

Commonly Asked Questions Pertaining to Discussions Regarding the City of Barrie's Boundary Expansion Request

December 12, 2024

Q. What is the purpose of the facilitated discussions?

A. In late 2023, the City of Barrie made a presentation to Oro-Medonte Council that included a proposal to expand its boundaries into Oro-Medonte to permit additional employment lands. A similar proposal was made to the Township of Springwater.

In the spring of 2024, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing engaged the Office of Provincial Land and Development Facilitator to initiate discussion between the City of Barrie, the Township of Oro-Medonte, the Township of Springwater and the County of Simcoe, with the goal of identifying mutually acceptable solutions to accommodate anticipated growth in the area.

As a first step, Hemson Consulting ("Hemson") was jointly retained to evaluate the need for additional residential and employment lands at the boundaries of Barrie/Springwater and Barrie/Oro-Medonte. Hemson has completed this task.

Q. Who is Hemson Consulting?

A. Hemson is an experienced consulting firm in the Province of Ontario that advises on growth management, long-range strategic planning, and adequacy of land supply for municipalities. Their services were contracted through a competitive procurement process.

Q. Who paid the cost for Hemson Consulting's Services?

A. The cost of the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study has been shared by all four municipalities. An agreement on the scope of further analysis and cost sharing would be required before any further work is undertaken.

Should Hemson be tasked with further work, recommendations will be provided to develop an appropriate consultation strategy for the parties to consider, including government ministries, agencies, municipal staff and Councils, Indigenous communities, and the general public.

Q. What is Oro-Medonte’s interest in the facilitated discussions?

A. Oro-Medonte supports maintaining current municipal boundaries and accessing municipal services from the City of Barrie under a Municipal Services Agreement to allow the development of medium density attainable housing for seniors and young people.

The Township understands the importance of the Province’s mandate to build more homes faster and it is prepared to do its part. The Township is actively engaged with the development community in Oro-Medonte to assist with filling the Provincial objective.

Q. Is the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study (“Land Needs Study”) prepared by Hemson available to the public?

A. Yes, the Land Needs Study is publicly available on the Township’s website here – [Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study](#). The Township’s Chief Administrative Officer and Manager, Planning Special Projects provided a staff report to Council at the December 11, 2024 Council meeting regarding the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study. To review the report, please see [City of Barrie Proposed Boundary Expansion – Receipt of Hemson Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study staff report](#).

Q. What are the next steps in the process?

A. Each municipal Council will review the findings from the Land Needs Study. The Study has outlined two options moving forward. To properly consider the impacts of any decision, further analysis into the availability of water, wastewater and other infrastructure, protection of natural features and ecological functions, compatibility with existing uses, financial impacts on the applicable municipalities, and consistency with Provincial Plan policies, and Conservation

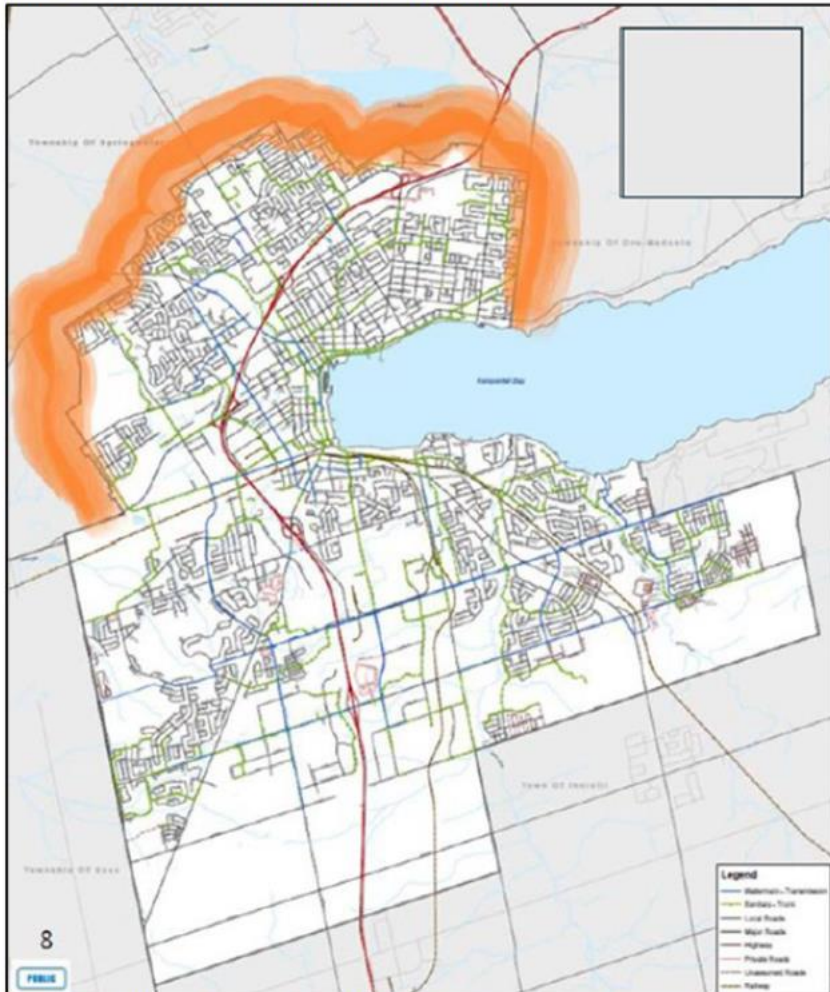
Authority plans and policies is required. Each municipal Council will decide if they wish to proceed further.

Q. How will the public be engaged in the process?

A. Although the continued facilitation discussions are confidential, all parties are committed to providing regular updates to keep their respective communities informed. Details regarding the discussions will continue to be shared publicly. Any potential decisions that may result from the facilitation process will be considered in an open, transparent forum.

Q. What lands are being considered for future employment or residential uses?

Map 1 – Joint Land Needs Analysis Study Area



Source: City of Barrie, Township of Oro-Medonte, Township of Springwater, and County of Simcoe

A. The study area includes lands along the Barrie/Springwater border and the Barrie/Oro-Medonte border. The City of Barrie owns lands in the vicinity of Little Lake, in the Township of Springwater. Further facilitated discussions could also include options for ensuring the long term environmental preservation and stewardship of those lands.

Questions and Answers Specific to the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study (“the study”)

Q. The City of Barrie requested additional land from Oro-Medonte for Employment Purposes. What were the report findings related to employment land needs?

A. Barrie has sufficient employment lands to meet demand to 2051, with sufficient serviced supply to address medium and long-term needs (as indicated on page 21 of study).

Barrie has a short supply of “shovel ready” lands and/or large parcels that are able to accommodate for the expansion of existing businesses, or for new larger businesses. However, “Barrie is implementing a targeted plan to accelerate the extension of linear infrastructure in key areas within South Barrie to bring to market” (as indicated on pages 17-21 of the study). Acquiring additional employment lands outside of Barrie would not address its short-term supply issue (as indicated on page 21 of the study).

Hemson has also indicated that if boundary adjustments are being considered, it is important to take a longer term view (beyond the 2051 planning period), and lands for both employment as well as community lands should be included to provide for complete communities that balance residential, commercial, and employment opportunities (as indicated on page 48 of the study).

Q. The study indicates the need for community area lands and comprehensive community/employment area uses is strong. What are community lands?

A. Community area lands include residential lands and other land uses that make up a community, such as local commercial plaza sites, school sites, parks, other open spaces, etc. Hemson is indicating that when looking at land for residential purposes, one needs to consider community needs in determining total land area requirements.

Q. What were the study findings for community area lands needs?

A. Oro-Medonte has sufficient community area land supply to meet its respective growth forecasts to 2051 (as indicated on page 46 of the study). Barrie will likely face shortfalls in its community area land supply to meet residential demand based on current Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) densities (as indicated on page 48 of the study).

Q. How do I stay up to date on this initiative?

A. As the process moves forward to address the City of Barrie's boundary expansion request, updates will be provided on the Township's website. To remain informed of additional/new information, please visit oro-medonte.ca/cbber.