

## INTRODUCTION

An Official Plan is a policy document, which is intended to serve as the basis for making land use decisions and managing change in any municipality in Ontario. According to the Planning Act, an Official Plan “shall contain goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic and natural environment of the municipality”. In preparing the Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills Planning Area, Council has had regard to matters of Provincial interest as set out in Section 2 of the Planning Act and as listed below:

- The protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;
- The protection of the agricultural resources of the Province;
- The conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base;
- The conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest;
- The supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;
- The adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;
- The minimization of waste;
- The orderly development of safe and healthy communities;
- The accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which the Planning Act applies;
- The adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities;
- The adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing;
- The adequate provision of employment opportunities;
- The protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities;
- The co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies;
- The resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private interests;
- The protection of public health and safety;
- The appropriate location of growth and development; and
- The promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.

These matters of Provincial interest are further articulated in the Provincial Policy Statement. The Policy Statement is intended to promote a policy led system that recognizes and addresses the complex interrelationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The Policy Statement deals with matters pertaining to Building Strong Communities, Wise Use and Management of Resources, and Protecting Public Health and Safety and a series of related subcategories. This Official Plan implements the Provincial Policy Statement through more detailed policies that appropriately reflect the Town's unique character.

Section 27 of the Planning Act requires the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan to conform to the Region of Halton Official Plan. The intent of the Regional Official Plan is to set out how growth and development, natural resources and the natural environment are to be managed throughout Halton Region. The intent of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan is to refine and expand upon the policy direction contained within the Regional Official Plan in a manner that reflects the Town's character, role and location within the Region of Halton and the Greater Toronto Area. Upon approval by the Region, the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan shall be deemed to conform to the Regional Official Plan. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan and the Regional Official Plan, the more restrictive provision shall apply.

The Town of Halton Hills Official Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the land use designations and policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Pursuant to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Niagara Escarpment Plan prevails over any local plan or zoning by-law where conflicts occur between them. Town policies in this Official Plan that are more rigorous or restrictive than the Niagara Escarpment Plan are considered not to be in conflict with the Niagara Escarpment Plan and continue to apply.

This Official Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan, which came into effect on February 28, 2005. The Greenbelt Plan was established under Section 3 of the Greenbelt Act, 2005, which received Royal Assent on February 24, 2005, and was deemed to have come into force on December 16, 2004. According to the Greenbelt Plan, "the Greenbelt is a cornerstone of Ontario's proposed Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan which is an overarching strategy that will provide clarity and certainty about urban structure, where and how future growth should be accommodated, and what must be protected for current and future generations. The Greenbelt Plan identifies where urbanization should not occur in order to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological features and functions occurring on this landscape."

The Greenbelt Plan contains one designation – Protected Countryside. In a Halton Hills context, and as set out in the Greenbelt Plan, lands within the *Protected Countryside Area* designation are intended to enhance the spatial extent of agriculturally and environmentally protected lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan while at the same time improving linkages between these areas and the surrounding major lake systems and watersheds. Within this designation there is an Agricultural System, a Natural System, and Settlement Areas. The policies of this Official Plan are intended to implement the Greenbelt Plan to the extent possible. A further amendment to this Plan is anticipated following the completion of a more detailed Greenbelt Plan implementation exercise by the Region of Halton, in consultation with the Town and the other Local Municipalities.

Pursuant to the Greenbelt Act, the Greenbelt Plan prevails over any local plan or zoning by-law where conflicts occur between them. Town policies in this Official Plan that are more rigorous or restrictive than the Greenbelt Plan are not considered to be in conflict with the Greenbelt Plan and continue to apply subject to the applicable limitations set out in Section 5.3 of the Greenbelt Plan.

The preparation of this Official Plan involved many dedicated and committed people with an interest in the future of the Town of Halton Hills. In January of 1999, Council initiated a strategic planning process to establish a clear Vision of the kind of future that the Town would like to achieve. This Vision was developed through a focused strategic plan process where the public, community leaders, stakeholders, staff and elected representatives actively engaged in dialogue about the choices and challenges that faced their community over the next twenty years.

The strategic planning process and the Official Plan process have resulted in the development of a Land Use Vision for the future of the Town that is expressed in this Plan. This Vision is based on the following planning principles:

- a) Protect and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage features of the Town;
- b) Manage growth by directing it to appropriate locations that have access to full urban services;
- c) Protect and enhance the character of both urban and rural areas in the Town;
- d) Protect good agricultural land from incompatible development;
- e) Provide appropriate municipal services to support an excellent quality of life;
- f) Foster the development of a prosperous economy by encouraging appropriate economic development in the best locations; and,
- g) Deliver responsive and effective local government.

In addition to the Strategic Plan, a number of comprehensive Discussion Papers were prepared prior to the writing of this Plan. These Discussion Papers dealt with growth management, housing, the environment, economic development and the rural area. In addition, an Urban Design Study, a Retail Market Demand Study, a Municipal Housing Statement Update and the Silver Creek Subwatershed Study were completed.

On June 16, 2006 the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe came into effect in accordance with the legislative framework provided by the Places to Grow Act. The Growth Plan provides a vision and sets out a supporting policy framework for managing growth in one of the fastest growing regions in North America until 2031. Detailed policy direction is provided pertaining to population and employment forecasts, intensification, employment lands, greenfield development, settlement area expansions, infrastructure, resource management and natural systems. All municipal official plans must be brought into conformity with the Growth Plan within defined time frames.

In order to address the requirements of the Growth Plan, along with the Greenbelt Plan and the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, between 2006 and 2009, the Region of Halton completed a multi-year work program, entitled Sustainable Halton. This exercise culminated in the selection of a Preferred Growth Option in June 2009, and the adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 38 in December 2009, implementing the Preferred Growth Option, as well as a number of other policy changes arising from the multi-faceted work program.

In order to respond to the Growth Plan and provide input to the Sustainable Halton exercise, the Town undertook a number of strategic and land use planning initiatives that are related to and are intended to respond to the Growth Plan and provide input to the Sustainable Halton Plan process. These initiatives included the development of a new Strategic Plan, approved by Council in November 2007, setting out a broad vision for the community contained in the following eight equally important strategic directions:

- Foster a Healthy Community;
- Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Environment;
- Foster a Prosperous Economy;
- Preserve, Protect and Promote our Distinctive History;
- Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Countryside;
- Achieve Sustainable Growth;
- Provide Sustainable Infrastructure and Services; and,
- Provide Responsive, Effective Municipal Government.

In addition to the foregoing, the Town commenced a series of studies and planning initiatives which primarily have an urban focus, including the Intensification Opportunities Study, the GO Station/Mill Street Corridor Secondary Plan, and the Community Improvement Plan. The Town also prepared Discussion Papers, reports, and consulted with its residents through a variety of means in providing input to the selection of a Preferred Growth Option for Sustainable Halton as implemented through ROPA No. 38.

The goals, objectives and policies contained in this Plan are intended to guide the decisions of public authorities and private interests until 2031, which is the planning period established by this Plan. All new public works and the passage of any zoning by-law must conform to this Official Plan. This Plan applies to all lands within the Town of Halton Hills.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN**

The Introduction is considered part of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan. This Official Plan is further divided into eight parts, each of which is described below:

### **PART A – COMMUNITY VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Part A contains the Vision of the Town. This Vision was prepared by Council and is based on an understanding of past and future trends and the wishes of the Town’s residents. The goals and strategic objectives that form the basis of the Plan flow from the Vision. These goals and strategic objectives also establish a framework for the other objectives and policies in the Plan. This section of the Plan also describes how it is to be implemented through a series of land use designations.

### **PART B – ENVIRONMENTAL AND OPEN SPACE LAND USE POLICIES**

Part B contains policies that apply to the natural heritage features and public and private open space lands within the Town, including lands within the *Niagara Escarpment Plan Area* and lands within the Town’s Greenlands System.

### **PART C – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

Part C contains the policies dealing with watercourses, natural hazards, watershed planning and surface and groundwater resources throughout the Town. In addition, policies that specify the requirements for matters such as stormwater management reports, environmental impact studies, tree preservation, the development of contaminated sites, land use compatibility, noise and vibration reports and energy conservation are contained in this section. The policies of this Section of the Official Plan apply to all lands within the Town of Halton Hills, unless specifically modified by the policies contained within Section E2 (*Protected Countryside Area*).

### **PART D – URBAN LAND USE POLICIES**

Part D contains the land use policies that apply to the urban areas of Georgetown, Acton and the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

### **PART E – AGRICULTURAL/RURAL LAND USE POLICIES**

Part E contains the land use policies that apply to the Town’s Agricultural/Rural Area.

### **PART F – GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

Part F contains policies that, where appropriate, must be considered as part of the land use planning process. This includes subdivision of land, urban design, cultural heritage resources, transportation, parkland, community facilities, servicing, public uses and development phasing. These policies apply to the whole of the Town.

### **PART G – PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

Part G describes how the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Official Plan will be implemented.

## **PARTH – SECONDARY PLANS**

Part H contains more detailed planning policies for specific geographic areas in the Town and includes the Secondary Plans for the Hamlets of Glen Williams and Norval and the Georgetown GO Station Area.

## **SCHEDULES**

The following schedules, which are to be read in conjunction with the text of this document, also constitute an operative part of this Official Plan:

Schedule A1	Land Use Plan
Schedule A2	Greenbelt Plan
Schedule A3	Georgetown Urban Area Land Use Plan
Schedule A3-1	Georgetown Built Boundary and Intensification Areas
Schedule A4	Georgetown Downtown Area Land Use Plan
Schedule A5	Georgetown Community Node Land Use Plan
Schedule A6	Acton Urban Area Land Use Plan
Schedule A6-1	Acton Built Boundary and Intensification Areas
Schedule A7	Acton Downtown Area Land Use Plan
Schedule A8	Premier Gateway Employment Area Land Use Plan
Schedule A9	Ashgrove Land Use Plan
Schedule A10	Ballinafad Land Use Plan
Schedule A11	Bannockburn Land Use Plan
Schedule A12	Crewsons Corners Land Use Plan
Schedule A13	Henderson’s Corners Land Use Plan
Schedule A14	Limehouse Land Use Plan
Schedule A15	Silvercreek Land Use Plan
Schedule A16	Terra Cotta Land Use Plan
Schedule A17	Future Strategic Employment Areas
Schedule B1	Functional Plan of Major Transportation Facilities
Schedule B2	Right-Of-Way Classifications
Schedule H2	Norval Land Use Plan

Schedule H3	Georgetown GO Station Area Land Use Plan
Schedule H4-1	Glen Williams Land Use Plan
Schedule H4-2	Glen Williams Environmental Areas

