



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Bronwyn Parker, Director of Planning Policy

DATE: September 4, 2020

REPORT NO.: PD-2020-0047

RE: Provincial approval of Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan and Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report PLS-2020-0047, dated September 4, 2020, regarding an update on the Provincial approval of Growth Plan Amendment No. 1 and Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology, be received for information.

BACKGROUND:

Staff prepared report PD-2020-0030 which was presented to Council on July 27, 2020 advising of a Halton Area Planning Partnership (HAPP) Joint Submission report regarding two substantial updates to the Provincial policy framework as proposed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). The first update was proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan, 2019. The second included proposed revisions to the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology. Both updates were approved by the Province after a 45 day comment period and brought into force on August 28, 2020.

Council endorsed the July staff report with the following amended recommendations:

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorse the comments contained in the Joint Submission attached as Schedule One to this report, with the exception of the Planning Horizon to 2051;

AND FURTHER THAT Town Council's displeasure with the Planning Horizon to 2051 is to be submitted along with Schedule One, to the Province in advance of the commenting deadline of July 31, 2020;

Report PD-2020-0030 with the amended resolution was forwarded to the Region of Halton, Halton area municipalities and conservation authorities as well as the MMAH, and was posted as the Town's formal comments on the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

COMMENTS:

Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan, 2019

On June 16, 2020 the MMAH posted a notice on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) advising that changes were being proposed to the Growth Plan including revised population and employment forecasts, changes to the 2041 planning horizon year and revisions to other policies with a goal of increasing housing supply, creating jobs, attracting business investment and better aligning with infrastructure. There were additional changes proposed to mineral aggregate operation policies, Indigenous community engagement, policy revisions aimed at better alignment with the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and transition provisions. The comment deadline closed on July 31, 2020.

Growth Forecasts; Horizon Year

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has advised that in order to ensure coordinated planning for growth and achieve complete communities, the previous growth forecasts to 2041 have been extended to the 2051 planning horizon and revised in keeping with the proposed Reference Scenario discussed in Report PD-2020-0030. The revised growth forecasts are included as a revised Schedule 3 to the 2019 Growth Plan (see Appendix 1).

The Province has explained that this extension of the growth horizon is expected “to ensure municipalities have sufficient land to support the fostering of complete communities, economic development, job creation and housing affordability”, and better aligns with the land supply requirements of the PPS. These changes mean that for Halton Region, the forecasted population to 2051 is now 1.1 million people with 500,000 jobs.

As Council is aware, through the ongoing Halton Region Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS), the Region and its local municipal partners are working together to determine the appropriate distribution of population and employment growth to each of the four local municipalities, now to the 2051 horizon year. The Region has committed that the growth distributions will be based on locally adopted plans and priorities (such as the results of the Town’s Intensification Opportunities Study Update and Employment Land Needs Study) and that Local Councils will be engaged throughout the process.

Mineral Aggregate Operations

Amendment No. 1 had proposed removal of the Section 4.2.8.2 prohibition of new mineral aggregate operations, wayside pits and quarries from habitats of endangered species and threatened species within the Natural Heritage System. Based on comments received throughout the process, the Province decided not to make any revisions regarding these policies and have left them as currently written within the 2019

Growth Plan. Aggregate operations also remain prohibited within significant wetlands and woodlands.

Indigenous Engagement

Report PD-2020-0030 supported the direction of the HAPP joint submission, encouraging the strengthening of requirements for engagement with the Indigenous community, but also advocated once again for the creation of clear Provincial guidelines on specific engagement with Indigenous communities. While the requirements for engagement with the Indigenous community as proposed through Amendment No. 1 were approved, no further direction or guidance was provided. As such, municipalities will continue to find creative ways to engage with the Indigenous communities and will ensure appropriate consultation takes place.

Land Needs Assessment Methodology

The Growth Plan requires upper-tier municipalities to follow the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology when determining the amount of land needed in order to meet the population and employment forecasts established by the Province. These Land Needs Assessments (LNA) are completed through the Municipal Comprehensive Review processes undertaken by the upper-tier municipalities.

As noted in PD-2020-0030, there are two key components to the LNA, being Community Area Land Needs and Employment Area Land Needs. These two components focus on determining the total amount of land needed to the planning horizon year (now 2051) in order to accommodate forecasted population and employment growth at the upper-tier level.

The 2020 Land Needs Assessment Methodology is now in force and effect. It replaces the 2018 methodology and provides direction at a broad level. Key changes include the requirement to consider market and market preferences as it relates to population distribution and housing needs, as well as including references to the growing trend of work from home employment and includes a permission allowing for adjustments to the four traditional employment land use categories (employment lands employment; population-related employment; major office and rural-based jobs) to reflect the municipally specific composition and nature of employment lands within the upper-tier. This means that should Halton Region so desire, specific trends within the Region can be considered as a component of study and evaluation through the ongoing Regional Official Plan process to ensure all types of employment uses within Halton have been appropriately considered.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report directly aligns to the following values in the Strategic Plan 2019-2022 including:

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.

Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Environment

To preserve, protect and enhance our natural environment for the health benefits and enjoyment it provides to present and future generations.

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.

Achieve Sustainable Growth

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

The report is also closely linked with a number of Focus Areas/Priorities including Shaping Growth.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

CONSULTATION:

No consultation took place for the preparation of this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

No public engagement was undertaken for this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report 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

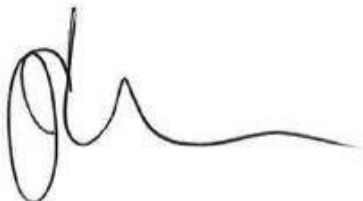
COMMUNICATIONS:

There is no communications impact associated with this report.

CONCLUSION:

This report has provided an update on the changes made to the Schedule 3 forecasts of the 2019 Growth Plan and the revised Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology. Both documents have been approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and are now in full force and effect. Halton Region is therefore required to ensure conformity with these items as they continue with their Municipal Comprehensive Review/Regional Official Plan Review process.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Linhardt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Mills', with a horizontal line crossing through the middle of the signature.

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer