Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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Update from the Office of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator

Re: Facilitated Process for Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study
August 1, 2025

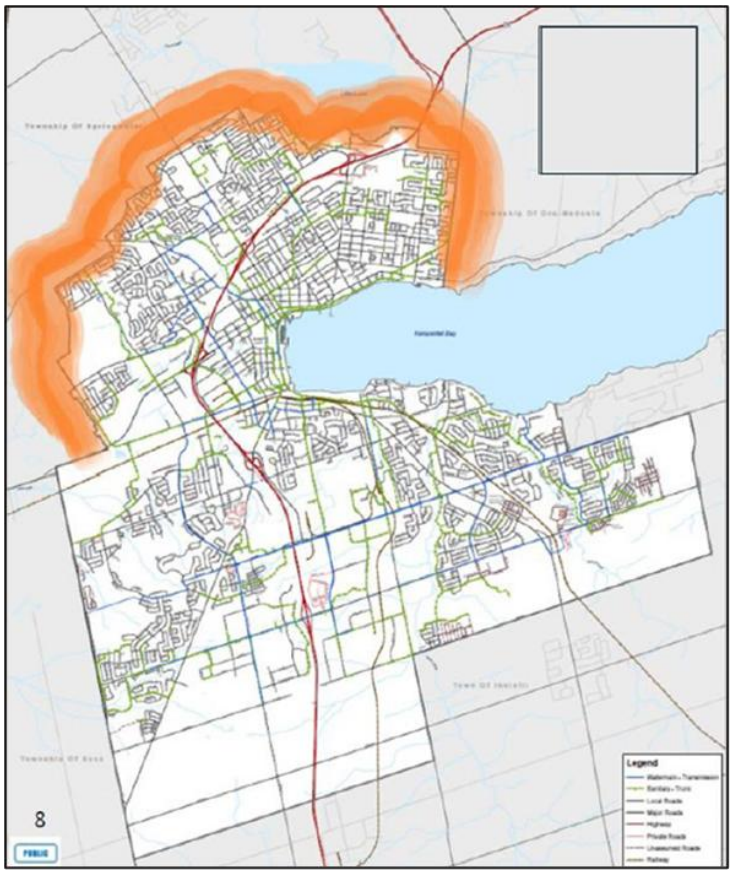
The City of Barrie, the Township of Oro-Medonte, the Township of Springwater and the County of Simcoe are engaged in facilitated discussions to develop mutually acceptable growth management solutions across their jurisdictions. To support this effort, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has tasked the Office of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator to assist with discussions, to ensure alignment with Provincial priorities, including the creation of housing and employment opportunities. The first stage of facilitated discussions between all parties began mid-2024.

This update and attached technical memorandum summarizes the work completed to date and outlines the next steps toward achieving a framework agreement by September 30, 2025, as directed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

A. Initial Findings: Additional Urban Lands are Required to Accommodate Growth in Barrie

In late 2024, Hemson Consulting was retained to assess the need for additional residential and employment lands in areas adjacent to Barrie, Springwater, and Oro-Medonte. The Study Area is shown in Map 1.

Map 1: Study Area – Joint Land Needs Analysis and Study



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

Barrie is forecast to experience significant population and employment growth to 2051. Other key findings from Stage 2 include:

Employment Area

- Barrie, Oro-Medonte, and Springwater collectively have sufficient designated Employment Area to 2051.
- However, Barrie faces a short-term shortage of “shovel-ready” employment parcels.
- Additional Employment Area may be needed in Springwater at full build out of the Midhurst Secondary Plan.

Community Area

- Oro-Medonte and Springwater have sufficient Community Area land to accommodate growth to 2051.
- Barrie does not have enough Community Area land to meet its 2051 population forecast based on expected densities.

Future Expansion

- Preliminary analysis indicates that future growth projected for Barrie may require up to 930 hectares of developable land (630 hectares for Community Areas, 300 hectares for Employment Areas).

B. Current Work: Identifying Locations and Servicing Needs for Additional Urban Lands

Stage 3, launched in March 2025, is being led by Hemson, supported by RV Anderson, North-South Environmental, and Orland Conservation. Building on the Stage 2 findings, this phase addresses two key questions:

1. **Where can additional urban land be accommodated within the Study Area?**
   - New greenfield lands
   - Existing lands designated for urban uses in Springwater and/or Oro-Medonte
   - A combination of both

2. **What are the infrastructure needs and environmental constraints?**
   - Evaluation of servicing needs (water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, electricity, and natural gas)
   - Identification of environmental features and constraints

It is important to note that as land supply in Barrie diminishes, growth in Barrie will slow, while growth in the Townships and the County will exceed current forecasts.

C. Next Steps

The following tasks are planned over the next two months:

- **Environmental mapping and constraint analysis** for potential Community and Employment Area expansion lands.

- **Servicing requirements and costing**, including water, wastewater, transportation, stormwater, as well as electricity, and natural gas. This work will, in particular, consider the option for servicing proposed development along Bayfield Street immediately north of the current Barrie/Springwater boundary.

- Continuing engagement with all parties over the coming weeks with a **Plenary Session** in September among the four municipalities to establish a framework agreement.

- **Reporting** on the results of the technical work completed by the consulting team. The preliminary findings of this technical work will be available for the September Plenary Session.