



Subject: City of Port Colborne Growth Analysis Review

To: Council

From: Development and Legislative Services Department

Report Number: 2023-158

Meeting Date: September 26, 2023

Recommendation:

That Development and Legislative Services Department – Planning Division Report 2023-158 be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Growth Analysis Review report prepared by Dillon Consulting (Appendix A). This report will be accompanied by a presentation by Dillon Consulting (Appendix B) on the findings of the report and recommendations for the City to best position the City to manage future residential and employment growth.

Background:

Dillon Consulting was retained by the City at the end of 2022 to conduct a review and analysis of the Region's Growth Projections for the City of Port Colborne to 2051. The Region had assigned the following to the City of Port Colborne as part of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review exercise (preparation of the Region's new Official Plan):

- A total population of 23,230 in 2051;
- A total employment of 7,550 in 2051;
- A total of 10,500 housing units in 2051, translating into an allocation of 2,300 housing units over the 2021-to-2051 period;
- An intensification target of 30% (690 units); and,
- A Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.

To reflect these Regional targets in the official plan for Port Colborne, the City must undertake their official plan conformity exercise in the short-term, as well as update their Development Charges (DC) By-law. This update would enable the City to fund and support infrastructure needs in the community.

Given the recent increase in building permit activity, *Planning Act* applications and development interest from landowners, there has been some concern that the allocations from the Region have generally underestimated the growth forecasts. This led to staff retaining Dillon Consulting to undertake a review and analysis of the Region's Growth Projections for the City.

Discussion:

The Growth Analysis Review report concludes that there is capacity within the City's existing urban area to accommodate a level of growth that exceeds the Region's 2051 forecast and that an urban area expansion is not necessary.

Within the existing urban area (comprised of the built-up area and designated greenfield areas), the City has land capacity for an additional **6,448 units** to be built. This equates to an increase in population for the City by approximately **16,000 residents**, if a person per unit ratio of 2.5 is used.

The five-year, new unit building permit average is 65 units per year. If the City is to grow at this relatively low pace, it would take approximately 99 years to build out all of the existing urban area land. If the City is to grow at a higher pace of 150 units per year, the lands would be fully developed in approximately 43 years. The attached report (Appendix A) details various growth scenarios, including an ultra-high scenario of 300 units a year (in which the supply would deplete in 22 years).

The report recommends that the following be implemented to adequately prepare and manage the anticipated future growth in the City:

1. Define and implement the City's vision for growth;
2. Establish a robust urban hierarchy that identifies priority areas for growth and an intensification strategy through the official plan review process;
3. Identify policy opportunities to diversify the City's housing stock;
4. Develop a framework for assessing compatibility of redevelopment and intensification at the periphery of identified Intensification Areas, Nodes, and Corridors and other priority areas for growth;
5. Align the employment lands planning framework with the economic development Strategy;
6. Build staff capacity; and
7. Monitor progress.

A number of these recommendations have been initiated or will be initiated shortly including reviewing the Official Plan and preparing a New Official Plan (consultation to start Fall 2023), updating the City's Development Charges By-law (the consultant has been retained and project kickoff meeting occurred earlier in September) and building staff capacity (position recruitment completed for a supervisor in the Planning Division to focus on development engineering).

Internal Consultations:

The Growth Analysis Review report in draft form was reviewed by staff in economic development, the Director of Corporate Services, and the Chief Administrative Officer.

Financial Implications:

The cost of the report has been accommodated as part of the 2022/2023 budget.

Additional costs needed to support the implementation of the seven recommendations would be brought forward to Council for consideration.

Public Engagement:

The final report will be shared with the development community, the Region, and other interested stakeholders.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Environment and Climate Change
 - Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
 - Economic Prosperity
 - Increased Housing Options
 - Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure
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Conclusion:

Staff will utilize the findings of the Growth Analysis Review report to inform several ongoing and future projects including preparing a new Official Plan, Updating the

Development Charges By-law, the Infrastructure Needs Study, the preparation of Secondary Plans undertaken by the development community, etc.

Appendices:

- a. City of Port Colborne Growth Analysis Review
- b. City of Port Colborne Growth Analysis Presentation to Council

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.