



## **REPORT**

**REPORT TO:** Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

**REPORT FROM:** Melissa Ricci, Senior Policy Planner

**DATE:** April 22, 2021

**REPORT NO.:** PD-2021-0026

**RE:** Premier Gateway Phase 2B Integrated Planning Project – Next Steps

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Report No. PD-2021-0026 dated April 22, 2021, regarding the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Integrated Planning Project – Next Steps, be received for information;

AND FURTHER THAT, Staff be authorized to prepare a Recommended Land Use Option based on the key findings and recommendations of the background report, technical reports and input received from the Technical Advisory Committee, the Steering Committee and the public to be presented at a Virtual Open House on June 21, 2021;

AND FURTHER THAT, a copy of this report be circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Ministry of Transportation, the Region of Halton, Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Halton for information.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the next steps for the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Secondary Plan Project. In August 2020, staff prepared Report PD-2020-0036, which provided a status update and summarized the project anticipated timelines, phases and upcoming public consultation efforts. On October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, a Virtual Open House was held to introduce the project to the public and gather their initial feedback. Approximately 40 stakeholders attended the event which included a presentation, and an opportunity for participants to ask questions and to provide input related to key aspects of the project. A summary and video of the meeting are available on Let's Talk Halton Hills.

The Project, which includes the completion of a Secondary Plan, Design Guidelines and a Scoped Subwatershed Study for the employment lands located north of Steeles Avenue, between Eighth Line and Winston Churchill Boulevard, has five phases and it is now in its third phase. As part of this phase, the consulting team has prepared draft technical reports which will serve as the framework for the preparation of land use alternatives this spring. The reports were presented to the Technical Advisory Committee and the Steering Committee in February and March 2021 for their review. In late-May, the land use alternatives will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee and the Steering Committee, and a Recommended Land Use Option will be developed and presented at a virtual Public Open house in late-June.

### **COMMENTS:**

In the fall of 2020, the Consulting Team led by MSH Planning prepared a Background Report that summarized the relevant provincial, regional, local and conservation authority policies, guidelines, and standards for the Study Area. The report was finalized in December 2020. A number of technical reports have also been prepared related to transportation, cultural heritage, agriculture, supportive commercial land needs and servicing. In addition, as part of the Scoped Subwatershed Study work, a Gap Analysis and Preliminary Constraint Assessment Technical Memorandum has been prepared which highlights preliminary constraints in advance of the Scoped Subwatershed Study Phase 1 Report which will be finalized once the spring fieldwork is completed in June. The Gap Analysis and Preliminary Constraint Assessment has been completed to facilitate the development of preliminary land use concepts for the area. It is important to note that the preliminary characterization and constraint assessment is subject to revisions, pending the results of the spring fieldwork for the Scoped Subwatershed Study; however, the assessment has built upon the review of desktop information and information collected to-date from the fieldwork.

The technical reports have been reviewed by town Staff and are being reviewed by members of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Steering Committee. Once the draft reports are finalized, they will be released for public review via the Project webpage. A summary of the key findings and recommendations of the reports are provided below.

#### Transportation Study Background Report:

The purpose of the Transportation Study Background Report is to provide information on the study context, the policy environment, and existing conditions related to the transportation system in and around the Study Area. The report prepared by Paradigm Consulting includes a summary of existing traffic conditions and planned road improvements, highlights Regional and local Active Transportation Initiatives and local transit plans. The report anticipates that development in the Study Area faces potential transportation challenges including:

- Limited arterial road capacity;
- Lack of transit service;
- Limited active transportation connectivity;
- Closely spaced access locations along arterial roads with inadequate storage, contributing to road safety concerns and operational delays; and
- Demand for access locations close to highway interchanges.

The report concludes that assessing the cumulative effects of existing and proposed development on the transportation system and addressing these issues effectively through timely infrastructure improvements requires a coordinated approach from development proponents and responsible agencies. A final Transportation Background Report will be prepared once the Preferred Land Use Option is developed. A detailed Work Plan for the Final Transportation Study has been provided to the Town and Halton Region. The Final Report will recommend remedial measures to address anticipated transportation challenges in the Study Area.

#### Agricultural Impact Assessment:

DBH Soil Services completed the Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) for the Study Area. The purpose of the AIA Report is to document the existing agricultural character, identify potential existing (or future) agricultural impacts, and to provide avoidance or mitigative measures as necessary to offset any impacts related to planned future development. For the AIA, agricultural operations and activities are evaluated in a larger area called a Secondary Study Area, located 1.5 km beyond the boundary of the Secondary Plan Study Area.

The assessment found that the predominant land use in the agricultural areas is the production of common field crop. Minimum Distance Separation (MDS 1) calculations were completed for agricultural facilities that were capable of housing livestock in the Secondary Study Area. The MDS 1 arc from an Agricultural Facility located at 8278 Ninth line, a horse facility, impacts the Secondary Plan Study Area. The AIA recommends potential mitigation strategies including:

- Upgraded road network and including wide shoulder areas for farm vehicles;
- Include fencing and signage between the employment lands and agricultural lands;
- Use of directional lighting, and lighting that does not affect crops;
- Design employment lands area with sound reduction and dust reduction at source and/or at periphery with agricultural area which may include tree/shrub plantings, berms, or sound walls; and
- Design employment lands area such that any employment that has the opportunity to increase vermin is located away from the agricultural lands.

## Cultural Heritage Assessment

The purpose of the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment, completed by ASI, is to describe the existing conditions of the study area, present an inventory of existing and potential cultural heritage resources and propose appropriate mitigation measures and recommendations for minimizing and avoiding potential negative impacts to identified, existing and potential cultural heritage resources. Recommendations were developed based on the results of the assessment, which include:

- A total of six cultural heritage resources are identified as strong candidates for conservation. Two properties located at 15625 Steeles Avenue (identified through this review) and 15145 Steeles Avenue (currently listed in the Town's Heritage Register) make up a large portion of the Secondary Plan Area.
- Consider using the following means to protect and conserve cultural heritage resources: Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, guidelines for Areas with Cultural Heritage Character, carry out Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment where required, and other measures.
- Incorporate policies that promote the conservation of existing cultural heritage resources and consider the presence of the potential cultural resources identified, such as:
  - Integrate conservation of cultural heritage with natural heritage features and environmentally sensitive areas;
  - Urban design and built form should be planned to ensure appropriate relationships between new buildings and cultural heritage resources; and
  - Establish significant views and focal points to provide views and vistas of prominently located cultural heritage resources.

The report concludes by providing additional recommendations and mitigation protocols to reduce the adverse impacts to potential cultural heritage resources in the area.

## Supportive Commercial Needs Assessment

The Supportive Commercial Needs Assessment addresses the market demand for Supportive Commercial Uses in the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Employment Area. The purpose of the report is to determine the need for commercial floor space in the new development area to support the employment uses and to determine how much land should be designated/zoned for these commercial uses. Example of supportive commercial uses include but are not limited to, accommodation, eating and dining, warehouse and wholesale retailing and, other forms of retail and service uses.

The following points summarize the key findings from the research and analysis:

- Demand for supportive commercial uses is influenced by businesses and employees forecasted for the Area and other employment areas in the vicinity, as well as traffic generated from existing uses in the vicinity such as Toronto Premium Outlets, commuter traffic, visitors and the general public.
- 40,000 and 80,000 square feet of supportive commercial use is warranted. This is approximately 2% and 3% of the Area.
- Opportunity for this land use should be provided along Steeles Avenue and Winston Churchill Boulevard. The Prestige Industrial designation is recommended for this area.

#### Area Servicing Plan Preliminary Report

The Water and Wastewater Area Servicing Plan will identify and evaluate water and wastewater servicing alternatives and recommend a servicing solution. The Preliminary Report has been prepared to provide the Town of Halton Hills and Halton Region with a proposed plan for the water and wastewater servicing of the area. The primary objective of the analysis is the provision of servicing across the entire secondary plan area aligning with the respective Secondary Plan's planning horizon.

The analysis considers existing Halton Region water and wastewater infrastructure as well as updated timing for Halton Region's planned area infrastructure, including the Ultimate Water Pressure Zone Boundary Realignment and construction of the Eighth Line Trunk Sewer. The initial review of the water and wastewater servicing for the Study Area shows that the lands can be serviced with upgrades to water and wastewater linear infrastructure along Steeles Avenue. In addition, the report highlights that the opportunity to incorporate the construction of required P2B Area Development Charges water and wastewater infrastructure by the development industry will be reviewed further as part of the Area Servicing Plan phasing considerations once a Recommended Land Use Option is being considered.

#### Gap Analysis and Preliminary Constraint Assessment:

The Technical Memorandum prepared by Wood summarizes the background information provided for use in the Scoped Subwatershed Study, details any remaining gaps in the background information, and provides suggested approaches to address these data deficiencies. In addition, a preliminary characterization and constraint assessment is included in order to facilitate the review and development of a Recommended Land Use Option in parallel with the Scoped Subwatershed Study work.

## GTA West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment

Through the preparation of the background reports, the consulting team considered the refined Focused Analysis Area and confirmed Preferred Route (PR) released by the MTO in the summer 2020. The GTA West team has continued to advance work on the preliminary design and staff have participated through the Municipal Advisory Group. In addition, Staff continue to work with the Region of Halton to advance opportunities to reduce the amount of land within PGP2B that are subject to the Corridor Protection policies contained in Regional Official Plan No. 43 and OPA No. 21<sup>1</sup>.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This report directly aligns with the following values in the Strategic Plan 2019-2022 including:

#### Foster a Healthy Community

To maintain and enhance a healthy community that provides a clean environment and a range of economic and social opportunities to ensure a superior quality of life in our community.

#### Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Environment

To preserve, protect and enhance our natural environment for the health benefits and enjoyment it provides to present and future generations.

#### Foster a Prosperous Economy

To maintain and enhance the economic vitality of the Town through the provision of a wide range of opportunities for economic development.

#### Achieve Sustainable Growth

To ensure that growth is managed so as to ensure a balanced, sustainable, well planned community infrastructure and services to meets the needs of its residents and businesses.

The report is also closely linked with a number of Focus Areas/Priorities including Shaping Growth.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There are no direct financial impacts associated with this report.

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<sup>1</sup> ROPA 43 remains under appeal at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. OPA 21 is being held in abeyance by Halton Region at the request of Town Council.

## **CONSULTATION:**

Planning staff will continue to consult with staff from the Region of Halton (Planning), Credit Valley Conservation, Conservation Halton, The Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Halton Hills Hydro and staff from the Town's Development Engineering, Transportation, Economic Development, Finance, Fire, and Recreation and Parks Departments.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

Public consultation is an important component of the project and opportunities for public consultation and community engagement have been incorporated throughout the various phases of the project.

A Public Communication and Engagement Strategy which aligns with the Mayor's Consultation Charter has been prepared for the project. A virtual Open House is scheduled to take place in June 2021. Planning staff will work in collaboration with Corporate Communications staff to identify the appropriate tools to be used to ensure that residents/landowners are well aware of the event and to encourage them to participate and provide their feedback.

To date, planning staff have communicated with many residents and landowners to answer questions and provide additional information on the project. Residents and landowners are encouraged to contact planning staff to set up a meeting if they have questions and concerns related to their property, and/or the project.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:**

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation. This report supports the Economic Prosperity, Environmental, Social Well-Being, and Cultural pillars of Sustainability and in summary, the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is: Excellent

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

A copy of this report will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Ministry of Transportation, the Region of Halton, Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Halton for information.

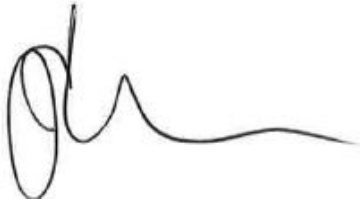
**CONCLUSION:**

This report presents an overview of the technical assessment completed to date and highlights next steps for the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Secondary Plan Project. The Consulting Team has begun the preparation of land use options to be presented to the TAC and Steering Committee in late-May. The land use options will be refined based on comments from the TAC and Steering Committee to develop a Recommended Land Use Option. A virtual Public Open House will take place in June 2021 to present the Recommended Land Use Option to the public. In addition, work continues on the Scoped Subwatershed Study. The Springfield work is ongoing and a draft Phase 1 Report is expected to be completed in June. Refinements to the Recommended Land Use Option may result from that report.

Reviewed and Approved by,



Bronwyn Parker, Director of Planning Policy



John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development



Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer