



SUBJECT: Official Plan Review: Urban Structure and Intensification Policy Directions Report

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Planning and Building Department

Report Number: PB-29-16

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 505-08

Date to Committee: July 7, 2016

Date to Council: July 18, 2016

Recommendation:

Endorse the policy directions, as detailed in PB-29-16, which relate to the city's Official Plan guiding principles and land use vision, city system, urban structure, intensification, Mobility Hubs and established neighbourhoods, for the purpose of developing the Part A Official Plan amendment of the Official Plan Review;

Receive the draft July 2016 Official Plan schedules, as contained in Appendices A – Draft City System, B – Draft Urban Structure, and C – Draft Intensification Framework, and D- Draft Intensification Framework: Transportation Network, to PB-29-16;

Direct the Director of Planning and Building to communicate and engage with the public on the policy directions and the July 2016 Draft Official Plan schedules prior to bringing forward the Part A amendment of the Official Plan Review.

Receive the report contained in Appendix H titled, "*Intensification Study Visualizing Density and Market Assessment of Intensification, a Report for the City's Strategic Plan*", December 2015, prepared by Dillon, Brook McIlroy and Watson and Associates.

Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to present a series of Official Plan (OP) policy directions that:

- Set the foundation for the city's urban structure, intensification, and growth management strategy;
- Update the vision and guiding principles for growth and intensification;



- Introduce new mapping to illustrate the city as a comprehensive system consisting of distinct areas including the urban, rural and North Aldershot areas;
- Indicate where the city wants growth and expects significant transition with additional population and jobs over time, and inversely, to identify where growth is not planned within established neighbourhoods;
- Inform the Region's Official Plan Review (OPR) and upcoming population and employment growth allocation process;
- Guide development within Mobility Hubs and enable mobility hub area-specific planning; and
- Serve as a framework in the city's evaluation of employment land conversions.

In developing the recommendations contained in this report, several elements have been considered including:

- City's Strategic Plan
- Provincial Plans
- Region of Halton Official Plan
- City's Intensification Study (2008)
- OPR Mobility Hub Opportunity and Constraints Study
- OPR Commercial Strategy Study
- OPR Employment Lands Study (Phases 1 and 2)
- Character Area Studies, and
- Community consultation and engagement

These elements, woven together, enable staff to present a series of recommendations that advances the city's strategy in accommodating future growth and intensification.

It is important to note that this report addresses several Strategic Plan directions. The policy directions contained in this report primarily relate to "*A City that Grows – Intensification*", however the policy directions address elements of all Strategic Direction identified in the 2015-2040 Strategic Plan.

In addition to the Strategic Plan, Provincial and Regional Plans and regulations, and the work of the OPR conducted to date, are the key inputs informing the proposed policy directions of this report.



Background and Discussion:

Background:

Status of the Official Plan Review

On January 25, 2016, Council approved staff report, "Official Plan Review: 2016 Revised Project Work Plan and Schedule" ([PB-09-16](#)). The purpose of that report was to:

- outline the relationship between the city's Strategic Plan and OPR;
- highlight the goals of the OPR;
- recommend a revised approach to deliver the OPR and to provide an update on timing; and,
- identify project management considerations and other current or emerging policy initiatives.

The report detailed a revised approach to the OPR to more effectively address Council's priorities and to create timing efficiencies. The revised approach included separating the OPR into two parts and that the city bring forward a Part A amendment which focuses on the urban area, while the Part B amendment focuses on the rural and natural heritage, agricultural and mineral aggregates policies.

The report listed various components to be addressed in Part A. The following components are addressed in this report:

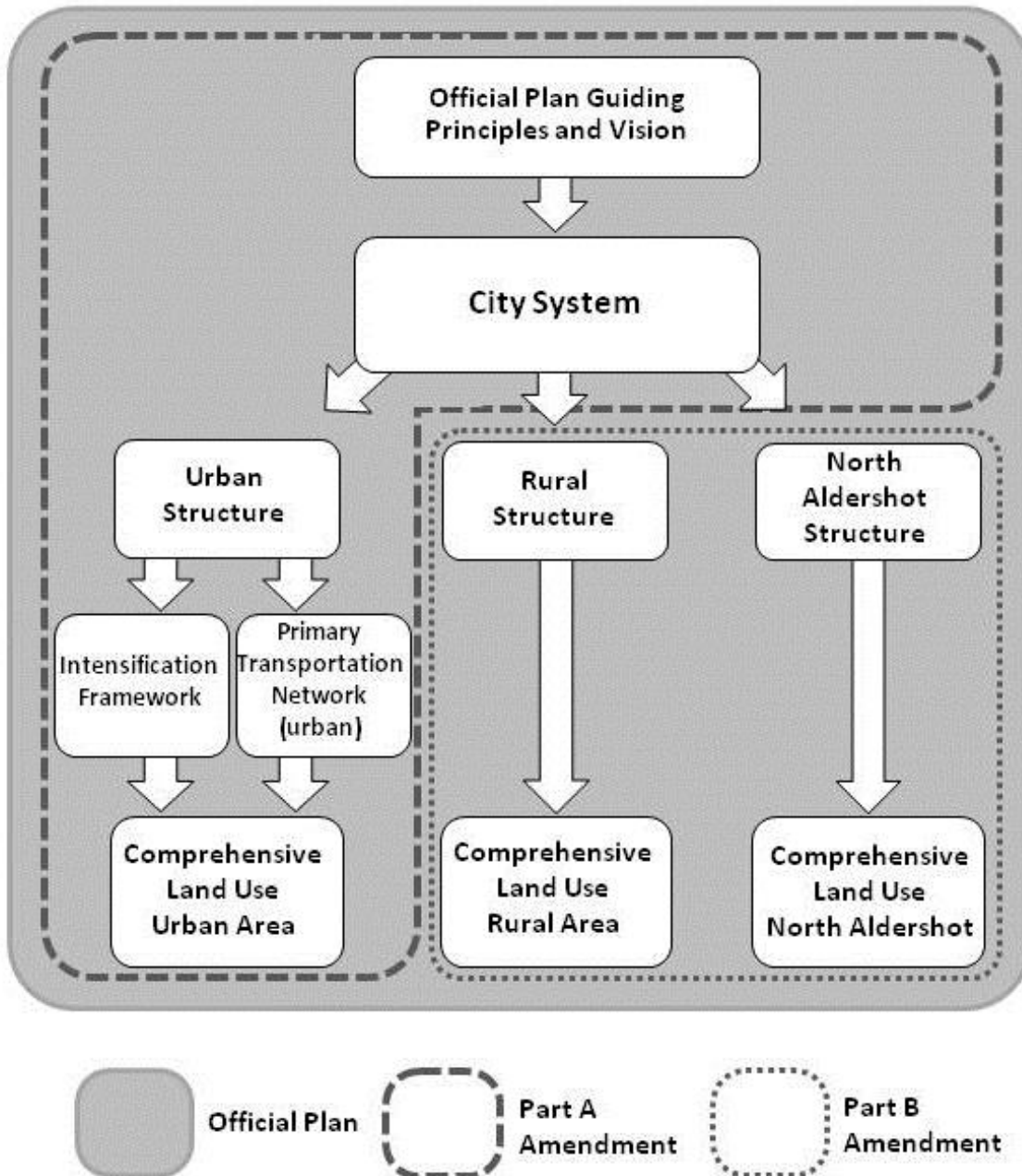
- City System and Urban Structure
- Intensification Areas
- Strategic Investment Areas
- Mobility Hubs
- Established neighbourhoods

Council's endorsement of policy directions in this report is a critical step in establishing the foundation for the Part A amendment to the city's Official Plan, and in enabling staff to bring forward the staff report containing the assessment of employment conversions.

Figure 1 – Major Components of the Official Plan on the following page illustrates the relationship of the Part A and Part B amendments to the Official Plan, as well as details the elements within each amendment.



Figure 1 - Major Components of the Official Plan





Discussion:

1.0 Provincial/Regional Planning Context:

In preparing the policy directions, staff have had careful consideration of provincial and regional plans, policies and regulation. Below is a general summary of the significant elements of the provincial and regional planning context.

1.1 Planning Act

Municipalities, when dealing with their responsibilities under the *Planning Act*, shall have regard to a wide range of matters of provincial interest ranging from the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions; to the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.

It also requires that:

- all planning decisions by Council shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and conform with provincial plans (Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan, Places to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe);
- an Official Plan contain goals, objectives and policies established to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic and natural environment;
- requires a municipality to review its Official Plan not less frequently than every five years (extended to 10 years for a new Official Plan as per Bill 73).

The Urban Structure and Intensification Policy Directions Report forms a major part of the outcome of the Official Plan Review work plan and addresses the sections above. Almost all matters of Provincial interest listed in the *Planning Act* are to some degree addressed through this report given that it establishes the general framework of the city's Official Plan.

1.2 Provincial Policy Statement

On February 24, 2014 the Province released the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* (PPS, 2014) which came into effect on April 30, 2014. The PPS recognizes that Official Plans are the most important vehicle for the implementation of the PPS. As noted above Council decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements issues under the Act.



The vision states that land use must be carefully managed to accommodate appropriate development to meet the full range of current and future needs, while achieving efficient development patterns and avoiding significant or sensitive resources and areas which may pose a risk to public health and safety.

The PPS includes direction related to this report in the following sections:

- Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns
- Housing
- Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities
- Long Term Economic Prosperity
- Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change

Several policies have a particular relevance to this report and are discussed below.

Settlement Areas

Land uses within a settlement area should incorporate a variety of densities and mix of uses that use land and infrastructure efficiently, minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, support transit and active transportation and include a range of opportunities for *intensification* and *redevelopment*.

Intensification and Redevelopment

The PPS states, in part, that:

Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for *intensification* and *redevelopment* where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including *brownfield sites*, and the availability of suitable existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* required to accommodate projected needs (Section 1.1.3.3).

Role of Upper and Lower Tier Municipalities

The PPS highlights the role of the upper tier municipality in consultation with the lower-tier municipality. Together, along with other municipal partners, population, housing and employment projections are allocated to each lower tier municipality. The local vision for growth and development, specifically Intensification areas including nodes and transit corridors must be developed in conformity with the Regional Official Plan.



Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change

Land use and development patterns are highlighted as having a key role in “energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns” (1.8.1).

Policy Connection to this Report

The Urban Structure describes the high level components of the Urban Area that together contribute to ensuring that opportunities exist to accommodate a wide range of densities and mix of land uses throughout the Urban Area. Certain areas of the municipality are identified which are expected to accommodate growth over time.

The Intensification Framework outlines the specific areas of the city where Intensification and the required investment in appropriate infrastructure (both public service facilities and infrastructure) will be made concurrently to ensure that sufficient capacity is available to support future employment and population growth.

The development of the Urban Structure and Intensification Framework, along with related policy directions, will establish a clear local vision for intensification and will support the Region in further defining and identifying nodes and corridors for intensification. This work recognizes direction from existing Regional Policy and will support the Region’s effort in its upcoming municipal comprehensive review. The establishment of a clear vision will ensure the elevation of the concept of intensification in the city of Burlington. Recognition of the new challenges that face a built up municipality will be identified in the Regional Official Plan. This will ensure that at the time of preparing or revising key implementation tools such as population and employment forecasts and master servicing plans that the vision for a mature state municipality is implemented.

1.3 Places to Grow

Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) includes a wide ranging set of policies intended to assist in managing growth in the GGH to 2031. The *Growth Plan* directs growth to the *built up areas* which is defined as areas within the urban boundary but are not considered designated greenfield areas.

Guiding Principles of the Growth Plan

The guiding principles of the *Growth Plan* are intended to guide decisions on how land is developed, resources are managed and public dollars invested:



- Build compact, vibrant and complete communities.
- Plan and manage growth to support a strong and competitive economy.
- Protect, conserve, enhance and wisely use the valuable natural resources of land, air, water for current and future generations.
- Optimize the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth in a compact, efficient form.
- Provide for different approaches to managing growth that recognize the diversity of communities in the GGH.
- Promote collaboration among all sectors – government, private and non-profit – and residents to achieve the vision.

Managing Growth

Population and growth will be accommodated within the built up area and focused in intensification areas. The Plan identifies four key areas where intensification shall be accommodated:

- Urban Growth Centres
 - Planned to achieve 200 people and jobs
 - An area for investment in institutional and region wide public services as well as commercial, recreational and cultural uses
 - Transit
 - High density and major employment centre
 - Accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth
- Major Transit Station Areas and Intensification Corridors
 - Accommodate higher residential and employment densities to support existing or planned transit service
 - Incorporate a mix uses including office, institutional, commercial and residential wherever appropriate.
- Employment Lands
 - Provide for an appropriate mix of employment uses
 - Support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses with any necessary infrastructure
 - Plan for, protect and preserve employment areas



Policy Connection to this Report

The City System, Urban Structure and the Intensification Framework together present the city's position at a high level about where to direct development. Together they represent the first step in communicating the commitment to development and redevelopment in these areas.

The Intensification Framework establishes that there are areas which are expected to contribute significantly to accommodating the population and employment distributed to the city by the Region. Capturing and defining the intensification priority and providing a means by which to support its implementation represents a growth management strategy for a built up municipality.

The Intensification Framework highlights the importance the Urban Growth Centre and the city's three major Transit Station Areas, the connecting intensification corridors and certain parts of the city's employment areas by identifying them as elements of the primary intensification area.

1.4 Emerging Provincial Plans

On May 10, 2016 the Province initiated a second round of consultation related to the Coordinated Land Use Planning Review by releasing a series of revised policies specific to each Provincial Plan including Places to Grow.

Several policy sections within the "Managing Growth" (2.2.1) section are noted below and will be carefully considered in staff review of the proposed policies as they relate to the City System, Urban Structure and Intensification Framework.

- Strategic Growth Areas: areas identified to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher density mixed use in a more compact built form. These areas include:
 - Urban Growth Centres
 - Major Transit Station Areas
 - Mobility Hubs
 - Other major opportunities (infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites etc.)
 - Lands along major roads, arterials or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service
- Expanded discussion of Transit Corridor and Station Areas, including Priority Transit Corridors – "prioritizing planning and zoning for priority transit corridors, minimum density targets reflective of transit service, etc.



- Minimum Intensification Target increase from 40% to 60%.
- Modifications to Employment Policies.
- Increasing minimum density requirements within Designated Greenfield Areas from 50 to 80 people and jobs per ha.

Policy Connection to this Report

It appears that the proposed provincial policies which require the development of an integrated approach to planning and managing growth by Upper tier municipalities is in line with the directions proposed in this report. It is expected that this integrated approach will, among other things, identify a hierarchy of areas within settlement areas for accommodating growth and that the primary focus will be on strategic growth areas.

1.5 Metrolinx: The Big Move

The *Big Move* is the third piece in a three-part approach by the provincial government to prepare the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) for growth and sustainability. It builds on the Greenbelt Plan, which protects more than 1.8 million acres of environmentally sensitive and agricultural land in the heart of the region, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow), which manages population and job growth, and curbs urban sprawl. Together these three initiatives will lead to the development of more compact and complete communities that make walking, cycling and transit part of everyday life.

The development of the *Big Move* (also referred to as the Regional Transportation Plan, RTP) was intended to create a long term strategic plan for an integrated, multi-modal, regional transportation system.

The Big Move includes a list of nine big moves. Strategy # 7, titled “*Build Communities that are Pedestrian, Cycling and Transit-Supportive*” focuses on Mobility Hubs.

A system of connected Mobility Hubs

The Big Move created a system of connected Mobility Hubs including Anchor Hubs and Gateway Hubs, at key intersections in the regional rapid transit network that provide travelers with access to the system, support high density development, and demonstrate excellence in customer service.

Section 7.15 of the Big Move directs Municipalities, in consultation with transit agencies, landowners, major stakeholders, and public agencies and institutions, to prepare detailed master plans (also referred to as Area Specific Plans) for each Mobility Hub.



Where appropriate, master plans should also be prepared for major Transit Station Areas and unique destinations that have been identified in accordance with Policy 7.14.

The policies also set out minimum requirements for the development of Mobility Hub Master Plans, which are further discussed in the *Metrolinx Mobility Hub Guidelines*.

Policy Connection to this Report

The policy directions established through this report establish a mobility hub /major transit station area policy framework informed by the *Big Move* and the *Metrolinx Mobility Hub Guidelines*.

1.6 Region of Halton Official Plan

Regional Structure includes: Settlement areas, the Agricultural System and the Natural Heritage System. This Regional Structure is presented in Map 1 of the Regional Official Plan. The Region of Halton established in policy:

- population and employment distributions;
- intensification and density targets; and
- phasing

for each local municipality and for the Region as a whole to 2031. Together these numbers represent a growth management strategy for the Region which, along with the policies of the plan maintain and enhance the established Regional Structure.

Urban Areas

Regional policies support development in a form that is compact, transit and active transportation supportive, reduces car dependency, and which makes efficient use of land and services (72(2)). In policy the Region highlights that one of the objectives of the Urban Area is to identify and urban structure that supports the development of Intensification Areas (72(6)). It also establishes as an objective the facilitation and promotion of intensification and increased densities (72(9)).

The Region directs to the *Built Up Area* a minimum of 40% of new residential development occurring annually after 2015 (77(2.1)). An annual intensification monitoring report is identified in policy to be undertaken each year to track the Region's performance.

Regional policy requires that Local Municipalities through their Official Plans demonstrate how the distribution of population and employment, the intensification and



density targets and the phasing policies can be “achieved and maintained at all times” (77(4)).

The Region further directs that Area Specific Plans, covering a wide range of considerations, be developed to establish policies for major growth areas, including the development or redevelopment of communities (i.e. Intensification Areas; Employment Areas, Mixed Use Areas)(77(5)).

Intensification Areas

In the Regional Official Plan Intensification Areas include:

- Urban Growth Centres (as identified in Map 1 and Map 3)
- Major Transit Station Areas (including Metrolinx-designated Mobility Hubs) (as identified in Map 1 and Map 3 and/or in Local Official Plans, which generally consist of areas within 500m of the Major Transit Station.)
- Intensification Corridors (as identified in Local Official Plans)
- Mixed Use Nodes (as identified in Local Official Plans) (80).

Regional Policy highlight a number of objectives related to *Major Transit Station Areas* and *Intensification Corridors* including:

- Achieving sufficient density to support existing and planned transit
- Achieving a mix of uses, where appropriate
- For Major Transit Station Areas provide multi-modal access including active transportation and innovative alternatives like carpool parking, car share and recharging stations etc.
- For Intensification Corridors, to accommodate local services, including recreational, cultural and entertainment uses. (78(11)).

The Region requires that Local Official Plans identify Intensification Areas with detailed boundaries in accordance with the objectives and policies of the Regional Official Plan (81(2)).

The policies of the Region establish a variety of directions, requirements, encouragements to plan for Intensification Areas ranging from special considerations for Areas Specific Plans related to Intensification Areas to tools and incentives to promote the development of these areas. Key to these policies is that Intensification Areas are to be considered the highest priority of urban development within the Region (81(7.2)).



The Region directs in Part II, Policy 48 that:

Area-Specific Plans such as secondary plans are to be prepared by the Local Municipalities for *settlement areas* such as new communities, *Intensification Areas* and *Hamlets* in accordance with policies of this Plan.

Area Specific Plans must demonstrate how the goals and objectives of the Regional Official Plan are being attained alongside a wide range of other considerations some of which are specific to area specific planning in intensification areas.

It is the policy of the Region to:...

- 81(7.3) Ensure that Intensification Areas are development-ready by:
- a) making available at the earliest opportunity water, waste water and transportation service capacities to support the development densities prescribed for Intensification Areas;...

Policy Connection to this report

This report presents the City System which conforms to the Region's Structure. The focus of this report and of the Part A amendment is on the Urban Area. The Part B Amendment will address and refine the city's approach to the other elements of the Regional Structure.

The Urban Structure and the Intensification Framework are informed by and conform to Regional Policy related to the Urban Area and to Intensification Areas. This report demonstrates concrete action to meet the policy directions established through the Regional Official Plan related first to the city's Structure within the Region and second to the means of demonstrating the city's growth management strategy and the city's means of demonstrating how various policy numbers can be achieved and maintained at all times.

As noted earlier, the Intensification Framework establishes that there are areas which are expected to contribute significantly to accommodating the population and employment distributed to the city by the Region. Capturing and defining the intensification priority evident in Region policy and providing a means by which to support its implementation represents a growth management strategy for a built up municipality.



The Intensification Framework highlights the importance the Urban Growth Centre and the city's three major Transit Station Areas, the connecting intensification corridors and certain parts of the city's employment areas by identifying them as elements of the primary intensification area.

2.0 Local Context:

2.1 Existing Official Plan

Burlington's existing OP was approved by the Region of Halton on March 5, 1997. A city-wide OPR was initiated in 2002, adopted by Council on October 10, 2006 and substantially approved by the Ontario Municipal Board by October 24, 2008. The OP has undergone several housekeeping consolidations over the past seven years; the most recent consolidation is dated July 2015.

The existing OP has set a strong foundation to guide growth and development in the city, which includes direction to grow to the existing urban boundary in order to protect the rural area, a system of land use designations and the identification of intensification areas. The OPR will build upon this foundation by retaining many of the existing elements, such as maintaining the current urban boundary, while proposing transformative shifts to others to achieve the goal of growing up, not out. Several of the key shifts are summarized in the policy directions in this report.

2.2 Strategic Plan

Burlington recently completed a 2015 - 2040 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan recognizes that the city is undergoing an important transition; to stop sprawl and instead grow through intensification. The plan strongly articulates the new mandate of the city to actively city-build and identifies a clear vision to:

- Direct population growth through targeted intensification that will build neighbourhoods that are environmentally friendly, infrastructure-efficient, walkable, bikeable and transit-oriented, and provide transit supportive densities;
- Direct growth towards mixed-use areas and along main roads with transit service, including Mobility Hubs, the Downtown and Uptown; and
- Reinforce the city's strong position to protect the existing urban-rural boundary.

In particular, work undertaken during the Strategic Plan Review, including the visualization of various density scenarios and associated market assessments



regarding intensification in Burlington, have been an important input into the development of the directions contained in this report. A document providing a detailed overview of the work undertaken as part of the Strategic Plan process titled *“Intensification Study Visualizing Density and Market Assessment of Intensification, a Report for the City’s Strategic Plan”*, December 2015 prepared by Dillon, Brook McIlroy and Watson & Associates, is found in Appendix H.

3.0 Policy Directions

This staff report lays out a framework that describes what the urban area will look like in order to achieve the vision identified in the strategic plan, and will articulate the key policy directions that are required to accommodate future population and job growth within the urban boundary. These shifts are summarized in the following eight policy directions below.



Table 1 - Policy Directions Summary

Direction	Nature of Direction	Page
A	Update the OP Guiding Principles and Land Use Vision	Pg. 20
B	Establish a new City System and Urban Structure Framework, including associated policies and mapping	Pg. 22
C	Establish a new Intensification Framework, including associated policies and mapping	Pg. 26
D	Amend the OP's definition of 'intensification' to conform with the Province and Region of Halton's definition and undertake consequential amendments throughout the OP	Pg. 35
E	Update the OP's current evaluation criteria for intensification proposals to better address a range of uses, built-form and urban design	Pg. 36
F	Introduce policy that enables the identification of Strategic Investment Areas within Primary Intensification Areas by City Council	Pg. 38
G	Establish a new Mobility Hubs policy framework, including associated policies and mapping	Pg. 40
H	Update the policies and schedules in the Official Plan and Transportation Plan to recognize and integrate Mobility Hubs and Connectors in the city-wide transportation system	Pg. 46



Mapping

In order to illustrate the vision and concepts presented in the policy directions, staff has included draft mapping in the appendices for discussion purposes only. It is important to note that staff is not seeking Council's endorsement of the July 2016 mapping included in the appendices at this time. Staff will undertake significant public consultation to refine Official Plan mapping, as part of the OPR Phase 3 engagement program in support of the Draft Official Plan Amendment.

A key to understanding time frames in planning

Throughout the Directions below reference is made to a number of different time frames. Time is an important dimension in planning for growth.

2031

Places to Grow distributed population and employment for the Greater Golden Horseshoe from 2001 – 2031. The Region of Halton in Regional Official Plan (ROPA) 38 and ROPA 39 distributed population and employment across the Region in the form of population and employment distributions and intensification and density targets set out in policy for each local municipality.

The population and employment distributions to 2031, and the respective intensification and density targets will be included in our Official Plan in conformity with the Regional Official Plan. That being said these numbers and targets are expected to be achieved and exceeded during the statutory time frame of this Official Plan - that is the time frame to 2031.

The Official Plan cannot establish policies that plan to exceed these statutory numbers. When we include reference to 2031 we are considering policy related to the accommodation of growth allocated to the city to 2031.

2031 and beyond

Notwithstanding the discussion above there is an acknowledgment that the "world doesn't end after 2031". Planning in a built up municipality requires both what we can plan from a statutory perspective, and the long term vision to set the path forward.

In the case of distinguishing planning to 2031 and the long term vision for the mature state of Burlington it becomes important to decouple the vision from the achievement of policy numbers by a certain date.

When we include reference to 2031 and beyond we acknowledge that there is potential capacity in the policy framework to accommodate growth beyond the statutory time



frame of the Official Plan. We recognize that this constitutes a vision related to accommodating growth beyond 2031 in Burlington where no additional designated greenfield lands or urban boundary expansions are anticipated.

2041

Places to Grow was amended (Amendment 2, June 17, 2013) to revise Schedule 3 and establish new population and employment distributions for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to 2041. In the course of developing those revised distributions the amendment had the effect of also developing a 2031B¹ forecast.

The upcoming Regional Official Plan Review and municipal comprehensive review will be the opportunity for the Region of Halton to distribute population and employment across the Region to 2041. Until such time as this work is complete and the Official Plan Amendment / New Regional Official Plan is in place efforts to allocate population and employment to 2041 are premature. Burlington's Official Plan Review presents the opportunity to establish a clear vision for the future of a built up municipality in order to inform the Region's allocation of growth to Burlington. Burlington's efforts will assist the Region of Halton in meeting intensification targets and will support the urban structure described in this report.

A detailed vision and supporting work to inform the Region's Official Plan Review is critical in Burlington as the traditional approach of assigning new growth to new designated greenfield land area is not valid in the Burlington context; it is now more appropriate to identify areas of the city, which support the urban structure with a clear vision and supportive technical work, to determine how these places throughout the city can accommodate a specific volume of growth.

¹ new 2031 population and employment distribution for Halton Region had the effect of establishing for 2031:

- A higher population target (from 780,000 people to 820,000 people; and,
- While maintaining the employment target (390,000 jobs).



When we include reference to 2041 the report is identifying the upcoming exercise to distribute population, housing and employment throughout the Region of Halton to the next statutory time frame.

Mature State

The city must plan for the future mature state by establishing vision and opportunities for growth that replace the more customary urban boundary expansion approach to accommodating future growth in other municipalities. It is not possible, nor is it prudent to establish a “maturity date”. In other words the city’s path to mature state for the foreseeable future will always be beyond the horizon of the Plan.

When we include reference to the city at a mature state we identify the vision for the future without reference to a time frame.



DIRECTION A: Update the Guiding Principles and Land Use Vision

Issue:

Some elements of the existing land use vision and guiding principles in the Official Plan are not consistent with the directions identified in the 2015-2040 Strategic Plan and do not reflect the future urban structure (the concept of urban structure is explained in Direction B below).

Background:

The 2015-2040 Strategic Plan identified a bold new vision to guide city building for the next 25 years. Several studies were undertaken as part of the Official Plan Review to identify potential changes to the city's urban structure, including the Commercial Lands, Employment Lands and Mobility Hubs studies. In order to identify required revisions, the existing OP guiding principles will be revised in conjunction with the new information presented through the Strategic Plan and the OPR.

Proposed Direction: Update the Guiding Principles and Land Use Vision

The vision and guiding principles will be revised to reflect the important transition that the city is undergoing to accommodate growth within the urban boundary. This includes the following key changes:

- The Official Plan will include the key strategic directions of the Strategic Plan, and the guiding principles will be organized and informed by the strategic directions: *A City that Grows, A City that Moves, A Healthy and Greener City and An Engaging City*.
- The guiding principles will be updated to reflect the key strategic directions and objectives of the Strategic Plan and to reflect OPR studies. Principles will address the following:
 - complete communities;
 - maintaining the urban boundary;
 - targeted intensification;
 - established neighbourhoods, rural areas, natural areas, and employment lands;
 - design excellence;
 - financial sustainability;



- infrastructure and community infrastructure;
 - economic development;
 - mobility choice;
 - aligning land use, density and transit/active transportation;
 - healthy environment and natural resources;
 - climate change and sustainable building and community design;
 - health, safety and social well-being for all ages and abilities;
 - engagement;
 - culture and arts; and
 - community identity and character.
- The city's land use vision will be illustrated by a framework that includes the City System, Urban Structure and Intensification Framework (see Figure 1 – Major Components of the Official Plan - and Directions B & C of this report). This framework has been informed by the key strategic directions and guiding principles, and will reflect proposed shifts to the urban structure, such as the identification of Primary Intensification Areas, Mobility Hubs, the protection of established neighbourhoods and employment lands, and the new Mixed Use hierarchy as summarized in the Proposed Commercial Lands Policy Directions Reports ([PB-09-15](#), and as revised in PB-38-16).



DIRECTION B. Establish a new City System and Urban Structure Framework, including associated policies and mapping, within the Official Plan

Issue:

An Official Plan contains maps and policies that set up the organizing framework for directing and managing growth in the city (Note: maps are often referred to as “schedules” within an OP). Maps help tell the story of the city. The framework is made up of elements such as municipal boundaries, roads as connectors, land uses, urban versus rural areas, and built-up versus greenfield areas.

While the city’s OP does contain schedules to illustrate the framework of the city, new schedules must be added to more clearly illustrate the city as a system and its parts.

Also, maps in the current Official Plan require updates to maintain consistency with Provincial and Regional policies, and to align with new or revised policies for the growth management structure.

The way the city will be physically organized will be fundamental to the quality of life it will offer its residents, the functioning of its economy, the fostering of social cohesion, and the health of the natural environment. Understanding and communicating the structure at a city-wide level and within the urban boundary is a critical first step to defining an appropriate structure for the future and creating a land use vision to guide the Official Plan.

Background:

Currently, the OP has only one framework schedule, *Schedule A – Settlement Pattern*. There is opportunity to improve clarity and interpretation of the city as a system and its parts.

Proposed Direction: City System

Existing OP Schedule A - Settlement Pattern is being replaced by a new city System Framework (as shown in Appendix A – City System), including associated policies and mapping, as part of the Official Plan Review in order to achieve the following:

- visualize and communicate the physical make-up of the city and provide a framework which conforms with provincial and regional policy and implement local objectives for population and employment growth for the long term development of the city;



- provide a meaningful connection between parts of the city to the detailed land use designations and other policies in the Official Plan; and
- illustrate, from a development perspective, where growth will figure more significantly and where little or no change is anticipated.

A new schedule and policies are proposed to be incorporated within the Official Plan. The City System framework will establish the key structural elements of the entire city, and the discrete physical components that collectively represent the city's unique system, which can each be further subdivided as the level of detail is increased in mapping and policy.

The City System framework will identify the following main components of the City Planning System:

- i. Municipal Boundary
- ii. Urban Boundary
- iii. Built Boundary
- iv. Urban Area
- v. Downtown Urban Growth Centre
- vi. Rural Area
- vii. North Aldershot
- viii. Rural Settlement Areas
- ix. Main transportation network
- x. Provincial Plan Areas (Greenbelt Plan Area – Protected Countryside, Parkway Belt West Plan Area and Niagara Escarpment Plan Area)

A draft version of this proposed schedule is contained in *Appendix A – Draft City System* of this report for information.

Proposed Direction: Urban Structure Framework

The city will manage growth by developing a new Urban Structure Framework that promotes compact, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods and densities in a series of centres and corridors, while protecting established neighbourhoods and environmental and employment areas over time. A new schedule and policies are proposed to be incorporated within the Official Plan which will describe the framework within which more detailed land use designations and policies are established.



The Urban Structure Framework, including associated policies and mapping describing the land use vision for the city's Urban Area, will be presented in order to achieve the following:

- a spatial framework to direct growth in the Urban Area over the planning horizon and focus on the Urban Growth Centre, Urban Centres, Mixed Use Areas and Mobility Hubs;
- a foundation for complete communities;
- a more efficient and sustainable integration of land use, transit and transportation;
- preserve and protect employment areas for current and future long-term businesses and job growth;
- maintain and protect the stability of established residential neighbourhood areas for residential purposes and related community infrastructure; and
- protect, preserve and enhance natural areas and open spaces.

The Urban Structure framework will identify the following main components of the Urban Planning System:

- i. Urban Boundary,
- ii. Built Boundary,
- iii. Greenfield Area,
- iv. Downtown Urban Growth Centre,
- v. Residential Neighbourhood Areas,
- vi. Employment Areas,
- vii. Urban Centres,
- viii. Mixed Use Areas,
- ix. Mobility Hub Study Areas,
- x. Tremaine Road Special Planning Area,
- xi. Major Greenlands, Parks and Open Spaces, and
- xii. Main Transportation Network.

A draft version of this schedule is contained in *Appendix B – Draft Urban Structure* of this report for information.

The draft Appendices A and B are not being recommended for Council endorsement at this time and are intended for discussion purposes only as they will be subject to further



change/refinement based on the pending outcomes of other Official Plan Review work plans and will be used as part of the public and stakeholder consultation and engagement that will be undertaken by staff as part of the development of the Part A amendment to the OPR.



DIRECTION C: Establish a new Intensification Framework, including associated policies and mapping

Issue:

In the current Official Plan, there are a number of policies which are intended to guide the review of Official Plan Amendments involving a proposed increase in density. These policies generally assist staff to review these applications on a site-specific basis but lack the required supporting policy framework that ensures that the proposal conforms to a broader city-wide vision and will support other important community and city-building objectives contained within the Official Plan and Council's Strategic Plan. Absent this city-wide vision, intensification can quickly become sporadic and create many challenges for the city including:

- limiting opportunities to concentrate growth in key under-utilized areas which have the potential to be major sources of new growth and investment;
- creating the potential for proponent driven intensification proposals in established neighbourhood areas of the city;
- resulting in the sporadic allocation of limited financial resources for development specific infrastructure and/or community infrastructure upgrades/investments; and
- not achieving key goals and objectives of the Official Plan, Places to Grow and Strategic Plan.

Background:

In 2008, the city's first intensification framework was developed and endorsed by city Council. This strategy was primarily intended to form the basis for the development of new mixed use land use designations in the Official Plan and to identify the city's capacity for population growth as part of the Region's 2031 growth allocation process. However, the strategy and associated mapping were not incorporated as part of the current Official Plan.

As of March 2016, 72% of proposed residential units since 2006 which are either currently under review by city staff/under appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, or have been approved by city staff but for which a Building Permit has not yet been issued, were located outside of the intensification areas identified through the city's previous 2008 framework.



Given current development trends since the development of the 2008 intensification strategy, staff believe that action must be taken to establish a comprehensive vision for intensification in the city through the Official Plan.

Proposed Direction: Intensification Framework

A new city-wide Intensification Framework is proposed as part of the current Official Plan Review that will build upon Council's new Strategic Plan and serve to provide greater clarity and direction to the public, city staff and other levels of government as to where and how the city plans to grow and intensify over time. More specifically, the new framework will have four key objectives:

1. serve as a filter through which privately initiated Official Plan amendments for increased density are considered and evaluated to ensure that growth is being directed to priority areas including key under-utilized mixed use and transit station areas;
2. provide the basis for the development of population and jobs growth capacity projections which will inform the forthcoming 2041 growth allocations by the Region of Halton;
3. ensure coordination amongst various city departments and other levels of government and service providers with respect to the efficient and timely focusing of investment/upgrades in infrastructure (including water and wastewater servicing, transit, utilities etc.) and community infrastructure (including parks, community facilities and public realm) which may required to support intensification and long-term growth; and
4. provide greater opportunities to accommodate a variety of housing forms that can serve the needs of a broad demographic in terms of tenure, affordability and access to services and transit.

The following sections will identify how the proposed Intensification Framework will achieve these objectives by outlining the proposed details/structure of the framework, how the proposed framework will be implemented and also identify how the framework will serve to inform future city initiatives related to intensification.

i. Intensification Framework Areas

The proposed framework will achieve its objectives by establishing four key areas: Primary Intensification Areas, Secondary Intensification Areas, Employment Intensification Areas and Established Neighbourhood Areas. For each area, the Official Plan will contain objectives and policies that, while maintaining development



permissions provided through the underlying land use designations, will serve to establish clear expectations for the scale and type of intensification that is expected within each area and provide greater direction when evaluating proponent driven Official Plan amendments for increased density.

The high-level geographies, objectives and policies of each area are outlined below:

Primary Intensification Areas

Primary Intensification Areas are geographic areas in the city which will accommodate the majority of the city's intensification and forecasted growth to 2031 and beyond.

The Primary Intensification Area will be comprised of major nodes and corridors, which may include various residential, mixed use, commercial or employment land uses in areas which have the greatest potential to accommodate intensification including: the city's Urban Growth Centre (UGC); mixed use areas of the Uptown Urban Centre; the Aldershot, Burlington and Appleby Mobility Hubs; the Plains Road/Fairview Street Urban Corridor; the Brant Street Urban Corridor and aging Neighbourhood Centres located south of the QEW

Primary Intensification Areas will focus on the intensification of under-utilized mixed use and employment areas (including Mobility Hubs) which have the greatest potential to accommodate significant population and employment growth and foster the development of pedestrian and transit-oriented neighbourhoods. Growth within Primary Intensification Areas will account for a majority of the city's growth over the planning horizon of the Official Plan and create a network of density that will support higher-order/frequent transit opportunities.

Policies for the Primary Intensification Area will require new developments to achieve intensification and promote developments which propose significant population/employment growth to locate in the Primary Intensification Areas to ensure that proposed redevelopments make the most of the development potential these areas offer. In addition, policies will ensure that these areas are planned to develop as complete communities and that Primary Intensification Areas are a focus for city, Regional and Provincial investment/upgrades to infrastructure and community infrastructure which may be needed to support significant population and job growth in these areas.



Secondary Intensification Areas

Secondary Intensification Areas are geographic areas in the city which may accommodate limited, site specific intensification opportunities to 2031 and beyond.

Secondary Intensification Areas will be comprised of commercial/mixed use designated areas and generally vacant sites which are not located within a Primary or Employment Intensification Areas and which are located immediately adjacent to an arterial street. In addition, staff propose that sites containing publicly-funded schools be generally identified as forming part of the Secondary Intensification Area in order to recognize potential redevelopment/intensification needs on these sites over the long-term which may not conform to the traditional residential land use designations applied to these sites.

Secondary Intensification Areas will consist of areas which may contain limited, site specific opportunities for intensification over the planning horizon of the Official Plan. However, to ensure the Primary Intensification Areas remain the primary focus for significant intensification and infrastructure and community infrastructure investment, these areas will not be intended to intensify at a scale or intensity equal to that of the Primary Intensification Area. As such, Secondary Intensification Areas will not be intended to accommodate a majority of the city's growth to 2031.

In order to meet the intent of the Secondary Intensification Areas, policies will include criteria to evaluate intensification proposals which involve an Official Plan Amendment for increased density. The criteria will focus on the proposed scale and intensity of the proposed development to ensure that the proposal will not result in significant unplanned population growth beyond that currently permitted under a site's existing Official Plan permissions and that the proposal will not require infrastructure/community infrastructure investments/upgrades in order to be accommodated.

This will provide staff and Council with greater control and predictability that development proposals involving significant population and employment growth will be focused/directed towards the Primary Intensification Areas. In addition, this will ensure that financial resources for potential infrastructure investment/upgrades required to accommodate growth are not being redirected to areas outside of the Primary Intensification Areas.



Established Neighbourhood Areas

Established Neighbourhood Areas are geographic areas within the city which may experience forms of intensification in accordance with Official Plan permissions only.

Established Neighbourhood Areas will be comprised of existing, predominantly residential neighbourhoods (including areas designated as Residential Low, Medium or High Density) as well as small neighbourhood-oriented commercial sites which are not located on an arterial street.

Established Neighbourhood Areas will be intended to accommodate existing development, redevelopment and intensification opportunities which are already currently permitted through a site's Official Plan land use designation. As such, Established Neighbourhood Areas will not be considered essential towards achieving population/employment growth to 2031 and beyond.

In order to maintain the stability of the Established Neighbourhood Areas and limit the potential for the introduction of significant and unplanned intensification proposals into these areas, policies will be introduced that prohibit privately initiated Official Plan amendments for increased density beyond that permitted through the underlying land use designation.

As a result, only the following forms of intensification would be permitted within the Established Neighbourhood Area:

- redevelopment/infill in accordance with Official Plan land use permissions;
- Consents to Sever;
- Plans of Subdivision; and
- Accessory Dwelling Units (e.g. second suites, including detached units).

This limitation would not prevent or preclude the potential for redevelopment or intensification of sites within the Established Neighbourhood Area but rather provide greater certainty that any proposals will be in keeping with the existing permissions provided through the site's Official Plan land use designation and compatible with the neighbourhood's existing built form, density, and scale.



Employment Intensification Areas

Employment Intensification Areas are geographic areas within the city which will support a majority future job growth on employment lands to 2031 and beyond.

The Employment Intensification Areas will be comprised of areas identified as city or Regional 'Areas of Employment' as identified at the conclusion of the city's Municipal Comprehensive Review. However, this will not include employment designated areas located in undeveloped areas outside of the built boundary as the proposed Intensification Framework is intended to apply only to developed areas where redevelopment and intensification would occur within an existing developed area context. While not forming part of the Intensification Framework, employment designated lands within undeveloped areas of the city will continue to be governed by the underlying land use designations and policies of the Official Plan and will continue to form part of the city's employment land inventory pending the outcome of the city's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

The Employment Intensification Area is intended to capture employment lands located within developed areas which have the potential to accommodate further intensification and job growth to 2031 and beyond.

Within Employment Intensification Areas, staff generally believe that existing Official Plan permissions/policies along with the implementation of Council endorsed policy directions provided through the Employment Lands Direction Report ([PB-02-15](#) as approved by Council January 26, 2015) will ensure that the Employment Intensification Area can continue to provide substantial opportunities for future intensification and job growth. A new policy is proposed that will promote significant employment intensification proposals to be located in areas which are in close proximity to transit routes and/or major, multi-purpose or minor arterial streets to ensure these proposals are adequately served by the city's transportation network. In addition, staff may review the need for any additional policies pending the outcome of the city's current Municipal Comprehensive Review for employment lands.

A comparative summary of the four Intensification Framework Areas is provided in Table 2 – *Intensification Framework Areas* below. In addition, a draft version of an Official Plan Schedule outlining the proposed Intensification Framework area geographies is contained in Appendix C of this report for information. Appendix C is intended for discussion purposes only and will be used as part of the public and stakeholder consultation and engagement that will be undertaken by staff as part of the development of the Part A amendment to the OPR.



Table 2 - Intensification Framework Areas

	Primary Intensification Area	Secondary Intensification Area	Employment Intensification Area	Established Neighbourhood Area
Intent	Intensification is promoted and required.	Intensification is promoted within existing OP density permissions.	Intensification is promoted.	Intensification beyond OP density permissions is not permitted.
Planning study and evaluation	OPA's for increased density may be considered and will be evaluated with site specific development criteria. City will prioritize area specific planning studies and public investment in these areas.	OPA's for increased density may be considered subject to specific intensification area policy criteria and site specific development criteria.	OPA's for increased density may be considered and will be evaluated with site specific development criteria.	OPA's for increased density <u>will not</u> be considered.
Development Timeframe	By 2031 and beyond.	May redevelop by 2031, however many of the lands are expected to redevelop in the longer term.	By 2031 and beyond.	By 2031 and beyond.
Use	Focus is on mix of uses.	Focus is on mix of uses.	Focus is on employment uses and uses ancillary to employment.	Predominantly residential areas and associated local commercial sites
Geography	Urban Centres, Mobility Hubs, Urban Corridors and aging Neighbourhood Centres south of the QEW.	Neighbourhood Centres north of the QEW, vacant residential or commercial sites located immediately adjacent to an arterial street and publicly funded school sites.	All lands designated as 'areas of employment' in the Official Plan.	Lands not otherwise identified as a Primary, Secondary or Employment Intensification Area including Residential Low, Medium and High Density areas and local commercial sites not located on an arterial street.



ii. Intensification Framework Implementation

As part of this new Intensification Framework, a new schedule is proposed to be incorporated within the Official Plan which will identify the geographic locations for each of the four areas described above within the city's urban area. A draft version of this schedule is contained in *Appendix C- Intensification Framework* of this report for reference and discussion purposes only. The draft schedule is not being recommended for Council endorsement at this time as it will be subject to further change/refinement based on the pending outcomes of other Official Plan Review work plans. In addition, staff plan to undertake further community engagement on the proposed geographies prior to delivery of the comprehensive Official Plan Amendment and final recommended schedule for Council consideration in Q4 of 2016.

In conjunction with a new schedule, staff also propose to introduce policy that will prohibit privately-initiated Official Plan Amendment applications that propose to modify the Intensification Framework schedule on a site or development specific basis outside of a broader comprehensive city-initiated review of an area or the Official Plan as a whole. The intent of this policy would be to ensure that the city's vision for intensification is implemented with a reasonable amount of consistency and predictability over time for the benefit of Council and the public and not altered through site specific amendments which collectively may erode or jeopardize the city's broader vision for intensification and other related city-building objectives over time.

While the framework should be reviewed and modified over time to ensure it is continuing to meet the needs of the city and aligns with Regional and Provincial policies and updates to Council's Strategic Plan, these reviews are proposed to be undertaken periodically and in conjunction with broader comprehensive reviews such as at the time of a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of the Official Plan, an Area Specific Plan and/or Official Plan amendments required in response to new or updated growth allocations from the Region of Halton. While this proposal will not eliminate potential Official Plan Amendments for increased density, it will ensure that such proposals are located in areas that are in keeping with the vision for intensification as outlined in the framework.

Staff have noted that the introduction of a new Intensification Framework and associated schedules and policies to the OP could potentially impact imminent development proposals which are either pending a formal application to the city or for which a development pre-consultation meeting has occurred. Therefore, as part of the delivery of the comprehensive Official Plan Amendment for Council consideration, staff will provide a plan for the phased implementation of the framework to ensure that the



public and development industry are provided an opportunity to formalize any pending development proposals to the city prior to the coming into force of the new framework.

iii. Informing Future Initiatives

While the purpose of the Intensification Framework is to establish a long-term vision for population and job growth through intensification, the proposed framework will also serve as an important first step towards enabling additional related actions and outcomes. Future work items which will be informed by the new Intensification Framework include:

- Informing amendments to the Official Plan's urban design and transportation policies to ensure that intensification is not only being directed to appropriate areas, but that proposals achieve a high quality of urban design and are currently, or planned to be, adequately served by transit and active transportation opportunities;
- Undertaking a parallel city-initiated intensification study that will identify the potential population and jobs capacity of Primary, Secondary and Employment Intensification Areas based on factors including existing/proposed Official Plan density permissions and market analysis of development potential in these areas. In addition, the study will identify potential infrastructure and community infrastructure constraints based on the areas potential capacity. This study will inform the drafting of detailed Official Plan policies as well as serve as an input to the Region of Halton's future growth allocation process to 2041 which may also include any further prioritization/phasing of the Primary Intensification Areas; and
- Undertaking Area Specific Plans for Mobility Hubs (see report PB-48-16).

In addition to the above Official Plan related actions, there will be numerous corporate actions needed to implement the intensification framework. These are discussed further in the "Connections" section below.



DIRECTION D: Amend the Official Plan’s definition of ‘intensification’ to conform to the Province and Region of Halton’s definition and undertake consequential amendments throughout the Official Plan

Issue:

The Official Plan’s current definition of ‘intensification’ does not conform to that of the Province’s Places to Grow Growth Plan or the Region of Halton’s Official Plan.

Background:

The Official Plan currently defines intensification as being “ [d]evelopment...which is proposed to be undertaken at a higher density or intensity than permitted under existing zoning...” (Official Plan of the Burlington Planning Area (1997), Part 8). This definition was developed prior to the introduction of the Province’s growth plan which defines intensification as development “...at a higher density than currently exists...” (Places to Grow (2006), Part 6). Various municipalities across the Province, including the Region of Halton, have since adopted the Province’s definition as part of subsequent Official Plan conformity exercises.

Proposed Direction: Definition of Intensification

It is proposed that the Official Plan’s definition of intensification be amended to achieve conformity with Places to Grow and the Region of Halton’s Official Plan by identifying intensification as development occurring at a higher density than that which currently exists on a site without reference to the existing zoning permissions. This will result in more developments being considered intensification within the city, particularly those which had previously been identified as ‘infill’ under the current Official Plan’s definitions. These developments will now become subject to the applicable intensification related policies of the Plan, including related evaluation criteria, further ensuring that developments are compatible with their surrounding areas.



DIRECTION E: Update the Official Plan's current development evaluation criteria for intensification proposals to better address a range of uses, built-forms and urban design.

Issue:

The Official Plan's existing development evaluation criteria for intensification proposals contains policies and wording which are heavily oriented towards addressing ground-oriented residential intensification, such as townhomes. As a result, these criteria do not adequately address other types of intensification proposals such as those containing mixed or non-residential uses as well as those which propose a mid or high-rise built form.

Background:

The Official Plan currently contains development evaluation criteria that are intended to provide guidance regarding the compatibility of a proposed intensification proposal with the surrounding area in terms of available community services, built form, parking, traffic and site orientation among other considerations. The criteria are utilized on a site-specific basis and is used in conjunction with other OP policies including the site's underlying land use designation, as well as city-wide policies that address broader intensification considerations such as transit supportive densities, public realm, urban design and multi-modal transportation and connectivity considerations.

Proposed Direction: Intensification Evaluation Criteria

It is proposed that the Official Plan's development evaluation criteria for individual intensification applications (Part 3, Section 2.5) be amended as follows:

- establish enhanced criteria that promotes urban design excellence and increased compatibility for mid and high-rise developments, including enhanced sun shadowing and wind impact considerations;
- enable new consideration of site layout/building orientation to facilitate future opportunities to achieve grid networks, short blocks, access to the street and active transportation connections across multiple properties (both public and private), where appropriate;
- introduce the ability to consider Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures when evaluating adequacy of on-site parking;
- introduce grading as an element for consideration when determining compatibility;



- add criteria to ensure that intensification proposals contribute towards a high quality public realm; and
- relocate intensification development evaluation criteria within the Official Plan to ensure it can be applied to all intensification proposals, regardless of whether the proposal contains residential uses.



DIRECTION F: Introduce policy that enables the identification of Strategic Investment Areas within Primary Intensification Areas by City Council.

Issue:

As the city transitions into a mature community there will be a number of development opportunities and constraints that will arise. Some of these opportunities and constraints will compete for financial and human resources, will have timing pressures and the need for prioritizing investments and efforts will increase.

A missed opportunity or barrier to development frustrates the advancement of city's community building vision. City Council, by Council resolution, may wish to identify a specific geography within the city as a "Strategic Investment Area (SIA)". By identifying a Strategic Investment Area, the city declares the area as a priority area that could receive a range of special attention measures to address issues within the SIA.

If used by City Council, SIA's would provide a focus on how the city allocates its staff, financial and time resources with respect to:

- influencing senior levels of government and agencies;
- conducting area specific plans (also referred to as master planning)
- conducting research and analysis and implementation actions;
- land acquisitions;
- capital works projects;
- public investment; and
- implementation of Community Improvement Plans;

Background:

The city's current Official Plan does not include the concept of a Strategic Investment Area

Proposed Direction: Strategic Investment Areas

It is proposed that an Official Plan policy be added to enable Council to identify a Strategic Investment Area as an area of focus for the use of an innovative financial and/or planning tool to overcome an identified constraint to intensification and to facilitate population and/or employment growth in accordance with Council's strategic priorities. Tools which may be considered include:



- (i) Development Related Fee Incentives;
- (ii) Capital investments;
- (iii) Community Improvement Plans;
- (iv) Community Benefits (Section 37 of the *Planning Act*);
- (v) Public/private infrastructure agreements;
- (vi) Area Specific Plans;
- (vii) City-initiated land acquisition/development;
- (viii) City-initiated Official Plan and/or Zoning By-Law amendments; and/or
- (ix) Economic development strategies.



DIRECTION G: Establish a new Mobility Hubs policy framework, including associated policies and mapping

Issue:

The current Official Plan does not identify the city's four Mobility Hubs, which include two provincially designated Mobility Hubs (Burlington GO Gateway Hub and the Downtown Urban Growth Centre and Anchor Mobility hub) and two city-identified Mobility Hubs (Aldershot GO and Appleby GO). Given the Strategic Plan objective and Official Plan objective to grow through intensification, the lands in the downtown Urban Growth Centre and at the city's key major Transit Station Areas are critical locations to direct intensification, achieve transit supportive densities and develop pedestrian and transit-oriented mixed use areas. Mobility Hubs capitalize on the presence of existing transportation infrastructure and present the opportunity to reorient to rail and make more efficient use of land.

Background:

In keeping with Places to Grow, existing policy in the Official Plan identifies major transit station areas (all GO stations and the downtown) and the Urban Growth Centre (downtown) as intensification areas with a pedestrian and transit-oriented focus; however, there is limited policy guidance to address how development should occur in these areas. The current Official Plan does not recognize Mobility Hubs as identified in The Big Move, and does not include the city's vision for these areas and specific policies to guide their development and redevelopment.

As a result, the city undertook a Mobility Hubs Opportunities and Constraints Study (MHOC Study) to inform the integration of Mobility Hubs into the Official Plan and other city initiatives, such as the Transportation Plan. The MHOC Study was delivered to Council in staff report [PB-54-14](#).

Shortly after the MHOC Study was received by Council, staff facilitated a Council Workshop on June 16, 2014 to discuss the study and receive Council input on key issues. To resource the Council Workshop discussion, staff prepared a [Mobility Hubs Briefing Note](#). Considerable background and planning context can be found in the previous staff report and briefing note.

The 2015-2040 Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of Mobility Hub lands. It contains specific guidance to direct growth and intensification to each GO station and the downtown, to undertake Area Specific Plans for each hub, and to enable walkable neighbourhoods in these areas.



Staff report PB-48-16 (available on the July 7, 2016 Committee of the Whole Agenda) presents the work plan for Mobility Hub Area Specific Planning.

Proposed Direction: Mobility Hubs Framework

A new Mobility Hub Framework is proposed as part of the current Official Plan Review in order to identify a clear vision for Mobility hub lands and to establish specific policies to guide their development and redevelopment. The Mobility Hubs policy framework will be incorporated into the following elements of the Official Plan:

i. Update the overarching Land Use Vision and Guiding Principles of the Official Plan to reflect Mobility Hubs.

The Land Use Vision and Guiding Principles will be updated to reflect the objective of promoting and supporting the integration of land use, transit and transportation. The plan will articulate a vision for Mobility Hubs that represents a mature state and incorporates compact, mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly development that achieves transit-supportive densities.

ii. Add Mobility Hubs Land Use Policies to guide development in all hubs.

A new section will be created to address mobility hub areas. The policies in this section will address the following:

a. Objectives:

Broad objectives will be identified to guide development in all hubs. They will include objectives to achieve:

- compact walkable, bikeable and transit-oriented development;
- transit-supportive densities;
- mixed use development, including employment, commercial and residential uses;
- a transportation system that prioritizes transit and active transportation modes and provides seamless connectivity between modes;
- land use compatibility;
- the provision of high quality open space and public realm;
- design excellence, including appropriate transitions to existing sites, creating urban street forms and blocks and achieving sustainable design; and



- develop Area Specific Plans to further refine the vision and set specific policies for individual hubs.

b. Policies to guide Area Specific Plans

Policies will be added to the Official Plan to address and guide the development of Mobility Hub Area Specific Plans. Policy will require detailed Area Specific Plans to be led and developed by the city in consultation with the Region, transit agencies, public agencies and institutions, utilities, land owners, residents and other key stakeholders.

Official Plan Policy will require that the Area Specific Plans address a range of technical studies and issues, such as:

- Proposed land use, mix of uses, transit supportive densities to support Regional Express Rail, heights, and built form;
- Transportation and parking studies addressing connectivity, target modal splits, priority measures for transit and active transportation, reduced/shared parking requirements, and mobility hub connectors (see Direction H for details on mobility hub connectors).;
- Urban design and sustainable building standards;
- Market and Land Economic Analysis;
- Financial Impact Analysis;
- Servicing;
- Environmental impact assessment and natural hazards; and
- Parks, open space, public realm and community infrastructure.

Area Specific Plan studies will also evaluate implementation tools and issues such as:

- The use of a Development Permit System or form based zoning;
- A priority list of city investments (i.e. transit, active transportation, public realm, etc);
- Community Improvement Plans;
- Phasing; and,
- Required updates to other city processes or standards.



Once completed, Area Specific Plans including detailed policies and schedules, would be adopted into the Official Plan through a city-initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA).

c. *Policies to guide development in hub areas prior to the completion of an Area Specific Plan*

While the city intends to proceed with Area Specific Plans for all hubs in the short term (see staff report PB-48-16 on the July 7, 2016 Committee of the Whole Agenda related to Mobility Hub Area Specific Planning) the Official Plan will include policies to guide development that occurs in Mobility Hubs prior to Area Specific Plans being completed and adopted by Council.

Prior to the adoption of an Area Specific Plan, existing land use designations will continue to apply to Mobility hub areas. It is important to note that the existing land use designations that will guide development in the Primary and Secondary zones ²of Mobility Hubs in the interim are comprised largely of Mixed Use Area and Employment designations. These land use designations will be updated through this OPR to better support intensification (e.g. updated policies to address urban design, built form, etc). In addition to the updated land use designations, existing city-wide functional policy (i.e. transportation policies, urban design policies) will also be updated to better support intensification. These improved policies will benefit all areas of the city, including Mobility Hubs.

In addition to the above noted city wide functional policy and the land use designations, development applications within the Primary and Secondary Zones (as identified in MHOC) that proceed in advance of an Area Specific Plan will be subject to additional policies to achieve the following:

² Primary Zone: Includes the transit station and associated facilities as well as the immediate surrounding area, approximately a 250 metre radius. The highest intensity, greatest mix of uses and greatest potential for change are expected within this zone.

Secondary Zone: Extends from the primary zone to approximately 400 metres from the transit station. Typically includes relatively high densities, mix of uses and enhanced connections.



- Plans that illustrate how the proposed development will relate to adjacent sites and fit within the vision of the Mobility hub. This will include strategies for phasing to achieve mixed use where applicable, address connectivity with adjacent sites and coordination with other landowners;
- Urban Design brief; and
- Parking analysis.

Policy recommendations for employment lands within Mobility Hubs will be presented with the Municipal Comprehensive Review/Employment Conversions recommendations in Q3 of 2016.

iii. Update Official Plan Schedules to reflect Mobility Hubs.

Mobility Hub Study Areas will be identified on a number of new and updated schedules within the Official Plan. The location of each hub study area will be reflected on the new *Urban Structure* (Appendix B).

In order to illustrate the relationship between land use, densities and transportation, a new schedule entitled "*Intensification Framework: Transportation Network*" (Appendix D) will highlight the critical alignment between Primary, Secondary and Employment Intensification Areas (based on the *Intensification Framework* in Appendix C), Mobility Hub Study Areas and the primary transit network, and mobility hub connectors (see policy direction H for further details on mobility hub connectors). The attached draft Appendix D is intended for discussion purposes only and will be used as part of the public and stakeholder consultation and engagement that will be undertaken by staff as part of the development of the Part A amendment to the OPR.

As each mobility hub is subject to an Area Specific Plan Study, a new set of schedules will identify the preliminary mobility hub study area boundaries, including the Primary and Secondary Zones as identified in the MHOC Study and the general area of the Tertiary Zones for each hub. Once completed and adopted by Council, the final Area Specific Plan will refine the boundaries of the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Zones and replace the respective Mobility hub Study Area schedule in the Official Plan.

iv. Add and update definitions to reflect Mobility hub terminology.

A number of new Mobility hub related definitions will be incorporated into the Official Plan, including: Active Transportation, Anchor Hub, Complete Street,



Gateway Hub, Mobility Hub, Primary and Secondary Zones, and
Primary/Secondary/Tertiary Connectors.



DIRECTION H: Update the policies and schedules in the Official Plan and Transportation Plan to recognize and integrate Mobility Hubs and connectors in the city-wide transportation system.

Issue:

The effective coordination of land use and transportation policy is key to the success of Mobility Hubs. Mobility Hubs present the unique opportunity to capitalize on the presence of existing transit and transportation infrastructure to support the development of new mixed use destinations in the city. Mobility Hubs also need to be effectively connected to one another and to other areas in the city.

As critical places of connectivity, the Official Plan, Transportation Plan, Transit Plans, road standards and city investments must reflect the intended function of Mobility Hubs and Connectors, in order to provide the required levels of transit service and to ensure different modes of transportation come together seamlessly.

Background:

A multi-modal approach is being taken as part of the Transportation Plan to develop a reprioritized and integrated transportation network, as reflected by the Strategic Plan. Planning and implementation of Mobility Hubs is linked to the city's commitment to investing in, building and growing the city's transit and multimodal network in supporting intensification areas as the city continues to grow in place. Official Plan and Transportation Plan policies have been developed concurrently in order to ensure coordination.

The current Official Plan includes extensive transportation policies in Part II – Functional Policy. The principles speak to supporting all modes of transportation; however the policies are predominately focused on the road network. Existing land use policy also supports pedestrian and transit-supportive development; however policies can be strengthened to achieve improved modal splits and the vision for Mobility Hubs.

Proposed Direction: Mobility Hub Connectors and Transportation System

Mobility Hubs need to be effectively connected to one another and to key destinations in the city. The MHOC Study identified these supporting transportation corridors as Mobility hub Connectors, which include:



- Primary Connectors (Brant Street, Plains Road/Fairview Street): Major thoroughfares with the ability to provide direct connections between hubs and act as strong pedestrian destinations.
- Secondary Connectors (Maple Avenue, New Street, Appleby Line): Other important roadways in the city that provide a viable alternative for linking hubs and have the potential to be strong pedestrian, cycling and transit corridors in the future. Through staff review, Appleby Line was added as a Secondary Connector since the MHOC Study.
- Tertiary Connectors (Centennial Bike Trail, Waterfront Trail, Hydro Corridors/Channels): Pedestrian trails and bike paths in the city that connect hub sites.

These connectors will be identified in Official Plan mapping (see Appendix D) and general policies will support their role. Policies will identify the need for enhanced levels of transit service (e.g. rapid transit) and facilities (e.g. waiting areas), the implementation of complete streets (including active transportation infrastructure and streetscaping) along Primary and Secondary Connectors. Policies will also ensure that connectors are addressed through Area Specific Plans to ensure the evaluation of transit oriented development and urban design approaches, and to ensure implementation through other city projects (e.g. streetscape studies, road standards, public realm improvement projects, complete streets and urban design guidelines, transit planning, etc.).

In addition to policies to guide Mobility hub Connectors, city-wide transportation functional policy will be updated to reflect the city-wide multi-modal approach identified in the Strategic Plan and Transportation Plan. This will include new and amended policies related to Transportation Demand Management, complete streets and active transportation.



Strategy/process

The recommendations in this report advance the city's planning for future growth and intensification. City building is evolutionary and will require ongoing fostering to manage growth appropriately.

Next steps include the commencement with area specific planning on lands located in the vicinity of Burlington's Major Transit Station Areas and Urban Growth Centre. The planning will commence subject to Council's consideration of staff report PB-48-16 scheduled for the July 7 Committee of the Whole meeting, and subject to project funding. Mobility hub planning will enable the city to update and refine the vision for these transit hub lands

Next steps within the OPR include the consideration of staff's assessment of employment conversions. Subject to Council's endorsement of Appendix A – City System, and Appendix B – Urban Structure as attached to this report, city staff will bring forward the employment conversion assessment report for Council consideration. Other major steps remaining in the OPR is to bring forward a consolidation of all proposed policy directions and related policy for consultation, and then a statutory public meeting with the proposed OP amendment.

Financial Matters:

There is currently \$300,000 remaining for the Official Plan Review which is sufficient in staff's assessment to fund delivery of Part A and Part B of the OPR. Any remaining funds will be used to supplement funding the Zoning By-law Review.

Connections:

The new urban structure represents a fundamental shift away from suburban planning to city building. In order to successfully implement the urban structure, coordination is needed across the city's departments and with agency partners to ensure related plans, policies, standards, processes and budgets are aligned with the vision for where and how growth will occur.

The following section includes messages from the Region and various city departments that highlight:

- i. key opportunities intensification brings to various service areas;



- ii. coordination issues between service areas to achieve the vision for the urban structure; and/or,
- iii. the impact of the new urban structure on upcoming initiatives and work plans.

Region of Halton

City staff have been working in consultation with staff from the Region's Legislative & Planning and Public Works departments regarding the development of the proposed Intensification Framework. Regional staff have indicated their general support for the city's proposed approach to growth management and intensification as outlined in the subject report.

City staff will continue to work with the Region to undertake additional coordinated analysis of the proposed Intensification Framework areas. This analysis will inform future Regional planning considerations, particularly with regard to future population and job growth allocations to 2041, phasing of growth, transportation planning, development charges and Regional water/wastewater infrastructure capital plans.

Stormwater/Engineering

Stormwater management will continue to be a critical functional consideration as the city transitions to a more mature and urban state. As sites redevelop and intensify, the city will apply design standards to control peak flows to a level that does not exist currently. Redevelopment provides the opportunity to enhance existing stormwater management engineering conditions which will result in reduced stormwater flows and improve storm system capacity and resiliency.

Transportation

It is critical to develop transportation policy concurrently through both the Official Plan and Transportation Plan. The coordinated development of key transportation policy serves to articulate the vision of a city growing up, not out. The city must offer real and better mobility choices to the car and reprioritize travel modes to favour pedestrians, cyclists and transit.

The coordinated approach to developing transportation policy represents a pivotal change to the way the city will be built, creating a purposeful alignment of land use and transportation. The proposed urban structure illustrates an opportunity to realize the transportation vision articulated through the Strategic Plan; that of a superior walking and biking city, a city that achieves the foundation of a complete community through the



direction of growth to strategic areas that are well serviced by primary transportation corridors and has great potential to achieve a higher degree of modal split. The proposed policy recognizes the multifaceted role streets play within our city and supports the notion that streets are more than just channels for movement, streets are first and foremost - public spaces for people.

The proposed policy directions support the overarching transportation goal of increasing mobility choice, with the greatest opportunity being realized through the development of Mobility Hubs policy framework. The establishment of Mobility Hubs policy aims to achieve a higher level of density within strategic intensification areas, while delivering compact pedestrian and transit-oriented development. The delivery of intensification done well is supported by a multi-modal transportation system that places emphasis on prioritizing active transportation and transit, developing an equitable transportation system that meets the needs of people walking, cycling, driving and taking transit; while striving to provide a seamless connection between modes.

The Transportation Plan will support the urban structure and intensification framework presented in this report, and will further refine the proposed transportation objectives and policies outlined in the Official Plan. The Transportation Plan will develop a series of strategic objectives and actions and will identify the specific plans, programs and activities that will require implementation in order to realize the transportation vision. Transportation staff will present policy directions for the Transportation Plan to Council in the fall. These policy directions will propose the fundamental changes to mobility in the city that are necessary to support the proposed urban structure and intensification framework, and to ensure that land use and transportation are properly aligned.

Transit

As the urban form changes in Ontario from lower densities to higher and more urban landscapes, the needs of the residents of these communities also changes. This is most evident when it comes to transportation, more specifically transit. While using transit as a primary mode of transportation is difficult to comprehend and envision in a North American context, it is apparent that transit is a key player in creating these new and desirable urban landscapes. Without proper expansion of our transit network, this vision of walkable, sustainable, and livable communities quickly falls apart when the only mode of transportation available to its residents are automobiles. While transit in North America has always been planned trying to achieve higher orders of cost recovery, it has been studied that greater rates of return come from transit networks which focus on becoming a competitive option to other modes of transportation, rather



than the only option. By providing a network which has higher frequencies and direct routing in an urban community designed for the pedestrian in mind, rather than the automobile, will yield higher growth in ridership and increase the quality of life for those who access to the service. Just like changing the urban form, growing a transit network takes time and investment, which will yield returns only in the long term.

The policies outlined in this report not only support more desirable and complete communities, but also aid in the creation of more efficient and desirable transit services. These policies will be the guiding frame work for future growth plans for transit, and will help us focus our growth strategically. Without these policies, and the investment it requires, many of the issues which spurred the creation of this vision will continue to grow and take away from what makes our city an outstanding place to live and work.

Finance

Understanding the city's intensification strategy allows for the investment in infrastructure to be aligned with strategic objectives and support the growth and development in specific areas. The city will further analyze the costs and revenues of varying forms of development. The recommendation of this report are reflective of the city's vision to achieve a more urban and intensified focus to actively shape the physical, social, economic and cultural fabric of the city as we grow. In 2016, Finance will be undertaking a Fiscal Impact analysis considering a variety of forms of development and density. The conclusion will be a useful component to the city's land use decision making and part of a full planning analysis which considers social, economic, financial, physical and environmental factors.

Community Energy Plan

The development of a policy framework to support intensification in Burlington's urban area supports a number of goals, objectives and actions in the Community Energy Plan (CEP). The CEP was endorsed by council in January 2014, covering community engagement, energy efficiency of buildings, local and sustainable energy generation, and efficient land use and transportation planning. How the city grows impacts how energy is consumed. For example, the transportation sector represents approximately 30% of the energy consumption in Burlington but 40% of greenhouse gas emissions. More intensified development in areas such as the Mobility Hubs, the downtown core and along major arterials can only help to support a more efficient and complete city with a sustainable transportation system. The forthcoming Phase 2 Integrated Community Energy Study will focus on these areas and provide specific



policy recommendations to ensure key intensification areas such as Mobility Hubs are district energy ready.

Capital Works and Parks and Open Space

The changing development patterns of Burlington will require changes to how the city plans for future parks and open space needs within the city, particularly in intensification areas. Changes to current practices regarding the planned size, location and function of new parks spaces and/or required enhancements to existing parks will be required to ensure that future parks and open space planning can serve the long-term needs of residents and workers in the city's intensification areas. This proposed Intensification Framework will help the city to better approach future planning for parks, open spaces and parkland dedications in a coordinated and planned manner going forward.

Accessibility

The economics of density will allow us to focus on and achieve key city building priorities, such as accessible and visitable housing (designing and building homes with basic accessibility that provides easy access on the main level for everyone), affordability, transportation demand management measures such as bicycle and car share facilities, and other amenities to improve the quality of development. These opportunities are not realized in traditional Greenfield development scenarios.

Public Engagement Matters:

The City of Burlington approved the city's Community Engagement Charter in 2013. As part of that charter, the city has committed to engaging residents in decisions that affect them.

Using the IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) spectrum of engagement as a guide, the city has, with different projects, informed the community, consulted with the community, involved the community in decision-making and collaborated with various community partners to reach decisions on projects and policies.

The city reconfirmed the commitment to engaging with residents on decision-making in Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040, approved in April 2016 (*Strategic Plan: An Engaging City*, 4.1.h).



The Official Plan and Transportation Plan are significant plans that greatly benefit from the input of the city's residents, business representatives, staff and community partners. The following section provides an update on engagement undertaken in support of this report and preliminary details on the remaining engagement strategy.

Urban Structure and Intensification Policy Directions Engagement

This report presents the work completed as part of a number of corporate and Planning and Building Department work plans, including the findings from the following specific studies and their respective public engagement programs:

- Council's Strategic Plan,
- Mobility Hubs Opportunities and Constraints Study,
- Employment Lands Study (Phase 1 and 2), and the
- Commercial Strategy Study.

A summary of all OPR Engagement and Communications undertaken to date can be found in Appendix F, and a summary of other corporate engagement and communication activities related to intensification and growth can be found in Appendix G.

Sustainable Development Committee

In addition to the broad consultation program noted above, staff met with the Sustainable Development Committee on a number of occasions to present and discuss the above policy directions, including:

- March 25, 2015: Mobility Hubs Council Workshop Briefing Note
- April 20, 2016: Planning for the future of Burlington, a conversation with Mary Lou Tanner, Director of Planning and Building
- June 1, 2016: Urban Structure and Intensification Directions contained in this report.

Following these meetings, the Sustainable Development Committee provided staff with written comments as input to the policy directions and planning process (Appendix E). Through their written comments, the Committee has indicated that members are generally in support of the potential policy directions and have expressed interest in continued involvement in reviewing the draft Official Plan policies. Staff have considered the written comments in preparing the directions in this report and the



committee's comments will be helpful in the drafting of policy. Staff will continue to consult with the Sustainable Development Committee.



Remaining Engagement Strategy

Development of Key Messages

A corporation-wide communication strategy is needed to ensure that the key messages from the Strategic Plan, Official Plan and Transportation Plan are clearly and consistently used in city communications. Staff from Communications, Planning and Building, Transportation, Transit and other city departments have been working together to develop a comprehensive communications plan that is aligned with the Strategic Plan, and that includes key messages in support of all corporate plans, with a specific focus on messages related to growth and intensification. These key messages will be used consistently by city staff when engaging the public on the OPR, Transportation Plan, development applications and at other public events that relate to growth and intensification. City staff will use the experience and research from previous engagement opportunities to develop this comprehensive communication and engagement plan.

Remaining OPR Engagement

Staff will continue to look for opportunities to inform, consult and involve the community in updating the Official Plan. We will reach out to youth, city committees, community partners and business partners. We will use both traditional engagement techniques, such as internal communication and media relations, but will also use newer techniques, such as online surveys and webcasting.

A detailed engagement and communications plan was created to support the Official Plan Review and is found in [Appendix O of staff report PB-53-12](#). Staff will review and update the existing plan to support communication and engagement activities through to the end of the OPR. The updated communications and engagement plan will be provided to Council for the specific consultation activities that will be undertaken as part of the final phase of the Official Plan review.

Charter Action Team (ChAT)

The city has experienced significant success in engagement but more work is to be done to make it part of the everyday fabric of our operation. City staff meet regularly with representatives from the community as part of the Charter Action Team (ChAT) to make sure this work continues. Staff will consult with the ChA Team on the engagement and communications program of the Official Plan and Transportation Plan.



Conclusion:

The detailed studies completed through the Official Plan and the work completed through the Strategic Plan have led to the policy directions recommended in this report. Council's in principle endorsement of the urban structure and intensification policy directions is a critical step in establishing the foundation for the Part A amendment to the city's Official Plan, and in enabling staff to bring forward the staff report containing the assessment of employment conversions.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendices:

- A. Draft City System
- B. Draft Urban Structure
- C. Draft Intensification Framework
- D. Draft Intensification Framework, Transportation Network
- E. Sustainable Development Committee Comments, dated June 2016
- F. OPR Engagement and Communications
- G. Corporate Engagement and Communications Activities
- H. Intensification Study Visualizing Density and Market Assessment of Intensification, a Report for the City's Strategic Plan, December 2015.

Notifications:

OPR Mailing List

Region of Halton – Ron Glenn, Director of Planning and Chief Planning Official

BEDC - Frank McKeown, Executive Director

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.