

## **City-Wide Population and Built-Up Area Residential Unit Growth Analysis:**

**June 2019**

The purpose of this document is to report on the ongoing monitoring of the City's population growth as well as new residential unit growth within the Built-Up Area to understand how the City is tracking against the population forecast and intensification and phasing targets in Halton Region's Official Plan, in accordance with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Specifically, the analysis will outline:

- 1) City-wide population based on 2016 Census data with a comparison to the Region's Best Planning Estimates (BPEs);
- 2) New units added to the Built-Up Area demonstrating how the City is supporting the achievement of the 40% intensification target across the Region of Halton; and
- 3) New units added to the Built-Up Area within specific timeframes, compared to the Region's phasing targets.

The analysis within this document will continue to evolve as new information becomes available. Staff will monitor new data, as well as periodically report on how Burlington is tracking to the growth targets.

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### **Background**

#### **Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006, established a framework to guide municipalities as they plan for growth in their communities. This framework included growth forecasts for population to 2031 to help plan for growth in a coordinated manner, as well as, a minimum intensification target to direct new residential growth to the delineated Built-Up Area.

#### **Halton Region Official Plan (ROP)**

Halton Region conformity to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 was established through the Region's Official Plan Review (Sustainable Halton) and resulted in Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPA 37, 38 & 39). Tables 1, 2, and 2A in the Region's Official Plan established population forecasts to 2031 for each local municipality as well as intensification and phasing targets, to support the Region in achieving the forecasts and targets established in the Growth Plan.

#### **City of Burlington Residential Growth Tracking**

The City currently tracks residential unit growth through the use of a growth tracking system developed by Watson and Associates. This system was developed as an "in-house" model for the City to monitor housing growth on an annual basis. The system uses building permit data to determine the number of dwelling units constructed and demolished by unit type (e.g. Low density,

Medium density, and High density) sorted by geographic areas identified in the City's 2008 Intensification Area study.

## 1) Population Distribution – Halton Region Official Plan: Table 1

Table 1 in the ROP distributes population numbers to each lower tier municipality in Halton to 2031. Table 1 established that Burlington had a total population<sup>1</sup> of 171,000 in 2006 which was expected to grow to 193,000 by 2031.

For the last three Census years, the Census population<sup>2</sup> of Burlington was:

- 2006 was 164,415
- 2011 was 175,779
- 2016 was 183,314

The Region also developed Best Planning Estimates<sup>3</sup> which are working numbers showing when and where development is likely to take place in the Region. It is a planning tool meant to be used when future population, dwelling unit and employment numbers are needed for planning purposes and were based on the collective knowledge and understanding of demographic and economic trends in the Region. The intent of these estimates is to provide a consistent set of land use data and forecasts to be used by agencies or individuals interested in this data.

The Regions BPE's established the following total population for the City:

- 2006 was 164,446
- 2011 was 173,761
- 2016 was 175,438
- 2021 is forecasted at 178,847
- 2026 is forecasted at 182,034
- 2031 is forecasted at 186,169

In both 2011 and 2016 the Census population for the City exceeded the BPE population. The following chart illustrates the difference between the City's Census population versus the BPE population. The chart also shows how the City's 2016 Census population has surpassed the 2026 BPE population for the City (182,034). It is expected that the City will exceed the 2031 population forecast well in advance of 2031.

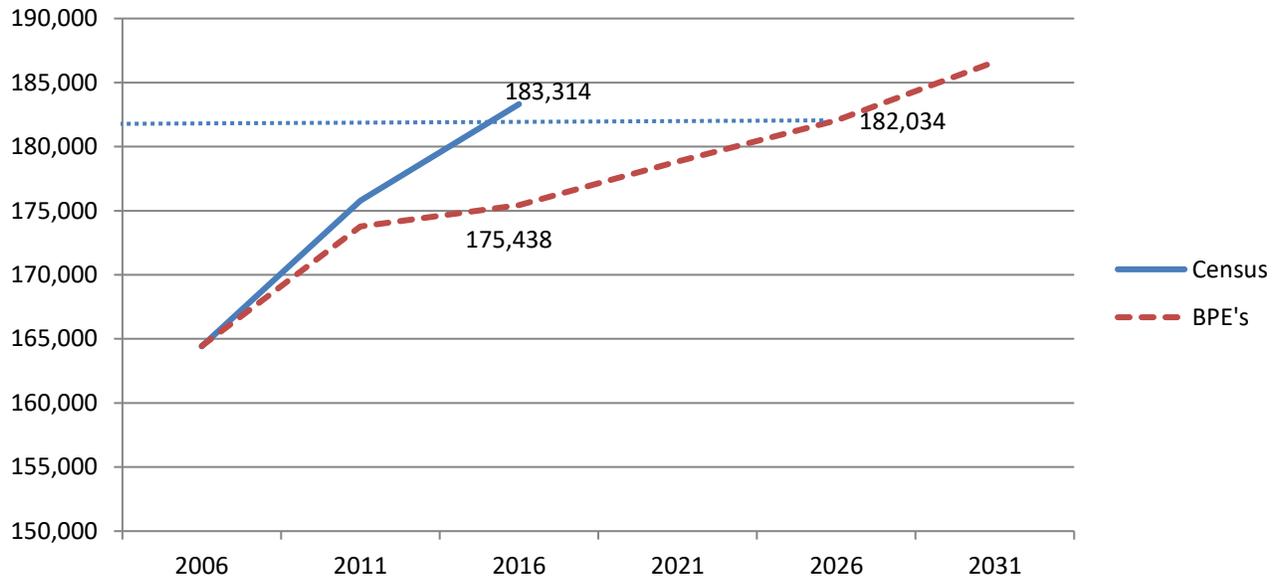
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<sup>1</sup> Total population numbers include approximately 4% undercount from the official census population. This factor takes into account those people who did not complete the census.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada Census Population (does not include undercount).

<sup>3</sup> The Best Planning Estimates show the total population and employment in Halton, in each of the local municipalities, by 5 year intervals to 2031. The BPE estimates are not adjusted for undercounting. The current iterations of the BPEs were endorsed by Regional Council in July 2011. <http://www.halton.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=8310&pageId=59345>

## Burlington's Total Population 2006-2016 Census vs. BPEs



### **2) Intensification Target – Halton Region Official Plan: Table 2**

Table 2 in the ROP establishes intensification targets for each lower tier municipality in Halton by establishing a minimum number of new housing units to be added to each Built-Up Area (delineated by the Built Boundary) between 2015-2031. This target varies by municipality, however together, they support the achievement of the 40% intensification target across the Region of Halton. For the City of Burlington, the minimum number of new housing units to be added to the Built-Up Area from 2015-2031 is 8,300 or approximately 500 units annually. The Downtown Urban Growth Centre is included within the Built-Up Area.

Based on the City's growth tracking system, the following number of new units<sup>4</sup> were added in the Built-up Area:

- 2015 = 325 units (94% of new units city-wide)
- 2016 = 654 units (99% of new units city-wide)
- 2017 = 910 units (91% of new units city-wide)
- 2018 = 470 units (80% of new units city-wide)

The number of new units added to the Built-Up Area will vary from year to year, however, the average number of new units over the 4-year period is 590. The City contributes far more than

<sup>4</sup> Net new units (new units minus demolitions)

40% of total new units within the Built-Up Area in support of the Region's target, and is on course to meet the 8,300 new units by 2031.

### **3) Regional Phasing – Halton Region Official Plan: Table 2A (2012-2016)**

Table 2A in the ROP establishes phasing targets for new housing units within the Built Up-Area (delineated by the Built Boundary), in four time periods between 2012-2031. For the City of Burlington, the target for the 2012-2016 timeframe was 2,525 new units, while the target for the current 2017-2021 timeframe is 2,758.

Based on the City's growth tracking system, within the 2012-2016 timeframe there were 2,092 new units<sup>5</sup> added to the Built-Up Area which is approximately 83% of the target. Within the first two years of the 2017-2021 timeframe, there were 1380 new units<sup>6</sup> added to the Built-Up Area, which is approximately 50% of the target.

Although the City fell short of the target set for the 2012-2016 timeframe, based on the first two years of reporting, the City is on course to meet the target set for the 2017-2021 timeframe.

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<sup>5</sup> Net new units (new units minus demolitions)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid