

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Planning, Public Works and Transportation Committee

REPORT FROM: Melissa Ricci, Senior Policy Planner

DATE: May 29, 2019

REPORT NO.: PLS-2019-0041

RE: Intensification Opportunities Study Update – Status Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PLS-2019-0035, dated May 29, 2019, reporting on the status of the Intensification Opportunities Study Update be received for information;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council on the results of the planned public consultation activities and the technical background studies when completed in the fall.

BACKGROUND:

The Town is undertaking a review of the 2010 Intensification Opportunities Study to develop and update policies and guidelines for intensification/ infill development in the built up urban areas of Georgetown and Acton to the end of the 2041 planning horizon. Through this Study, the Town will be better positioned to manage expected residential growth within built urban areas and provide input to the Regional Official Plan Review, which is currently underway.

In 2017, staff advised Council through report PLS-2017-0021 that SVN Architects + Planners Inc., joined by Dillon and Hemson Consulting, was awarded the contract to lead the Study. Considering the current Provincial and Regional direction regarding intensification, the Consulting team would review servicing and transportation capacity, and real estate market interest to help assess how much intensification can be appropriately accommodated in the Town. In addition, the team would prepare Infill Design Guidelines highlighting aspects of urban design that should be considered when reviewing applications for infill developments within Mature Neighbourhoods, Contemporary Neighbourhoods, and Nodes and Corridors throughout Georgetown and Acton.

COMMENTS:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update regarding the status of the Intensification Opportunities Study Update and inform on the next steps planned in order to finalize the Study by fall 2019. To date, a number of draft technical documents have been prepared including the Policy Review and Directions Report, the Infill Design Guidelines, the draft Infrastructure Assessment Report and a draft Market Assessment Report. These documents examine the potential to accommodate new development within key nodes and corridors, and the various forms of intensification that are possible within the Urban Areas of Acton and Georgetown.

As part of this Study, staff will present an updated Intensification Inventory, reflecting approved and recently completed development projects, as well as the feedback received during consultation from both the public and Members of Council. The physical potential and existing constraints of individual sites (e.g. site configuration and topography, existing uses, adjacent uses, setbacks, heritage considerations etc.) are all considered within the inventory assessment. Work on the inventory is ongoing; however, it will not be finalized until the inventory assumptions are confirmed based on the results of the Infrastructure and Market Assessments.

A Steering Committee, comprised of Members of Council, industry leaders and interested residents as well as a representative from the Region has been established primarily to provide comments during the study process, including reviewing the background work and technical documents associated with the study. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of Town staff from key departments was established to provide feedback during the study process, assist with issue identification and resolution and provide data input. Two meetings have been held with the Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee on April 23, 2018 and February 7, 2019. During these meetings, staff and the Consulting team introduced the Study, discussed the concepts of intensification and infill development and presented the preliminary findings of the draft technical assessments.

Public Engagement

A number of consultation activities have been established for this Study including regular meetings with the Steering Committee, two Public Open Houses, and additional online and in-person interactive engagement activities.

A Public Open House was held on May 15, 2019 at the Hillview Active Living Centre in Georgetown from 6:30 to 8 pm to introduce the project to the public and provide an opportunity to gather their feedback. Display boards summarizing information on the Study (see Attachment A) were presented and staff together with the Consulting team were available to answer questions. A Survey Form to gather input from participants and hear about their vision for accommodating intensification in the community was distributed at the Open House and is available on the Let's Talk Halton Hills webpage (see Attachment B).

A project webpage, which includes the background reports and information on new opportunities for engagement is being updated throughout the Study phases. In addition, a Let's Talk Halton Hills page has been created providing an opportunity for interested residents to share their input through a brief survey and ask questions. Staff will continue to leverage Let's Talk Halton Hills by providing opportunities for the public to provide their feedback through other interactive online activities.

An Educational Guide, for public distribution, has been prepared and is available online on the project website and at the Planning and Sustainability Department front counter (see Attachment C). The purpose of the Guide is to clearly explain what intensification is and to provide information on how intensification projects can be sensitively designed and integrated into existing neighbourhoods within the Town.

Upcoming Consultation

As of the date of writing this report, a Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on June 12, 2019. At this meeting, staff and the consulting team will deliver a brief presentation summarizing the updates to the Infill Design Guidelines and the Infrastructure and Market Assessments. In addition, staff will gather input from the Committee prior to presenting the information to the public. A Second Public Open House will then be scheduled for the fall.

Planning staff will work with Recreation and Parks staff to deliver interactive workshops with youth and seniors groups over the summer months. During these workshops, participants will place LEGO pieces on maps highlighting potential intensification areas in Acton and Georgetown to demonstrate the amount and form of intensification they envision in the community. Each coloured LEGO piece represents a different density/unit type i.e., red pieces are equal to three storey apartments (30 residential units) while orange pieces are equal to one row of townhomes (6 residential units).

The goal of these sessions is to engage both young people and seniors within our community through the process, by asking them to identify the best manner to accommodate development within the provincially identified built boundaries of the Town.

A Second interactive workshop will also be planned with the general public in the fall. The input from these LEGO workshops will be considered and used to fine-tune the intensification inventory (the estimated number of intensification units that can be accommodated in the urban areas of Acton and Georgetown), and will ultimately be incorporated into the draft Official Plan Amendment.

Next Steps

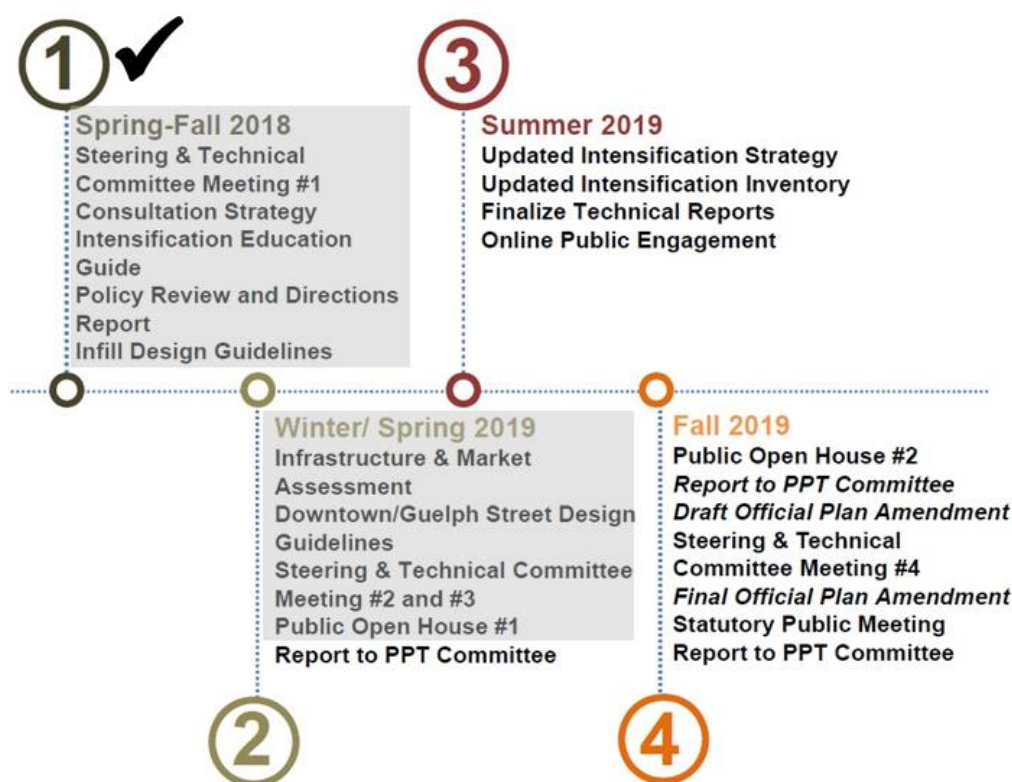
Town staff will work through the spring and summer to finalize the technical reports and facilitate interactive workshops with the Acton and Georgetown youth and seniors

groups. For this activity Planning staff will coordinate with Recreation and Parks staff who regularly organize activities with these groups at recreational and seniors centres.

Following the interactive sessions with the youth and seniors groups, staff will conduct a broader public consultation event/interactive workshop in the fall, and will provide an update to Council summarizing the results of the public consultation activities and the preliminary findings of the technical reports and updated inventory.

Figure 1 below provides a description of the updated project phases anticipated for this Study (the grayed out tasks have been completed).

Figure 1- Project Phases



RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report directly aligns with Priority #3 of Council's 2014-2018 Strategic Action Plan, which is 'Planning for Growth'. Specifically this project advances the objective of 'preserving stable neighbourhood character by focusing development in intensification areas, and utilizing 'best practices' in urban design for infill development.'

The subject of this report also directly relates to Strategic Direction G: Achieve Sustainable Growth, specifically the following Objectives:

- G7 - To ensure that the character and stability of existing residential neighbourhoods is maintained when accommodating growth.
- G10 - To promote intensification and affordable housing in appropriate locations within the Town.
- G11 - To ensure the efficient use of urban land and infrastructure in existing communities and new growth areas.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Region of Halton has advised that they will be providing the Town with \$75,000 to undertake the Intensification Opportunities Study Update. Council had previously approved \$75,000 for completion of this project. Upon receipt of funding from the Region of Halton, the funds approved by Council can be returned to the appropriate reserves as was recommended in Report P&I-2017-0036.

CONSULTATION:

Throughout the Study phases, Planning Policy staff has and will continue to consult with the Town's Development Review, Zoning and Building, Transportation and Development Engineering staff. In addition, consultation with Regional staff has been ongoing.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public consultation has been conducted with residents and other interested key-stakeholders via Steering Committee Meetings, a Public Open House and online engagement. The Study follows the Mayor's Public Engagement Charter which is built on three pillars; Transparency, Notification, and Participation.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation. Updating the Intensification Opportunities Study and completion of supporting studies (infrastructure assessment and urban design guidelines) will ensure that intensification is being directed to areas where infrastructure can accommodate the growth and that the scale of intensification is appropriate in specific areas. This directly relates to the Land Use goals in Imagine Halton Hills under the Environmental Health pillar.

Overall, the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is: Good

COMMUNICATIONS:

The development of the Terms of Reference and the Public Consultation Plan included a comprehensive communications component to ensure that the community is kept informed and aware of the various opportunities to share their thoughts.

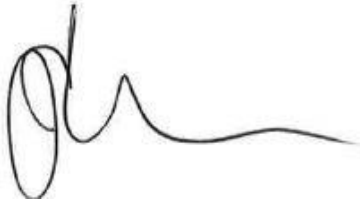
CONCLUSION:

Staff will be working through the summer and fall to finalize the technical reports, updated inventory and deliver the public consultation activities. The Study is intended to culminate in late-fall 2019. As the Region undertakes their Official Plan Review, it is important that the Town of Halton Hills updates the 2010 Intensification Study to advise the Region of the ratio of intensification that can be accommodated in Halton Hills to the year 2041, considering the available infrastructure and market demand and without compromising stable residential neighbourhoods.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bronwyn Parker".

Bronwyn Parker, Manager of Planning Policy

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be "John Linhardt".

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brent Marshall".

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer