



SUBJECT: Draft New Official Plan: Public Consultation and Engagement Summary

TO: Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Planning and Building Department

Report Number: PB-47-17

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 505-08

Date to Committee: September 5, 2017

Date to Council: September 11, 2017

Recommendation:

Receive and file planning and building department report PB-47-17.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Outline the community engagement tactics used upon release of the draft New Official Plan, dated April 2017;
2. Transmit a summary of feedback received from the public, stakeholders, and agencies on the draft new Official Plan;
3. Provide preliminary staff response to feedback on the top themes and issues raised.

This report aligns with direction from the Burlington Strategic Plan 2015-204, "An Engaging City".

Background and Discussion:

1.0 Background

On April 18, Council received the draft new Official Plan dated April, 2017, while specific commercial policies were directed back to staff for further review. Council also directed staff to commence with public and agency consultation and engagement on the draft new Official Plan.

Since that time, staff have advanced the Grow Bold communications and engagement program. Engagement started after the release of the draft new Official Plan on April 6, 2017 and concluded on June 30, 2017. The following sections will briefly recap the Grow Bold program and detail the methods used as part of the engagement program to consult with: 1) the public; 2) agencies and stakeholders; and 3) internal staff.

While this report focuses on the engagement activities that supported the release of the draft New Official Plan for the period between April 6, 2017- June 30, 2017, it is important to note that significant community consultation and engagement has occurred throughout the project and prior to the release of the draft new Official Plan. This consultation has informed policy directions and has been summarized in previous staff reports on the Official Plan Review, which subsequently became the New Official Plan Project.

1.1 The “Grow Bold” Program Recap

The engagement and communications plan for the draft new Official Plan was carried out as part of a coordinated Grow Bold engagement program that includes other corporate projects such as the Transportation Plan, Integrated Transit Mobility Plan and Mobility Hubs Study. In alignment to the City’s Strategic Plan, the engagement strategy is built on the principles of “A City that Grows”, “A City that Moves”, “A Healthy and Greener City”, and “An Engaging City”.

Many of the engagement activities were supported by staff across the organization. These staff are also involved in the other corporate projects, and their involvement in the Grow Bold program ensures connections between the initiatives and to the Burlington Strategic Plan 2015-2040.

A staff team of “Grow Bold Ambassadors” made up of City staff from across the organization assisted with facilitating the public consultation work plan, attending public events and synthesizing survey data.

This program was designed to engage with a broad spectrum of participants, including the public, advisory groups, interest groups, property owners/agents, and technical

agencies. A summary of all public, agency and stakeholder engagement activities can be found in *Appendix A: Engagement Activities Summary, April-June, 2017*.

1.2 Method to the Various Grow Bold Engagement Activities on the New Draft OP

1) Engaging with the Public

The public engagement and communications objectives for the draft new Official Plan included:

- Inform and engage residents about the city's future growth strategy and why it is important;
- Inform and engage residents about how the Official Plan will establish where and how the city will grow to 2031;
- Reach residents in the community that may be under-represented, e.g. youth, newcomers, persons with disabilities;
- Use plain language in all communications materials and messaging;
- Obtain feedback from the community on the draft OP, in conjunction with the Transportation Plan, Mobility Hubs Study and Integrated Transit Mobility Plan.

The team employed a number of techniques in order to reach as many people as possible, including a combination of high tech and in person tactics. There was emphasis in the engagement plan of going to where people already are, and as such a Grow Bold booth was present at several community events and festivals, schools, community centres, malls and markets. The Grow Bold booth used ViewMasters containing intensification renderings and Feedback Frames (an interactive tool used to collect votes on various themes) as a novel method to generate interest and collect feedback on the draft new Official Plan at public events. In addition to Grow Bold booths in the community, staff engaged with residents through:

- public meetings including open houses, ward meetings and drop in sessions
- social media
- regular updates through the Official Plan and Grow Bold mailing lists
- three online surveys
- Grow Bold conversation guide and workbook

2) Engaging with Technical Agencies and Stakeholders

Many agencies, stakeholders and First Nations and Métis were notified that a draft new OP was available for review and comments were requested. In addition to the

broader public engagement, Planning & Building staff undertook targeted consultation with the Region of Halton, Conservation Halton, the Niagara Escarpment Commission and public and catholic school boards.

Key stakeholders that participated included groups such as the Hamilton Halton Homebuilders Association (HHHBA), Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), Citizen Committees of Council and other community groups and organizations.

Staff provided opportunities to all delegates from April 6 COW to meet and discuss their concerns. These discussions and any new information will inform the development of the new Official Plan.

3) Engaging with Internal City Staff

There has been extensive collaboration with City staff throughout the organization as part of the new Official Plan project. The draft new Official Plan was circulated to all city departments through senior management and feedback was provided by staff members across the organization. Open houses were also held to give staff an opportunity to complete the Grow Bold workbook.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 Summary of Public Feedback from Grow Bold Surveys

As noted above, the Official Plan public engagement strategy included three online surveys, a Grow Bold workbook that was completed by groups of people and individuals (which posed the same questions as the online surveys), and the use of “Feedback Frames”, interactive tool used to collect votes on various themes.

In total 19 different questions were asked to get residents input, opinions and feelings on how and where Burlington will grow in the future, as reflected by the draft new Official Plan.

In total 1,032 surveys were submitted, 32 workbooks were submitted (reflecting the participation of between 50-75 people), and approximately 1,000 individual votes were placed using the Feedback Frames.

A detailed summary and analysis of all survey questions, including Feedback Frames and youth engagement, can be found in *Appendix B: Draft New Official Plan: Grow Bold Survey and Workbook Summary*

There were several common urban themes that were reflected across all question categories. The most common themes presently generally in order, can be summarized as follows:

A desire for:

- more urban greenspace, including trees, landscaping, natural areas and parks
- improved transit service
- intensification focused in specific areas
- pedestrian friendly and vibrant/interesting streets
- different and affordable housing options
- protecting the existing character of the City
- having a variety of amenities, recreation choices, jobs and shops.
- safe cycling infrastructure
- beautiful buildings and public space

Concern about:

- traffic congestion
- with tall buildings and blocking sunlight/views to the lake, with a preference for midrise buildings
- loss of community

- on-road cycling lanes
- availability of parking

There was strong support for the continued protection of Burlington's rural area and a desire to see this area remain the same over time. The key things residents value about the rural area are:

- Hiking and conservation areas;
- Nature;
- Local farms and local food; and
- Unique landscapes like Mount Nemo.

These theme-based responses, although not based on specific policies as proposed in the draft new Official Plan, will support staff in considering and balancing stakeholder, agency and public comments, and will inform the finalization of the Official Plan. The feedback received presents Council with general public opinion on the themes related to the draft new Official Plan, and in many cases is also related to other Grow Bold initiatives (e.g. Transportation Plan, Integrated Transit Mobility Strategy and Mobility Hub Area Specific Plans).

2.2 Summary of Written Feedback Received (April 6, 2017- June 30, 2017)

To date, staff has received 95 written submissions from members of the public, stakeholders and agencies on the draft new Official Plan. These submissions include detailed comments as well as suggested revisions to the new Official Plan.

A summary of all comments, organized by chapter and section of the draft new Official Plan, and grouped according to stakeholders, agencies and public, is available in the following appendices attached to this report: *Appendix C: Stakeholder Feedback Summary*; *Appendix D: Agency Feedback Summary*; and *Appendix E: Public Feedback Summary*.

The purpose of the tables within the appendices is to comprehensively present all the comments in relation to the applicable section(s) of the draft new Official Plan. In some cases, feedback has been presented verbatim in the table, and in other cases the feedback was summarized for brevity. While staff have prepared the summary table for ease of review, staff will reference the original submissions for analysis of the issues. All original submissions have been included in the City's public records related to the Official Plan project. Feedback received after July 21, 2017 (after the preparation of the staff report) has not been included in the appendices, but will be considered by staff when policy revisions are made

Some feedback received was not directly related to the draft new Official Plan. Feedback of this nature is highlighted in Appendices C and E as feedback that relates to other plans, city initiatives and agencies.

As noted in Section 1.2 of this report, there has been extensive collaboration with City staff throughout the organization as part of the new Official Plan project. Internal staff feedback will continue to be collected and may also impact revisions to the Official Plan, however staff feedback has not been summarized in this report. The final staff report that transmits the recommended Official Plan will clarify which revisions were made as a result of staff feedback.

Given the volume of comments received, staff have summarized the common major themes from all the feedback received and is presented below in *Table No. 1: Preliminary Responses to Key Issues on New Draft Official Plan*.

It is important to note that there are many other issues and recommendations that have not been included in the table, but are referenced in Appendices C, D and E. Development of the Official Plan for adoption by Council will consider all feedback received.

Table No. 1: Preliminary Responses to Key Issues on New Draft Official Plan

Issue 1: The Draft OP does not provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the City will achieve objectives.

Staff Comment:

The new Draft OP has been prepared in order to achieve conformity with the Regional Official Plan. The planning horizon of the Regional Official Plan and the Draft OP is 2031. The population and job targets associated with this planning horizon are contained within the Region's Official Plan and are applicable to Burlington's current in force and effect Official Plan, as well as will be applicable to Burlington's new Official Plan.

The Draft OP presents both a plan to conform to the Regional Official Plan and to chart the course forward to 2041 and beyond through the development of the Urban Structure and the Growth Framework to drive discussions through the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review.

Staff will not be considering adding more information to the Draft OP related to growth for 2031 to 2041. Staff will be preparing technical material in support of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review to establish how the Urban Structure, including Mobility Hubs and the UGC, will contribute to meeting the population and employment numbers established in Places to Grow, 2017.

<p>Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue: Development Industry</p>
<p>Issue 2: The structure of the Draft OP is too complicated</p>
<p>Staff Comment: The new Draft OP was restructured into different Chapters than as compared to the existing plan. Staff are considering opportunities to include a graphic to clarify how key sections such as the Urban Structure, Growth Framework and Land Use Policies work together. Staff are also examining ways to reduce duplication of policies.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue: Professional Planning Agents; Agency; Development Industry</p>
<p>Issue 3: The Growth Framework</p>
<p>The new Draft OP includes a new set of growth management policies. These policies are intended to find a balance of flexibility as well as degree of strength and stability of vision.</p>
<p>Issue 3.1: The Growth Framework is too restrictive in the Established Neighbourhood Area and the Secondary Growth Area.</p>
<p>Staff Comment: Staff are considering revising policies to clarify the areas of flexibility related to development applications both in terms of the Growth Framework policies and the underlying land use designations.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue: Professional Planning Agents; Development Industry; Housing Providers; Commercial Property owners.</p>
<p>Issue 3.2: The Growth Framework is too permissive in the Established Neighbourhood Area.</p>
<p>Staff Comment: Staff are considering these comments and will assess the type of development permitted as stipulated in the Established Neighbourhood policy. It is important to note that the draft Growth Framework policies are not intended to “freeze” any redevelopment in these areas. In contrast, the policies are intended to</p>

clarify that:

- transitions are not required within Established Neighbourhood Areas to accommodate future growth, as other areas in the City are targeted to receive the future growth (e.g. Primary and Secondary Growth Areas); and
- redevelopment within these areas is intended to occur within existing land use permissions, while providing some flexibility to exceed the height/density permissions, subject to criteria, in order to achieve a broader public interest in alignment with the City's Strategic Plan (e.g. redevelopment in close proximity to a frequent transit network or for the provision of additional rental housing stock).

In summary, the framework policies are a city-wide growth management tool to clarify the city's priorities for where future growth is expected.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Advisory Committee to Council; Community Group.

Issue 4: The Mixed Use Nodes and Intensification Corridors in general and the Neighbourhood Centres in particular, contain policies that are too rigid. This limits the ability to respond to market shifts and trends, and to achieve redevelopment.

Staff Comment:

The draft new Official Plan includes a Growth Framework to manage the way Burlington will grow. These framework policies are intended to work with the underlying land use designations to achieve a city wide built form strategy and high level growth management.

The policy objectives are expected to be assessed through the consideration of development applications. All development applications are subject to a set of development criteria that guide matters such as compatibility, design, natural heritage and cultural heritage, trees and a wide range of technical matters like parking. The Growth Framework provides direction regarding the type and scale of development application that could be considered in a city-wide framework.

Staff are considering policy revisions to increase flexibility for all Mixed Use Nodes and Intensification corridors within the Secondary Growth Framework to support redevelopment.

Staff are considering the appropriate development application processes and criteria to provide more flexibility.

Staff are also considering policy revisions that would allow an individual site to augment the built form strategy established in the Growth Framework. In those cases, staff are considering the role of an Official Plan Amendment which could require that above and beyond the basic development criteria, the development will support the achievement of other City building objectives.

Staff are considering the above in alignment with other modifications throughout the plan in a way that ensures that the City's objectives are met.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Development Stakeholders; Professional Planning Agents; Land owners

Issue 5: Incomplete without the findings of the Area Specific Plans to understand growth allocation and timing

Staff Comment:

Urban planning is an evolutionary process. While some planning exercises can occur comprehensively, other times planning occurs sequentially. This is a result of an ever changing policy context, new city priorities, as well as the very real considerations of time, financial and staffing resource limitations to what can be achieved in any given year.

The draft new Official Plan establishes a new Urban Structure with a hierarchy of mixed use intensification areas supported by a Growth Framework to prioritize investment and planning for growth to 2031 and beyond.

Staff continue to work through the development of the Mobility Hub Area Specific Plans. Policies, specifically related to the Downtown Mobility Hub, are expected to be incorporated into the proposed Official Plan, and may assist in understanding the hierarchy established in the Urban Structure.

At this time Staff offer that the plan establishes a long term land use vision for the City of Burlington, achieves the 2031 population and jobs forecasts, and demonstrates conformity to ROPA #38.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Development Industry

Issue 6: Guidance, language and level of prescription

The draft new Official Plan uses specific language and terminologies, which in some cases are defined, to provide interpretation guidance. The policies are intended to achieve excellence in design and to manage the interfaces among different uses and areas, for example managing land use compatibility among sensitive and other land uses.

6.1 Language is unclear, inconsistent and requires careful review.

Staff Comment: Staff are considering the draft terminology and definitions in a way that ensures that the City's objectives are met.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Development Industry; Public; Housing Providers; Professional Planning Agents; Community Groups; Advisory Committees to Council.

6.2 Remove too much detail from the Official Plan

Staff Comment:

Staff are considering which policy matters may be better incorporated into other guidance documents like site plan guidelines, urban design guidelines or other city standards in a way that ensures that the City's objectives are met.

Stakeholder Group Who Raised this Issue:

Professional Planning Agents; Development Industry; Housing Providers.

6.3 Design Policies are overly prescriptive and rigid and could result in unnecessary process.

Staff Comment:

Staff are considering opportunities to communicate design priorities and determine which details should be left to other guidance documents like site plan guidelines, or urban design guidelines in a way that ensures that the City's objectives are met.

Stakeholder Group Who Raised this Issue:

Development Stakeholders

Issue 7: A number of employment land conversions that were not preliminarily recommended for conversion remain a concern for specific sites.

Staff Comment:

Those employment land conversions which were preliminarily recommended for conversion were reflected in the draft new Official Plan.

Staff's recommendations to date on which properties should be converted, and which should remain has involved careful consideration of study findings, policy context, and city building objectives in alignment with the City's Strategic Plan.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Development Stakeholders; Professional Planning Agents; Land owners

Issue 8: Regional Conformity Must be Achieved

Staff Comment:

The city's new Official Plan must conform to the Region of Halton's Official Plan. The Region has provided feedback on draft policies that do not appear to conform to the Region's plan. This includes:

- Policies, road classifications and transit corridors that do not align to the Region's Transportation Plan and Mobility Management Strategy.
- Employment land conversion and the findings of the local municipal comprehensive review will require further discussion.
- Other changes to policy wording to achieve conformity on other policy topics of regional interest (e.g. Natural Heritage, Housing, etc.).

Staff are considering revisions to these policies to ensure conformity is achieved, or in some cases understand that deferral of certain policies would be required until the conclusion of the Region's Official Plan Review/Municipal Comprehensive Review processes.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Region of Halton

Issue 9: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements for agricultural buildings

Staff Comment:

The City's draft new Official Plan, in conformity with the Region's Official Plan, requires EIAs for agricultural buildings and structures proposed in or adjacent to the Natural Heritage System. The City's Agricultural Committee has expressed concern about this requirement and indicated that the New Official Plan should clarify that it does not apply where only a building permit is required. Staff are investigating means to clarify and minimize the EIA requirements for agricultural buildings.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Advisory Committees to Council

Issue 10: Severance of surplus farm dwellings should be permitted

Staff Comment:

In conformity with the Region's Official Plan, the City's new draft Official Plan does not permit the severance of a farm residence that is rendered surplus as a result of a farm consolidation (i.e. the acquisition of additional farm parcels to be operated as part of one farm operation).

Halton Region Council has directed Regional staff to prepare an amendment to the Region's OP to enable Local Municipalities to amend their Official Plans to permit severance of surplus farm dwellings.

City staff currently are considering the agricultural community's input on this topic and reviewing the issues involved in the severance of surplus farm dwellings. Also, staff will work with Regional staff as the Regional amendment is being formulated and develop an appropriate policy approach for the City's OP.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Advisory Committees to Council

Issue 11: The OP references many external strategies and plans. The OP should omit these items and/or a work plan including budget and timelines should be presented.

Staff Comment:

The Official Plan contains numerous references to other plans and strategies (e.g. Area Specific Plans, Agricultural and Employment Strategies, Transit and Transportation Plans and budgets, etc), many of which support the successful implementation of the Official Plan.

Staff will consider editing policies to ensure that only relevant plans and strategies remain in the Official Plan. For those that remain, staff will consider methods to communicate a work plan with timelines and budget.

Stakeholder Groups Who Raised this Issue:

Agencies, Community Groups and Citizen Advisory Committees, Professional Planning Agents.

Strategy/process

New Official Plan Project Process

Staff continue to consider all feedback received as part of the consultation process. Several meetings have been, or will be, scheduled with stakeholders and agencies, over the Summer and early Fall months to work through issues related to various policies and maps.

Staff will build on this report (PB-47-17) to provide a staff response to the feedback received as part of the staff report transmitting the proposed Official Plan for Council adoption scheduled for Q4 2017. Further feedback received between the time of printing of this report and the future staff report on the proposed new Official Plan will be included in the public record, and summarized as part of the future staff report.

Statutory notice will be provided upon release of the proposed new Official Plan, and open houses will be held.

Subject to Council adoption of the new Official Plan, it will be forwarded to the Region for review to ensure conformity to the Region of Halton Official Plan and for approval.

Region's Official Plan Review

The Region of Halton is currently conducting its Official Plan Review process. As part of that process, the Region will be conducting research and analysis, and community and technical consultation, and updating its Official Plan in order to achieve conformity to the new provincial plans. The Province has established a deadline for upper tier Growth Plan conformity by July 1, 2022. Burlington will then be required to initiate an Official Plan Review to ensure conformity to the Region's updated Official Plan.

Financial Matters:

There is currently \$156,482 remaining which is sufficient in staff's assessment to fund the delivery of the new Official Plan. Any remaining funds will be used to supplement funding the new Zoning By-law and Grow Bold community engagement.

Conclusion:

The community engagement and consultation period of the new Official Plan project has served as a critical component of Phase 3 (Developing and Finalizing the Plan) of the project. Staff are considering the feedback as part of confirming or modifying the

policies contained within the draft new Official Plan dated April 2017. The feedback and further consideration by staff will serve as the basis for revisions to be presented as part of the proposed new Official Plan for Council's adoption.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendices:

- A. Engagement Activities Summary (April – June 2017)
- B. Draft New Official Plan: Public Engagement Data Analysis
- C. Stakeholder Feedback Summary
- D. Agency Feedback Summary
- E. Public Feedback Summary

Appendices C, D, and E can be found at www.burlington.ca/calendar

Notifications:

Curt Benson, Region of Halton
Dan Tovey, Region of Halton
Niagara Escarpment Commission
Conservation Halton
OP Mailing List

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.