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REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 51 TOWN OF GEORGINA OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 97 KESWICK BUSINESS PARK SECONDARY PLAN

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

- 1. The communication dated October 2, 2006 and deputation by Matthew Cory, Malone Givens Parsons Ltd., representing Glenwoods Gateways Properties, be received; and**
- 2. The recommendations contained in the following report, September 22, 2006, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services, be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Commissioner of Planning and Development Services issue notice to adopt Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 51, appended as *Attachment 1*.
2. The Commissioner of Planning and Development Services be authorized to give notice to modify and approve the Georgina Official Plan Amendment No. 97, as set out in *Attachment 2* to this report.
3. York Region staff be authorized to appear at the Ontario Municipal Board in support of the Region's position, if required.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 51 and approval of Town of Georgina Official Plan Amendment No. 97 for the expansion of the Keswick urban area to facilitate the development of the Keswick Business Park.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Description of Requests

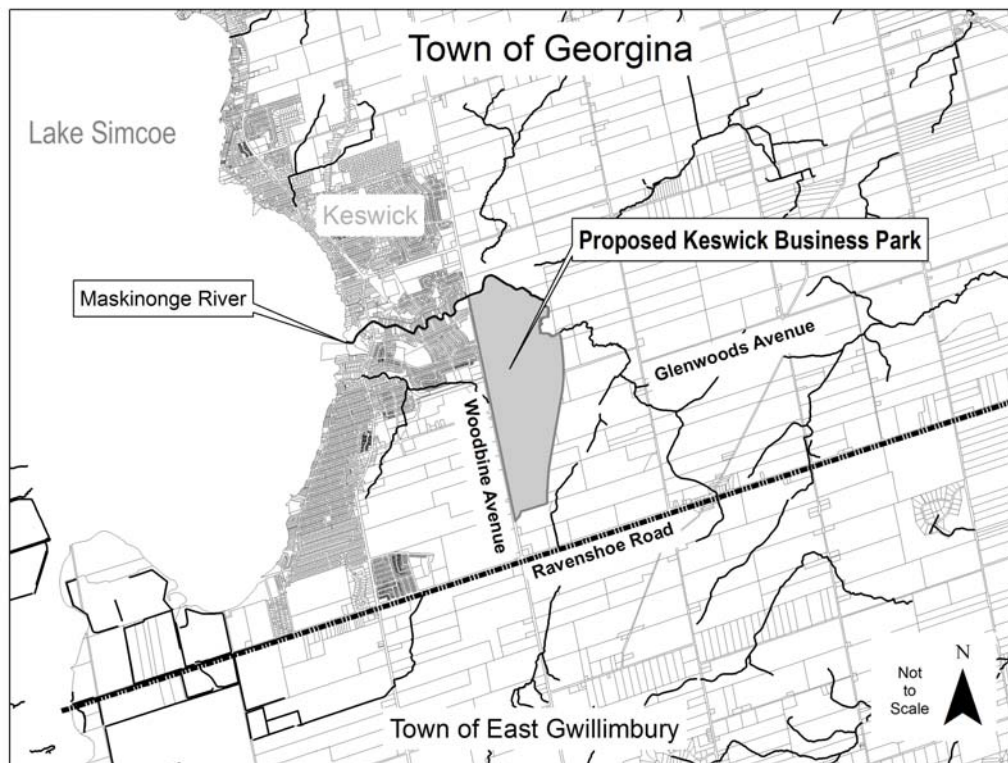
On June 26, 2006, the Town of Georgina adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 97 (OPA 97), which is referred to as the Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan.

The lands within the Keswick Business Park are currently designated “Agricultural Policy Area” in the Regional Official Plan and to conform to the York Region Official Plan, the Town of Georgina has applied for a Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) to expand the urban area of the community of Keswick.

The second request from the Town of Georgina is that the Region approve the adopted Secondary Plan (OPA 97). As noted on the attached schedules from OPA 97, the Plan proposes three (3) categories of Business Park land use in a business park setting (see *Attachment 3*).

3.2 Location

The lands comprise approximately 260 hectares (642 acres) and are located on the east side of Woodbine Avenue, north of Ravenshoe Road, on the easterly limits of the community of Keswick, in the Town of Georgina.



3.3 Public Meeting

The notice of the Public Meeting to amend the York Region Official Plan appeared in the Toronto Star and in the Georgina Advocate on Thursday August 17, 2006. In addition, notices were mailed to several public agencies and to everyone that had submitted a written request for notification. The Public Meeting was held on September 6, 2006.

Since the Public Meeting, the Town adopted several minor modifications to the proposed Secondary Plan; however, the modifications do not affect the request to amend the York

Region Official Plan and therefore a further Public Meeting is not required. The modifications are addressed in Section 4 of this report.

3.4 Provincial Consultation

Subsequent to the above noted Public Meeting, Regional staff has had discussions with representatives of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal with respect to the conformity of the proposed Secondary Plan and ROPA 51 to provincial policy.

With respect to the Growth Plan, Provincial staff indicated that the policies of the Growth Plan apply and that the following key areas of interest have been identified:

- **The Growth Plan requires an analysis of employment land needs at the regional market area to ensure that an over-designation of employment land does not occur.** It is important to note that one of the key goals of the Growth Plan is to create “complete communities” in which there is a balance of residential and employment uses. The York Region Vacant Employment Land Inventory identified that the majority of employment land is encumbered in the City of Vaughan and that the Town of Georgina has 0.0 hectares of registered unbuilt employment land. Thus, the Keswick Business Park is essential to satisfy the “complete community” goal of the Growth Plan for the northern portion of the Region including Georgina. The Region is also now in the process of creating a renewed employment land budget, acknowledging that the amount of employment land must be closely monitored and to further ensure that only appropriate dedication of employment land will occur.
- **The Growth Plan suggests that “major office” should be located in urban growth centres, major transit station areas, or areas with existing frequent transit service, or existing or planned higher order transit service.** Major office is defined as freestanding office buildings of 10,000 sq. m. (107,642 sq. ft.) or greater, or with 500 jobs or more. With respect to the Keswick Business Park, the locational characteristics that attract major office development are located within the Business Park 1 designation, which is only found abutting the future extension of Highway 404. Given that the extension of Highway 404 into Georgina is not within the current Growth Plan, and that the majority of the Business Park does not permit offices, it is not anticipated that major office will locate in the Keswick Business Park in the near future. Lastly, although Keswick is not identified as an Urban Growth Centre in the Growth Plan, it will form the major urban area for the northern portion of the Region.
- **The Growth Plan establishes a minimum density target that is not less than 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare.** With respect to the Keswick Business Park, the recent environmental assessment (EA) for the expansion of the Keswick Water Pollution Control Plant used an estimate of 49 jobs per hectare and therefore, when combined with the residential population, the density target of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare will likely be exceeded.

In addition to the above, Provincial staff wanted to ensure the Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan conformed to the Greenbelt Plan (refer to Section 4.1) and that the Inter-governmental Action Plan (IGAP) process was properly addressed (refer to Section 4.7).

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The proposed ROPA 51 and Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan (OPA 97) have been through a comprehensive public process, conform to Provincial policy, and represent good planning.

Planning matters considered in this section include the following:

- Conformity with the Greenbelt Plan.
- Consistency with the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement.
- Consistency with the policies of the York Region Official Plan.
- Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Comments.
- Impact of the proposal on the Assimilative Capacity of Lake Simcoe.
- The provision of Regional infrastructure.
- Modifications to the Secondary Plan.
- Fiscal impact.

4.1 The Greenbelt Plan

In February of 2005, the Province released its Greenbelt Plan, which designated the subject lands “Protected Countryside”. The Business Park lands are outside of the Keswick settlement area and the Greenbelt Plan prohibits the expansion of settlement areas into the non-settlement areas.

However, Section 3.4.4 of the Greenbelt Plan states that “Where a municipality had initiated the consideration of a settlement expansion prior to the date this Plan came into effect, such an expansion may be considered through the municipality’s exercise to bring its official plan into conformity with this Plan as described in the municipal implementation policies of Section 5.2.” To qualify under Section 3.4.4, a proposed expansion of the settlement area must:

- a. Have been initiated prior to December 16, 2003 and be supported by:
 - i. A council resolution authorizing the consideration of such an expansion; and
 - ii. The substantial completion of background studies or reports by municipal staff or planning consultants, or the expenditure of municipal funds on the consideration of such an expansion.
- b. Not extend into the Natural Heritage System;
- c. Not extend into specialty crop areas; and,
- d. Maintain the rural and/or existing character of the settlement area.

Regarding a), the Town of Georgina adopted a Council resolution initiating the Keswick Secondary Plan Review in August of 2002. The Terms of Reference for the Review included the requirement to develop a detailed land use and urban design development strategy for the east side of Woodbine Avenue.

With respect to criteria b), although OPA 97 includes the greenlands of the Maskinonge River and the settlement area extends into the Natural Heritage System in a minor fashion, the extension is based upon scientific criteria. The Town has done extensive environmental analysis to ensure that the limit of development is accurately reflected in accordance with the policies of the Greenbelt Plan.

With respect to criteria c) and d), the proposal does not extend into specialty crop areas and maintains the existing urban character of the Keswick Community.

With respect to the municipal implementation policies of Section 5.2 referred to above, municipalities are required to amend their official plan(s) to conform to the Greenbelt Plan at such time as the municipality is required to do its five (5) year Official Plan Review. The subject request to expand the urban area is essentially considered the first phase of the Greenbelt conformity exercise and is within the intent of Section 3.4.4 of the Greenbelt Plan.

At the public meeting of September 6, 2006, a question was raised with respect to whether there is a Regional Council resolution for the ROPA. As part of York Region's comments to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the proposed Greenbelt legislation, Regional Council, by resolution, requested that the Province "exclude the Keswick Business Park Study Area from the Greenbelt Plan to permit the Regional and Local Planning process to proceed". In addition, discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirm that the intent of Section 3.4.4 is to ensure that a resolution of Council was passed at the level of government at which the urban expansion exercise began, as is the case with Georgina Council and the Keswick Business Park Amendment.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to meet the intent of Section 3.4.4 and is considered to conform to the Greenbelt Plan.

4.2 Provincial Policy Statement

Section 4.3.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement states that Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness through:

- an appropriate mix and range of employment;
- opportunities for a diversified economic base;
- protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses; and
- ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided.

The Keswick Business Park assists the Town in satisfying the employment requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement.

4.3 York Region Official Plan

Section 5 of the York Region Official Plan is entitled *Regional Structure and Growth Management*. The regional structure is an articulation of where and how the Region will grow. It is a statement of where agriculture and natural areas will be, what form our communities will take and how they will be serviced by roads, transit, sewers and water pipes. The OP recognizes that there is opportunity in York Region to balance the protection of the natural environmental system and agricultural lands, while accommodating urban growth.

Section 5.2 – *Community Building* recognizes that managed growth in new development areas is important in achieving sustainable urban growth over the long term. The policies of the Plan are intended to promote communities that are diverse and self-contained with opportunities to work, enjoy recreation and be housed. The Plan states that “the concentration of residents and jobs at specific locations is important to provide opportunities to live and work in the same area...”. The characteristics of well designed and managed communities are detailed in a number of development criteria which are found in the policies of Section 5.2. The relevant criteria are discussed in the sections below.

4.3.1 ROP Policy 5.2.2 – Growth Management Strategies

A review of this section of the Region’s Official Plan can be found in Section 4.3 of the report attached as *Attachment 4*.

4.3.2 ROP Policy 5.2.3 – Urban Expansion

Policy 5.2.3 requires an amendment to the York Region Official Plan for any expansion of an urban area and sets out the following criteria which the amendment shall be consistent with:

- a) regional population and employment forecasts
- b) the need for expansion relative to other lands available for development in the area municipality
- c) the role of the new development lands identified in the area municipal growth management strategies
- d) the capability of the area municipality to provide growth within the urban area
- e) an analysis of options for growth direction and sequencing with respect to environment, agriculture and the implications on the availability of servicing including water, sewer, road and transit networks and human services
- f) the protection of and integration with the Regional Greenlands System
- g) the amendment is large enough (i.e. a concession block) with clear and identifiable boundaries, such as concession roads, major natural features, rail or major utility corridors, to assess the creation of new communities at the regional level

- h) the role of the development lands is supportive of an urban structure of centres and corridors with transit-supportive densities
- i) the other policies of this Plan.

Policies 5.2.3 a) to d) are reviewed in Section 4.4 of *Attachment 4*. However, with respect to Policy 5.2.3 c) it is important to recognize the importance of the role of the subject lands for employment uses. The Keswick Business Park will function as an important employment node in the northern portion of the Region. The substantive regional role of this employment centre has therefore been reaffirmed through a proposed modification to OPA 97, as set out in Section 4.6 of this report. Lastly, any proposal to change the designation of the lands from employment uses is strongly discouraged and would require a comprehensive Regional analysis.

Policy 5.2.3 e) is discussed in Sections 4.4 and 4.8 of this report. With respect to policy 5.2.3 f), the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority has participated in the review of the proposed Secondary Plan and, as noted in Section 4.4, the LSRCA is satisfied that the Regional Greenlands will be properly protected through the policies and requirements of the Secondary Plan. With respect to policy 5.2.3h, Keswick is not considered to be a Local Centre.

Therefore, the proposed OPA 97 is considered to conform to Section 5.2.3 of the Region Official Plan.

4.3.3 ROP Policy 5.2.7 – Secondary Plans

Policy 5.2.7 requires the preparation of comprehensive secondary plans for new areas of development based on several criteria. The relevant criteria with respect to the Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan are discussed below:

- a) the plans are generally for large contiguous blocks of land, approximately concession blocks of 400 hectares (1,000 acres)
- b) the areas encompass one or more communities
- d) the development includes continuous mid-concession block collector roads that run both north-south and east-west where possible and/or a grid system of roads
- j) the incorporation of the Regional Greenlands System into the community plan and the inclusion of pedestrian-accessible green space and local parks
- l) the completion of an environmental analysis which includes examination of natural functions, attributes and linkages, as well as cultural heritage resources
- n) a road system which is linked with the regional road system and is generally designed to incorporate road patterns that offers a choice of routes and flexibility
- o) population and employment targets for the area municipality
- q) urban design criteria that promotes pedestrian safety and comfort; attractive buildings, landscaping, and public streetscapes; compatibility; and appropriate building placement and orientation
- r) other policies of the Plan (Policy 5.2.7).

With respect to policy 5.2.7 a) and b), the Secondary Plan covers a large contiguous block of land that is approximately 260 hectares (642 acres) in area.

With respect to policies 5.2.7 d) and n), the plan calls for two (2) north/south collector roads, one of which has a connection to Woodbine at both the south end of the Park and at the north end of the Park. In addition, there are two (2) east/west collector roads and a proposed arterial road (Glenwoods Ave.), thereby forming a grid system of roads. The road system is also linked with Woodbine in six (6) possible locations.

With respect to policy 5.2.7 j), although the Regional Greenlands have been included within the Secondary Plan, the lands are not included in the urban settlement area. By including the Greenlands within the boundary of the Secondary Plan, a “Primary Trail Network” which accesses the Greenlands System has been identified; a multi-use trail system that could accommodate various users in a connected pathway that could potentially connect with other parks and pathways such as the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail and the Nokiidaa Trail.

Policy 5.2.7 l) requires the completion of an environmental analysis. As part of the Keswick Business Park interdisciplinary team, LGL Environmental Research Associates completed an environmental analysis that forms part of the background reports to the Secondary Plan. The LSRCA has requested that this report be enhanced in certain areas; however, the LSRCA is generally satisfied with the work done to date. In addition, the Secondary Plan requires the completion of detailed Environmental Impact Statements prior to the approval of any development application.

With respect to policy 5.2.7 q), the Town has created a set of Urban Design Guidelines that set out direction for both private sector developers and the Town by establishing design criteria for each specific Business Park land use designation as well as criteria for public realm streetscape, landscaping and stormwater management pond landscaping.

With respect to policy 5.2.7 r), the Regional Official Plan emphasizes the importance of creating a balanced community that provides the opportunity to work and live in the same community. The Business Park provides this kind of opportunity.

The Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan is considered to be an essential component in the fabric of the Keswick community, in particular, and the Town of Georgina in general. The Plan is considered to be in conformity with the policies of the York Region Official Plan and the Park is acknowledged to be an important regional employment area.

4.4 Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Comments

In June of 2006, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) provided an extensive comment letter to the Town of Georgina with respect to the proposed Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan. The letter made reference to several issues, including the following:

- Land uses at the south end of the Business Park Study Area
- Land uses adjacent to the Maskinonge River
- Timing of the creation of standards for passive recreational facilities
- Natural Heritage System policy clarity
- Hydrogeology Review policies
- Greenbelt policy inclusions.

Subsequently, Town and Regional staff met with the LSRCA to review the issues. Staff agreed that many of the matters can be addressed through updates to the background reports and detailed work at the Master Environmental Servicing Plan stage, while others require minor modifications to the proposed Secondary Plan.

These modifications have been prepared by the Town and are included in *Attachment 2*.

4.5 Town Modifications to OPA 97

On August 28, 2006, Georgina Council recommended several minor modifications to the plan. Although most of the modifications are “housekeeping” in nature and are attached as *Attachment 2*, there are a few modifications that affect Region and LSRCA matters as noted below:

4.5.1 Land Use Conversion/Urban Service Boundary Amendments

On advice from the Town solicitor, the Town has modified the wording of Section 9.4.7.4.3 to “tighten up” the land use policies to protect and preserve the employment designation by not supporting the conversion of employment lands to residential, retail commercial, or any other use not permitted by the Plan.

Given the importance of the employment lands as discussed throughout this report, this modification is supported.

4.5.2 Phasing

Policies b) and c) of Section 9.4.7.1.2 of OPA 97 deal with phasing and caps regarding specific traffic thresholds. Staff of the Town and York Region have agreed to remove earlier specific phasing numbers, provided there is a policy that will ensure an adequate road system will be in place to service each phase of the proposed business park development. To this end, new wording is recommended that requires a Traffic Impact Assessment or Study of the internal and external road network prior to draft plan or site plan approval. In addition, the policies now note that the traffic impact studies identify and assess the feasibility and impact of implementing travel demand management measures (promoting public transit).

4.6 York Region Modifications to OPA 97

In addition to the above noted Town requested modifications, York Region is recommending the following modifications to OPA 97.

4.6.1 Regionally Significant Employment Node

As discussed in Section 4.3.2 of this report, the substantive regional role of this employment node should be reaffirmed through a modification to OPA 97. Therefore, it is recommended that the words “will function in northern York Region as a key regional employment centre, and” be added to the “Purpose” Section (9.4.1.1 a) so that it reads as follows:

- “9.4.1.1 a) The Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan will function in northern York Region as a key regional employment centre, and will also provide an opportunity to further the contribution of businesses to the economic well being of the Town of Georgina. ...”

In addition, there is a further opportunity to begin to investigate the merits of a “Regional Employment” designation to establish the primacy of employment-generating land uses within the Urban Area. The lands subject to this proposed ROPA may be a candidate for such a future designation.

4.6.2 Woodbine Avenue and Glenwoods Avenue

In May of 2006, the Region sent comments, including modifications to the draft OPA, to the Town with respect to the design of Woodbine Avenue and the re-alignment of Glenwoods Avenue. Due to time constraints, the modifications were not included in the final version of the OPA and therefore, the modifications have been included as Points 32 to 34 inclusive in *Attachment 2* and have been agreed to by Georgina staff.

4.6.3 Highway 404 Extension

Section 9.4.4.1 (b) of OPA 97 recognizes that the timing of the extension of Highway 404 north of Ravenshoe Road is not anticipated for development within the 30 year timeframe of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As the timing of the extension of Highway 404 and the construction of a future interchange is unknown and subject to a future environmental assessment, additional policies must be added to the plan to ensure that development of the Business Park shall not preclude the ultimate construction of the Highway. It is recommended that a new section be added to the end of Section 9.4.4.2 as follows:

- “9.4.4.2.5 a) The proposed Highway 404 and Glenwoods Avenue interchange shown on Schedule L1 – Land Use + Transportation, is conceptual and shall be subject to further review through an Environmental Assessment to be undertaken. Notwithstanding this, the Town shall require that sufficient lands shall be reserved to accommodate the interchange through the development approval process for the lands in the area of the interchange.
- b) Development of the lands in the vicinity of the Highway 404 interchange may only receive development approval following determination of land and design requirements for the interchange, or if the proponent of the development can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Province and the

Town, that sufficient lands to accommodate the interchange have been provided or reserved through the development approval process, and that development on adjacent lands will not compromise the potential for future construction of a full interchange at Highway 404 and Glenwoods Avenue.”

4.7 Impact of the Proposal on the Assimilative Capacity of Lake Simcoe

As part of the work being undertaken to support the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Keswick Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) expansion, modelling using the CANWET model, developed through the Assimilative Capacity Study (ACS) for Lake Simcoe and the Nottawasaga River, has been used to test the impact of the Keswick Business Park on Lake Simcoe. The preliminary results of the modelling indicate that the development of the Keswick Business Park will result in a predicted net decrease in phosphorous loading in the Maskinonge and Kettle Creek watersheds. Further reduction to the phosphorous loading is likely through refined modelling using more detailed land use analysis and best management practices (Stormwater Management).

It is also noted that the EA for the WPCP is ongoing and the Region is working toward meeting the directives of the Provincial ministries. The conclusions of the CANWET modelling will be of assistance to the Province in their review and approvals.

4.8 Regional Infrastructure

The York Region Official Plan requires urban expansion amendments to be consistent with an analysis of options for growth direction and sequencing with respect to environment and the implications on the availability of servicing. The environment has been comprehensively reviewed and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is satisfied with the modifications to the Plan, as noted in Section 4.4.

With respect to the availability of services, including water, sewer, roads, and transit, these have been addressed and form part of the attached fiscal impact analysis (*Attachment 5*). The full build-out of the area will require the completion of the Joe Dales Pumping Station and Forcemain, the Keswick Water Pollution Control Plant Phase 1 and 2 Expansion, and additional water supply from the Georgina Phase 2 Water Treatment Plant Expansion, the Woodbine Avenue/Ravenshoe Road Watermain and the Keswick North Elevated Tank and Watermain.

5. FINANCIAL IMPACT

A summary fiscal impact review of the Keswick Business Plan indicates that the proposed development within the Secondary Plan will not adversely impact the Regional tax rate (tax levy). There is major infrastructure required within the OPA which is part of the broader system of Regional service improvements that have been identified in long term servicing master plans. The cost of these Regional works are scheduled to be recovered through the uniform Region wide development charge, based on the growth anticipated to occur within the Region.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Town of Georgina has adopted the Keswick Business Park Secondary Plan (OPA 97). The approval of ROPA 51 will expand the urban area and thereby facilitate the development of the OPA 97 lands for a business park, providing new live/work opportunities in the Georgina community.

7. CONCLUSION

Approval of ROPA 51 and the Town of Georgina's OPA 97 will facilitate the development of the Keswick Business Park.

OPA 97 was prepared on the basis of public input and an analysis of the Region's and the Town's employment lands needs analysis. ROPA 51 and OPA 97 are consistent with the Province's Greenbelt Plan, Places to Grow Plan, Provincial Policy Statement and the Regional Official Plan. The proposed amendments represent good planning and therefore, it is recommended that ROPA 51 be adopted and OPA 97, as modified, be approved.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)