



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From: Debbie Vandenakker

Position: Planner

Title / Subject: Alternative Land Needs Scenario Report for Envision Durham

Date of Report: April 13, 2022

Date of Meeting: April 19, 2022

Report No: 2022-PCA-006

1.0 Issue / Origin

Durham Region is undertaking a Growth Management Study (GMS) as part of Envision Durham, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of the Regional Official Plan (ROP). This is a two-phase study to assess how to accommodate the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe forecast growth to 2051 of 1,300,000 people and 460,000 jobs in the Region of Durham. The first phase of the GMS is the preparation of a Land Needs Assessment (LNA) to quantify the amount of Settlement Area Boundary Expansion that will be required to accommodate future population and employment growth to the year 2051.

Through the fall 2021, the Envision Durham process sought input and comments on the Technical Reports from stakeholders and the public. Correspondence from BILD, other development interests, certain area municipalities, and others, questioned whether the proposed housing mix contained in the draft Region Wide Growth Analysis was too heavily weighted towards high density forms of development, and did not adequately represent the market demand for low density housing (i.e. single detached dwellings). Other correspondence, including from individual members of the public, certain area municipal comments, and other organizations indicated that the draft LNA targets were either appropriate, or could be more aggressive to limit settlement area expansions by more heavily prioritizing the protection of farmland, mitigating climate change, and maximizing higher density intensification opportunities.

In response to comments received, Regional Planning staff agreed at the October 5, 2021 Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting to run modelling and assess a range of alternative land need scenarios. This report offers Brock's opinion on which growth scenario is preferred to meet the principles of good planning and protect agricultural and rural resources while accommodating for planned growth.

2.0 Background

A fulsome report was prepared that provides a summary of the land need scenarios, and the resultant analysis and assessment of the scenario modelling outcomes. A link to the report has been provided below and is included attached to this report.

[ALTERNATIVE LAND NEED SCENARIOS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY REPORT - Part of the Region of Durham Growth Management Study: Land Needs Assessment, March 2022](#)

3.0 Analysis

Five Community Area Land Need Scenarios were assessed. The Region's report describes each as follows:

Scenario 1: Emphasis on low-density housing, not meeting the minimum Growth Plan intensification target

This scenario implements the housing unit mix from the Growth Plan background technical report entitled: "Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051", prepared by Hemson Consulting, dated August 26, 2020. This scenario incorporates the highest proportion of low-density housing forms, which will result in the highest amount of additional Community Area land and the lowest intensification rate at 35%, well below the Growth Plan minimum.

Scenario 2: Primarily low-density housing, with increased share of medium and high-density housing

Scenario 2 targets a higher intensification rate than Scenario 1, while maintaining a housing unit mix that is still predominantly oriented towards low and medium-density housing. The resultant intensification rate is 45%, lower than the Growth Plan minimum. The unit mix paired with the lower intensification rate results in the second highest amount of additional Community Area land.

Scenario 3: Shifting the unit mix and adding low density intensification to BUA and SGAs to achieve the minimum Growth Plan intensification target

Scenario 3 aims to meet the Growth Plan minimum intensification target of 50%, while maintaining a high share of low and medium-density housing forms. To accommodate increased levels of low- and

medium-density housing forms in the BUA (to achieve the 50%), intensification within urban structure will limit higher density growth with Regional Centres and along Regional Corridors. Achieving this scenario would prove challenging, because a high number of low-density units would be required within the BUA on sites that may otherwise be appropriate and desirable for more intensive forms of development, and through the redevelopment of larger lots in stable neighbourhoods. Furthermore, this Scenario will still result in a considerable amount of additional Community Area land need.

Scenario 4: Balancing the unit mix - with an emphasis on high and medium-density housing, while achieving the minimum 50% intensification target

Scenario 4 reflects the current pipeline development trend toward high density housing forms in the BUA, while accommodating a sufficient proportion of low- and medium-density forms in response to public and stakeholder comments. The result is a Scenario that achieves the minimum 50% intensification target, supports the growth of SGAs, and offers a market-based choice of housing options that is adjusted to a more balanced mix of built form in the region over the 30-year horizon. A moderate amount of new Community Area land is anticipated.

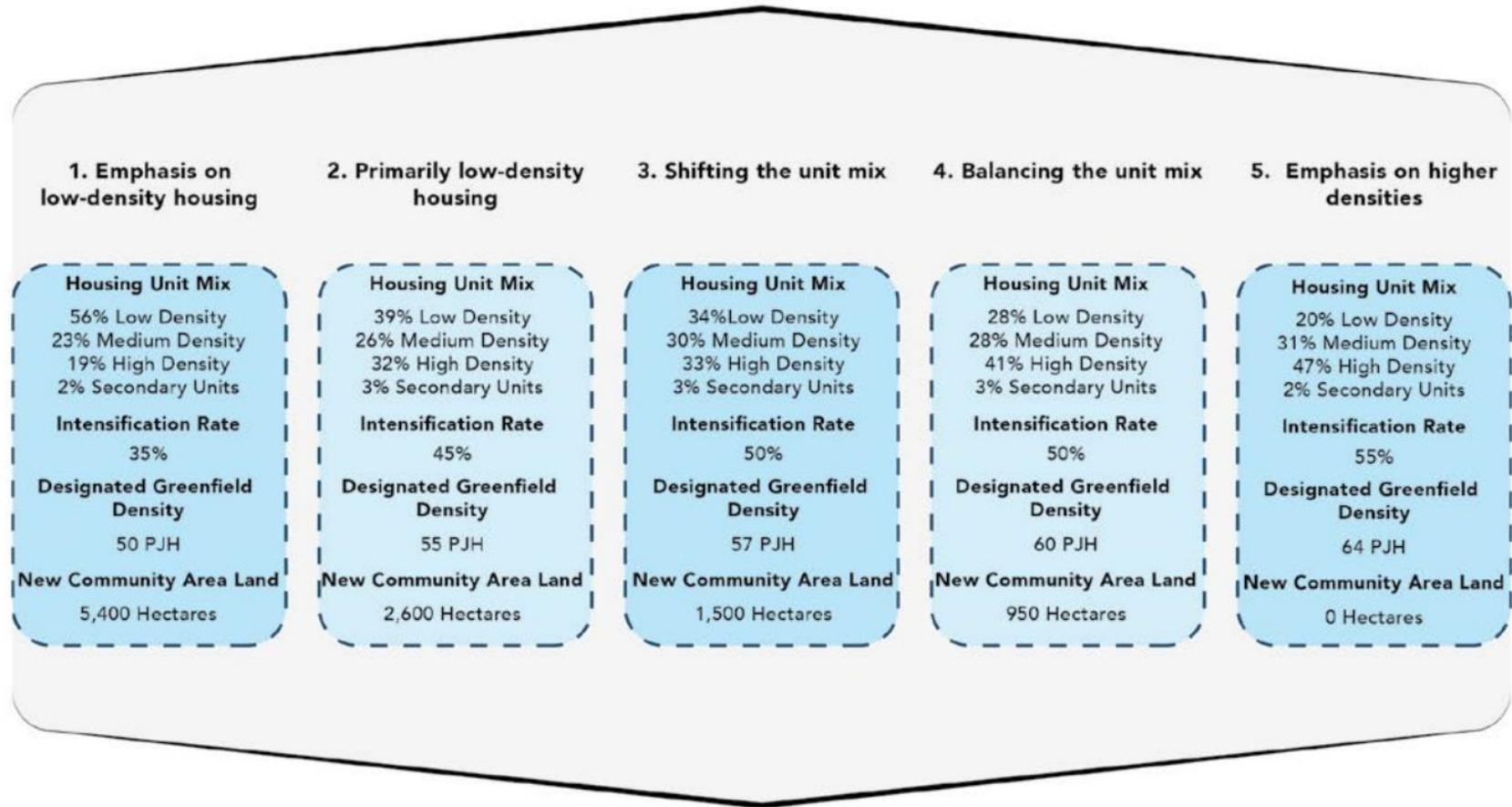
Scenario 5: Emphasis on higher densities and intensification beyond minimum Growth Plan targets

Scenario 5 seeks to achieve an intensification rate of 55%, primarily through medium- and high-density housing forms. The forecast unit mix in the DGA is expected to accommodate the greatest share of high-density housing compared to the previous four scenarios. Based on less overall housing growth forecast in the DGA and a dense housing mix, no additional Community Area Land is required. This represents a “no-urban-expansion” scenario.

Figure 1 illustrates the key evaluation factors within each of the five scenarios considered.

Figure 1: Summary of Five Scenarios

Note: Excerpt from Page 11 of [Alternative Land Need Scenarios Assessment Summary Report March 2022 \(durham.ca\)](#)



An Assessment Framework was developed by considering the key theme areas of Conformity with the Growth Plan, Regional Priorities, Future Forward Planning, and Regional Official Plan and Envision Durham Planning Objectives, all of which inform how growth in Durham should occur over the next 30 years.

A review of existing policies and strategies under each theme was conducted, which resulted in the following principles and questions that were used to measure and compare the scenarios:

Principle 1: Achieving Targets

1. Does the scenario achieve the minimum targets of the Growth Plan, before advancing additional settlement area boundary expansion?

Principle 2: Housing Market Choice

1. Does the scenario provide for the development of a fulsome range of housing types?
2. How does the scenario respond to market demand?

Principle 3: Setting up Strategic Growth Areas for Success

1. Does the scenario support the ability of SGAs, including Urban Growth Centres, MTSAs, Regional Centres, and Regional Corridors, to achieve their planned function as higher density, mixed-use, and transit supportive urban communities?

Principle 4: Protecting Agricultural and Rural Systems, preparing for Climate Change and Achieving Sustainable Development

1. To what extent would the scenario negatively impact existing agricultural and rural areas?
2. Does the scenario provide efficient and sustainable development patterns, including transit-oriented development?
3. Does the scenario respond to the Region's Climate Change Emergency declaration?

Principle 5: Competitive Economic and Employment Conditions

1. To what extent does the scenario capitalize on the Region's economic and sector strengths, including providing for appropriate Employment Area land to ensure Durham remains economically attractive and competitive over the long term?

The details of the Region's analysis are best read in the fulsome report, but the high-level conclusions of the analysis are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Summary Results of Regional Analysis of Scenarios

	Achieves targets / supports principle		Partially supports principle		Does not support principle
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Principles	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
P1: Achieving Targets					
P2: Housing Market Choice					
P3: Strategic Growth Areas					
P4: Ag & Rural Systems, Climate & Sustainability					
P5: Economic and Employment Conditions					

Within the Township of Brock, there is a known housing diversity shortage. We are a predominantly single detached home community. Through our own housing study undertaken as part of our Official Plan Review study, we know that we have a severe shortage of rental units and a dangerous lack of housing diversity for our younger, senior and lower income populations. We also know that the housing market is largely driven towards single-detached homes currently.

The analysis of the five scenarios, evaluated with the five principles, gives two clear possibilities for a rural community based on eliminating the three scenarios that don't support the Principle 4: Protecting Agricultural and Rural Systems, preparing for Climate Change and Achieving Sustainable Development. This prioritization of our rural lands allows us to eliminate scenarios 1 through 3 leaving Scenarios 4 and 5. From this position, and given our knowledge of our housing diversity lack, it is clear that Scenario 4 meets that the housing market choice principle and can therefore most closely meet the needs of the Township of Brock.

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

This analysis and eventual Growth Management Study recommendation and implementation into the Regional Official Plan will impact several Township policies moving forward. Our Official Plan will need to conform to the growth policies, our infrastructure and recreational planning will rely on these projections and our climate change and other environmental protection policies will use the growth scenarios as foundational information for creating future protection and restoration plans.

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

N/A

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

This recommendation will provide the opportunity for positive climate change actions by encouraging intensification. This option also limits the additional lands that will be required to support housing, by default leaving more lands unbuilt.

7.0 Communications

N/A

8.0 Conclusion

The Township of Brock will be best served by the Region of Durham moving forward with Scenario 4: Balancing the unit mix - with an emphasis on high and medium-density housing, while achieving the minimum 50% intensification target.

9.0 Recommendation

That Council approve report 2022-PCA-006 and direct staff to provide the report to Brad Anderson, Principal Planner in the Planning and Economic Development Department of the Region of Durham for consideration in the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review process / Envision Durham.