and therefore will not impact the greenfield density calculation for this area; however, separate employment density targets should be established for employment areas as directed by the Growth Plan. A review of current employment densities in Smithville is provided in part B.5 of this memorandum and examples of estimated existing employment densities are provided in Appendix 1.

Preparation of the East Secondary Plan has been initiated by the Township, but a recommended land use plan and policies are not yet established for this area. The land use plan may include mixed-use development and is expected to achieve the density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare. The Township's Official Plan currently designates this area for service commercial and employment land uses.

The North-East area of the DGA is a designated employment area. As required by the Growth Plan, employment areas are not included in the greenfield density calculation and a separate employment density target will be required. Existing industrial employment densities in Smithville are relatively low due to the large and space-extensive nature of some existing industries.

As shown on Figure 5, there are three smaller vacant land areas remaining the DGA, including a property on the south side of West Street designated as Medium Density Residential in the Official Plan, and two parcels on the south side of Townline Road including one property designated as Low Density Residential and the other as Medium Density Residential. It is estimated that these parcels could accommodate approximately 50 residential units in total to achieve a combined density of approximately 50 people and jobs per hectare.

B.4 Greenfield Density Target and Land Needs

The current greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare was first introduced by the Growth Plan in 2006 and most new residential developments in Smithville have achieved this target. The 2019 Growth Plan has modified how greenfield densities are measured by excluding employment areas for which separate employment density targets must be set. With this change there is greater certainty and viability of continued achievement of the current greenfield density target as residential and mixed-use development areas will not require higher densities to offset the low density nature of industrial employment uses in Smithville.

Currently there are not sufficient vacant lands within the Smithville DGA to accommodate forecast housing and employment to the year 2041. Build-out of the existing DGA and intensification supply in the current urban area is estimated to accommodate approximately 1,500 new housing units and 1,750 jobs. The 2041 population and employment growth forecasts require sufficient land and intensification opportunities for over 5,000 new residential units to accommodate an added population of more than 14,500 people and approximately 5,000 new jobs.

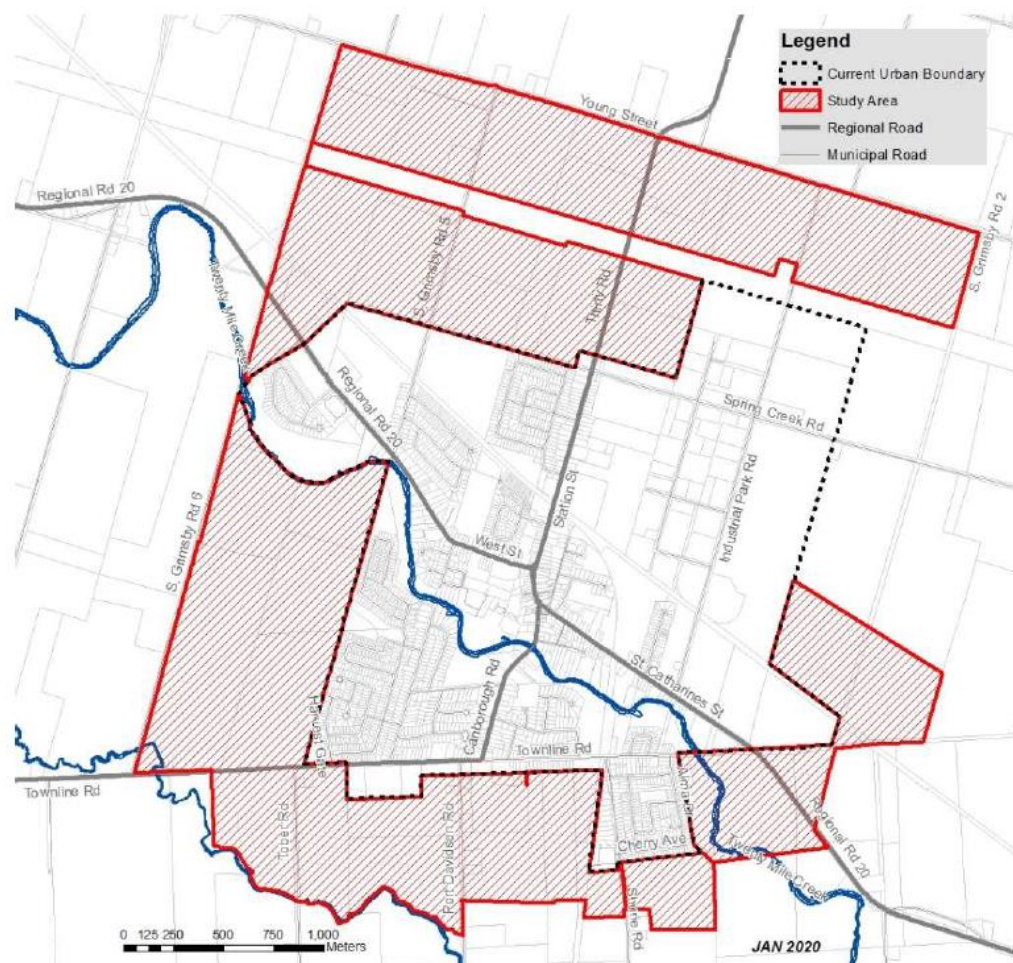
A limited amount of new housing may be accommodated outside of Smithville within other rural settlement areas in West Lincoln, which are estimated to have sufficient land and infill potential for approximately 30 to 40 new dwellings. Some future employment growth is also anticipated in the rural area, but the majority of population-related employment growth and new industrial employment will be directed to locations within Smithville on full municipal services.

The preliminary Land Needs Assessment completed for the Region's MCR indicates an additional DGA land need of 209 hectares in Smithville to accommodate the 2041 growth forecast for the Township of West Lincoln. This

preliminary land needs estimate has been determined using the Land Needs Assessment (LNA) methodology issued by the Province under the previous 2017 Growth Plan. An updated LNA methodology is expected under the 2019 Growth Plan, and the Province has also announced that the Growth Plan population and housing forecasts will be reviewed and updated. The total DGA land requirements for Smithville will be determined and confirmed through the Region's MCR process in accordance with Provincial requirements.

Figure 6 shows the study area for the Smithville MCP, which includes the land surrounding the existing urban area boundary to determine opportunities and constraints for future urban area expansion to accommodate the additional greenfield land need identified.

Fig. 6: Smithville MCP Study Area



B.5 Employment Density

The Niagara Region 2019 Employment Inventory provides data on the number of existing jobs within the Township of West Lincoln from the 205 businesses and organizations that participated in the related survey. A total of 3,181 jobs are reported by those that provided this information and the Region estimates a further 224 jobs among those that did not report 2019 employment data, for an estimated total of 3,405 jobs. According to the data, most of the jobs identified through the business survey are in manufacturing (1,519 jobs), followed by retail (458 jobs), construction (168 jobs), educational services (137 jobs) and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (118 jobs).

Mapping of the Employment Inventory data was reviewed to determine the number of jobs reported and estimated among businesses and organizations located within Smithville. Of those that participated in the survey, 130 are located within the current urban boundary of Smithville and reported a combined total of 1,740 jobs and a further 120 jobs are estimated, for a total of 1,860 jobs or 55% of the total jobs identified in West Lincoln through the inventory.

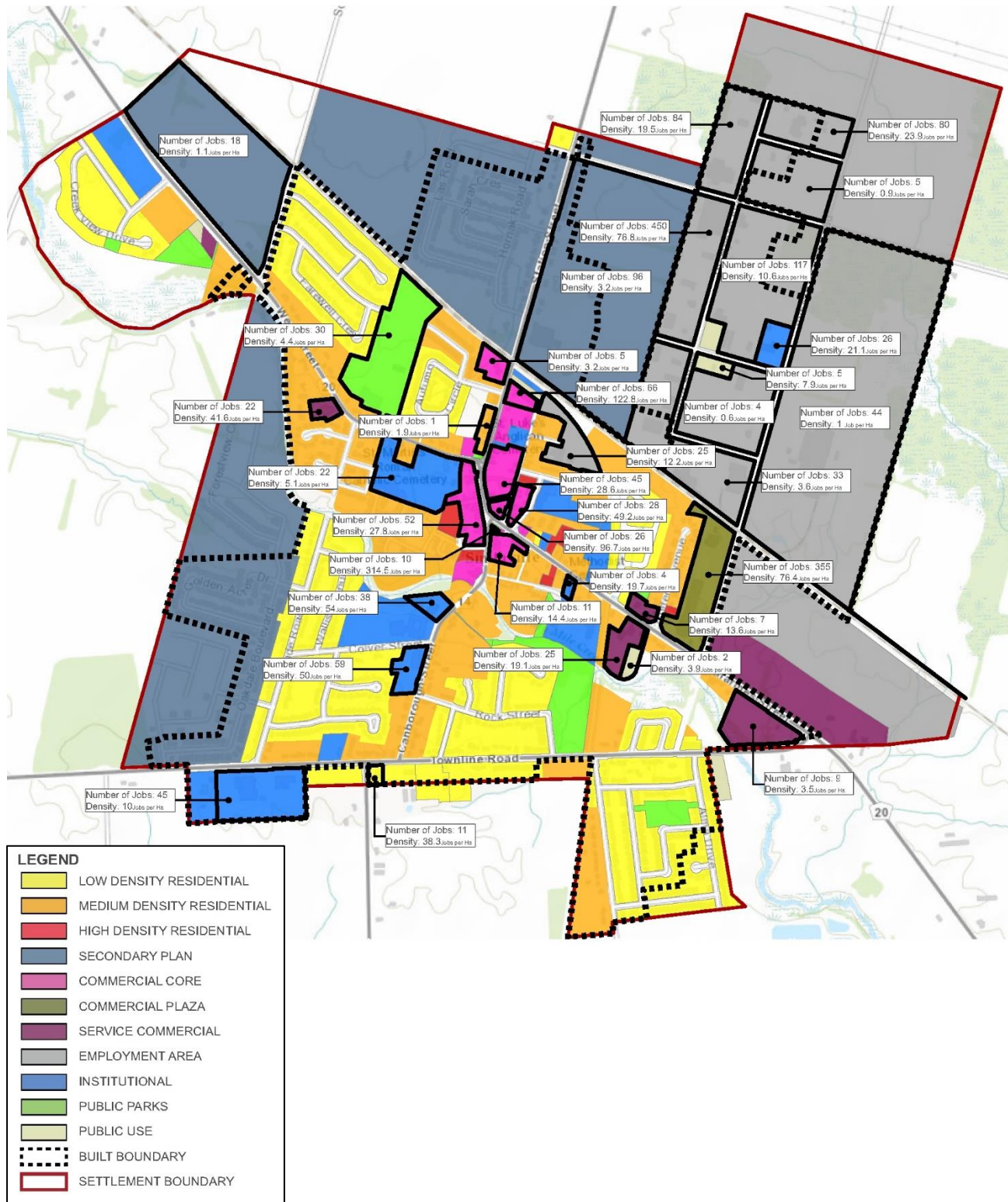
The data was aggregated by land use type to estimate the current employment densities for industrial Employment Areas, the Commercial Core, Commercial Plazas and Service Commercial areas, and Institutional areas designated in the Township's Official Plan. Figure 7 illustrates the location of reported and estimated jobs identified in the inventory, by land use area.

In the north-east industrial Employment Area, employment density ranges from less than 1 job per hectare to 77 jobs per hectare, and the average density is 5.9 jobs per hectare.

Most of the Commercial Core area is in the range of 28 to 50 jobs per hectare and the average is 30 jobs per hectare. The highest density of employment is found in the Commercial Plaza area located at St. Catharines Street and Industrial Park Road where the calculated density is 76 jobs per hectare. Service Commercial areas have an average density of 4.6 jobs per hectare.

Employment densities in Institutional areas range from 5 jobs per hectare to 50 jobs per hectare and the average is 7.8 jobs per hectare.

Fig. 7: Smithville Employment Inventory and Densities by Land Use Type



Conclusions & Next Steps

As part of the MCP process, an initial review of intensification potential and the density of greenfield development and existing employment densities has been completed to assess the remaining capacity of land within the existing urban area of Smithville to accommodate the forecast growth to the year 2041. This review will also inform planning for an appropriate balance between infill and redevelopment within the built-up area of Smithville and future outward expansion of Smithville, as well as the setting of targets for intensification, greenfield density and employment area density as required by the Growth Plan.

Key conclusions and next steps emerging from the intensification, greenfield density and employment density review include:

Intensification

- From 2003 to 2019, an average of 33 residential units per year representing 39% of new residential units in the Township and 51% of new residential units in Smithville have been accommodated through the development of vacant lands and infill opportunities within the built-up area of Smithville.
- Although building activity has produced recent high rates of intensification over the past three years, the longer-term trend indicates a declining rate of intensification overall attributed to the declining supply of available vacant land for intensification within the built-up area.
- The Official Plan should continue to support the designated Intensification Area of Smithville as the primary location for significant redevelopment as the community core. Future intensification will become increasingly dependent on opportunities in this area as other infilling areas build out.
- Further review of the current boundaries and policies for the Intensification Area should determine the need for refinements and opportunities to align with and incorporate the Growth Plan directives for Strategic Growth Areas.
- Key elements for further review and planning for the Intensification Area include building heights, built form and density, mix of land uses, place-making, public realm improvements, transition to surrounding areas, parking, transit and active transportation opportunities, policies, programs and

incentives to promote and facilitate redevelopment, and market demands and opportunities for higher density housing types.

- The land inventory and redevelopment opportunities for intensification indicate a planned and potential supply of 807 units, which is sufficient to meet the current 15% intensification target. The Region projects 15% intensification for West Lincoln, and this continues to be an appropriate and suitable target.
- A 40% or 50% intensification rate requires 2,000 to 2,500 new residential units or 100 to 125 units per year in the built-up area, which exceeds the estimated supply of planned and potential intensification by 1,200 to 1,700 residential units and is not considered achievable in the Smithville context.
- Opportunities for intensification of existing housing should continue to be supported in policies and through zoning regulations including updated provisions for additional residential units and consideration of supplementary user-friendly guidelines and a database or registry.
- A decline in intensification rates is likely to occur during the forecast period as the limited remaining vacant land and infill sites within the built-up area are absorbed and new DGA is added via urban expansion. A phasing plan and policies should be included in the Official Plan to direct the orderly development of the DGA while maintaining servicing capacity for intensification with servicing priority to the Intensification Area, and to align the timing of DGA development with intensification to ensure the intensification target will be met over time.
- Intensification and DGA development should continue to be tracked and monitored annually as an input to the development review and approvals process. As illustrated by the variability of past intensification rates, applying and measuring the target over a longer period or “intensification banking” is a more practical approach that provides greater flexibility than restricting development approvals to attempt to achieve the intensification target each and every year. Monitoring should be used to determine when a greater degree of phasing control may be warranted to maintain a balance between development in the built-up area and the DGA to meet the intensification target.

- Updates to the Township's Community Improvement Plans should be considered following the MCP process to refresh and prioritize the promotion and implementation of the incentive programs and public realm improvement initiatives to support intensification and complete community development.

Greenfield Density

- A review of existing neighbourhoods in Smithville provide examples indicating a range of existing densities throughout the urban area (see Appendix 1), with Residential areas ranging from 20 to 110 people per hectare.
- Most recent and planned residential subdivision developments in the greenfield area are achieving or exceeding the current density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.
- Remaining vacant greenfield land approved or planned for residential development is located in the North-West Quadrant Secondary Plan area where a density of 50 to 55 residents and jobs per hectare is expected.
- A review and update of the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan and the East Secondary Plan have been initiated to determine the approximate mix and density of future land uses in these areas which are anticipated to achieve a density of 50 residents and jobs per hectare.
- Employment areas are netted out and therefore future industrial uses in the Spring Creek Heights and/or East Secondary Plan areas and in the North-East employment area will not impact greenfield density.
- The current greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare remains appropriate for future greenfield residential development in the Smithville context where the DGA should continue to be planned primarily for ground-related single and multi-unit housing forms generally within a 3-storey height limit to focus and direct higher density, taller multi-unit apartments and other vertical built forms within the Intensification Area.
- To support complete community development, neighbourhood design and land use mix within greenfield areas should support walkability and connectivity within and among neighbourhoods and with the downtown core and other nodes of businesses, services and amenities.

- Intensification potential and vacant lands within the greenfield area are not sufficient to accommodate forecast housing and employment to the year 2041. The Region's MCR will determine the future land needs for growth.
- The Smithville MCP Study Area includes the land surrounding the existing urban limit to determine opportunities and constraints to accommodating the additional greenfield land need identified.

Employment Density

- Employment areas are not included in the DGA for the purposes of applying and measuring the greenfield density target; however, separate employment density targets must be established for the employment areas of Smithville as directed by the Growth Plan.
- Existing average employment densities by land use type have been approximated based on reported and estimated 2019 employment for existing commercial and industrial businesses and institutions located in Smithville:
 - Industrial Employment Area: 5.9 jobs per hectare;
 - Commercial Core: 30 jobs per hectare;
 - Commercial Plaza: 76 jobs per hectare;
 - Service Commercial: 4.6 jobs per hectare;
 - Institutional: 7.8 jobs per hectare.
- Existing employment densities should be considered as a key input to the establishment of density targets for employment areas in Smithville through the Region's MCR and allocating land or future employment, commercial and institutional land uses through the Smithville MCP.

Respectfully submitted,
GSP Group Inc.



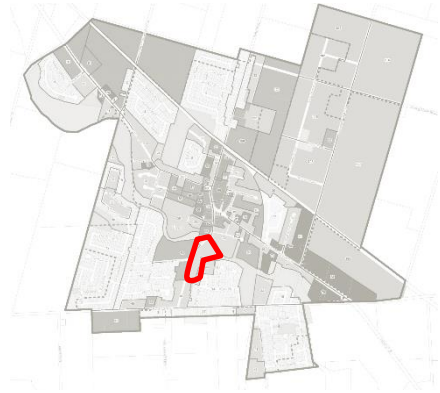
Steve Wever, MCIP, RPP
Associate – Senior Planner

APPENDIX 1:
Smithville Density Examples
and Mapping

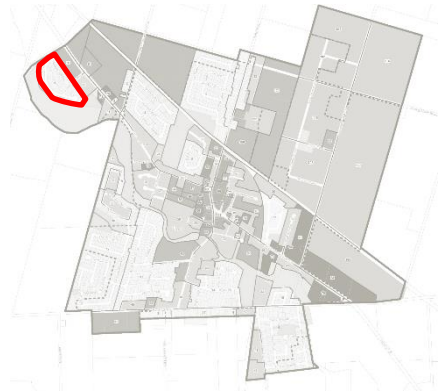
Smithville – Residential Density Examples



Canborough Street (single detached, 20m to 55m lots):
19.7 people per ha



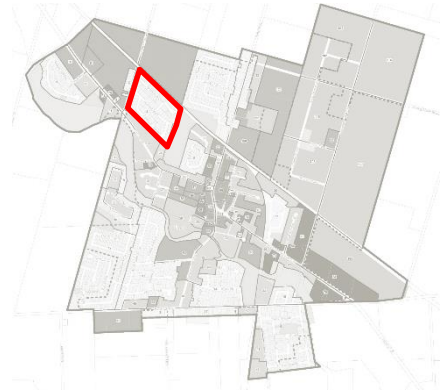
Streamside (single detached, 15m to 18m lots):
37.3 people per ha



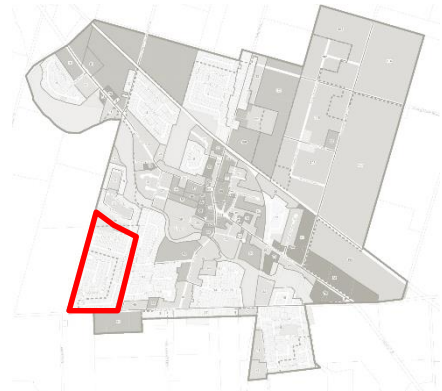
Smithville – Residential Density Examples



Northridge / Westlea Drive
(single detached, 10m to 20m
lots): **41.5 people per ha**



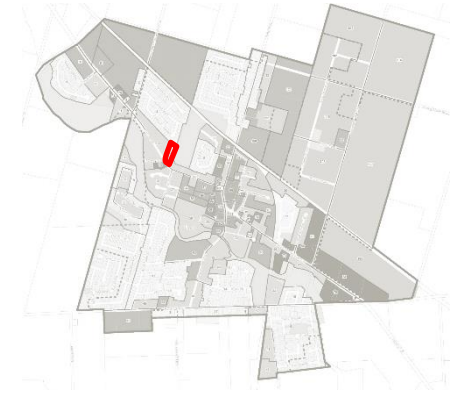
Oakdale / Anastasia Blvd.
(single and semi-detached):
43.6 people per ha



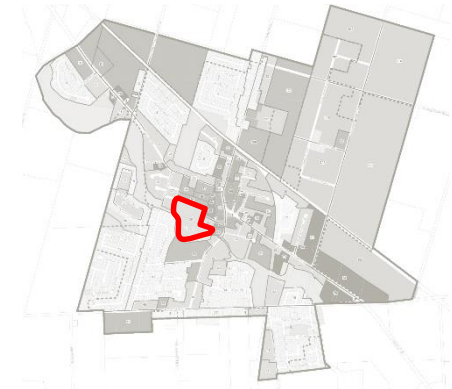
Smithville – Residential Density Examples



West Street / DiCarlo (semi-detached and townhouses):
52 people per ha



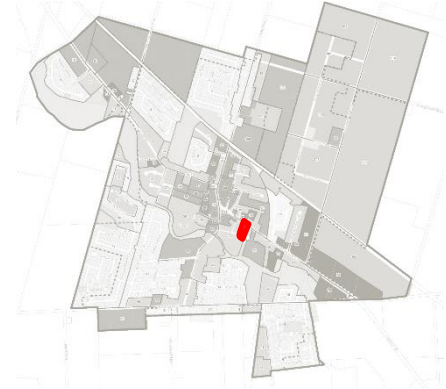
Wes-Li Gardens
(townhouses):
64.8 people per ha



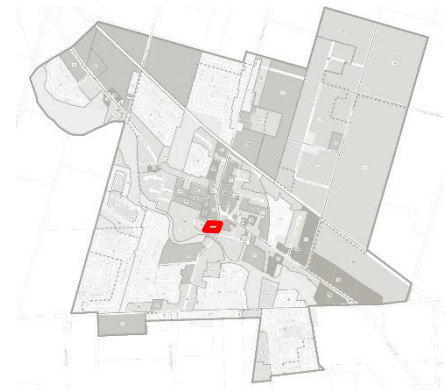
Smithville – Residential Density Examples



Mill Street (apartments):
88 people per ha



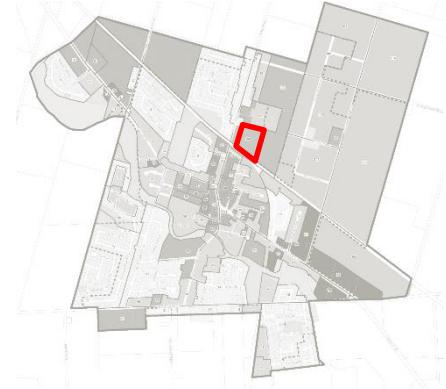
Smits Cove (apartments):
106.7 people per ha



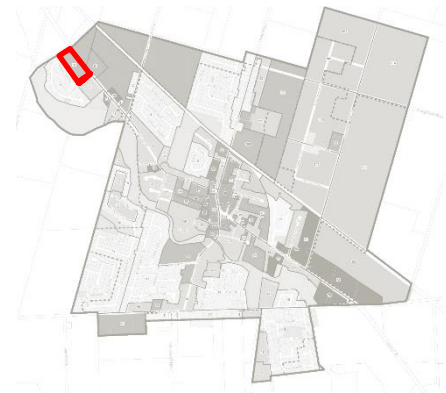
Smithville – Employment Density Examples



Lumber/Resource Industry:
5 to 10 jobs per ha



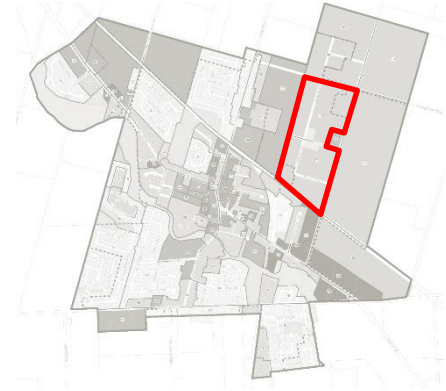
Elementary School:
10 to 15 jobs per ha



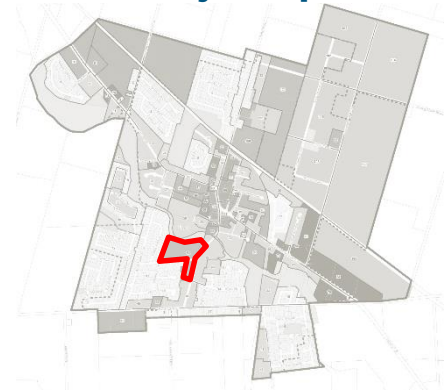
Smithville – Employment Density Examples



Industrial Park:
12 to 18 jobs per ha



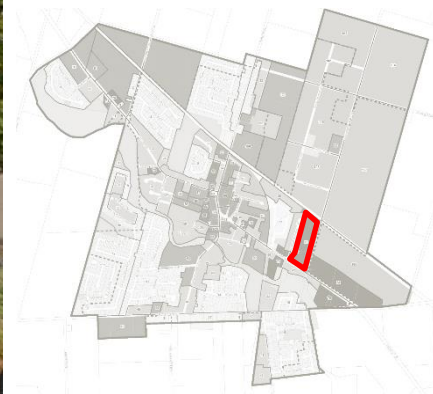
Municipal office, firehall,
secondary school
18 to 25 jobs per ha



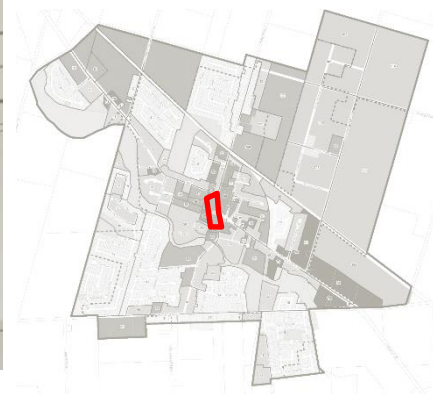
Smithville – Employment Density Examples



Retail/Commercial Plaza:
45 to 55 jobs per ha



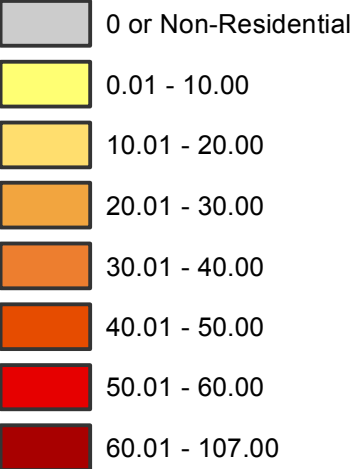
Commercial Core:
60+ jobs per ha



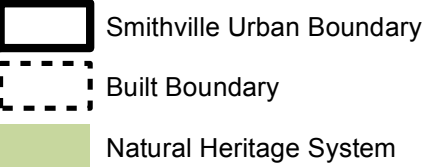
Township of West Lincoln
SMITHVILLE

Map 1
Population
Density

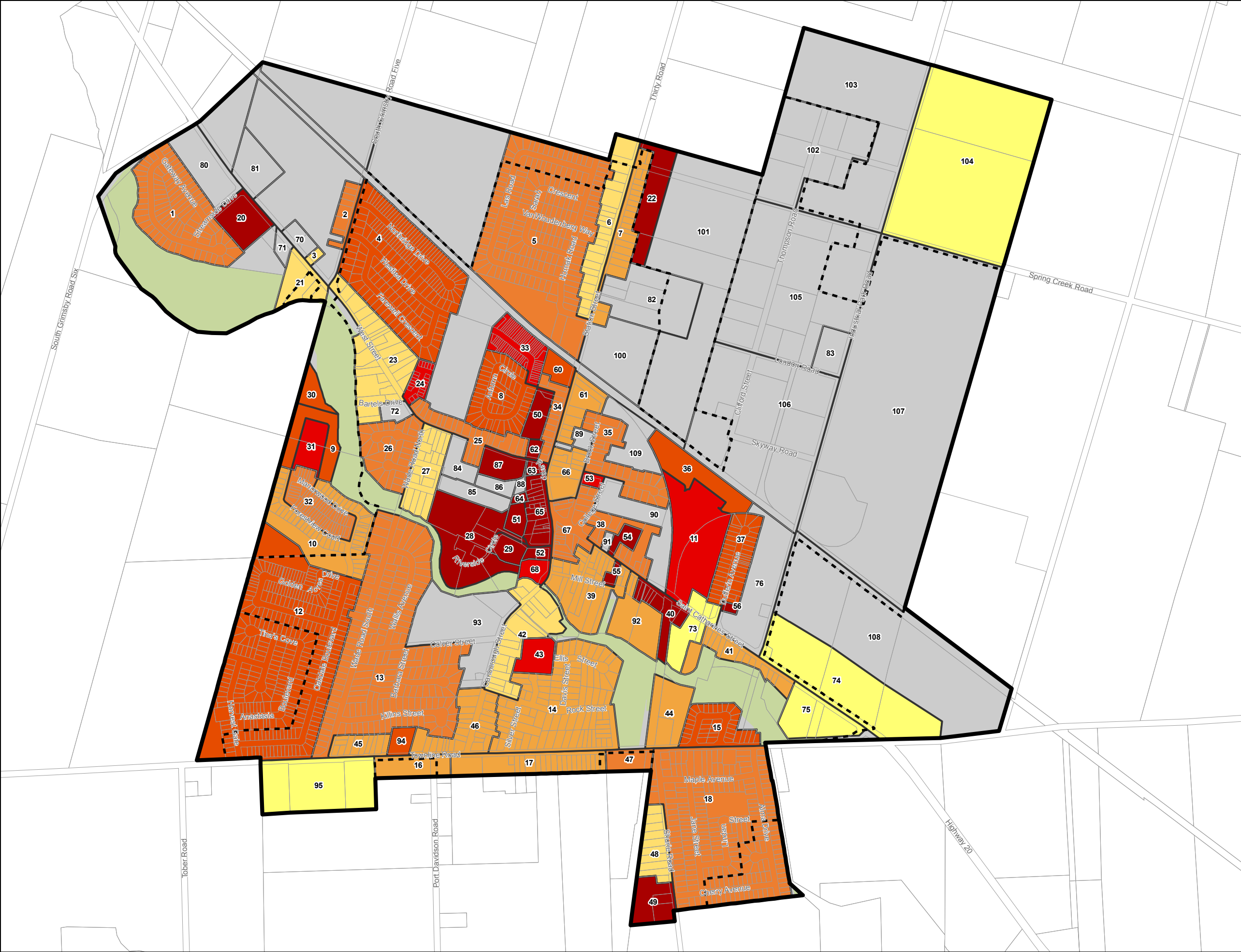
Population Density
(Persons per Hectare)



Note: Future Population Density calculated based on existing households (if any) and planned or potential future housing units identified within each numbered area and the following household size by unit type: single and semi-detached, 3.6 persons per unit (ppu); townhouses, 2.2 ppu; apartments and other dwelling types, 1.6 ppu.



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Township of West Lincoln
SMITHVILLE

Map 2
Gross
Residential Density

