



Town of Halton Hills

PARKLAND POLICY REVIEW

Phase 2 of the Town of Halton Hills Parkland Acquisition Strategy

January 2019

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by:



January 2, 2019

Mr. Warren Harris
Commissioner of Recreation and Parks
Town of Halton Hills
1 Halton Hills Drive
Halton Hills, Ontario L7G 5G2

Dear Mr. Harris,

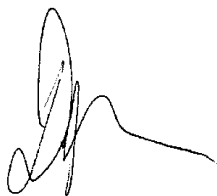
RE: Parkland Policy Review - Phase 2 of the Halton Hills Parkland Acquisition Strategy

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. is pleased to submit the Parkland Policy Review that has been prepared to support the Town of Halton Hills' development of a Parkland Acquisition Strategy. We trust it will provide a foundation through which the Town solidifies its strategy for obtaining needed parkland required to serve the best interests of the community, and for guiding decision-making over the next decade and beyond.

If you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance to the Town of Halton Hills throughout the remainder of the Parkland Acquisition Strategy process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd.



Todd Brown, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
President and Principal Planner

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1.0 Introduction

The Town of Halton Hills is undertaking a Parkland Acquisition Strategy to understand current and future parkland needs and to develop a framework in which to determine the quantity and quality of parks required to serve a broad range of social, recreational and cultural activities. This Parkland Acquisition Strategy is being driven by population growth, legislative changes relating to how parks can be acquired and funded, anticipated socio-economic diversification of the population base, and changes in land development patterns as Halton Hills responsibly plans how and where growth will be accommodated.

The Town of Halton Hills' Project Charter for the Parkland Acquisition Strategy is organized as follows:

Phase 1 – Parkland Policy Discussion Paper, submitted August 2015

Phase 2 – Parkland Policy Review, submitted January 2019 (this Report)

Phase 3 – “Who Owns What” (future project phase)

Phase 4 – Implementation Strategy (future project phase)

Phase 5 – Terms of Reference for securement approach (future project phase)

This Parkland Policy Review represents the second phase of the broader Parkland Acquisition Strategy. It is intended to identify prospective draft amendments that will result in updated parkland policies contained in the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan, which is largely based on parkland provisions contained in the Provincial Bill 73 (that amends the Planning Act and Development Charges Act). This report also establishes criteria through which to evaluate prospective sites for a future Town Wide Park(s) and reconfirms service level targets/assumptions used in previous planning exercises that reflect needs for parks and recreation facilities located in Halton Hills.

2.0 Methodology

This Parkland Policy Review has been prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. (“Monteith Brown”) in association with the Town of Halton Hills. The Terms of Reference for this Study identifies the following scope of work to be completed:

1. Review the following documents:
 - a. Section F7.3 – Parkland Development Policies of the Town’s Official Plan.
 - b. Inventory of existing parkland sizes and designations and outdoor recreational facilities.
 - c. Vision Georgetown Parkland Review (May 2014): summary of parkland needs and shortfalls prepared by the Recreation and Parks Department.
 - d. Meeting Notes – Vision Georgetown Technical Steering Committee Parkland Review.
 - e. Parkland Discussion Paper prepared by Monteith-Brown dated August 2015.
 - f. Cash-in-lieu of Parkland By-law 2002-0152.
2. Outline the parkland ratios and designations applied by comparative municipalities of similar populations (in addition to those found within Region of Halton) and distinguish between policy requirements and actual parkland inventory (i.e. is the historic 4ha/1,000 residents an achievable target) to supplement those identified in the Parkland Policy Discussion Paper (August 2015).
3. Re-affirm the provisional standards for recreational facilities as well as the assumptions used to determine parkland deficiencies in existing neighbourhoods based on inventory and summary data provided by the Town.
4. Provide draft amendments to the Town’s Official Plan to update policy on residential densities (D1.3) to determine the distinction of low density housing to clearly articulate when the 1ha per 500 dwelling units (per Bill 73) shall be calculated.
5. Prepare criteria for the securement of Town Wide parkland as identified in the Parkland Discussion Paper that will inform Phase 2 of the Parkland Acquisition Strategy and the Official Plan.
6. Prepare draft amendments to the Town’s Official Plan based on new parkland provision contained within Bill 73. Identify future issues to be addressed once regulations come into full effect.
7. Coordinate with the Town’s legal Counsel who will be reviewing the Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland By-law 2002-0152 consecutively with this assignment to make recommendations on updating the by-law and make any relevant recommendations to this by-law that arise out of this study.

This Parkland Policy Review incorporates certain information referenced in the Parkland Policy (Phase 1) Discussion Paper to remain consistent with the information supplied by both the Recreation and Parks Department and the Planning, Development and Sustainability Department. Community consultations have not been held to specifically inform assessments contained in this Parkland Policy Review given that this report will be utilized as an internal document to inform Town staff; consultations have been undertaken, however, as part of recent Town initiatives such as Vision Georgetown and will subsequently be conducted at the time of any Official Plan Amendment (as per provincial legislation) and/or future tasking related to the Parkland Acquisition Strategy.

Limitations & Exclusions

The disclosure of any information contained in this report is the sole responsibility of the Town of Halton Hills. The material in this Parkland Policy Review and all information relating to this activity reflect Monteith Brown's judgment in light of the information available to us at the time of preparation of this report. It is solely attributable to work conducted as part of 'Phase Two' of the Town's Parkland Acquisition Strategy and thus any findings contained herein should not constitute final recommendations since subsequent works may be undertaken by the Town. Any use which a third party makes of this Parkland Policy Review, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. accepts no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by a third party as a result of decisions made or actions based on this Review.

3.0 Planning Context

3.1 Ontario Planning Act & Bill 73

The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 outlines a framework for parkland dedication in Sections 42 and 51.1 which allow approval authorities to require parkland dedication as a condition of development or plan of subdivision approval. These Sections generally provide that 2% of commercial or industrial land and 5% of residential or other lands be conveyed to a Municipality for parkland or other public recreational purposes. In certain cases, where the approval authority has established specific policies regarding parkland dedication, the Planning Act allows the approval authority to require parkland at an alternate rate of one hectare for each 300 dwelling units, if land for parks is being provided. Where this alternate rate applies, the recently enacted Bill 73 amendments to the Planning Act provide that the approval authority may accept cash-in-lieu at a rate of one hectare for every 500 dwelling units proposed, as will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

On December 3, 2015, Bill 73 to amend the Ontario Planning Act received Royal Assent. Bill 73 – also known as the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act – enacted a number of changes to the Planning Act with a stated intent of: giving residents more say in how communities grow; setting out clearer rules for land use planning; providing municipalities with more independence to make local decisions; making it easier to resolve disputes; and making Section 37 Density Bonusing and the parkland dedication systems more predictable, transparent and accountable. Through Bill 73, the following sections of the Planning Act with specific implications on parkland-related policies were amended:

- *Subsections 42(17)-(20) & 70.1 - **Reporting for Parkland Fees***
- *Subsections 42(6)-(6.0.3) and 51.1(3)-(3.2) - **Alternative Parkland Rate for Cash-in-lieu***
- *Subsections 42(4.1)-(4.3) and 51.1(2.1)-(2.3) - **Parks Plans***

One of Bill 73's most notable amendments relating to parkland pertains to how much cash-in-lieu of parkland can be collected by a municipality using the Planning Act's alternative acquisition standard. While physical land taken for parkland remains the same at 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units through the alternative acquisition standard, Bill 73 amends the Planning Act whereby a municipality intending to collect cash-in-lieu of parkland must do so at a reduced rate of 1 hectare per 500 dwelling units (as compared to 1 hectare per 300 units prior to Bill 73 coming into effect). The Planning Act establishes that the value of this land is determined the day before either the draft plan of subdivision is approved or the issuance of a building permit. The stated intent is to create an incentive for a municipality to take physical parkland through dedications rather than collect cash-in-lieu, as physical land is conveyed at a higher rate under the alternative standard (i.e. 1 hectare per 300 units) than cash-in-lieu (i.e. cash-in-lieu of 1 hectare per 500 units). Accordingly, the Town will consider changes from Bill 73 when deciding whether to take cash-in-lieu versus the physical amount of land (or a combination of the two) as this amendment has the potential to increase reliance upon the property tax base to maintain parkland service levels at historical ratios.

Under the Reporting for Parkland Fees Subsection, a municipality is required to report on balances and spending details pertaining to the special account reserved for cash-in-lieu of parkland contributions. The third major change under Bill 73 in regard to parkland is the need for a municipality to have a "Parks

Plan” in place prior to adopting official plan policies dealing with the use of the alternative standard. Parks Plans are required to examine the need for parkland in the municipality. Parks plans are not required under the following circumstances:

- If municipalities only use 2% and 5% parkland dedication rates.
- For existing official plans already containing policies dealing with the alternative standard - in this cases, a parks plans is only required if the municipality adopts a new alternative parkland rate policy in its Official Plan.

The requirement for a Parks Plan is set out in Sections 42 (4.1) and 51.1 (2.1) of the Planning Act. In preparing a parks plan, a municipality is required to consult with every school board in its jurisdiction, and may consult with any other persons or public bodies that a municipality deems appropriate when preparing the Parks Plan. However, apart from the requirement to “examine the need for parkland in the municipality” the Planning Act does not specify which matters should be discussed, nor does it set out the obligations of each party when preparing the plan. A municipality is only required to have a Parks Plan in place where new official plan policies are adopted after the effective date of Bill 73. However, given that new and amended policies have been recommended through this report, a Parks Plan is assumed to be required in Halton Hills.

The various works being undertaken as part of the Halton Hills Parkland Acquisition Strategy will inform subsequent planning studies. This would presumably include consideration within a future update to the Recreation and Parks Strategic Action Plan, a document that would be prepared in accordance with the Planning Act’s parks plan requirement (as it would involve consultations with school boards and other public bodies held as part of its planning process). Until a future update is completed, the Town’s current Recreation and Parks Strategic Action Plan is being considered to be the “parks plan.”

3.2 Re-affirming Service Standards for Parkland and Recreation Facilities

Part of the proposed amendments to parkland policies contained in the Halton Hills Official Plan are intended to ensure that the Town receives sufficient lands through which to deliver parks, recreation, cultural and other civic services. The Parkland Policy (Phase 1) Discussion Paper provided the basis for the Town of Halton Hills targeting parkland at an overall rate of 3.4 to 4.0 hectares per 1,000 population and, within that standard, active forms of parkland (i.e. readily developable tablelands) should constitute a minimum of 2.2 hectares per 1,000 population.

These parkland service level targets are consistent with factors such as:

- the Town’s existing parkland service level - currently at 3.4 hectares per 1,000 population based upon a stated parkland supply of 199.99 hectares;
- generally accepted parks planning principles that have been developed by leading agencies – including the American Public Health Association, Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, National Recreation and Parks Association (US) – and been employed by municipalities in North America over the past century; and

- service level targets contained in Official Plans/Master Plans of benchmarked communities as shown in Table 1.

Discussions with Town Staff since the Phase 1 suggest that the overall standard is unlikely to be achieved moving forward at the current rate, and thus future parkland acquisition should focus on the readily developable tablelands for active forms of parkland at the 2.2 hectares per 1,000. Proposed Policy Amendment #3 within this Report provides more information as to how parkland service standards are articulated through the Official Plan.

Recreation facility service levels contained in the 2007 Recreation and Parks Strategic Action Plan have also been reviewed. The standards contained in the Strategic Action Plan remain in line with service level standards established in most GTA municipalities. A more comprehensive review of Halton Hills' recreation facility standards would best take place through an update to the Strategic Action Plan in order to consider important inputs such as community and recreation user group consultations, detailed examinations into facility utilization rates, financial capacity of the Town to fund facilities, etc.

Facility	Recommended Service Level in Strategic Action Plan
Ice Pads/Arenas	1 : 750 registrants
Indoor Aquatic Centres	1 : 40,000 population
Gymnasiums	1 : 50,000 population
Soccer Fields	1 : 90 registrants
Ball Diamonds	1 : 100 registrants
Tennis Courts	1 : 4,000 population
Basketball Courts	1 : 1,500 youth
Splash Pads	1 : 4,000 children
Skateboard Parks	1 : 5,000 youth
Playgrounds	1 playground within 500m of built-up residential areas

Source: Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Strategic Action Plan, 2007

Future facility-specific needs assessments involving a comprehensive community engagement initiative and detailed analyses into operating performance will provide more clarity as to the number of recreation facilities required in the future. The information provided in the following pages is intended for illustrative purposes only as future provision of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities should form part of a broader and more comprehensive study using a variety of factors as noted above.

Table 1: Parkland Targets and Service Levels in Benchmarked Communities

	Parkland Classification	Parkland (ha)	Size Requirements	Service Radius	Parkland Service Level Target (ha/1,000 pop.)	Parkland Service Level ATTAINED (ha/1,000 pop.)
Halton Hills Pop Size: 58,891 Persons	Parkettes	53.4	0.2 to 0.6 ha	0.2 to 0.4 km	1.2	0.9
	Neighbourhood Park		1.5 to 2.5 ha	0.4 to 0.8 km		
	Community Park	146.7	6.0 ha (min.)	Secondary Plan or specific area	2.5	2.5
	Town Wide Park		11.0 ha (min.)	Entire Town		
Aurora Pop Size: 59,100 Persons	Parkette	1.5	0.35 ha (min.)	Sub-neighbourhood	1.0 – 1.5	1.4
	Neighbourhood Parks	79.3	1.6 to 4.0 ha	0.4 km		
	Community Parks	67.1	4.0 to 8.0 ha	Entire Town	1.0 – 1.5	1.1
Bradford West Gwillimbury Pop Size: 35,325 Persons	Parkette	3.4	Less than 1 ha	Sub-neighbourhood	undefined	0.1
	Neighbourhood Park	21.4	1.0 to 3.0 ha	Neighbourhood	1.0	0.6
	Community Park	32.2	5 ha (min.)	Entire Town	1.0	0.9
Burlington Pop Size: 179,035 Persons	Parkette	unavailable	undefined	Sub-neighbourhood	undefined	unavailable
	Neighbourhood Park		undefined	Neighbourhood		
	Community Park		undefined	Several Neighbourhoods		
	City Park		undefined	Entire City		
	Special Resource Park		undefined	Entire City		
Caledon Pop Size: 73,200 Persons	Neighbourhood Park	29.3	1.5 to 2.0 ha	Neighbourhood	2.7 (active parkland)	2.7
	Community Park	70.8	4.0 ha (min.)	Entire Town		
	District Park	91.1	undefined	Entire Town		
	Special Purpose Park	10.0	undefined	Entire Town		
	Linear Park	unavailable	undefined	Entire Town	0.8 km of primary trail per 1,000 pop.	unavailable
Innisfil Pop Size: 35,566 Persons	Linear Park	n/a	varies	Entire Town	undefined	
	Parkette	3.8	0.2 to 0.5 ha	0.4 to 0.6 km	1.0	0.1
	Neighbourhood Park	39.7	2.0 to 4.0 ha	1.5 km		1.1
	Community / District Park	38.4	4.0 to 10.0 ha	1 to 3 km	1.0	1.1
	Regional / Special Use Park	87.9	varies	Entire Town	1.5	2.5

	Parkland Classification	Parkland (ha)	Size Requirements	Service Radius	Parkland Service Level Target (ha/1,000 pop.)	Parkland Service Level ATTAINED (ha/1,000 pop.)
Milton Pop Size: 104,217 Persons	Linear Park	17.4	undefined	Sub-neighbourhood	2.5	2.3
	Village Square	18.8	0.2 to 0.5 ha			
	Neighbourhood Park	72.9	3.0 ha (min.)	Neighbourhoods in a Planning District		
	District Park	83.4	6.0 ha (min.)	One or more Planning Districts		
	Community Park	43.9	20 to 50 ha	Entire Town		
Oakville Pop Size: 217,299 Persons	Village Square/Parkette	0.3	undefined	Sub-neighbourhood	2.2	1.8
	Neighbourhood Park	224.1	undefined	Neighbourhood		
	Community Park	173.7	undefined	Entire Town		
Orangeville Pop Size: 28,900 Persons	Urban Green	2.9	0.2 to 1.0 ha	varies	undefined	0.1
	Neighbourhood Park	8.6	1.0 to 2.0 ha	0.4 to 0.8 km	1.0	0.3
	Community Park	14.6	2.0 ha (min.)	Multiple neighbourhoods	0.5	0.5
	Major Park	22.5	4.0 (min.)	Town-wide	Undefined	0.8
Oshawa Pop Size: 159,458 Persons	Neighbourhood	250	1.8 to 4.0 ha	Areas with up to 5,000 persons	0.8	1.6
	Community	60	8.0 to 12.0 ha	Areas with to 20,000 persons	0.6	0.4
	City	106	12 ha (min.)	Entire City	2.43	0.7
	Regional	69	varies	City and beyond	undefined	0.4
West Perth Pop Size: 8,865 Persons	Parkette	2.0	Less than 0.5 ha	Sub-neighbourhood	3.0	0.2
	Neighbourhood Park	10	0.6 to 3.0 ha	Neighbourhood		1.1
	Community Park	18.4	4.0 ha (min.)	Entire Town		2.1

Notes: 2016 population estimates in each municipality are based on a number of sources including development charges studies, population estimates prepared by upper tier municipalities, etc. Parkland inventories were obtained from Parks and Recreation Master Plans or sourced directly from municipal staff. Benchmarking results for actual park service ratios should be interpreted cautiously due to differences in how municipalities categorize their parklands, including whether developable and non-developable portions are reflected. For example, Halton Hills tracks its developable and non-developable portions of parkland whereas others do not do so (or only reflect active supplies).

Action A

Arenas

Halton Hills provides 6 full ice pads and a 'quarter-pad' equivalent rink across the Mold Masters Sportsplex and the Acton Arena & Community Centre for a total supply of 6.25 ice pads. The service level target of one ice pad per 750 registered arena users, as advanced in the Strategic Action Plan, remains within the target range employed in most communities across the province (typically 1 ice pad per 700 to 800 registered players). Certain communities also provide ice pads based upon the number of minor system users (typically in the range of 1 per 400 to 550 minor players). Some continue to target rinks based on the size of the total population (e.g. 1 ice pad per 15,000 to 20,000 persons) which may still work in communities with a younger age profile but is becoming less appropriate in the context of aging populations and general participation trends.

As arena group registration information is unavailable at time of writing, it is assumed that the arena participation rate in Halton Hills is 6% suggesting there could be 3,670 players at present time. This registration figure should be confirmed by the Town and it is noted that the actual rate was recorded at 7.5% in 2006 (but arena registrations have declined considerably across the province since that time). The following shows the ice pad requirement based on continued application of a 1:750 participant standard and an assumed 6% participation rate in relation to current growth forecasts. On this basis the existing supply would be sufficient until the year 2026.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Arena Registration @6%	3,670	3,860	4,620	5,515
Ice Pads Required @ 1:750 players	4.9	5.2	6.2	7.4
Ice Pads Provided	6.25	6.25	6.25	6.25
Surplus (Deficit)	1.4	1.0	(0.05)	(1.2)

Population Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census; Region of Halton Best Planning Estimates, 2011; Halton Hills Development Charges Background Study, 2012.

Indoor Aquatic Centres

GTA municipalities are targeting indoor aquatic centres in the range of 1 per 30,000 to 50,000 population. The 1:40,000 target used in the Strategic Action Plan is within range and continued application would mean that the existing supply of 3 pools – which includes two shared pools at local high schools – is sufficient to meet needs over the next ten to fifteen years. However, staff note that the demands of recreational users are changing, and may necessitate improvements to the existing shared pools, or consideration for a new facility.

Gymnasiums

The 1 gymnasium per 50,000 population service level target used in the Strategic Action Plan remains appropriate by today's standards and would suggest that one gymnasium would be required at present time. It is worth noting, however, that municipalities are increasingly exploring provision of gyms through partnerships with school boards through joint facility construction and/or reciprocal agreements. In turn, municipalities are moving away from a population-based target recognizing the role that school gyms play when accessible to the public (i.e. municipalities need to provide fewer of their

own gyms if school agreements are conducive to public usage). The Strategic Action Plan's recommendation to construct a gymnasium as part of a Gellert Centre expansion remains appropriate with the Town's program delivery objectives and best practices in community centre design/operations. Ideally such a gymnasium would be high-school sized, capable of being divisible in two courts to allow simultaneous program delivery. A double gymnasium could also be considered given it would be the sole municipal gymnasium and the Town would require the equivalent capacity of 1.8 gymnasiums based on a population of 91,885 persons by the year 2031 using the 1:50,000 service ratio.

Soccer Fields

The Strategic Action Plan recommended a provision standard for soccer fields based upon the number of players registered with local soccer associations. As with arenas, soccer field needs are best measured using a market-based standard in conjunction with an analysis of sports field utilization rates and geographic distribution. Certain communities also provide soccer fields based upon the number of minor system users (typically in the range of 1 per 60 to 80 minor players although this varies depending upon the strength of the local organizations, general trends, socio-demographic composition, etc.). Other municipalities continue to target fields based on the size of the total population (e.g. 1 soccer field per 1,500 to 3,000 persons) which may still work in communities with a younger age profile but is becoming less appropriate in the context of aging populations and competition with other sports.

At the time the Strategic Action Plan was prepared, approximately 4,000 players were registered with local youth and adult soccer organizations. Nearly ten years later, the Town of Halton Hills records slightly more than 3,000 players being registered with local clubs, which is a substantial decline which may be attributable to a continued aging of the established population and trends in soccer participation. In fact, Halton Hills' population of 5 to 19 year olds – who constitute the primary soccer market - has declined from 13,305 to 12,990 persons between the 2011 and 2016 Census years. It is also noted that player registrations in the Ontario Soccer's Peel-Halton territory have stagnated/declined since 2008 meaning Halton Hills is consistent with regional and provincial trending with registrations in clubs affiliated with OSA (there is no provincial data regarding private or non-sanctioned leagues). The decline in Halton Hills soccer registration has two notable implications compared to years past:

- Whereas registrations in 2006 resulted in a service level of 1 soccer field per 96 registered players, the current level of registration equates to 1 field per 69 players which by itself would be indicative of a surplus. It is important to note that this assessment does not delve into the quality of individual fields or the propensity of soccer groups to use all fields in the municipal inventory.
- Whereas the penetration rate of soccer players was 7% in 2006, the current registration equates to a penetration rate of 5% in 2016.

For the purposes of this assessment, the Strategic Action Plan's original service target of 1 field per 90 registered players has been slightly adjusted upwards to 1:80 players despite the lower registration figures. While an update to the Strategic Action Plan would confirm the appropriateness of retaining the revised standard on a go forward basis (as it would consider field utilization rates, input from groups, etc.), the revised standard is put in place recognizing that the OSA's Long Term Player Development model has altered field size requirements and has placed additional pressures on fields in some communities. Further, a 1:80 standard is a more common service level in other communities.

The following shows the soccer field requirement based on a revised participant standard of 1 field per 80 players and a 5% participation rate in relation to current growth forecasts. Calculating the existing supply of 38 fields as 44 unlit equivalents – recognizing the added capacity of lit fields to into the evenings – the Town would have a sufficient quantity of fields (in terms of total number) to meet needs until it registrations reach 3,500 players or 70,000 total population with the current capture rate (projected sometime between 2022 and 2024). A total of 4 new fields would be required by 2026 and the unlit equivalent of 13.5 new fields is needed by the year 2031. Therefore, longer-term planning would need to contemplate land for 7 new fields assuming current capture rates remain consistent.

It should be noted that the Town's soccer fields are also used by a variety of other sports groups (field lacrosse, rugby, and football). These groups are not accounted for in the provision standard, and they place an additional demand on the Town's sports fields, typically in the spring and fall shoulder seasons. These other groups account for approximately 16% of current soccer field bookings, which increases the pressures on the numbers noted below. Between these other organizations there are approximately 600+ additional participants in field sports.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Soccer Registration @5%	3,020	3,220	3,850	4,595
Soccer Fields Required @ 1:80 players	37.75	40.25	48.0	57.5
Soccer Fields Provided	44	44	44	44
Surplus (Deficit)	6.25	3.75	(4.0)	(13.5)

Ball Diamonds

The Strategic Action Plan recommended a provision standard for ball diamonds based upon the number of players registered with local soccer associations. Certain communities also provide ball diamonds based upon the number of minor system users (typically in the range of 1 per 100 total participants or 1 per 60 to 80 minor players) though diamond sports typically have a greater share of adult players which those communities would need to factor. Other municipalities continue to target fields based on the size of the total population (e.g. 1 ball diamond per 2,000 to 4,000 persons).

At the time the Strategic Action Plan was prepared, approximately 3,000 players were registered with local ball organizations. Nearly ten years later, the Town of Halton Hills records slightly more than 2,700 registered players through which the decline may be attributable to aging trends discussed in previous paragraphs for soccer. The decline in Halton Hills ball registration has two notable implications compared to years past:

- Whereas registrations in 2006 resulted in a service level of 1 ball diamond per 88 registered players, the current level of registration equates to 1 field per 81 players which by itself would be indicative of a surplus. It is important to note that this assessment does not delve into the quality of individual diamonds or the propensity of ball groups to use all diamonds in the municipal inventory.

- The penetration rate of ball players was 5% in 2006 which is nearly unchanged as of present time, with the current registration equating to slightly lower penetration rate of 4.5% in 2016.

The following shows the ball diamond requirement based on continued application of a 1:100 total participant standard and an assumed 4.5% participation rate in relation to current growth forecasts. Calculating the existing supply of 28 fields as 33.5 unlit equivalents – recognizing the added capacity of lit fields to extend play into the evenings – the Town’s current supply would be sufficient between 2023 and 2025 after which require up to 1 diamond (preferably lit) would be needed by 2026. A total of 8 unlit equivalent diamonds would be required by 2031, placing the impetus on securing lands for future ball diamonds in the longer term assuming current capture rates hold constant.

Also of note is that the Town has a higher than average participation rate in adult ball leagues, which require larger diamonds. The Town has a noted shortage in premium major diamonds that are suitable for adult leagues and older youth play, as well as for multi-diamond sites that are appropriate for tournament play. Development of premium major diamonds (including an additional mounded hardball diamond) should remain a priority for the Town in the short term.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Ball Registration @4.5%	2,737	2,900	3,465	4,135
Ball Diamonds Required @ 1:100 players	27.4	29.0	34.7	41.4
Ball Diamonds Provided	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5
Surplus (Deficit)	6.1	4.5	(1.2)	(7.9)

Tennis Courts

With a supply of 14 tennis courts, Halton Hills’ service level is 1 tennis court per 4,370 population. This is slightly below the 1:4,000 standard recommended in the Strategic Action Plan but remains on the upper end of GTA targets that typically range from 1 tennis court per 4,000 to 6,000 population. In communities where a community tennis club exists, the need for club courts is sometimes measured using a 1 club court per 100 to 125 club player metric. Municipalities also factor geographic distribution of tennis courts into their provision strategies.

Assuming the 1:4,000 standard continues to be employed in Halton Hills, there is a slight deficit projected over the next five years that could readily be accommodated through provision of a two-court pod at a future neighbourhood or community park. Beyond the next ten years, between 5 and 9 new tennis courts would be required. Simply for the sake of comparison, the Town would need just 4 new courts by 2031 if adjusting its provision standard to a less aggressive 1:5,000 rate.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Tennis Courts Required @ 1:4,000	15.3	16.0	19.25	23.0
Tennis Courts Provided	14	14	14	14
(Deficit)	(1.3)	(2.0)	(5.25)	(9.0)

Basketball Courts

Halton Hills has a supply of 2 full courts in Acton and 6 half courts in Georgetown (effectively 5 courts collectively). School basketball courts often provide a secondary but more limited point of access for the sport. The Strategic Action Plan standard of 1 basketball court per 1,500 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 accounts for the Town's dispersed population base as some urbanized municipalities will target courts at a rate of 1:800 youth. Geographic distribution of basketball courts is also factored into many municipal provision strategies.

The 2016 Census records 9,055 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 in Halton Hills. Assuming that the 10 to 19 age group continues to account for 16% of the population as it did in 2016, the following chart shows that up to 5 new courts would be required by 2031.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Population 10 to 19 yrs. @16%	9,905	10,300	12,320	14,700
Basketball Courts Required @ 1:1,500	6.6	6.9	8.2	9.8
Basketball Courts Provided	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
(Deficit)	(1.6)	(1.9)	(3.2)	(4.8)

Note: estimated youth population applies the 2016 Census age proportion to total future populations in the absence of current age structure forecasts. Analysis should be revisited upon any future release of updated age structure forecasts.

Splash Pads

Halton Hills has a supply of 3 splash pads. The Strategic Action Plan's standard of 1 splash pad per 4,000 children between the ages of 0 and 14 is consistent with the 1:4,000 to 5,000 children used in many GTA communities. Some communities have focused exclusively on the 0 to 9 age group feeling that the pre-teen segment is less likely to use splash pads and the standard is usually in the 1:3,000 to 4,000 children range for residents under 10 years of age. Certain urban-rural municipalities such as Halton Hills also target one splash pad per major urban settlement area to maximize access across their respective territories.

Unfortunately, 2016 Census age cohort data has not been released at time of writing which limits the ability to accurately apply the 1:4,000 children standard - this data is scheduled for release on May 3, 2017 at which time the Town should re-apply this standard. However, assuming that the 0 to 14 age group accounts for 22% of the population as it did in 2011, the following chart shows that 1 new splash pad would be required within the next five to ten years, and two additional in total by the year 2031.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Population 0 to 14 yrs. @22%	13,450	14,170	16,940	20,215
Splash Pads Required @ 1:4,000	3.4	3.5	4.2	5.0
Splash Pads Provided	3	3	3	3
(Deficit)	(0.4)	(0.5)	(1.2)	(2.0)

Note: estimated youth population applies the 2016 Census age proportion to total future populations in the absence of current age structure forecasts. Analysis should be revisited upon any future release of updated age structure forecasts.

Skateboard Parks

Halton Hills has a supply of 2 skateboard parks. The Strategic Action Plan's standard of 1 skateboard park per 5,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 has been updated by the Town of Halton Hills – by way of its Georgetown Action Sports Study - to be 1 skateboard park per 5,000 residents aged 5-19 to be consistent with actual observed usage based on the popularity of scooters and the expansion of the use of skateboard parks to be more of a family activity. Certain urban-rural municipalities such as Halton Hills also target one skateboard park per major urban settlement area to maximize access for youth living across their respective territories.

There are 12,990 children and youth between the ages of 5 and 19 in Halton Hills, as recorded through the 2016 Census. Under the Georgetown Action Sports Study's 1:5,000 standard and assuming that the 5 to 19 age group continues to account for 21% of the population as it did in 2016, the following chart shows that up to four additional skateboard parks are required by the year 2031. The Town's recent reinvestment into making the 3 Musketeers Skatepark a premier, high quality skateboard venue provides added flexibility in accommodating long-term needs due to the size and design of that skateboard park.

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Estimated Population 5 to 19 yrs. @21%	12,990	13,522	16,170	19,295
Skateboard Parks Required @ 1:5,000		2.7	3.2	3.9
Skateboard Parks Provided	2.6	2	2	2
(Deficit)	(0.6)	(0.7)	(1.2)	(1.9)

Note: estimated youth population applies the 2016 Census age proportion to total future populations in the absence of current age structure forecasts. Analysis should be revisited upon any future release of updated age structure forecasts.

Playgrounds

Most municipalities provide playgrounds on the basis of ensuring walkability from major residential areas, usually in terms of a 5 to 10 minute walk time which generally equates to a 400 to 800 metre service radius. The Strategic Action Plan targets playgrounds within a 500 metre radius of all built-up residential areas without crossing any major barriers (e.g., creeks/ravines, highways, rail lines, etc.). While mapping is not part of the scope of work, it is presumed that future secondary and tertiary plans will identify parks to contain playgrounds based on the 500 metre service radius.

3.3 Summary of Parkland and Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs

Based upon proposed Official Plan Policy Amendment #3 as contained in Section 4.1 of this Review along with a scan of regional parkland provision targets, it is recommended that the Town of Halton Hills strive to provide 2.2 hectares of usable parkland per 1,000 population. Table 2 and 3 illustrate the additional parkland required in order to achieve this level of service on a Town-wide basis compared the existing standards.

Table 2: Parkland Needs to the year 2031 at 3.7 hectares per 1,000 (EXISTING STANDARD)

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Parkland required at 3.7ha/1000 overall	226.30 ha	238.25 ha	284.91 ha	339.97 ha
Existing Parkland	188.40 ha	188.40 ha	188.40 ha	188.40 ha
Parkland from Vision Georgetown (estimated)	not applicable	not applicable	20.0 ha	20.0 ha
(Deficit)	(37.9 ha)	(49.85 ha)	(76.51 ha)	(131.57 ha)

The Parkland Policy (Phase 1) Discussion Paper provided the basis for the Town of Halton Hills to target active forms of parkland (i.e. readily developable tablelands) at a minimum of 2.2 hectares per 1,000 population, within the overall rate noted above. Table 34 illustrates the land requirement for active parkland alone, noting that this quantum is largely attributable to high use areas of parks such as those dedicated to recreation facilities.

Table 3: Parkland Needs to the year 2031 at 2.2 hectares of usable parkland per 1,000 (PROPOSED STANDARD)

	2016	2021	2026	2031
Population	61,161	64,392	77,003	91,885
Parkland required at 2.2ha/1000 overall	134.55 ha	141.66 ha	169.41 ha	202.15 ha
Existing Parkland (usable)	126.69 ha	126.69 ha	126.69 ha	126.69 ha
Parkland from Vision Georgetown (estimated)			20.0 ha	20.0 ha
Surplus (Deficit)	(7.86 ha)	(14.29 ha)	(22.72 ha)	(55.46 ha)

Table 4 summarizes the quantum of land required solely to address major, built recreation facilities typically found in parkland. Please note that this land requirement excludes open areas for unstructured recreation (e.g. open spaces, picnic areas), community gathering spaces, cultural and horticultural amenities, off-leash areas, walkways and minor recreation facilities such as playgrounds. It is noteworthy that based upon potential park sizes in Vision Georgetown, it is anticipated that major sports field needs will not be met through the parks in Vision Georgetown.

It is further noted that outdoor recreation facilities would generate a land requirement similar to that identified using the 2.2 hectares per 1,000 for active parkland based upon unit area assumptions applied in Table 34. However, the land requirement shown in Table 34 could be reduced if the Town were to intensify certain sports fields through use of synthetic turf and field lighting systems, as well as if co-

locating multiple fields together which would partially reduce setback requirements within a park(s) thereby reducing the unit area assumption that has been applied.

Table 4: Land Requirement for Major Outdoor Recreational Facilities in Parks to the year 2031

	Unit Area (ha)	Number Required	Total Area (ha)
Soccer Fields	2.5	14	35.0
Baseball Diamonds	3.6	8	28.8
Tennis Courts (single)	0.45	9	4.1
Splash Pads – Major	0.5	2	1.0
Skateboard / BMX parks – Major	0.92	2	1.8
Multi-Use Courts (single)	0.64	5	3.2
Total Parkland Required for Major Recreational Uses:			73.9 ha
Total Parkland in Vision Georgetown (estimated)			20.0 ha
Net Parkland required (estimated):			53.9 ha

Notes: unit areas are derived from the Town of Milton Boyne Secondary Plan. Number of facilities required has been rounded up to the nearest whole number recognizing there may be subsequent population growth in Halton Hills past the year 2031. However, land requirements associated with sports fields may be slightly reduced depending upon the number of lit fields that may be developed as well as the number of sports fields that are co-located together (which may reduce unit areas due to shared setbacks between fields).

3.4 Site Securement Criteria for a Future Town Wide Park

The Phase 1 Discussion Paper identified the need for a **Town Wide Park** largely to address future sport field requirements associated with population growth in Halton Hills. Given the size requirement of a Town Wide Park is defined as 11 hectares through the Halton Hills Official Plan Section F7.3.5.2 to meet optimal functionality of this park type, there is limited potential for the Town of Halton Hills to secure such a site(s) within its existing urban boundary. Finding sufficiently sized land outside of the designated Urban Area, however, also poses considerable challenges due to areas protected through the Niagara Escarpment, Ontario Greenbelt and the GTA West Corridor Protection Area.

While locating a park in the Urban Area would be ideal to maximize proximity to the most number of residents, the growing scarcity of large greenfield sites within Georgetown and Acton could require the Town to consider a future Town Wide Park(s) within its designated Agricultural/Rural Area. Complicating factors in the rural areas include distance to population, previously noted legislative constraints as well potential new agricultural land use policies set forth by the upper-tier municipality.

In pursuing a future Town Wide Park(s), Table 2 offers criteria for consideration. These criteria are intended to guide decision-making and are not mutually-exclusive of each other, nor are they listed in any order of priority or importance. They are generally applicable in both the urban and rural context, though there may be some exceptions (e.g. proximity to populations served, ability to be located in a highly visible location, etc.). While attaining all criteria would maximize benefit, the Town may proceed with park acquisition where certain criteria are not met provided that the Town can reasonably demonstrate this will not have a detrimental effect on the park design, park usage or on adjacent land

uses. The Town may wish to consider a weighting or scoring system to evaluate prospective sites using the following and/or other criteria deemed to be appropriate.

Table 5: Town Park Site Securement Evaluation Criteria

Action C

Criteria	Description
Site Conditions	Consider topography (flat, stable and well drained tableland is strongly preferred), parcel configuration (ideally square or rectangular), drainage, and soil conditions (e.g., free of environmental contaminants).
Size	Should meet or exceed minimum standards, and ideally possesses reasonable long-term expansion potential to accommodate future recreation facilities. The site may be a minimum of 11 hectares (as per s.F7.3.5.2 of the Halton Hills Official Plan) and while it is preferred that the land be relegated to one parcel, multiple parcels may be considered at the discretion of the Town to address legislative or other constraints to meeting the minimum size requirement provided Town-wide Park function is not compromised.
Distribution	Contributes to a reasonable distribution of similar recreation and social services within the Town.
Centrality	Proximity to the population to be served and provides the Town with a location that creates efficiencies for its services and in good proximity to significant existing and/or proposed populations.
Land Use Impacts	Compatibility with adjacent land uses; conformity with Official Plan or Secondary Plan (if applicable); does not require elimination of a vital land use (e.g. significant woodlot, environmentally significant area, etc.); compliance (or high likelihood of being re-designated and/or re-zoned to comply) with Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law regulations.
Connectivity	Integration of trail and open space linkages or corridors.
Accessibility	Site has frontage on an arterial road or a collector road near an arterial road, reasonable access to future public transit and/or sidewalks (in urban areas), contains sufficient space for onsite parking, etc.
Safety	Conditions of the site and surrounding area do not pose any unnecessary safety risk to park users due to traffic patterns, crime rate, adjacent uses, etc.
Partnerships	Potential joint use with school sites or other municipal assets.
Visibility	Ability to be a focal point for the community and is at a highly visible location.
Natural Features	Park site is not encumbered by wooded areas or features of cultural or natural significance that would preclude the development of sports fields and other major outdoor recreation facilities.
Added Value	Access to viewpoints or vistas, adjacency or ability to integrate lands of natural and/or cultural significance (over and above the 11 hectare minimum for active and useable parkland), ability to encourage and/or enhance appropriate development in the area or to complement municipal revitalization goals, etc.
Constructability	Parks should not be restricted by natural or man-made obstructions thereby avoiding hydro corridors, easements, stormwater overflow areas, floodplains, valleylands, environmental lands, etc.; however, opportunities to enhance or integrate, where feasible, can be considered.
Services	Site has full municipal services (or the potential for full services) to the property line.
Availability	Timing of parcel availability should coincide with preferred timing of park development along with other external factors including but not limited to the GTA West Highway Corridor.
Cost	Reasonable land valuation (if applicable); publicly-owned lands offer the greatest potential.

4.0 Proposed Amendments to the Halton Hills Official Plan

This Section validates past recommendations from the Parkland Policy (Phase 1) Discussion Paper in consideration of new legislation prescribed through the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act (Bill 73). The pages that follow propose a number of amendments to Halton Hills Official Plan policies regarding parkland classification, service level targets and parkland dedication. As the Town continues to grow in population and progresses towards build out of its urban settlement areas, parkland development strategies must consider planning for higher densities and more urban landscapes. Proposed amendments specific to the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan policies are found in Appendix A of this report.

4.1 Halton Hills Parkland Classification System

The Town of Halton Hills Official Plan defines its 'Parkland Classification System' through Sections F7.3.3, F7.3.4 and F7.3.5. These Sections establish two distinct types of public parkland in the Town, consisting of Local Parkland and Non-Local Parkland:

- Local Parkland is intended to serve residents in the surrounding residential area and consists of Parkettes and Neighbourhood Parks which are permitted in low, medium and high density residential areas.
- Non-Local Parkland contains Community Parks and Town Wide Parks and is intended to fulfil the needs of the entire Town and visitors to the Town.

The following policy amendments are proposed to the current Parkland Classification System contained in the Halton Hills Official Plan.

Proposed Policy Amendment #1.

Action D

Accept Parkettes throughout the Built Boundary of the Town and Adjust Size/Service Catchment Standards

Section F7.3.4.1 - Parkettes

While Section F7.3.4 of the Halton Hills Official Plan directs Local Parkland (including Parkettes) to all areas and densities within the Living Area, Section F7.3.4.1d pertaining specifically to Parkettes implicitly directs parkette development to higher density areas by way of stating parkettes shall be "required for housing developments that provide smaller lots with reduced opportunities for amenity areas." It is recommended that Section F7.3.4.1d be removed from the Official Plan to reinforce the provision of parkettes throughout the designated Living Area.

Notwithstanding this amendment to apply the Parkette classification throughout the entire designated Living Area, Hamlets and other areas falling outside of the Urban Area designations should be treated as a loose exception. In these areas that are typically characterized by homes with large lots or estate residential characteristics, the Community Park classification is deemed to be the preferred park typology. Existing Official Plan policy (Section F7.3.5.1a) identifies the suitability of Community Parks in

Action E

servicing Hamlet Areas. At its discretion, the Town could choose to accept Neighbourhood Parks in Hamlet Areas as well so long as such parks meet the minimum size requirement (1.5 to 2.5 hectares) associated with that classification. An Official Plan amendment is not deemed to be required to advance these noted directions.

Action F

Amendments are also proposed to Section F7.3.4.1a and Section F7.3.4.1b pertaining to catchment areas and size of parkettes. Future residential development patterns in Halton Hills are such that parkettes and neighbourhood parks will have some overlapping functionality whereby their service catchments and sizes may share certain characteristics depending upon the density and style of development in which they are located.

With respect to service catchment area, Sections F7.3.4.1a and F7.3.4.2a of the Halton Hills Official Plan establish 0.4 kilometres (400 metres) as the maximum service radius for Parkettes and as the minimum service radius for Neighbourhood Parks. Both Parkette and Neighbourhood Park classifications will be required to service a larger territory due to growing scarcity of available/undeveloped lands as well as recent trends in Halton Hills that are resulting in an ability to secure less parkland over and above Planning Act requirements. Collectively, these factors could potentially lead to more people having to rely on fewer parks and thus the parks will need to encompass a greater geographic catchment area. Accordingly, Official Plan Sections F7.3.4.1a and F7.3.4.2a should be amended so that Parkettes serve a radius of up to between 0.2 and 0.5 kilometres (200 to 500 metres) while Neighbourhood Parks service lands within a 0.5 to 0.8 kilometre radius (500 to 800 metres).

Another amendment to the descriptions of Parkette and Neighbourhood Park classifications pertains to a gap between the defined sizes of each. Section F7.3.4.1b articulates a maximum Parkette size of 0.6 hectares while a minimum size of 1.5 hectares is presently in place for Neighbourhood Parks through Section F7.3.4.2b. There is thus no classification of parkland that applies to parks above 0.6 hectares and below 1.5 hectares. Official Plan Section F7.3.4.1b pertaining to Parkettes should be amended to reflect a size range between 0.2 hectares and 0.8 hectares while Section F7.3.4.2b should be amended to reflect a park size range between 0.8 hectares and 2.5 hectares.

It is thus implied that park size alone should not be the differentiating factor between these two forms of parkland but rather their function by way of their designs, facilities included, and amenity features (all of which will also determine the parks catchment area as described in the previous paragraph). On this basis, along with the fact that residents of a broad range of ages can be expected to rely on parkettes for their open space needs, an amendment to Official Plan Section F7.3.4.1f is also recommended whereby Parkettes service residents of all age groups rather than specifically identifying young children and older adults as is presently written.

Proposed Policy Amendment #2.

Action G

Create a Linear Connector classification

Section F6.2 – Pedestrian and Cycling Routes and Facilities

The creation of a Linear Connector category is intended to advance the objectives of the Halton Hills Transportation Master Plan (2011) which emphasizes ‘active transportation’ modes as a key component of the overall transportation system. Linear Connectors reflect lands that are oriented to off-road trail ways that provide connecting links between green spaces and other forms of parkland or major community destinations (e.g. schools, downtown areas etc.). Linear Connectors should be referenced as part of the Transportation system and thus would not qualify as being active parkland given that their recreational function is secondary to the movement of people, and is generally singular in nature. Linear Connectors, therefore, should not be taken as parkland conveyance under Sections 42 and 51.1 of the Planning Act.

4.2 Overall Public Parkland Standard (Service Level Target)

Section F7.2.3 of the Halton Hills Official Plan states that “Council shall encourage the provision of public parkland to achieve a minimum ratio of 1.2 hectares of local parkland and 2.5 hectares of non-local parkland per 1,000 residents”, amounting to a collective ratio of 3.7 hectares per 1,000 residents.

The following policy amendments are proposed to the current Parkland Classification System contained in the Halton Hills Official Plan.

Proposed Policy Amendment #3.

Action B

Target acquisition of useable, tableland parkland at a rate of 2.2 hectares per 1,000 population

Sections F7.2.3 - Overall Public Parkland Standard; F7.3.4 - Local Parkland; and F7.3.5 - Non-Local Parkland

The Town of Halton Hills owns and maintains 199.99 hectares¹ of parkland categorized according to its Official Plan Parkland Classification system, resulting in a provision level of 3.4 hectares per 1,000 population (based on a 2016 population estimate of 58,891 persons). Reflecting analysis from the Parkland Policy (Phase 1) Discussion Paper, the provincial land use planning framework is such that it will be challenging for the Town to cost-effectively reconcile the gap between the current parkland service level and its overall public parkland standard. A variety of land acquisition tools will be required in order to maintain similar service levels into the future.

The current land use planning climate is such that it will be difficult to achieve parkland at the targeted rate presently specified in the Official Plan. The ability to acquire parkland will be increasingly constrained by legislative factors such as the Greenbelt Act, Places to Grow Act, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, etc. that will challenge the ability to find large, developable tracts of land

¹ Town of Halton Hills. August 2015. Parkland Policy Discussion Paper, Appendix A.

as well as increase development densities by directing growth towards many established areas through infill and intensification.

Parkland Policy Discussion Paper (Phase 1) advanced consideration of an 'active parkland' target of 2.2 hectares per 1,000 to recognize the importance of securing sufficiently sized and contiguous tableland parcels. Reflecting this level of provision as the Official Plan standard moving forward should provide the Town with a reasonable parkland acquisition target provided that the Town receive developable tablelands for park developments. This amendment would continue to be supported in the Official Plan through Sections F7.3.4.2 and F7.3.5.1 where existing policies relating to Neighbourhood and Community Parkland emphasize securing tableland.

In terms of targeted rates between Local and Non-Local forms of Parkland, it is recommended that a rate of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 residents be applied to Local Parkland again provided that the entire quantum attributable to the ratio consists of active, developable tablelands. The balance, in the amount of 1.0 hectares per 1,000 residents shall apply to Non-Local Parkland; whereas Non-Local Parkland is presently targeted at 2.5 hectares per 1,000 population in the Official Plan, the resulting difference of 1.5 hectares per 1,000 less can be considered to be attributable to a) less land being available for larger park sizes and, b) less non-developable or non-tableland areas being included as part of Non-Local Parkland acquisitions.

It will also be necessary for the Town to review existing parkland boundaries to reconfirm the actual limits of usable parkland.

4.3 Parkland Dedication & Acquisition

The Town of Halton Hills establishes the following parkland conveyance requirements in its Official Plan through Section F7.2.6 to Section F2.7.10:

- A parkland dedication target of 5% of gross residential land for Low Density residential developments.
- For Medium or High Density residential areas, land should be conveyed at a rate of 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units.
- For industrial and commercial land uses, land should be conveyed at a rate equal to 2%. If an industrial or commercial building is expanded where expansion is greater than 25% of a site's Buildable Area, the conveyance of land is equal to 2% of the proportion of the site obtained by dividing the building expansion area by the Buildable Area.
- In the case of land proposed for uses other than residential, commercial or industrial lands, the conveyance of land is equal to five percent (5%) of the land proposed for development or redevelopment.
- The Town should enact a Parkland Dedication By-law.

The following policy amendments are proposed to the current parkland dedication policies contained in the Halton Hills Official Plan. It should be noted that the Town already has a Parkland Dedication By-law in effect – which recently underwent a housekeeping amendment – and the Town is investigating further amendments to the By-law through a separate ongoing process.

Proposed Policy Amendment #4.

Amend Cash-in-Lieu of parkland requirement to 1 hectare per 500 dwelling units

Section F7.2.6 - Dedication of Land through the Development Process

Bill 73 changes cash-in-lieu of parkland requirements associated with residential land developments. If utilizing the Planning Act's alternative parkland dedication rate, up to 1 hectare per 500 residential units shall be applied when collecting cash-in-lieu of physical parkland supplied. The Town would still have the ability to collect cash-in-lieu of parkland for residential developments using the 5% of developable land in instances where it is advantageous to do so.

In deciding when to take cash-in-lieu of parkland as calculated per the Planning Act's amended alternative requirement of 1 hectare per 500 units, there are two primary considerations:

- i) The cash-in-lieu of parkland should only be collected where the Town deems parkland to not be needed due to an oversupply of parkland in the area or other reason.
- ii) The cash-in-lieu of parkland based upon the alternative standard should only be collected where the net residential density is greater than 25 units per net hectare, otherwise the 5% cash-in-lieu should be taken.

Density of Development Scenarios – Cash-in-Lieu				
Net Developable Land Area	10 hectares			
Density (units per net hectare)	14	15	20	25
Unit Count	140	150	200	250
Parkland from 5% Requirement (hectares)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Net Site Coverage	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
CIL Land Value Equivalent from 1:500 Requirement	0.28	0.30	0.40	0.50
CIL Equivalent Net Site Coverage	2.8%	3.0%	4.0%	5.0%

To illustrate the rationale through which the 25 dwelling unit per net hectare threshold was established, consider a site with a net developable land area of 10 hectares and 250 dwelling units. At this density, cash-in-lieu of parkland contributions under the Planning Act's alternative standard would be the same as would be if the Town were to take cash-in-lieu using the Planning Act's 5% conveyance requirement for a residential development.

There is **no change** to the standard rate for parkland dedication upon conveyance of physical parkland supplies. That is, the Town should continue to collect 5% of the gross residential land area or an alternative of 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units based upon whichever conveyance requirement yields

the greatest quantum of land as is the Town's right under the Planning Act. The Town shall also continue to collect 2% of the gross land area or cash-in-lieu equivalent for commercial and industrial developments, as well as 5% for all other developments.

Proposed Policy Amendment #5.

Establish density threshold for when to take the 5% land conveyance versus the 1 hectare per 300 unit conveyance

Section F7.2.6 - Dedication of Land through the Development Process

Building upon the Density of Development Scenarios chart, where the Town wishes to take physical land – rather than cash-in-lieu – it would want to apply the Planning Act's alternative rate 1:300 rate for densities above 15 units per net hectare. Where residential densities are below the 15 units per net hectare (i.e. fewer than 150 units on a 10 hectare site), the Town would collect more parkland or cash-in-lieu thereof by taking 5% as permitted by the Planning Act. This implies that the 5% dedication would only be collected for development proposals within the Low Density Residential Area designation, as is presently written in Official Plan Section F7.2.6.

Density of Development Scenarios – Parkland Conveyance				
Net Developable Land Area	10 hectares			
Density (units per net hectare)	14	15	20	25
Unit Count	140	150	200	250
Parkland from 5% Requirement (hectares)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Net Site Coverage	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Physical Parkland from 1:300 Requirement	0.47	0.5	0.67	0.83
Net Site Coverage	4.7%	5.0%	6.7%	8.3%

Proposed Policy Amendment #6.

Action O

Articulate parkland conveyance requirements for Mixed-Use developments

Section F7.2.6 - Dedication of Land through the Development Process

Recent land use planning and design practices encourage compact urban form through which mixed-use developments play a key role. As municipalities and their residents continue to pursue communities in which a person can live, work and play, mixed-use developments have the potential to become more prevalent throughout Halton Hills' designated growth areas and in redevelopment/infill/intensification scenarios.

To provide clarity for the Town to calculate parkland dedication requirements for mixed-use development applications, the Official Plan should include language speaking to the amount of parkland and the cash-in-lieu equivalent to be conveyed. Parkland to be conveyed should be the sum of Planning Act dedication requirements for each type of land use contained within the mixed-use development, calculated based upon the total area devote to each respective use in a given development.

Proposed Policy Amendment #7.

Action H

Dedicate land for bicycle and pedestrian pathways

Section F7.2.6 – Dedication of Land through the Development Process

Land dedication for bicycle and pedestrian pathways as permitted under Section 51(25) of the Planning Act is recommended to be considered when reviewing and approving Plans of Subdivision. Such lands could be categorized under the Linear Connector typology as advanced through Proposed Policy Amendment #2. Land acquisition under Section 51(25) is intended and collected for transportation requirements and should not be construed as being parkland dedicated under any such provision of the Planning Act.

4.4 Other Amendments

The following section contains supplementary amendments recommended to be considered by the Town based on new legislation and best practices.

Proposed Policy Amendment #8.

Include Reference to the Active Transportation Master Plan

Section F7.2.2 – Trails and Cycling Master Plan

Section F7.2.2 was recently updated through a housekeeping amendment referencing the Council adoption date of the Cycling Master Plan. A further housekeeping item will be to add reference to the Active Transportation Master Plan that is presently being completed as that document will contain policies pertaining to the trails system.

The year of completion for documents referenced in Section F7.2.1 and F7.2.2 should not be included in order to minimize housekeeping amendments relating to outdated references (provided that future iterations of these Master Plans retain the same name).

Proposed Policy Amendment #9.

Reference to barrier-free accessibility through park design

Section F7.3.1 – Parkland Siting and Design

With the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) prescribing measures to ensure barrier-free environments in all public areas, reference to accessible park design standards is recommended. Reference to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is also recommended to augment policies referencing park safety through design.

5.0 Next Steps

This Parkland Policy Review summarizes the provincial framework for parkland acquisition, compares the parkland classification and dedication policies contained in the Halton Hills Official Plan to those in selected benchmarked municipalities, proposes amendments to explore through the Official Plan Review process, and provides land securement criteria for a future Town Wide Park.

The Town's Project Charter (dated February 25, 2015), provided on the following page, identifies the following next steps for the Parkland Acquisition Strategy.

Town of Halton Hills – Parkland Acquisition Strategy Project Charter

Phase One – What We Have, Where We're Going *(completed in 2015 through a Parkland Policy Discussion Paper)*

- Confirm parkland ratios and designations based on other municipal best practices, OMB decisions, and a fair, equitable approach to achieving Provincial, Regional and Town policy objectives.
- Identify need for Town Wide Park(s) based on existing parkland inventory, projected Vision Georgetown requirements, and range of uses outlined in Town's current Official Plan.

Phase Two – Striving for the "Emerald Necklace" *(completed through this Parkland Policy Review)*

- Develop criteria and related ranking for Town Wide parkland needs considering such factors as parcel size, location, connections to Town lands and natural areas, cultural significance and key planning constraints (land use compatibility, current OP and OZ designations, feasibility of servicing). The criteria may inform/amend existing Official Plan.

Phase Three – Who Owns What

- Identify ownership of key land holdings within the context of major development initiatives: GTA West Corridor, Trafalgar Road North Widening, Vision Georgetown Secondary Plan, Greenbelt Plan Review (10yr review 2017), Growth Plan (2031-41).

Phase Four – Implementation Strategy: How to Get There

- Determine major steps required to acquire and develop future Town Wide Park
 - Land acquisition budget
 - Scope of studies
 - Timing of approvals
 - Conceptual design and capital construction framework
 - Funding options

Phase Five

- Develop terms of reference for securement approach including landowner approaches, negotiations and terms of purchase(s).

Source: Town of Halton Hills Project Charter, February 25, 2015