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# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan



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# Draft Background Report

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### Table of Contents

---

- 1.0 Introduction ..... 1
  - 1.1 The Official Plan Review ..... 1
  - 1.2 Purpose: ..... 3
- 2.0 Growth and Settlement ..... 3
  - 2.1 Population, Household and Employment Projections ..... 3
  - 2.2 Land Supply ..... 5
  - 2.3 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 5
    - 2.3.1 The Planning Act ..... 5
    - 2.3.2 Provincial Policy Statement ..... 5
    - 2.3.3 The Official Plan ..... 7
    - 2.3.4 Conclusion ..... 7
- 3.0 Changing Climate ..... 8
  - 3.1 Background ..... 8
  - 3.2 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 9
    - 3.2.1 The Planning Act ..... 10
    - 3.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement ..... 10
    - 3.2.3 The Official Plan ..... 11
  - 3.3 Conclusion ..... 11
- 4.0 Natural Heritage and Water ..... 12
  - 4.1 Background ..... 12
  - 4.2 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 13
    - 4.2.1 The Planning Act ..... 13
    - 4.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement ..... 13
    - 4.2.3 The Official Plan ..... 14
  - 4.3 Conclusion ..... 15
- 5.0 Economic Development ..... 15
  - 5.1 Background ..... 15
  - 5.2 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 16
    - 5.2.1 The Planning Act ..... 16
    - 5.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement ..... 16
    - 5.2.3 The Official Plan ..... 18
  - 5.3 Conclusion ..... 18
- 6.0 Housing ..... 19
  - 6.1 Background ..... 19
  - 6.2 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 20
    - 6.2.1 The Planning Act ..... 20
    - 6.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement ..... 20
    - 6.2.3 The Official Plan ..... 21
  - 6.3 Conclusion ..... 21
- 7.0 Parks and Open Spaces ..... 22
  - 7.1 Background: ..... 22
  - 7.2 The Land Use Planning Framework ..... 24
    - 7.2.1 The Planning Act ..... 24
    - 7.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement ..... 25
    - 7.2.3 The Official Plan ..... 25
  - 7.3 Conclusion ..... 26
- 8.0 Mobility ..... 26

**Draft Background Report  
PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan**

---

- 8.1 Background.....26
- 8.2 The Land Use Planning Framework .....27
  - 8.2.1 The Planning Act.....27
  - 8.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement .....27
  - 8.2.3 The Official Plan.....28
- 8.3 Conclusion .....28
- 9.0 Servicing .....29
  - 9.1 Background.....29
  - 9.2 The Land Use Planning Framework .....29
    - 9.2.1 The Planning Act.....29
    - 9.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement .....29
    - 9.2.3 The Official Plan.....30
  - 9.3 Conclusion .....30
- 10.0 Minerals and Mineral Aggregates .....31
  - 10.1 Background.....31
  - 10.2 The Land Use Planning Framework .....31
    - 10.2.1 The Planning Act.....31
    - 10.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement .....31
    - 10.2.3 The Official Plan.....31
  - 10.3 Conclusion .....31
- 11.0 Cultural Heritage .....32
  - 11.1 Background.....32
  - 11.2 The Land Use Planning Framework .....32
    - 11.2.1 The Planning Act.....32
    - 11.2.2 Ontario Heritage Act .....32
    - 11.2.3 The Provincial Policy Statement .....33
    - 11.2.4 The Official Plan.....34
  - 11.3 Conclusion .....34
- 12.0 Protecting Public Health and Safety.....34
  - 12.1 Background.....34
  - 12.2 The Planning Framework.....35
    - 12.2.1 Planning Act.....35
    - 12.2.2 Provincial Policy Statement .....35
  - 12.3 Official Plan.....37
  - 12.4 Conclusion .....37
- 13.0 Lowertown.....37
  - 13.1 Background.....37
  - 13.2 Official Plan.....38
  - 13.3 Conclusion .....38
- 14.0 Implementation.....39

**List of Tables**

---

Table 1	Summary of Population and Household Forecasts, 2016-Buildout
Table 2	Projected Change in Annual Mean Temperature
Table 3	Projected Change in Total Precipitation

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 1.0 Introduction

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#### 1.1 The Official Plan Review

The Town of Gananoque (Gananoque) is a waterfront community situated on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, straddling the Gananoque River, in Eastern Ontario. Known as the “Gateway to the 1000 Islands”, Gananoque is known for its vibrant waterfront, small town feel and community engagement and pride. According to the 2016 Census, Gananoque is home to just over 5,200 people. In the summer months, Gananoque’s population swells as summer residents and tourists return to the area attracted by the natural environment and high quality of life.

Gananoque, like all communities is navigating considerable change. Climate change, cyclical population changes, an aging population, economic restructuring, housing affordability, heritage preservation, downtown and waterfront revitalization and changing societal norms and expectations present opportunities and challenges for Gananoque.

Gananoque’s Official Plan is a key tool that the community is and can continue to use to navigate these changes. An Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that looks twenty years into the future and establishes a vision of what the community will look like and establishes policies to guide physical change undertaken by the public and private sector consistent with that vision.

The purpose of an Official Plan is articulated in Section 24 of the *Planning Act* (the Act). This section states that an Official Plan shall contain goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environment of the municipality; such policies and measures that are practical to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing; and a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public when land use planning applications are advanced in the community.

Gananoque’s current Official Plan was approved by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on May 12, 2010. The Official Plan establishes a vision and guiding principles for the community and comprehensive set of policies based on the following themes:

- Our heritage – Planning Lowertown
- Where we live – Planning sustainable residential neighbourhoods
- Where we do business – Planning our commercial lands
- Where we work – Planning for employment lands
- Our rural and open spaces – Planning for balance
- Our environment – Planning for sustainability
- Development constraints – Planning for public health and safety
- Making it work – Our infrastructures
- Implementing the plan – The planning toolkit
- Administration of the Official Plan

Gananoque’s current Official Plan can be found [here](#).

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Given the long term nature of an Official Plan, consistent change in the external environment and continuous improvement to legislation, policy, plans and regulations, it is a standard municipal practice to periodically review an Official Plan to ensure that it reflects the best available information, continues to reflect the vision and goals of the community and balances that vision and goals with matters of provincial interest in local land use planning.

This practice is enshrined in Section 26 of the Act, which requires that municipalities revise its Official Plan ever 10 years (if a new Official Plan) and every 5 years thereafter (until replaced by a new Official Plan) to ensure that it conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them as the case may be; has regard to matters of provincial interest under Section 2; and is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement that is issued under Section 3 of the Act.

Gananoque has initiated a review of its Official Plan, pursuant to Section 26 of the Act, with the goal of creating a new Official Plan for the community (Official Plan Review). Since the Official Plan came into effect, considerable change has occurred. At the provincial level, this includes changes to the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS). At the local level, new source water protections have been implemented and other studies (e.g. Development Charge Study, Recreation Master Plan) have been completed, providing new insights.

In accordance with the legislation described above, the Official Plan Review will ensure that the Official Plan continues to have appropriate regard to matters of provincial interest articulated in the Act, continues to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and continues to reflect local goals and priorities. The scope of this review includes the following policy themes:

1. Employment, population and housing projections
2. Land supply
3. Growth management
4. Employment areas
5. Housing
6. Parks and Recreation
7. Mobility
8. Infrastructure and public service facilities
9. Climate change
10. Natural heritage
11. Source water protection
12. Mineral resources
13. Cultural heritage and archaeology
14. Natural hazards
15. Human made hazards
16. Administering the plan

The Official Plan Review also provides an opportunity for Gananoque to build relationships with indigenous communities. Gananoque is part of the Crawford Purchase of 1783 and the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat peoples.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 1.2 Purpose:

This Background Report is the first of several reports that will be prepared as part of the Official Plan Review. This report summarizes key information from several different sources, describes the existing provincial policy framework for the above referenced themes as well as the current Official Plan policies. This report is intended to serve as a basis for recommended policy directions and changes.

The balance of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 speaks to growth and settlement related considerations
- Section 3 speaks to the changing climate
- Section 4 addresses the natural environment
- Section 5 addresses source water protection
- Section 6 speaks to economic development
- Section 7 speaks to housing
- Section 8 speaks to parks and open space
- Section 9 speaks to mobility (including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists)
- Section 10 speaks to infrastructure
- Section 11 speaks to cultural heritage
- Section 12 speaks to natural hazards

## 2.0 Growth and Settlement

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This section provides information on several aspects of Gananoque that fall under the general theme of “growth and settlement”. This includes the population, housing and employment land forecasts, land supply, and current approach to growth management (e.g. urban boundary, phasing policies, nodes and corridors, etc.).

### 2.1 Population, Household and Employment Projections

Section 1.1.2 of the PPS states that sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years. For the purposes of this review this is 2021 to 2046. The first step in meeting this test is to forecast future population, household and employment growth.

Gananoque recently commissioned a [2020 Development Charge Background Study](#) that was prepared by Watson & Associates Ltd. (DC Background Study). The DC Background Study provides a provides a comprehensive population, household and non-residential gross floor area forecast for the community. The key findings of this forecast is summarized in Table 1 below. Key highlights from this table include:

- Gananoque’s population is expected to increase by as many as 1,536 residents between 2016 and buildout (which is based on available waste water capacity);
- Similarly, the number of housing units is also expected to increase by 958 units in the same time period;

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

- The demand for new housing is generated by the anticipated population growth and decline in the number of persons per household that has been forecasted, which is due in part to the aging of the population. For example, the number of persons per household in 2016 is 2.2 persons/household. This number is forecast to decrease to 2.03 persons/household by the end of the forecast period;
- The mix of housing units is also expected to change during the forecast period. The proportion of singles and semis is expected to decrease from 64% to 54% of the total number of units between 2016 and buildout, while the proportion of multiples and apartments is expected to increase from 35% to 45% of the total during the same period.
- The forecasts also anticipate that the majority of future population and housing growth will occur in the urban serviced area of Gananoque.

**Table 1. Summary of Population and Household Forecasts, 2016-Buildout**

Year		Pop <sup>1</sup>	Pop <sup>2</sup>	Housing Units				
				Singles/Semis	Mult <sup>3</sup>	Apt	Other	Total
Historical	Mid 2006	5,410	5,285	1,500	195	615	5	<b>2,315</b>
	Mid 2011	5,320	5,194	1,509	196	631	10	<b>2,346</b>
	Mid 2016	5,280	5,159	1,535	200	655	10	<b>2,400</b>
Forecast	Late 2020	5,560	5,427	1,568	203	788	10	<b>2,570</b>
	Late 2030	6,010	5,865	1,660	225	968	10	<b>2,862</b>
	Buildout	6,816	6,655	1,823	266	1,259	10	<b>3,358</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>2016-Buildout</b>	<b>1,536</b>	<b>1,496</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>958</b>

Source: Adapted from Table 2-1, 2020 Development Charge Background Study

Note 1: Includes Census undercount estimated at 2.4%, figures rounded

Note 2: Excludes Census undercount

Note 3: Multiples includes townhouses and apartments in duplexes

In terms of employment, the Background Study uses the activity rate method (number of jobs/number of residents) to forecast future employment growth. The Background Study anticipates that total employment will increase by 23% during the forecast period from 2,730 in 2016 to 3,580 by buildout. This includes individuals that are working from home and those that have no fixed place of work. After excluding work from home and no fixed place of work employees from the forecast, the Background Study anticipates that demand for industrial, commercial/population related and institutional employment will increase by approximately 400,000 square feet by buildout. The majority of this growth will occur in the urban service area.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 2.2 Land Supply

The second step in determining whether Gananoque meets the up to 25 years land supply test is to examine the supply of land within the municipality. As discussed in the following section, within the 25 year land supply, Gananoque is required to maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for at least 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands that are designated and available for residential development, as well as at least a 3 year supply of residential units that are suitably zoned for residential intensification and redevelopment, as well as lands in draft approved and registered plans of subdivision and condominium.

In 2020, Town Staff examined vacant land potential in Gananoque. This analysis indicates that the Town's residential land supply consisted of approximately 250 approved residential units, approximately 180 acres of potential residential lands and approximately 160 acres of potential commercial and employment lands.

In 2019, Gananoque commissioned an update to its "uncommitted reserve capacity" of its existing municipal sewage system. The update, prepared by J.L. Richards & Associates Ltd, concluded that at that time Gananoque had the capacity to accommodate the 209 approved residential lots/units and a further capacity to accommodate 1,032 equivalent residential household connections.

### 2.3 The Land Use Planning Framework

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the land use planning framework relating to land supply has been modified to support the Provincial Government's strategic goal of creating more affordable housing supply across Ontario.

#### 2.3.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities have regard to the orderly development of safe and healthy communities and the adequate provision of a full range of housing (including affordable housing), employment opportunities, educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities when carrying out their responsibilities under the Act, including the establishment of an appropriate land supply.

#### 2.3.2 Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS recognizes that an adequate land supply is part of managing and directing land use to achieve efficient and residential development is part of building strong and healthy communities.

Policy 1.1.3.1 states that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development.

Policy 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use land and resources; are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the infrastructure and public service facilities which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion; minimize negative impacts to air quality



## **Draft Background Report**

### **PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan**

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and climate change, and promote energy efficiency; prepare for the impacts of a changing climate; support active transportation; and are freight supportive.

Policy 1.1.3.3 states that planning authorities shall accommodate a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.

Policy 1.1.3.5 states that planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built up areas, based on local conditions.

Policy 1.1.3.6 states that new development taking place in designated growth areas should occur adjacent to the existing built up area and should have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, infrastructure and public service facilities.

Policy 1.1.3.7 states that planning authorities should establish and implement phasing policies to ensure that specified targets for intensification and redevelopment are achieved prior to or concurrent with new development within designated growth areas; and the orderly progression of development within designated growth areas and the timely provision of infrastructure and public service facilities required to meet current and projected needs.

Policy 1.1.3.8 states that a planning authority may identify a settlement area or allow the expansion of a settlement area boundary only at the time of a comprehensive review and only after certain tests have been met.

Policy 1.1.5.2 states that on rural lands located in municipalities permitted uses area the management and use of resources; resource-based recreational uses (including recreational dwellings); residential development, including lot creation, that is locally appropriate; agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and normal farm practices, in accordance with provincial standards; home occupations and home industries; cemeteries and other rural land uses.

In support of these policies, Policy 1.1.5.5 states that development shall be appropriate to the infrastructure, which is planned or available, and avoid the need for the unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion of this infrastructure.

Policy 1.1.5.8 states that new land uses, including the creation of new lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities, shall comply with the minimum distance separation formulae.

Policy 1.3.2.6 gives planning authorities the ability to plan beyond 25 years for the long term protection of employment areas, provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon identified in policy 1.1.2.

Policy 1.4.1 states that to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development; and, maintain

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through land suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

In addition, Policy 1.4.1 permits single tier municipalities like Gananoque, to maintain land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a five year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

### 2.3.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan includes many policies that are designed to achieve Gananoque's strategic growth and settlement goals. The Official Plan anticipated that Gananoque would continue to grow modestly. From our discussions with Town Staff, Gananoque has experienced relatively strong growth, particularly residential growth in the last few years. The difference in past and current expectations is illustrated in the growth statements made in the Official Plan and DC Background Study. The Official Plan anticipates that the Town would grow to accommodate 5,900 people, while the DC Background Study anticipates 6,800 residents.

The Official Plan defines a settlement area (i.e. all land located inside the Town's corporate limits, except rural designated lands). The Official Plan speaks to land supply, intensification and redevelopment, development phasing, to intensification and redevelopment, development phasing, housing supply, phasing and rural development.

### 2.3.4 Conclusion

The Town of Gananoque can continue to build a strong and healthy community by providing and adequate land supply and by ensuring that the majority of new development continues to occur within the urban settlement area consistent with local and provisional goals and objectives. The exiting Official Plan policies should be reviewed to ensure that Gananoque's land supply meets the new long-term 25 year land supply target and associated sub-targets established in the PPS. The current approach to establishing minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment should also be reviewed. Consideration could be given to consolidating updated growth and settlement related policies in a single section of the Official Plan so that Gananoque's growth management strategy is more prominent.

### **3.0 Changing Climate**

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#### **3.1 Background**

Climate change is a term that is often used to describe the enhanced and accelerated warming of the earth's climate system associated with human activities, namely the burning of fossil fuels and their associated greenhouse gas emissions. These human caused emissions make the blanket of naturally occurring greenhouse gases that surround the planet and regulate its temperature, thicker, trapping heat and making the climate system warmer.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) *Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C*, which was prepared as part of the Panel's Sixth Assessment and Reporting cycle, human activities are estimated to have caused 1.0 °C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC also estimates that global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if global warming continues at the current rate.

In 2019, the Government of Canada released *Canada's Changing Climate Report*, part of a national assessment of how and why Canada's climate is changing, the impacts of those changes and how the country is adapting to the change. This report concludes, in part, that:

- both past and future warming in Canada is, on average, about double the magnitude of global warming;
- the effects of widespread warming are evident in many parts of Canada and are projected to intensify in the future. This includes more extreme heat, less extreme cold, longer growing seasons, shorter snow and ice cover durations and early spring peak streamflow;
- precipitation is projected to increase for most of Canada, on average, although summer rainfall may decrease in some areas. Precipitation has increased in many parts of Canada, and there has been a shift toward less snowfall and more rainfall. Annual and winter precipitation is projected to increase everywhere in Canada over the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- the seasonal availability of freshwater is changing, with an increased risk of water supply shortages in summer. Warmer winters and earlier snowmelt will combine to produce higher winter streamflows. Warmer summers will increase evaporation of surface water and contribute to reduced summer water availability in the future despite more precipitation in some places.
- a warmer climate will intensify some weather extremes in the future. Extreme hot temperatures will become more frequent and more intense. This will increase the severity of heatwaves and contribute to the increased drought and wildfire risk. More intense rainfalls will increase urban flood risk.
- the rate and magnitude of climate change under high versus low emission scenarios project two very different futures for Canada. Projections based on the range of emission scenarios are needed to inform impact assessment, climate risk management and policy development.

According to the Government of Canada's Canadian Centre for Climate Services, Gananoque's annual mean temperature and total precipitation are projected to change over the next 40 years. The projected changes are included in Tables 2 and 3 below.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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**Table 2. Projected Change in Annual Mean Temperature**

Projection Period	Low Emission Scenario	Moderate Emission Scenario	High Emission Scenario
2021 – 2040	+ 1.4°C	+ 1.3°C	+ 1.5°C
2041 – 2060	+ 1.6°C	+ 2.2%	+ 2.9°C

**Table 3. Projected Change in Total Precipitation**

Projection Period	Low Emission Scenario	Moderate Emission Scenario	High Emission Scenario
2021 – 2040	+ 1.9%	+ 1.8%	+ 3.9%
2041 – 2060	+ 1.9%	+ 4.5%	+ 8.0%

*Note: The projected change is relative to the 1986-2005 average*

Based on the projected change in annual mean temperature and total precipitation, Gananoque can expect to experience many of the effects noted by the Federal Government in their assessment of the nation.

Given the change that Gananoque is expected to experience, it should continue to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is well established that the transportation and building sectors are key contributors to green house gas emissions. Land use planning can play a role in mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Effective land use planning can support mitigation by promoting a mix of land uses and increased densities to bring more jobs and homes closer together, making it more feasible for residents to use non-automobile modes of travel for their journey to work, shop or recreate. Effective land use planning can also be used to ensure that new development maximizes opportunities for passive solar gain, reducing energy use associated with building heating and cooling.

Similarly, planning can support adaptation efforts through updated flood hazard mapping, the use of low impact development techniques to manage increased and more variable precipitation, promoting infiltration and reducing long term infrastructure asset costs. Planning can also be used to ensure that new developments maximize landscaping, reduce paving and include trees to reduce impervious surfaces, promote water infiltration and “cool” urban areas.

### **3.2 The Land Use Planning Framework**

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the framework that governs land use planning has evolved, including its treatment of climate change mitigation and adaption. The land use planning framework provides specific policy direction on climate change and the role of land use planning in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 3.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities have regard to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate when carrying out their responsibilities under the Act.

### 3.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS recognizes that efficient development patterns permit better adaptation and response to the impacts of a changing climate, that strong, liveable and healthy communities are resilient to climate change and that it is important to protect the overall health and safety of the population, including preparing for the impacts of a changing climate.

The PPS defines “impacts of a changing climate” as the present and future consequences from changes in weather patterns at local and regional levels including extreme weather events and increased climate variability.

Policy 1.1.1 i) states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by preparing for the regional and local impacts of a changing climate.

Policy 1.1.3.2 c) states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.

Policy 1.6.1 states that infrastructure and public service facilities shall be provided in an efficient manner that prepares for the impacts of a changing climate while accommodating projected needs.

Policy 1.6.6.1 states that planning for sewage and water services shall ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that prepares for the impacts of a changing climate.

Policy 1.6.6.7 states that planning for stormwater management shall minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and prepare the impacts of a changing climate through the effective management of stormwater, including the use of green infrastructure.

Policy 1.7.1 k) states that long term economic prosperity should be supported by minimizing negative impacts from a changing climate and considering the ecological benefits of nature.

Policy 1.8.1 states that planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate through land use and development patterns which promote compact form and structure of nodes and corridors; promote the use of active transportation and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas; focus major employment, commercial and other travel intensive land uses on sites which are well serviced by transit where this exists or is to be developed, or designing these to facilitate the establishment of transit in the future; focus freight-intensive land uses to areas well served by major highways, airports, rail facilities and marine facilities; encourage transit supportive development and intensification to improve the mix of employment and housing uses to shorten commute journeys and decrease transportation congestion; promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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effects of vegetation and green infrastructure; and maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.

Policy 2.2.1 c) states that planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by evaluating and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate to water resource systems at the watershed level.

Policy 3.1.3 states that planning authorities shall prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.

### 3.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan does not currently include any policies that directly speak to climate change mitigation and adaptation. However, many policies in the Official Plan align with the policies above and support climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Town of Gananoque is relatively compact and walkable. The Town's urban fabric is largely characterised by the traditional grid system and regular pattern of streets and blocks.

The Official Plan's Lowertown, General Commercial and Highway Commercial and Employment Area land use designations provide the basis for a nodes and corridors system. Approximately 50 percent of residents live within a 400 metre distance of the Lowertown and General Commercial areas. Approximately 80 percent live within 800 metres of the same areas.

The Lowertown and General Commercial (and to a lesser extent, the Residential) land use designations permit a mix of uses. The Official Plan also encourages infill, intensification and redevelopment. The Employment Lands land use designation protects lands closest to Highway 401 for freight intensive land uses.

The Official Plan encourages the use of innovative water and sewage technologies, encourages walking and cycling, promotes energy efficiency and the use of alternative energy sources, protects and preserves street trees and woodlands.

### 3.3 Conclusion

The Town of Gananoque will continue to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Official Plan can assist with these efforts. The existing Official Plan policies should be updated and expanded to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Official Plan should define an urban settlement area and system of nodes and corridors, continue to permit a mix of land uses (where appropriate), continue to encourage infill, intensification and redevelopment (where appropriate), continue to protect lands along the Highway 401 Corridor for freight intensive uses, provide direction on active transportation, provide updated direction on planning for water, sewage and stormwater management services (e.g. low impact development techniques, provide updated direction on flood hazards and provide updated direction on energy efficiency and conservation, including the use of vegetation.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 4.0 Natural Heritage and Water

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#### 4.1 Background

Gananoque is located within the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, a member of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It encompasses 2700 sq. km from Brockville to Gananoque, extending north to Harrowsmith, Verona, and Westport. The biosphere is home to a diverse number of plant and animal species, while providing health, social, and recreational opportunities for the surrounding communities. Part of the UNESCO designation as a Biosphere Reserve requires protection and conservation of flora and fauna within its boundaries

The Town is home to several significant woodlands, both in the rural areas and along the shoreline. The PPS defines woodlands as treed areas that provide environmental and economic benefits to both the private landowner and the public, such as erosion prevention, hydrological and nutrient cycling, the provision of clean air and carbon storage, wildlife habitat, and outdoor recreational opportunities. Significant woodlands are woodlands that have either 60% ground coverage, or 10% ground coverage with a variable number of trees of different diameter and type. Development adjacent to significant woodlands are generally subject to a buffer to prevent negative environmental effects or an environmental impact study to demonstrate that the woodland function will not be negatively impacted.

Gananoque also falls within the Cataraqui Watershed and is situated at the juncture of the Gananoque and St. Lawrence Rivers, making the waterfront a major natural heritage feature. Both rivers serve as important fish habitat and spawning areas, as can be seen in Schedule “F” of the Official Plan. The James W. King Intake Protection Zone is also located within Gananoque. The rivers and surrounding watershed provide a source of drinking water for the local community. Protection of the rivers, and the watershed that feeds into the rivers, is of importance to not only animal and plant species for habitat, but the human population as well for health, tourism, and recreation purposes.

In 2014, the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority prepared the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan which proposed amendments to several of the Town’s Official Plan Policies regarding source water protection. The Plan advocated for the inclusion of ‘and source water protection’ into the Official Plan’s guiding principles for ‘Planning for Public Health and Safety.’ Further, the Plan called for the inclusion of a section of new guiding principles for source water protection under the ‘Planning for Public Health and Safety.’ The Plan laid out new restrictions on developments within Gananoque adjacent to Intake Protections Zones and Highly Vulnerable Aquifers and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas.

The CRCA also undertook a review of the Official Plan in 2018 and recommended several updates that could be implemented to better reflect the natural environment and natural heritage features present within town. Key themes from their review include:

- Recognizing areas of natural heritage not located along the waterfront, such as woodlands and watercourses, and limiting and/or prohibiting development adjacent to or in these areas
- Addressing potential hazards along shorelines and recommending mitigation measures for the protection of these features
- Implementing environmental policies consistently across the Town

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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- Recommending the use of Low Impact Development (LID) practices in new and redeveloped construction

Creating sustainable development practices and policies can mitigate adverse effects on the natural environment. The *Environmental Protection Act* defines adverse effects as the impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it. One way to minimize these impacts is by using low impact developments (LID). Low impact development uses cost-effective construction and buildings methods to filter, store and return rainwater and melted snow to the ground. LID mimics the natural filtering processes of nature, cleans and cools the water, and reduces the local risk of flooding and strain on local stormwater infrastructure. Examples of low impact developments include rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavements, and garden roofs.

### 4.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

#### 4.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities consider provincial interests, such as the conservation and management of natural resources in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. It also promotes sustainable economic development in healthy natural environments within the provincial policy framework.

Section 2 a) of the Act lists the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features, and functions as a matter of provincial interest, while (q) states that the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable is of provincial interest.

#### 4.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS holds that preserving the natural environment and natural features for their economic, environmental and social benefits is essential to Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being. These natural features include wetlands and woodlands, water, agriculture, mineral, cultural heritage, and archaeological resources. These natural features provide essential ecological processes, public health and safety, food and fibres, and provide for recreational opportunities and are of provincial interest.

The PPS also defines natural heritage systems as a system made up of natural heritage features and areas, linked by natural corridors which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species and ecosystems.

The PPS outlines policies regarding development, sewage, water and stormwater, agriculture, and development in rural areas for the protection of the natural environment.

Policy 2.1, Natural Heritage, requires consistency from planning authorities to prevent development and site alteration from occurring within, or within the buffer zone of, significant wildlife habitats, woodlands, wetlands, and areas of natural and scientific interest. Further, natural features and areas shall be protected for the long-term, and where possible, linkages between, and among, natural heritage features should be maintained and restored to preserve their ecological function and biodiversity.



# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Policy 2.2, Water, states that authorities shall protect, improve, or restore the quality and quantity of water by:

- using the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development;
- minimizing potential negative impacts, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts;
- maintaining linkages and related functions among ground water features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas, and surface water features including shorelines;
- implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration to:
  - protect all municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas; and
  - protect, improve or restore vulnerable surface and ground water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their hydrologic features
- ensuring stormwater management practices minimize stormwater volumes and contaminant loads and maintain or increase the extent of vegetative and pervious surfaces.

Policy 1.1.3.8. b) of the PPS states that the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available are suitable for the development over the long term, are financially viable over their life cycle, and protect public health and safety and the natural environment.

Policy 1.1.4.1. h) states that healthy, integrated and viable *rural areas* should be supported by conserving biodiversity and considering the ecological benefits provided by nature.

Policy 1.6.6.1. b) 4) states that planning for sewage and water services shall ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that protects human health and safety, and the natural environment.

### 4.2.3 The Official Plan

One of the Town's Official Plan's Guiding Principles is a commitment to protect the natural environment. Section 3.6 of the Plan outlines the Town's policies for endangered or threatened species habitat, woodlands, fish habitat, river corridors, wildlife crossings, and public open space.

Woodland policies within the Official Plan state:

1. Development may be permitted in accordance with the underlying land use designation in areas where a Woodlands overlay designation is shown on Schedule F where it has been demonstrated through an environmental impact assessment that the overall woodland function will not be negatively impacted, or the ecological function of the woodland negatively impacted by the proposed development.
2. For significant woodlands, agricultural forestry activities such as maple syrup production and the harvesting of mature trees in accordance with accepted forestry practices, recreational trails and snowmobile trails are considered as appropriate activities in woodlots and therefore are permitted without any environmental impact assessment. Such activities are to be carried out in an environmentally sensitive manner so as to preserve the overall woodlot function.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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All watercourses and waterbodies within Town are considered to have the potential for Fish Habitat, and specifically the Gananoque and St. Lawrence Rivers host both fish habitat and fish spawning. Policies regarding Fish Habitat centre around prohibiting development in fish habitat, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, and ensuring development abutting fish habitat adheres to mitigation and prevention measures.

There is reference to the restoration of contaminated sites in Section 3.7.6., which have the potential for adverse effects to human health and the natural environment.

Section 4.1.5 requires watershed and sub-watershed studies to be undertaken when proposed development may impact highly sensitive natural environments. The results of these watershed studies should be incorporated into the Town's Official Plan whenever practical.

Section 5.4.10.2 discusses the implementation of the Town's Development Permit By-Law in which one of the objectives is the continued and enhanced protection of the natural environment.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan must ensure that all relevant natural heritage and source water protection policies, enacted since the Official Plan was introduced, be incorporated into the update. Existing Official Plan policies should be updated to ensure they are up to date with current local, provincial, and federal policy.

## 5.0 Economic Development

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### 5.1 Background

A strong economy is central to a healthy and sustainable community. Gananoque's economy, like all communities is evolving away from a traditional, industrial based economy towards an economy that includes a mix of commercial, service, manufacturing, and tourism industries. According to Economy Overview Gananoque Q3 2016, prepared by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs and Economic Modelling Specialists International, Gananoque housed 3,530 jobs with 582 in manufacturing, 802 in wholesale and retail trade, 443 in arts, entertainment and recreation, and 511 in accommodation and food services, with the remainder in other various trades.

The Town's main economic driver in the summer months is tourism, with the Town's Economic Development Department reporting upwards of 500,000 visitors, mainly in the months of June, July and August. In 2015, the Gananoque Visitor Centre Survey Report estimated that tourism was an \$84 million industry for the Town of Gananoque and Township of Leeds and Thousand Islands. Consequently, the Town is home to number of restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts and retail stores which make up a large portion of the Town's workforce.

Within the tourist areas of the Town, mainly in the Lowertown District, are a number of retail and commercial services which supplement the tourism economy while also providing services for locals year-round. These include retail, personal services, and food, accommodation, and entertainment services.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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In areas closer to Highway 401 are industrial and light industrial uses. Industrial properties range from 33,000 sq. ft to 60,000 sq. ft, allowing for a variety of industries such as niche manufacturing, supply chain opportunities and technology-based businesses.

Gananoque's strategic location along the Highway 401, which forms the backbone of the Windsor to Quebec City urban economic corridor makes it ideally situated for new growth. Gananoque is also strategically located midway between Ottawa and the Upper New York State Area. As mentioned in Section 2.1 above, the DC Background Study estimates that Gananoque's employment will continue to grow during the forecast period.

Gananoque's Economic Development Strategic Plan (2016-2018) identifies several investment attraction target sectors, including:

- Entrepreneurs
- Tourism Based Businesses
- Knowledge/Creative Economy
- Medical Sector
- Niche Manufacturing/Supply Chain Opportunities

This project provides an opportunity to consider how Gananoque's land use planning approach and policies support realization of investment and growth in these investment attraction target sectors.

### 5.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the land use planning framework relating to economic and employment matters has continued to evolve, to provide municipalities with additional flexibility when planning for future employment growth and tools to protect employment areas from incompatible development, especially employment areas that are near major good movement corridors such as Highway 401.

#### 5.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities have regard to the adequate provision of employment opportunities when rendering decisions that affect a land use planning matter.

#### 5.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 1.3.1 of the PPS states that planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;
- b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;
- c) facilitating the conditions for economic investment by identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;

## Draft Background Report

### PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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- d) encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities, with consideration of housing policy 1.4; and
- e) ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.

Policy 1.3.2.1. states that planning authorities shall plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs. The PPS defines an employment area as those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

Policy 1.3.2.2 states that, at the time of the official plan review or update, planning authorities should assess employment areas identified in local official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of the employment areas. Employment areas planned for industrial and manufacturing uses shall provide for separation or mitigation from sensitive land uses to maintain the long term operational and economic vitality of the planned uses and function of these areas.

Policy 1.3.2.3 requires that within employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses, planning authorities shall prohibit residential uses and prohibit or limit other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment uses in order to maintain land use compatibility. In addition, employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment uses.

Policy 1.3.2.4 allows municipalities to permit conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses through a comprehensive review, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion.

Policy 1.3.2.6 states that planning authorities shall protect employment areas in proximity to major goods movement corridors for employment uses that require those locations. The PPS defines a major goods movement corridor as transportation facilities and corridors associated with the inter and intra provincial movement of goods. This includes Highway 401.

Policy 1.3.2.7 permits planning authorities to plan beyond 25 years for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon identified in policy 1.1.2.

Policy 1.2.6.1 states that major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

Policy 1.2.6.2 states that where avoidance is not possible, planning authorities shall protect the long-term viability of existing or planned industrial, manufacturing or other uses that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and development of the proposed adjacent sensitive land uses are only permitted if the following are demonstrated in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures: there is an identified need for the proposed use;

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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alternative locations for the proposed use have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations; adverse effects to the proposed sensitive land use are minimized and mitigated; and potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other uses are minimized and mitigated.

### 5.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan recognizes commercial, service industries, manufacturing activities and tourism as the Town's economic base and establishes policies for both commercial and employment lands. However, there are policies in place that recognize the need to expand the Town's economy and explore new employment opportunities.

Section 3.3 outlines policies for the Town's transition from industrial to light industrial and mixed commercial uses.

Section 3.4 of the OP recognizes the need to preserve industrial and commercial employment lands while accommodating new employment opportunities. The impacts of globalization have resulted in a reduction in industrial land uses within the Town, however the Town is committed to preserving the existing industrial land uses. The Town has designated lands closest to Highway 401, as seen in Schedule D, as a Trade and Industry Policy Area with the following objectives:

1. to provide for commercial and industrial land uses which require larger land areas;
2. to ensure access to efficient transportation links;
3. to provide commercial and industrial development opportunities which will not result in land use conflicts in accordance with Ministry of the Environment Guideline on Compatibility Between Industrial Facilities and Sensitive Land Uses; and
4. to enhance economic development opportunities within the Town of Gananoque

Section 5.5 of the Official Plan has designated the entire Municipality as a Community Improvement Area. Some of the policy objectives of this designation are to upgrade and maintain existing municipal services, facilitate the remediation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of brownfield sites, encourage private sector investment and expansion of the economic base, and revitalize the downtown core as a mixed-use shopping destination.

There are also special provisions for the development of Lowertown regarding protecting and promoting tourism. Section 3.1.1.6. states that development in Lowertown should protect and enhance existing recreation, tourism, and cultural uses in a mixed-use setting. Tourism commercial uses are one of the permitted uses within the Lowertown designated areas.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan includes a comprehensive policy framework to guide future commercial and employment growth in the community. The Official Plan should be reviewed to ensure that an adequate amount of employment lands are identified to accommodate future growth, that the designations permit an appropriate range of economic opportunities and that employment areas are adequately protected from sensitive land uses.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 6.0 Housing

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#### 6.1 Background

Housing is a human right. There is ample evidence that demonstrates that affordable and attainable housing is central to achieving various economic and social outcomes. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, international law requires that Canada work towards having access to adequate and affordable housing. Land use planning can support these outcomes by ensure that there is an adequate supply of land that accommodates a variety of housing options, by permitting and facilitating all forms of housing, by ensuring the efficient use of land and effective business processes, which can impact the cost of housing.

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the 2016 Census was released, providing new insights into housing in Gananoque. Leeds and Grenville has prepared a new 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. During this time, Gananoque's housing market has continued to change, while the Town has responded with new initiatives, such as a short term rental accommodation framework, that is designed to preserve existing housing stock for ownership and rental purposes. The Government of Ontario also released a Housing Supply Action Strategy, which brought about changes to various pieces of legislation, all designed to encourage the production of new housing.

According to the 2016 Census, Gananoque had 2,405 occupied private dwellings. In terms of housing mix, single detached homes constituted approximately 55 percent of occupied private dwellings, followed by other attached dwellings (42 percent) and apartments in buildings 5 or more stories in height (3 percent). Average household size stood at 2.1 persons per household, which is 20 percent lower than the provincial average. Median household income was \$55,296, approximately 25 percent lower than the provincial average. In terms of tenure, 64 percent of homes are owned, while 36 percent are rented. Private households in condominium tenure represented approximately 8 percent of total private households. At that time, 97 percent of private households were living in suitable housing, which is higher than the provincial average. Statistics Canada defines housing suitability as whether a private household is living in suitable accommodations according to the National Occupancy Standard (i.e. whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the households).

In 2014, Leeds and Grenville released the *10 Year Housing & Homelessness Plan*. The Plan examined demographics across the municipalities and found that housing issues in all the communities included aging populations, the need for diverse unit sizes and smaller housing units, aging buildings, high unemployment and low-income levels, and a lack of supportive and transitional housing. In Gananoque, aging buildings and a lack of affordable housing are the main causes for concern. Consequently, the Housing Plan outlined 3 strategic goals to address these issues:

1. Maintain Current Affordable Housing Services and Programs
2. Enhance Services to Reflect the Changing Needs of the Community
3. Involve All Stakeholders in the Development and Implementation of the Housing Plan

In terms of the local real estate market, average sale prices in Gananoque have increased from \$141,662 in 2016 to \$451,026 in 2021 with an average 39 homes sold per year. The Leeds and Grenville *Social Housing Need and Demand* Report found that in 2011, 47.2% of renters in Gananoque were spending over 30% of their household income on shelter costs. In comparison,

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation found that the provincial average in 2016 was 15% of renters spending over 30% of their household income on shelter costs.

In 2019, the Province of Ontario released *More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan* and *Bill 108, More Homes More Choice Act* that were intended to increase the supply of housing and streamline the development approval process. In 2020, the Province of Ontario released an updated version of the Provincial Policy Statement, which updated provincial policies relating to housing, in line with the strategic intent of the Government's legislative change. These changes are described below.

### 6.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

#### 6.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires municipalities to have regard to the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing, in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. As described above, it also requires that municipal Official Plans contain policies and measures required to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing.

Recent changes to the Planning Act have introduced two new “tools” – additional residential units and inclusionary zoning – designed to support the provision of adequate and affordable housing.

Section 16 (3) of the Act states that an Official Plan shall contain policies that authorize the use of additional residential uses by authorizing the use of two residential units in a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse; and the use of a residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse. Ontario Regulation 299/19 establishes standards for additional residential units. It requires that each additional residential use shall have one parking space, unless exempted by the local municipal zoning by-law, and that the additional residential unit may be occupied by any person regardless of relationship or ownership.

Section 16 (4) and (5) of the Act establishes new requirements for the use of inclusionary zoning in either prescribed municipalities, protected major transit station areas, areas where a development permit system is adopted or established in response to a Ministerial Order. Inclusionary zoning is a new land use planning tool that is designed to increase the supply of affordable housing by requiring a percentage of units in new developments be affordable. Gananoque has a development permit system in place and is therefore eligible to use this new land use planning tool, subject to the creation an assessment report. Any decision to approve inclusionary zoning policies is not subject to appeal, except for the Minister.

#### 6.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 1.1.1 b) states that healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by accommodating an appropriate affordable and market based range of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons).

Policy 1.4.1 states to provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall: maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary,

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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lands which are designated and available for residential development; and maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units.

Policy 1.4.3 states that planning authorities shall provide for a mix of housing options and densities to meet project market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the regional market area by:

- a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans;
- b) permitting and facilitating:
  - 1. all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including special needs requirements and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and
  - 2. all types of residential intensification, including additional residential units, and redevelopment in accordance with policy 1.1.3.3;
- c) directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to support current and projected needs;
- d) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed; ...
- f) establishing development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment and new residential development which minimizes the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

### 6.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan contains a comprehensive set of policies that are designed to promote an adequate and affordable range of housing opportunities. The Official Plan's Lowertown policies allow for low, medium and high density residential uses. The Official Plan's sustainable residential neighbourhood policies are intended to preserve and consolidate existing residential neighbourhoods and to provide for new residential opportunities through intensification and redevelopment of vacant buildings to allow a mix of commercial and residential uses. The sustainable residential policies permit a full range of dwelling types and provide direction on compatibility, infill, servicing, energy efficiency, residential densities, development criteria for higher density residential development, access and housing supply and affordability.

### 6.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan includes a comprehensive set of policies to guide the delivery of adequate and affordable housing. The Official Plan should be reviewed in light of the changing economic and demographic trends within the community (e.g. aging population, declining household sizes, housing market price increases) and changes in provincial legislation and policy which require



# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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consideration of an appropriate affordable and market based range of residential types, establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low to moderate income households and which aligns with Leed and Grenville's Housing and Homelessness Plan, reviewing existing residential density targets and introducing new policies that speak to additional residential units and set the stage for the use of inclusionary zoning.

## 7.0 Parks and Open Spaces

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### 7.1 Background:

Parks and open spaces are a key component of healthy, liveable and safe communities. For the purposes of this initiative parks and open spaces include municipally, provincially and federally-owned parks, natural areas and waterfronts, outdoor recreational and institutional spaces, like school and recreation centre yards, sports fields and golf courses.

Parks and open spaces provide a range of benefits. On an environmental level, parks and open space mitigate flood risks and impacts of climate change by offering permeable, high-absorbing lands that offset the impacts of potential flood events and trees and vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide and provide cooling canopies. Additionally, parks and open spaces provide areas where native species can thrive within developed, built-up areas. On a human level, parks and open spaces have positive impacts on health; encouraging physical activity, community connections and positive impacts on mental health and early childhood development. Representing significant community assets and aesthetic value, parks and open space support a community's economy by raising the values of adjacent and proximate properties.

Land use planning can play a role in ensuring that these objectives are met.

- Land use planning can support the appropriate creation and renewal of parks and open space by considering modelled demand and population growth, identifying and reserving lands most suitable for the creation of new parks and open spaces and providing policies that aim to protect and enhance these community assets.
- Land use planning is concerned with residential, employment, institutional, recreational and natural spaces and how these land uses fit together to produce resilient, efficient and functional development and land use patterns. Given this integrated approach, land use planning can ensure that parks and open spaces are strategically planned in accordance with other land use patterns; maximizing their potential as community assets in terms of use and access.

Gananoque has a number of parks, open spaces and recreational pathways within its municipal boundaries. Currently, parks and open spaces make up 6% of Gananoque's total area. Given Gananoque's position in relation to the St. Lawrence and Gananoque Rivers, the town's waterfront is central to its parks and open space network. Of the total 6% parks and open spaces identified in Gananoque's current land use schedule, 11 have waterfront locations.

In 2019, the Town of Gananoque and Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands prepared a joint Recreation Master Plan. This plan outlines a 10-year vision for recreation, parks and trails: The Recreation Master Plan is based on eight guiding principles including developing complete communities through health, wellness and physical activity, age friendly, accessible and inclusive

## Draft Background Report

### PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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recreation, investment in infrastructure based on smart growth principles, investment in multi-use for the broadest range of access to recreation and strengthening the municipalities' joint role as a tourism destination. Given its strategic waterfront location and compact form, Gananoque is identified as a primary service area for recreational facilities and amenities.

The Recreation Master Plan includes many service based recommendations for recreational infrastructure in both communities, including some that have land use planning implications. For example, the Recreation Master Plan recommends that consideration be given to expanding the Lou Jeffries Park property boundary to the north to make more effective use of the site and reinforce its role as a regional recreational hub. In terms of parkland, the report states that Gananoque's existing parkland provision standard is 2.23 hectares of parkland/1000 residents. The Plan recommends a minimum parkland provision standard of 3.0 hectares/1000 residents, moving forward. Given the difference between the existing and recommended parkland provision standard, and anticipated population growth described in Section 2, Gananoque will need to increase the amount of parkland provided by approximately 7 hectares to meet the recommended parkland provision standard.

The Recreation Master Plan makes the following observations:

- The parkland dedication policies in the Official Plan be updated as part of the review of the Official Plan.
- Gananoque should focus its efforts on obtaining cash in lieu of parkland as the preferred method of parkland dedication for new developments in order to pool resources to acquire large park parcels that can be used for a variety of active and passive recreation uses or improvement of existing facilities;
- Parkland acquisition in areas of growth and future developments must be considered based on their connectivity to existing parks, open space and trail systems, street frontage and ease of accessibility. It should also be of sufficient size and configuration to allow for the development of a variety of active and passive amenities, with priority given to larger parks.

The Recreation Master Plan makes the following relevant recommendations:

- Maximize the supply of available parkland through a range of strategies, including dedication by development, donations, accessing grants, land trusts, conservation easements, land exchange, partnerships, agreements and direct purchase.
- Consider acquisition of undevelopable open space areas through the development process and other means of securement to provide opportunities for enhanced conservation, and compatible public access and linkages to parks, trails and open spaces, per the Planning Act. This land should not be accepted as part of the parkland dedication requirement.
- Continue to consider cash-in-lieu of parkland and acquisition of additional parkland by other means where land acquired through dedication by development is insufficient in size or shape for the intended park function.
- Continue to require parkland dedication through Official Plan policy, as prescribed in the Planning Act, including alternative conveyance requirements, through physical parkland acquisition or cash-in-lieu of parkland. Update relevant policies within the Official Plan to conform with the changes to the Planning Act.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Since the Official Plan came into effect, the legislative and regulatory framework governing parkland dedication was updated by the Province of Ontario through the above-described *More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan, Bill 108, More Homes More Choice Act, Bill 197 COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act* and *O.Reg 509/20*. Initially, the Government proposed to integrating parkland dedication, cash-in-lieu of parkland, development charges and Section 37 benefits into a single Community Benefit Charge. The outcome of this process is that Community Benefit Charges replace Section 37 benefits, while development charges, parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu remain separate requirements.

### 7.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

#### 7.2.1 The Planning Act

The *Planning Act* requires that municipalities have regard to the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities when making decisions that affect land use planning matters.

The *Planning Act* permits municipalities to acquire parkland or cash-in-lieu of parkland through Section 42 of the Act or Section 51.1 of the Act.

Section 42(1) of the Act states that as a condition of the development or redevelopment of land, the council of a local municipality may, by by-law applicable to the whole municipality or to any defined area or areas thereof, require that land in an amount not exceeding, in the case of land proposed for development or redevelopment for commercial or industrial purposes, 2 percent and in all other cases 5 percent of the land be conveyed to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes.

Section 42 (3) of the Act states that, subject to 42(4), as an alternative to requiring the conveyance provided for in subsection (1), in the case of land proposed for development or development for residential purposes, the by-law may require that land be conveyed to the municipality for a park or other public recreational purposes at a rate of 1.0 hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed or at such lesser rate as may be specified in the by-law.

Section 42(4) of the Act states that this alternative requirement may not be provided for in a by-law passed under this section unless there is an official plan in effect in the local municipality that contains specific policies dealing with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternate requirement. The creation of these policies is contingent upon the creation of a parks plan that examines the need for parkland in the municipality (subsection 42(4.1)) that meets the consultation standards established in subsection 42(4.2)).

Section 42(6) of the Act states that if a rate established by subsection (1) applies, the council may require a payment in lieu, to the value of the land otherwise required to be conveyed.

Section 42(6.0.1) of the Act states that if a rate established by subsection (3) applies, the council may require a payment in lieu, calculated by using a rate of one hectare for each 500 dwelling units proposed or such lesser rate that may be specified in the by-law.

## **Draft Background Report**

### **PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan**

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Section 42(6.2)(6.3) allows a municipality to establish a reduction in the cash in lieu payment for proposed redevelopment projects, should the municipality choose to.

Section 42(6.4) states that the value of the land shall be determined as of the day before the day the building permit is issued.

Section 42(7) states that if land has or is required to be conveyed for parkland through this section or the land division provisions of the Act, no additional conveyance or payment may be required from subsequent development or redevelopment unless there is an increase in density or land originally proposed for industrial or commercial purposes, is now being proposed for another purpose.

The provisions in Section 51.1 of the Act are similar to the above requirements, except that they are enabled as conditions in the context of land division (i.e. subdivision, condominium and consent) and the valuation of the land occurs on the day before draft approval is received. In addition, if a municipality has imposed a standard 2 or 5 percent parkland dedication, it may require payment in lieu.

#### **7.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement**

Policy 1.1.1 b) states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by accommodating ... recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs.

Policy 1.5.1 states that healthy, active communities should be promoted by: planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity; planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources; providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.

#### **7.2.3 The Official Plan**

The Official Plan has a number of policies that directly relate to parks and open spaces. The Official Plan's Lowertown's Natural Heritage Features identifies waterfront parks and open spaces as essential for the preservation of natural and biological features, through their integration in Gananoque's open space and parks plans.

Parks and open spaces are identified on Schedule E, including a number of recreational pathways linking these spaces. Notably, the existing recreational pathways provide many access points to both the St. Lawrence River and Gananoque River waterfronts. Recreational pathways and the connections they provide represent a key aspect and strength of Gananoque's park and open space network.

The Official Plan identifies public access and public use of shoreline parks and open spaces as a priority. Additional efforts will be made to preserve natural features along the waterfront, acquire additional waterfront lands and pathways, enhance existing spaces and facilities and improve general access (i.e. pedestrian, cyclist and motorist access).

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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The Official Plan states that existing parks provide diverse recreational opportunities (active and passive) and are outfitted with different facilities and infrastructure that encourages recreation. A key priority of the Town of Gananoque is to maintain and enhance the existing inventory of parks.

The Official Plan also includes cash in lieu of parkland policies that enable cash in lieu of the standard 2 or 5 percent parkland dedication requirements in the land division process.

### 7.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan contains policies on parks and open space, their connectivity and importance as access points to Gananoque's waterfront. The Official Plan should be updated to reflect the recommendations outlined in the Recreation Master Plan and new Planning Act requirements relating to parkland dedication and cash in lieu of parkland.

## 8.0 Mobility

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### 8.1 Background

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the practice of land use planning has evolved to place an increasing emphasis on the need to integrate land use and transportation decisions and to provide individuals with additional non-automobile modes of transportation including walking and cycling with the goal of improving health and climate outcomes.

Creating communities that support a variety of transportation methods helps to create healthier, more active communities. Enhanced sidewalk and trail networks provide venues for active transportation methods which allow for physical activity, increased social exchanges, and reduced road congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. These forms of transportation are also more accessible to a larger population.

The Provincial Policy Statement defines a transportation system as a system comprised of facilities, corridors and rights-of-way for the movement of people and goods and may take the form of transit stops and stations, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, HOV lanes, rail facilities and parking facilities. These transportation systems move individuals from their point of origin to their destination.

Gananoque's transportation system includes the Highway 401 Corridor, portions of the Thousand Island Parkway, arterial roads (e.g. King Street East), collector roads (e.g. Charles Street North) local roads, sidewalks, on and off street recreational pathways, public parking facilities (e.g. Pine Street Parking Lot).

Gananoque, given its relatively small land area of 7 square kilometres, high population density of 733 residents per square kilometre, largely urban grid and moderate topography, make it an ideal location to promote non-automobile modes of transportation. Gananoque recently partnered with the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands on a Transit Feasibility Study that explored the possibility of connected Gananoque to Kingston via public transit. The study recommended an initial express bus service model and subsequently an on-demand model.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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The Lowertown Master Plan has outlined a full network of interconnected streetscapes using vehicle and pedestrian networks and parks and open spaces. While this plan was finalized in 2005, the pedestrian and vehicle networks proposed would still provide a benefit to the community. In particular, the pedestrian networks would create more recreational opportunities both within the Town and along the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail.

Gananoque has not yet developed a transportation master plan, active transportation plan, or transportation demand management strategy.

### 8.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

#### 8.2.1 The Planning Act

The *Planning Act* requires that municipalities have regard to the adequate provision and efficient use of transportation systems in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. As well as, promoting development that is designed to be sustainable, supports public transportation and is oriented towards pedestrians.

#### 8.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 1.1.1 e) states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning to achieve cost effective development standards, optimization of transit investments and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.

Policy 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which support active transportation, are transit supportive where transit is planned, exists or may be developed and are freight supportive.

Policy 1.4.3. e) requires planning authorities to prioritize transit-supportive development and intensification in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations.

Policy 1.6.7.1 states that transportation systems should be provided with care safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and are appropriate to address projected uses.

Policy 1.6.7.2 states that efficient use should be made of existing and planned infrastructure including through the use of transportation demand management strategies, where feasible.

Policy 1.6.7.3. states that as part of a multimodal transportation system, connectivity within and among transportation systems and modes should be maintained and, where possible, improved including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Policy 1.6.7.4. states that a land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support current and future use of transit and active transportation.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Policy 1.6.8.1 states that planning authorities shall plan for an protect corridors and rights of way for infrastructure, including transportation, transit and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems to meet current and projected needs.

Policy 1.6.8.2 states that major goods movement facilities and corridors shall be protected for the long term.

Policy 1.6.8.3 prohibits planning authorities from permitting development in planned corridors that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which was identified. New development proposed on adjacent lands to existing or planned corridors and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purposes of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts on and from the corridor and transportation facilities.

### 8.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan identifies and provides policies for a road classification that includes provincial highways, the Thousand Island Parkway, arterials, collectors, local streets, private roads, lanes or alleyways. The Official Plan also speaks to land acquisition, extension or improvements to existing roads, additions to roads and conversion of roads.

The Official Plan states that the provision of transportation is a crucial element in ensuring that Gananoque can continue to accommodate growth in a manner which is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.

The Official Plan states that a balanced transportation network for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists will be implemented in association with development and redevelopment, and as Town resources permit. Any network improvements within the Lowertown area shall be consistent with the Master Plan.

The Official Plan also states that a pedestrian network consistent with the Lowertown Master Plan will be implemented through development and re-development. The proposed pedestrian and vehicular gateways, signage, and wayfinding outlined in the Master Plan will be a priority for development.

### 8.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan includes policies that speak to mobility including walking, cycling and driving. The Official Plan should be reviewed to ensure that the existing mobility policies continue to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and anticipate and support the proposed provision of public transit services in the community.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 9.0 Servicing

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#### 9.1 Background

Since the Official Plan came into effect, land use planning for stormwater management has also evolved to emphasize the need for more naturalized stormwater management practices to help reduce capital and maintenance cost and encourage more sustainable practices.

Gananoque is serviced by municipal water services, municipal sewage services and stormwater management facilities. Gananoque's municipal water system includes the water treatment plant located on and drawing water from the St. Lawrence River and a distribution system that consist of approximately 48 kilometres of underground pipes.

Gananoque has not yet developed a water wastewater master plan or stormwater management plan/guide/

#### 9.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

##### 9.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act required that planning authorities have regard to the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act.

##### 9.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 1.1.1 g) states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.

Policy 1.6.1. states that infrastructure and public service facilities shall be provided in an efficient manner that prepares for the impacts of a changing climate while accommodating projected needs. Planning for infrastructure and public service facilities shall be coordinated and integrated with land use planning and growth management so that they are financially viable of their life cycle and available to meet current and projected needs.

Policy 1.6.2 states that planning authorities should promote green infrastructure to complement infrastructure.

Policy 1.6.6.1 states that planning for sewage and water services shall:

- a) accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services ...
- b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely, prepares for the impact of a changing climate, is feasible and financially viable over their lifecycle, and protects human health and safety and the natural environment.
- c) promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
- d) integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
- e) be in accordance with the servicing hierarchy outlined through the PPS.



# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Policy 1.6.6.2 states that municipal sewage services and municipal water services are the preferred form of servicing for settlement areas to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety. Within settlement areas with existing municipal sewage services and municipal water services, intensification and redevelopment shall be promoted wherever feasible to optimize the use of the services.

Policy 1.6.6.3 and 1.6.6.4 states that where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available planned or feasible, private communal or private individual services are permitted, in that order, and subject to certain criteria.

Policy 1.6.6.7 states the planning for stormwater management shall:

- a) be integrated with planning for sewage and water services and ensure that systems are optimized, feasible and financially viable over the long term;
- b) minimize, or, where possible, prevent increases in contaminant loads;
- c) minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through effective management of stormwater, including the use of green infrastructure;
- d) mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment;
- e) maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces; and,
- f) promote stormwater management best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency and low impact development.

### 9.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan includes policies on water, wastewater and stormwater management. These policies generally direct development to areas where services can be reasonably extended and does not result in unplanned extensions. The policies encourage capacity allocation for economic development purposes, require stormwater management in accordance with provincial, conservation authority and local requirements, and permit consideration of partial, private communal or partial services, subject to certain criteria.

### 9.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan includes policies that speak to water, wastewater and stormwater services. These policies should be reviewed in the context of the updated Provincial Policy Statement policies that place a greater emphasis on the use of green infrastructure.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 10.0 Minerals and Mineral Aggregates

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#### 10.1 Background

As part of the Official Plan process to date, the provincial Ministry of Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MDMNR) provided the Town with information on aggregate resources, mineral deposit sites, abandoned mines information system inventory sites, mining land status and mineral potential.

This information indicates that there aren't any primary, secondary or tertiary sand or gravel deposits in Gananoque. There are three documented mineral deposit sites (clay, quartzite building stone and granite building stone) and two abandoned mine information system points (former and abandoned granite quarries) in Gananoque. Granite is a commodity designated under the *Aggregate Resource Act*.

MDMNR identified an area of significant mineral potential for wollastonite in the northwestern edge of Gananoque. Wollastonite is an industrial mineral comprised of calcium, silicon and oxygen. Wollastonite is used to improve the performance of plastics, paints and coatings, construction materials, ceramic and metallurgical applications.

#### 10.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

##### 10.2.1 The Planning Act

The *Planning Act* requires that planning authorities have regard to the conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base when exercising their authority under the Act.

##### 10.2.2 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 2.4.1 states that minerals and petroleum resources shall be protected for long term use.

Policy 2.4.2.2 states that known mineral deposits, known petroleum resources and significant areas of mineral potential shall be identified and development and activities in these resources or on adjacent lands which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if the resource use would not be feasible, or the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest and issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

##### 10.2.3 The Official Plan

The Official Plan does not currently include any designations or policies that recognize the identified area of significant mineral potential or known mineral deposits.

#### 10.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan should be revised to identify the mineral deposit occurrences and area of significant mineral potential and incorporate policies that protect the resources and guide development on, abutting and adjacent to these resources.

## 11.0 Cultural Heritage

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### 11.1 Background

The PPS defines cultural heritage landscapes as geographic areas that may have been modified by human activity, and that has cultural heritage value or interest to a community. These areas may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, or archaeological sites or natural features valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. These landscapes may have been deemed to have cultural heritage value under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or included on a federal and/or international register, and/or are protected through an official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanism.

Built heritage also falls under the realm of cultural heritage and is an important definition for land use planning. The PPS defines built heritage as a building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured or constructed part or remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest to a community. These buildings may have been deemed of cultural heritage value under the *Ontario Heritage Act* or have been included on a local, provincial, federal and/or international register.

Gananoque identified several cultural heritage features, mainly within the Lowertown area along the Gananoque River. These features are largely linked to factories located along the river at the time the town was formed in the 1800s. Gananoque generally grew out from this middle point with residential developments on both sides of the river. The Town has 20 properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and an additional 8 properties identified as properties of interest. Notable designations include Town Hall, the former factories along the river, mansions, hotels, and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings on the main street. Heritage designations are led by the Gananoque Municipal Heritage Committee comprised of one member of Council and Town residents. There are five known archaeological sites in Gananoque.

Since the Official Plan came into effect, the Provincial Government has updated the framework for cultural heritage planning. As part of this process, the Ontario Heritage Act was updated to modify the process for designating heritage properties, and the PPS was updated to require municipalities to consult with indigenous communities when identifying and managing a cultural heritage or archaeological resource.

### 11.2 The Land Use Planning Framework

#### 11.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that municipalities have regard to the conservation of features of significant cultural interest, as well as the adequate provision and distribution of cultural facilities in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act.

#### 11.2.2 Ontario Heritage Act

Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act went into on July 1, 2021 and apply to all heritage applications from that day onward. Key changes to the Act include:

- New applications have the benefit of appeals to and binding decisions from the Ontario Land Tribunal

## Draft Background Report

### PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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- Owners whose properties are designated will be notified and may object to the designation wherein council must consider the objection in moving forward with the designation
- New applications for alteration or demolition are considered approved if council does not decide within a specified time
- Municipalities have 90 days to issue a designation notice upon notice of an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment, or plan of subdivision application
- Designations must occur within 120 days after the issuance of a notice to designate

The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries also updated the toolkits used for implementing the Heritage Act. These toolkits explain step-by-step how municipal councils and planning authorities will implement the new policies laid out in the Act. These toolkits explain how to designate a heritage property, evaluate a potential property, designate a heritage conservation district, create, and maintain a heritage committee, and utilize places of worship while maintaining their heritage value.

Existing policies within Part 4 of the Heritage Act allow for municipalities to designate properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest given they meet the prescribed criteria for heritage designation and the designation is made through the process outlined in the Act. Further, municipalities may appoint heritage committees to advise and assist the council on matters of heritage designation.

Part 5 of the Act allows municipalities to designate heritage conservation districts. These are areas whose cultural heritage value extends beyond that of a single building, structure, or landscape. These districts require permit approval from the municipality for any alternation not considered minor, as well as demolition and any new construction. New developments must go through a review and approval process to ensure they fit in with the existing characteristics of the district.

#### 11.2.3 The Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 2.6.1 states that significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.

Policy 2.6.2 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved.

Policy 2.6.3 states that planning authorities shall not permit development and site alternation on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected property will be conserved.

Policy 2.6.4 states that planning authorities should consider and promote archaeological management plans and cultural plans in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

Policy 2.6.5 states that planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting, and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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### 11.2.4 The Official Plan

The Official Plan contains policies to guide cultural heritage and archaeological planning in the community generally, as well as Lowertown. Lowertown policies outline policies for redevelopment of the lands within Lowertown, a built heritage area. The policies promote the development of a mixed-use community within Lowertown while protecting and enhancing existing residential and cultural uses in the area.

When reviewing development proposals, Section 5.4.4. of the OP states that planning authorities and councils should consider the compatibility and appropriateness of development and re-development with conserving natural heritage resources. Further, Section 5.10.3. states that the municipality will maintain a heritage resource database and that heritage resource polices will apply when:

1. conserving heritage buildings, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources that are under municipal ownership and/or stewardship
2. conserving and mitigating impacts to all significant cultural heritage resources, when undertaking public works
3. respecting the heritage resources identified, recognized or designated by federal and provincial agencies

Development and site alteration may be allowed on sites adjacent to heritage properties given a Heritage Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is demonstrated that the heritage property will be conserved.

### 11.3 Conclusion

Gananoque's cultural heritage features, coupled with its natural environment, are key features of the community and support the tourism economy. Gananoque also has a number of know archaeological sites. The Official Plan should be reviewed and updated to ensure that it can provide a strong policy basis for cultural heritage and archaeological planning in the community.

## 12.0 Protecting Public Health and Safety

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### 12.1 Background

A key element of land use planning is to ensure that development does not occur in locations that is not appropriate due to the risk of public health and safety and property damage/loss. These areas fall within two categories – natural hazards and human made hazards.

Natural hazards include hazardous lands, hazardous sites and hazardous forest types for wildland fire. These hazard types are influenced by climate change.

- The PPS defines hazardous lands as property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River System this means the land, including that covered by water, between the international boundary, where applicable, and the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard, erosion hazard or dynamic beach limits. Along river systems, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard or erosion hazard.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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- The PPS defines a hazardous site as property or lands that could be unsafe for development and site alteration due to naturally occurring hazards. These may include unstable soils or unstable bedrock.
- The PPS defines hazardous forest types for wildland fire as forest types assessed as being associated with the risk of high to extreme wildland fire using risk assessment tools established by the province and amended from time to time.

Human made hazards are those places where human activity on the landscape has occurred and the activity has created a risk to further development. Human made hazards include mine hazards, oil, gas and salt hazards, or former mineral mining operations, mineral aggregate operations or petroleum resource operations.

- The PPS defines a mine hazard as any feature of a mine defined under the Mining Act, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated.
- The PPS defines a mineral aggregate operation as lands under license or permit, other than wayside pits and quarries, issued in accordance with the Aggregate Resources Act, and associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing or recycling of mineral aggregate resources and derived products or the production of secondary related projects.

Given its location along the St. Lawrence and Gananoque Rivers, its geology and geomorphology and past land uses, several natural and human hazards have been identified in Gananoque. This includes hazardous lands along the St. Lawrence and Gananoque Rivers, hazardous sites associated with organic soils, and as described above, two former mineral aggregate operations that have been identified through the provincial abandoned mine information system database.

### 12.2 The Planning Framework

#### 12.2.1 Planning Act

The Planning Act requires that planning authorities have regard to the protection of public health and safety when exercising their authority under the Act.

#### 12.2.2 Provincial Policy Statement

Policy 1.1.1 e) recognizes that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns.

Policy 3.1.1 states that development shall generally be directed, in accordance with guidance developed by the Province (as amended from time to time) to areas outside of hazardous lands adjacent to the shoreline of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River System which area impacted by flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards; hazardous lands adjacent to river systems which are impacted by flooding and/or erosion hazards; and hazardous sites.

The PPS defines a flooding hazard as the inundation, under the conditions specified below, of areas adjacent to a shoreline of a river or stream system not ordinarily covered by water: along the shorelines of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System, the flooding hazard is based on the one hundred year flood level plus an allowance for wave uprush and other water related hazards; along river systems, the flooding hazard is the greater of the flood resulting from a

## **Draft Background Report PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan**

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regional storm event (e.g. Hurricane Hazel), the one hundred year flood or a flood that is greater than the regional storm or one-hundred year flood that occurred as a result of ice jams and has been approved by the province.

The PPS defines erosion hazard as the loss of land, due to human or natural processes, that poses a threat to life and property. The erosion hazard limit is determined using considerations that include the 100 year erosion rate, an allowance for slope stability, and an erosion/erosion access allowance.

The PPS defines a dynamic beach hazard as areas of inherently unstable accumulations of shoreline sediments along the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System, as identified by provincial standards as amended from time to time. The dynamic beach hazard limit consists of the flooding hazard limit plus a dynamic beach allowance.

Policy 3.1.2 states that development and site alteration shall not be permitted within the dynamic beach hazard, defined portions of the flooding hazard along connection channels such as the St. Lawrence River System, areas that would be rendered inaccessible to people and vehicles during times of flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards (unless it has been demonstrated that the site has safe access appropriate for the nature of the development and the natural hazard) and a floodway.

Policy 3.1.3 states that planning authorities shall prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.

Policy 3.1.4 states that despite policy 3.1.2, development and site alteration may be permitted in certain areas associated with the flooding hazard along a river system in those exception situations where a Special Policy Area has been approved or where development is limited to uses, which by their nature, must locate within the floodway, including flood and/or erosion control works or minor additions or passive non-structural uses which do not affect flood flows.

Policy 3.1.5 states that development shall not be permitted to locate in hazardous lands and hazardous sites where the use is an institutional use, an essential emergency service or use associated with the disposal, manufacture, treatment or storage of hazardous substances.

Policy 3.1.7 states that except as prohibited by policies 3.1.2 and 3.1.5, development and site alteration may be permitted in those portions of hazardous lands and hazardous sites where the effects and risk to public health and safety are minor, could be mitigated in accordance with provincial standards, and where all of the following area demonstrated and achieved: development and site alteration is carried out in accordance with floodproofing standards, protection works standards and access standards; vehicles and people have a way of safely entering and exiting the area during times of flooding, erosion and other emergencies; new hazards are not created and existing hazards are not aggravated; and no adverse environmental impact will result.

Policy 3.18 states that development shall generally be directed to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for development due to the presence of hazardous forest types for wildland fire. Development may be permitted with there risk is mitigated in accordance with wildland fire assessment and mitigation standards.

# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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Policy 3.2.1 states that development on, abutting or adjacent to lands affected by mine hazards or former mineral aggregate operations may be permitted only if rehabilitation or other measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are under way or have been completed.

Policy 3.2.2 states that sites with contaminants in land or water shall be assessed and remediated as necessary prior to any activity occurring on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be no adverse effects.

### 12.3 Official Plan

The Official Plan defines and includes policies for hazardous lands, hazardous sites and human made hazards, including flooding and/or unstable slopes along the St. Lawrence and Gananoque Rivers and organic soils. The Official Plan recognizes that there may be additional hazardous land or hazardous sites that have not been identified in the community. The Plan also includes policies that speak to contaminated sites and site decommissioning and clean up.

### 12.4 Conclusion

The Official Plan policies relating to public health and safety should be reviewed and expanded to include the full range of hazards identified in the PPS (e.g. allowances for wave uprush or other water related hazards along the St. Lawrence River) and to reflect the requirements for brownfield redevelopment that came into effect after the Official Plan came into effect. Consideration should also be given to how to address climate change related considerations and their influence on natural hazards, as well as new provincial requirements relating to wildland fire.

## 13.0 Lowertown

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### 13.1 Background

In 2005, Gananoque initiated the Gananoque Lowertown Study, which was finalized in the same year. The study was initiated as an economic development initiative and strategy to guide future development in the Lowertown Area and to inform a review of the Official Plan that was about to get underway at that time.

The Lowertown study featured an extensive consultation program that involved interviews, questionnaires, information displays, various Council and Steering Committee Workshops and Meetings and several Public Workshops and Meetings.

The study establishes the following vision and principles for Lowertown:

Vision: Create a vibrant, year-round, mixed use Lowertown neighbourhood on an active waterfront where people live work and play.

Principles:

- Live: Protect and enhance existing residential uses; encourage new medium-density residential uses.



# Draft Background Report

## PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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- Work: Protect and enhance existing viable businesses; encourage appropriate new, street-related retail and commercial uses.
- Play: Protect and enhance existing recreation, tourism and cultural uses; provide opportunities for new water-related recreation activities; encourage appropriate cultural activities and facilities.

The study identifies several issues, opportunities and constraints associated with Lowertown at that time:

- Redevelopment potential
- Parking issues
- Poor linkages to King Street
- Signage/information
- All season use
- Access to the waterfront
- Environmental issues – land base and water base

The study speaks to a series of matters including:

- Pedestrian circulation
- Vehicular circulation
- Parking strategy
- Streetscape design
- Wayfinding and signage
- Open space and parks
- Design guidelines

In 2015, Gananoque commissioned the Parking in Lowertown Study which provided a more in-depth analysis of existing and future parking and traffic conditions. This study found that the parking supply was adequate to meet existing and future demand, including peak period demand, with the exception of holiday weekends. Based on this analysis, the study made various recommendations to improve parking operations in the short and long term.

### 13.2 Official Plan

The Official Plan includes various policies that speak to Lowertown. The first guiding principle of the Official Plan states “we will be dedicated to maintaining and improving Lowertown through the long term implementation of the Lowertown Master Plan.” The Official Plan includes a section on Lowertown, including goals and objectives, policies for natural heritage features, public access and use, development and redevelopment and implementation. These policies are consistent with the Lowertown Study recommendations.

### 13.3 Conclusion

The Official Plan policies relating to the Lowertown should be reviewed in the context of the external and local changes described in previous sections and progress made on the Lowertown Study to date.

# Draft Background Report PlanGAN Gananoque Official Plan

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## 14.0 Implementation

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The Official Plan contains sections devoted to plan implementation and administration. These sections speak to various matters including permitted uses, development control tools, community improvement areas, maintenance and occupancy standards, building permits, zoning, economic development, social and cultural matters.

These policies should generally be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the in effect legislation and policy, including

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