



Staff Report

To: Council

From: George Vadeboncoeur, Manager, Planning Special Projects

Meeting Date: April 17, 2024

Report No.: DS2024-048

Subject: City of Barrie Proposed Boundary Expansion – Request for Provincial Land and Development Facilitator Mediation

Type: Requires Action

Motion No.:

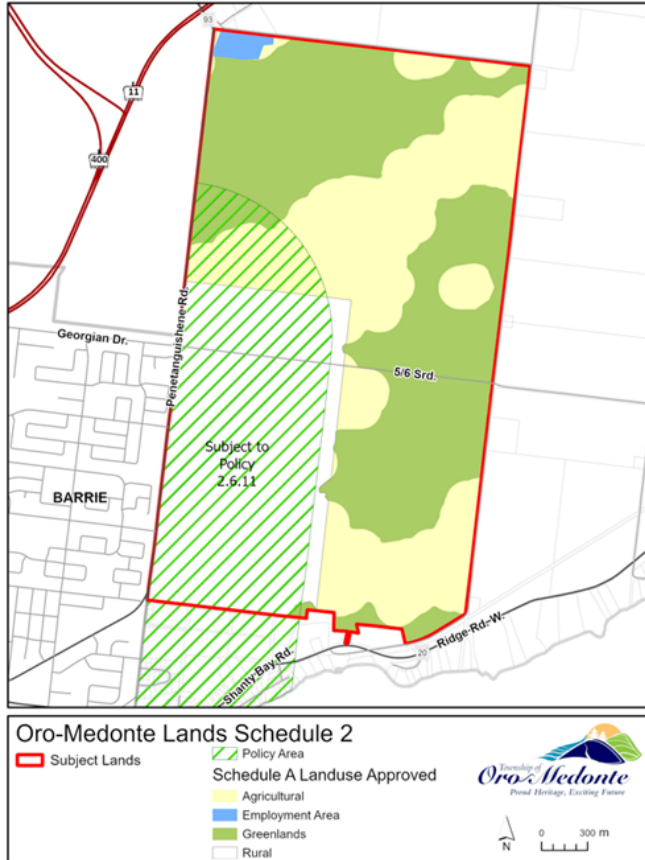
Recommendation

1. That Report No. DS2024-048 be received and adopted.
2. That Council authorize staff to contact the Office of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator to request assisted mediation regarding the City of Barrie request to expand their municipal boundary into Oro-Medonte in accordance and consistent with direction provided by Council for Oro-Medonte through Motion No. C240214-10.
3. That Council direct staff to prepare options for Council's consideration prior to meeting with the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator that are in keeping with Council's position and Minister Calandra's direction.

Background

The purpose of this report is to obtain direction to request the assistance of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator for mediation regarding the City of Barrie's request for a Municipal Boundary expansion.

The Provincial Land and Development Facilitator's role is to help the Province, municipalities, developers, businesses and community groups resolve issues related to growth management, land use and infrastructure planning, and environmental protection by providing impartial facilitation services or by acting as a negotiator on behalf of the Province.



City of Barrie Proposal

On November 8, 2023, Mayor Nuttall from the City of Barrie presented his proposal to Oro-Medonte Council to expand the City of Barrie municipal boundary into the Township for the provision of employment lands.

The requested municipal boundary expansion into the Township of Oro-Medonte would include lands east of Penetanguishene Road, south of Gore Road, west of Line 1 South and north of the Shanty Bay rural settlement area. The area comprises approximately 772 hectares (1,907.65 acres) of land shown below and consists of active farmland and environmentally sensitive features.

The Township's new Official Plan designates 221.7 hectares (231.7 acres) of the lands "Agricultural", 309.77 hectares (309.77 acres) as

"Greenlands", 223.68 hectares (552.72 acres) as "Rural" and 5.59 hectares (13.81 acres) as "Employment Area".

The subject lands primarily consist of actively farmed agricultural land that is considered a prime agricultural area within the new Oro-Medonte Official Plan. Prime Agricultural Areas generally consist of Class 1-3 lands as per Canadian Land Inventory (CLI), which is exceptional for farming purposes.

There are several watercourses that traverse the area and a significant portion of the subject lands are regulated by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA).

There is also a significant portion of the lands within the floodplain as defined by the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) that are regulated by the NVCA.

There is an area adjacent to the existing residential neighbourhood in Barrie shown on the map that is subject to Policy 2.6.11 of the new Oro-Medonte Official Plan. This policy is intended to establish agricultural policies in locales throughout the Township that abut urban development within neighbouring municipalities.

Township Response

On January 18, 2024, Mayor Greenlaw, Deputy Mayor Lavoie, and Township Representatives met with Minister Calandra to discuss the City of Barrie's proposal and

the Township's concerns. The Minister indicated that municipalities and upper tiers of government are expected to work cooperatively together to reach fair and amicable partnerships regarding provincial housing and employment needs as well as municipal priorities.

On February 14, 2024, Oro-Medonte Council considered a staff report on Mayor Nuttall's boundary adjustment proposal and approved the following recommendations through Council Motion No. C240214-10:

1. "That Report No. DS2024-017 be received and adopted.
2. That Council confirm the following points related to the City of Barrie's proposed municipal boundary expansion:
 - a. the Township of Oro-Medonte does not support the City of Barrie's proposed Municipal Boundary Expansion as presented.
 - b. the Township of Oro-Medonte is prepared to work with the City of Barrie to find an amicable solution to address its employment land needs based on a comprehensive planning process that works for Oro-Medonte, the City of Barrie, the County of Simcoe and the Province.
3. And further, that staff be authorized to prepare additional background documentation in support of the ongoing discussions with the City of Barrie."

The Chronology attached as Schedule 1 provides an overview of other actions and dates leading up to the preparation of this report.

Analysis

Since the February 14, 2024, Council meeting, letters have been sent to the City of Barrie and Minister Calandra advising of Council's decision and informal discussions between Mayor Greenlaw and Mayor Nuttall have occurred regarding the expansion proposal, but nothing concrete has emerged.

In keeping with Minister Calandra's comments, the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator could be of assistance to work with the parties to arrive at a solution that meets the goals/objectives of both municipalities and the County of Simcoe. Township representatives have been advised that the Provincial Facilitator is available upon request to address these types of matters.

The Provincial Facilitation process allows a third party to review the proposals and alternatives submitted by each municipality in an objective manner and can result in recommended potential solutions. This is a voluntary process and if Council were to approve the request, the City of Barrie and the County of Simcoe would be approached requesting their participation.

At a future meeting of Council, staff intend to bring options forward for Council's consideration so that the Township's position is confirmed prior to meeting with the Facilitator, the City of Barrie and the County of Simcoe.

Financial/Legal Implications/ Risk Management

This is early in the City of Barrie's efforts to expand its boundaries. The Township has stated that it is prepared to work with the City and the County to achieve a solution that meets the objectives for each party. If at some point the City moves to an annexation process, there will be substantial financial implications to the Township that will have to be addressed. This is a separate process and financial and legal implications will be considered at that time.

Policies/Legislation

- Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13
- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
- A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020
- County of Simcoe Official Plan
- Conservation Authorities Act
- Township of Oro-Medonte new Official Plan
- Township of Oro-Medonte Zoning By-law No. 97-95, as amended.

Corporate Strategic Goals

In December 2023, Council adopted the Township's new Corporate Strategic Plan 2024-27. The comments in this report are consistent with the following Goals of the Plan:

- Financial Sustainability
- Employment Lands
- Well Planned Development

Consultations

The writer discussed this report with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CAO, Director of the Development Services Department.

Attachments

Schedule 1: City of Barrie Proposed Boundary Expansion Request Chronology

Background Information/Related Reports

- Staff Report dated February 14, 2024 - [Link to Report](#)

Conclusion

There is merit to considering options for the provision of employment lands in the spirit of cooperation and partnership with the Province, County of Simcoe and the City of Barrie, that is beneficial to all parties. The Township has a need for serviced residential lands for the provision of medium density housing.

To assist with the review, it is recommended that the Township of Oro-Medonte request the assistance of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator to work with the Township, City of Barrie and the County of Simcoe on finding solutions that are beneficial for both municipalities.

All options should be explored in collaboration with the City of Barrie and the County of Simcoe through a comprehensive process that provides information to inform important decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

George Vadeboncoeur,
Manager, Planning Special Projects

April 3, 2024

Approvals:

Date of Approval:

Andy Karaiskakis, Manager, Planning Services
Brent Spagnol, Director, Development Services
Robin Dunn, CAO

April 5, 2024
April 5, 2024
April 5, 2024