



**SUBJECT: Downtown UGC and MTSA Designations**

**TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.**

**FROM: Community Planning Department**

Report Number: PL-33-20

Wards Affected: 2

File Numbers: 505-01

Date to Committee: August 11, 2020

Date to Council: August 24, 2020

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**Recommendation:**

Request the Region of Halton, through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan, to adjust the boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre to generally align with the lands in proximity to the Burlington GO Station; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to provide all related planning studies and background information to the Region to support the adjustment of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre boundary; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the Region of Halton through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation from the downtown and delineate the boundaries of all other Major Transit Station Areas in Burlington; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the Region of Halton to implement a staged approval of its Municipal Comprehensive Review of their Official Plan through Section 26 of the *Ontario Planning Act* to prioritize the above issues; and

Request Provincial support of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan, including the adjustment of the boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre and make all necessary modifications to Provincial mapping; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare the appropriate amendments to the City of Burlington Official Plan upon Provincial approval of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station

Area designation in the downtown and to reflect the adjusted boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre.

## **PURPOSE:**

### **Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth.
  - Improve integrated city mobility.
  - Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment.
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## **Background and Discussion:**

### **1.0 Staff Direction**

On May 27, 2019, Council approved the following staff direction:

Direct the Director of City Building, after the conclusion of the studies conducted as part of (1) the scoped re-examination of the policies of the adopted Official Plan and (2) Interim Control By-law 10-2019 as amended (21-2019), to report on any changes to the Urban Growth Centre and Major Transit Station Area designations applicable to Burlington's downtown and the Burlington GO Station that could be recommended as a result of any proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments arising out of the studies

The staff direction is a result of Council's concern with unprecedented growth and development in the downtown. It anticipates that upon the conclusion of the studies for the scoped re-examination of the adopted Official Plan and Interim Control By-law (ICBL), recommendations could be provided regarding the appropriateness of the current Urban Growth Centre (UGC) designation and the Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) designation in the downtown. Council understands that the City has a role to play in accommodating intensification; the intent of the staff direction is to establish a clear framework for where future growth in the City should be directed.

### **2.0 Letter from Province**

On April 27, 2020, The City of Burlington received a joint letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Ministry of Transportation (see Appendix A) indicating that there is no provincial requirement for mobility hubs to be identified in municipal official plans. The Province also confirmed that the John Street bus terminal does not constitute a mobility hub given that it is not at the intersection of multiple Frequent Rapid Transit Network routes.

The letter also states that the Region of Halton, working together with the City of Burlington, has the ability to remove the identification of a mobility hub and the MTSA designation in Downtown Burlington.

It should be noted that the letter does not offer any advice regarding the location of the UGC or the process to refine its boundaries.

### **3.0 Planning Framework in Ontario**

To understand the recommendations of this report, a brief summary of the planning framework in Ontario is required.

In Ontario, planning matters are identified and considered through direction and policy established at three different levels of government: Provincial, Regional and Municipal.

The Provincial government addresses planning matters through legislation and policy documents such as: the *Planning Act of Ontario*, the *Provincial Policy Statement*, the *Places to Grow Act*, the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* and the *Greenbelt Plan*, among others. The Province takes a broad lens related to large-scale planning issues such as protecting the Province's agricultural land, ensuring opportunities for employment growth are maintained, protecting natural heritage systems such as woodlots and wetlands, and managing suburban sprawl by directing growth into the built-up areas of municipalities.

These broad Provincial directions are further refined through single / upper-tier Regional Official Plans. These are plans prepared by Regional governments to implement and conform to provincial legislation and policy while reflecting the Regional context. Regional governments are typically responsible for several municipalities and therefore their plans are generally focused on Region-wide matters within their jurisdiction.

And finally, Municipalities are required to prepare local Official Plans that address fine grain matters specifically affecting their local context while conforming to the planning framework established at both the Provincial and Regional levels.

It should be noted that most planning decisions made at the Regional and Municipal level can be appealed to the Province through the Local Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) for a hearing and decision. An exception to this is that Upper Tier levels of government such as the Region of Halton can update their Official Plans in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act* which would only require approval from the Province and would not be subject to appeal to LPAT.

### **4.0 Discussion**

The importance of focusing growth (i.e. transit supportive development) around higher order transit such as the GO rail network lies in the opportunity to make it easier for people to live in places without the need for a private vehicle or with a reduced need for

a private vehicle. If people who live in and around higher order transit can make most of their daily trips by transit, cycling or walking, they are less likely to require a vehicle. A reduction in the number of people who rely on vehicles will generally lead to a more active and healthier population, mitigate traffic congestion, and extend the lifespan of infrastructure such as roads and highways. It will also enable more efficient investment in community services and amenities.

Building on the work from the adopted Official Plan (2018), the Scoped Re-examination of the Official Plan (focused on the downtown), the Interim Control By-law Land Use Study, and the April 2020 letter from the Province, staff recommend the removal of the Downtown Burlington Major Transit Station Area designation and adjustment to the boundaries of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Center that focus on the Burlington GO Station area.

#### **4.1 Major Transit Station Area Policy Context**

In A Place to Grow, the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), a “Major Transit Station Area” (MTSA) is defined as:

“The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station or stop within a settlement area; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. MTSA generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk”.

The Growth Plan defines “higher order transit” as:

“Transit that generally operates in partially or completely dedicated rights-of-way, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve levels of speed and reliability greater than mixed-traffic transit. Higher order transit can include heavy rail (such as subways and inter-city rail), light rail, and buses in dedicated rights-of-way”.

The policy guidance from the Growth Plan indicates that for MTSA on *priority transit corridors* or subway lines, upper- and single-tier municipalities in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, will delineate the boundaries of major transit station areas in a transit-supportive manner that maximizes the size of the area and the number of potential transit users that are within walking distance of the station. The policies also indicate that lands within or adjacent to an MTSA be served by *frequent transit service*.

Schedule 5 of the Growth Plan identifies “priority transit corridors” (see Appendix B), which includes the Lakeshore West line to Burlington GO.

The Growth Plan defines “frequent transit service” as:

“A public transit service that runs at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening every day of the week”.

The Growth Plan recognizes matters of local context and that MTSAAs should be more closely reviewed and delineated through an upper tier Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of its Official Plan.

It is noted that the current Region of Halton Official Plan identifies the location of MTSAAs but does not define their precise boundaries (see Appendix C).

The delineation of precise boundaries for Burlington's MTSAAs is underway through the current MCR process with the Region of Halton as directed by the Growth Plan.

#### **4.1.1 Removal of the MTSA Designation in the Downtown**

In 2019 Dillon Consulting prepared the "Interim Control By-Law Land Use Study". The lands in the study area included the Downtown Urban Growth Centre (UGC) and lands in proximity to the Burlington GO Station.

The purpose of the land use study was to:

- Assess the role and function of the downtown bus terminal and the Burlington GO station on Fairview Street as Major Transit Station Areas;
- Examine the planning structure, land use mix and intensity for the lands identified in the study area; and
- Update the Official Plan and Zoning bylaw regulations as needed for the lands identified in the study area.

The findings of that work concluded that the term "major bus depot" is not defined in the Growth Plan and that, based on best practice of the typical characteristics of major bus depots, the Downtown John Street bus terminal does not currently function as a major bus depot. Investments are not anticipated to elevate the bus terminal's status beyond its current function as an intercity bus transfer point.

The downtown currently has transit supportive densities but with limited opportunities to provide higher order transit or transit in a dedicated right-of-way due to the narrow street configurations and the limited existing and future transit demand during morning and afternoon peak hours based on the current land use mix and limited major trip generators in the downtown such as major office or institutional uses. The City's adopted 2018 Official Plan recognizes the local importance of enhancing transit service and access to the Downtown however, the MTSA designation for the bus terminal is not commensurate to its role and function and the transit service level provided.

The growth framework from the adopted Official Plan identifies growth areas to accommodate the majority of intensification. The growth areas along the Primary Transit Corridor (lands in and around the three Lakeshore West GO Station MTSAAs) have an enhanced ability to accommodate growth as they will be guided by area specific planning in the short term and are located along higher order transit routes with planned frequent transit service by way of Regional Express Rail and linked by a frequent transit bus route (see Appendix D). The preparation of these area specific

plans for MTSAs will assist with optimizing future infrastructure investments that enable complete and compact communities. As noted above, the Growth Plan sets out specific direction about the delineation of MTSAs along higher order and primary transit corridors.

Given the ambiguity around the term “major bus depot” and the findings of the Interim Control By-law Land Use Study which considered the MTSA policies and definitions from the Growth Plan, and the direction contained in the letter from the Province, it is staff’s opinion that the downtown bus terminal does not constitute an MTSA. Staff recommend that this designation be removed from the Region of Halton Official Plan and City of Burlington Official Plan through the appropriate respective processes.

#### **4.2 Urban Growth Centre Policy Context**

The Growth Plan defines an Urban Growth Centre (UGC) as:

“Existing or emerging downtown areas shown in Schedule 4 and as further identified by the Minister on April 2, 2008.”

For reference, Schedule 4 of the Growth Plan is included as an appendix to this report (see Appendix E).

Policy 2.2.3.1 of the Growth Plan states that UGCs will be planned:

- a) as focal areas for investment in regional public service facilities, as well as commercial, recreational, cultural, and entertainment uses;
- b) to accommodate and support the transit network at the regional scale and provide connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit;
- c) to serve as high-density major employment centres that will attract provincially, nationally, or internationally significant employment uses; and
- d) to accommodate significant population and employment growth.

Policy 2.2.3.2.b) of the Growth Plan states that:

“Urban Growth Centres will achieve a minimum density target of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for Downtown Burlington”.

In 2008, the Province released a document titled “Size and Location of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe”. This document is supplemental to the Growth Plan and provides municipalities with details such as maps of the general size and location of UGCs to be implemented in their official plans. In effect, this document implements the “as further identified by the Minister” portion of the definition for a UGC found in the Growth Plan. It is noted that the Growth Plan first came into effect in 2006 and has been amended twice since then, in 2017 and 2019. While this supplemental document was created to support the original 2006 Growth Plan, it continues to apply to

the current 2019 Growth Plan. For reference, the map of Burlington's UGC from this document is attached as an appendix to this report (see Appendix F).

In the Region of Halton's Official Plan, the Urban Growth Centre boundary for each lower-tier municipality, including Burlington, is depicted on Map 1 Regional Structure (see Appendix C). Burlington's Official Plan identifies the boundaries of the UGC on various schedules; Schedule B-2 from the 2018 adopted Official Plan is included for reference (see Appendix D).

#### **4.2.1 Adjustments to the Boundary of the Urban Growth Centre**

The City has been monitoring development within the UGC and periodically reporting on how its tracking to its UGC growth target, through a density analysis which was initially undertaken in 2017 and more recently updated in 2019. Using a base year of 2016, the UGC Density Analysis captures developments in various stages of process from recently completed to newly proposed, to estimate new growth based on a series of assumptions applicable at the time and as outlined within each report. As a result of recent development pressures in the downtown the most recent analysis completed in 2019 shows an increase in density in the UGC based on approved developments, and a further potential increase in density after development applications under consideration are factored in. Although the UGC Density Analysis continues to evolve as new information becomes available, it does demonstrate that the City is on course to achieve its UGC growth target of 200 people and jobs per hectare by 2031.

The UGC in its existing configuration has been a benefit to the City as it generated investments in amenities, culture, parks, and infrastructure to support intensification. The UGC is forecast to meet its growth target by 2031 and has served its original intended purpose which was to:

- Revitalize downtowns to become vibrant centres;
- Create complete communities throughout the Greater Toronto Area that offer more options for living, working, shopping, and playing;
- Provide greater choice in housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages of life;
- Curb sprawl and protect farmland and green spaces; and
- Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices.

The land in proximity to the Burlington GO Station is an emerging area; recent proposed legislation and policy direction from the Province has reinforced the importance of transit-oriented communities. The existing Zoning and the proposed Zoning regulations that were developed as an outcome of the ICBL Land Use Study are the most flexible zoning regulations in the city to encourage investment and growth that supports transit-

oriented development at the Regional scale in line with the Provincial directive. The area around the Burlington GO Station is well positioned to accommodate an adjusted UGC boundary. An adjusted UGC boundary that focuses on the area around the Burlington GO Station would direct intensification to this area that is well served by dedicated rail transit with frequent service. It would support the eventual development of a vibrant, complete community around the Burlington GO Station. An adjusted UGC boundary focusing on the area around the Burlington GO Station would align with the intent of the Growth Plan, the Province's investment in transit infrastructure, and would promote City and Regional policy objectives.

This is further reinforced through the Region of Halton's MCR process which includes the Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS). One of the key outcomes of the IGMS is to inform changes to the Regional Structure. The Regional Structural components, key of which are the Major Transit Station Areas and the Urban Growth Centres across the Region, are the most critical Strategic Growth Areas that are identified to be defined by the Growth Plan.

The City's request to adjust the boundary of the UGC to focus on the Burlington GO Station is intended to inform the related policy framework through the current MCR process with the Region of Halton that could then inform a revised scope of work for the development of an area specific plan to support the long term development of the area as a UGC which would then be confirmed through amendments to the City's Official Plan.

Adjusting the boundaries of the UGC will provide clarity on the City's long-term vision for transit supportive growth while preparing for a new Provincial land use planning time horizon.

Given the policies from the Growth Plan regarding UGCs, the existing Zoning already in place around the Burlington GO Station, the Region's MCR, and the City's pending work for an area specific plan in this area (MTSA), it is staff's opinion that the objectives of the Province, Region, and City can be planned to be met, subject to the appropriate respective processes outlined in the recommendations of this report.

#### **4.3 Next Steps**

An adjustment of the UGC boundary to focus on lands around the Burlington GO Station would not require an amendment to Schedule 4 of A Place to Grow, contained at Appendix E to this report.

In accordance with policy 5.2.2.1.b) of the Growth Plan, the Minister has the authority to update the size and location of the UGCs. By way of the Region's MCR, adjusting the boundary of the UGC around the Burlington GO Station would not require an amendment to the Growth Plan; only an update to the map of the UGC in the document



titled “Size and Location of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe” (2008), contained at Appendix F, would be required.

As it is the Region of Halton’s responsibility to delineate the boundaries of MTSAs, staff will work with Regional planning staff to ensure the removal of the Downtown MTSA, the delineation of all other MTSAs, and the adjustment of the UGC boundary through its MCR process via Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. Should these be approved by the Region and Province, the City will then be able to update its Official Plan to conform to the Region’s Official Plan (and Provincial policy).

Phasing the approval of the above-mentioned components of the MCR through Section 26 of the *Planning Act* would be beneficial to the Region and City. Early implementation of any adjustments to the UGCs across the Region and delineation of the MTSAs would support the subsequent work of the IGMS and the MCR in general. This phasing would have the effect of supporting the Region in considering employment conversions informed by the Regional Structure as well as finalizing the remaining elements of the MCR.

Lastly, once the boundaries of the adjusted UGC and the GO Station MTSAs have been defined, it would provide further guidance to inform the re-initiation of local implementation work such as the area-specific planning processes for the MTSAs equipped with new guidance from the Region. The City would then be in position to implement its vision for intensification while providing clarity in our expectations for growth within a new land use planning time horizon. Specifically, in the case of the adjusted UGC and the Burlington GO Station MTSA, the area specific plan will be scoped to ensure that the lands will be planned to develop as a complete community and to meet the Growth Plan and Regional Policy objectives related to UGCs.

### **Strategy/process**

The recommendations of this report are a culmination of the work completed through the Adopted Official Plan, Scoped Review of the Official Plan, and ICBL Land Use Study. They are intended to inform the Province and Region of the City’s vision for growth going forward, which is to accommodate complete and sustainable communities within appropriate locations through transit supportive development. If approved, the recommendations of this report will enable a cascade of amendments to the related planning policy frameworks ensuring conformity at the provincial, regional, and municipal levels.

### **Options Considered**

The letter from the Province regarding Mobility Hubs and MTSAs indicates that there is no provincial requirement for mobility hubs to be identified in municipal official plans. The issue of Mobility Hubs is being dealt with through the draft decision on the

City's adopted 2018 Official Plan. An excerpt from the staff report released in June regarding Mobility Hubs is attached to this report as reference (see Appendix G). No further actions or options are required regarding the identification of mobility hubs in the City's Official Plan.

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### **Financial Matters:**

Not Applicable

### **Total Financial Impact**

Not Applicable

### **Source of Funding**

Not Applicable

### **Other Resource Impacts**

Not Applicable

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## **Climate Implications**

Burlington City Council declared a climate emergency in April 2019 in response to the concerns about the impact that a changing climate is having on the City and communities around the globe. On April 20, 2020, Council approved a Climate Action Plan which provides a framework to reduce the use of fossil fuels in the community, the main contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, which are causes of climate change.

The Climate Action Plan acknowledges that many factors that contribute to climate change are not controlled by the City. Accordingly, the Climate Action Plan focuses on the following key areas: low-carbon new buildings, deep energy retrofits for existing buildings, renewable energy, electric mobility and equipment, integrated mobility, waste reduction, and industry innovation.

The Official Plan has a role to play in ensuring that planning activities contribute to achieving the City's climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives. In accordance with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019), planning in Burlington must have as a guiding principle the need to "integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure – that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate – and moving towards environmentally sustainable communities by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions" (Growth Plan 2019, s.1.2.1).

Strengthening the connection between land use and transit in the Official Plan and directing growth to transit-supportive locations supports the City's objective to achieve a lower carbon footprint by supporting the development of a compact built form and supporting mixed use development that will encourage walking, cycling and transit by locating intensification in areas that are well served by higher order transit in priority transit corridors.

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### **Engagement Matters:**

City Planning staff have been working closely with Region of Halton through the MCR process to help establish an updated Regional urban structure. This ongoing collaboration relies heavily on local municipal input of its vision for growth. As such, Region of Halton planning staff are fully aware and supportive of the recommendations to remove the Downtown Burlington MTSA designation and to adjust the boundaries of the UGC to focus on the Burlington GO Station area.

City Planning staff have also consulted with staff from the Province about the recommendations found in this report. While no direct decisions or recommendations were provided, City Planning staff have a better understanding of how to proceed should Council wish to pursue the recommendations.

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### **Conclusion:**

The recommendations in this report, if supported by City Council, Regional Council, and the Province, will enable a strong policy framework that will better manage expectations for transportation services in the Downtown and support continued growth, development, and investment around the Burlington GO Station as an emerging community to live, work and play.

There is a strong rationale for removing the Downtown MTSA designation and adjusting the boundary of the UGC. The Downtown MTSA designation is not commensurate to the role, function, and the transit service level provided at the John Street bus terminal. The UGC has done its job in its current configuration; adjusting the UGC boundary to lands in proximity to the Burlington GO Station will enable sustainable and transit-oriented growth for future generations. This is supported by Provincial Policy, the letter from the Province as well as the directions and findings of completed planning initiatives such as the adopted 2018 Official Plan, the Scoped Review of the Official Plan, and the ICBL Land Use Study.

The changes proposed as a result of the recommendations from this report are not anticipated to require a further re-examination of the policy framework for the downtown

in adopted Official Plan. The only modifications required should be to conform with the proposed updated mapping from the Province and policies resulting from the Region's MCR.

Given further consideration of the Downtown and the Burlington GO Station, the municipal vision for growth and urban structure within the next land use planning time horizon has become clear. While staff are not aware of any precedent for the request we are making, this is an opportune time to proceed and ensure alignment with the Region's MCR.

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Respectfully submitted,

Heather MacDonald

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### **Appendices:**

- A. Letter from the Province
- B. A Place to Grow, Schedule 5
- C. Excerpt of Map 1 of the Region's Official Plan
- D. Schedule B-2 from City Adopted Official Plan 2018
- E. A Place to Grow, Schedule 4
- F. Size and location of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- G. Excerpt from Staff Report PL-16-20

### **Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Council. Final approval is by the City Manager.

## Appendix A: Letter from the Province

**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

Office of the Minister

777 Bay Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 2J3  
Tel. 416-585-7000

**Ministry of  
Transportation**

Office of the Minister

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[www.ontario.ca/transportation](http://www.ontario.ca/transportation)

**Ministère des  
Affaires municipales  
et du Logement**

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 17<sup>e</sup> étage  
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Bureau du ministre

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234-2020-651

Dear Regional Chair Gary Carr and Mayor Marianne Meed Ward:

We are writing you today to provide clarity on removing the Downtown Burlington mobility hub and Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) designation in the Region of Halton's Official Plan. We recognize the need for municipal flexibility and how one-size does not fit all. **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe** is responsive to the needs of local communities and supports local decision-making.

We would like to confirm that there is no provincial requirement for mobility hubs to be identified in municipal official plans, including Downtown Burlington. As a result of extensive advocacy from MPP Jane McKenna since July 2018, we agree that the John Street bus terminal does not constitute a mobility hub given that it is not at the intersection of multiple Frequent Rapid Transit Network routes. Consequently, we have directed Metrolinx to remove legacy documents that refer to the 2008 mobility hubs, including the Guidelines.

We acknowledge that, in 2011, under the Liberal government, the then Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing made the decision to identify the Downtown Burlington mobility hub when approving the Region of Halton's Official Plan. This decision was taken with the advice of Metrolinx, based on the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan.

Furthermore, the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, issued in 2018, refined the concept of mobility hubs to focus on MTSAs along subway lines and priority transit corridors, as identified in Schedule 5 of **A Place to Grow**. As a result of changes to the policy framework for planning in the Greater Golden Horseshoe by our government, we do not require mobility hubs to be identified in municipal official plans.

Therefore, the Region of Halton, working with the City of Burlington, has the ability to remove the identification of a mobility hub and an MTSA in Downtown Burlington, centred on the John Street bus terminal, from its Official Plan.

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This can be implemented through a municipal official plan amendment under section 17 of the *Planning Act*, outside of a municipal comprehensive review, as this is not a matter of conformity with *A Place to Grow* given that mobility hubs are not a component of the Growth Plan. Alternatively, the Region of Halton and the City of Burlington may address this matter at the time of the next municipal comprehensive review, as part of an official plan amendment initiated under section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

In a letter dated November 12, 2019 from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we indicated that our government has taken the position that municipalities may choose to take a phased approach to their municipal comprehensive review through multiple municipal official plan amendments under section 26. This means that the Region can submit an amendment to remove the Downtown Burlington mobility hub and MTSA designations in the Region of Halton's Official Plan now.

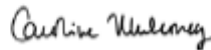
We want to thank MPP Jane McKenna for bringing this to our attention and for her tireless advocacy on this issue.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Alex Beduz, Chief of Staff, Office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, at [alex.beduz@ontario.ca](mailto:alex.beduz@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

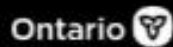
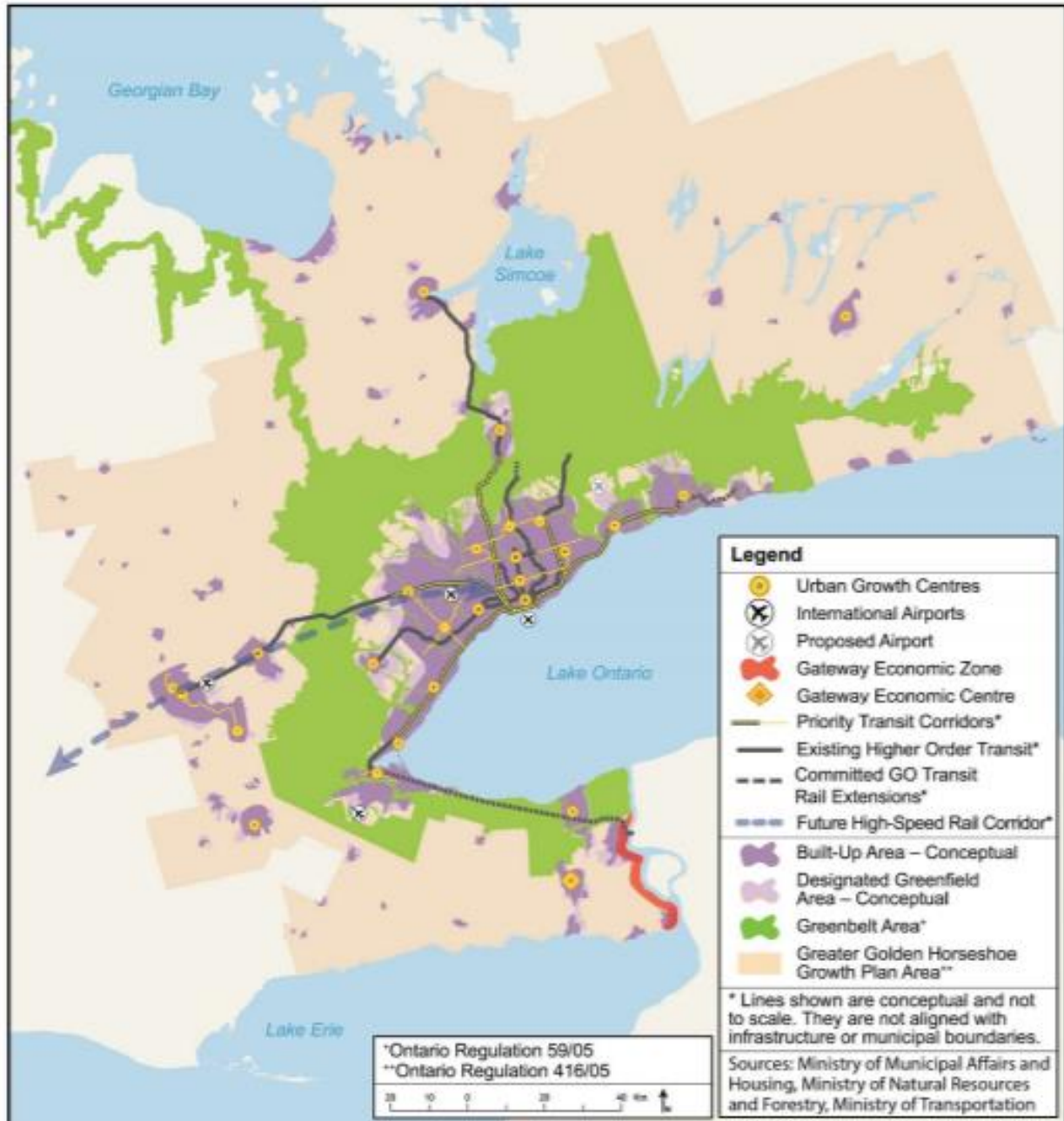


Caroline Mulroney  
Minister of Transportation

C. Head, planning departments of City and Region



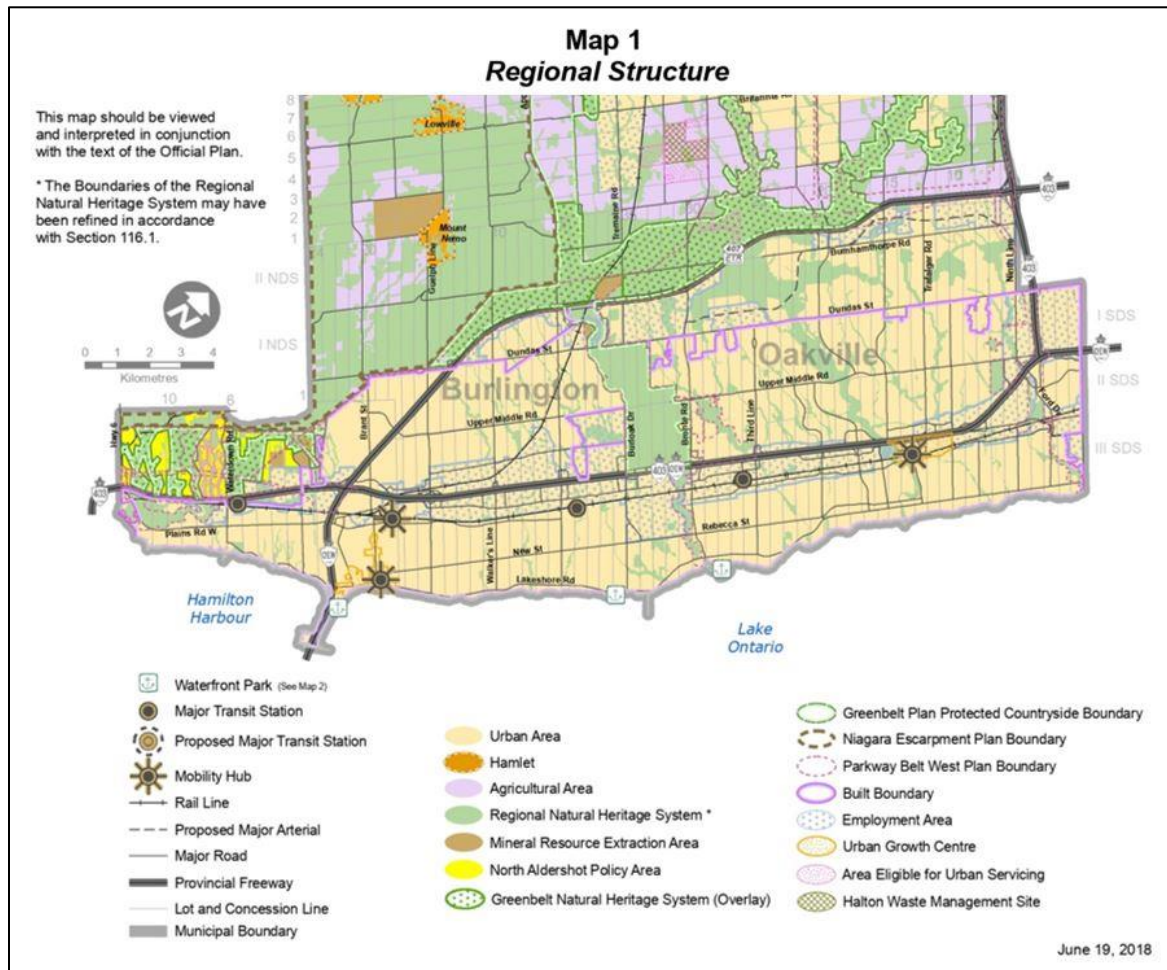
Appendix B: A Place to Grow, Schedule 5



SCHEDULE 5  
 Moving People - Transit

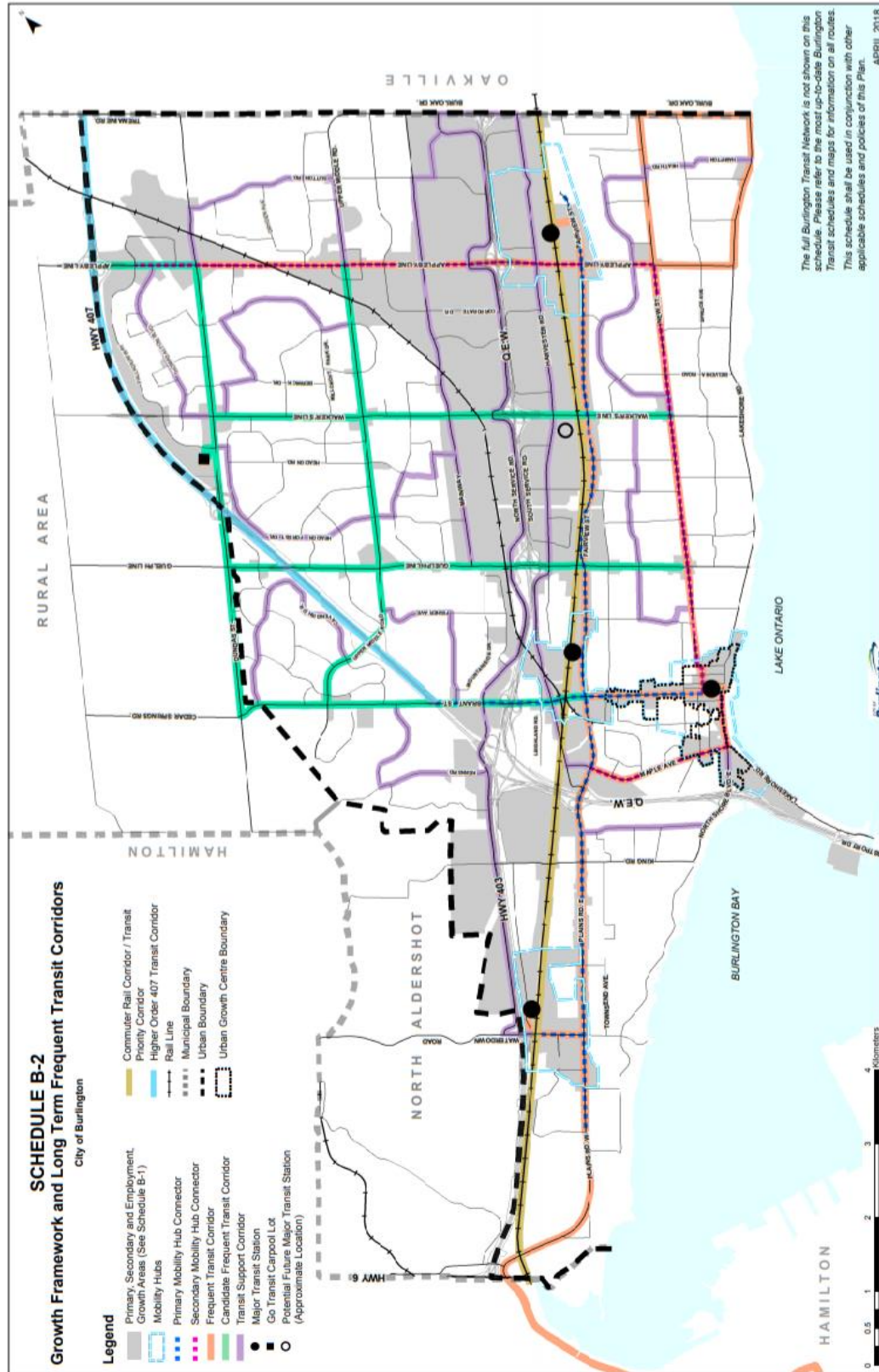
Note: The information displayed on this map is not to scale, does not accurately reflect approved land-use and planning boundaries, and may be out of date. For more information on precise boundaries, the appropriate municipality should be consulted. For more information on Greenbelt Area boundaries, the Greenbelt Plan should be consulted. The Province of Ontario assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences of any use made of this map.

Appendix C: Excerpt of Map 1 of the Region's Official Plan

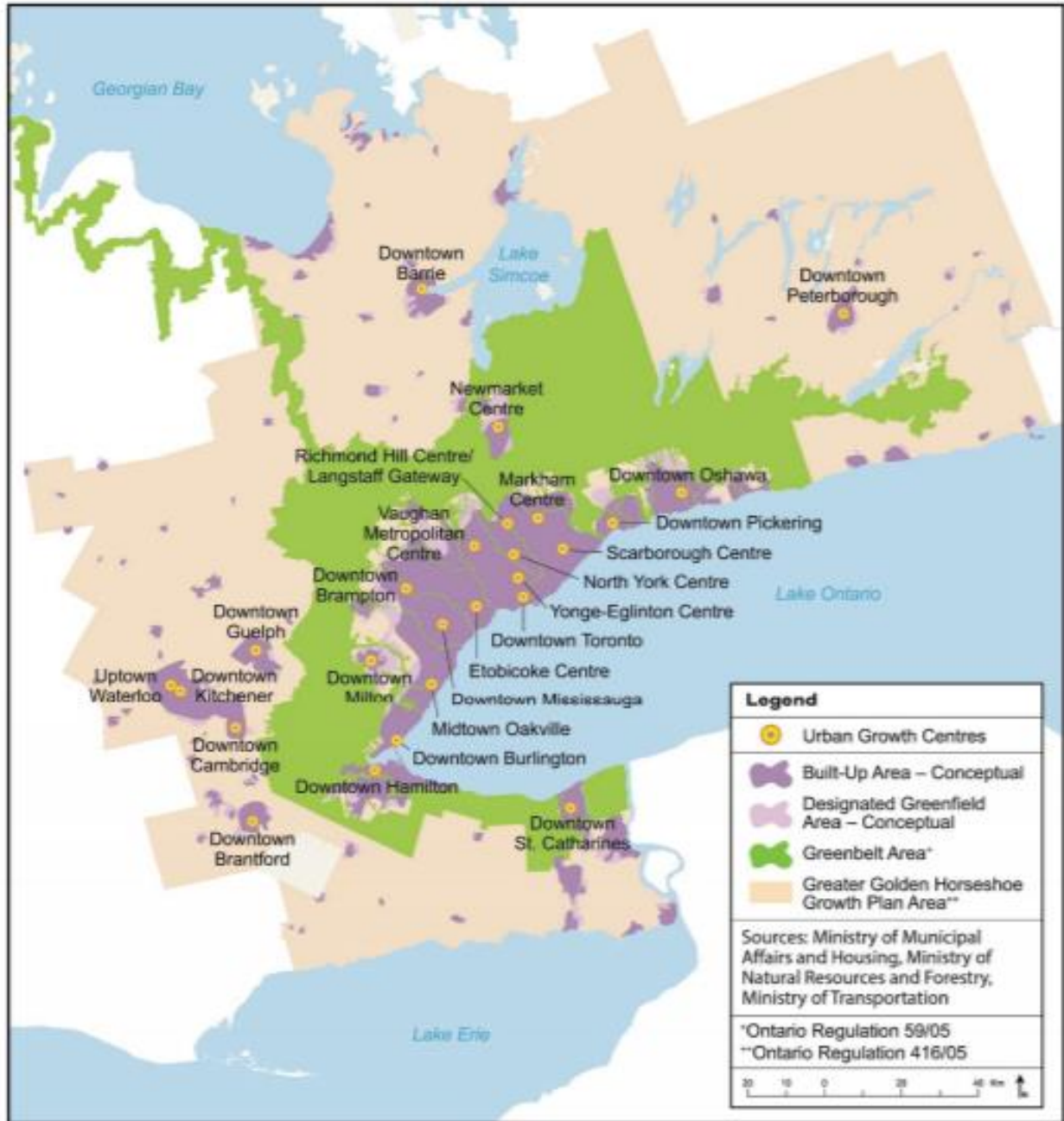




Appendix D: Schedule B-2 from City Adopted Official Plan 2018



Appendix E: A Place to Grow, Schedule 4



## Appendix F: Size and location of Urban Growth Centres in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

### Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre



Image description: Map of the approximate size and location of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre in the vicinity of Brant Street and Lakeshore Road.



**Appendix G: Excerpt from Staff Report PL-16-20**

b) Mobility Hub term not included

The recommended policies presented in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 have not included reference to the term Mobility Hub. The term Mobility Hub has changed significantly in its meaning over time. In the Big Move (2008) Downtown Burlington and Burlington GO were both identified as Mobility Hubs on Schedules 1 and 2 of that document. The Downtown was considered an Anchor Mobility Hub and Burlington GO was considered a Gateway Mobility Hub. The Big Move defined Mobility Hubs as:

Major transit station areas, as defined in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, that are particularly significant given the level of transit service that is planned for them and the development potential around them. They are places of connectivity between regional rapid transit services, and also places where different modes of transportation, from walking to high-speed rail, come together seamlessly. They have, or are planned to have an attractive, intensive concentration of employment, living, shopping and enjoyment around a major transit station. To be identified as a mobility hub, a major transit station area must be located at the interchange of two or more current or planned regional rapid transit lines as identified in the RTP, and be forecasted in the RTP to have 4,500 or more combined boardings and alightings in the morning peak period in 2031. In addition, these areas are generally forecasted to achieve or have the potential to achieve a minimum density of approximately 10,000 people and jobs within an 800 metre radius. The primary major transit station area associated with an urban growth centre are also identified as mobility hubs, as are Pearson Airport and Union Station due to their roles as the GTHA's primary international gateways. (For more information see the backgrounder "Mobility Hubs, December 2008")

The definition was also supported in The Big Move by a series of policies ranging from developing a financial plan for facilitating mobility hub-related capital improvements and to facilitate development of these hubs, to parking studies and other various strategies and financial and development tools and other supportive policies that included land use planning related issues. Policy 7.10 of the Big Move stated that:

The regional rapid transit and highway network in Schedules 1 and 2 shall be incorporated into all municipal Official Plans, and these planned transit services shall be used as the basis for determining appropriate land uses and densities in conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The Big Move acknowledged and reinforced the primacy of the Growth Plan. In defining the term mobility hub, The Big Move referenced the term Major Transit Station Areas

(MTSA), which is a defined term in A Place to Grow, the current version of the Growth Plan. An MTSA is defined as:

The area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within a settlement area; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Major transit station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

The policies of the Official Plan must conform to the policies of A Place to Grow.

Both the Downtown and Burlington GO were identified in the Halton Region Official Plan (ROP) as MTSAs and Mobility Hubs within the Regional Structure as part of the approval process for Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) #38 in 2009. In addition to being identified on the Regional Structure Schedule the term Mobility Hub was also defined:

MOBILITY HUB means Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA's) that are designated by Metrolinx as regionally significant given the level of transit service that is planned for them and the development potential around them. They are places of connectivity between rapid transit services, and also places where different modes of transportation, from walking to high-speed rail, come together. They have, or are planned to have a concentration of mixed use development around a major transit station. Given the high level of transit service at or forecasted for Mobility Hubs relative to other MTSAs, it is recommended that the Mobility Hub areas receive a commensurately higher level of development intensity and design consideration that supports transit and multi-modal travel than what may be applied in other MTSAs.

In the consideration first of the Official Plan Review and ultimately in the development of a new Official Plan, the City undertook a technical study of 4 key MTSAs (Aldershot GO, Appleby GO, Burlington GO and Downtown Burlington), two of which were mobility hubs identified by Metrolinx. The City adopted the term Mobility Hub to apply to all 4. The adopted Official Plan (2018) established Mobility Hub Study area boundaries and included policies to guide area specific planning. The City initiated area specific planning for the Downtown and the other three Mobility Hubs in 2016.

Subsequently Metrolinx prepared the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (2018) which replaced The Big Move, and re-oriented the discussion around Mobility Hubs to focus on identifying Mobility Hubs on Priority Transit Corridors. The 2041 RTP defined Mobility Hubs as:

Mobility Hubs are Major Transit Station Areas at the intersection of two or more Frequent Rapid Transit Network routes, designed to support a high number of transit boardings and alightings, and facilitate seamless, efficient transfers between modes. They have and/or are planned to have a high density mix of jobs, residences, public services, and other land uses that encourage and support transit use and active transportation, or the potential to develop into areas with a high-density mix of land uses. See Major Transit Station Area.

Map 5: Frequent Rapid Transit Network of the 2041 Metrolinx RTP identifies the “existing or in-delivery GO Stations” which are located on Priority Transit Corridors. The John Street Bus Terminal is not shown on Map 5: Frequent Rapid Transit Network of the 2041 Metrolinx RTP, nor is it on the Priority Transit Corridor as shown on Schedule 5: Moving People - Transit in A Place to Grow.

In addition changes to the 2017 Growth Plan and carried forward in the 2019 Growth Plan required that the upper tier municipality delineate the boundary and densities of MTSA's and sets minimum densities for MTSA's on Priority Transit Corridors. As a result, it is no longer up to the City of Burlington to delineate the boundaries around MTSA's or Mobility Hubs.

In 2019 the City initiated an Interim Control By-law (ICBL) Land Use Study to examine the role and function of both the Downtown and Burlington GO (defined study area). As an outcome of this study the City established an MTSA typology which reinforced that the Downtown Major Transit Station Area should be differentiated from the other Major Transit Station Areas located along the GO rail line through a policy framework in the Official Plan.

In April, 2020 City of Burlington Mayor and Council received a joint letter from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Transportation concerning the Mobility Hub and Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) designations applying to Downtown Burlington. This letter clarified that the John Street Bus Terminal is not considered a Mobility Hub and that the province does not require municipal Official Plans to identify mobility hubs, and identified steps that the Region of Halton and City of Burlington may take if pursuing the removal of the mobility hub and MTSA designations from Downtown Burlington. It was also indicated in the letter that Metrolinx had been directed to remove legacy documents that refer to the 2008 Mobility Hubs, including the guidelines. The letter from the Ministries does not refer to the Urban Growth Centre (UGC) designation that also applies to Downtown Burlington in the provincial Growth Plan (“A Place to Grow”).

Given the revised definition of Mobility Hubs in the Metrolinx 2041 RTP (2018), the policy direction of the Growth Plan (2019), the findings of the ICBL Land Use Study, and

the joint letter from the Ministers, the recommended policies no longer identify the Downtown as a Mobility Hub. In this case, and given the direction from the Province and additional land use study, the use of the term “Mobility Hub” is an outdated term. The RTP identifies that:

Metrolinx provides occasional input to the Province’s review of the official plans of upper- and single-tier municipalities through the Province’s One Window process, which is a formal mechanism for reviewing municipal plans. Metrolinx can also ask to review planning applications submitted to municipalities and other planning documents (e.g., secondary plans and zoning by-law amendments), but there is no formal mechanism to guide this process and for Metrolinx to advise on alignment with the RTP. Strategy 4 recommends development of such a process.

Although the Burlington GO Mobility Hub is identified on Map 5: 2041 Frequent Rapid Transit Network of the 2041 Metrolinx RTP as an “existing or in-delivery GO Stations” located on a Priority Transit Corridors identified on Schedule 5: Moving People -Transit of a Place to Grow it is reinforced that municipal Official Plans are not required to conform to the 2041 Metrolinx RTP and, as the letter states, there is no provincial requirement for mobility hubs to be identified in municipal official plans. From a land use planning perspective it is appropriate to move away from the term Mobility Hub as the term MTSA provides sufficient guidance.

The draft decision on the City’s adopted Official Plan will remove the term Mobility Hubs and will also develop Special Planning Areas to establish boundaries to guide area specific planning and to apply MTSA policies until such a time as the Region confirms a formal MTSA boundary through the Municipal Comprehensive Review. It is important to note that the Downtown is considered an MTSA and any change to this designation may only occur through the Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review. The ICBL Land Use Study recommended that the Downtown MTSA be treated differently than the MTSA’s on the priority transit corridor. City Staff will be preparing a report to Council regarding the MTSA designation of the Downtown and UGC boundary based on the findings of the ICBL land use study. Further recommendations from staff regarding the Downtown MTSA may come from that report.