

March 21, 2024

Municipal Services Office – Central Ontario  
16th Floor – 777 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2J3  
-- Sent Via Email --

Attn: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Re: Get It Done Act, 2024 – Amending the Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023 (ERO #019-8273)**

Please accept this submission as our formal comments and requests related to proposed changes to the legislatively approved Official Plan for the City of Barrie as outlined in ERO # 019 – 8273.

We would like to thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting. Evans Planning and Innovative Planning Solutions jointly represent the Wellington Street West Landowner's Group. The parcels of land within the ownership of represented landowners are located at southeast corner of Wellington Street West, north of Donald Street, west of Eccles Street North and east of Anne Street North with the following municipal addresses: 121, 125, 126, 128, 135, 165, 200 Wellington St West and 120 Donald Street (the 'Subject Lands'). The Subject Lands are outlined on the map below.

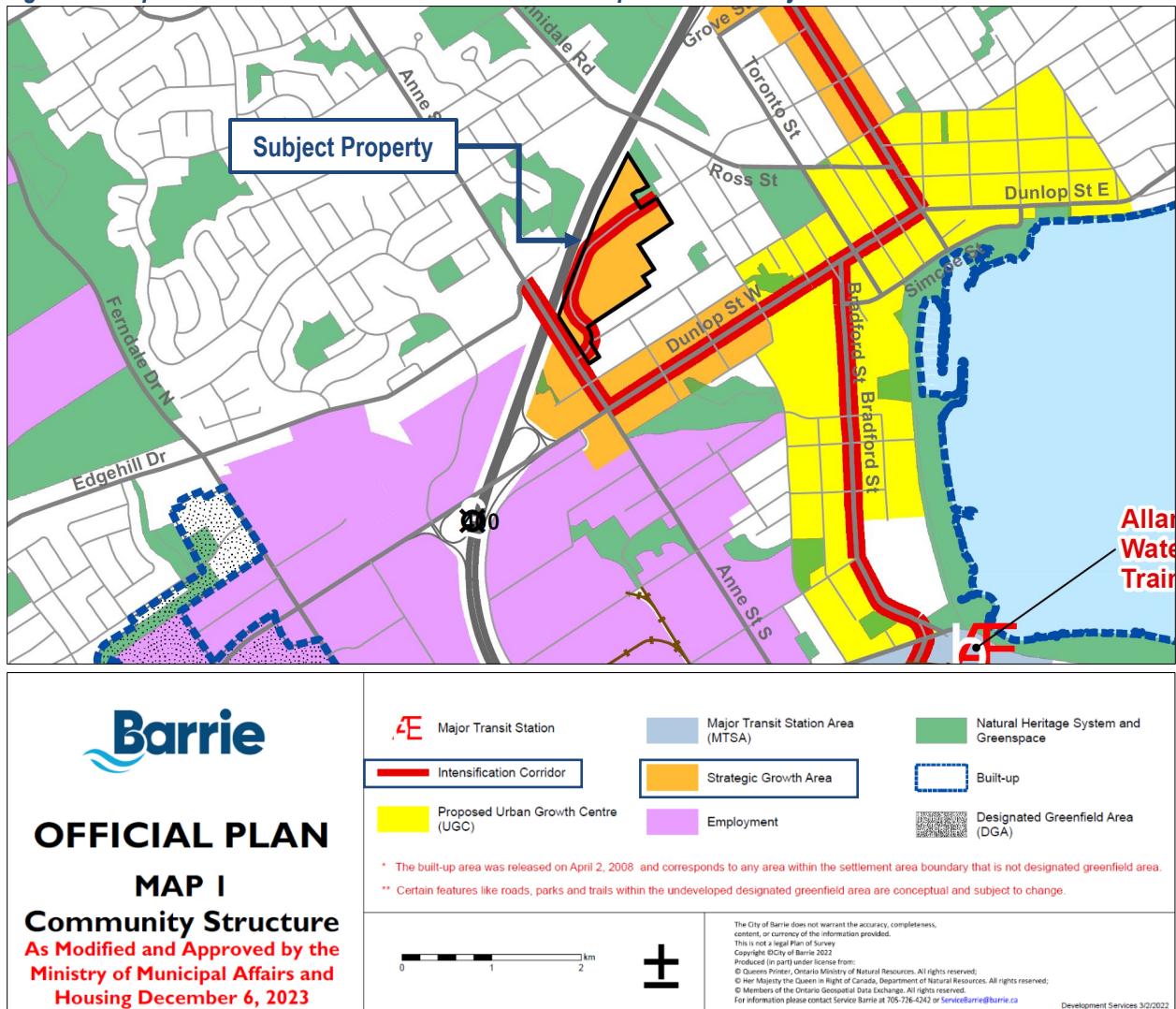
**Figure 1: Location of Subject Lands**



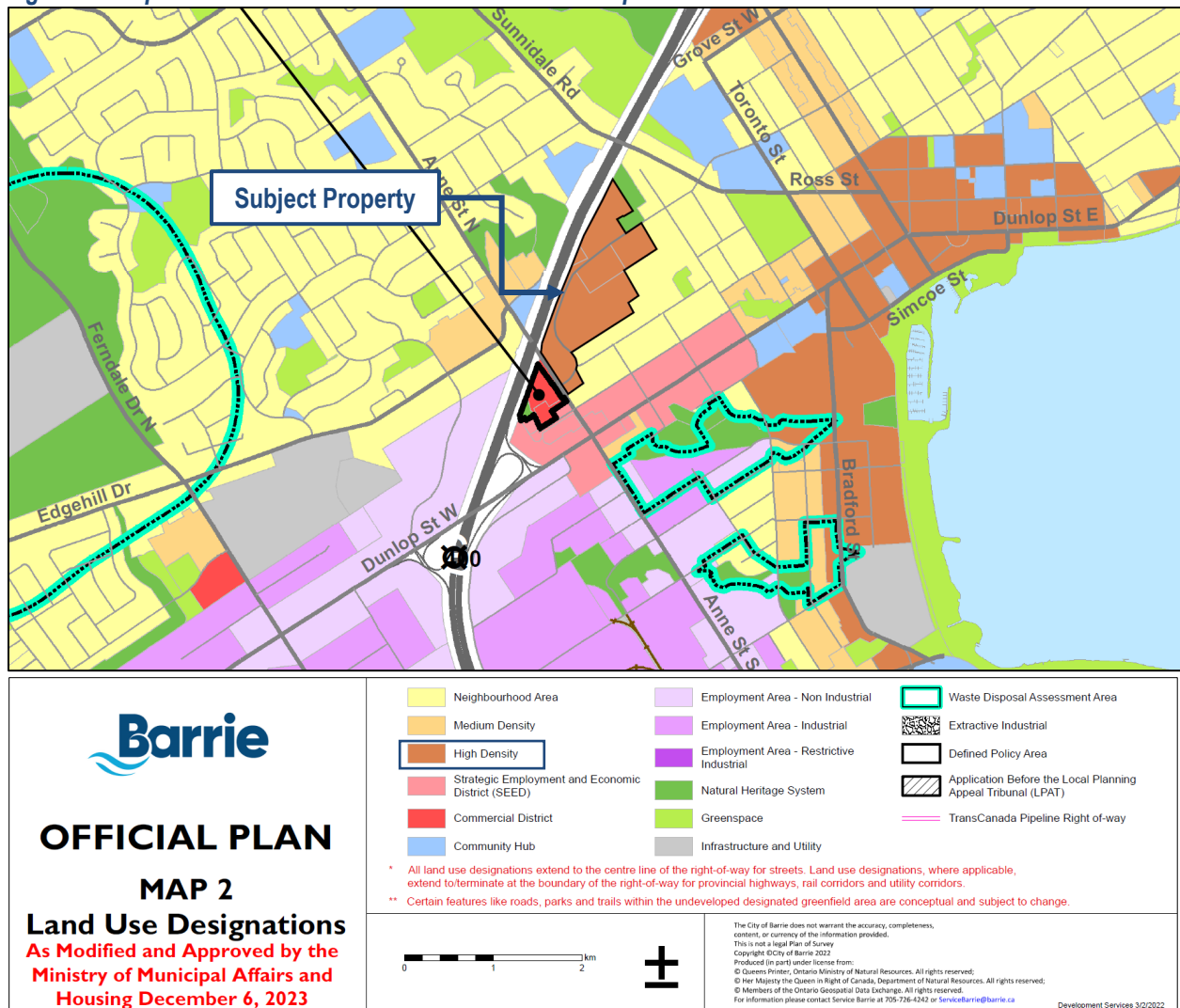
These lands represent 11.5 hectares, located adjacent to Highway 400 and 1 km west of the city's Urban Growth Centre. The Subject Lands presently consist of mid-rise buildings and commercial retail plazas with large surface parking areas.

The purpose of this correspondence is to request that the Ministry redesignate the Subject Lands as a *Strategic Growth Area (SGA)* and add an *Intensification Corridor* designation to Wellington Street West on Map 1 of the Official Plan (Community Structure) (as outlined in Figure 2 below). Further, that the Official Plan Map 2 (Land Use) be modified by establishing a *High Density* designation on the entirety of the Subject Lands (as outlined in Figure 3).

**Figure 2: Proposed Amendment to Barrie Official Plan Map 1 – Community Structure**



**Figure 3: Proposed Amendment to Barrie Official Plan Map 2 – Land Use**



Mayor Alex Nuttall responded to the legislation that reversed changes to the City of Barrie Official Plan in a December 6 submission, which included our ambitious proposal to build more housing in the city (Appendix 3). Minister Calandra stated when the legislation was introduced, “I look forward to receiving feedback from our municipal partners about changes to the original official plans and amendments. As they prepare this feedback, and in the spirit of being more ambitious, I am urging our municipal partners to prioritize increasing density, especially near transit.” Upon receipt of our verbal submission at the City of Barrie town hall on November 22, 2023, Mayor Nuttall said that this proposal fell into the ‘new good ideas’ category.

The proposal for the Subject Lands takes an underutilized parcel and creates opportunities to provide housing and jobs to people close to the Highway 400 corridor, on two existing public transit routes, less than 1km from the downtown and less than 3km from the Allandale GO Train Station. This neighbourhood is currently serviced by a grocery store, two pharmacies, medical clinics, banks, shops, and restaurants. It is within walking distance of an elementary school – the only school in Barrie that is not at capacity, and a high school. Water, wastewater, and all other critical infrastructure is in place at this location to service new homes.

Concentrating development near highways and in downtown areas enhances accessibility and connectivity for residents, facilitating convenient access to employment, amenities, services, and public transportation networks. By fostering mixed – use developments in these locations, we can create dynamic urban environments that cater to diverse needs and preferences, fostering social interaction, cultural vitality and economic opportunity meeting all of the objectives of the SGA designation in the City’s Official Plan.

In addition, designating land for higher density in central locations including the Subject Lands presents an opportunity to address the pressing need for affordable housing in Barrie. By allowing for the construction of multi-unit residential buildings and mixed-use developments, we can expand housing options in both rental and ownership tenure, creating opportunities for first time buyers, seniors wishing to downsize, and families seeking more attainable accommodation.

The Mayor and council recognize the housing challenges faced by the city and the unique potential that the Subject Lands provide in creating vibrant communities and meeting provincial housing targets. Anticipating a change in designation from the Provincial Government based on the Mayor’s submission to the Minister, Barrie City Council introduced and unanimously passed a time sensitive motion on February 28, 2024 as inserted below (Figure 3).

**Figure 4: City Council Motion Decision**

**DIRECT MOTIONS**

**24-A-024**      **MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE - MASTER PLANS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF WELLINGTON STREET AND BAYFIELD STREET**

Moved by      Deputy Mayor, R. Thomson  
 Seconded by:    Councillor, C. Nixon

That pursuant to Section 7.1 of the Procedural By-law 2019-100, permission be granted to introduce a motion without notice concerning the Master Plans for the revitalization of Wellington Street and Bayfield Street.

**CARRIED BY A TWO-THIRDS VOTE**

**24-A-025**      **MASTER PLANS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF WELLINGTON STREET AND BAYFIELD STREET**

Moved by      Deputy Mayor, R. Thomson  
 Seconded by:    Councillor, C. Nixon

1.      That staff prepare two Master Plans for the revitalization of Wellington Street and one for Bayfield Street and report back to the Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee.
2.      That should any of this work need to be outsourced it be funded from the Tax Capital Reserve at a cost not to exceed \$250,000.
3.      That any Provincial or Federal grant or funding received be allocated as appropriate to this project.

**CARRIED**

Mayor Nuttall stated in correspondence dated March 9, 2024, 'We are certainly moving forward in the same direction to increase density and create a Wellington West plan. We are working to fast track as well and support your ideas.' This direct motion is designed to advance planning that will be supported by amendments to the Official Plan as per this request. A Provincial amendment to the Official Plan will streamline the implementation process of the above council motion.

The Subject Lands meet all of the criteria outlined in the City of Barrie Official Plan as they relate to Strategic Growth Areas and Intensification Corridors. The vision of the Subject Lands as outlined in our proposal (Appendix A) achieves the goals the City wishes to pursue. Setting apart the Subject Lands and the areas which the Official Plan presently designates as SGA and Intensification Corridors is the land owners expressed an interest in redeveloping their lands in accordance with an amended designation.

Building 1.5 Million homes in Ontario by 2031 is, according to Minister Calandra's own comments in Barrie on March 15, 'aggressive', although achievable with the effort of the development community and the assistance of municipalities. It is imperative to 'remove obstacles getting in the way of putting shovels in the ground.' Minister Calandra said in Barrie, 'the development community said to us two things, certainty and certainty, certainty of time and certainty of cost. Give us that and we'll get shovels in the ground.'

By amending the City of Barrie Official Plan to include the Subject Lands as SGA and Wellington Street West as an Intensification Corridor, the Province will create certainty for this group of land owners, creating confidence to invest in zoning by-law amendments, required studies, and a planning process that will result in homes being built in Barrie. An amendment to the Official Plan at this stage cuts red tape and gets us one step closer to getting shovels in the ground. The proposal to amend the Subject Lands to a Strategic Growth Area Designation and Wellington Street West as an Intensification Corridor meets the objectives of both the City and the Province. The plans align with sustainable transit focused development of complete communities that take advantage of existing infrastructure. The lands create opportunities to develop a range of housing types, tenures, and price points. This proposal has been requested by the Mayor in his December 6, 2023 submission to the Province, was reconfirmed by a direct motion of council on February 28, 2024 and further through the Mayor's March 9, 2024 correspondence.


Through this amendment the Ministry has a unique opportunity to provide certainty to this group of landowners and encourage the ambitious proposal that they have prepared in accordance with Provincial direction to Build More Homes Faster and the Ministers comments related to the types of proposals he hoped municipal partners would advance through this process. The landowners group is asking for the Province's assistance so that we can Get it Done in Barrie.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or to discuss our proposal further.

Sincerely,



**Adam Layton, RPP, MCIP**  
**Evans Planning**



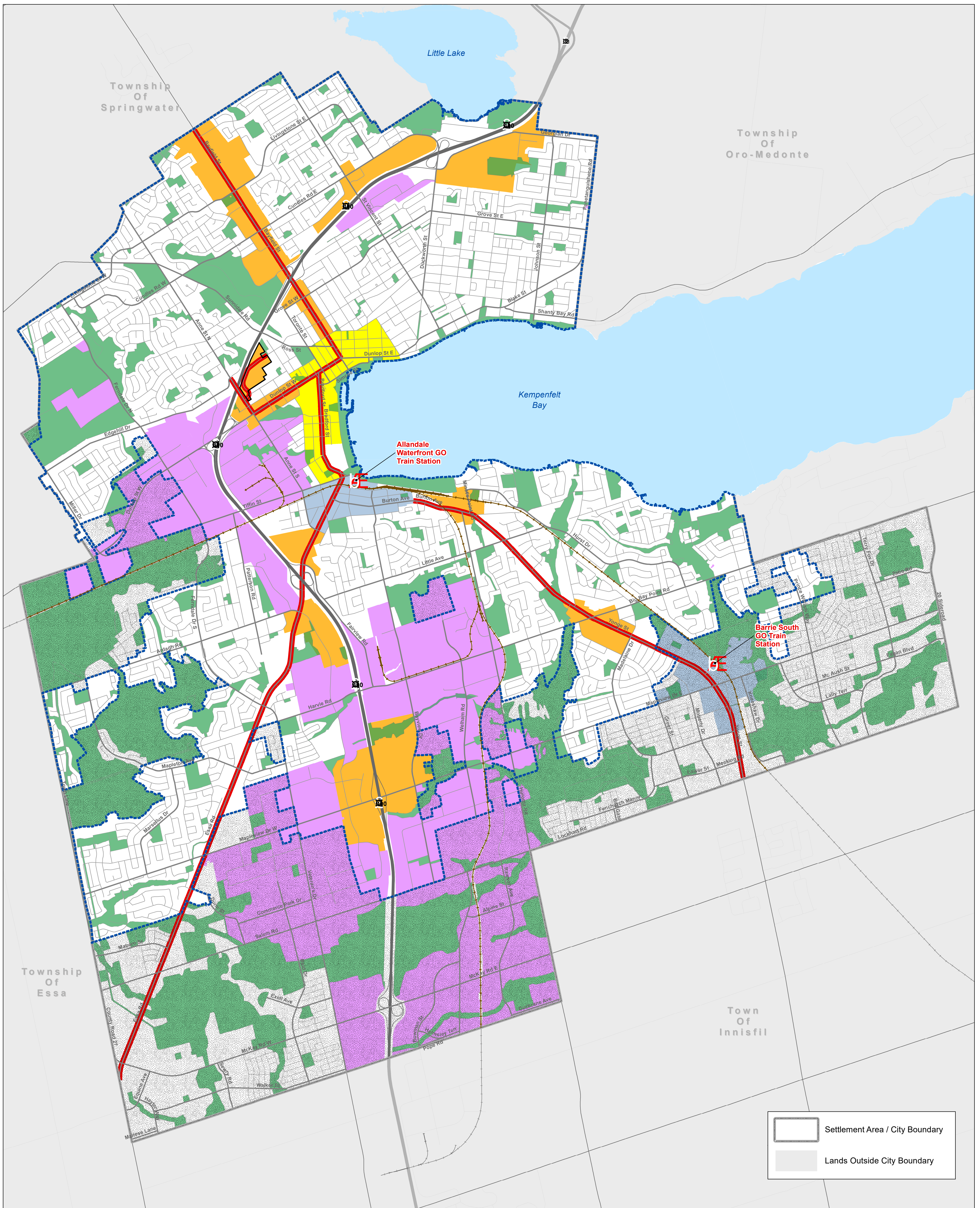
**Cameron Sellers, B.B.A**  
**Innovative Planning Solutions**


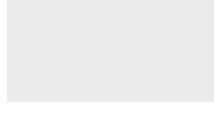


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Appendix 1:  
Proposed Amendment to Barrie Official Plan Map 1 – Community Structure

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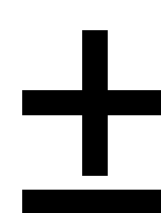
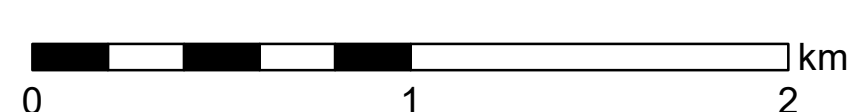
 Settlement Area / City Boundary  
 Lands Outside City Boundary



**OFFICIAL PLAN**  
**MAP I**  
**Community Structure**  
 As Modified and Approved by the  
 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and  
 Housing December 6, 2023

-  Major Transit Station
-  Major Transit Station Area (MTSA)
-  Natural Heritage System and Greenspace
-  Intensification Corridor
-  Strategic Growth Area
-  Built-up
-  Proposed Urban Growth Centre (UGC)
-  Employment
-  Designated Greenfield Area (DGA)

\* The built-up area was released on April 2, 2008 and corresponds to any area within the settlement area boundary that is not designated greenfield area.  
 \*\* Certain features like roads, parks and trails within the undeveloped designated greenfield area are conceptual and subject to change.



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