

Township of Wilmot
REPORT

NO: PB 2003-07
TO: Council
PREPARED BY: Harold O’Krafka, Director of Development Services
DATE: March 17, 2003
SUBJECT: Township of Wilmot Response
Planning Our Future – Phase II:
Options for a Regional Growth Management Study

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Township of Wilmot forward a copy of Report PB 2003-07, “Township of Wilmot Response to Planning Our Future - Phase II: Options for a Regional Growth Management Strategy” to the Region of Waterloo, requesting that the Township’s concerns and comments be addressed in Phase III of the study.

REPORT:

As Council is aware, the Region of Waterloo has embarked on a long term planning process for the Region.

Phase I of the study was completed in mid-2002 and in response to Phase, the Township of Wilmot expressed its concern that the plan had been developed without input from Wilmot Township and with a certain apparent bias to imposing a predetermined growth plan.

To quote Report PB 2002-31, which was forwarded to the Region as the Township’s official comment,

“The resultant report of Phase I clearly highlights the apparent lack of consideration of the future growth of Wilmot Township within the Region. Of particular note is the “conceptual shrink wrapping” of Baden and New Hamburg which does not correspond to historical and ongoing planning of long term growth by the Township.

It would appear that the Phase I perspective of growth, as it applies to the Township of Wilmot, is that the needs of our community are met through the a hard edge boundary to the growth of the cities.

The future health of Wilmot Township within the Region of Waterloo requires much more. The values and goals of the Township must be considered and to this extent Township staff are again concerned that Phase I of the Regional study did not list Wilmot's Community Strategic Plan in its background documentation. The apparent exclusion of input from Wilmot both as a municipality and as a community in Phase I remains a concern."

Phase II, as it evolved from Phase I, responded to the Township of Wilmot's concerns by including representation on the Steering Committee and provided for a meeting respecting growth in Wilmot between Regional staff, Township planning staff, and the Township CAO.

Through the analysis of options within Phase II the Region has created two new concepts of growth – both in the vein of a Balanced Approach described as a balanced approach between Moderate Re-Urbanization and Intensive Re-Urbanization.

Both concepts appear focused on justifying a central transit corridor with a higher order public transit system. More importantly for Wilmot Township, both concepts propose a hard edge Country Side Line to City Urban Growth along the eastern boundary of the Township.

Figure 1 shows Wilmot Township as conceived at the end of Phase I. Figure 2 shows Wilmot Township as conceived at the end of Phase II.

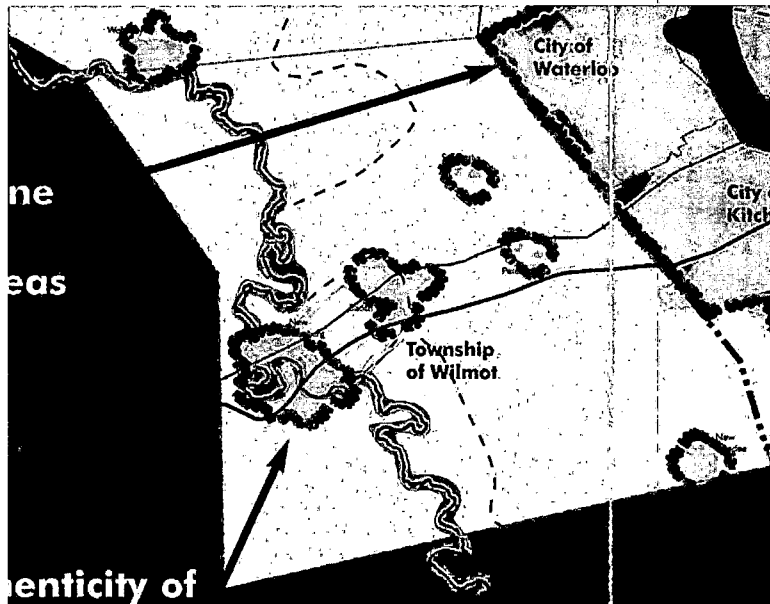


FIGURE 1

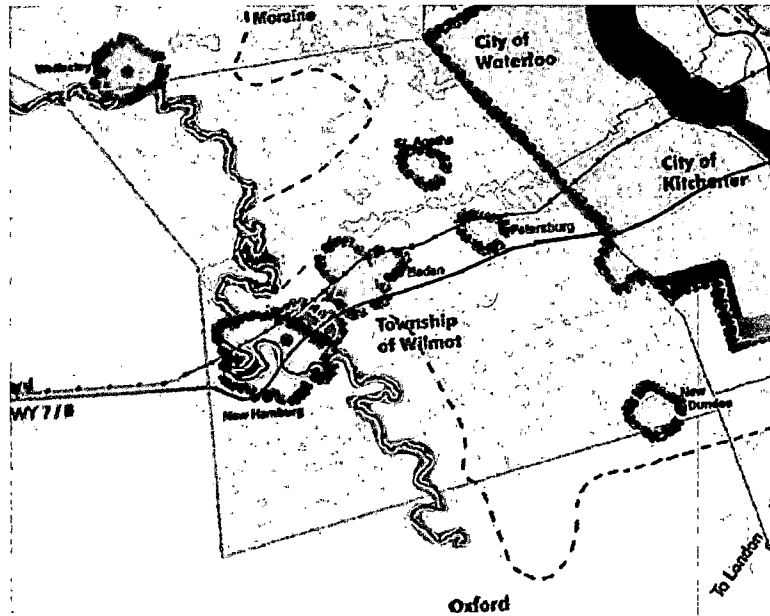


FIGURE 2

It is clear from comparing the concepts that Phase II has tried to address the Township's concerns that Phase I did not recognize that a node for growth is required and desired in Wilmot Township in order to provide for the needs of the community and to recognize longstanding planning directions and foci.

Specifically, the longstanding need for employment lands within Wilmot Township, the need for a long term recreational centre and the direction of residential growth to the fully serviced settlements of New Hamburg and Baden has now been recognized. That said, the conceptual plan is somewhat graphically challenged and staff recommend that the concept for Wilmot be altered in accordance with Figure 3.

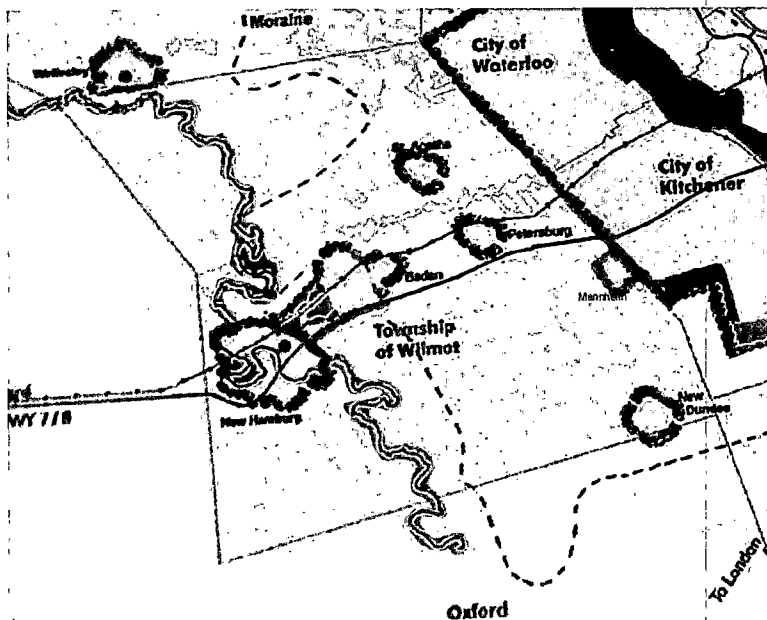


FIGURE 3

The primary change proposed would be the elimination of growth on the south side of the 7 & 8 highway and the reflection of the long term focus of growth in the corridor between Snyder's Road and Highway 7 & 8. Staff assume that the introduction of growth south of Highway 7 & 8 was a drafting error as it does not reflect any Township Planning documents or the discussions between Regional and Township staff.

Rather, those discussions focused on the long term development and intensification of development between New Hamburg, the Nafziger Road Industrial Area and Baden. The corridor provides both natural and physical linkages between the communities of Baden and New Hamburg and the existing industrial development node along Nafziger road.

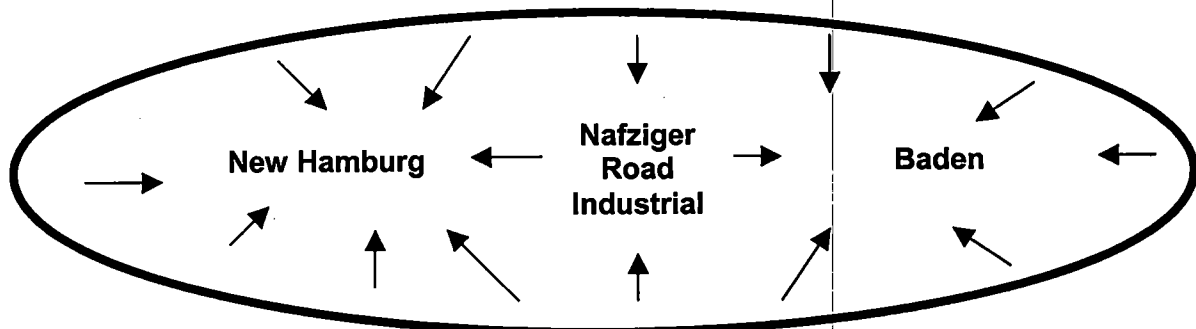
By focusing the majority of future Township growth to intensifying development in this corridor allows for the maximization of physical infrastructure and investment in Wilmot Township in a location which is outside of the Waterloo Moraine.

Intensified, concentrated and centralized growth for Wilmot Township, as a component of Regional growth, reflects of the goals of the Regional Strategy by utilizing existing infrastructure such as sewer and water mains, the railway and Highway 7 & 8. It also allows a greater return on investment for services such as education and emergency services by minimizing travel distances in the transport of students or response of emergency vehicles.

The application of the intensification concept to Baden and New Hamburg as a collective Township urban population is preferable to a long term plan of dispersed growth throughout the Township and indeed this policy direction away from dispersed growth was implemented through the 1997 Growth Strategy for Wilmot. The direction balances the need to minimize the intrusion on agricultural activities while recognizing that the community needs some measure of growth so as to sustain the health of the community.

The Wilmot Concentrated Growth Model

Concentrated growth on full services in and between Baden and New Hamburg to concentrate growth with minimal infrastructure requirements and maximum use of existing infrastructure as opposed to widespread growth throughout the Township on private services.



Two other more minor changes to the Phase II Regional Growth Management Concept have also been proposed on Figure 3.

Firstly, the Mannheim Settlement would seem to appear as an unlabelled extension of the City of Kitchener into Wilmot Township. Staff suggest that Mannheim should be clearly labeled and separated from the City of Kitchener by the graphical representation of the Countryside line.

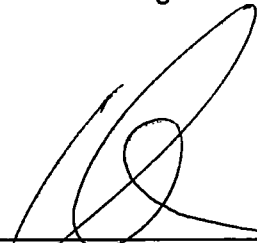
Secondly, Township staff failed to notice the spill over effect of Wellesley towards the Nith River in the Phase I concept. Township staff would prefer if the boundary of Wellesley settlement were shown as a hard edge Countryside line.

Although the Wellesley sewage treatment plant is located in Wilmot Township it was decided at the time it was built that Wilmot Township would not seek urbanization on the Wilmot side of the line beyond that which was already in place. To this end it presents a somewhat misleading hope for land owners south of Gerber Road to be shown as an existing Urban Area.

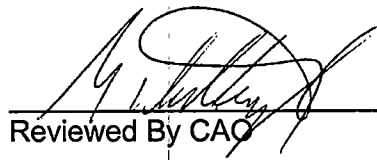
In general, the Balanced Approach of the Regional Growth Management Plan Phase II, as modified in Figure 3, is representative of the plans which Wilmot has made for its own sustainable future and therefore the plan effectively incorporates the long term goals of Wilmot Township.

The hard edge boundary to urban growth within the cities combined with the intent that true urban growth be concentrated fits well with the policies of Wilmot Township to concentrate and intensify development within the New Hamburg, Nafziger Road Industrial Area and Baden.

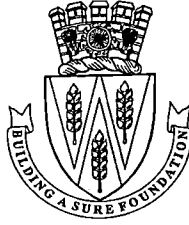
Township staff recommend that this report be forwarded to the Region of Waterloo with a request that the Balanced Growth Concept for the Region be amended, as shown on Figure 3 of this report, to reflect the long term balanced approach to growth within Wilmot Township.



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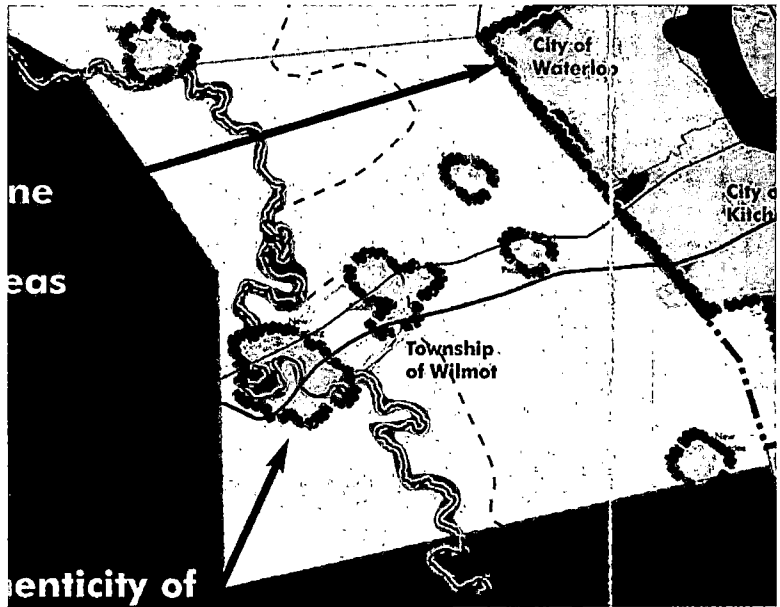


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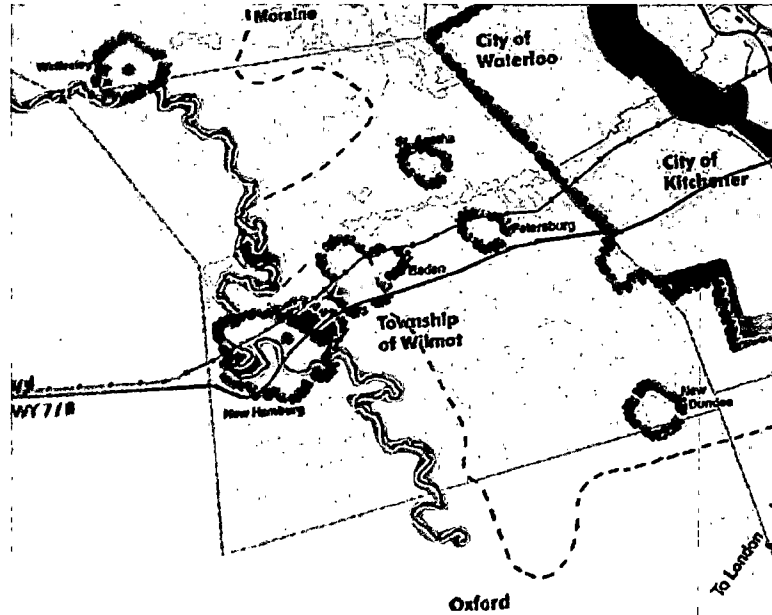


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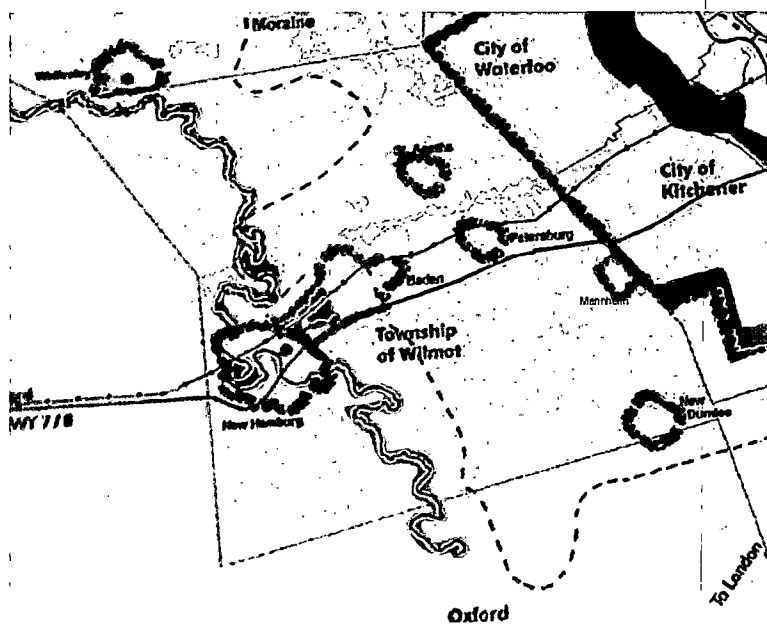


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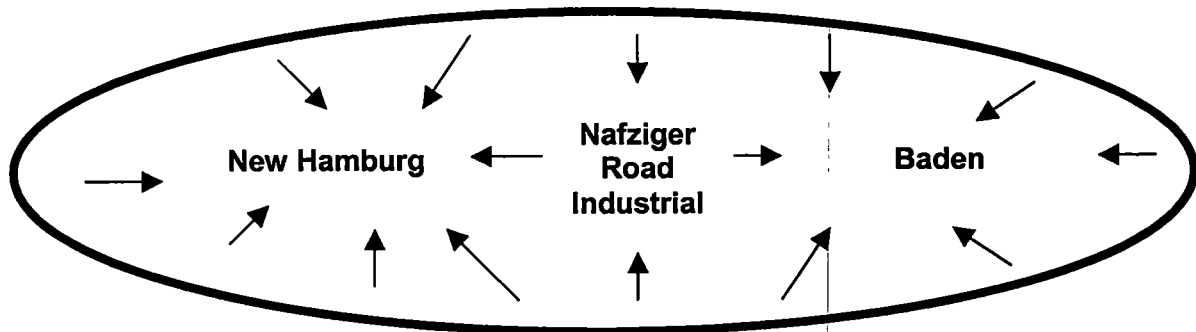
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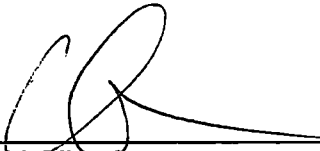
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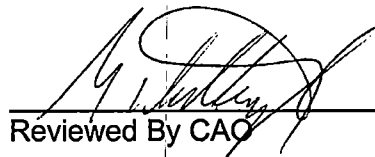
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