



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: John McMulkin, Planner – Development Review

DATE: November 30, 2020

REPORT NO.: PD-2020-0064

RE: Recommendation Report for the Premier Gateway Employment Area Zoning By-law and Urban Design Review

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2020-0064, dated November 30, 2020, regarding the “Recommendation Report for the Premier Gateway Employment Area Zoning By-law and Urban Design Review”, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT the municipally initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to By-law 2000-138, as amended, for the Phase 1A and 2A Premier Gateway Employment Areas, as generally shown on SCHEDULE 4 to this report, be approved;

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorses the Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines for the Phase 1A, 1B and 2A Premier Gateway Employment Areas, dated November 2020, and attached as SCHEDULE 5 to this report;

AND FURTHER THAT the Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines, dated November 2020, be utilized for the evaluation of new development applications effective January 1, 2021;

AND FURTHER THAT in accordance with Section 34(17) of the Planning Act, no further notice is determined to be necessary.

BACKGROUND:

1.0 Purpose of the Report

This report provides Council and the public with a summary of the findings for the Premier Gateway Employment Area Zoning By-law and Urban Design review and presents the final Zoning By-law Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines for approval.

2.0 Purpose of the Study

The *Planning Act* contains legislated requirements to ensure municipalities keep their official plans and zoning by-laws up-to-date to reflect changes to Provincial and Regional Plans. As part of the 2015 Capital Budget, Halton Hills Council approved the

5-Year Review of the Town’s Comprehensive Zoning By-law. One of the areas that had been identified for review is the zoning applicable to the Premier Gateway Employment Area, which is located along Steeles Avenue, adjacent to Highways 401 and 407; see **SCHEDULE 1 – PREMIER GATEWAY EMPLOYMENT AREA LOCATION MAP**.

The Premier Gateway Employment Area is identified as the Town’s prestige employment area where large scale employment growth is to be directed. Over the past 20 years, a range of successful developments have been constructed in this area; however, through the application of Zoning By-law 2000-138 Town staff and the development community have identified a number of standards which may no longer be appropriate or need to be updated.

In addition, the current Urban Design Guidelines for the Premier Gateway (entitled “401 Corridor Integrated Planning Project Urban Design Guidelines”) were developed 20 years ago. The Guidelines have served the Town well; however, like the By-law, a review of the design principles, concepts and standards is warranted to align with updated sustainable development practices, current building requirements and modern design approaches.

While the focus of the study is to update the current standards and guidelines applicable to the Premier Gateway, the review also supports the completion of the Phase 1B Secondary Plan study (initiated in 2015) by providing input with respect to appropriate future standards within that area. The proposed Urban Design Guidelines are also designed to be extended to future development within the Phase 1B Area.

3.0 Study to Date

In 2016 Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Premier Gateway Employment Area Zoning By-law and Urban Design review as a component of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-0050 review (Report No. PI-2016-0009). The Terms of Reference for the study is broken down into three phases (i.e. Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3) along with deliverables and public engagement within each phase:

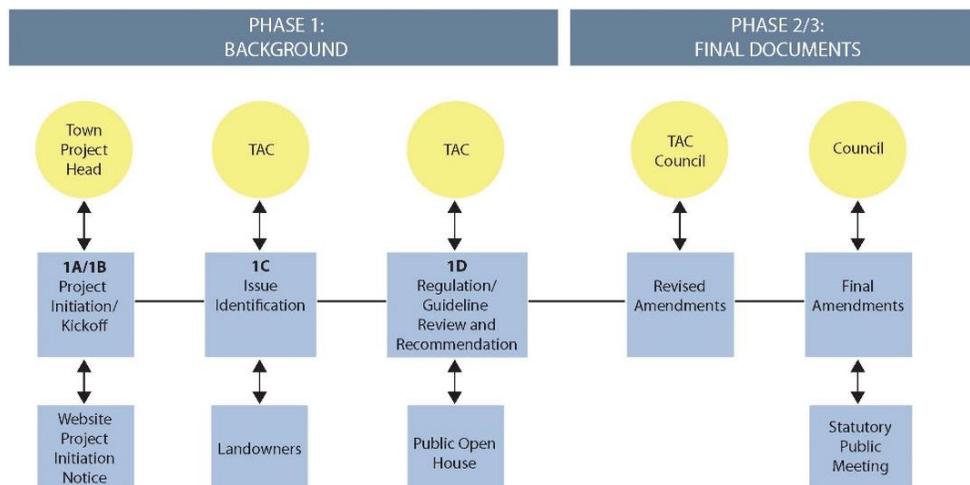


Figure 1: Zoning By-law and Urban Design Review Work Program

Macaulay Shiomi Howson, in concert with Brook McIlroy, (i.e. the consultant team) was subsequently retained to undertake the study. With the holding of the public open house on June 18, 2020, all of the deliverables and public engagement within Phase 1 were completed; see **SCHEDULE 2 – SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED IN PHASE 1**.

The findings from Phase 1 have been captured in an “Issues Review and Analysis Report” prepared by Planning staff and the consultant team. The report provides detailed analysis of the issues identified by the development community (land owners), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the public in regards to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the current Urban Design Guidelines as well as the rationale for the proposed changes to those documents; see **SCHEDULE 3 – ISSUES REVIEW AND ANALYSIS REPORT**.

Based on the input received in Phase 1, draft amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and new Urban Design Guidelines were prepared and presented to Council and the public at a Statutory Public Meeting on October 13, 2020. The holding of the Public Meeting completed Phase 2 of the study.

Through this final Recommendation Report, Planning staff has summarized and addressed the staff, public and other stakeholder comments received throughout all phases of the study. This report also presents the final Zoning By-law Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines; see **SCHEDULE 4 – ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT** and **SCHEDULE 5 – URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES**. Approval of the subject report and accompanying final documents will complete Phase 3 and conclude the study.

COMMENTS:

The following provides a broad summary of the issues identified with Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the current Urban Design Guidelines by the development community, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the public through Phases 1 and 2 of the study:

Zoning By-law 2000-138

The key zoning objective is to establish a regulatory environment in the Premier Gateway Employment Area which strikes the appropriate balance between development that is high-quality and economically viable and development that is compatible with the remaining residential/institutional uses and the natural environment. The identified issues illustrate that some of the existing zoning provisions require refinement to better achieve this objective. The identified zoning issues include:

- lot size and built form;
- lot coverage and landscaping;
- parking, commercial vehicle waiting spaces, servicing and loading; and,
- minimum yards and Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) setbacks.

Urban Design Guidelines

The current 401 Corridor Integrated Planning Project Urban Design Guidelines were developed as “a framework to guide future development and promote design principles on which it is based”. The main issue with the Guidelines is their approach to guiding development. Often the Guidelines established a regulatory direction which would be more appropriate for the Zoning By-law.

More specific issues that were identified include:

- balance between landscaping and development;
- flexibility of setbacks for irregular lots;
- building height, signage and light pollution;
- servicing, loading, shared access and local street frontages;
- examples of industrial projects to guide appropriate future development; and,
- guidelines for warehousing uses.

Recommended Amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138:

The following provides a summary of the recommended amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138:

Prestige Industrial (M7) and Gateway (G) Zones

- reduction of yards abutting Steeles Avenue and Fifth Line from 20 metres to 10 metres for the M7 Zone;
- removal of maximum lot coverage requirement (i.e. 60%);
- increase to maximum height requirement for 2-storey buildings located within the M7 Zone from 10.6 metres to 14.0 metres;
- increase to maximum commercial vehicle waiting space requirement from 20% of the provided loading spaces to 100% of the provided loading spaces for buildings with a gross floor area of 9,290 m² (~100,000 ft²) or greater to allow these buildings to have 1 commercial vehicle waiting space per loading space;
- removal of requirement for no more than 20% of required parking spaces to be located in any yard abutting Highways 401 or 407;
- reduction in parking requirements for specific uses to be consistent with Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-0050 (i.e. Industrial use, Manufacturing use, Museum, Take-out Restaurant, Warehouse use and Wholesale use); and,
- other minor administrative and typographical changes.

Development (MD) Zone, General Provisions and Parking Standards

- clarification that additional building and structure setbacks from residential, institutional and open spaces lots do not include commercial lots;
- definitions of “Gross Floor Area” and “Net Floor Area” from Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-0050 added to list of definitions;
- change from “Gross Floor Area” to “Net Floor Area” in parking table; and,
- general parking standards added from the Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

Tables 2 to 4 of the attached “Issues Review and Analysis Report” (SCHEDULE 3) outline the rationale for the recommended amendments. The recommended amendments reflect those set out under Option 1 in the tables. The amendments identified under Option 2 were to serve as an alternative should objections be raised with regard to Option 1 at the October 13th Public Meeting; however, no objections were received.

The recommended amendments are designed to address the issues that have been identified by the TAC, public and development community with the existing development standards in Zoning By-law 2000-138. The proposed amendments are also designed to enhance the efficiency and flexibility of development within the Premier Gateway and improve access for pedestrians and future transit, while still protecting existing residential and institutional development and the natural environment. In addition, a number of provisions and standards from Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-0050 have been incorporated into the By-law to reflect more recent market requirements and industry standards for industrial/commercial/employment uses and ensure consistency between the by-laws; see **SCHEDULE 4**.

It should be noted that through the study process some land owners and members of the development community requested additional permitted uses such as transport terminals (i.e. truck parking), outdoor storage uses and motor vehicle dealerships to be introduced into By-law 2000-138. However, any changes to the uses permitted within the Prestige Industrial Area or Gateway Area designations require amendments to the Official Plan, which would be outside the scope of the Terms of Reference for the study approved by Council in 2016.

In addition, the Town received a few requests from land owners within the Phase 1B Area for individual properties to be rezoned to permit industrial, commercial and/or outdoor storage uses. Properties within the Phase 1B lands are located outside the study area for the proposed amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the site-specific rezoning of individual properties was also not contemplated within the scope of the approved 2016 Terms of Reference for the study.

New Urban Design Guidelines:

Given the feedback received from the TAC, public and development community through the various workshops, public open house and survey, Planning staff believes the final Urban Design Guidelines provide enough direction to ensure high-quality and sustainable design for new development while being flexible enough to respond to changes in the market and the needs of businesses; see **SCHEDULE 5**. As such, they appear to address the identified issues with the previous Urban Design Guidelines and provide a good framework for evaluation of future development.

It is intended that the new Urban Design Guidelines (November 2020) recommended for approval through this report would replace the existing 401 Corridor Integrated Planning Project Urban Design Guidelines as of January 1, 2021.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The subject study is most closely aligned with the Town's values of fostering a prosperous economy and achieving sustainable growth, the goals of which are:

- 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 meet the needs of its residents and businesses.

These values are to be achieved, in part, through the Town's priority of shaping growth:

- Halton Hills harnesses its future population and employment growth to provide new opportunities for residents, workers, businesses, and visitors.
- Halton Hills grows in a way that embodies its values of social, economic, fiscal, and environmental sustainability. Staff engages with other levels of government to see that population growth in Halton Hills remains moderate.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for this project is derived from the "Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review" Capital Budget.

CONSULTATION:

Planning staff consulted with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Macaulay Shiomi Howson and Brook McIlroy throughout the study process and in the preparation of this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Two (2) workshops, one (1) public open house and one (1) Statutory Public Meeting were held to discuss issues and receive input:

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Workshop – June 28, 2016;
- Development Industry Representatives Workshop – October 3, 2016;
- Virtual Public Open House – June 18, 2020; and,
- Statutory Public Meeting – October 13, 2020.

In addition to the public open house, a 16-question survey was posted to the Let's Talk Halton Hills website earlier this year to obtain further feedback regarding the study and contemplated changes. **SCHEDULE 6 – PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE AND SURVEY RESULTS** outlines the results from the public open house and survey and how they have informed the proposed amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the new Urban Design Guidelines.

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 recommendations outlined in this report advance the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the Economic Prosperity, Environmental Health and Social Well-Being pillars of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Very Good.

Section 5.0 (Environment and Open Space Guidelines) of the proposed Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines contains guidelines related to sustainable site and building design, protection of the natural environment, and active transportation. A separate Subsection (5.1 - Sustainability) is included within this section dedicated to sustainability guidelines. In addition, staff is recommending eliminating the 60% maximum coverage from Zoning By-law 2000-138 for development in the Premier Gateway to allow for a more efficient use of the lands and is proposing to maintain the existing minimum landscaped open space and setback requirements from the natural environment and open space lands.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Public Open House

To notify members of the public with respect to the open house that was posted to the Let's Talk Halton Hills website on June 18, 2020, emails were sent to individuals on the email notification list and letters were sent to property owners within the study area and within 120 metres of the study area. An advertisement was also posted in the June 18, 2020, issue of the Independent & Free Press newspaper. The virtual PowerPoint presentation and accompanying reference materials are still located on the website and will be removed at the conclusion of the study.

Statutory Public Meeting

To notify members of the public with respect to the October 13, 2020, Public Meeting emails were sent to individuals on the email notification list and letters were sent to property owners within the study area and within 120 metres of the study area. An advertisement was also posted in the September 17, 2020, issue of the Independent & Free Press newspaper, with a courtesy notice posted on October 8, 2020.

Recommendation Report

Public Notice of Council's decision regarding the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment and Urban Design Guidelines will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*.

CONCLUSION:

Staff has completed background research, agency/stakeholder and public consultation as part of the Premier Gateway Employment Area Zoning By-law and Urban Design review. Directions, Statutory Public Meeting and Recommendation Reports have been

prepared in support of the recommended amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the preparation of the new Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines.

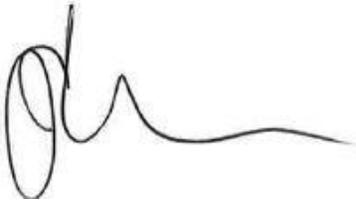
The amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 will enhance the efficiency and flexibility of development in the Premier Gateway, while still protecting existing sensitive land uses. In addition, the new Urban Design Guidelines will provide a good framework for the evaluation of future development within the Premier Gateway that will balance high-quality and sustainable design and also provide the flexibility to respond to changes in the market and the needs of businesses. As such, the final recommended documents should address the issues identified by the development community, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the public with the current Zoning By-law 2000-138 and the existing 401 Corridor Integrated Planning Project Urban Design Guidelines.

For these reasons, Planning staff recommends that Council approves the amendments to Zoning By-law 2000-138 and endorses the Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines, attached as **SCHEDULE 4** and **SCHEDULE 5** to this report.

Reviewed and Approved by,



Jeff Markowiak, Director of Development Review



John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning and Development



Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer