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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2020-INFO-3
Date: January 10, 2020

Subject:

Update to the Provincially Significant Employment Zone (PSEZ) Mapping in Durham, File L35-03

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 In January 2019, the Province released a proposed suite of changes to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe including a proposed framework for Provincially Significant Employment Zones (PSEZs). Regional Council considered these changes through Commissioner's Report [2019-P-6](#) and provided comments to the Province in February 2019.
- 1.2 On December 20, 2019, the Province released updated mapping for the PSEZs based on comments it received during its consultation process. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the mapping changes as they affect Durham Region. The changes are illustrated in Attachments 1 to 4 of this Report.
- 1.3 In brief, the map changes made on December 20th pertain to the removal of lands from the PSEZs. A further announcement from the Province regarding the creation of new PSEZs is expected later in 2020. In general, the changes

requested by the Region regarding the removal of lands from the PSEZs were accepted by the Province. The mapping for this stage of the process is now final.

2. Background

2.1 The rationale for identifying certain designated employment lands as PSEZs is to protect them from conversion to non-employment uses. Lands within a PSEZ cannot be converted to non-employment uses except through a municipal comprehensive review.

2.2 PSEZs are intended to apply to employment areas that:

- a. are designated for employment, are inside existing settlement area boundaries, and are outside of the Greenbelt Plan Area;
- b. may be vulnerable to conversion pressure, for uses such as residential;
- c. may be facing encroachment by sensitive land uses that could threaten existing employment uses in the employment area; or
- d. are needed for the GGH to attract new investment and retain existing industries.

2.3 The following factors were considered by the Province in identifying PSEZs:

- a. are near highways, railways, intermodal facilities, transit and/or other major transportation infrastructure to support the movement of people and goods;
- b. include a high concentration of employment and/or economic output, and play a strategic role to the GGH;
- c. support industrial uses, which are sensitive to encroachment; or
- d. are contiguous zones and contain large continuous developable, constraint-free lands.

2.4 Consultation on the draft 29 PSEZs was undertaken by the Province over the summer and fall of 2019. The Province continues to analyze and review requests for new PSEZs, such as along Highway 407 in Durham. Additional changes to the mapping is expected to be released in winter 2020.

2.5 The final phase of the PSEZ framework is the development of policy objectives to support implementation. No additional information on the timeline for this work has been provided.

3. Provincially Significant Employment Zones in Durham

3.1 There are three PSEZs in Durham:

- a. Zone 1: Durham South (Oshawa East and Clarington) – Employment Areas in Oshawa and Clarington, along Highway 401, west of Simcoe Street South;
- b. Zone 2: Durham South (Oshawa and Whitby) – Employment Areas in Oshawa and Whitby, generally south of Highway 401, to Lake Ontario;
- c. Zone 3: Durham South (Pickering and Ajax) – Employment Areas in Pickering and Ajax, south of Highway 401.

3.2 On February 27, 2019, Regional Council requested that the Province:

- a. Identify PSEZs along all 400 series highways in Durham (401, 407, 412);
- b. Identify the Seaton employment lands as a PSEZ due to its proximity to Highway 407, the federal airport lands and its status within the Province's Central Pickering Development Plan;
- c. Increase the size of the Uxville Industrial Park in the Township of Uxbridge;
- d. Remove the DurhamLive lands from Zone 3; and
- e. Remove the lands east of Church Street between Highway 401 and Bayly Street in Ajax (Annandale Golf Course lands) from Zone 3.

Council's requested removals were granted. The requested additions are pending.

3.3 Regional staff subsequently informed the Province that a portion of the lands identified in Zone 1 in Clarington just west of Highway 418 were outside of the Urban Area Boundary and should be removed until such time as the urban area boundary is extended.

4. Area Municipal Requests for Modifications

4.1 The area municipalities had several requests for modifications to the PSEZs. How the changes were addressed through the release of the December 2019 mapping is captured below.

4.2 The **Municipality of Clarington** requested the following modifications to Zone 1:

- a. Remove the proposed Courtice Major Transit Station Area, (change not granted);
- b. Add the lands between Courtice Road and Highway 418, south of Bloor Street and the lands between Durham Highway 2 and Bloor Street, east of Courtice Road and west of Highway 418. These requests included adding these lands to the Courtice urban area, which would require a settlement area boundary expansion, (change not granted); and

- c. Remove from the Zone lands that overlapped with the Southeast Courtice Secondary Plan and the Southwest Courtice Secondary Plan areas, (change partially granted).

4.3 The **City of Oshawa** requested the following modifications to Zone 1 and 2:

- a. Refine the boundaries of the PSEZs so that they do not encroach or entirely encompass locally zoned Open Space zoned lands, including Environmentally Sensitive Open Space zones, Hazard Lands Open Space zones and Waterfront Open Space zones (e.g. Lakefront Park West located south of Philip Murray Avenue and west of Stevenson Road South), (change granted);
- b. Remove the Harbour Commercial zone near the former marina lands, east of Simcoe Street, (change granted);
- c. Designate the industrial lands located south of Highway 407 East in Oshawa as a PSEZ, including the West Windfields Industrial Area and the East Windfields Industrial Area, (not addressed through this Phase);
- d. Designate the industrial lands located in the Northwood Business Park as a PSEZ. The Northwood Business Park is generally bounded by the pipeline north of Taunton Road West to the south, the Oshawa-Whitby boundary to the west, Highway 407 to the north and the Oshawa Creek to the east, (not addressed through this Phase); and
- e. Designate the south Columbus Industrial Area along Highway 407 as a Zone in the future once the boundaries are finalized, based on the results of the Environmental Assessment being undertaken for the area to support the Columbus Part II Planning Area, (not addressed through this Phase).

4.4 The **Town of Whitby** requested the following modifications to Zone 2:

- a. Remove the Lake Ontario Waterfront lands from the PSEZ, (change not granted);
- b. Undertake minor refinements to the boundaries to include/exclude certain lands, coincident with the Town's Industrial designations, (not granted); and
- c. Add the lands designated as Prestige Industrial and General Industrial along Highway 412 and Highway 407, (not addressed through this Phase).

4.5 The **Town of Ajax** requested the following modifications to Zone 3:

- a. Exclude areas where MTSA's are designated in municipal official plans (i.e. Ajax GO Station Mixed Use Area, (change granted for the Ajax GO Station);

- b. Remove the employment area north of Bayly Street, east of Westney Road, to allow for consideration of expansions to the GO Transit Station Mixed Use Area and the Downtown Regional Centre in the future, (change granted);
- c. Add lands along Bayly Street, west of Duffins Creek where a new employment use was recently constructed, (change granted);
- d. Remove lands along Westney Road South that are primarily designated environmental protection and contain a Town Park, (change granted); and
- e. Add other employment areas in north and east Ajax to Zone 3 along Salem Road, (not addressed through this Phase).

4.6 The **City of Pickering** requested the following modifications to Zone 3:

- a. Remove the lands designated "Mixed Use Areas - City Centre", (Pickering Urban Growth Centre), bounded by the hydro corridor on the east: Bayly Street on the south, Sandy Beach Road on the west, and Highway 401 on the north; and the row of properties along the south side of Bayly Street, west of the hydro corridor, that is designated "Mixed Use Areas - Mixed Corridors" in the Pickering Official Plan, (change granted);
- b. Add the Whites Road Prestige Employment Area in the West Shore Neighbourhood on the south side of Highway 401 and west of Whites Road (change not granted); and
- c. Add the Seaton Employment Lands along Highway 407, also referred to as the Pickering Innovation Corridor, (not addressed through this Phase).

5. Private Submissions for Modifications in Durham

5.1 On October 18, 2019, Ministry of Municipal Affairs – Ontario Growth Secretariat staff held a technical session with Regional and area municipal staff to discuss municipal and private submissions to the Province on the boundaries of the PSEZs.

5.2 The private submissions received directly by the Province were shared at this meeting. These included:

- a. **Ontario Farmland Trust** – requested that where the Zones overlap with the provincially issued agricultural land base mapping (outside of an Urban Area), that those areas be removed. This applies to Zone 1 in Clarington, (change granted);
- b. **Courtice (Employment) Landowners Group** – requested removal of the area surrounding the planned future Courtice GO Station from Zone 1, and

- the lands be designated for mixed-use development as part of the MTSA, (change not granted);
- c. **Delpark Homes, Courtice** – supported the Municipality of Clarington’s request to remove the Southwest and Southeast Courtice Secondary Plan lands from Zone 1, (change partially granted);
 - d. **Southwest Courtice Landowners Group** – requested that the Zone 1 boundary be revised to reflect the Secondary Plan boundary of the Southwest Courtice Secondary Plan, supporting Clarington’s Request (change partially granted);
 - e. **80 Harbour Road, Oshawa, property owners** – requested removal of the Oshawa Harbour lands designated Open Space and Recreation in the Oshawa Official Plan from Zone 1, (change granted);
 - f. **Home Depot Canada Inc.** – requested removal from Zone 2, for their Victoria Street East property in Whitby, (change not granted);
 - g. **895 and 905 Sandy Beach Road, Pickering property owners** – requested that additional land use compatibility/setback policies for uses within/adjacent to the Zones be implemented, (not addressed through this Phase);
 - h. **DurhamLive** – requested that the DurhamLive lands south of Highway 401, west of Church Street and north of Bayly Street be removed from Zone 3, (change granted);
 - i. **Infrastructure Ontario** – raised concerns about the ability to consider higher order employment uses, including, but not limited to the continuation of existing government institutional uses in PSEZs and questioned why the Seaton employment lands were not included as a PSEZ, and questioned whether it was a mapping error (not addressed through this Phase).

6. Changes to the Provincially Significant Employment Zones in Durham

- 6.1 The final PSEZs were released in December 2019. The changes are summarized below. Attachments 1 to 4 are a series of maps illustrating the changes from the January 2019 to December 2019 releases of the PSEZ mapping.
- 6.2 Zone 1 – Oshawa/Clarington Removals
 - a. lands outside of the urban area boundary south of Bloor Street, east of Courtice Road;
 - b. lands along Bloor Street identified as Mixed-Use Corridor, west of Courtice Road in the Municipality of Clarington Official Plan;

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- c. lands along the western boundary of Clarington and Oshawa that are part of the Southeast Courtice Secondary Plan area;
 - d. the General Motors Headquarters natural area on the east side of Second Marsh was removed;
 - e. the area designated Urban River Valley as per the Greenbelt Plan;
 - f. minor adjustments east of Farewell Street, south of Highway 401; and
 - g. the Harbour Road Commercial zone near the former marina lands, east of Simcoe Street.

6.3 Zone 2 – Oshawa/Whitby Removals

- a. lands along the Lake Ontario waterfront south of Phillip Murray Avenue that contain of recreational and naturalized uses.

6.4 Zone 3 – Ajax/Pickering Removals and Minor Additions

- a. east of Westney Road, north of Bayly Street was removed;
- b. the Ajax GO Station Mixed Use Area, and the lands south to Bayly Street, west of Westney Road was removed;
- c. the Annandale Golf Course lands, east of Church Street, north of Bayly Street were removed;
- d. the DurhamLive Lands, west of Church Street, north of Bayly Street were removed; and
- e. the area that overlapped with the City Centre and Mixed-Use Corridor near the Pickering GO Station was removed; and
- f. a property south of Bayly Street and west of Church Street was added.

6.5 The removal of lands from the PSEZs, where the designation is Employment Area in the Regional Official Plan results in the ability for a privately initiated application to be brought forward to convert the lands from Employment Area to another land use designation. It is Regional staff's view that the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) serves an important purpose to properly manage and comprehensively evaluate all employment land conversions, and the Region's current work program for Envision Durham and the Growth Management Study has been developed accordingly. Dealing with site specific conversion requests ahead of the MCR will divert staff effort away from achieving the MCR completion deadline of mid-2022.

7. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 7.1 Numerous changes were made to the PSEZ mapping from January 2019 to December 2019. However, not all requests made by the Region, area municipalities or others were acted upon. The Province has advised that requests for new zones will be considered through the next phase of the process. In particular, the request for the employment lands along Highway 412 and Highway 407 to be included in a PSEZ, and the expansion of the rural employment area in Uxbridge have yet to be considered.
- 7.2 Regional staff will continue to monitor the Province's progress on reviewing the requests for additional PSEZs and will keep Regional Council apprised of any further changes.

8. Attachments

Attachment #1: Provincially Significant Employment Zone 1A, Durham South (Clarington)

Attachment #2: Provincially Significant Employment Zone 1B, Durham South (Oshawa East)

Attachment #3: Provincially Significant Employment Zone 2, Durham South (Oshawa and Whitby)

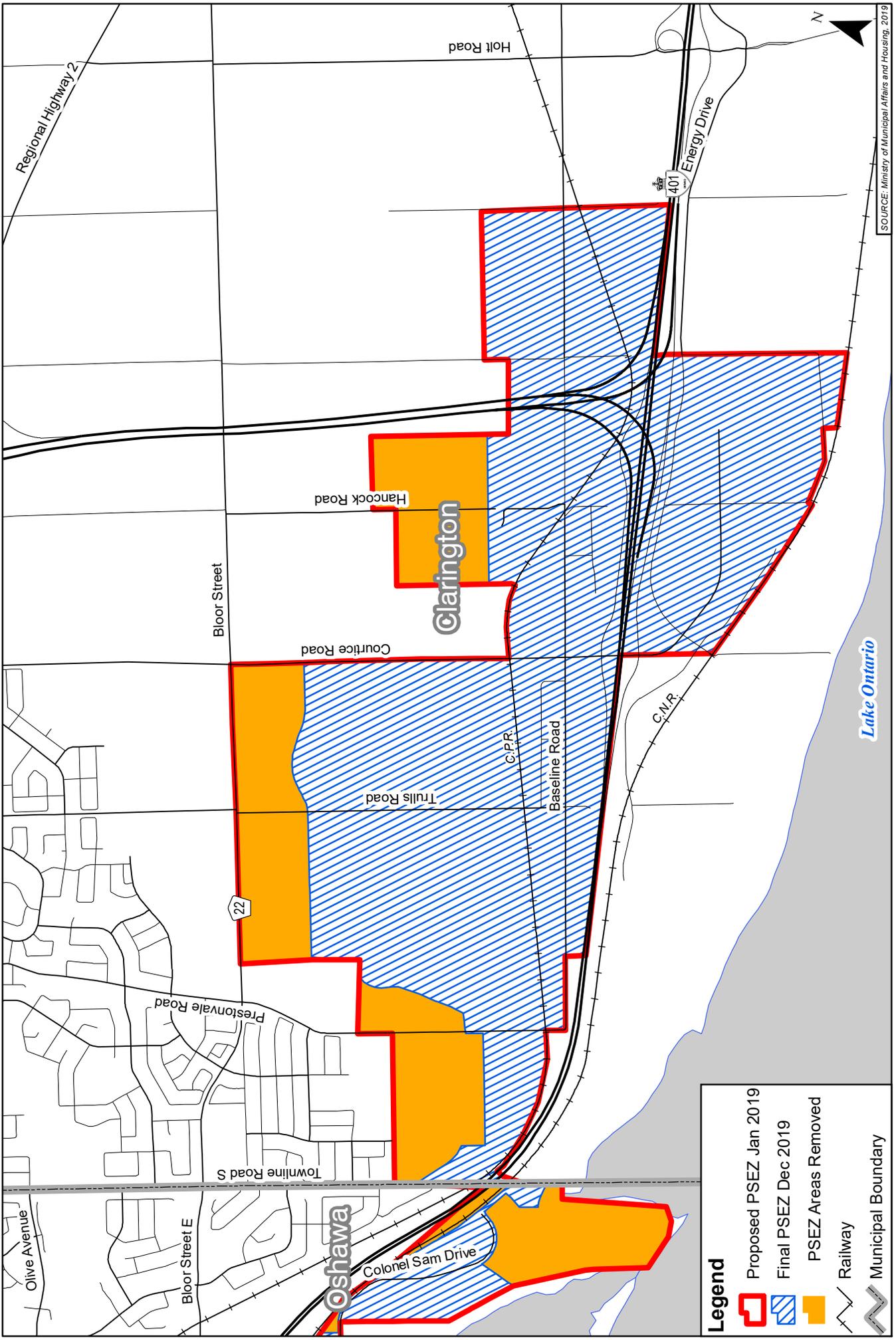
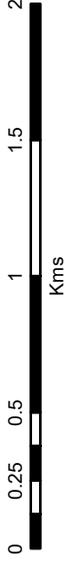
Attachment #4: Provincially Significant Employment Zone 3, Durham South (Pickering and Ajax)

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development

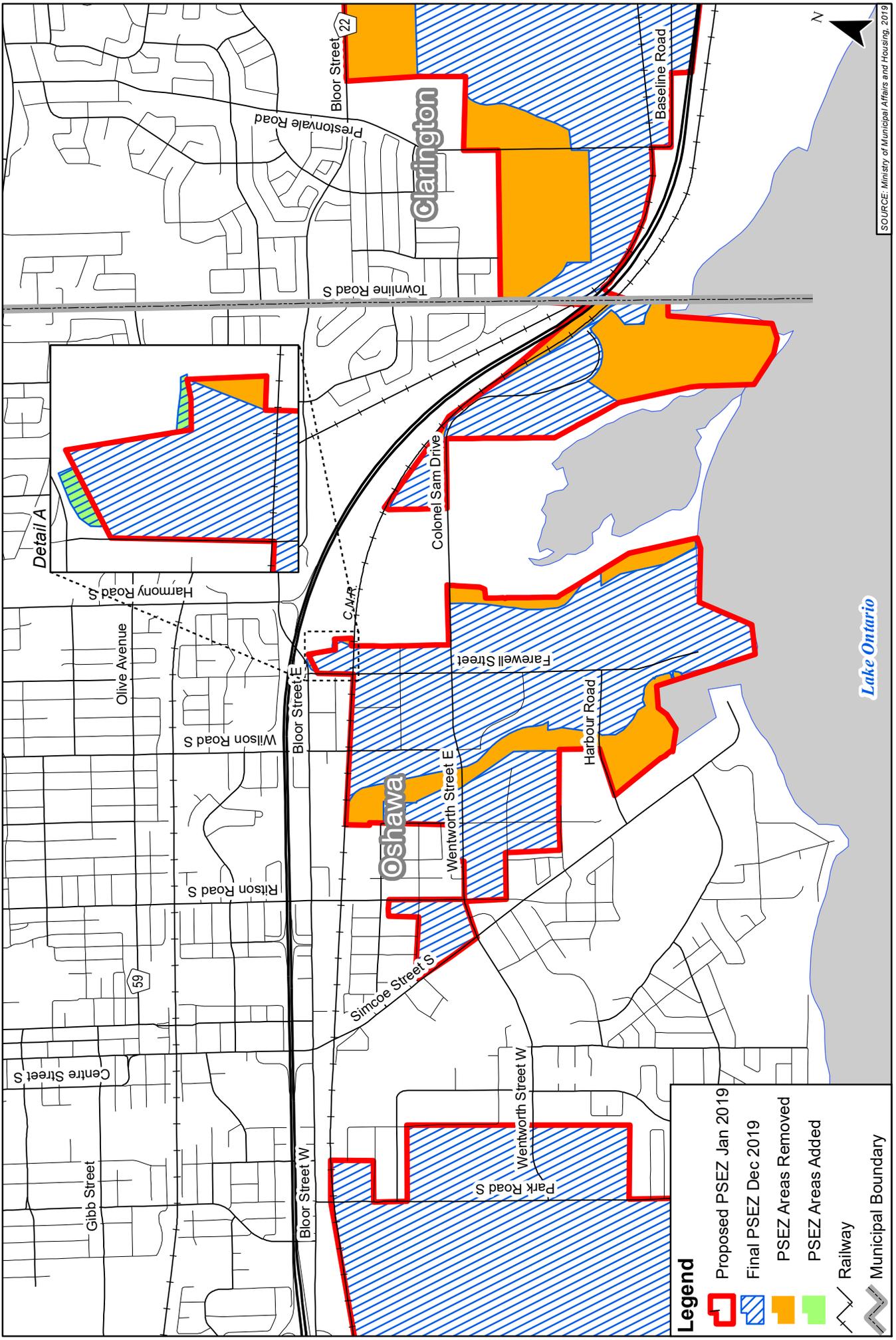
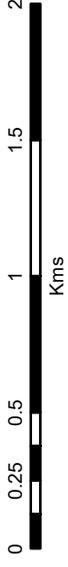
Provincially Significant Employment Zone1A



Legend

- Proposed PSEZ Jan 2019
- Final PSEZ Dec 2019
- PSEZ Areas Removed
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary

Provincially Significant Employment Zone 1B

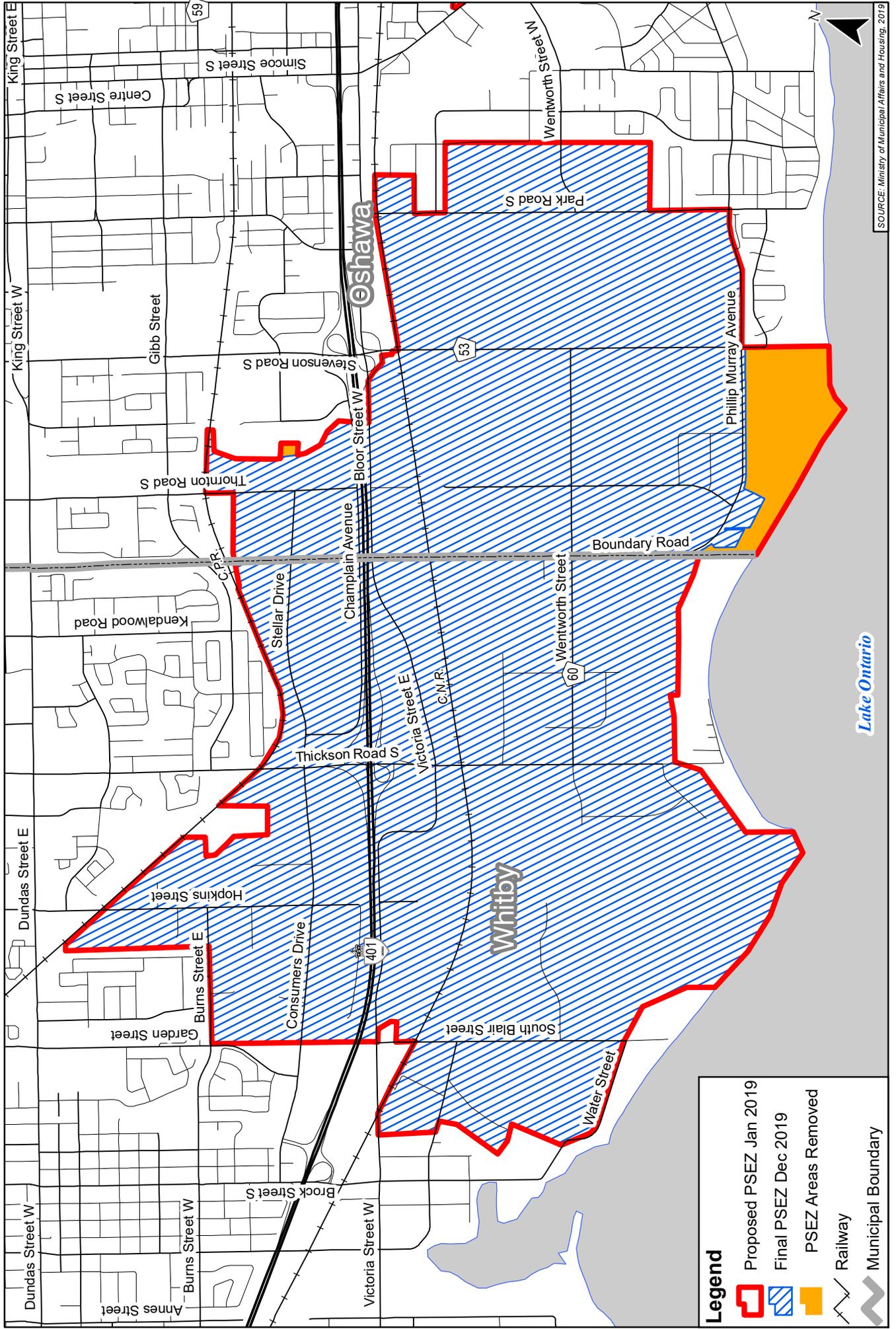
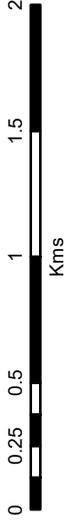


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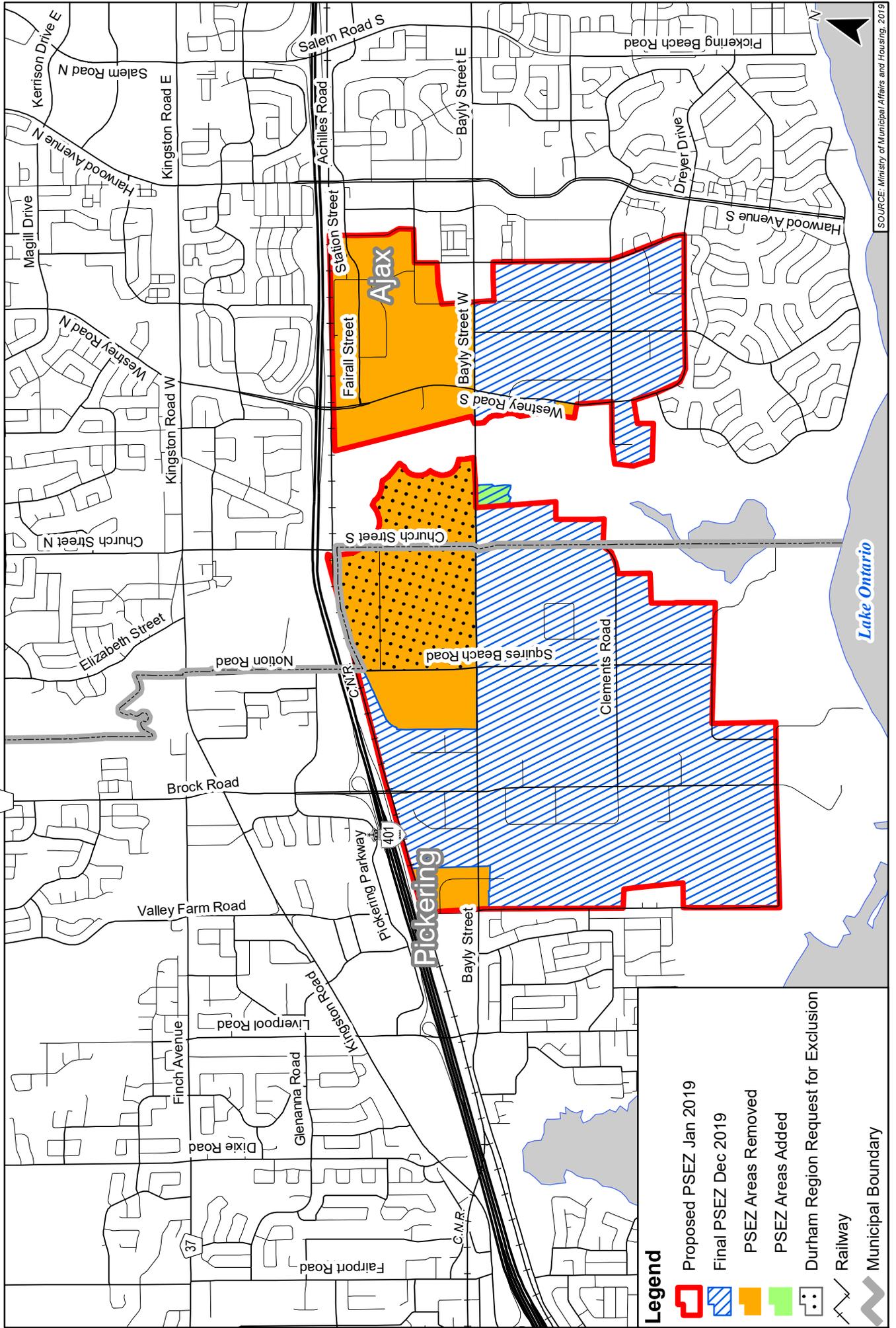
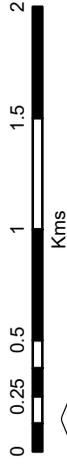
- Proposed PSEZ Jan 2019
- Final PSEZ Dec 2019
- PSEZ Areas Removed
- PSEZ Areas Added
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary

Lake Ontario

Provincially Significant Employment Zone 2



Provincially Significant Employment Zone 3



Legend

- Proposed PSEZ Jan 2019
- Final PSEZ Dec 2019
- PSEZ Areas Removed
- PSEZ Areas Added
- Durham Region Request for Exclusion
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary