



REPORT

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

REPORT FROM: Bronwyn Parker, Director of Planning Policy

DATE: January 10, 2020

REPORT NO.: PD-2020-0010

RE: Halton Region Official Plan – Evaluation Framework

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report PD-2020-0010 dated January 10, 2020 regarding the Halton Region Official Plan – Evaluation Framework be received;

AND FURTHER THAT the Region be advised that all of the themes identified in the “Halton Integrated Growth Management Strategy Evaluation Framework: Policy Tests to Assess the 2041 Refined Growth Concepts”, attached as Appendix A to this report, are considered to be important to the Town of Halton Hills;

AND FURTHER THAT the Town Clerk forward a copy of Report PD-2020-0010 to the Regional Clerk, serving as the Town of Halton Hills’ input to the Integrated Growth Management Strategy Evaluation Framework.

BACKGROUND:

Section 26 of the Ontario *Planning Act* requires that municipalities must review their Official Plans to ensure conformity with Provincial Plans and policies. These Official Plan reviews or updates must be undertaken every 5 years and at the upper-tier level, they must be approved by the Province. The last Regional Official Plan was completed in 2009 with the adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 38. Since that time, numerous updates to Provincial plans and policies have been made, including the release of 2041 growth forecasts. To that end, the Region has commenced their required 5 year review of the Regional Official Plan.

On June 19, 2019, report LPS41-19 was presented at Regional Council regarding a progress update on the Regional Official Plan Review Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) and Preliminary Growth Scenarios.

The report provided information regarding 8 initial Growth Scenarios that were prepared to accommodate the 1,000,000 people and 470,000 jobs to 2041 as required by the Growth Plan (2017). These 8 initial scenarios were created stemming from:

- Distributions of growth based on Regional growth scenarios including:
 - o Moderate amount of new greenfield growth (Scenario 1)
 - o Limited amount of new greenfield growth (Scenario 2)
 - o No new greenfield growth (Scenario 3); and
 - o Growth aligned with Amendment #1 to the Growth Plan (Scenario 4)
- Two “lenses” for considering the Growth Scenarios including:
 - o the current Regional Official Plan framework (Scenarios with “A”); and
 - o the Local Plans and Priorities context (Scenarios with “B”)

A key component of the IGMS process is the allocation of population and employment growth to the 2041 planning horizon to the four local municipalities. Scenarios 1, 2 and 3 each meet the 2017 Growth Plan minimum target of 60% of all residential development being accommodated within the Built-Up Area from 2031-2041. These Scenarios also assume that any new designated residential greenfield areas achieve a density target of 80 residents and jobs per hectare. Scenario 4 takes into consideration the reduced minimum intensification target of 50% as required by Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan and assumes a density target of 65 people and jobs per hectare for any new designated residential greenfield areas.

The technical report prepared by Hemson Consulting (the lead consultant working on behalf of the Region) has on a preliminary basis, identified that the Growth Scenarios all conform to the requirements of the Growth Plan and are not drastically different in terms of transportation, infrastructure, and financial considerations.

The recommendations of the report requested that the four “B” Growth Scenarios (Scenario 1B, 2B, 3B and 4B) which represent the ‘Local Plans and Priorities’ lens of the Official Plan Review be advanced as the foundation for analysis and refinement leading to the development of four Growth Concepts through the Regional Official Plan Review; that the Evaluation Framework which was appended to the report be endorsed; and that staff be directed to undertake an evaluation of the four refined “B” Scenario Growth Concepts as outlined in the Report. Staffs’ understanding is that the final preferred growth concept will not necessarily be one of the four Regional scenarios but rather may be a hybrid of the scenarios as currently presented (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1

Total Population, 2041				
	<u>Scenario 1B</u>	<u>Scenario 2B</u>	<u>Scenario 3B</u>	<u>Scenario 4B</u>
Burlington	254,800	256,900	258,100	247,700
Oakville	327,800	334,500	342,800	319,200
Milton	295,100	292,800	291,800	301,400
Halton Hills	122,300	115,800	107,300	131,700
Region TOTAL	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000

- Scenario 1B: Moderate Greenfield Growth
- Scenario 2B: Limited Greenfield Growth
- Scenario 3B: No New Greenfield Growth
- Scenario 4B: Proposed Amendment 1 Growth

(source: “Integrated Growth Management Strategy: Growth Scenarios, Halton Region to 2041” technical paper, Hemson Consulting)

The Evaluation Framework which was appended to LPS41-19 was developed by Regional staff based on the policy directions identified in Provincial plans and the current Regional Official Plan.

The Evaluation Framework is focused on 4 main themes:

- Theme 1: Regional Urban System & Local Urban Structure
- Theme 2: Infrastructure & Financing
- Theme 3: Agriculture, Environment & Climate Change
- Theme 4: Growing the Economy & Moving People and Goods

The intent of the Framework was for it to be used to evaluate the four Scenario B Growth Concepts.

At the June 19, 2019 meeting, Regional Council unanimously decided not to approve the staff report and instead passed the following Motion to Defer:

“THAT Regional Council defer Report No. LPS41-19 until the Local Municipal Councils can recommend to Regional Council for each local municipality, in concert with Report No. LPS45-19/PW-18-19 Item No. 2, what evaluation criteria and weighting of the evaluation criteria best suit the planning needs of each Local Municipality.”

This report serves as Halton Hills’ response to that resolution.

COMMENTS:

The Town of Halton Hills has a unique community structure. We are comprised of two separate Urban Mixed Use Areas (Acton and Georgetown), three Employment Areas (Acton, Georgetown and the Premier Gateway), numerous hamlets and rural clusters, and vast Agricultural and Natural Heritage System lands, all within our community boundaries. These elements help to define and shape our community and make us distinctive within the Regional context.

In light of this unique community and locational context, staff is of the opinion that all of the themes identified in the Evaluation Framework are important to Halton Hills and that each should be appropriately and properly considered in the context of future community growth throughout the Regional Official Plan process.

As such, staff recommends responding to Regional Council's direction of June 19, 2019 that all of the themes associated with the Evaluation Framework are important in the Halton Hills context and as such, they should be given careful consideration when refining the IGMS Growth Scenarios.

While the intent to use the Evaluation Framework (attached to this report as Appendix A) to rank the various themes and scenarios appears at surface to be a logical method to refining the Growth Scenarios, a "one size fits all" approach to evaluating future community growth and development is not appropriate in the Halton Hills context. Each municipality within Halton Region is at a different stage of evolution and has different, locally specific needs. This needs to be carefully considered by the Region in conjunction with the local municipalities as the Regional Official Plan Review unfolds.

Looking out to 2041, staff believes that the Town should continue to further develop Council's vision as entrenched in our Strategic Plan such as:

- maintaining fiscal sustainability as a local municipality;
- enhanced economic development opportunities including leveraging and enhancing our strategic location vis a vis Highway 401 and the 407 ETR;
- continuing to develop our Climate Change strategies;
- promoting an adequate supply of housing and range of housing choices including affordable, accessible and seniors housing;
- fostering and enhancing our existing community structure; and
- providing for a moderate scale of growth that enhances the Town's urban and community structure and protects its' rural character as directed by the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report relates to various aspects of the Town's Strategic Plan including key components of the Strategic Directions including:

- Foster a Healthy Community
- Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Environment

- Foster a Prosperous Economy
- Preserve, Protect and Promote our Distinctive History
- Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Countryside
- Protect and Enhance our Agriculture
- Achieve Sustainable Growth

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no immediate financial impacts associated with this report, however the financial analysis of the Growth Scenarios will be considered as the Town continues to participate in the Region's IGMS process.

CONSULTATION:

Staff from various departments have been consulted in the review of the Regional Evaluation Framework.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Regional staff has not yet commenced the public consultation component of the Regional Official Plan Review process. As was endorsed by Regional Council in 2017, the Communication and Engagement Strategy for the Regional Official Plan Review identified that public engagement on the Growth Concepts and the larger Integrated Growth Management Strategy will not take place until the technical evaluation of the four Growth Scenarios is presented to Regional Council.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Strategic Plan sets out a broad vision for the community contained in nine strategic directions. Expansion of the Provincially Significant Employment Zones into the Town of Halton Hills relates to the following Strategic Directions:

A. Foster a Healthy Community:

- To maintain and enhance a healthy community that provides a clean environment and a range of economic and social opportunities to ensure a superior quality of life in our community.

C. Foster a Prosperous Economy:

- To maintain and enhance the economic vitality of the Town through the provision of a wide range of opportunities for economic development.

G. Achieve Sustainable Growth:

- To ensure that growth is managed so as to ensure a balanced, sustainable, well-planned community that meets the needs of its residents and businesses.

COMMUNICATIONS:

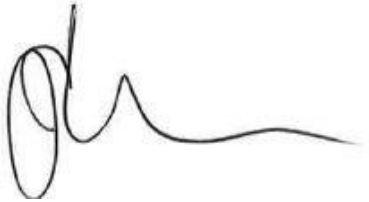
It is recommended that this report be forwarded to the Regional Clerk to serve as the Town's input to the Regional Integrated Growth Management Strategy Evaluation Framework.

CONCLUSION:

The Town of Halton Hills enjoys a unique community and locational context within the Region of Halton. In response to the Regional Council motion for local municipal input on the IGMS Evaluation Framework, staff is of the opinion that all of the themes identified in the Evaluation Framework are important to Halton Hills and that each should be appropriately and properly considered in the context of future community growth throughout the Regional Official Plan process.

Staff understands that the Region intends to bring a report forward to Regional Council in March 2020 summarizing the responses received from the local municipalities regarding the Evaluation Framework. Staff will continue to keep Council informed of any directions stemming from the Regional Plan Review process.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Linhardt', with a stylized, flowing script.

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Brent Marshall', with a stylized, flowing script.

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer