**Submission on ERO-019-6177**

**Review of A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement**

December 30, 2022

**FRIENDS OF THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE**

David Crombie, Chair

Lynn Morrow

Susan Lloyd Swail

Kevin Eby

Ken Greenberg

David Israelson

Victor Doyle

A Place to Grow is Ontario’s globally recognized and award-winning growth management framework and economic strategy for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Developed to work in an integrated manner with the Greenbelt Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan it provides the overarching and specific policy direction for managing urban growth in one of the largest and fastest growing city-regions in North America. It is designed to address planning and resource management challenges across 115 municipalities with a suite of mutually supportive elements which minimize the impacts of urban sprawl while optimizing the benefits of more compact, transit supportive communities.

It has been instrumental in driving the planning to provide the long-term mix, range and supply of housing units to accommodate the needs of existing and future residents in the most affordable manner as its density and intensification targets are essential in planning for the types of housing people can afford. Supported by its own legislation with a *conformity* standard, it provides the specificity and standard of decision-making necessary for effective implementation. This is particularly important in regard to housing compared to the generic policies and lesser standard of *consistency* found in and governing the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Growth Plan is therefore critical and integral to managing growth in the Golden Horseshoe. This region is not like other parts of Ontario and cannot and should not be woven into a province wide policy document. It needs and warrants its own specific growth management framework as that provides the most strategic long term economic plan.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe should be maintained as a provincial plan under the Places To Grow Act. All geographic specific policies and metrics relating to urban growth should be maintained within the Growth Plan including the population/employment forecasts and allocations and the intensification and density targets (for both greenfields and built-up areas). The policies and schedules of the Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems should also be maintained as should policies pertaining to watershed planning and integrated infrastructure planning.

In short, the Growth Plan has been doing exactly what it was intended to do and doing it well. Merging it with the province-wide, generic Provincial Policy Statement is ill-conceived and will lead to more fragmented and less effective growth management and planning for housing.

David Crombie, Chair, Friends of the Golden Horseshoe

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Susan Lloyd Swail

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David Israelson

Victor Doyle

c/o 239 Johnston Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 1H5