



TOWN OF
HALTON HILLS
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REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Melissa Ricci, Senior Policy Planner

DATE: July 3, 2024

REPORT NO.: PD-2024-051

SUBJECT: Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan Terms of Reference

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2024-051 dated July 03, 2024, with respect to the Draft Terms of Reference for the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan Project be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the attached Draft Terms of Reference outlining the scope of the review and process for the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan Project;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize the issuance of a Request for Proposal for consultant services to support Planning staff with the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan Project, based generally on the draft Terms of Reference attached to this report subject to any minor changes as may be required.

KEY POINTS:

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

- The purpose of this report is to share with Council the Draft Terms of Reference that have been prepared to undertake the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan.
- The Draft Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix A to this report, outline the project scope and timeline and provide the basis for issuing a Request for Proposal to hire a consultant to support Town staff with delivering the project.
- The Guelph Street Corridor is located along Guelph Street, between Maple Avenue and Hall Road/McFarlane Drive in Georgetown. The Study Area

generally includes properties that front onto the north and south sides of Guelph Street.

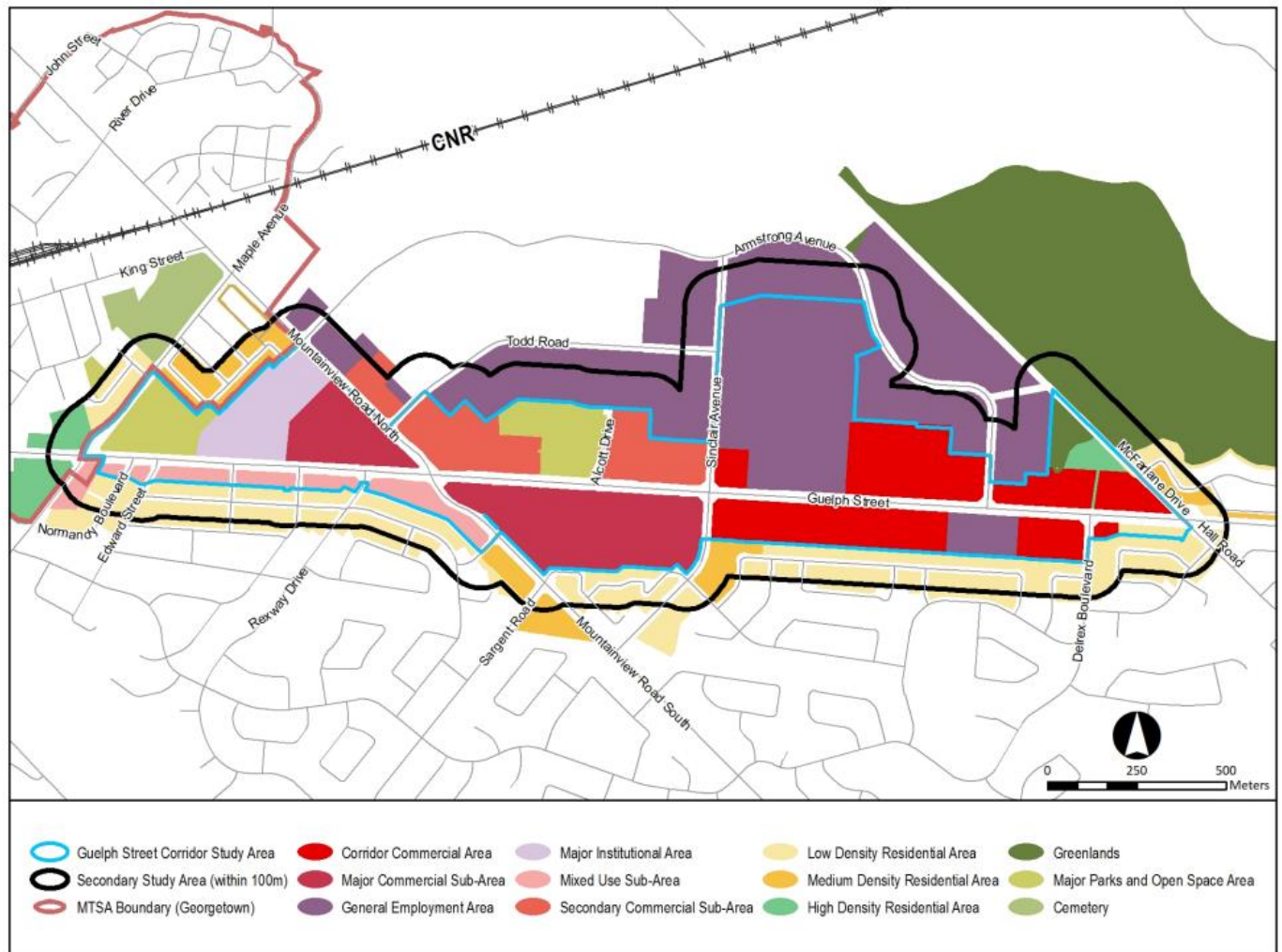
- In 2022, through Regional Official Plan Amendment No.48, the Guelph Street Corridor was designated as a Regional Secondary Node. Secondary Nodes are intended to be a focus for growth through mixed-use intensification at a scale appropriate for their context.
- Although Official Plan policies and development guidelines were established for the Guelph Street Corridor and the Community Node (intersection of Guelph Street and Mountainview Road) as part of the previous Official Plan Review Process in 2006, it is appropriate that the current policies, for lands along the Corridor and within the Node be reviewed to ensure that an appropriate scale and form of development can be achieved over time.
- The process will include a significant amount of community engagement and is proposed to follow an 18- month work plan divided into three phases: Develop a Vision, Prepare a Preferred Land Use Plan, and Finalize the Preferred Land Use Plan and Urban Design Guidelines.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Guelph Street is a multipurpose arterial road that connects to Highway 7, which is considered a Provincial Highway. Adjacent to the Guelph Street Corridor is the Hamlet of Norval to the east and the Georgetown Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) and Downtown Georgetown to the west. Guelph Street is the largest retail commercial corridor in the Town providing critical retail services to Halton Hills' residents. The Town envisions the redevelopment of the corridor into a mixed-use vibrant area with access to a multi-model transportation network, and ample multi-residential, recreational, shopping and employment opportunities.

The Guelph Street Corridor redevelopment potential stems from its prime location in close proximity to Downtown Georgetown and the Georgetown GO Station, direct access to existing GO bus routes to connect to high order transit and future plans to implement local transit through this area. The existing land uses, north of Guelph Street, are primarily employment, while south of the Corridor, are mainly low density residential. Redevelopment along the boundaries of the study area should address adjacent employment uses and established neighbourhoods through compatible land use and design, and appropriate height transitions. To undertake a Secondary Plan Process, a Secondary Study Area has been identified to ensure that consideration is given to adjacent uses and appropriate transitional policies.

Figure 1: Guelph Street Corridor Study Area and Secondary Study Area



Project Goal and Objectives

The purpose of the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan Project is to prepare recommendations for a preferred Land Use Plan and provide direction regarding tools such as a proposed policy framework to incentivize appropriate redevelopment and intensification along the corridor.

The strategic objectives of the study are to:

- develop a vision, goal and objectives that embrace the concept of place making by promoting context appropriate intensification in the corridor that helps build a distinct character, sense of community and creative design;
- support mixed use development that integrates well with existing and adjacent uses and adds to the Town's efforts to expand housing choices;
- promote sustainable, age friendly and accessible design practices;

- encourage connectivity of all transportation modes and the concept of ‘complete streets’ by prioritizing transit, cycling and pedestrian friendly development to create a context for a healthy and safe lifestyle, and high quality of life;
- build on the work from the Intensification Opportunities Study Update (2020), to assess transportation, servicing capacity, and current economic and market conditions to support future intensification along the Corridor;
- support efforts to enhance and connect to local public infrastructure, parks and open space; and,
- support new and existing businesses by providing a wide range of permitted uses and commercial space opportunities.

Policy Context

Provincial Legislation, Plan and Policies

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Growth Plan (2020) provide strong direction for increased intensification and planning for complete communities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. These policies support prioritizing intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability. These Provincial documents also reinforce the close integration of transportation and land use planning and planning practices which facilitate active transportation and provide for a range and mix of uses and activities. Policies in these overarching Provincial documents direct a significant portion of new growth through intensification to urban built-up areas, such as the Guelph Street Corridor, to efficiently use land and infrastructure and support active transportation¹.

In addition, given current Provincial direction for municipalities to build more homes faster, and the mandated 9,500 new homes by 2031 target that the Province has directed the Town to achieve, it is imperative that the Town leverages opportunities for redevelopment and intensification within the Guelph Street Corridor with a focus on neighbourhood renewal, and providing a variety of housing choices and amenities to residents in the area.

Regional Official Plan Review

Halton Region initiated a review of its Regional Official Plan in 2014. A number of technical discussion papers were prepared as part of the review and two Regional Official Plan Amendments were submitted to the Province for approval. Regional Official Plan Amendment 48 (ROPA 48) and Regional Official Plan Amendment 49 (ROPA 49) were approved by the province in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

¹ In May 2024, the Province introduced the Provincial Planning Statement, which will replace the current Planning Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). It is anticipated that this document will be finalized in the summer and will provide additional direction through the completion of the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan process.

[ROPA 48](#) implements components of the Regional Urban Structure to establish a hierarchy of strategic growth areas in the Regional Official Plan. ROPA 48 includes the following components: delineation of Major Transit Stations, Regional Nodes, Performance Targets, Urban Growth Targets, and Employment area Conversions. Through ROPA 48, new Major Transit Station Area boundaries were put in place for the [Acton and Georgetown GO Stations](#)² and two parcels were converted from employment to allow mixed use development. Specifically, along the Guelph Street Corridor, 344 Guelph Street, a former factory that is now vacant, has been redesignated to allow mixed-use development. In addition, Guelph Street was designated a Secondary Regional Node which are Strategic Growth Areas with a focus on providing a range and mix of uses. The policies in the Regional Official Plan encourage municipalities to delineate boundaries for Secondary Regional Nodes and require the completion of detailed official plan policies or an Area-Specific Plan for these areas. ROPA 48 was approved by the Province with minor modifications on November 10, 2021.

In November 2022, Bill 23 removed land use planning responsibilities from the Region of Halton. Bill 185, which received Royal Assent on June 6, 2024, identifies Halton Region as an Upper-tier without planning responsibility as of July 1, 2024. Therefore, as of July 1, 2024, the Region's Official Plan and responsibility to implement it has been transferred to the Town. Nonetheless, upper-tier municipalities without planning responsibilities will continue to play a critical role in servicing and infrastructure development.

Official Plan Background

Guelph Street, from Maple Avenue to Sinclair Avenue, is identified as an Intensification Area in the Official Plan. There are numerous land use designations within the Guelph Street Corridor, including the Mixed-Use Sub-Area, Major Commercial Sub-Area, Major Parks and Open Space Area, Major Institutional Area, Secondary Commercial Sub-Area, Corridor Commercial Area, and General Employment Area. Other periphery designations adjacent to the Study Area include Low Density Residential Area, Employment, and Greenlands.

Guelph Street travels through the Hamlet of Norval, which is outside of the corridor area; however, there are policies and objectives from the Norval Secondary Plan that may need to be considered as Guelph Street transitions into a mixed-use intensification corridor. Guelph Street also travels through the Georgetown GO Station Secondary Plan Area, which is outside of the Study Area for this Project. This Secondary Plan is currently undergoing a review.

Scope of Work

The Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan will be completed in three phases. A detailed overview of the project phases and deliverables are included under Section 5 of the Terms of Reference (see appendix A).

Phase 1: Develop a Vision (Fall- Winter 2024)

Phase 1 of the study will involve undertaking a review of existing conditions, including a review of background documents and previous studies such as the Intensification Opportunities Study Update (2020). During this Phase, an analysis of issues and opportunities and the development of a vision and associated goals and objectives will be completed. These elements will be used as the basis for developing Land Use Options in Phase 2.

During this phase, a Community Engagement Plan will be prepared. The Plan will identify key stakeholders that will need to be engaged through this process and describe an innovative engagement program to obtain community input on the vision for future growth along the Corridor. A Public Open House/Visioning Session to develop a participatory vision of the future of the Guelph Street Corridor will be held. An introductory meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee (“TAC”) and the Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee will also take place during this phase. At the end of this phase, the Project Team will present an update report to Council which will provide a summary of the deliverables, what was heard from the community during this phase of the project, and next steps.

Phase 2: Prepare a Preferred Land Use Plan (Winter 2024- Spring 2025)

Phase 2 will focus on the development of Land Use Options. Each Land Use Option will be based on and support the elements of the Vision, Goals, and Objectives. To support the Preferred Land Use Plan, technical reports related to transportation and servicing capacity will be prepared. A meeting with the TAC and the Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee will be held during Phase 2 to present the results of the technical reports and Land Use Options. Once comments from the TAC and the Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee are addressed, a Public Open House will be held to gather additional feedback from the public. At the end of this Phase, Town staff and the Consulting team will present to Council a summary of key deliverables, the feedback received, and the draft Preferred Land Use Plan for Council endorsement.

Phase 3: Finalize the Plan and Urban Design Guidelines (Spring to Summer 2025)

The Design Guidelines that were prepared for the Guelph Street Corridor as part of the Intensification Opportunities Study Update (2020) will be updated to consider best design practices to incentivise intensification and to incorporate the area on Guelph Street, from Sinclair Avenue to Hall Road/McFarlane Drive.

A Public Open House will be hosted to present the Draft Secondary Plan and Urban Design Guidelines (UDG). The Draft OPA will then be presented at the Public Open House and Statutory Public Meeting. Following the final Public Open House and Statutory Public Meeting a Consultation Summary will be prepared listing the comments received and the project team’s responses. A Recommendation Report and Council presentation will be delivered at the end of this phase.

Project Team and Committees:

The Project Team will be comprised of the Town's project lead, Town's technical experts and the Consultant. The Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan will be guided by a Technical Advisory Committee and the Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee.

Technical Advisory Committees:

The Technical Advisory Committee will be comprised of key representatives of:

- i. Pertinent Town of Halton Hills departments
- ii. Provincial Ministries (MMAH, MTO)
- iii. Halton Region
- iv. Credit Valley Conservation
- v. Halton Hills Hydro and other utility companies as required
- vi. Halton District School Board
- vii. Halton Catholic District School Board
- viii. French Public and Catholic Boards
- ix. Other public agencies, as determined appropriate

The role of the Technical Advisory Committee is as follows:

- i. Review project deliverables and provide comments during the study process;
- ii. Assist with issue identification and resolution;
- iii. Members to liaise with their respective organizations to ensure study awareness and to provide one-window coordination on behalf of their organization;
- iv. Provide data input; and
- v. Meet on a regular basis to monitor the progress of the study.

Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee

The Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee is very much interested in the creation of an inspiring and achievable long-term vision for the redevelopment and enhancement of this corridor.

Political representation on the Guelph Street Revitalization Steering Committee will include the Mayor as Chair and two or three Ward 3 and 4 Councillors. Other stakeholders such as landowners, the business community/Chamber of Commerce representatives, potential investors, major real estate agencies and area residents will

be included on the Committee. Participation will be determined at the start of the project.

The Committee will primarily be supported by staff from the Planning and Development Department. Additional support will be provided by the Economic Development Division of the Community Services Department as required.

The specific role of the Committee will be to:

- Bring together community resources
- Share information / knowledge of the study area
- Provide input at key stages of the project and/or on key issues
- Receive feedback from community members outside the Committee
- Serve as a direct link between the Project Team and the Community

Meetings are anticipated to be held every other month. The consultant is expected to participate in a total of 5 (three hour) meetings as per the list of deliverables. For those meetings, the consultant will prepare the agenda, presentation and other meeting material, and meeting minutes to be circulated to the group within a week of the meeting. Additional meetings will be scheduled and organized by Town staff as required.

Council Engagement

Council members will be engaged throughout all project phases via Council reports, presentations, and workshops. Updates to Council will be scheduled as required to inform Council of key project milestones.

Community Engagement

Community engagement and public participation will form a large component of the Guelph Street Corridor Secondary Plan. Considering that local businesses and landowners are key players in initiating and carrying out redevelopment along the Guelph Street Corridor, the Town's Economic Development Team will act as a liaison to engage with existing businesses in the Study Area and ensure that feedback is incorporated as needed.

A Community Engagement Plan will be prepared during Phase 1 to identify key participants and the community engagement objectives for the project.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report identifies a safe and welcoming community 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.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement will be required; consultation with Communications staff to follow.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Planning staff have consulted with the Climate Change, Communications, Development Engineering, Economic Development, Finance, Recreation and Parks, and Transportation Divisions. Their input has been considered through the preparation of the draft Terms of Reference.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source.

Reviewed and approved by,

Bronwyn Parker, Director of Planning Policy

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning & Development

Bill Andrews, Acting Chief Administrative Officer