



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Melissa Ricci, Senior Policy Planner

DATE: January 31, 2023

REPORT NO.: PD-2023-0003

SUBJECT: Premier Gateway Phase 2B Employment Area Secondary Plan- Preferred Land Use Plan and Policy Direction

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2023-0003 dated January 31, 2023, regarding the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Integrated Planning Project – Preferred Land Use Plan and Policy Direction, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT the draft Preferred Land Use Plan, draft technical reports including the Land Use Concepts Report, Transportation Report, Scoped Subwatershed Study Phase 2 Report, and Urban Design Guidelines, which can be found on Let's Talk Halton Hills, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be authorized to hold a virtual Public Open to present for public review and input the draft Preferred Land Use Plan, technical reports, draft Urban Design Guidelines and key Secondary Plan policy themes;

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

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In May 2020, The Town of Halton Hills initiated the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Integrated Planning Study (also referred to as a Secondary Plan).
- The Premier Gateway Phase 2B employment lands encompass an area of approximately 257 hectares and are located north of Steeles Avenue, between Eighth Line and Winston Churchill Boulevard.

- The Study is being carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*. The transportation and water and wastewater servicing master plans and the Scoped Subwatershed Study, are being carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, which is an approved process under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.
- The Town's team of consultants, led by Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd., is currently completing Phase 4 of the Study. As part of the work under Phase 4, a draft Preferred Land Use Plan and the associated technical evaluation has been completed. The technical reports completed to date are available on [Let's Talk Halton Hills](#). In addition, the team has begun to prepare the draft land use policies in accordance with the recommendations of the technical studies and the agency and public feedback received to date.
- Given that progress on the Study has now advanced to the preparation of a draft Preferred Land Use Plan, the supporting technical reports and the Urban Design Guidelines, it is appropriate that a Public Open House be held to present this information to the public and obtain feedback. This input will help to inform the development of the final Preferred Land Use Plan, and ultimately lead to the finalization of the Secondary Plan policies.
- It is important to note that after the Public Open House, staff will report back to Council on the feedback obtained prior to initiating the *Planning Act* Public Meeting process which would include a Public Open House and a Statutory Public Meeting.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The Premier Gateway Phase 2B area (shown in yellow on Map 1) is planned to accommodate employment development to the year 2031. The Secondary Plan will help establish the basis for new development to occur and contribute to achieving the Town's economic objectives.

Map 1: Study Area



The purpose of the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Integrated Planning Study is to develop a detailed local development framework including land use designations and policies for the portion of lands needed to accommodate the second phase of employment lands for the 2031 planning horizon¹. The Study was initiated in 2020 and a number of technical studies have been completed to support the development of the Secondary Plan. Currently, the team is in the process of completing the work related to Phase 4, including finalizing the Preferred Land Use Plan and technical reports and initiating Phase 5, which entails the preparation of land use policies for the area.

Figure 1: Study Phases



The following background reports were completed in order to lay the groundwork for the detailed planning and analysis in the following phases of the Study:

- Background Report
- Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment
- Supportive Commercial Needs Assessment
- Agricultural Impact Assessment
- Draft Area Servicing Plan Report
- Noise Report
- Air Quality Report
- Communication and Engagement Strategy
- Scoped Subwatershed Study Phase 1 Report

In addition, the draft technical reports listed below have been completed to support the preparation of the draft Preferred Land Use Plan and draft land use policy direction:

- Draft Transportation Report
- Draft Urban Design Guidelines
- Draft Land Use Concepts Report
- Draft Functioning Servicing Report²
- Draft Scoped Subwatershed Study Phase 2 Report

¹ Area specific studies have been completed for the rest of the lands allocated to accommodate employment in the Town of Halton Hills by 2031 including the Premier Gateway Phase 1A, 2A and 1B Employment Areas.

Subsequent sections of this report provide a summary of the key findings and recommendations of the technical reports listed above. All reports, except for the Draft Functioning Servicing Report, are accessible on [Let's Talk Halton Hills](#). The draft Functioning Servicing Report has been prepared; however, discussions with the Region of Halton are ongoing regarding means to expedite the construction of water and wastewater infrastructure to service the Premier Gateway Phase 2B lands. This input will be included in the report prior to releasing it to the public.

Through [Report PD-2021-0026](#) and [Memorandum PD-2022-0004](#), staff previously circulated to Council the two initial land use options, associated technical reports and comments received from the public. The two land use options (see appendix A) were also circulated to the public for their review. In addition, meetings were held with the Steering and Technical Advisory Committees that were established at the outset of the project. The feedback received has helped to inform the development of the draft Preferred Land Use Plan.

In June 2022, staff released the draft Preferred Land Use Plan for public review. An online survey on [Let's Talk Halton Hills](#) provided the opportunity for the community to share their comments on the key features of the plan. The survey was accessible from mid-June to late-September and advertised via email to the Study's stakeholder email list, social media including on LinkedIn and Facebook, and the Current, the Town's e-newsletter.

Approximately 40 participants have provided their input on the draft Preferred Land Use Plan to date. The Land Use Concepts Report, which can be found on [Let's Talk Halton Hills](#), contains the detailed comments received from the public on the two land use concepts, as well as responses to the comments.

Draft Transportation Report

The draft Transportation Report includes additional analysis of the future traffic conditions and presents mitigation strategies to address the implications of the future employment development. To address the issues identified with 2031 total traffic operations in the Study Area, various potential mitigation measures were identified and tested. For each of the identified issues, at least one mitigation measure was found.

The report recommends that as part of the Steeles Avenue Environmental Assessment that the Region will be completing in the near future, additional mitigation measures be examined to address capacity issues along Steeles Avenue. Through the preparation of the Transportation Report, Town staff worked closely with Regional Transportation staff.

Scoped Subwatershed Study (SWS) Phase 2 Report

The Scoped SWS Phase 1 Report provided a base line assessment and characterization of surface water, groundwater, stream morphology and natural heritage within the Study Area. The Phase 2 Report refined the baseline assessment completed in Phase 1, assessed the impacts of the proposed land use plan on these features and provided a management plan. Finally, the Phase 3 report, which is currently being prepared, will provide an implementation and monitoring plan.

Based on the Phase 2 Report, the proposed Natural Heritage System (NHS) is generally in line with the Town's existing Greenlands System and Regional NHS and has been used to establish the basis for the NHS in the draft Preferred Land Use Plan. The NHS protects the significant and sensitive natural heritage features within the study area and ensures connection to areas outside the study area. The proposed NHS is robust as it is comprised of wetlands, woodlands, watercourses, Significant Wildlife Habitat, and the floodplain. Through the development application process or detailed design stage, it is recommended that non-developable areas, created through the irregular NHS boundary, be included in the NHS and naturalized to provide an enhancement to the proposed system. The report suggests that the lands adjacent to the proposed NHS, particularly small pockets of land difficult to access or develop given the NHS configuration, are ideal for any compensation measures that are to be provided, as well as open space uses such as stormwater management and Low Impact Development (LID).

Headwater Drainage Features (HDF) have been evaluated through the SWS and have management recommendations ranging from 'conservation', which means the feature should be retained, to 'no management' which means the feature can be removed. The report provides mitigation strategies that will be incorporated into the land use policies and utilized as development proceeds and the necessary Subwatershed Impact Studies are undertaken. In addition, the scoped SWS provides an analysis of stormwater management criteria and identifies the anticipated location for stormwater management facilities which will be shown on the draft Secondary Plan.

Functional Servicing Study

The Functional Servicing Study report indicates that the planned Employment Area can ultimately be serviced by the Region's proposed upgrades to water and wastewater infrastructure along Steeles Avenue, Ninth Line and Tenth Line and crossing the Highway 413 corridor (GTA West Corridor).

Further discussions are ongoing with the Region of Halton to ensure that the required infrastructure is in place to prioritize development in the Premier Gateway Phase 2B employment lands.

Fiscal Impact Study

The Fiscal Impact Study has been prepared to address the fiscal impacts of development within the Premier Gateway Phase 2B Secondary Plan Area on the Town's costs of services from an operating and capital perspective. The study addresses the following annual net fiscal impacts at buildout of the Secondary Plan Area:

- Non-residential employment and gross floor area (G.F.A.) development by type and land use;
- Net operating expenditures;
- Capital expenditures and funding, including lifecycle capital replacement costs;
- D.C. funding and impacts; and
- Tax and non-tax revenues.

The fiscal impact assessment measures the development's projected impacts on the Town's property taxes and D.C. rates over the buildout of the Secondary Plan Area.

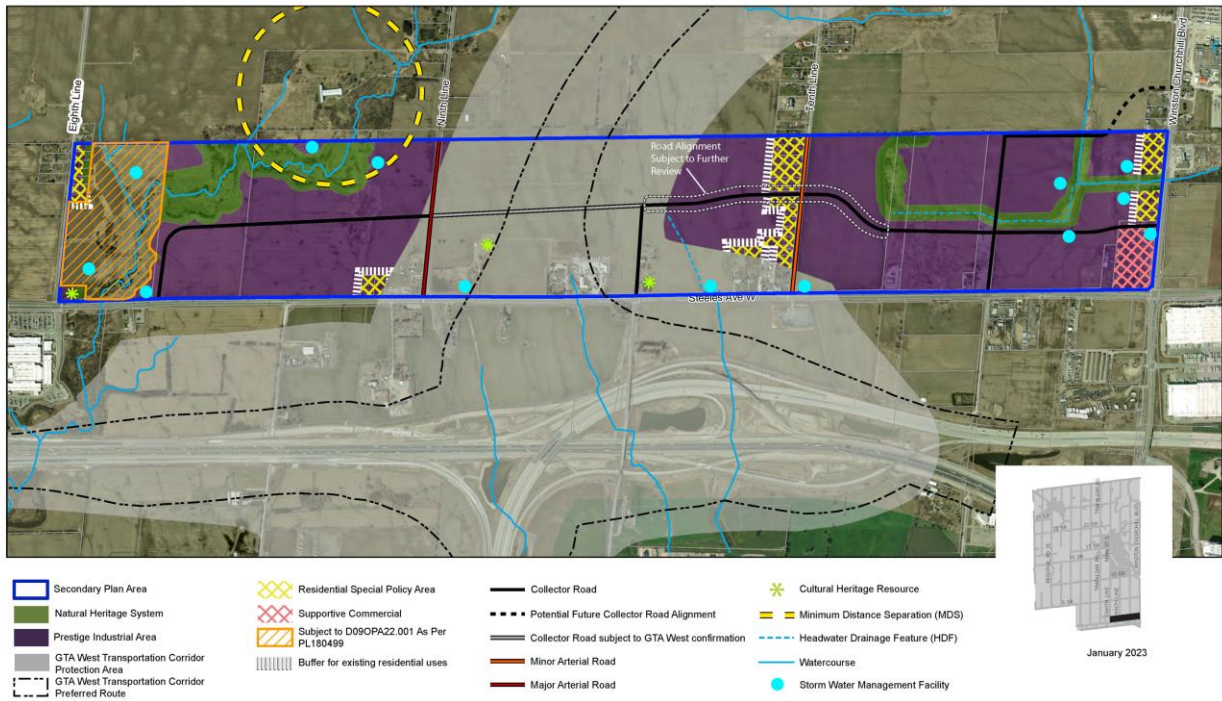
For modelling purposes, the Fiscal Impact Study looked at two tax levy scenarios. Under Option 1, development was assumed to be evenly split between manufacturing and warehousing sectors, and under Option 2, 80% of industrial development occurring in warehousing and 20% within manufacturing. It is anticipated that the Premier Gateway Phase 2B area at build out would create a surplus under both options; however, option 1 would lead to a more robust surplus for the municipality due to higher assessment values associated with manufacturing development. It should be noted that the Fiscal Impact Study was completed in early 2022 prior to Bill 23. Accordingly, any impacts from DC revenue reduction measures imposed through Bill 23 have not been incorporated into this Study.

Draft Preferred Land Use Plan

Based on the public, landowner and agency input that was received on the two land use options, a draft Preferred Land Use Plan has been created which:

- Locates the new supportive commercial use at the northwest corner of Winston Churchill and Steeles Ave to assist with creating a gateway function for the entrance to the Town and the Employment Area, and to respond to public feedback.
- Indicates that the 8079 Eighth Line (Gilbach) property will be subject to site specific designations and policies which identify the permitted uses and the limits of the Natural Heritage System on the property, which is anticipated to be integrated into the Premier Gateway Phase 1B Secondary Plan area. This allows the site-specific Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications for 8079 Eighth Line to proceed through the application process in a manner that satisfies the terms of the settlement at the Ontario Land Tribunal (formerly LPAT).
- Uses Option B for the location of the east-west collector road between Eighth and Ninth Lines. The location of the road is approximate, and the north-south component of the road can be designed to follow the eastern edge of the NHS as much as possible to minimize fragmentation of land. The exact road location can be refined through the development application process and can be adjusted as long as it meets the Regional intersection spacing policies along Steeles Ave.
- Uses Option A for the inclusion of a new north-south collector road east of Tenth Line which aligns with the southern portion of Tenth Line and thereby increases access opportunities in the Secondary Plan area.
- Extends the overlay "Road alignment subject to further review" that applies to the east-west collector road to the east side of Tenth Line as requested by public comment.
- Protects for Highway 413 based on the Corridor Protection Area approved in Regional Official Plan Amendment 49. Once the Corridor is further refined, the lands can develop in accordance with the adjacent Prestige Industrial designation.

Map 2: Draft Preferred Land Use Plan



Policy Direction

The draft policy language is being prepared based on the findings and analysis of the background studies, the updated supporting documents including the Urban Design Guidelines and the draft Transportation Report, and comments received from all stakeholders including members of the public, internal staff and external agencies on the draft Preferred Land Use Plan and on the Study in general.

In consultation with the Town's Economic Development team, policies will be crafted to encourage high quality employment generating uses that align with the Town's strategic objectives. The permitted uses will reinforce a more intensive economic base that will amplify synergies between the Town's economic development, land use planning and climate change objectives. The policies, following the direction of the Urban Design Guidelines, will focus on promoting sustainable development that reflects the Town's leadership in climate change. The refined and enhanced natural heritage system will further support the Town's climate change and sustainability programs. In addition, the secondary plan policies will need to consider the employment density targets assigned as part of the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review process.

Urban Design Guidelines

The Halton Hills Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines have been updated and expanded to include the Phase 2B lands. The Urban Design Guidelines aim to fulfill the Town's vision and objectives for the Premier Gateway Employment Area, in order to ensure high quality development with a strong visual identity. The intent of the guidelines is to establish a planning framework that will help

the area thrive as a dynamic, accessible, and economically competitive employment area that reflects high-quality urban design aesthetics and sustainable development practices appropriate for this emerging regional green economy innovation and employment hub.

Next Steps

The reports addressing transportation and water and wastewater servicing continue to be refined based on on-going feedback and discussions with the Technical Advisory Committee. The Phase 3 report of the Scoped Subwatershed Study is in the process of being prepared and will incorporate comments on the Phase 2 report and address the implementation and monitoring components of the Subwatershed analysis. The work on these three reports is sufficiently advanced that they are not expected to result in any substantive changes to the draft Preferred Land Use Plan.

The draft Preferred Land Use Plan is being used as the basis for creating the draft Secondary Plan which will be subject to a round of public and committee meetings in the spring. The information received from the public along with technical input will be used to refine the Secondary Plan policies and will result in a recommended Secondary Plan that is anticipated to be presented to Council this summer.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report aligns to the Town's Strategic plan recognizing the value to foster a prosperous economy, maintain and enhance the economic vitality of the town through the provision of a wide range of opportunities for economic development.

This report also identifies shaping growth as one of the Town's Strategic priorities.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report impacts and/or helps address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target through climate mitigation.

The Secondary Plan policies for the Premier Gateway Phase 2B employment area will focus on promoting sustainable development that reflects the Town's leadership in climate change. The refined and enhanced natural heritage system will further support the Town's climate change and sustainability programs.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as follows: Steering Committee meetings, Technical Advisory Committee meetings, Online Surveys, Public Open Houses and Stakeholder Meetings as per the Study's Communication and Engagement Strategy.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Planning staff will continue to consult with Town staff from the following departments/divisions: Transportation, Development Engineering, Economic Development, Fire, Finance and Recreation and Parks

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning & Development

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer