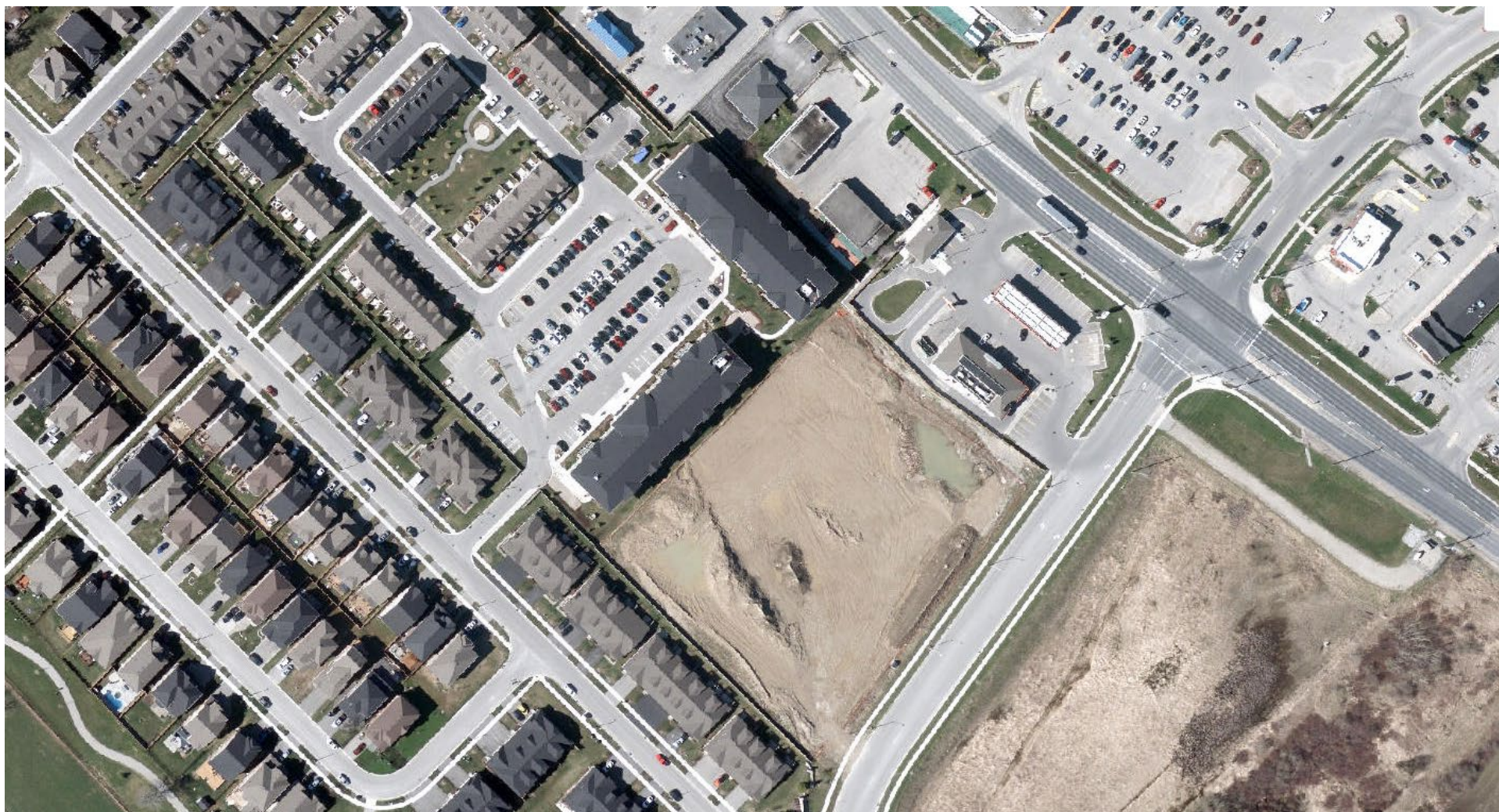




PLANWELL^{OM}

Wellington County Official Plan Review

Urban Boundary Expansion Review Framework



Urban Boundary Expansion Review Framework

County of Wellington

Context

By 2051, the Province expects the County to reach a population of at least 160,000 people and employment of at least 70,000 jobs. To manage this future growth, the County is required to follow a planning process to determine how and where population and employment growth will occur to promote healthy, compact and complete communities while incorporating planning, servicing and financing considerations.

Provincial guidance and requirements for planning for long term growth is found primarily in A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). The Growth Plan builds on the policy foundation of the Provincial Policy Statement but provides additional and more specific land use planning policies for places like Wellington County in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. Working in concert with the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan also provides policy direction in Erin and Puslinch for settlement areas and their expansion.

How to Grow?

The Provincial Growth Plan requires completion of a land needs assessment which determines whether a settlement (urban) boundary expansion is necessary. The County retained Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson) to address the growth management requirements related to the allocation of growth and determination of which municipalities need additional land. Based on the County's land needs assessment, urban expansions are required in Centre Wellington, Erin, Mapleton and Minto.

Where to Grow?

The Province lays out a comprehensive set of planning policies to guide and shape decision-making related to growth. The criteria in this document have been developed based on the land use policies and policy directions identified in the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), Growth Plan (2019, as amended), Greenbelt Plan (2017) and County of Wellington Official Plan. This document has also been informed by a best-practices review of other municipalities.

Hamlet expansion and other rural growth options are subject to different policies and will be part of a separate process.

How this document will be used

This document will be used to consider whether a given area is feasible for urban expansion. There are two steps to the process. Step 1 is the initial screening to remove unqualified municipal comprehensive review requests based on whether the proposed expansion area is in a municipality with a need for expansion.

Step 2 criteria will be used to assess the urban boundary and assist in evaluating the appropriateness and suitability of lands for boundary expansion. This step will be completed by an assessment team made up of County and Member Municipality staff and/or consultants together with input from Conservation Authorities, Source Water Protection staff and other specialized areas of expertise as needed.

The County has compiled an inventory of private landowner/developer for lands to be added urban areas. The submission window for new requests is now closed.



- If a property is included in the inventory, it does not necessarily mean it will be used for a future urban boundary expansion.
- If a property is not included in the inventory, it may still be identified for new growth as part of the review process.

In some cases, supportive planning documents were voluntarily submitted as an accompaniment to a request to be added to an urban area. Supplemental submissions will only be reviewed for context.

Step 1 Screening Criteria

A request must meet the criteria below to proceed to Step 2.

In Wellington County's Land Needs Assessment, is the proposed expansion area located in a Member Municipality with an identified need for urban expansion:

- ☐ Centre Wellington (community area and employment area)
- ☐ Erin (employment area)
- ☐ Mapleton (community area and employment area)
- ☐ Minto (community area)

Community Area (mainly residential, but also includes commercial, institutional or office uses)

Employment Area (Industrial lands)

Step 2 Evaluation Framework

The County of Wellington Official Plan Review is being completed under the “Plan Well” banner which includes three broad and interconnected theme areas: Sustain Well, Live Well and Grow Well. The following focus areas have been identified under the themes:



Agricultural Resources
Natural Heritage
Source Water
Aggregate Resources
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
Greenbelt Protection



Complete and Healthy
Communities



Water, Wastewater, Roads and
Financing
Growth Management





Each focus area has more detailed objectives which are associated evaluation criteria and measures. The evaluation criteria are based on the policy tests outlined in the Growth Plan and associated Provincial and County planning documents. The overall recommendation as to whether a given candidate expansion area is feasible for expansion will be based on the comprehensive application of all the criteria.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to scope the criteria due to the small scale of land needed in a given municipality, provided the overall policy intent is maintained. This document is not meant to limit the County or Member Municipalities from identifying local criteria and information that may also need to be considered.

Criteria marked with a magnifying glass:  highlight those which apply a climate lens.



1. Agricultural Resources


Objectives	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Protect prime agricultural area	 Prime agricultural areas should be avoided where possible. Where prime agricultural areas cannot be avoided, does the proposed expansion area contain lower priority agricultural lands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Based on evaluation of reasonable alternatives that avoid, minimize and mitigate the impact on prime agricultural areas. Where prime agricultural areas cannot be avoided, lower priority agricultural lands are to be used.
Minimize fragmentation of prime agricultural lands	 Is fragmentation of prime agricultural lands avoided/ minimized; and, are contiguous agricultural lands retained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of available mapping and data
Compliance with minimum distance separation formulae	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Are there existing livestock operations in proximity to the candidate area? Does the proposed expansion area comply with the minimum distance separation formulae?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of the distance between the candidate expansion area and existing agricultural operationsBased on the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formula with reference to OMAFRA's guideline
Minimize impact on the agri-food network including agricultural operations	 Does the candidate expansion area avoid/ minimize/ mitigate any adverse impacts on the agri-food network, including agricultural operations?  Would the proposed expansion negatively impact local food production, processing and distribution by increasing the length of trips (and greenhouse gas emissions) between farms, processing facilities, and grocery stores?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of impact on agricultural operations and farm markets within and in proximity to the candidate expansion areaQualitative assessment of location of existing agricultural assets



2. Natural Heritage and Water

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Enhance/ support water resource system	<p>🔍 Would the proposed expansion area (including any extension of water and wastewater services) avoid/ minimize/ mitigate any potential impacts on watershed conditions and the water resource system, including quality and quantity of water?</p> <p>🔍 What is the potential for impacts on key hydrologic areas? Are key hydrologic areas protected?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of available indicators of hydrologic function• Assessment of impacts to key hydrological areas
Avoid Provincial Natural Heritage System	<p>🔍 Does the proposed expansion area avoid the Provincial Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan mapping
Avoid and protect natural features and areas for the long term	<p>🔍 Does the proposed expansion area avoid and protect the Official Plan Greenlands System and the County-identified Natural Heritage System and/or maintain, restore or improve the functions of the area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of the designated Core Greenlands and Greenlands features and the County Natural Heritage System
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	<p>🔍 Does the proposed expansion area support nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation (e.g. prevent flooding, provide shade to mitigate impacts of heat, and sequester carbon)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available subwatershed studies• Input from Municipal staff on potential stormwater management constraints and opportunities and ability to implement best management practices



3. Source Water		
Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Source Water Protection - quality and quantity of municipal sources of drinking water	 Would the candidate expansion area create concerns or conflicts with the source protection plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Source protection plan and policies• Input from Source Water Protection staff
4. Aggregate Resources		
Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Protect mineral aggregate resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the candidate expansion area contain any deposits of mineral aggregate resources or are there any within 300 m?• Would development within the proposed expansion area preclude or hinder the expansion or continued use of any existing mineral aggregate operations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of aggregate resource areas (Mineral Aggregate Resource Overlay, Schedule D of County Official Plan)• Assessment of active mineral aggregate operations



5. Cultural Heritage and Archaeology






Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Support/protect cultural heritage resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would the proposed expansion area affect any significant built heritage resources or significant cultural heritage landscapes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of impacts to significant built heritage resources or significant cultural heritage landscapes• Input from Municipal staff with reference to available inventory and mapping of significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes and assessment of potential impact on such areas
Support/protect archaeological resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the archaeological potential of the candidate expansion area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening for archaeological resources through use of Provincial criteria for evaluating archaeological potential



6. Greenbelt Protection: Erin

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Support growth in Greenbelt Towns and Villages	🔍 Is the settlement area to be expanded identified in the Greenbelt Plan as a Town/Village?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hillsburgh and Erin Village are identified as a Town/Village in the Greenbelt Plan
Limited expansion of Greenbelt settlement areas	🔍 Would the proposed expansion be modest in size? (e.g. no more than a 5% increase in the size of Erin Village or Hillsburgh, up to a maximum size of 10 hectares and residential development would not be permitted on more than 50 per cent of the lands that would be added)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A maximum size of 10 hectares would apply to Hillsburgh and Erin VillageThe land needs assessment identified a need for 23 ha of additional employment area land (industrial) and did not identify a need for additional community area land (mainly residential, but also includes commercial, institutional or office uses)
Support complete communities/ local agricultural economy	🔍 Would the proposed expansion support the achievement of complete communities or support the local agricultural economy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See focus area 1 and 6
Optimize use of existing or planned infrastructure	🔍 Would the proposed expansion be serviced by existing municipal water and wastewater systems without impacting future intensification opportunities within the existing settlement area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See focus area 8
Protect Natural Heritage System	🔍 Would the proposed expansion area be outside of the Natural Heritage System in the Greenbelt Plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of the location of Natural Heritage System

6. Complete and Healthy Communities

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Diverse range and mix of housing options	 Can the expansion area provide for an appropriate density and mix of housing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the ability to support the greatest opportunity for an appropriate density and mix of housing
Mixed use and compact	 Can the expansion area function as a standalone complete community or provide for the completion of an existing community including an appropriate mix of housing, jobs, stores, transportation options, and public service facilities for all ages and abilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the ability to design the candidate expansion area as a complete community based on relative size and location
Improve transportation linkages and increase travel choices	 Would the proposed expansion area be served by and integrated with an existing or planned transportation network (e.g. roads, rail, bike lanes, multi-use trails and future transit) to increase travel choices?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing and planned transportation network Proximity to existing or planned pedestrian/trail or cycling network
Convenient access to necessities for daily living	 Would the proposed expansion area provide residents easy access to food, shelter, education, health care, arts and recreation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of proximity of candidate expansion area to existing urban boundary and any development constraints which may impact/limit connectivity opportunities
Provide integrated open space and parks	 Would the proposed expansion area be integrated with existing, or planned open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of proximity to existing parks, public facilities, amenities, etc.

6. Complete and Healthy Communities (continued)

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Prioritizing tree canopy protection/enhancement	<p>🔍 Does the candidate expansion area support the maintenance and enhancement of the existing tree canopy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of existing tree canopy and potential for maintenance and enhancement should a boundary expansion occur Based on input from Municipal staff with reference to available mapping
Support public health, active living, and personal safety	<p>🔍 Would the proposed expansion area contribute to a pattern of development that supports healthy and active living and mitigates public health risks?</p> <p>🔍 Would the proposed expansion area direct development away from hazardous lands?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to existing or planned pedestrian/trail or cycling network Assessment of identified hazardous lands, including but not limited to, areas subject to flood hazards and erosion hazards and hazardous sites that could be unsafe for development

7. Water, Wastewater, Roads and Financing

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Optimize use of existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there sufficient capacity in existing or planned municipal infrastructure (including road, water and wastewater) and public service facilities to accommodate the expansion area? Is there opportunity to effectively expand on existing and planned infrastructure established through approved master plans and related studies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level assessment of new infrastructure requirements based on input from Municipal staff and/or consultants Assessment of capacity in existing and planned water/wastewater systems (where available/applicable) based on input from Municipal staff and/or consultants
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on input from Municipal staff and with reference to Water/Wastewater Master Plan Best supports a sustainable, long term infrastructure planning strategy
Cost effective/ financially viable infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would the water/ wastewater/ transportation infrastructure needed be financially viable over the full life cycle of the assets? Are the public service facilities needed financially viable over the full life cycle of the assets? Does the proposed expansion area have an unreasonable or unanticipated financial impact on the municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative assessment of new infrastructure costs based on input from Municipal staff and/or consultants Assessment of infrastructure and public service facility requirements Based on input from Municipal staff High level assessment of potential financial impacts for proposed expansion areas Based on input from Municipal staff and if necessary, a Financial Impact Assessment

8. Growth Management

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Wise use and management of lands	<p>🔍 Does the candidate expansion area represent logical and orderly progression of urban development?</p> <p>🔍 Is the proposed expansion area contiguous with an existing urban area boundary?</p> <p>🔍 Would the timing of the proposed expansion adversely affect achievement of minimum density and intensification targets?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of proximity of the candidate expansion area to existing settlement area and any development constraints which may impact/limit connectivity • Proximity to existing urban area boundary in the County Official Plan • Based on input from Municipal staff and/or consultants and with reference to available Water/Wastewater Master Plan • Best supports a sustainable, long term infrastructure planning strategy
Sustainable and active transportation system	<p>🔍 Would the proposed expansion support other sustainable and active modes of travel, such as walking, cycling, and travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs?</p> <p>🔍 Would it support minimized vehicle kilometres travelled and help reduce growth of greenhouse gas emissions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to existing or planned pedestrian/trail or cycling network. • Review of existing and planned street network (where available/applicable) • Assessment of potential street connectivity and block size

8. Growth Management (continued)

Objective	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Measures/Data Sources
Protect or enhance employment areas, highway corridors and rail corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there potential for the candidate area to erode or enhance protection of existing employment areas, road and rail corridors? Would the proposed expansion area protect or enhance employment areas in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses that require those locations? Would the proposed expansion area help to provide sufficient land, in appropriate locations, to accommodate the County's employment growth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to existing or planned employment areas, road and rail corridors Assessment of how well the area/parcel can access a Provincial highway and whether it is in an area with the highest demand for employment area growth Assessment of location relative to existing employment areas Assessment of whether the candidate expansion area would have good road frontage and opportunity to subdivide
Consider local development conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any known cross-jurisdictional issues that may impact the viability of the land to be developed? (e.g. adjacent land use conflicts, transportation network, etc.) Are there constraints on the site area that would negatively impact the feasibility of the development of the site? (e.g. contaminated lands, existing uses, topography, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of adjacent lands and transportation networks Based on input from County and Municipal staff Based on input from Municipal staff