

# GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY DIRECTION REPORT

## Part One: Intensification First



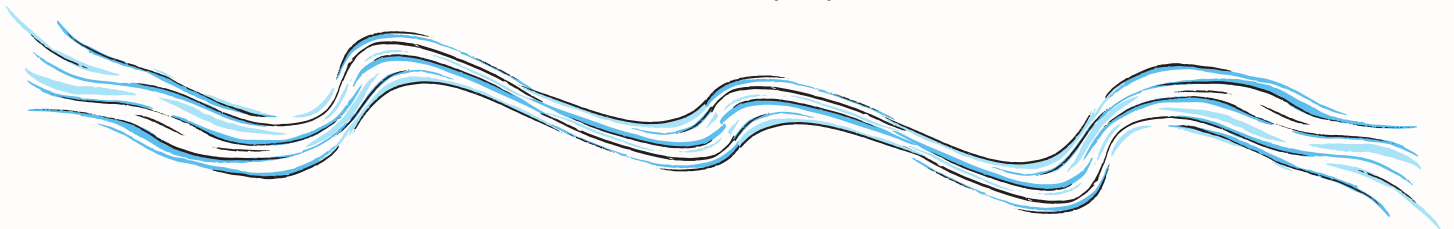
Office of Community Planning  
Growth Services  
**June 2025**



## Water & Land Acknowledgement



*Bradford West Gwillimbury is located within the lands covered by Treaty 18, the Lake Simcoe–Nottawasaga Treaty of 1818. As visitors on this land, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury acknowledges that the land on which we gather today is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek Nation, which includes Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nation, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. We recognize that the Huron-Wendat, Chippewa and Haudenosaunee Nations have walked on this territory over time. In times of great change, we recognize more than ever the importance of honouring Indigenous history and culture and are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, respect and good health with all First Nation, Métis and Inuit people.*





# Executive Summary

This report represents the first phase of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's Growth Management Exercise, aimed at bringing the Town's Official Plan into conformity with recent Provincial and County policy directions and planning for growth to 2051. Guided by the Planning Act, the Provincial Planning Statement, and Simcoe County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (SCOPA No. 7), the Town is planning to accommodate a forecasted population of 83,470 and a total of 30,900 jobs by 2051—an increase of approximately 39,000 residents and 19,000 jobs from 2021 levels.

Part One of the Exercise, titled "*Intensification First*," assesses how much of this growth can be accommodated within the existing Urban Settlement Boundary. This phase is focused on a series of Official Plan Amendments centered around four key components:

1. Boundary delineation and policies for the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) around the Bradford GO Station
2. Residential intensification within the Town's delineated built-up area
3. Employment area policies including long-term land needs and protection policies; and,
4. Criteria for employment land conversions.

This Policy Direction Report summarizes the key findings of background studies and outlines evidence-based policy directions to guide the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's Official Plan to the year 2051, in conformity with applicable Provincial and County policies.

Technical analyses by WSP Inc. and Watson & Associates confirm that residential intensification—particularly within Built-Up Areas and the Bradford GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)—will be essential to accommodate the Town's projected growth. The MTSA, delineated and categorized into four sub-areas which cumulatively span an area of approximately 62 hectares, is expected to absorb the largest share of urban growth, with a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs per hectare.

The Employment Area Strategy Report by Watson & Associates found that the Town is well positioned to support a broad range of employment uses, with the Highway 400 Employment Lands offering strong potential for large-scale development and regional competitiveness. These lands, including the Reserve Lands, are expected to be fully required by 2051, with the Reserve Lands anticipated to be needed by 2041.

To ensure market readiness and sufficient supply, the report recommends that servicing should begin in advance of 2041. The lands are projected to absorb 10 hectares annually, with the non-reserve portion providing 15–18 years of supply. Additional Employment Areas within the Bradford Settlement Area are anticipated to accommodate approximately 38% of employment demand, further supported by enhanced connectivity through the future Bradford Bypass.



Overall, the employment reports findings indicate that the Town is forecast to accommodate nearly 9,000 new employees, requiring 444 net hectares of Employment Area land by 2051—averaging 16 hectares of annual absorption. While current land supply is sufficient to meet this forecast, the surplus beyond 2051 is limited. As such, any reductions in designated Employment Lands or underperformance in density or absorption could compromise long-term growth capacity. Using these findings a series of draft employment conversion criteria have been developed as part of the draft Official Plan Amendments.

The proposed policy directions comprise targeted Official Plan Amendments focused on residential intensification, MTSA planning, employment land protection, and employment land conversion criteria. These directions are informed by relevant legislation, upper-tier policy frameworks, comprehensive technical analysis prepared by the consulting team, and public input collected through visioning workshops conducted as part of Part 1 of the work plan, as outlined in detail throughout this report. A formal public consultation process will be undertaken following the release of the draft amendments, culminating in Council's consideration and potential adoption in fall 2025.





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## Section 1.0: Introduction

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On June 25, 2024, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) formally launched its Growth Management Exercise through a Special Meeting of Council, initiating a review and update of the Town's Official Plan in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. The Growth Management Exercise is intended to bring the Official Plan into conformity with the *Planning Act*, the *Provincial Planning Statement*, applicable provincial plans, and the County of Simcoe Official Plan. It also supports the Town's efforts to plan for forecasted population, housing, and employment growth to the year 2051 by establishing policies that promote complete communities, efficient land use, and long-term infrastructure and environmental sustainability.

This multi-phase initiative is structured in two parts. Part 1 focuses on a series of Official Plan Amendments within the existing settlement boundary, including residential intensification policies, the delineation and policy framework for the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) around the Bradford GO Station, employment area designations and policies, and criteria for employment land conversion. Part 2 will assess the settlement area expansions. This report is intended to focus on the findings of part 1 only.

Since initiation, substantial progress has been made on Part 1, including technical background studies, policy analysis, and community engagement. This report summarizes the findings to date and introduces the proposed policy directions that have informed the preparation of the Part 1 Official Plan Amendments. These directions are grounded in evidence and community input and are intended to serve as a framework for Council and the public to review.





## Section 2.0: Land Use Planning Framework

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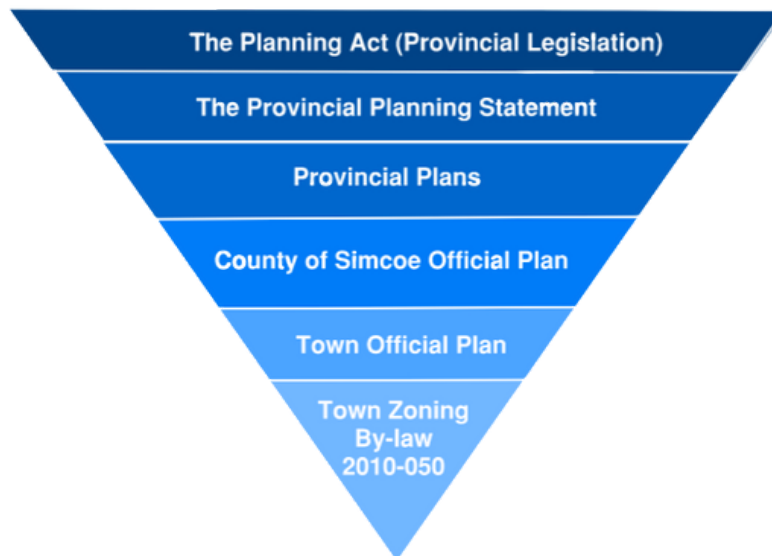
This section will discuss the legislative, regulatory and policy framework guiding the Town's Growth Management Exercise.

- 2.1 - Introduction to Ontario's Land Use Framework
- 2.2 - Planning Act
- 2.3 - Provincial Planning Statement
- 2.4 - Greenbelt Plan
- 2.5 - Lake Simcoe Protection Plan
- 2.6 - Lake Simcoe Georgian Bay Protection Plan
- 2.7 - County of Simcoe Official Plan
- 2.8 - Town of Bradford Official Plan



## Section 2.1- Introduction to Ontario's Land Use Framework

Land use planning in Ontario is governed by a legal framework established by the provincial government, which has constitutional authority over property and land use matters. Under this authority, Ontario enacted the *Planning Act*, which outlines the land use planning system and sets the guiding principles for development throughout the province. The *Planning Act* also provides the basis for issuing provincial policy statements and plans, and requires that municipal planning decisions be consistent with these statements and conform to applicable provincial plans. In addition, the *Planning Act* defines the structure for planning for single-tier and two-tier planning authorities. This structure reflects a hierarchical planning system, where local planning documents, such as municipal Official Plans, must align with broader provincial and regional policy directions, as illustrated below within the context of the Town:



As illustrated in the figure above, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) is a lower-tier municipality within the County of Simcoe. As such, all local planning documents must conform not only to provincial legislation, including the *Planning Act*, the *Provincial Planning Statement*, and applicable provincial plans, but also to the County of Simcoe Official Plan. The County serves as the upper-tier planning authority and is the final approval authority for any amendments or updates to the Town's Official Plan.

This hierarchical policy framework is one of the key drivers for the Growth Management Exercise currently underway. Through this process, the Town is reviewing and updating its Official Plan to ensure alignment with recent changes to provincial legislation and policy, as well as with the County's Official Plan. BWG's current Official Plan only plans for growth to the year 2031. However, recent provincial requirements now mandate that Official Plans plan for growth beyond that horizon including up to 2051. Updating the Official Plan is therefore essential to ensure legislative conformity and to position the Town to accommodate future population and employment growth in a manner that supports efficient land use, infrastructure planning, and community well-being. The following sections provide an overview of the legislative and policy frameworks guiding this process, including recent updates at the provincial, regional, and local levels.





## Section 2.2 - Planning Act, 1990

The *Planning Act* provides the land use planning framework for the entirety of the province of Ontario. The *Planning Act* (the Act) outlines a range of provincial interests that municipalities must consider when making land use decisions. These include protecting public health and safety, preserving natural and agricultural resources, promoting economic development and housing supply, coordinating infrastructure and public services, and safeguarding ecological systems.



The Act requires all municipalities in the province to prepare an Official Plan (OP) that applies land use policies to the entirety of their planning jurisdiction. In the case of lower-tier municipalities, such as the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG), the OP must be adopted by Council and submitted to the upper-tier authority (County of Simcoe) for final approval. Official Plans must conform to the *Planning Act*, be consistent with the *Provincial Planning Statement*, conform to applicable provincial plans, and align with upper tier Official Plans.



Image sourced from Ontario GeoHub - "Municipal Boundary - Upper Tier and District" at <https://geohub.lio.gov.on.ca/datasets/lio::municipal-boundary-upper-tier-and-district/about>

The *Planning Act* also requires municipalities to review and update their Official Plans at prescribed time intervals to ensure ongoing alignment with provincial policy and evolving community needs. This legislative requirement provides the foundation for the Growth Management Exercise currently underway in BWG, ensuring that the Official Plan conforms to updated statutory and policy directions. Further details on these legislative and policy requirements are provided in the sections that follow.

The following section builds on the legislative framework established by the *Planning Act* by introducing the *Provincial Planning Statement*, which provides further policy direction to support its implementation. The *Provincial Planning Statement* outlines comprehensive land use planning policies intended to guide municipal decision-making and ensure consistency with provincial interests across Ontario. A summary of its purpose, structure, and key policy areas is provided below.

## Section 2.3 - Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The *Provincial Planning Statement* (PPS) establishes the Province's policy direction on land use planning matters of provincial interest. Pursuant to Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is authorized to issue policy statements on matters related to provincial interests and municipal decisions affecting land use planning must be consistent with the PPS.



The *Provincial Planning Statement* (PPS) provides a consistent policy framework that promotes the efficient use of land and resources, supports the development of healthy, liveable, and complete communities, protects the environment and public health and safety, and facilitates economic growth. Municipal planning decisions must be consistent with the PPS, ensuring that local planning documents and development approvals align with provincial objectives. The PPS is intended to guide growth and development across Ontario while recognizing the diversity of communities and the need for local decision-making within the broader provincial framework.

Prior to October 20, 2024, the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020* (PPS 2020) and *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020* (the Growth Plan) were the primary provincial policy statement and plan guiding how growth occurred across southern Ontario. Both documents were revoked in the fall of 2024 and replaced by the *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024* (PPS), which consolidates key policies from the PPS 2020 and the Growth Plan into a single, integrated and shorter policy framework. The new PPS is intended to simplify and align provincial land use policy while continuing to support the Province's objectives for managing growth, promoting housing supply, and protecting resources.





Notable policies impacting the Town's Official Plan review and Growth Management Exercise, as incorporated in the new *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024* (PPS), are included below:

## 1. Growth Forecasting

The new *Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)* eliminates the prescribed population and employment forecasts and minimum intensification targets for Delineated Built-Up Areas previously required under the Growth Plan, 2020. These targets had directed growth toward existing built-up areas to promote efficient infrastructure use and minimize urban sprawl.

While the PPS removes these prescribed targets, it continues to require municipalities to plan for growth using forecasts issued by the Ministry of Finance. Municipalities may also rely on previously issued provincial forecasts, such as those from the Growth Plan, for planning purposes. Population and employment forecasting therefore remains a core component of municipal planning, with flexibility regarding the choice of forecasts.

Through Official Plan updates, municipalities must ensure sufficient land is available to accommodate a range and mix of land uses over a planning horizon of at least 20 years and not more than 30 years. Municipalities are also required to:

- Maintain a minimum 15-year supply of designated and available residential land; and
- Maintain a minimum three-year supply of residential units on zoned and serviced lands, including draft-approved and registered plans.

The PPS continues to require municipalities to direct the majority of growth to settlement areas through intensification and redevelopment, supported by the establishment of minimum intensification targets to promote the development of complete communities. The official plan review and growth management exercise currently underway will incorporate policies to ensure consistency with the aforementioned requirements.

## 2. Major Transit Station Area

The PPS retains the requirement for municipalities to delineate Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) through an Official Plan amendment under Section 26 of the Planning Act. MTSAs must generally encompass an area within a 500- to 800-metre radius of a transit station.



*Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives*

For commuter rail stations, including the Bradford GO Station, the PPS establishes a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare within the delineated MTSA. Municipalities are also required to promote higher-density built forms and facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized sites, such as surface parking lots, in support of achieving transit-oriented development objectives. As will be covered in greater detail in subsequent sections of this report, the Town has incorporated these requirements for the MTSA that the Town is in the process of delineating as part of Growth Management Exercise



### 3. Employment Lands

The PPS introduces significant changes to employment land policies. These include a narrower definition of “area of employment,” that conforms with the revised definition in the Planning Act and which provides greater flexibility for employment area conversions, and the removal of previous restrictions on establishing employment areas within rural lands. Under the PPS, “areas of employment” are now more specifically limited to traditional industrial-type uses such as manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics, and generally exclude major retail, institutional, and other non-industrial uses.



*Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives*

The PPS also provides municipalities with broader authority to consider employment land conversions outside of a municipal comprehensive review, subject to certain criteria. The newly introduced revisions and set of criteria for employment designated lands are incorporated as part of the policy review work underway in part 1 of the Town’s Growth Management Exercise, particularly in relation to the Town’s Highway 400 Employment Lands.

### 4. Agricultural Areas

While many of the agricultural policies incorporated in the PPS remain consistent with those found in the PPS, 2020, there are notable revisions that will require updates to the Town’s agricultural policies to ensure consistency with the new PPS. Of particular note, the PPS now permits up to two additional dwelling units (ADUs) accessory to a primary residential dwelling on a lot located within a prime agricultural area, subject to specific criteria.



*Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives*

These include maintaining the principal use of the property for agricultural purposes, ensuring that the ADUs are located within the existing residential cluster or established farm area, minimizing impacts on agricultural operations and land, utilizing existing infrastructure where possible, and ensuring compliance with minimum distance separation requirements. The PPS also introduces a new policy encouraging planning authorities to support local food production, facilitate near-urban and urban agriculture, and foster a robust agri-food network. These policy changes reinforce the importance of preserving agricultural viability while allowing for modest residential diversification, and will need to be carefully reflected in the Town’s updated Official Plan.



## 5. Settlement Area Expansion

The PPS removes the previous requirement for a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) as the sole mechanism for expanding settlement area boundaries within prescribed timeframes. Under the new framework, settlement area expansions may now occur at any time, provided specific policy criteria are met. These criteria include demonstrating the need for additional land to support a mix of land uses, confirming the availability or planned provision of infrastructure and public service facilities, avoiding or minimizing impacts on prime agricultural lands and the broader agricultural system, and ensuring the logical, phased progression of urban development.



*Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives*

Additional considerations include the avoidance of specialty crop areas, compliance with minimum distance separation requirements, and the evaluation of alternative locations where agricultural impacts can be minimized. The policies will be of crucial importance as the Town commences work in part 2 of the Growth Management Exercise.

## 6. Infrastructure

The new PPS places significant emphasis on aligning infrastructure and servicing with land use planning. In accordance with provincial direction, growth must be coordinated with the sequencing and availability of infrastructure and public service facilities. This alignment is particularly critical when considering settlement area expansions, which are subject to policies requiring the demonstration of sufficient servicing capacity. Although the new PPS introduces some modifications, the core principles remain consistent with those set out in the former Growth Plan and PPS, 2020.



The Town's Growth Management Exercise has incorporated infrastructure capacity and servicing considerations into its work plan, with the Town's Master Servicing Plan, led by the Infrastructure Department, being undertaken in conjunction with and in alignment with the Growth Management Exercise.



*Both Images sourced from Town of BWG Archives*





The *Provincial Planning Statement, 2024* (PPS) was introduced and enacted in October 2024, following the initiation of the Town's Growth Management Exercise in June 2024. While greater detail on the Town's proposed work plan is provided in Section 3 of this report, it is important to note that the new PPS carries forward many of the core principles and objectives from the now-revoked PPS, 2020 and Growth Plan. As a result, while Staff remain vigilant for any further changes that may need to be incorporated into the Growth Management Exercise to ensure consistency with the new PPS, the Council-endorsed work plan has continued to serve as an effective framework for guiding this project.

This approach was reaffirmed by Town Council in March 2024, when, despite ongoing uncertainty regarding provincial amendments to the PPS and the Growth Plan, Council directed Staff to proceed with the project based on the previously established work plan. This direction was informed by the alignment between the draft provincial policies at the time and the Town's proposed approach, as well as the limited time remaining before the current Official Plan's 2031 planning horizon is reached.

While SCOPA No. 7 remains one of the primary documents guiding the Town's Growth Management Exercise, it forms part of a broader provincial policy framework for land use planning across Ontario. In addition to the PPS, other provincial and regional plans apply to specific geographic areas.

In Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG), plans such as the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Lake Simcoe Protection Plan* (LSPP), and the *South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Plan* (SGBLSSPP) impose additional land use and environmental protection policies that must be considered when developing policy and making planning decisions. These additional plans must be read in conjunction with the PPS to ensure consistency with applicable provincial and regional policy objectives. The following section provides an overview of the Greenbelt Plan, the LSPP, and the SGBLSSPP, and their relevance to the Town's Growth Management Exercise.



Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives





## Section 2.4 - Greenbelt Plan, 2017

The Greenbelt Plan derives its authority from the *Greenbelt Act, 2005*. The Plan provides detailed land use policies to protect agricultural lands, natural heritage features, and water resource systems within the Greenbelt Area. Under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, municipal planning decisions must be consistent with policy statements and conform to applicable provincial plans, including the Greenbelt Plan. The Greenbelt Plan builds upon the policy foundation of the PPS by introducing geographically-specific policies that address the unique characteristics and needs of the Greenbelt Area.

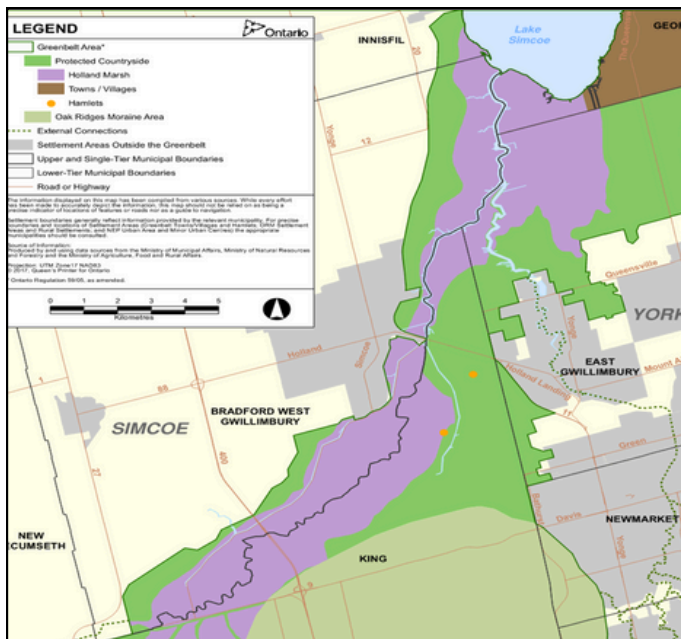


Image sourced from Schedule 3: Holland Marsh from the Greenbelt Plan, 2017

Within the southwestern portion of BWG, a significant area of the Town falls within the Greenbelt Area, and is designated as Protected Countryside under the Plan. The Protected Countryside includes lands within the Holland Marsh, which is recognized as a Specialty Crop Area, a vital agricultural region focused on vegetable production and the broader agri-food sector. The Greenbelt Plan requires the protection of this entire land base while permitting agriculturally supportive infrastructure and value-added uses necessary to sustain agricultural activities and maintain the character and economic value of these vital regions.

The Greenbelt Plan plays a key role in the Town's Growth Management Exercise by guiding growth in a way that protects agricultural lands and natural heritage features. It promotes the development of complete, sustainable communities while ensuring designated Greenbelt areas are preserved in line with provincial objectives for agricultural viability and environmental conservation. Where conflicts arise between the Provincial Planning Statement and the Greenbelt Plan, the Greenbelt Plan prevails unless otherwise specified by legislation.



Image sourced from Town of BWG Archives

## Section 2.5- Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, 2008

The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP) was prepared and approved under the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008*, (LSPA) and came into effect on June 2, 2009. The LSPP applies to the Lake Simcoe watershed, geographically defined as Lake Simcoe and the surrounding areas from which surface water drains into the lake. The General Regulation made under the LSPA delineates the watershed boundaries, a significant portion of which falls within the boundary of the Town as shown below.

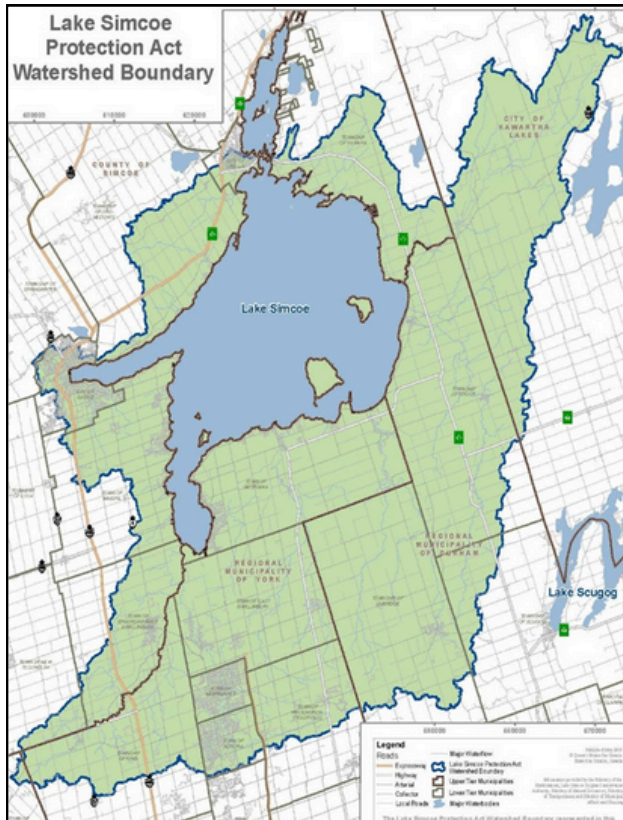


Image sourced from Lake Simcoe Protection Plan at:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/lake-simcoe-protection-plan>

The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP) applies to the Lake Simcoe watershed and sets out objectives for the protection, improvement, and restoration of the watershed's ecological health. The Plan includes targets, indicators, and policies addressing key environmental components such as aquatic life, water quality and quantity, shorelines, natural heritage, invasive species, climate change, recreational activities, and implementation. It also contains policies related to provincially significant wetlands, woodlands, and prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas such as the Holland Marsh. Under Section 1(1) of the *Planning Act*, the LSPP is recognized as a Provincial Plan, requiring that all planning decisions within its jurisdiction conform to its applicable policies. The PPS also provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to natural hazards, water resources, and conservation.

The PPS directs planning authorities to protect, improve, and restore the quality and quantity of water within watersheds, and to mitigate negative environmental impacts. Sections 4.2 and 5.2 of the PPS further require municipalities to collaborate with conservation authorities in conducting watershed planning and identifying hazardous lands, hazardous sites, flooding and erosion hazards, floodways, and other environmentally sensitive features.

Pursuant to Section 21.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) is delegated responsibility for managing risks and conserving natural hazards within the portions of the Town that fall under its jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Town's growth management exercise and planning policies must conform to the LSPP, be read in conjunction with the applicable policies of the PPS, and the Town must work closely with the LSRCA to ensure the protection of natural features, the management of natural hazards, and the integration of watershed-based planning principles.





## Section 2.6 - South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region Plan, 2015

Source water refers to untreated water found in lakes, rivers, and underground aquifers that is used to supply municipal drinking water systems. Source water protection involves proactive measures to prevent the contamination and overuse of these water sources before they enter the drinking water treatment system. The South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region Plan (2024), prepared under the authority of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, is a provincially approved document that provides a comprehensive policy framework for protecting existing and future sources of municipal drinking water. The *Clean Water Act* introduced a preventative, watershed-based approach to safeguarding Ontario's drinking water resources at the source, prior to treatment and distribution.

Ontario Regulation 284/07, made under the *Clean Water Act*, defines the boundaries of source protection areas to align with watershed boundaries. The South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region encompasses over 10,000 square kilometres and includes four major watersheds: Lake Simcoe, Nottawasaga Valley, Black-Severn, and Severn Sound. The Town of BWG is situated within both the Lake Simcoe and Nottawasaga Valley watersheds. As such, collaboration with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority is essential to ensure the integration of source protection policies into municipal planning processes.

Under the *Clean Water Act*, municipalities are required to ensure that land use planning decisions—such as Official Plan policies and zoning by-laws—conform with

the significant threat policies outlined in the Source Protection Plan. These policies apply to designated vulnerable areas, including Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs) and Intake Protection Zones (IPZs), where certain land uses may pose risks to the quality or quantity of municipal drinking water.



Image sourced from Figure 3 (page 21) of South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region Plan.

The *Planning Act* further supports this integration by identifying the protection of public health and safety and the conservation of natural resources as matters of provincial interest. Municipalities must also ensure that their Official Plans are consistent with the PPS, which reinforces the requirement to incorporate source protection objectives into local land use planning frameworks.

In the context of the Town's Growth Management Exercise, the Source Protection Plan represents a key environmental and policy constraint. As the Town plans for population and employment growth to 2051, it must ensure that development is directed and managed in a way that protects vulnerable drinking water sources. Locally mapped WHPAs, including those surrounding municipal well systems within BWG, must be carefully considered when identifying areas for intensification or expansion. This includes evaluating potential risks associated with future development and applying appropriate risk management measures where necessary.

Integrating source protection policies into the Official Plan is essential to ensuring long-term public health, environmental sustainability, and compliance with both provincial legislation and regional watershed-based planning objectives.

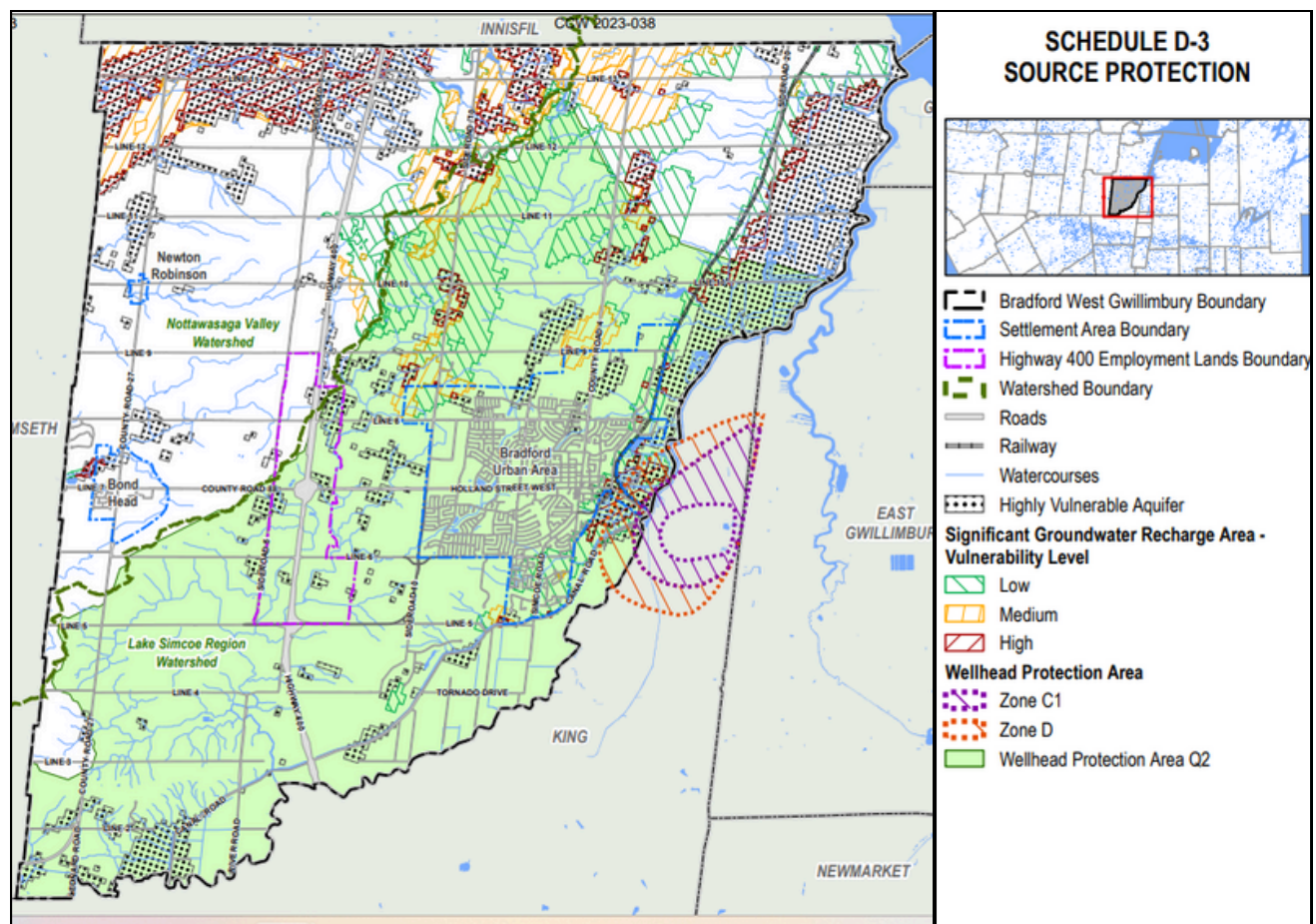
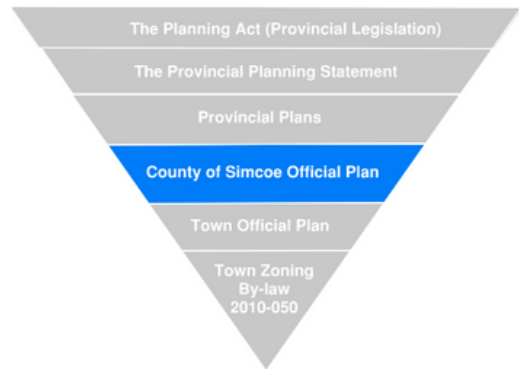


Image sourced from Town of BWG Official Plan Schedule D-3



## Section 2.7 - County of Simcoe Official Plan

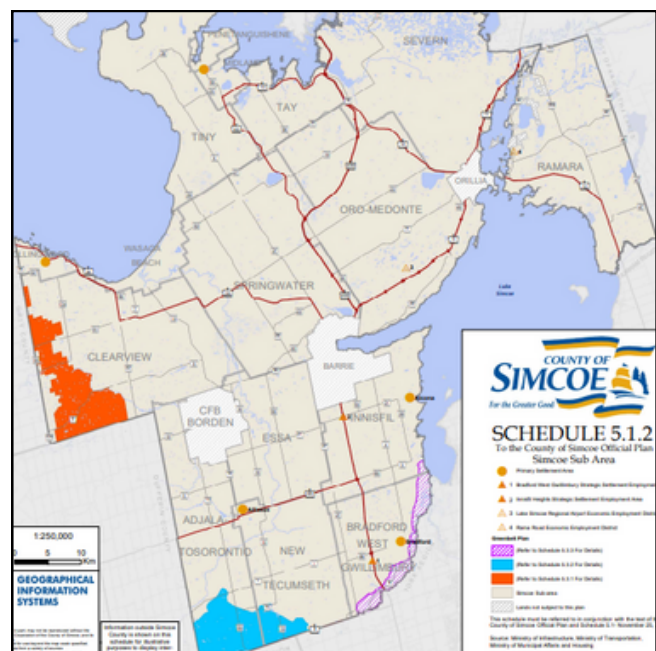
Within the time-frame of the Town's Official Plan Review, and following its adoption in early 2021, two key provincial policy documents—the now-revoked *Provincial Policy Statement, 2020* and *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020* (the Growth Plan)—underwent a number of amendments, one of which included the extension of the planning horizon for land use and growth management from 2031 to 2051. These amendments also introduced updated schedules with revised population and employment forecasts for single and upper-tier municipalities reflecting the extended planning timeframe.



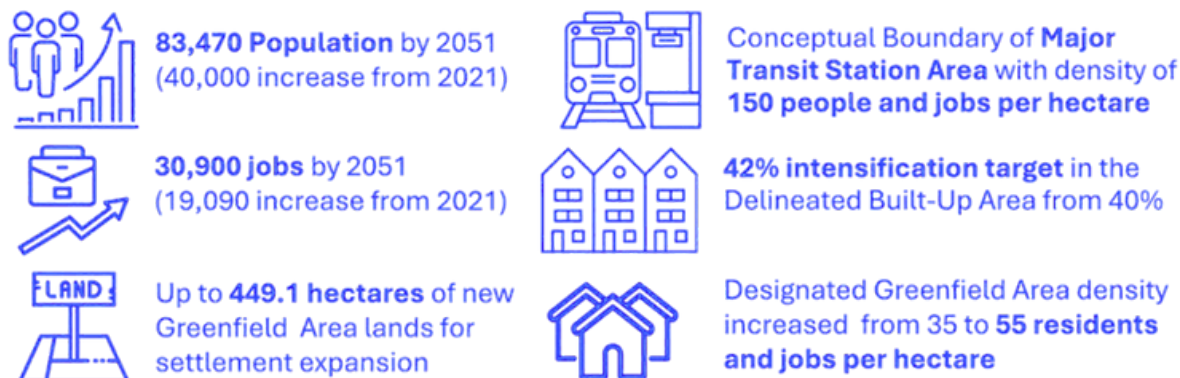
In response to these provincial policy changes, the County of Simcoe, as the upper-tier planning authority, was required to initiate a multi-phased Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to bring its Official Plan into conformity with the updated provincial framework. Phase 1 of the County MCR was initiated in April of 2020 and included review and allocation of the population and employment growth forecasts it received through the Growth Plan among its 16 lower-tier municipalities, which includes the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG). Completion of phase 1 of the MCR culminated in the the Simcoe County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (SCOPA No. 7) which was adopted by County Council in August of 2022 and sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval at the same time.

SCOPA No. 7 established population and employment allocations for each of the County's lower-tier municipalities as well as intensification targets applicable to each of their built up areas. The part 1 MCR also assessed the maximum amount of land required to accommodate future growth through potential settlement area expansions.

Notable policies in SCOPA No. 7 related to the Town of BWG include the identification of the Bradford Urban Area as a Primary Settlement Area and the allocation of an additional approximately 40,000 people (for a total population of 84,370) and 19,000 jobs (for a total of 30,900 jobs).

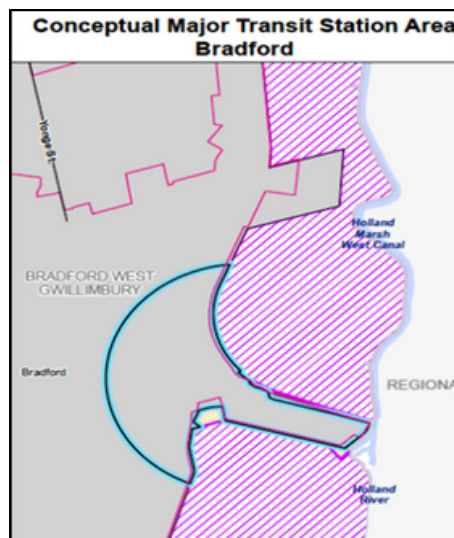


Furthermore, SCOPA No. 7 increased BWG’s intensification target within the Delineated Built-Up Area to 42% from 40%, raised the Designated Greenfield Area density target from 35 to 55 residents and jobs per hectare, and provided a conceptual boundary for the Town’s Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) around the Bradford GO Station, for which the Town is required to conduct further comprehensive planning for its development.



In addition to the SCOPA No. 7 growth forecasts, the County recognized ongoing demand for employment lands in the Town—particularly along Highway 400—and acknowledged that these lands, including the Highway 400 Reserve Lands, will be required to accommodate part of the County’s long-term employment growth to 2051.

SCOPA No. 7 also required the preparation of phasing plans that outline the logical progression of growth and the scheduling and financing of supporting infrastructure. Additionally, sub-watershed plans or their equivalent became required for planning new designated greenfield areas to ensure consideration of natural heritage and water resource systems (SCOPA No. 7, Part A).



Although SCOPA No. 7 was adopted by County Council in August 2022, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), as the approval authority, has not issued a decision on the amendment as of April 2025. As a result, the amendment is not yet in effect and does not form part of the in-force Simcoe County Official Plan.

Ontario

Environmental Registry of Ontario

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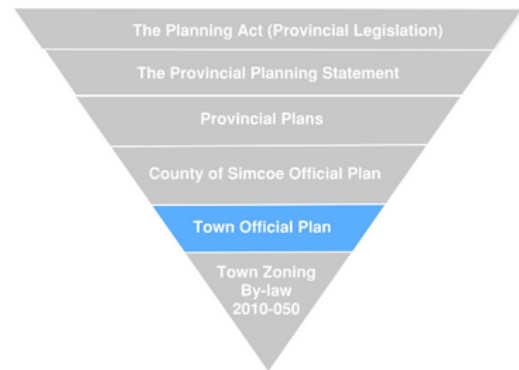
## County of Simcoe

Instrument type: **Approval of a municipality's official plan**

This notice was published to the Environmental Registry on December 5, 2022 for a 60-day public review and comment period. The notice was updated on March 28, 2025 to advise the public that there has been no change to the status of this proposal and that it is still being considered.

## Section 2.8 - Town of Bradford Official Plan, 2023

The Official Plan (OP) is a policy document adopted by Council under the *Planning Act*. It includes goals, objectives, and policies for the Town to manage the impact of the social, economic, and environmental changes as the municipality grows and develops. The Planning Act also identifies matters of provincial interest to be considered in municipal planning instruments and establishes a two-tier planning system between non-single tier municipalities, such as a lower-tier municipalities (such as Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG)) and their upper-tier planning authority (such as the County of Simcoe).

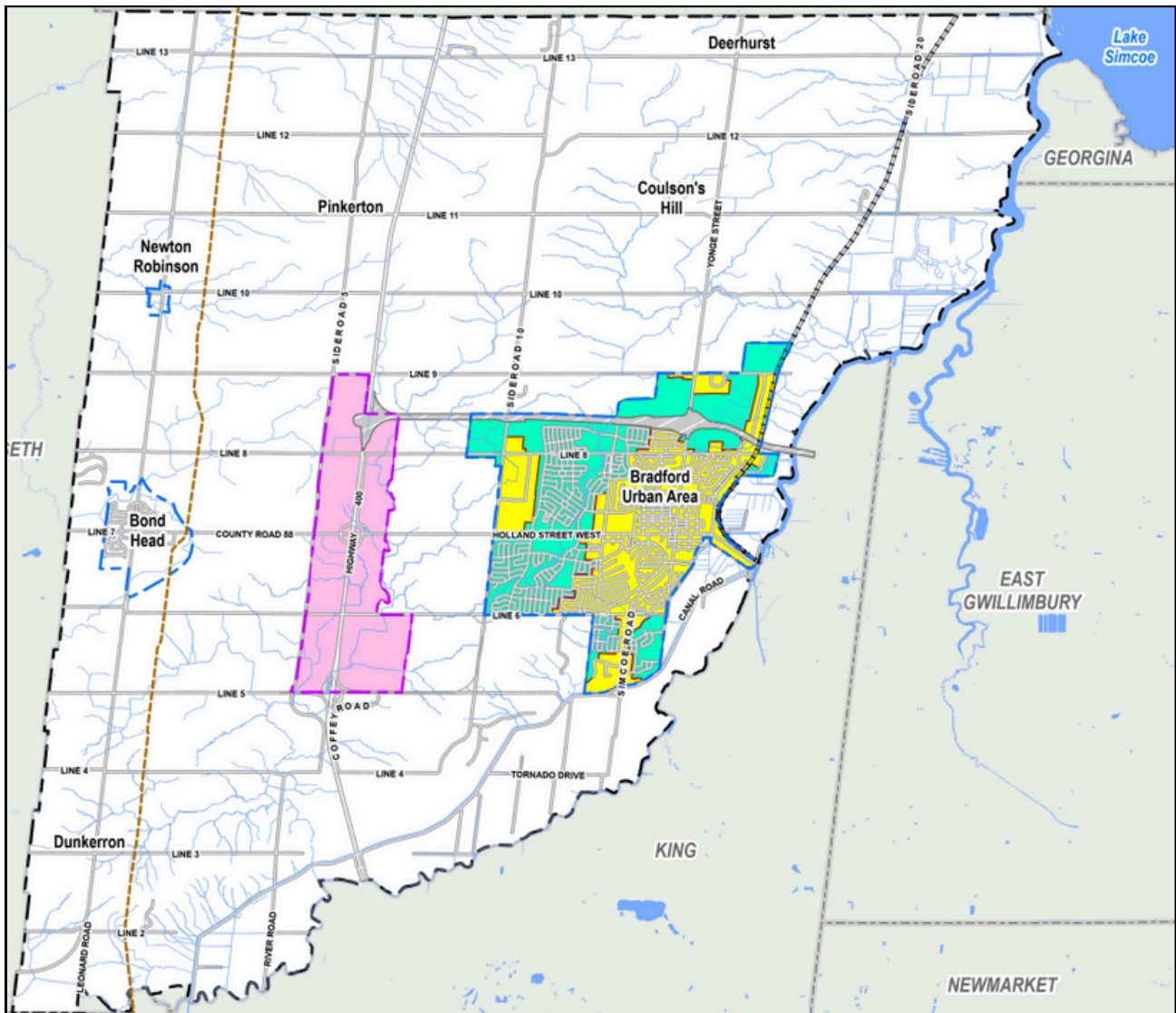


As such, the OP serves as a key tool for implementing the municipality's vision for growth while ensuring alignment with broader regional and provincial plans and the *Planning Act*. The current Official Plan for the Town of BWG provides a comprehensive land use framework that in accordance with County and Provincial policies, identifying areas in Town requiring protection such as agricultural and natural heritage lands and areas suitable for residential, commercial or industrial uses and development in accordance with the policy documents covered in the previous sections. The Town's OP establishes distinct boundaries along with land use designations to guide where residential or employment growth and development should occur. The two main boundaries identified for residential and employment growth are: the Settlement Area Boundary and the Highway 400 Employment Lands.

The Settlement Area Boundary (commonly referred to as the urban boundary) is intended to accommodate the majority of housing, along with population-related jobs that serve the local community, including retail, education, healthcare, and public services. It is comprised of two distinct components: the Delineated Built-Up Area/Boundary (DUA) and the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA). Schedule 'A' of the Town's Official Plan identifies these boundaries and is shown in the figure in the subsequent page.





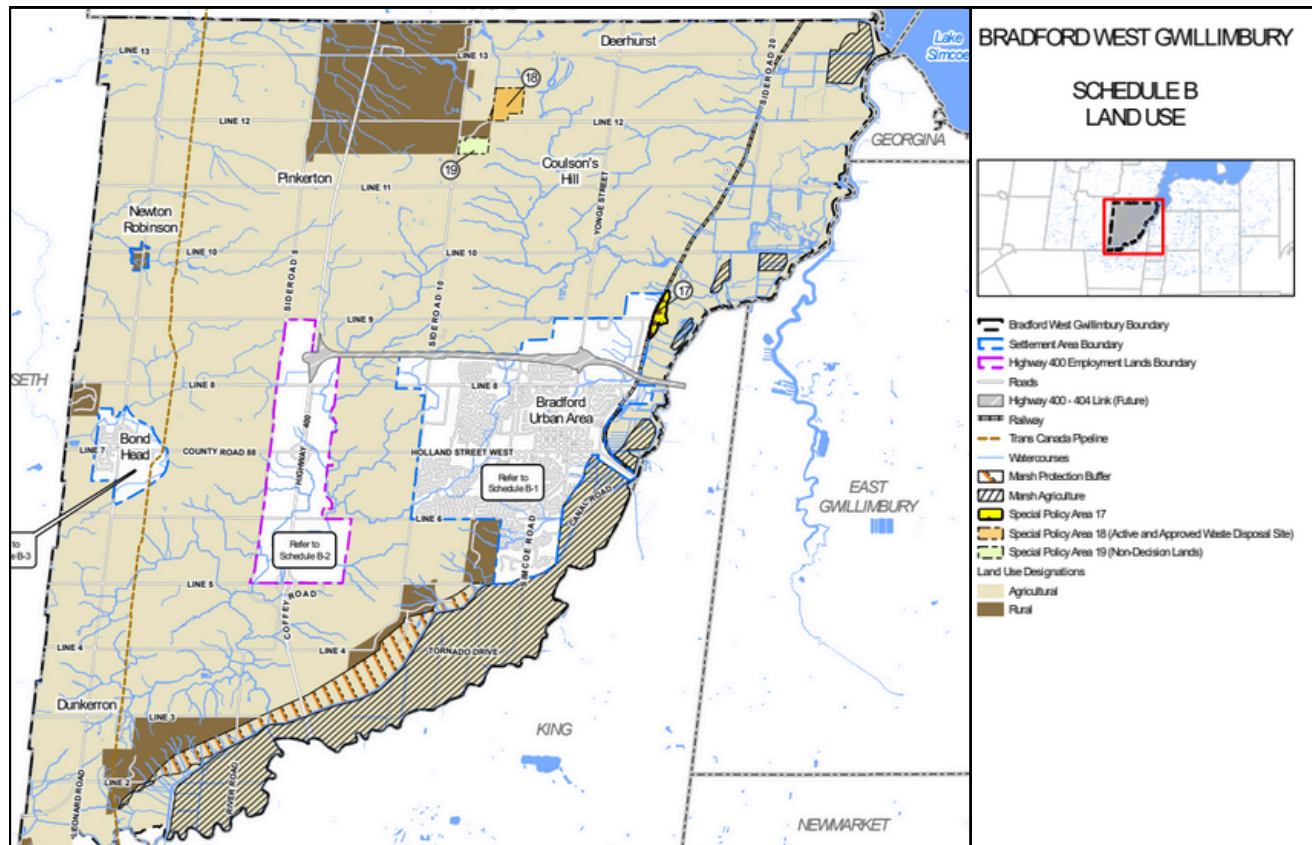


- The **Settlement boundary** is shown by a dashed blue line in the above schedule and within the **Bradford Urban Area Settlement boundary** there are two community structure areas:
  - The **Delineated Built-Up Area/Boundary (DUA)** shown in yellow- was originally identified by the Province under the now-revoked Growth Plan. The DUA is meant to generally represent the existing extent of residential development, and was subject to a minimum residential intensification target
  - The **Designated Greenfield Area (DGA)**, shown in green- also defined through the now-revoked Growth Plan, and refers to areas within the Urban Area that lie outside the Built Boundary and were intended to accommodate the balance of growth through lower-density development.
- The boundary shown in purple above is the **Highway 400 Employment Lands** and is designated to support export-based employment, including a range of industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehousing, and transportation and associated uses. Recent provincial amendments have restricted the types of permitted uses within employment areas which will be discussed in subsequent sections. The growth management exercise will update the Town's policies to reflect employment land definitions accordingly.





The remaining areas within the municipal boundary include Agricultural Lands, Rural Lands, and the Natural Heritage System, which encompasses the County Greenland's and the Holland Marsh, lands subject to the Greenbelt Plan. These areas are not intended for urban development. Schedule B of the Official Plan shows the designation and location of these lands.



The Town's current Official Plan (OP) was adopted by Council in 2021 and came into force following County approval in March 2023. Under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, municipalities must ensure their Official Plans conform with provincial plans, are consistent with the PPS, and have regard for matters of provincial interest outlined in Section 2 of the Act. Official Plans must also be reviewed no later than ten years after coming into effect, and at least every five years thereafter.

Although the Town's OP was adopted four years ago and approved two years ago in conformity with the policies in effect at the time, it was based on a planning horizon to 2031. Since then, legislative changes to provincial and County planning frameworks have extended the required planning horizon to 2051. As a result, the Town's OP is no longer in conformity with current policy requirements. In accordance with legislative requirements, the Town must conduct a review of its Official Plan and bring it into conformity with the updated provincial and County policies. This conformity exercise—previously referred to as a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and now referred to as the Growth Management Strategy was initiated by the Town of BWG on June 25, 2024, and forms the basis of this report, as outlined in the following sections.



## Section 3.0: Growth Management Strategy

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This section will discuss the Town's Growth Management Work Plan and public consultation efforts taken to date.

3.1 - Growth Management Work Plan

3.2 - Public Consultation and Engagement Efforts



## Section 3.1 - Growth Management Work Plan

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Although the Town's Official Plan (OP) was recently approved, it is no longer in full conformity with current provincial and County planning frameworks. The OP was developed based on a planning horizon to 2031, which was in effect when the project was initiated. However, subsequent legislative and policy changes have extended the required planning horizon to 2051. The need for an Official Plan update was anticipated through Policy 2.3.1 of the Town's OP, which states:

*"The County must undertake a municipal comprehensive review to implement the new forecasts and monitoring-related policies... An amendment to this Plan based on the policy updates arising from the next Simcoe County municipal comprehensive review is anticipated... to extend the timeframe for this Plan to the year 2051...It is intended that this Plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect refinements in managing growth and to remain in conformity and consistency with various Provincial and County plans and policies."*

The municipal comprehensive review referenced in Policy 2.3.1 of the Town's Official Plan has since been completed through the adoption of Simcoe County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (SCOPA No. 7). SCOPA No. 7 allocates to the Town approximately 40,000 additional residents (for a total minimum population of 84,370) and 19,000 additional jobs (for a total minimum of 30,900) between 2021 and 2051, as outlined in Section 2.7 of this report. Although SCOPA No. 7 has not yet received final provincial approval, Town Council, in March 2024, directed staff to proceed with implementing the Growth Management work plan in anticipation of its eventual approval, and in light of the limited time left to the 2031 planning horizon.

Planning to the 2051 horizon and implementing SCOPA No. 7 will involve a number of planning initiatives, including amendments to the Town's Official Plan, the introduction of new community plan areas, subsequent plans of subdivision, zoning by-law updates, and site plan applications. The current focus, however, is on the first and most immediate step: the Official Plan Review, also referred to as the Growth Management Exercise. The Council-endorsed Growth Management Exercise is being undertaken in two parts:

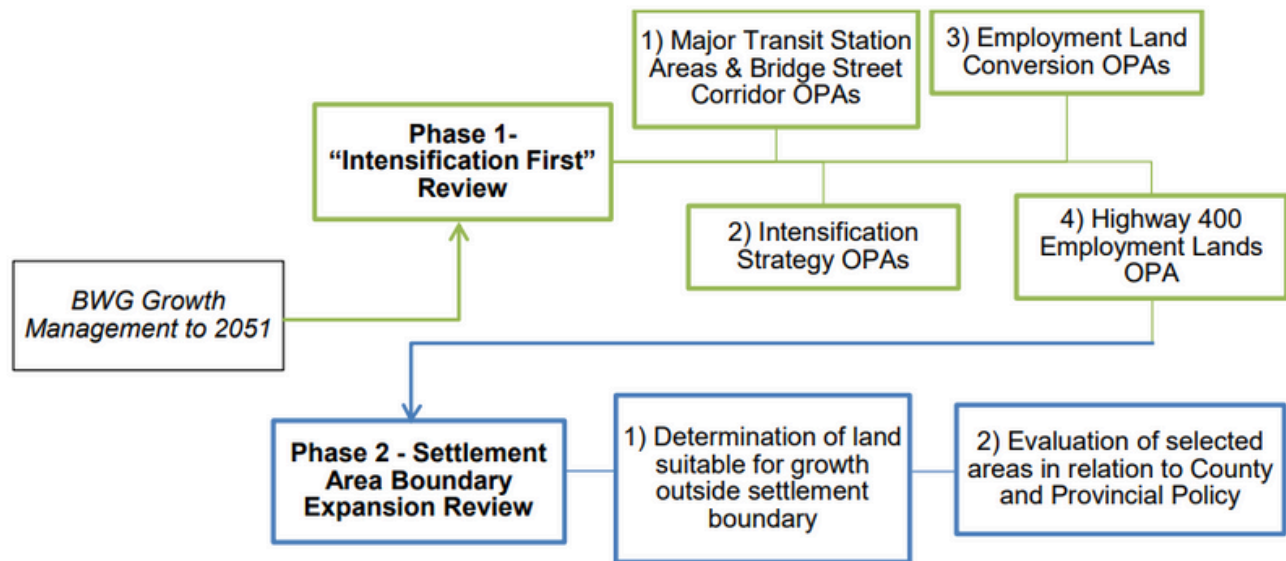
- **Part 1 - "Intensification First"** evaluates how much of the 2051 population and employment growth allocated through SCOPA No. 7 can be accommodated within the existing Bradford Urban Area boundary. It also assesses long-term employment land needs and establishes criteria for employment land conversion, in accordance with applicable provincial policy. Part 1 is structured around four Official Plan Amendment (OPA) themes:
  - Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)
  - Residential Intensification
  - Highway 400 Employment Lands
  - Employment Land Conversion Criteria
- **Part 2 - "Settlement Boundary Expansion"** will assess the need for settlement area boundary expansion, based on the outcomes of Part 1 and applicable land needs assessments.

This report focuses on the findings and policy directions derived from the background analysis and public consultation undertaken through Part 1 of the project.





## Growth Management Project Work Plan



### Part 1 - “Intensification First”

Official Plan Amendment Theme	Objectives of OPA
<b>1) Major Transit Station Area (“MTSA”) and Bridge Street Corridor OPA</b>  As required under the Provincial Growth Plan and SCOPA No. 7, greater levels of intensification are directed to higher order transit stations, in areas delineated as “Major Transit Station Areas” (“MTSA”) including the area surrounding the Bradford GO Station.  Alongside planning the Town’s MTSA also this step requires implementation of the prior direction from Council regarding the Bridge Street Corridor Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine the boundaries of the MTSA &amp; establish a minimum density of 150 residents and jobs per hectare</li> <li>• Permit a range of uses that support a complete community and a mix of housing</li> <li>• Protect lands for enhancement or expansion of transit infrastructure</li> <li>• Establish strategies to support various modes of transportation</li> <li>• Support high quality public realm improvements and a compact urban form</li> <li>• Encourage the redevelopment of land uses in a manner that supports the objectives of MTSA policies.</li> <li>• Implement recommendations for the Bridge Street Corridor Review and conduct an OPA which includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ A visioning exercise, public consultation program and analysis</li> <li>◦ Assessment of existing vs. desired land uses, existing transportation network and recommended modifications</li> <li>◦ Upgrades to public spaces, and review of urban design standards</li> <li>◦ Consideration of riverside/canal integration</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>2) Intensification Strategy OPA (lands with residential permissions outside MTSA)</b> This step involves exploration of greater residential intensification on fully serviced lands with existing residential permissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration of opportunities for greater levels of intensification within the Bradford Urban Area and or Bond Head Settlement Area.</li> <li>• The preparation of a draft OPA to this effect that includes consideration of existing capacities and constraints, and supportive policies to guide its implementation.</li> <li>• Determination of the level of intensity achievable in different areas based on background analysis and findings.</li> </ul>
<b>3) Employment Land Conversion OPA</b>  SCOPA No. 7 alludes to the Town’s need for all currently-earmarked employment lands. This exercise affords an opportunity to re-evaluate the desired attributes of employment lands in the Urban Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the protection of those employment lands considered to be most desired for long-term protection</li> <li>• Create an opportunity for landowners to pursue conversion of their employment lands subject to demonstration of select criteria such as based on minimum distance from major transportation corridors, and be subject to a proponent’s willingness to deliver higher densities of residential unit types that contribute to increased variety of housing options in the Town.</li> </ul>
<b>4) Highway 400 Employment Lands OPA</b>  A standalone amendment to facilitate the absorption of the Town’s Highway 400 Employment Lands	Facilitate absorption of the Highway 400 Employment Lands with employment and employment supportive uses with similar provisions as employment lands along Provincial highways in other jurisdictions and that supports development of the Highway 400 Employment Reserve lands, comprising nearly 500 acres in proximity to the future interchange of Highway 400 with the Highway 400-404 Link (Bradford Bypass).





## Section 3.2 - Public Consultation and Engagement Efforts

In carrying out an Official Plan Review (e.g., for growth management), the *Planning Act* prescribes minimum consultation requirements that must be satisfied. Those minimum consultation requirements include:

- Holding a Special Meeting of Council at the outset of the project (Held on June 24, 2024)
- Once draft policies (e.g., Official Plan Amendment(s)) are prepared:
  - Consult with prescribed stakeholders and agencies, and
  - Hold one Public Open House
  - Hold one Public Meeting before taking to Council for decision

Although the Town has not yet formally presented any of its Official Plan Amendments and has therefore not been required to hold any statutory public open houses or public meetings (aside from the Special Meeting of Council held in June 2024 to initiate the project), it has proactively exceeded minimum requirements by undertaking an extensive public engagement process.

To date, the Town has hosted four public open house sessions:

- October 16, 2024: Two sessions (afternoon and evening) were held to provide accessible opportunities for participation. These open houses included:
  - A presentation outlining the Growth Management Exercise and Official Plan Review.
  - A “knowledge café” format featuring Town and WSP staff, information boards on proposed amendments, and guided questions to gather feedback on long-term growth and planning to 2051.
- January 25, 2025: A second series of open houses was held, also in two time slots. These sessions focused on the delineated boundary of the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), which was divided into four corridors. The same knowledge café format was used to gather public input on the vision for each corridor.



To support broad and meaningful participation, the Town implemented a multi-channel outreach strategy that included repeated promotion on social media, updates on the Town’s dedicated Growth Management webpage (which also features a recording of the October open house presentation), and the distribution of pamphlets and posters with QR code links at municipal facilities. For the MTSA open houses, a targeted mail-out was also delivered to residents within and up to 250 metres beyond the proposed MTSA boundary to further enhance local awareness and engagement. Further engagement efforts are explained in the last section of this report



## Section 4.0: Background Findings & Policy Direction

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This section will summarize the main findings of the background work that has informed the evidence-based policies and direction for each of the Official Plan Amendment themes as well as provide a high level summary of the proposed draft Official Plan Amendments.

4.1 - Introduction to Reports Informing Policy Direction

4.2 - Background Growth Findings

4.3 - Residential Intensification and MTSA Findings & Policy Direction

4.4 - Employment Areas Strategy Findings & Policy Direction



## Section 4.1 - Introduction to Reports Informing Policy Direction

To support the development of evidence-based policy directions, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson) was retained by WSP to provide technical analysis in support of the Growth Management Exercise, with a focus on growth forecasting, land needs assessment, and the development of background information to inform policy directions. Working closely with WSP and Town staff, Watson prepared three technical background reports, each serving as a foundation for the development of draft policy directions under Part 1 of the project as summarized further below:



### 1. Growth Review and Allocations Report

This report consisted of the first report prepared by Watson and provides an overall demographic, economic, and socio-economic profile of the Town, evaluates regional growth drivers, and assesses how Bradford West Gwillimbury is tracking against the 2051 forecasts established in SCOPA No. 7. It also includes updated growth allocations by area, housing type, and employment sector and forecasted demographic and socio-economic growth for the Town.



### 2. Residential Intensification Strategy Report

This report examined opportunities for accommodating residential and mixed-use intensification within the existing Bradford Urban Area, including the delineated Major Transit Station Area (MTSA). It identifies Strategic Growth Areas, evaluates intensification targets, and assesses development potential in support of the MTSA and Residential Intensification OPAs. The report provides the basis for establishing the total number of people and jobs that can be accommodated within the MTSA and remaining residential areas in the Urban Boundary.



### 3. Employment Area Strategy Report

This report evaluates the Town's long-term employment land needs to 2051 and examines the competitiveness and absorption potential of the Highway 400 Employment Lands. It also develops a framework for evaluating Employment Area conversions and supports the policy directions for the Employment Land and Employment Conversion Criteria OPAs.

Together, these reports provide a robust, data-driven basis for the Official Plan Amendments prepared under Part 1 of the Growth Management Exercise. The following pages provide a summary of each report's findings. Full versions of the reports are available on the Town's Growth Management webpage.

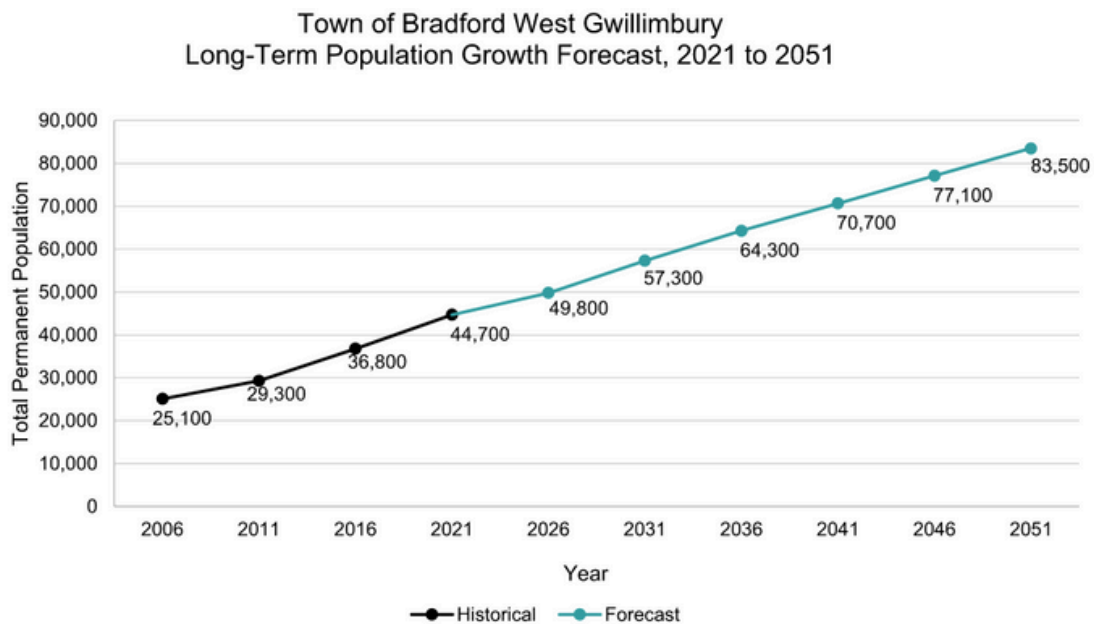




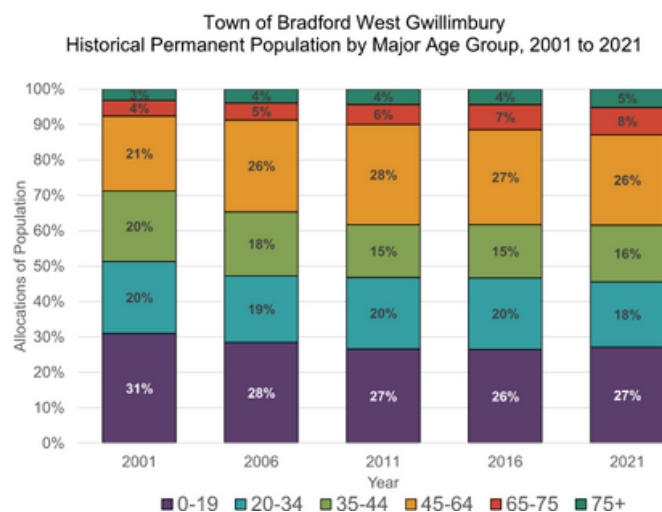
## Section 4.2 - Background Growth Findings

As mentioned one of the first reports to form the basis of the work plan for Part 1 of the Growth Management Exercise is the “Growth Management Strategy - Growth Review and Allocations” Report prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson) to support the foundation for the further development of additional reports that will support evidence-based Official Plan policies. This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the Town’s demographic, economic, housing, and employment trends to 2051, in alignment with SCOPA No. 7 and broader provincial policy directions. Below is a summary of the main findings of this report. The full version of the report can be accessed on the Town’s Growth Management webpage.

### 1. Demographic Trends and Forecasts



The Town’s population grew from approximately 23,100 in 2001 to 48,600 in 2024, driven primarily by in-migration from the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The population is expected to continue increasing steadily, reaching approximately 83,500 by 2051. In parallel, the Town is experiencing a demographic shift toward an aging population, with residents aged 65 and over expected to comprise a significantly larger share by 2051. This trend is anticipated to increase demand for medium- and high-density housing, accessible infrastructure, and age-friendly planning initiatives.

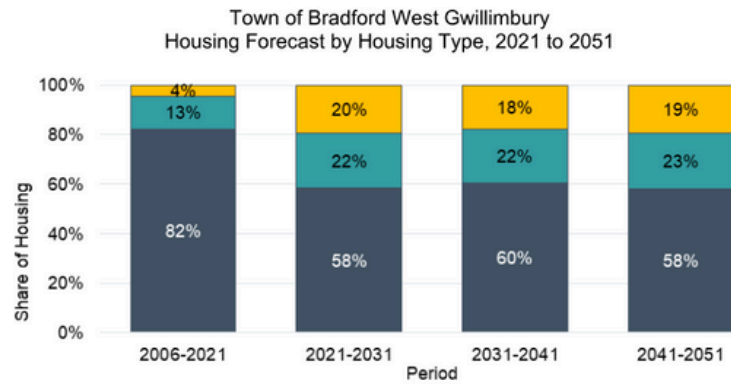


*Image from Intensification Analysis report by Watson & Associates*

## 2. Housing Type and Trends

Over the most recent period, the Town has mainly accommodated low density housing units at 82% of the total share, followed by 13% medium-density housing units and 4% high-density housing units. Looking forward, the current residential mix is expected to shift dramatically to support intensification and a more compact urban form. Between 2019 and 2023, low-density units dropped to 62% of new permits.

Looking ahead, the Town is forecast to add approximately 16,280 new residential units by 2051—an average of 543 units annually. This includes a significant increase in intensification, with 42% of units (over 6,300 dwellings) targeted within the Built-Up Area (BUA), particularly around the delineated Major Transit Station Area (MTSA). This represents a major change from the current predominance of low-density housing and reflects both policy direction and evolving market preferences, particularly among seniors, newcomers, and young families.



**Notes:**

- Low density includes single and semi-detached houses.
- Medium density includes townhouses and apartments in duplexes.
- High density includes bachelor, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom+ apartment units.

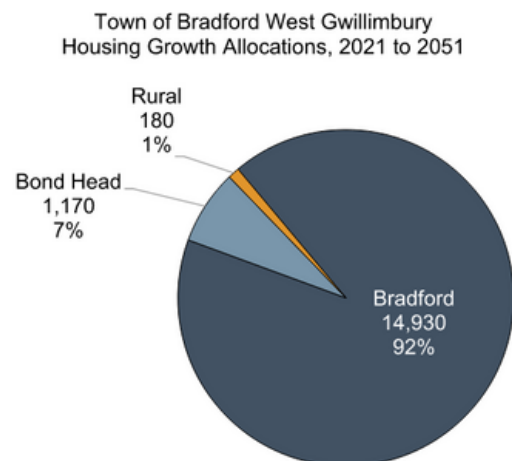
## 3. Employment Forecast and Sectoral Trends

Total employment in the Town is forecast to increase to approximately 30,900 jobs by 2051—an addition of 18,400 jobs from 2021 levels. This growth reflects an anticipated increase in the Town’s employment activity rate from 26% to 37%, with industrial uses expected to account for the largest share of job growth (44%). The remaining growth will be distributed across commercial/population-related (20%), institutional (14%), and work-at-home or rural-based employment sectors. The future employment landscape is expected to be strongly influenced by improved regional connectivity, particularly through the planned Bradford Bypass.

## 4. Urban Land Needs and Growth Allocation

No additional Employment Area lands are currently required; however, full utilization of the Town’s designated employment lands—particularly along the Highway 400 corridor—will be critical to supporting long-term economic development objectives. The majority of population and housing growth to 2051 is expected to be accommodated within the Bradford Urban Area, which benefits from full municipal servicing, a range of community amenities, and opportunities for both intensification and greenfield development.

In Bond Head, growth will be limited to existing approved plans. Since 2021, approximately 170 housing units have been constructed, with the potential for an additional 1,000 units through active applications. Further expansion beyond this is not anticipated. In alignment with the PPS which directs growth to serviced settlement areas, development in the Rural Area is expected to remain limited over the long term.



## Section 4.3 - Residential Intensification & MTSA

### Findings & Policy Direction

The Intensification Analysis Report builds upon the Town-wide growth forecasts and evaluates the extent to which the projected population and employment growth to 2051 can be accommodated within the Town's Settlement/Urban Boundary. This includes an analysis of the Town's capacity to meet the County-prescribed intensification target of 42% within the Built-Up Area (BUA), as well as the minimum density target of 55 residents and jobs per hectare within designated greenfield areas.

The report also assesses the development potential of the delineated Bradford GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) to accommodate a share of this growth. As detailed in Section 2.7 of this report, the County provided a preliminary conceptual boundary for the MTSA. The Town was tasked with refining this boundary through a combination of technical analysis and public consultation.

This section of the report is structured as follows: Subsection 4.3.1 summarizes the key findings of the Intensification Analysis Report as they relate to the BUA and designated greenfield areas, and outlines how these findings have informed the draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) policies under the residential intensification theme. Subsection 4.3.2 provides a corresponding overview of the MTSA analysis and the resulting policy directions.

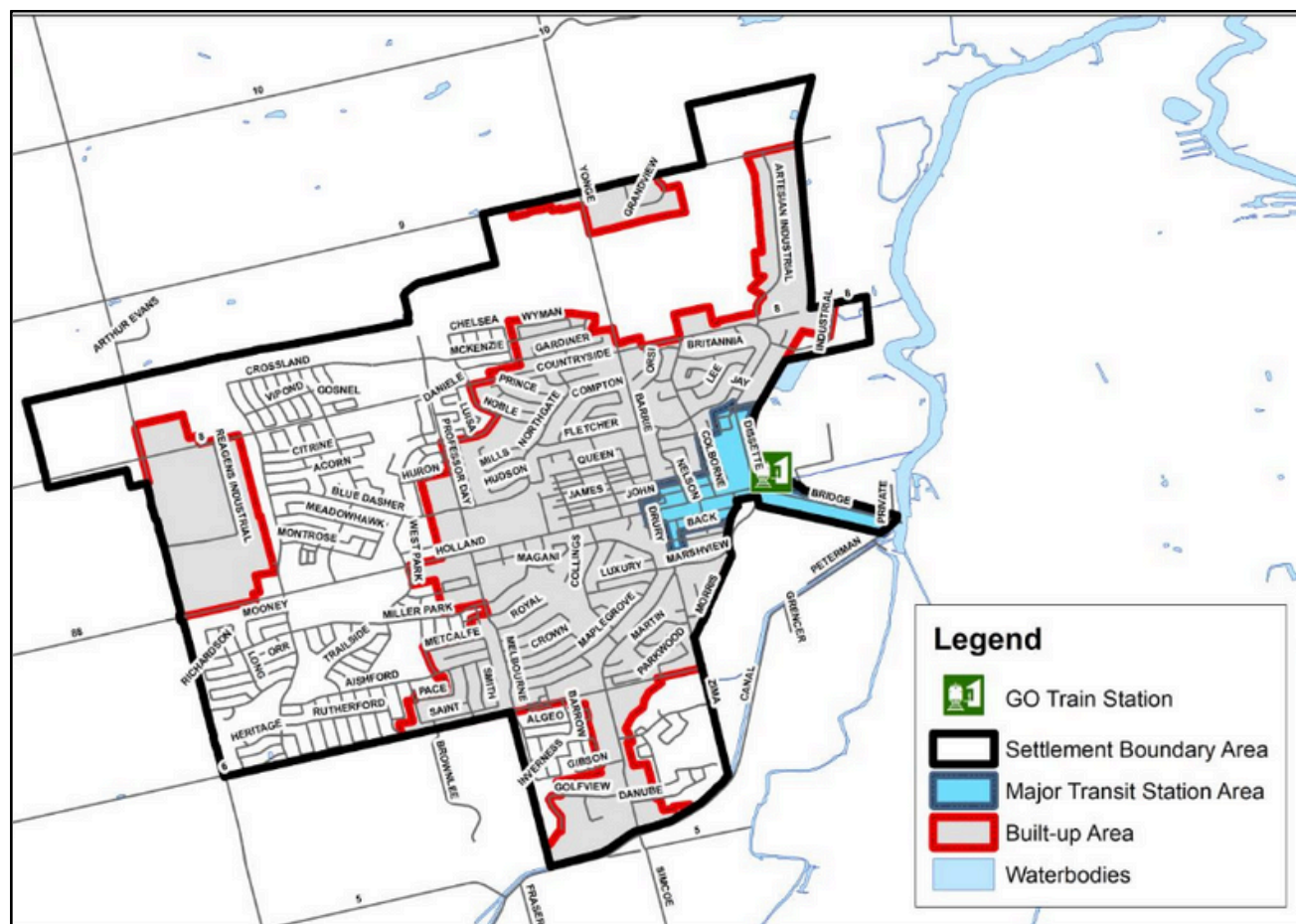


Image from Intensification Analysis report by Watson & Associates



### Subsection 4.3.1 - Residential Intensification Findings

As discussed in Section 2.7 of this report, Simcoe County Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (SCOPA No. 7) establishes an intensification target of 42% for the Town's Built-Up Area (BUA). The BUA refers to the portion of the Town's Urban Settlement Area that was primarily developed as of 2006, consistent with definitions established under the former Growth Plan. While the Growth Plan has since been revoked, both the County of Simcoe and the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury continue to apply this terminology through SCOPA No. 7 and the Town's current Official Plan as shown in 'Schedule A' of the Official Plan.

According to the Intensification Analysis Report prepared by Watson and Associates, reaching a 42% intensification rate within the BUA by the year 2051 will require the Town to accommodate approximately 8,600 new housing units over the long-term planning horizon (this total is inclusive of the number of units anticipated from the MTSA). To meet this target, the Town would need to accommodate an average of approximately 233 new housing units per year in the BUA and MTSA combined. This represents more than double the historical annual average achieved between 2019 and 2023.

In total, the BUA excluding the MTSA is estimated to have the potential to accommodate approximately 3,200 new dwellings. This includes units from active and approved applications, infill development opportunities, and ARUs, more detail on this is provided in the table below.

BUA Housing Intensification Type 2024-2051	Density Unit Type			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Active Applications (Approved & Proposed)	180	280	1323	1,780
Infill Sites	20	230	90	340
Total	200	510	1315	2,120
Housing Mix inclusive of ADU (%)	3%	15%	68%	3,200
Additional Dwelling Units (ADU)	1080 units - (14% of total share)			1080

*Data summarized and sourced from Intensification Analysis report by Watson & Associates*

Watsons analysis of density types are categorized based on dwelling type and average occupancy metrics, specifically the number of persons per unit. The chart below summarizes Watson's classification of residential density by building type, along with the associated average persons per unit for each category.

Building Type	Units per Net Hectare (UPH)	Persons Per Unit (PPU)	Residential Density Type Category
Single/Semi-Detached	20	3.78	Low
Townhouses, Multiples	60	3.13	Medium
Stacked Townhouses	75	1.73	Medium
Low or Mid-Rise Apartment	150-330	1.73	High
Downtown/Mixed Use Apartment	230	1.73	High

*Data summarized and sourced from Intensification Analysis report by Watson & Associates*



## Residential Intensification Policy Direction

As illustrated in the charts from data provided by Watson & Associates, achieving the Town's intensification targets and meeting its evolving housing needs will require that the majority of new residential development within the built-up area be delivered in mainly medium and high-density forms. Based on the findings of the Watson Report, the recommended policy directions include encouraging higher residential densities within the Built-Up Area (BUA) and targeted modifications to the Town's existing residential policies, including the introduction of broader, town-wide intensification policies.

Additionally, while the proposed Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) for residential intensification maintain the existing maximum density permissions in the Low and Medium Density Residential designations (i.e., 30 units per hectare and 50 units per hectare, respectively), in recognition of the need for greater flexibility and promotion of residential intensification, Holland Street West is recognized as a Strategic Growth Area (SGA) with no maximum density limit but with building height limitations that range from 2 to 4 storeys and up to 4 to 8 storeys in the area northeast of the intersection of Melbourne Drive and Holland Street West. Outside of the Holland Street West SGA, 'the Built Up Area' designation is amended to permit up to 80 dwelling units per net hectare. The proposed policy directions also promote compact development patterns that support a broader range of housing options, encourage mixed-use environments, and facilitate local-serving retail uses. The proposed policies are intended to conform with provincial and county policies as well as allow the Town to appropriately accommodate its projected growth to 2051

The draft schedule below demonstrates the boundaries of the Holland West SGA within the green boundary and the proposed MTSA within the red boundary.

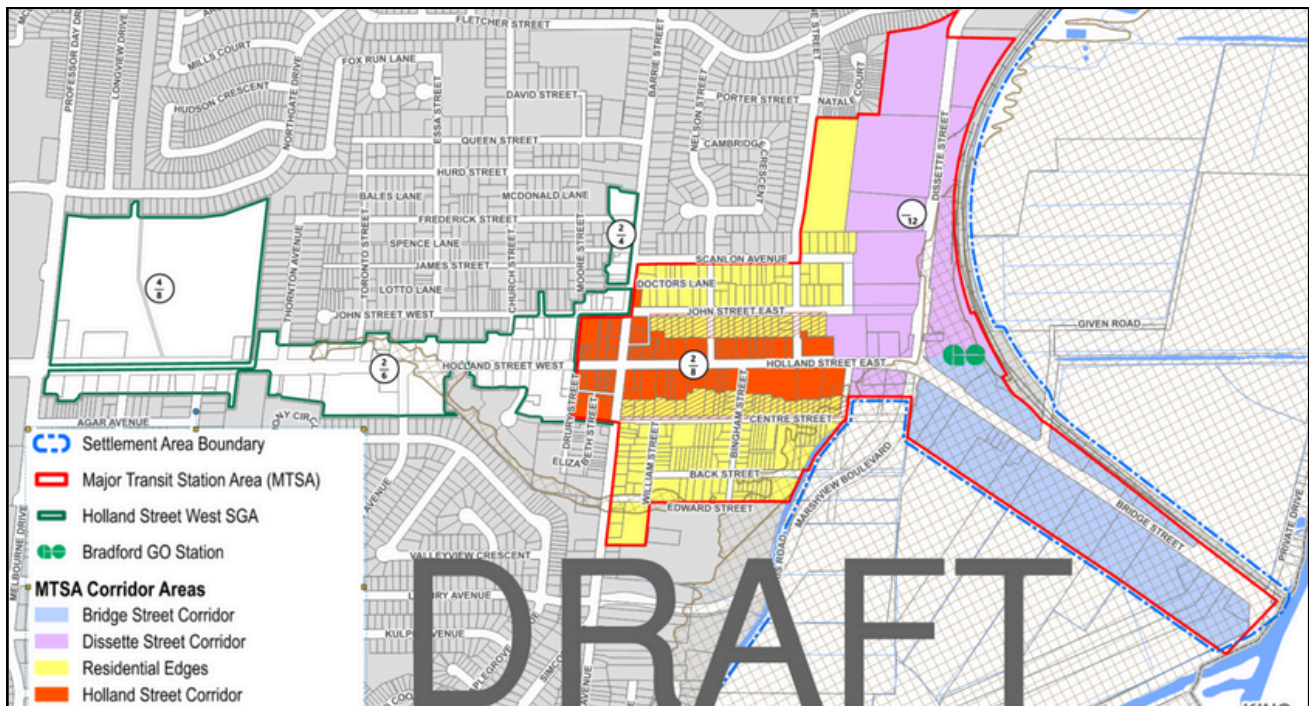


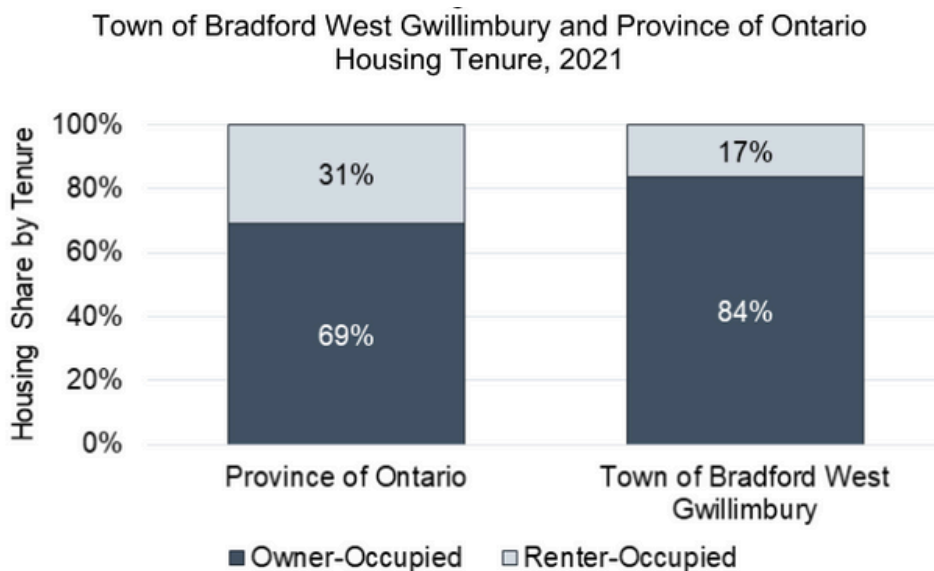
Image consists of first Draft Schedule demonstrating the boundaries of the Holland Street West Strategic Growth Area and the MTSA prepared by WSP Inc. as a component of the Part 1 Growth Management OPAs.



Furthermore, in alignment with Watson’s recommendations, Policy modifications to the Town’s OP policies in relation to Additional Dwelling Units are also directed in order to bring the policies into conformity with the *Planning Act* and the *Provincial Planning Statement* permissions as well as incorporating policies reflective of the increased density target of 55 people and jobs per hectare for the greenfield designation.

The Watson report also highlighted the significant challenges facing the rental housing market in the Town. As of October 2024, the Town had an estimated 300 purpose-built rental housing units, approximately 80% of which were constructed between 1969 and 1979, according to CMHC. The report stated that the rental market was marked by severe constraints, with a vacancy rate of just 0.4%—well below the 2.5% rate observed in the Toronto CMA—and average monthly rents had increased by 24% over the previous five years, outpacing the 21% increase seen in bigger municipalities such as Toronto. The report states that these trends underscore a pressing need for rental housing options. Supporting residential intensification was identified as a critical opportunity for the Town to diversify its housing stock, improve affordability, and expand access to rental accommodations for current and future residents.

As a result, Watson’s report recommends that the Town include policies that will promote greater rental housing availability and variety in housing tenures, since as the report points out, the Town has among the lowest availability and occupation of rental housing in the province. The report further recommends that the Town pursue an Inclusionary Zoning and Housing Needs Study in the future to explore avenues for increasing affordable housing availability, especially in terms of rental options.





## Bradford GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)

In accordance with both the PPS, and SCOPA No. 7, the Town's MTSA is required to achieve a minimum density of 150 residents and jobs per hectare. The delineated MTSA boundary, developed by Town staff based on SCOPA No. 7 and refined through public consultation, was used by Watson to assess its total capacity and provide guidance in terms of policy decisions. The MTSA is expected to accommodate a significant share of the intensification target.

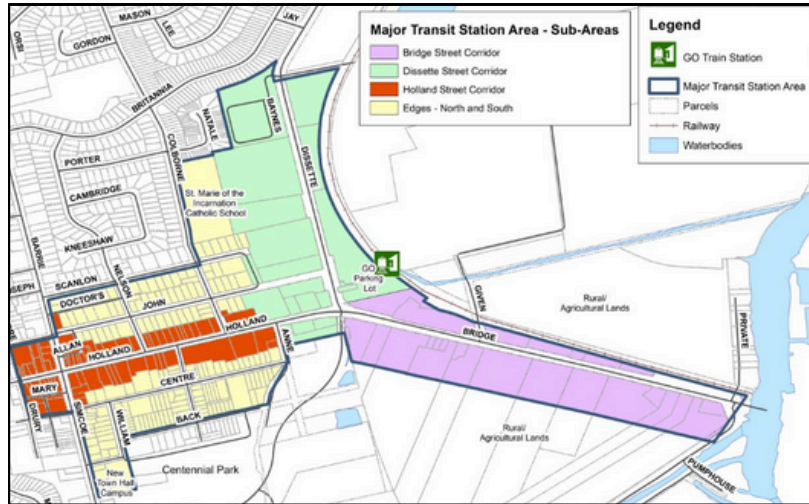
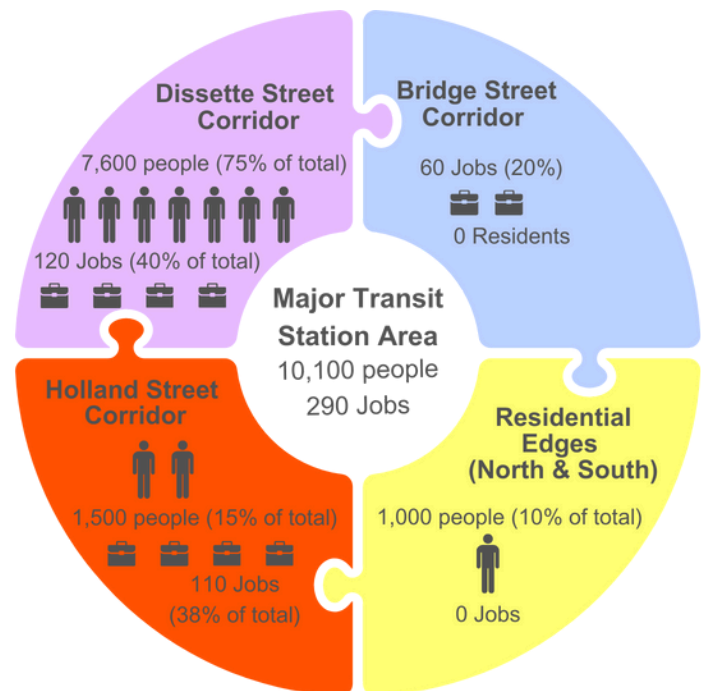


Image from Intensification Analysis report by Watson & Associates

The MTSA encompasses a total area of approximately 62 hectares within an 800-metre radius—roughly a 10-minute walk—from the Bradford GO Station, located at the intersection of Dissette Avenue, Holland Street, and Bridge Street. The area is planned to accommodate approximately 12,800 people and jobs, representing the largest share of the Town's projected growth.

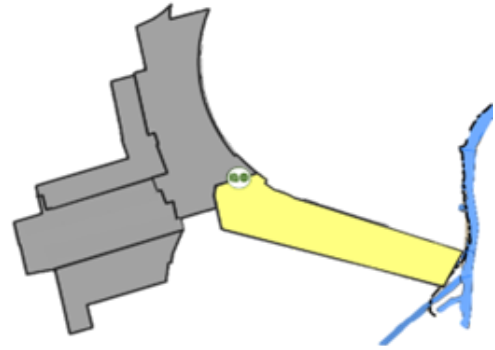
Watson's analysis structured the MTSA into four primary corridors: Bridge Street, Dissette Street, Holland Street, and the Residential Edges (north and south). Each corridor is supported by context-sensitive policies related to land use, built form, and density but will work together to collectively contribute to a cohesive, connected, and vibrant community that balances small-town character with urban vitality.

The Dissette Street Corridor is expected to accommodate the highest level of growth within the MTSA, followed by the Holland Street Corridor. The Residential Edges consist of established neighbourhoods and are therefore not anticipated to support significant additional growth. The Bridge Street Corridor however lies entirely within a floodplain. Therefore, due to natural hazard constraints and flood risk, residential development is not permitted within the Bridge Street Corridor, in accordance with PPS and Regulations under the Conservation Authorities Act. However, limited commercial uses may be permitted in this area, provided they do not include overnight parking. The total net number of people and jobs projected to be accommodated within each corridor is summarized in this illustration.



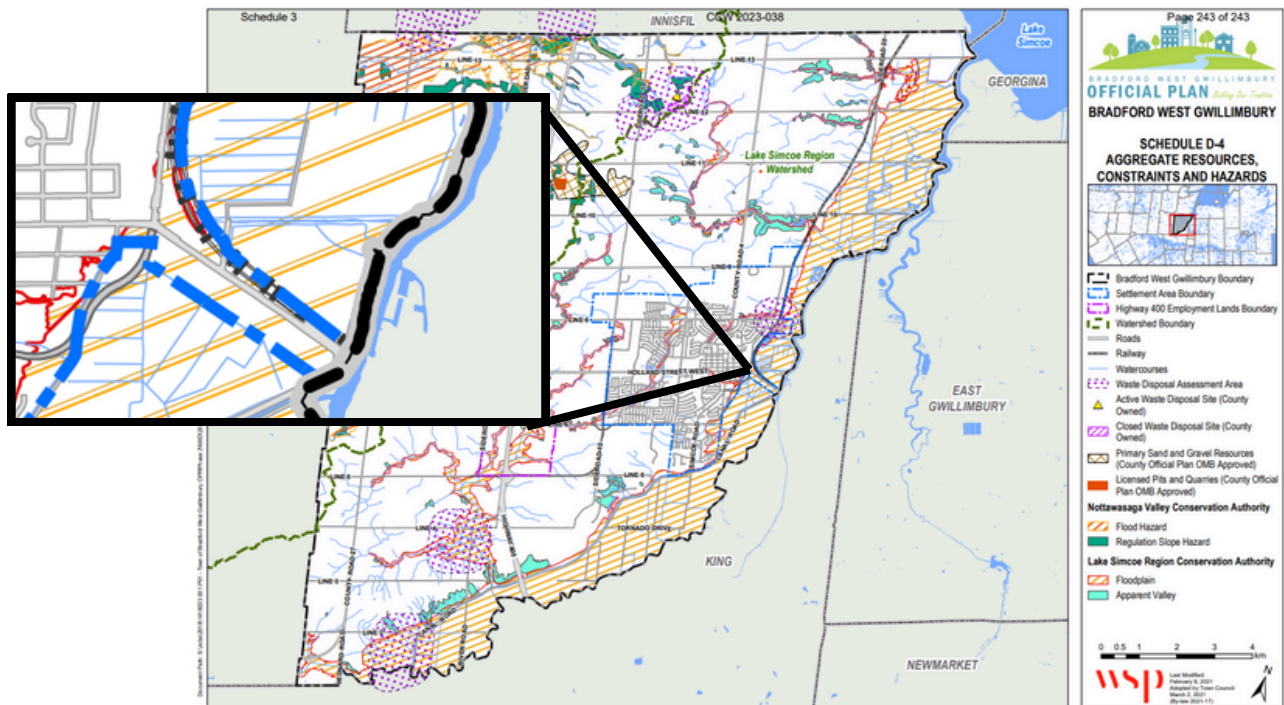
## Bridge Street Corridor

The Bridge Street Corridor comprises the eastern portion of the Town's Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), encompassing the Bradford GO Station, as identified on Schedule B1-A. Located immediately west of the Holland River, this corridor has long served as a centre of mobility, commerce, and regional connectivity. Its significance is deeply rooted in the area's natural geography and historical role as part of a major Indigenous trade and travel network.



The Holland River, adjacent to the corridor, functioned as a vital extension of the Carrying Place Trail—an important Indigenous route connecting Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe and beyond. This network was used by the Wendat (Huron), Haudenosaunee (including the Onondowahgah, or Seneca), Anishinaabe, and Mississaugas to exchange goods, knowledge, and culture. One of the most well-documented segments of this trail passed through the west Holland River, adjacent to the present-day Bridge Street Corridor. The area formed part of one of the busiest historical trading routes in Southern Ontario, solidifying its legacy as a place of cultural, economic, and regional importance.

The corridor's flood susceptibility is closely tied to its environmental context. As shown on Schedule D-4 the entirety of the Bridge Street Corridor is located within a regulated floodplain and is subject to provincial natural hazard policies. The surrounding landscape—shaped by the historical recession of glacial Lake Algonquin—formed a saturated wetland basin known today as the Holland Marsh. This ecologically significant area was historically used by Indigenous communities for fishing, hunting, and harvesting resources such as cedar, tamarack, and cranberries.





In the 18th and 19th centuries, European settlers transformed the area into one of Ontario's most productive agricultural regions through an extensive system of engineered drainage canals and pumping stations. Concurrently, the corridor continued to grow as a transportation hub, facilitated by the development of road networks and the Northern Railway. The establishment of Bradford's first train station in 1853—on the current site of the Bradford GO Station—further strengthened the corridor's role in moving agricultural products from the Holland Marsh to urban markets.



*parade of trucks loaded with produce going to Toronto to promote Holland Marsh produce.*



*Images from Town of BWG Photo Archives*

Despite these modifications, the area remains prone to flooding due to its low-lying topography and proximity to the Marsh. In accordance with provincial policy, development within these flood-prone areas is discouraged. Future redevelopment will remain limited until such time as the Town, in consultation with the Ministries of Natural Resources and Municipal Affairs and Housing, the County of Simcoe, and the Conservation Authority, conducts the requisite studies to assess natural hazard constraints and evaluate the feasibility of implementing flood mitigation measures and parameters for potential mixed-use redevelopment of the area.

Notwithstanding these constraints, the Bridge Street Corridor's location at the confluence of regional transportation infrastructure, river access, and agricultural lands presents opportunities for nature-based and water-oriented recreation. With appropriate planning, these lands can enhance ecological stewardship, improve public access, and contribute to a resilient, connected community.

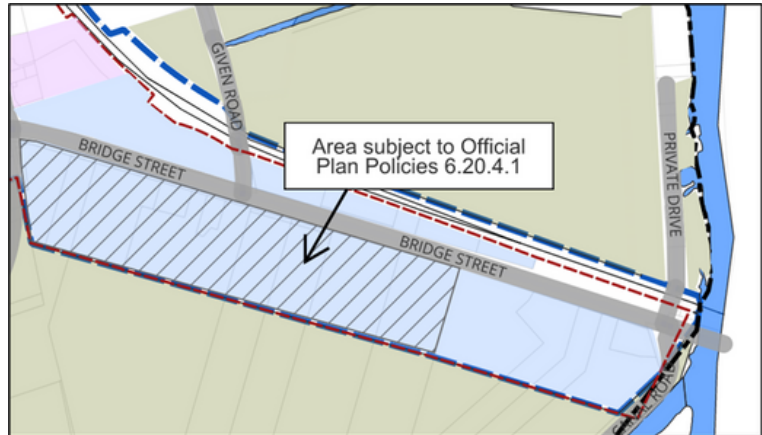
This legacy of movement and exchange informs the vision for the corridor's future: to re-establish it as a vital connector—linking people to regional opportunities while fostering a distinct sense of place that honours its past and embraces a vibrant, inclusive future. Anchored by the Bradford GO Station, the corridor is expected to support approximately 60 new jobs by 2051. Through compact, human-scaled development and thoughtful urban design, the Bridge Street Corridor will evolve into a dynamic, transit-oriented community—encouraging walking, cycling, nature based recreational activities and public life in a safe, accessible, and connected public realm. In doing so, it will continue to reflect its enduring role as a place of movement, interaction, and cultural exchange.





## Bridge Street Corridor - Commercial Use Permitted Areas

As noted, the entire Bridge Street Corridor is located within a floodplain and regulated by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). However, in 1990, recognizing the corridor's historic role in regional commerce—particularly its connection to the Oak Ridges Market—the LSRCA passed a by-law permitting commercial uses on lands located approximately 320 metres west of the Holland River.



*Draft Image showing properties on Bridge Street with commercial permissions*

These lands are limited to a maximum development depth of 67 metres from Bridge Street and may accommodate a full range of retail, service commercial, recreational, and small-scale office uses. Residential uses are not permitted, and all developments must meet specific technical requirements. The proposed policies reflect these permissions and ensure that this area continues to support MTSA job targets. A dedicated subsection within the Bridge Street Corridor policies will reflect these provisions in detail.



*Images from Town of BWG Photo Archives of market on Bridge Street as well as Bradford Co-operative storage building used for storing agricultural goods from the Holland Marsh. These photos are meant to showcase the historic commercial activities on Bridge Street.*





## General Flood Plain Regulations & Policies

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For the remainder of the Bridge Street Corridor and portions of other corridors within the floodplain overlay, policies prioritize public safety and environmental protection. These lands, identified on the draft proposed Schedule B1-A, are subject to the Natural Hazard policies in Section 3.10.5 of the Town OP and prohibit institutional uses, essential emergency services, hazardous material storage, new underground parking, and overnight parking without safe access. Residential uses are not permitted on these lands until further technical studies are completed by the Town in consultation with relevant agencies to assess redevelopment feasibility. Development and site alteration are also not permitted in areas inaccessible during flood events or within the floodway, except in limited cases where, through consultation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and alignment with applicable provincial frameworks, it is demonstrated that the proposed use poses no risk to public safety, flood control, or emergency access.



*Images from Town of BWG Photo Archives on Holland Marsh*





## Bridge Street Corridor - Bradford GO Station

The Bradford GO Station holds significant historical value, having provided railway service to the community since 1853 when the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railway first extended its line to what was then Machell's Corners (now Aurora). Over time, this early rail line evolved into the Northern Railway of Canada, was acquired by the Grand Trunk Railway, and eventually became part of the Canadian National Railway system in 1923. Today, the station is a key stop on Metrolinx's Barrie GO Line, connecting Bradford to Union Station and serving as a vital hub in the regional transit network. In light of its historic role and future service expansions anticipated by Metrolinx, a set of forward-looking policies has been developed to guide station-area planning.



*Images from Town of BWG Photo Archives of the current Bradford GO Station*

Policies for the Bradford GO Station, which spans the Bridge Street and Dissette Street Corridors, prioritize universal accessibility and multimodal connectivity. Passenger pick-up and drop-off areas must support seamless transitions between vehicles and active transportation. A safe, well-lit, and accessible active transportation network will link the station to nearby corridors, transit stops, trails, public spaces, and community hubs.



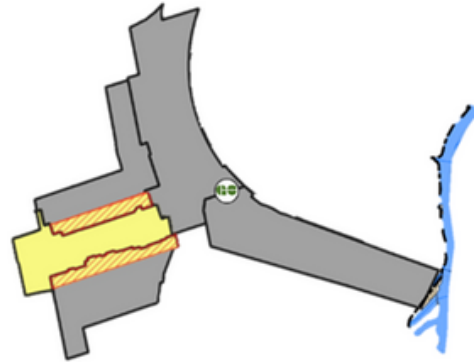
Pedestrian walkways must accommodate mobility aids, and secure, visible bicycle parking—ideally sheltered and located near platform entrances—is required. Additionally, passenger amenities should be integrated into adjacent buildings and open spaces to enhance the overall station experience and support growing commuter needs while maintaining the cultural and historical legacy of the station.





## Holland Street Corridor

The Holland Street Corridor encompasses approximately 4 hectares of net developable land and represents the central portion of the Town's Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), as shown on Schedule B1-A. As one of the earliest established streets in Bradford, Holland Street has historically served as the Town's main street and remains a central destination for residents and visitors, offering a range of commercial, cultural, and community amenities.



*Images from Town of BWG Photo Archives & Town iStock*

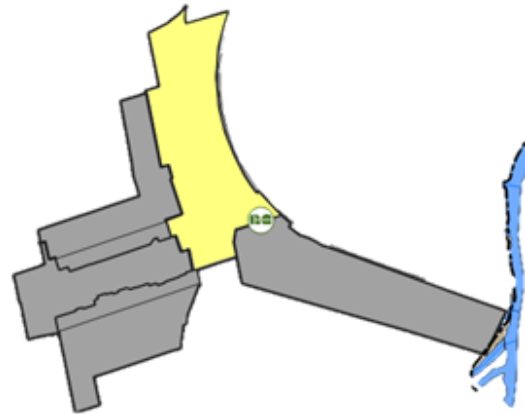
Home to several historic and heritage buildings, the corridor reflects Bradford's early settlement history and cultural development. As the corridor intensifies, a balanced approach is required to accommodate growth while conserving key heritage features and maintaining the street's identity and sense of place. Planned as the second-highest intensification area within the MTSA, the corridor is expected to accommodate approximately 860 new dwellings, 1,500 residents, 110 jobs, and 5,900 square metres of new commercial floor space by 2051, with a minimum residential density target of 200 units per net hectare. Future development will support a vibrant, mixed-use environment with a focus on transit-supportive density, diverse housing options, active commercial frontages, and enhanced public spaces.

The Holland Street Corridor also includes a Transition Overlay to ensure compatible integration with adjacent residential neighbourhoods to the north and south, as shown on Schedule B1-A. Development in this area must support the corridor's minimum density target of 200 units per net hectare while providing a gradual transition in height, scale, and density through step-backs, setbacks, and varied built forms. Taller buildings are directed to Holland Street, while lower-scale, ground-oriented housing is encouraged within the Overlay. Design must minimize impacts on neighbouring properties by protecting privacy, maintaining sunlight access, and limiting shadowing and light spill. Landscaping, fencing, and other buffers are also required to support a high-quality residential interface.



## Dissette Street Corridor

Based on policy direction from Watson & Associates, the Dissette Street Corridor is envisioned to be the highest-density, most intensively developed area within the Major Transit Station Area. Located directly north of the Bradford GO Station and encompassing approximately 15 hectares, this corridor is planned to evolve into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use community. It will accommodate the tallest buildings in the MTSA and include a diverse mix of residential, office, institutional, and commercial uses, supported by high-quality public realm features such as wide sidewalks, ground-floor retail, parks, trail connections, and Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPs).



*Images from Town of Bradford Town-wide Urban Design Guidelines available on Town website*

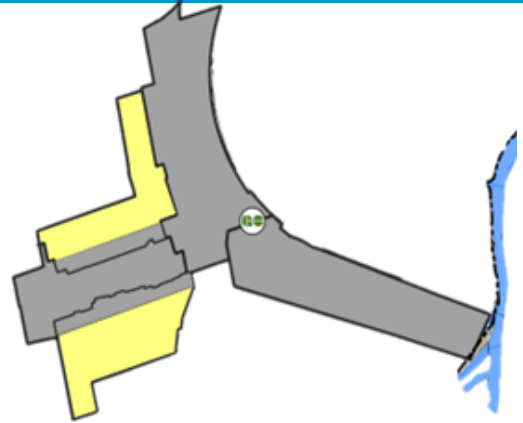
The corridor is projected to deliver approximately 3,990 dwellings at a minimum density of 300 units per net hectare, 6,700 square metres of new commercial floor space, and support a population of 7,600 residents and 121 jobs by 2051. Taller buildings will be concentrated closest to the GO Station, where access to transit and amenities is highest, with built form transitioning down toward adjacent residential areas. All development must ensure compatibility with nearby industrial uses and rail infrastructure, including compliance with Metrolinx Adjacent Development Guidelines and requirements for noise, vibration, and safety mitigation measures. Drive-throughs and new automotive uses are prohibited, and any proposals for increased building height must follow the applicable policies in the Official Plan. Developments are also expected to demonstrate architectural excellence, incorporate durable materials, and enhance walkability through direct pedestrian connections to the GO Station. These policies based on the findings of the background research hope to achieve a sustainable, active and mixed-use corridor for Dissette Street while promoting greater residential intensification.





## Residential Edges Corridor

The Residential Edges Corridor comprises two distinct areas located at the northern and southern boundaries of the Major Transit Station Area. These areas are characterized by a mix of established neighbourhoods, institutional uses, and newer residential intensification projects. Guided by planning direction from the recommendations of the Town's consulting team, these areas are intended to support gentle density increases while maintaining neighbourhood character.



This corridor is forecasted to accommodate approximately 1,000 additional residents by 2051. The southern portion is also identified as the future site of the Town's Civic Centre, further reinforcing its civic and community-serving role. Permitted uses will include existing buildings, a range of low- to medium-density housing forms—such as semi-detached homes, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, multi-unit dwellings, and walk-up apartments of up to 10 units—as well as parks, urban squares, POPS, institutional facilities, and small-scale neighbourhood commercial uses. All new residential development must meet a minimum density of 40 units per net hectare. To promote walkability and integration with the broader transit network, development in this corridor must prioritize strong pedestrian connections, trails, and open space linkages to the GO Station and adjacent corridors, while also supporting day-to-day amenities for local residents.



*Images from Town of Bradford Town-wide Urban Design Guidelines available on Town website*

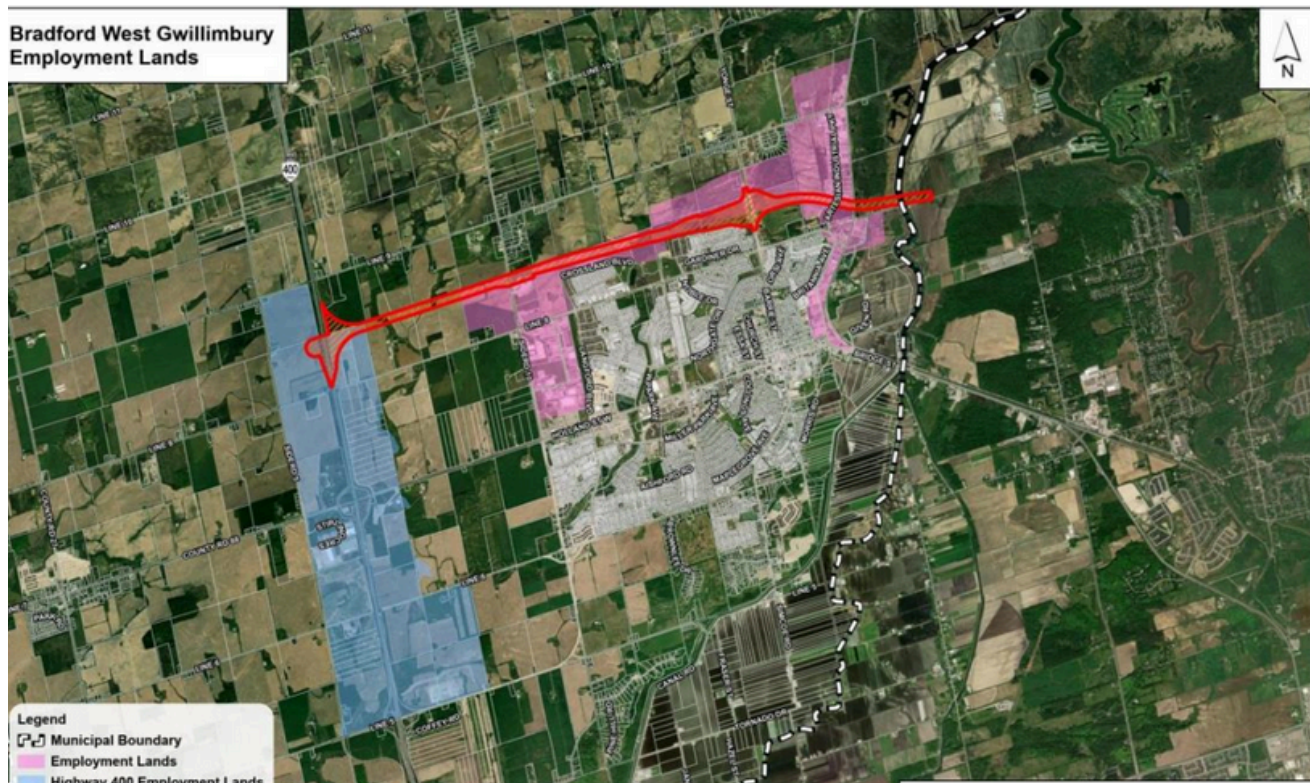




### Subsection 4.3.2 - Employment Areas Strategy Findings & Policy Direction

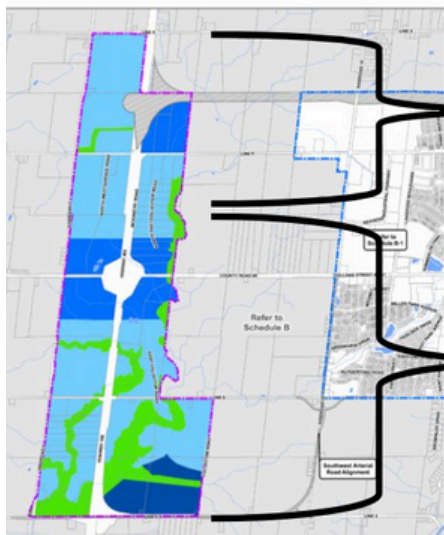
The Employment Area Strategy Report, prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (April 15, 2025), was developed as part of the Town of BWG Growth Management Strategy (GMS) and is intended to inform long-term land use planning for employment to the year 2051. It builds upon the Simcoe County Municipal Comprehensive Review and Official Plan Amendment No. 7 (SCOPA No. 7), and responds to the updated planning framework introduced through the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS 2024). The PPS 2024 emphasizes flexibility in planning for growth and allows municipalities to plan for Employment Areas beyond a 30-year horizon, while introducing a more focused definition of Employment Areas consisting of lands that are to be primarily accommodating core industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics. Municipalities are required to designate, protect, and plan for these areas while limiting residential and non-employment supportive uses.

Within Bradford West Gwillimbury, designated Employment Areas include Artesian Industrial Parkway, Reagens Industrial Park, the Highway 400 Employment Lands, and the Highway 400–404 Link Employment Lands near the planned Bradford Bypass. These areas are strategically located with direct access to Highway 400 and are supported by varying levels of municipal servicing. Collectively, they comprise approximately 740 gross hectares (or 444 net hectares) of vacant, designated Employment Lands. The report emphasizes that Employment Areas are critical to the Town’s economic competitiveness, not only for job creation but also for fiscal balance, assessment growth, and overall livability. These lands accommodate a range of industrial uses and are home to many of the Town’s largest private-sector employers.



According to the Watson analysis and SCOPA No. 7, the Town is forecast to accommodate 28,300 jobs by 2051, an increase of approximately 15,800 jobs from 2024, with around 9,000 of these jobs expected to be located within Employment Areas. This translates to an average employment growth rate of 3.1 percent per year and a corresponding land demand of approximately 444 net hectares, assuming a target density of 20 jobs per hectare.

The report identifies several strategic priorities for the Town. First, the Highway 400 Employment Lands represent a major opportunity to attract large-scale, export-based industries due to their visibility, parcel sizes, and proximity to the 400-series highway network. Second, the future Bradford Bypass is expected to enhance accessibility and open up new opportunities for industrial growth, especially in the Highway 400–404 Link Employment Lands. Third, the Town is encouraged to support the emergence of integrated industrial-office facilities—business operations that combine warehousing, manufacturing, office, and research uses within a single site or building. These hybrid forms reflect evolving business models and allow for more flexible, higher-density employment formats. In addition to updating the employment areas definition in the OP, policies will need to support these integrated developments, particularly in prestige employment locations.



**Employment “Reserve” Area**

- Bring “online” with “Highway 400 Industrial/Logistics” and “Highway 400 Interchange” designations

**OP Designated and Zoned Employment Area**

- Improved flexibility for employment and employment-supportive uses
- Removed restrictions on minimum number 8ha and 20ha lots

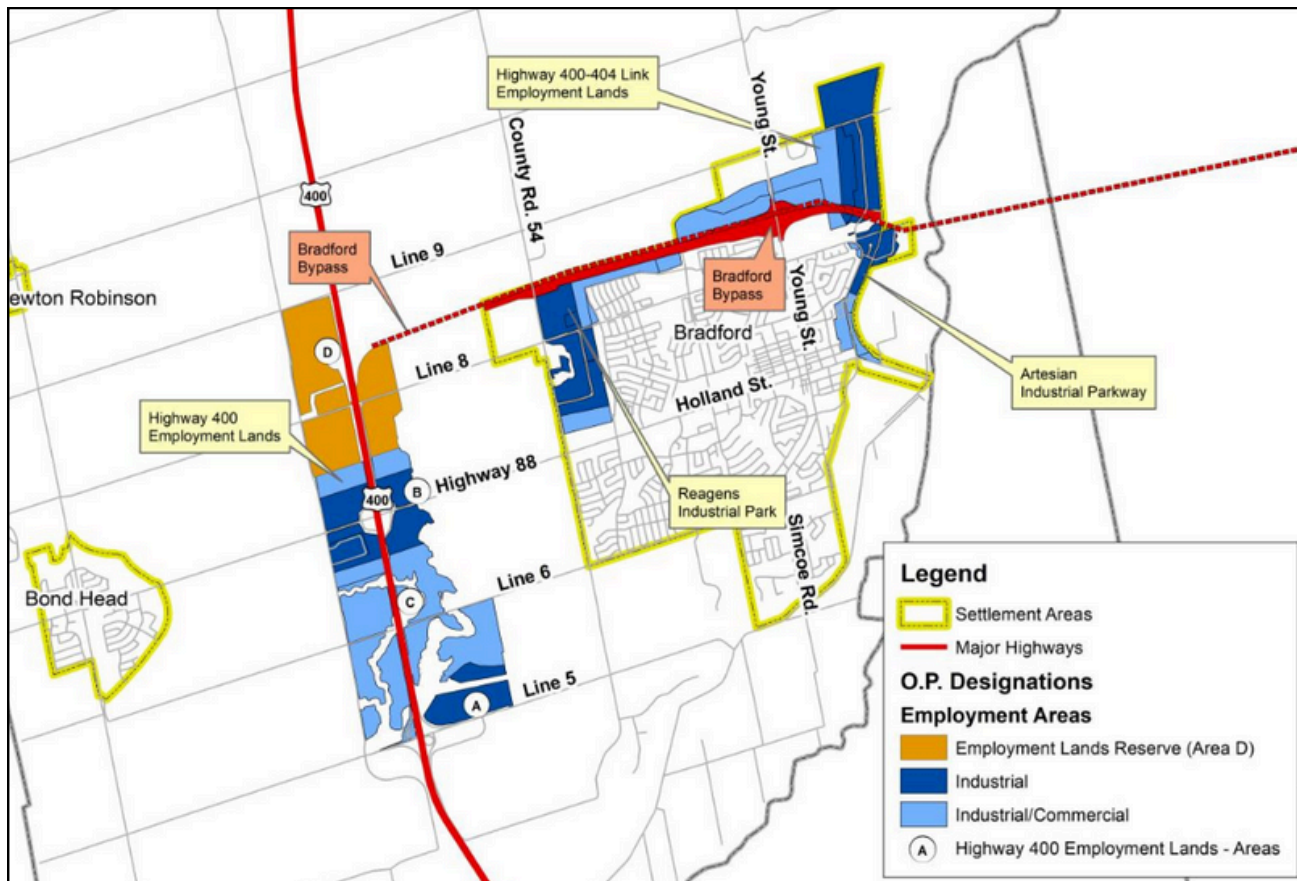
The Watson employment report concludes that the entire Highway 400 Employment Lands, including the Reserve Lands, will be needed by 2051, with the Reserve Lands required as early as 2041. To ensure market readiness and sufficient site options, servicing of these lands should begin before 2041. The Highway 400 Employment Lands are expected to absorb approximately 10 hectares annually, with the non-reserve portion providing 15–18 years of supply. Overall, the Town is projected to require 444 net hectares of Employment Area lands to support nearly 9,000 new jobs by 2051, averaging 16 hectares of land absorption per year. While the Town currently has enough designated Employment Lands to meet growth to 2051—consistent with SCOPA No. 7—this supply is limited beyond that horizon. The Bradford Bypass will significantly enhance access and development potential, particularly for Employment Areas within the Bradford Settlement Area, which are expected to accommodate about 38% of future demand. The report underscores the need to protect designated Employment Lands and recommends establishing an annual monitoring program to track land needs, absorption rates, and potential supply constraints.





In terms of target sectors, the report identifies advanced manufacturing, clean energy and renewables, logistics and warehousing, agri-tech and food processing, electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, health and life sciences, and technology and innovation as key areas of opportunity. Supporting these sectors will require not only adequate land but also modern servicing, adaptable policy frameworks, and marketing strategies that align with regional trends.

In conclusion, the Employment Area Strategy provides a clear rationale for protecting and optimizing the Town's existing supply of Employment Lands. It confirms that sufficient land is available to accommodate projected growth to 2051 but cautions that the supply is limited beyond that horizon. The report reinforces the importance of targeted policy interventions, infrastructure readiness, and strategic investment attraction to support employment growth, economic diversity, and long-term prosperity for the Town. Using this information and in accordance with provincial and county directives and policies the team at WSP developed a set of criteria for employment area conversions described in greater in the subsequent page.



Map from Watson Employment Report for the Town of BWG



## Employment Conversion Criteria

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In accordance with the requirements of the PPS, employment land conversion requests must demonstrate that the lands are no longer needed for long-term employment uses, that the conversion will not undermine the viability of the overall employment area, that sufficient infrastructure and public service facilities exist to support the proposed use, and that the municipality has adequate employment land supply to meet growth projections to 2051 (the projected planning horizon of the municipal OP).

Building on these requirements and the findings and recommendations of the Watson employment land needs assessment, WSP Inc. helped draft the following proposed additional criteria to further guide the evaluation of employment conversion requests:

- A minimum residential density of 80 dwelling units per hectare must be achieved;
- The site must be located at least 800 metres from the centre point of a highway interchange and 400 metres from the centre line of the corridor;
- The existing job density on the site must not exceed 20 jobs per hectare;
- The site must not play a strategic or economic role within the regional employment framework;
- It must be located on the edge or fringe of an existing or planned employment area;
- The parcel must be comparable in size to others within the employment area;
- The conversion must not:
  - Limit or prevent adequate transportation or civil servicing to remaining employment parcels;
  - Adversely impact the transportation network or the movement of goods;
- The proposal must provide an equivalent number of jobs to those displaced by the conversion; and
- The site must be demonstrably suitable for non-employment uses.

These criteria are intended to ensure employment land conversions are selective, strategic, and do not compromise the Town's long-term economic development goals



## Section 5.0: Conclusion and Next Steps

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In conclusion, this report provides an overview of the key findings from the background analysis completed by the Town's consultants, WSP and Watson & Associates, which have informed the first iteration of the Part 1 Draft Official Plan Amendments. All supporting documents referenced in this report, including draft versions of the Official Plan Amendments, are available on the Town's website. Following the presentation of this report and the proposed draft amendments, Town staff will initiate a formal circulation and public engagement process to gather feedback from reviewing agencies and members of the public. This process will include an open house and statutory public meeting, after which the proposed amendments will be finalized and brought forward for Council's consideration and adoption.



## Conclusion

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Although SCOPA No. 7 remains under review by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Town Council endorsed proceeding with the Growth Management Exercise work plan despite the absence of a provincial decision. Accordingly, staff and the consulting team have completed the first iteration of public draft Official Plan Amendments for Part 1 of the Exercise, in line with the approved timeline. The summer of 2025 will focus on public consultation to gather feedback from residents, stakeholders, and external reviewers. While this engagement is underway, staff and the consulting team will also advance Part 2, which focuses on the Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, in coordination with the Town's Capital Team and the ongoing Master Servicing Plan. Until the Province provides alternative direction or a final decision on SCOPA No. 7, the Town will continue to rely on its current policy direction to guide the Official Plan update to 2051.

