



Staff Report

To: Council

From: Shawn Binns, Chief Administrative Officer and
George Vadeboncoeur, Manager, Planning Special Projects

Meeting Date: May 14, 2025

Report No.: DS2025-051

Subject: Update Report on Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study Stage 3
City of Barrie Proposed Boundary Expansion

Type: For Information Only

Motion No.:

Recommendation

1. That report DS2025-051 Update Report on Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study Stage 3, City of Barrie Proposed Boundary Expansion be received.

Background

On November 8, 2023, Mayor Nuttall, of the City of Barrie, made a [presentation](#) to the Township of Oro-Medonte proposing a boundary adjustment to address Barrie's need for additional employment lands.

These lands encompass approximately 772 hectares (1,907.65 acres) of active farmland and environmentally sensitive features.

In June 2024, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing assigned the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator to work with the City of Barrie, the Townships' of Oro-Medonte and Springwater, and the County of Simcoe, *"to assist the municipalities in developing a mutually acceptable approach to enable growth in the area and achieve local and Provincial priorities such as the creation of housing and opportunities for employment in the boundaries between Barrie/Springwater and Barrie/Oro-Medonte."*

The parties suggested, and it was agreed that as a first step, the municipalities should determine if there is a need for additional employment and/or residential land within and around the City of Barrie, the Township of Oro-Medonte, and the Township of Springwater.

In September 2024, Hemson Consulting (Hemson) was engaged to undertake a “*Joint Lands Needs Analysis and Study*” (Study) pertaining to the study area within the Townships of Springwater and Oro-Medonte to 2051. Stages 1 and 2 of the Study included a review of existing background studies, Official Plans, the City of Barrie’s existing land supply, and a review of the additional land needs of participating municipalities arising from growth forecasted to 2051.

The findings from Stages 1 and 2 of the Study were [presented](#) to Council and the public on December 11, 2024.

Hemson Proposed Stage 3 Work Plan

On December 17, 2024, Hemson circulated a Preliminary Scope of Work for Stage 3 of the study along with a budget estimate. The draft scope had the following elements:

Phase 1 – finalize Stage 3 scope of work, establish up to three growth scenarios for testing within the Study Area and develop municipal and sub-municipal growth forecasts for each scenario.

Phase 2 – conduct a technical analysis of each scenario, including assessments of engineering service costs and mapping of environmentally constrained areas. Findings will be summarized in detailed memoranda.

Phase 3 – prepare and deliver a comprehensive report of findings and recommendations.

Phase 4 – facilitate consultation sessions with the participating municipalities (staff and Council) as well as external stakeholders, including indigenous groups, public agencies, and the general public.

Proposed fee for all phases is \$582,780.

Staff reviewed the proposed Stage 3 work plan and submitted [Report DS2025-005](#) to Council on January 22, 2025 with the following recommendations:

That Stage 3 of the Land Needs Analysis and Study be scoped to only include a single phase to determine the following before considering further phases:

- a. *Develop revised long-term forecasts for population, households, housing by type, employment and employment by type for the participating municipalities to 2051, as well as detailed forecasts for any annexation lands under consideration including:*

- b. *Verify amount of currently designated developable employment lands available in the City of Barrie is sufficient to 2051 under the new definition of employment lands under the new PPS, 2024.*
- c. *Determine if the population targets in Barrie's Official Plan are reasonable given the land available within the City of Barrie boundary and the density provisions in place (Barrie planned density versus typical suburban density) using Ministry of Finance population projections (PPS, 2024 requirement).*
- d. *Calculate developable land available in Barrie versus total land needs (40% non-development factor)*
- e. *Confirm if Hemson included the City of Barrie assertion that 40% of any annexed land is non-development land in its calculations of Community Area Land needs or is it in addition to the land area specified.*
- f. *Oro-Medonte to pay its share of costs based on the original apportionment – 20%.*

February 26, 2025 Council Motion

At its February 26, 2025 meeting Council passed a [Motion](#) outlining its concerns with the Facilitation process and proposed that consideration be given to a more streamlined process. On March 4, 2025, the motion was forwarded to the participating municipalities and the Provincial Facilitator for consideration.

Revised Scope of Work for Stage 3 of the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study

On February 27, 2025, the Facilitator circulated a revised Scope of Work for Stage 3 of the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study with the following elements:

1. Phase 1 will explore viable options for accommodating growth within the study area, broadly encompassing the boundary of Barrie/Springwater and Barrie/Oro-Medonte and within the City of Barrie.
2. Phase 2 will involve a robust technical and planning analysis of several factors, including:
 - the suitability of different land locations and configurations for development;
 - the delineation of developable and undevelopable lands;
 - the serviceability of lands (e.g. municipal water and wastewater, as well as transportation, electricity, and natural gas);
 - local and regional real estate market conditions
 - review of population projections based on available land and projected densities

Hemson Consulting will continue as the lead consultant for Stage 3 and will be assisted by consultants RV Anderson (Servicing components) and North-South Environmental (natural heritage components).

The City of Barrie has agreed to be the contracting party and pay the full estimated cost of Stage 3 at \$200,000. The consultant team will continue to report and receive direction from the Provincial Facilitator.

Phase of 1 includes Hemson working with the four participating municipalities on establishing up to three growth scenarios based on population projections, projected densities and available developable land for testing against engineering service needs. Based on feedback received, a preferred growth option will be developed and presented.

Phase 2 will finalize the servicing requirements, develop probable costs for recommended infrastructure upgrades, and map environmentally constrained areas for the preferred option.

The consultant team estimates Stage 3 will take at least six (6) months to complete and has made provision for extensive consultation with all municipalities so that municipal staff fully understand the data, assumptions, and methodologies used.

It is anticipated that the following meetings will be required:

Up to ten (10) meetings of the consulting team (lead consultant and engineers) and the participating municipalities. Discussions will include challenges, opportunities, and considerations for the proposed growth scenarios, along with input on specific concerns or priorities. The Facilitator is proposing that these meetings be structured to include two meetings with each of the four municipalities (8 meetings in total) and at least two larger bi-lateral group meetings.

Two plenary workshop meetings are also being proposed to provide the main preliminary findings of the servicing review in terms of existing and planned system capacities, requirements in terms of water demand, wastewater flows, power, stormwater retention/detention, and propose the required infrastructure expansions and upgrades for the proposed growth scenarios.

The Facilitator convened a kick-off meeting with the Oro-Medonte team, Hemson and the other consultants on April 24, 2025, where the workplan was discussed as well as next steps.

Financial/Legal Implications/Risk Management

There is no external cost to the Township as the City of Barrie is covering the cost of this stage of the Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study.

The Oro-Medonte Team consists of Mayor Greenlaw, Deputy Mayor Lavoie, CAO Shawn Binns, Director, Development Services Brent Spagnol, and Manager, Planning Special Projects George Vadeboncoeur.

Corporate Strategic Priorities

- Financial Sustainability
- Well Planned Development
- Employment Lands
- Community Engagement and Trust

Conclusion

The Scope of Work for Stage 3 of the *Joint Lands Needs Assessment and Study* builds on the findings from Stages 1 and 2 by analyzing population and growth forecasts, servicing capacity of existing infrastructure, and environmental constraints leading to the preparation of up to three options for accommodating growth in the study area.

The Township provided comments on the Stage 3 draft Scope of Work in late January 2025 and commented on the facilitation process through a direct Motion of Council in late February. The final version of the Scope of Work for Stage 3 was released by the office of the Provincial Land Development Facilitator on February 27, 2025.

The Facilitator organized a virtual kick-off meeting with the consultants and the Oro-Medonte Team on April 24, 2025. The team reinforced the importance of a thorough analysis of potential growth scenarios within the planning period to 2051, including the potential for growth within the City of Barrie.

Several meetings are planned, both with individual municipalities and with the larger group so that each party understands how the consultants arrived at their conclusions. As per the Facilitation Process Terms of Reference, discussions will be confidential, however staff will continue to provide update reports on the general progress being made.

Respectfully submitted,

George Vadeboncoeur,
Manager, Planning Special Projects

May 5, 2025

Shawn Binns
Chief Administrative Officer

May 7, 2025