

Report to Council

<u>Subject</u>	Long Term Growth Management Strategy, Phase 1 & 2 Growth Analysis and Urban Land Needs Report
<u>Department</u>	Infrastructure Services
<u>Division</u>	Planning
<u>Report #</u>	INS-2026-025
<u>Meeting date</u>	April 13, 2026

Recommendations

That report INS-2026-025, Long Term Growth Management Strategy, Phase 1 & 2 Growth Analysis and Urban Land Needs Report, be received.

Overview

In 2022, the County of Dufferin completed a Land Needs Assessment (County LNA) as part of its Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan. The County LNA identified future growth for Orangeville (and other Dufferin municipalities) and calculated the amount of land needed to accommodate that growth, according to existing vacant land available and future development opportunity within the Town's boundaries. Major land need shortfalls were identified for the Town to accommodate its forecasted growth over the next 30-year planning horizon. Since any expansions to the Town's settlement area boundary would equal an expansion of the Town's corporate boundary, this process can take many years. The Town must now begin to plan for how it will accommodate long-term future growth to ensure land needs and required infrastructure upgrades are proactively met.

A consulting team (Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. and J.L. Richards & Associates Limited) has been retained to prepare a long-term Growth Management Strategy (GMS) to identify long-term population and employment growth and related land needs for the Town over the next 30 and 50-year planning horizons. The strategy will identify how and where the Town should expand its settlement boundary to accommodate future growth in a sustainable, fiscally responsible manner.

The GMS project consists of five phases. Early phases focused on reviewing planning policies, forecasting population and employment growth, and identifying the land required to support growth under both constrained (growth within existing boundaries and municipal servicing) and unconstrained (assuming boundary expansion and service upgrades) scenarios. Initial analysis confirms that Orangeville's current boundaries and servicing capacities can support a population growth to 36,500, which would be reached by approximately 2045, at which point growth thereafter would occur only through higher-density intensification redevelopments and additional residential units (ARU's).

Long-range forecasts in an unconstrained scenario show the Town will require 119 hectares of additional land over the next 30 years, increasing to 317 hectares over a 50-year horizon. To address this need, potential expansion areas were examined around the Town. Expansion to the north and east is significantly limited by environmental features, limited transportation connections, and existing development patterns. The south and west present fewer constraints and offer more flexibility. As a result, three study areas to the south and west —each large enough to provide long-term contingency—have been identified for detailed evaluation.

The next phases will assess these study areas through a rigorous criteria-based framework that considers planning, infrastructure, environmental, agricultural, and market conditions. This will determine a preferred study area, and a municipal fiscal impact analysis will then determine whether the preferred study area can support financially sustainable long-term growth.

This Growth Management Strategy is the foundational step toward addressing the Town's long-term land shortages for residential, commercial, and employment uses. Upon completion, it will establish a recommended expansion area and set the stage for initiating the formal municipal boundary expansion process, ensuring Orangeville can effectively plan for and accommodate growth over the coming decades.

Background

In 2022, the County of Dufferin completed a Land Needs Assessment (County LNA) as part of a multi-phased municipal comprehensive review (MCR) of its Official Plan. The County LNA generated population and employment forecasts for Orangeville and other Dufferin municipalities for a thirty (30) year planning horizon, to 2051.

Overall, Dufferin County is forecast to grow to 100,700 people and 40,900 jobs by 2051. Consistent with provincial policy direction, the majority of this growth is to be focused within the Urban Settlement Areas of the County, such as Orangeville, Shelburne and Grand Valley.

The County LNA forecasts the Town of Orangeville to grow to 38,500 people and 21,700 jobs by 2051, representing approximately 24% and 48% of the County's population and employment respectively, by 2051.

The County LNA determined future land needs for urban settlement areas by comparing population and employment growth forecasts against existing designated land availability. According to the final County LNA, Orangeville has significant land need shortfalls of up to 67.8 hectares of land needed to accommodate future community area employment, and approximately 25.3 hectares needed to accommodate future greenfield residential growth over the next 30 years. These land needs shortfalls were understood to be conservative, as they were based on assumptions that future growth would conform to policy direction for increased intensification targets (up to 60% of new residential development should occur within the Town's built-up area every year) and meeting greenfield density targets in the Town. The County LNA recommended these targets to be incorporated into its Official Plan, recognizing that Orangeville's land needs shortfalls cannot be easily addressed. Unlike other settlement areas in Dufferin, Orangeville's settlement area boundary matches its jurisdictional boundary, meaning that any expansion thereof would involve a municipal boundary adjustment/annexation. This growth allocation framework,

including intensification targets and greenfield density targets for the County's lower-tier municipalities, were incorporated into the Dufferin County Official Plan through Amendment No. 2 approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on October 9, 2024.

Following the completion of the County LNA in 2022, County planning staff initiated high level discussions with staff in Orangeville and adjacent municipalities in Dufferin County about the concept of a future boundary expansion and annexation for Orangeville. The discussions did not progress, because without knowing the full extent of land needed, and where such expansion(s) would be best physically located, it was difficult to rationalize future settlement expansion concepts that were largely unknown. Further, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) staff were also consulted regarding Orangeville's future land needs relative to its expansion/annexation issue and recommended that further planning study be undertaken first, to better understand the Town's future growth, land needs and expansion area options that have been evaluated for constraints and other planning objectives.

A comprehensive study was needed to: 1) reaffirm Orangeville's future growth and land needs for a long-term horizon; and 2) determine viable expansion area location options by analysing constraints, community planning objectives and fiscal impacts. In 2024, the Town procured a consultant team with expertise in this study area specialty. Watson and Associates Limited (Watson) in partnership with J.L. Richards & Associates Ltd. (JLR, or the Consultant Team) was retained in 2025 to initiate this project and undertake a Growth Management Strategy and Land Needs Study for the Town.

Analysis/current situation

The Growth Management Strategy project consists of five (5) phases:

- 1. Project initiation and background review (July to September 2025):** This phase involved a review of current provincial and local planning policy context as it applies to long-term population, housing and employment forecasting. Provincial, County and local planning policy framework was also analysed for its direction for the type, form and location of future development in the Town.
- 2. Growth Analysis, Land Needs and Location Options (September 2025 to March 2026):** This phase developed Town-wide population, housing and employment forecasts under constrained (i.e. within current corporate boundary with existing municipal services available) and unconstrained (i.e. servicing and land availability constraints addressed) scenarios. Forecasts were used to calculate the amount of land expected to accommodate that growth, which was then compared to existing land available within the Town's boundaries that could accommodate future development and intensification opportunities. From there, future expansion land needs were identified. Future expansion land needs were then assessed in surrounding areas outside of the Town's corporate boundary to identify potential expansion areas for further analysis (i.e. Study Areas).
- 3. Land Needs Options Evaluation (April-May 2026):** This phase will develop a comprehensive evaluation framework with a series of criteria to evaluate each Study Area. These criteria will identify the merits, opportunities and constraints of

each Study Area from market, land use, community planning, infrastructure, agricultural and environmental impact perspectives. This assessment will identify the most suitable location for future settlement area expansion (i.e. a preferred Study Area) to be explored in detail.

4. **Municipal Fiscal Impact Analysis (May to June 2026):** This phase will review municipal financial implications for the preferred Study Area, related to infrastructure servicing requirements and land use planning merits. It will consider the following for the potential residential and non-residential development build-out of the preferred Study Area:
- Incremental assessment growth;
 - Net operating expenditures;
 - Capital expenditures and funding, including lifecycle capital replacement costs; and
 - Tax and non-tax operating revenues.

The municipal fiscal impact analysis intends to confirm the long-term unconstrained growth scenario and preferred Study Area is fiscally viable and supportive of the Town's long-term growth objectives.

5. **Final Growth Management Strategy recommendations (July 2026):** This phase will conclude the Growth Management Strategy with a final recommended preferred Study Area that has been assessed for its viability based on an evaluation matrix framework and fiscal impact assessment. It will provide the foundation for informed decision making for the Town to initiate a formal a settlement area and municipal boundary expansion process in the future.

A Growth Analysis and Urban Land Needs Report has been prepared for Phases 1 and 2 of this project, which is included in Attachment 1 to this report. The following are key findings of this report:

- The 2024 Provincial Planning Statement (2024 PPS) requires municipalities to provide sufficient lands to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years. When planning for employment areas, land requirements can extend beyond a 30-year horizon.
- The Town's current settlement area boundary and municipal water and wastewater systems can accommodate up to 36,500 people and 16,900 jobs, which will be reached by 2045 (i.e. the "constrained" growth scenario). In this constrained scenario, it is foreseeable that the Town would add only a modest number of additional housing units beyond 2045. predominantly through high-density intensification redevelopment forms and additional residential units ("ARU's").
- In an unconstrained settlement area expansion growth scenario, the Town is forecasted to reach a population of 44,800 and 21,800 total jobs by 2076.
- In an unconstrained scenario, the Town is forecasted to require approximately 119 hectares of additional land beyond its current boundaries to accommodate future housing and employment growth for the next thirty years. This assumes that a municipal boundary expansion would be achieved by 2041. Over the 50-year horizon, total land needs would increase to 317 hectares.

- Based on the above land need forecasts, preliminary opportunities to expand Orangeville’s municipal boundary have been explored in all surrounding directions, with an initial review determining that expansion to the north and/or east is significantly constrained by key environmental features, a lack of major transportation corridor connectivity and presence of established development areas. Similar constraints exist to the south and west but to a lesser extent, with these areas offering greater flexibility in configuring gross developable areas.
- The study team has identified three potential expansion areas for further study (i.e. “Study Areas”), which range from 336 to 410 gross developable hectares. Each exceeds the 50-year horizon forecasted land need of 317 hectares to provide an appropriate level of contingency to support long term planning needs.

The next phases of the Growth Management Strategy will involve further delineating the Study Areas and developing a comprehensive evaluation of each area using a range of criteria, including market conditions, environmental and agricultural constraints, infrastructure requirements and community planning considerations. A preferred study area will be identified based on this evaluation, which will be analysed for municipal fiscal impacts associated with future growth and development build-out.

Corporate implications

This report will not generate immediate or direct implications at this time. The Phase 1 and 2 Growth Analysis and Urban Land Needs Report attached herein identifies long-term growth forecasts, with related land needs and potential boundary expansion areas for further analysis. A final report with recommendations for a preferred growth scenario and land expansion area will be presented to Council, which will include a municipal fiscal impact assessment of the preferred Study Area expansion scenario.

Conclusion

The Dufferin County Land Needs Assessment and Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan identified long-term growth and related land needs for Orangeville over the next thirty years. Land shortfalls were identified for future residential, commercial and employment uses in the Town over this planning horizon, and the Town must now begin to plan for how it will overcome these shortfalls.

The process to expand Orangeville’s settlement area can take many years because it will involve adjustments to the Town’s corporate municipal boundary. This Growth Management Strategy is a key first step, as it provides a detailed forecasting of the Town’s long-term growth and related land needs, as well as a thorough evaluation of potential expansion area options.

The next phases of this project will evaluate expansion area options in more detail. This will determine a preferred area to be evaluated from a municipal fiscal impact standpoint, which will confirm the viability of the preferred long-term growth and expansion scenario. From there, this will set the foundation to begin the planning process to formally expand the Town’s settlement area.

Strategic alignment

Strategic Plan

Strategic goal: Future-Readiness

Objective: Confirm applicable governance and policy regimes

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Theme: Land Use and Planning

Strategy: Manage and direct land use that creates healthy, liveable and safe communities.

Notice provisions

Not applicable.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Kocialek, P.Eng., PMP

General Manager, Infrastructure Services

Prepared by:

Brandon Ward, RPP, MCIP

Manager of Planning, Infrastructure Services

Attachment(s):

1. Growth Management Strategy: Growth Analysis and Urban Land Needs Report: Phases 1 & 2 (March 6, 2026)