



SUBJECT: Regional Official Plan Review ROPA 49 staff comments

TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.

FROM: Community Planning Department

Report Number: PL-37-22

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 150-14-03

Date to Committee: May 10, 2022

Date to Council: May 17, 2022

Recommendation:

Authorize the Director of Community Planning to submit community planning department report PL-37-22, in advance of Council approval, as the City of Burlington submission on the Region of Halton's Draft Regional Official Plan Amendment Number 49; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to provide any further comments to the Region, if any, upon Council's decision on May 17, 2022.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide staff comments in advance of the May 13, 2022 deadline for comments on the [draft Regional Official Plan Amendment \(ROPA 49\)](#) which has been prepared to implement the Integrated Growth Management Strategy, the findings of the Region's supporting Land Needs Assessment Methodology. This report will also provide comments on the Policy Directions Report.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
 - Improve integrated city mobility
 - Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
 - Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
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Executive Summary:

City of Burlington staff have reviewed the Region of Halton's Draft Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 49 which was released on March 24th, 2022 for the statutory public consultation process. The process and detailed work undertaken to date in developing draft ROPA 49 has been comprehensive and collaborative. Staff have reviewed and provided the comments identified in this report to support the Region in the finalization of the amendment to implement the Integrated Growth Management Strategy.

Background and Discussion:

1.0 Regional Official Plan Review

The Regional Official Plan Review has been underway since 2014 and is being implemented in a series of amendments under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*. Through a phased approach to implement the work associated with the Integrated Growth Management Strategy, the Region advanced Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 48 which established a Regional Urban Structure that supports the local plans and priorities focusing on the Urban Area. ROPA 48 was adopted by the Region in July 2021 and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in November 2021.

As part of the IGMS work to identify how and where Halton might grow to 2051, the Region released the Growth Concepts Discussion paper on four growth concepts and an accompanying evaluation of those concepts. In April 2021, Regional Council directed staff to develop an additional growth concept that considered no new urban boundary expansion and an analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions for the growth concepts. Through Report [PL-21-21: Submission on the Region of Halton' Growth Concepts Discussion Paper](#), city staff presented comments on the Growth Concepts discussion paper which were endorsed by City Council and forwarded to the Region for consideration.

In January, through Report [PL-06-22: Submission on Region of Halton' Draft Preferred Growth Concept and Draft Land Needs](#), city staff informed City Council of the Region's materials released at the November 2021 Regional Council workshop and presented the Draft Preferred Growth Concept and identified the key findings of the Land Needs Assessment for Burlington .

The purpose of the report was to introduce Halton Region's Draft Preferred Growth Concept, the associated Draft Land Needs Assessment and to provide comments from the City of Burlington's perspective to inform the completion of the Integrated Growth

Management Strategy (IGMS) and the next stage of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review/Regional Official Plan Review (ROPR). The Draft Land Needs Assessment and the Draft Preferred Growth Concept presented an approach to accommodating population and employment to 2051 in Halton. Report PL-06-22 also provided a [detailed chronology](#) of the Regional Official Plan review process.

City staff highlighted the “intensification-first” approach taken to distributing growth to 2051 as a critical element of the Draft Preferred Growth Concept and the importance of continuing to seek new approaches to emphasize and embed an intensification-first approach that can respond to trends, challenges and opportunities associated with achieving the broader objectives of the Province, the Region and the City of Burlington.

On February 9, 2022, the Region held an additional [Regional Council Workshop](#) where staff released additional and updated information, technical analysis to support the draft Preferred Growth Concept and provided an opportunity to respond to questions and requests for clarification on the draft Preferred Growth Concept raised by Council and the public since the November 2021 Council workshop. The Region also released the draft Policy Directions to implement the Integrated Growth Management Strategy and the Preferred Growth Concept, and to guide updates to the Regional Official Plan (through an associated amendment) on policies related to climate change, the rural and agricultural system, natural heritage system, the North Aldershot policy area, Indigenous consultation, and implementation. No decisions were made at this workshop.

At its February 16, 2022 meeting, Regional Council adopted a [Motion supporting a Modified Preferred Growth Concept](#). The motion directed Regional staff to prepare a Regional Official Plan Amendment that advances a Modified Preferred Growth Concept in two phases:

- Population and employment growth before 2041 will be directed to the existing approved urban boundary.
- A clear framework will be provided for when and how planned growth between 2041 and 2051 should be distributed. This framework will be based on principles of minimizing land consumption, making the most efficient use of land and infrastructure, and achieving other principles of the Growth Plan.
 - The findings of the Affordable Housing Task Force, Natural Heritage and Water Resources Impact Assessment and Agricultural Impact Assessment will be considered in the preparation of the policy framework for growth post-2041.
 - The specific distribution of growth post-2041 will be defined in a Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) prior to or in parallel with the next statutory 5-year OP review.

The Motion also directs staff to:

- schedule a Statutory Public Meeting and Open House to obtain comments on an updated draft ROPA 49 no later than April 30, 2022; and
- prepare its recommendation report and bring it forward to Regional Council, so ROPA 49 could be adopted and forwarded to the Province for approval to meet the July 1, 2022 conformity deadline, subject to being directed by the Minister to meet an alternative date, as requested by the Region and other municipalities.

The motion also directed regional staff to hold a statutory public meeting and open house on an updated draft ROPA 49 no later than April 30, 2022 and advance the amendment to Regional Council for adoption to meet the July 1, 2022 Provincial conformity deadline.

On March 23, 2022, Regional staff provided Council with an update on the Regional Official Plan Review (ROPR) workplan and the following project milestones to implement ROPA 49:

- March 24, 2022 – Release of Draft ROPA 49 for Public Consultation
- April 6, 2022 – Public Information Centre/Open House
- April 13, 2022 – [Statutory Public Meeting of Regional Council](#)
- May 13, 2022 – Deadline for comments on Draft ROPA 49
- June 15, 2022 – Recommendation report to Regional Council on ROPA 49.

The Region also intends to bring forward a Policy Directions report for Regional Council consideration in May 2022. The Region expects to advance an associated ROPA related to the Rural and Agricultural System, Natural Heritage System, North Aldershot, and Climate Change for consultation in 2023.

2.0 Draft Modified Preferred Growth Concept and ROPA 49

In response to Regional Council's direction, the Region has prepared an updated [draft ROPA 49](#) that implements the results of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy, which directs all growth to 2041 within the existing Regional Urban Boundary and provides a framework for determining how and when growth between 2041 and 2051 will be distributed through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Draft ROPA 49 updates the policies and mapping related to the Regional Urban Boundary, the Regional Urban Structure, the Strategic Growth Areas, and the Employment Areas. It includes the following:

- A distribution of population and employment growth to 2041 by local municipality;
- Updates to the intensification and density targets;
- A framework for planning for growth between 2041 and 2051;
- Revisions to the policy framework and identification of additional Regional Nodes;

- A new policy framework and identification of Regional Intensification Corridors;
- An updated policy framework for the Region's Employment Areas; and
- Mapping updates, including to delineate the existing Regional Urban Boundary and to delineate the existing Regional Employment Areas based on the supported conversions, additions and revisions.

This report does not speak to the content of the technical studies associated with draft ROPA 49 aside from the Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment. This technical work was prepared based on an urban boundary expansion and since draft ROPA 49 directs all growth to 2041 within the existing Regional Urban Boundary, the technical work, with the exception of the Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment, is not relied upon. Staff advise that at the time of consideration of a future urban boundary expansion the detailed comments and concerns noted in response to the technical studies as a result of work with City departments will be brought forward. Staff also note that the studies that have been released to date will likely need to be updated at such time that an urban boundary expansion is contemplated through a future statutory 5-year Regional Official Plan review process. Staff look forward to working collaboratively with the Region to collecting data to inform updated and refinements to those studies, where possible and to provide comments on the finalized studies.

2.1 Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment

To support the Integrated Growth Management Strategy and the updated draft ROPA 49, the Region released the [Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment \(March 2022\)](#). The purpose of a Land Needs Assessment (LNA) is to determine the land needs of the Region to accommodate population and employment forecasts to 2051, in alignment with Schedule 3 of A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The LNA prepared for the Preferred Growth Concept, which was provided to Regional Council at the February 9, 2022 Council Workshop, treated the 30-year planning period (2021-2051) as a single analysis in accordance with the Province's Land Needs Assessment Methodology. However, Regional Council's direction has the effect of dividing the updated LNA into two segments, the first being the 20-year period from 2021 to 2041 and the second being the final 10-years of the planning period from 2041 to 2051.

In terms of the overall land need to 2051, the Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA identifies 2,190 ha of total land need. However, this land is not required prior to 2041, but will be needed to accommodate growth between 2041 and 2051. As an urban boundary expansion to accommodate growth post 2041 is proposed to be identified at a later date through a subsequent statutory 5-year Official Plan Review, the LNA does not provide the municipal allocation of growth between 2041-2051 nor does it identify the

location of the urban boundary expansion. The LNA will likely need to be updated at the time that the Region proceeds with allocating growth post 2041.

Key Findings for Burlington

The following section takes a closer look at the Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment (2022) and compares the findings with the Draft Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment (2021); the findings of which were shared with Council through staff Report PL-06-22, and with the City’s Growth Analysis Study which was completed in 2019 to inform and support the work at the Region. It’s important to note that the City’s Growth Analysis Study was carried out independently and in absence of any of the Region’s work and the findings of each should be viewed as two perspectives on growth management, with the City’s study providing a local lens to the broader Region-wide work.

The following table has been prepared to present the differences between the reports being contrasted:

Study/Analysis	Timeframe	Rationale
City of Burlington Growth Analysis (2019)	To 2041	<p>The analysis considered growth to the planning horizon of the Growth Plan at the time.</p> <p>The Study forecasted a range of growth through the identification of a low growth scenario, a reference growth scenario and high growth scenario.</p>
Draft Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment (2021)	2021 to 2051	<p>Treated the 30-year period as a single analysis, in accordance with the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology.</p> <p>Distributed growth by Local Municipality to 2051 and identified additional lands in Halton needed to accommodate that growth.</p>
Modified Preferred Growth Concept Land Needs Assessment (2022)	2021 to 2051; divided into two periods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-2041 • 2041-2051 	<p>In accordance with Regional Council’s direction the analysis considers growth to the planning horizon of 2051, undertaken in two phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct growth prior to 2041 to the existing approved urban boundary with distributions to the Local Municipalities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a framework for planning for growth between 2041-2051 with no distributions to the Local Municipalities
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The discussion below outlines the population, household and employment growth forecasts for the City of Burlington to 2041, in accordance with the Modified Preferred Growth Concept and draft ROPA 49. A comparison with the growth forecasts identified under Draft Preferred Growth Concept (November 2021) has been provided to show how the forecasts continue to evolve through the Region’s on-going IGMS process, while the comparison with the City’s Growth Analysis Study has been provided to assist with analysis and feedback on the growth forecasts.

A) Population Growth

The modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA identifies a 2021 total population of 192,700 for the City of Burlington, with the population forecasted to grow by approximately 47,800 people by 2041. This forecasted growth for the City accounts for approximately 15% of all the growth in Halton Region over the next 20 years, with both Milton and Oakville taking on higher shares of growth.

Table 1 compares the population forecasts identified in the above noted reports. While the City’s Growth Analysis Study identified a growth range, the reference scenario figures are being used for comparison purposes.

Table 1: Population Growth in Burlington

Population	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2019) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2022) LNA
2021	194,900	195,000	192,700
2031	214,300	217,830	217,200
2041	234,000	241,330	240,500
2051	n/a	265,830	n/a
Annual Growth Rate	1.0% (over 20 years)	1.2% (over 30 years)	1.2% (over 20 years)

The City’s forecasted population growth under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041) equates to an annual population growth rate of approximately 1.2 %, which has remained consistent with the level of growth identified in the Draft Preferred Growth Concept. The annual growth rate also falls within the range of annual growth identified

in the City’s Growth Analysis Study, which ranged from 0.5% at the low end to 1.2% at the high end over a 25-year period to 2041.

Table 2 below sets out the Population growth by Policy Area in the City of Burlington under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept with a comparison to the growth by policy area under the Draft Preferred Growth Concept. It’s important to note that the difference in the figures does not represent the City’s population growth forecast by policy area between 2041-2051, as growth within this 10-year timeframe will be allocated to Burlington through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Table 2: Population Growth in Burlington by Policy Area and Percentage Share

Policy Area	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051)	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041)
Existing DGA	5,910 8.4%	5,080 10.7%
Rural	4,020 5.7%	1,770 3.7%
BUA Centres*	31,590 45%	18,880 40%
BUA Corridors^	11,750 16.7%	8,950 18.9%
Remaining BUA+	16,930 24%	12,530 26.5%

Source: Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (November 2021) and Modified Preferred Growth Concept (March 2022)

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding and multiple data sources

*BUA Centres: include the Downtown and Uptown Mixed Use Centres, Downtown Burlington UGC/Burlington GO MTSA, Appleby GO MTSA, Aldershot GO MTSA

^BUA Corridors: include Fairview Corridor and Plains Road Corridor (Aldershot)

+Remaining BUA: includes some Mixed Use Commercial Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres as well as the Residential Neighbourhood Areas.

While the growth forecasts by policy area differ because of the two different timeframes, it’s the share of growth by policy area that has remained relatively consistent. Over the next 20 years, the Built-Up Area (BUA) Centres are forecasted to accommodate the highest share of population growth, followed by the Remaining BUA and BUA Corridors.

The table also identifies that over the next 20 years that approximately 15% of the forecasted population growth in Burlington will be accommodated in the Existing Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) and Rural Area while the remaining 85% of the forecasted population growth will be accommodated in the BUA. This is consistent with Draft Preferred Growth Concept and is generally in keeping with the findings in the City’s Growth Analysis Study which forecasted that approximately 20% of population growth will be accommodated in the Existing DGA and Rural Area and the remaining 80% forecasted population growth accommodated in the BUA over a 25-year period (2016-2041; Reference Scenario).

B) Household Growth

The Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA identifies 73,179 households in the City of Burlington in 2021 (in accordance with the 2021 Census) with the number of households forecasted to grow by approximately 23,000 by 2041. This forecasted household growth for the City accounts for approximately 19.5% of all household growth in Halton Region over the next 20 years, with both Milton and Oakville taking on higher shares of household growth; consistent with their population growth.

The following table compares the household forecasts identified in the above noted reports.

Table 3: Household Growth in Burlington

Total Households	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2019) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2022) LNA
2021	75,410	74,200	73,179
2031	84,955	85,000	84,521
2041	93,235	96,900	96,297
2051	n/a	108,100	n/a
Average Number of Households per year	890 units/year	1,130 units/year	1,156 units/year

The forecasted household growth for the City under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept equates to an average of 1,156 units/year. This is higher than the average number of units a year identified under the Draft Preferred Growth Concept as well as in the City’s Growth Analysis Study. It is also significantly higher than the City’s average of 570 units/year over the last 10 years (2011-2021) based on CMHC Housing Completion data.

Table 4 below sets out the Household growth by Policy Area in the City of Burlington under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept with a comparison to the growth by policy area under the Draft Preferred Growth Concept. It’s important to note that the difference in the figures does not represent the City’s household growth forecast by policy area between 2041-2051, as growth within this 10-year timeframe will be allocated to Burlington through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Table 4: Household Growth in Burlington by Policy Area and Percentage Share

Policy Area	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051)	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041)
Existing DGA	2,550 6.5%	2,120 9.2%
Rural	1,110 3.3%	500 2.2%
BUA Centres*	15,990 47%	9,750 42.4%
BUA Corridors^	5,570 16%	4,260 18.5%
Remaining BUA+	8,770 26%	6,310 27.4%

Source: Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (November 2021) and Modified Preferred Growth Concept (March 2022)
 Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding and multiple data sources

*BUA Centres: include the Downtown and Uptown Mixed Use Centres, Downtown Burlington UGC/Burlington GO MTSA, Appleby GO MTSA, Aldershot GO MTSA

^BUA Corridors: include Fairview Corridor and Plains Road Corridor (Aldershot)

+Remaining BUA: includes some Mixed Use Commercial Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres as well as the Residential Neighbourhood Areas.

While the growth forecasts by policy area differ because of the two different timeframes, it's the share of growth by policy area that has remained relatively consistent. Over the next 20 years the BUA Centres are forecasted to accommodate the highest share of household growth, followed by the Remaining BUA and BUA Corridors, consistent with the population growth by policy area.

The table also identifies that over the next 20 years, approximately 12% of the forecasted household growth in Burlington will be accommodated in the Existing DGA and Rural Area while the remaining 88% of the forecasted household growth will be accommodated in the BUA. This is consistent with the Draft Preferred Growth Concept and is generally in keeping with the findings in the City's Growth Analysis Study which forecasted that approximately 15% of household growth will be accommodated in the Existing DGA and Rural Area and the remaining 85% forecasted population growth will be accommodated in the BUA over a 25-year period (2016-2041; Reference Scenario).

C) Household Growth by Unit Type

The Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA also breaks down household growth by unit type. The following table identifies the growth by unit type forecasted for Burlington under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept and compares it with the growth by unit type forecasted under the Draft Preferred Concept and in the City's Growth Analysis Study. It's important to note that the difference in the Regions' figures does not represent the City's household growth forecast by unit type between 2041-2051, as

growth within this 10-year timeframe will be allocated to Burlington through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Table 5: Household Growth by Unit Type in Burlington and Percentage Share

Unit Type	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2021-2041) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041) LNA
Singles & Semi Detached	895 5%	2,300 7%	1,825 8%
Rows	1,155 7%	4,000 12%	2,431 11%
Apartments	15,775 88%	26,800 79%	18,298 79%
Accessory Units	n/a	800 2%	563 2%

While the growth forecasts by unit type differ between the reports, the percentage share of growth by unit type is consistent between the Region's Draft Preferred Growth Concept and the Modified Preferred Growth Concept. When compared with the growth by unit type forecasted in the City's Growth Analysis Study, the Modified Preferred Growth Concept forecasts a slightly higher share of ground related units (singles, semis and rows) and a lower share of apartment units. However, overall, the Modified Preferred Growth Concept is in keeping with the findings of the Growth Analysis Study.

The Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA identifies the following household growth by unit type for Halton Region between 2021-2041:

- Singles & Semis – 24.6% of household growth
- Rows – 24.8% of household growth
- Apartments – 48.6% of household growth
- Accessory Units – 2.1% of household growth

Of that growth by unit type, Milton and Oakville account for the highest percentage shares of singles, semis and rows, while Oakville and Burlington account for the highest percentage share of apartment units (Oakville 47% and Burlington 32%).

D) Persons per Unit (PPU)

Using total population and household data from the Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA, the following table identifies an overall persons per unit for Burlington and compares it with the overall persons per unit under the Draft Preferred Concept and in the City's Growth Analysis Study.

Table 6: Overall Persons per Unit in Burlington

	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2021-2041) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041) LNA
2021	2.59	2.62	2.63
2031	2.52	2.56	2.57
2041	2.51	2.49	2.50
2051	n/a	2.46	n/a

Although the reports represent different timeframes, the table shows that the overall persons per unit for Burlington under the Modified Preferred Concept is consistent with the Draft Preferred Growth Concept and is in keeping with the City's Growth Analysis Study.

E) Employment Growth

The Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA identifies 98,500 jobs in Burlington in 2021, with employment forecasted to grow by 16,800 jobs by 2041. This forecasted employment growth for the City accounts for approximately 12% of all employment growth in Halton Region over the next 20 years, the smallest share of growth among the local municipalities.

Table 7 compares the employment forecasts identified in the above noted reports. While the City's Growth Analysis Study identified a growth range, the reference scenario figures are being used for comparison purposes.

Table 7: Employment Growth in Burlington

Employment/ Jobs	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2019) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2022) LNA
2021	99,800	98,500	98,500
2031	116,300	106,900	106,600
2041	126,400	115,500	115,300
2051	n/a	125,000	n/a
Annual Growth Rate	1.3% (over 20 years)	0.9% (over 30 years)	0.9% (over 20 years)

The City's forecasted employment growth under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept equates to an annual employment growth rate of approximately 0.9 %, which has

remained consistent with the level of growth identified under the Draft Preferred Growth Concept. The annual growth rate also falls within the range of annual growth identified in the City’s Growth Analysis Study, which ranged from 0.7% at the low end to 1.4% at the high end over a 25-year period to 2041.

Table 8 below sets out the employment growth by Policy Area in the City of Burlington under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept with a comparison to the growth by policy area under the Draft Preferred Growth Concept. It’s important to note that the difference in the figures does not represent the City’s employment growth forecast by policy area between 2041-2051, as growth within this 10-year timeframe will be allocated to Burlington through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Table 8: Employment Growth in Burlington by Policy Area and Percentage Share

Policy Area	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051)	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041)
Existing DGA	3,380 13.8%	1,970 11.8%
Rural	260 1.1%	150 0.9%
BUA Centres*	6,560 26.9%	4,800 28.7%
BUA Corridors^	2,800 11.5%	2,340 14%
Remaining BUA+	11,400 46.7%	7,430 44.5%

Source: Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (November 2021) and Modified Preferred Growth Concept (March 2022)

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding and multiple data sources

*BUA Centres: include the Downtown and Uptown Mixed Use Centres, Downtown Burlington UGC/Burlington GO MTSA, Appleby GO MTSA, Aldershot GO MTSA

^BUA Corridors: include Fairview Corridor and Plains Road Corridor (Aldershot)

+Remaining BUA: includes some Mixed Use Commercial Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres as well as the Residential Neighbourhood Areas.

While the growth forecasts by policy area differ because of the two different timeframes, it’s the share of growth by policy area that has remained relatively consistent. Over the next 20 years the Remaining BUA, which includes a large share of the City’s designated Employment Areas is forecasted to accommodate almost half the employment growth in the City, followed by the BUA Centres which are forecasted to accommodate almost one third of the City’s employment growth.

F) Employment Growth by Employment Type

The Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA also breaks down employment growth by land use or employment type. The following table identifies the percentage share of forecasted employment growth by type for Burlington under the Modified Preferred

Growth Concept and compares it with percentage share employment growth by type forecasted under the Draft Preferred Concept and in the City’s Growth Analysis Study.

Table 9: Employment Growth in Burlington by Employment Type as a Percentage Share

Employment Type	Burlington Growth Analysis Study (2016-2041) Reference Scenario	Halton Region Draft Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2051) LNA	Halton Region Modified Preferred Growth Concept (2021-2041) LNA
Major Office	9%	53%	48%
Population Related	68%*	42%	48%
Employment Land	23%	3%	2%
Rural	n/a	2%	2%

* In the City’s Growth Analysis Study, the Commercial/Population Related category included mixed-use/office space in the City’s Mobility Hubs

Although there is minimal difference between the percentage share of employment growth by type under the Region’s Draft Preferred Growth Concept and the Modified Preferred Growth Concept, the Modified Preferred Growth Concept forecasts a much higher share of Major Office growth in Burlington than the City’s Growth Analysis Study. The table also shows differences in the shares of Population Related and Employment Land employment growth, with the Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA forecasting lower shares of growth for both employment types than the City’s Growth Analysis Study.

G) Major Office Employment Growth: Key Assumption

Through Report PL-06-22, staff noted that that Draft Preferred Growth Concept LNA applied a key assumption related to major office employment in municipalities, such that it assumed that 75% of new Major Office employment anticipated within the municipality to 2051 would be located within Employment Areas and 25% of that new Major Office growth is anticipated within the Strategic Growth Areas.

While Staff generally supported the direction of the Draft Preferred Growth Concept, the City recommended proposing an aspirational direction beyond the 25% directed to Major Transit Station Areas. Staff believe such a change in the case of Burlington would acknowledge that ROPA 48 establishes long term proportional targets for people and jobs in these areas, and by directing and planning for major office in SGAs given the City of Burlington’s Urban Structure reinforces the need to support growth and change including planning to direct Major Offices in the Urban Growth Centre, in

Appleby GO (with a significant portion of the MTSA included in the Region's Employment Area) and within Aldershot GO.

Under the Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA, the Major Office Employment growth assumption remains at 75% of the growth occurring within Employment Areas. While staff remain generally supportive of the direction in the Modified Preferred Growth Concept LNA and recognizing the on-going area specific planning work in the City's MTSAs, staff recommend that at such time the Region proceeds with allocating growth post 2041, which will likely require an update to the LNA, that consideration be given to applying an assumption that more than 25% of Major Office growth be directed to the SGAs.

City staff are supportive of the general approach for accommodating growth to 2041 within the Region's existing Urban Boundary that continues to take an intensification first approach to accommodating growth within strategic growth areas. To achieve an intensification first approach, it is imperative that the Region continue to work towards developing a comprehensive and consistent monitoring program to ensure that growth related studies and infrastructure master planning is aligned with actual growth achieved in these areas. It is also important that this monitoring program is done collaboratively with the local municipalities with clearly defined roles and responsibility to ensure that the Region is working together with its local municipal partners to plan for growth.

2.2 ROPA 49

Comments related to the specific details of ROPA 49 are considered below.

A) Population and Employment

As indicated above, Draft ROPA 49 implements the direction from Regional Council to allocate growth to 2041 within the Region's existing Urban Boundary and to provide a framework for accommodating growth between 2041 to 2051 through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment. As a result, Table 1 in draft ROPA 49 identifies total population and employment growth to be accommodated in Halton to 2051, but only distributes growth to the local municipalities to 2041, in accordance with the LNA.

As detailed above, City of Burlington is forecasted to grow by approximately 47,800 people and 16,800 jobs by 2041 which equates to an annual population growth rate of 1.2% and an annual employment growth rate of 0.9%.

In planning for growth between 2041 and 2051 the Region has proposed a new policy framework that indicates that an expansion to the Regional Urban Boundary may only be permitted on the basis of considering the impacts of any changes to the Provincial land use planning framework and their impact of on the Region's ability to

accommodate growth within the Regional Urban Boundary; the results of a growth monitoring framework that provides information on a number of identified indicators, reported annually, to inform and support planning for growth between 2041 and 2051; and the findings of a Natural Heritage and Water Resource Impact Assessment, the Agricultural Impact Assessment and any updates to the policies in the Regional OP related to the Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff are supportive of the intensification first approach to accommodating growth within the existing Regional Urban Boundary to ensure that the existing urban areas are serviced first to support the development of complete communities where residents have access to housing, jobs, local services, schools, recreation, open space, as well as public and active transportation options.

Staff are also supportive of the growth monitoring framework proposed by the Region to inform and support planning for growth between 2041 and 2051 and would like to see this monitoring framework broadened in the Region's OP to ensure all future growth is continually monitored and reported annually within the Region.

Staff note that although the ROPA 49 adjusts the planning horizon from 2051 to 2041 the Regional Official Plan in section 35 states:

For other more durable elements, such as the agricultural and natural heritage systems, and Strategic Growth Areas, and the planning vision of this Plan, the horizon is far beyond the year 2051. Regional Council is cognizant of the fact that land use decisions have a permanent impact on the landscape and should be made in the context of a time frame well beyond the planning horizon.

Staff are monitoring the change to the planning horizon in ROPA 49 as it relates to planning to the City's Protected Major Transit Stations, which are key Strategic Growth Areas in the City. Work continues on the area-specific plans for the City's Protected Major Transit Stations, given the clear direction established in ROPA 48.

B) Intensification and Density Targets

Draft ROPA 49 also updates the Intensification and Density Targets for the Region and Local Municipalities. As identified in draft ROPA 49 the Modified Preferred Growth Concept is based on a Region-wide intensification rate of 45%, representing the number of new housing units occurring in the BUA, which is a reduced intensification rate from the Growth Plan's 50% target. This is a result of the allocation of a significant amount of apartment units to SGAs planned within the existing DGA that don't count towards the Growth Plan's target. However, when combined, the units allocated to the BUA plus the additional greenfield densification units equate to a combined rate that exceeds 50%,

thereby meeting the Growth Plan's intensification first approach and limiting the need for any urban boundary expansion.

As a built-out Municipality, the City of Burlington is a strong contributor towards the Region achieving its Intensification Target. As detailed above, over the next 20 years approximately 88% of the forecasted housing growth in Burlington will be accommodated in the BUA. Based on Table 2 in Draft ROPA 49, Burlington's share of housing units in the BUA is the highest of all local municipalities, accounting for 38% of all housing units within the BUA in the Region.

Table 2 also identifies a Designated Greenfield Area density target for the Region and the Local Municipalities, with the Region's target of 62 people and jobs per hectare exceeding the Growth Plan target of 50 residents and jobs per combined hectare. For the City of Burlington, Draft ROPA 49 identifies a DGA target of 76 people and jobs per hectare which is based on a forecasted 20,800 total people and jobs in the City's DGA in 2041, in accordance with the LNA.

Draft ROPA 49 also identifies an Employment Area density target for the Region and Local Municipalities, as required by the Provincial Growth Plan and measured by the number of jobs per hectare in the Employment Areas. Table 2 in draft ROPA 49 identifies a density target of 26 jobs per hectare for Halton Region and 33 jobs per hectare for the City of Burlington. The City's Employment Area density target is based on a forecasted 56,000 jobs in the City's Employment Area in 2041, in accordance with the LNA.

Draft ROPA 49 also sets out the Regional Phasing to be achieved every five years between 2022 to 241 between the BUA, DGA and Employment Areas, to provide direction on how the growth for the City is planned in accordance with the Strategic Growth Area Targets in Table 2b, implemented through ROPA 48. Table 2b has also been updated through Draft ROPA 49, to include targets for primary regional nodes. Implications of this for Burlington are discussed below in the Regional nodes section.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff are supportive of the Intensification and Density Targets proposed through ROPA 49 as they represent an intensification first approach to growth in the Region which was first implemented through ROPA 48 with the Regional Urban Structure and hierarchy of SGAs. Staff once again recommend that a robust growth monitoring framework be established by the Region, with annual reporting to assess whether the targets and phasing of growth implemented through ROPA 49 are being achieved.

C) Regional Nodes

ROPA 48 implemented a Regional Urban Structure that identified Primary and Secondary Regional Nodes in both mapping and policy as a Strategic Growth Area that could accommodate mixed-use intensification, supported by transit, and reflect and reinforce the local urban structures. Through ROPA 48, the Uptown Urban Centre was identified by symbol in mapping as a Primary Regional Node. Through the Province's decision on ROPA 48, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing made modifications to the policies for Primary and Secondary Regional Nodes that encouraged local municipalities to delineate the boundaries of the Regional nodes and to identify a minimum density target for the areas. The Province, through their modifications required that any minimum density target for a strategic growth area must be established and delineated in the Regional Official Plan first.

ROPA 49 updates the policies for Primary Regional Nodes by delineating and assigning density targets to these Strategic Growth Areas and encourages the local municipalities to set density and employment targets for Secondary Regional Nodes. As a result of this change, the Burlington Uptown Urban Centre is identified as a Secondary Regional Node rather than as a Primary Regional Node and is therefore identified by symbol in mapping only.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The City, through the development of the new Official Plan policies reviewed the Uptown Urban Centre to recognize the maturity of the area and secondary planning that was last completed in the 1990s. City staff will review the Uptown Urban Centre policies in the new Official Plan to determine if a future area-specific planning or study will be required. The identification of the Uptown Urban Centre as Secondary Regional Node provides city staff the discretion to make this determination without the requirement in the ROP to have the Uptown Urban Centre delineated with an associated minimum density target in the ROP.

Staff note that in developing an understanding of the modifications required to the Official Plan, 2020 that one issue of change between ROPA 48 and ROPA 49 is the shift in designation for the Uptown Urban Centre. Staff will proceed based on the ROPA 48 direction and will note that modifications to reflect ROPA 49 must wait for final approval.

D) Regional Intensification Corridors

Draft ROPA 49 provides policies for Regional Intensification Corridors that fit within the Regional Urban Structure hierarchy of Strategic Growth Areas. The policy framework encourages the local municipalities to identify Regional Intensification Corridors and develop detailed Official Plan or Area Specific Plan policies for these areas. The

Region has identified the following corridors within the City as Regional Intensification Corridors:

- Dundas Street
- Plains Road/Fairview Street
- Harvester Road to Wycroft Road
- Appleby Line
- Brant Street

The policies of draft ROPA 49 identify the Regional Intensification Corridors conceptually on Map 1h to illustrate the connective role of the corridors both within and outside of the Regional Urban Boundary. However, the policies only apply to the Regional Intensification Corridors within the Regional Urban Boundary. ROPA 49 emphasizes that when corridors fall within other strategic growth areas (i.e., MTSAs) development along those corridors will be guided by the specific policies of those strategic growth areas and when corridors fall outside of those Strategic Growth Areas the underlying designation of the local official plan applies. ROPA 49 also includes language that clarifies that the identification of Strategic Growth Areas, including Regional Intensification Corridors, are not land use designations and the identification does not confer a new land use designation or alter the existing land use designation. The policy framework is clear that development on lands within Strategic Growth Areas, including Intensification Corridors, is to occur in accordance with the policies in local official plans.

It is important that the policies in the Regional Official Plan recognize Regional Corridors as Strategic Growth Areas provided that they also recognize the existing local context and planning framework of the Local Official Plans.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Throughout the Regional Official Plan Review process, City staff have worked collaboratively with the Region in the appropriate identification of corridors within the Regional Official Plan based on the Region's Mobility Management Strategy and the Defining Major Transit Requirements study. Regional staff have responded to the City's concerns of the identification of corridors to align with the City's new Official Plan.

City staff are supportive of the conceptual nature of depicting the corridors in mapping and in policy as Strategic Growth Areas to help achieve increased residential and employment density around the corridors to support and enhance the viability of existing and planned transit service where appropriate. City staff are also supportive of the policy framework in ROPA 49 that directs development on lands within Strategic Growth Areas to occur in accordance with the local official plans and zoning by-laws. It is staff's opinion that the policy framework in the City's new Official Plan provides sufficient direction for growth along Intensification Corridors to support achieving the objectives of

the Regional Intensification Corridors as outlined in ROPA 49. There may be an opportunity in the future to review the new Official Plan to determine if future area specific planning or study is required for Intensification Corridors.

E) Employment Areas

Through ROPA 48, the Regional Official Plan was amended to provide direction for the development of employment uses within Strategic Growth Areas to bring the Regional Plan into alignment with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and balance the priorities of protecting employment uses and planning for Strategic Growth Areas while ensuring land use compatibility. ROPA 48 identified the requirements of the Growth Plan to ensure achieving land use compatibility requirements relate to major facilities and sensitive land uses. A new definition of major facilities was included to conform to provincial policy and policies were incorporated to provide clarity on the required studies to achieve land use compatibility in the context of strategic growth areas.

ROPA 49 further modifies the policies for planning for Employment Areas to provide greater direction to plan for and protect lands for employment over the long term. Policies have been included that require the local municipal Official Plans to identify a range of employment uses, ancillary uses, and sensitive land uses for Employment Areas. The policies prohibit non-employment uses, limit sensitive uses and only permit them in limited circumstances where land use compatibility can be maintained in areas identified as Regional Employment Area. ROPA 49 also provides additional direction on achieving land use compatibility between sensitive uses and major facilities and require the local municipalities to prohibit, limit and only permit at the periphery where land use compatibility can be maintained. In addition to changes to the policies for planning for employment areas, the Region has introduced a new definition for ancillary use that recognizes uses within an Employment Area that is subordinate to and supportive of the uses within the surrounding Employment Area and provides services to the uses, businesses and employees in the Employment Area.

STAFF COMMENTS:

While city staff have not provided specific policy modifications for consideration related to land use compatibility, staff are generally supportive of the policy direction to ensure the protection of Employment Areas from non-employment uses and the additional definition of ancillary uses. Staff note that the new ancillary use definition closely aligns with the City's definition of *ancillary employment use* in the Burlington Official Plan, 2020. Through the MTSA Area Specific Planning project, the policies may need to recognize and identify flexible and innovative approaches that manage and mitigate land use compatibility between industries and sensitive uses to implement the PPS, Provincial guidance and ROPA 49. City staff request that the Region, either modify ROPA 49 policy or build into the consideration of local area-specific planning process

approvals, means of ensuring flexibility and opportunities for innovation in addressing land use compatibility and achieving the objectives of the PPS and the Growth Plan.

F) Additional Residential Units

ROPA 49 permits additional residential units within a primary dwelling and an ancillary structure consistent with the provision 16(3) of the *Planning Act*. This would allow for up to three permanent housing units on a lot permitting detached, semi-detached or row housing, subject to criteria balancing other land-use planning priorities including health and safety as well as environmental protection.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff are supportive of this work that aligns with the policies found within the City of Burlington's Official Plan related to Additional Residential Units and further aligns with the work currently underway through the City of Burlington's Housing Strategy project. The draft Housing Strategy action 12 identifies exploring the development of a policy framework that supports and encourages Additional Residential Units (ARUs) and devising a registry and monitoring program to evaluate the success of the framework and to make sure the ARUs meet health and safety standards as part of the draft Housing Strategy's recommended actions.

G) Mapping Updates

ROPA 49 updates mapping to identify Regional Intensification Corridors and changes to Regional Employment Area resulting from conversions and additions. At the February 2022 Regional Council workshop, the Region released [Appendix B- Existing Employment Area Delineation Recommendations](#) that provided a summary of the recommended changes to the Region's Employment Areas including lands removed from the Employment Area through conversions (including those which were advanced through ROPA 48), areas within the existing Urban Area added to the Employment Area and minor technical revisions. For Burlington, additional conversions advanced through ROPA 49 include 1515 North Service Road and 2202-2210 Industrial Street.

These conversions were noted as part of the adopted of the new Official Plan through [Appendix D](#) to report PB-04-18 that were recommended by the City to be considered through the Region's municipal comprehensive review.

The Region has also identified a number of technical revisions to the Regional Official Plan existing Employment Area boundaries and additional lands that were considered to be added to the Regional Employment Area in accordance with Growth Plan policy. The Region assessed areas for addition to the Regional Employment Area given the adjacency to an existing Employment Area, Provincially Significant Employment Zone

(PSEZ) and current function. The lands that have been added to the Regional Employment Area overlay include:

- 1144-1254, 1197 Plains Road East/955 Maple Avenue
- 4435-4501, 4450 Corporate Drive / 1800-1820, 1805-1837 Ironstone Drive
- Appleby & Mainway (1250 Appleby Line/4495 North Service Road/1150-1235 Appleby Line)
- Tremaine-Dundas Secondary Plan Lands

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff are supportive of the conversions and additions advanced through ROPA 49. The conversions and additions rely on decisions and recommendations emerging from Council's adoption of the Burlington Official Plan, 2020, through the modifications related to the Region's approval of the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 and through decisions on the Tremaine Dundas Secondary Plan.

3.0 Policy Directions Staff Comments

As noted above, the Policy Directions report was released in February 2022 at the Regional Council workshop. The Policy Directions report included policy directions for all theme areas of the Regional Official Plan Review (Integrated Growth Management Strategy, Rural and Agricultural System, Natural Heritage System, North Aldershot Policy Area review, and Climate Change). While the Policy Directions report include directions for the Integrated Growth Management theme, those policies have been implemented through ROPA 48 and will be implemented through ROPA 49. Staff comments below are focused on the policy directions related to the Rural and Agricultural System, Natural Heritage, North Aldershot and Implementation which will be the subject of a future Regional Official Plan Amendment (or Amendments).

3.1 Rural and Agricultural System

The policy directions propose the creation of three new mutually exclusive land use designations: Prime Agricultural Areas, Rural Lands and Key Features. Staff are supportive of policy changes which clarify land use permissions and enhance certainty in the Rural Area but recommend the consideration of additional opportunities to enable ongoing mapping refinements outside of the Official Plan Review process and outside of a development application. Efforts undertaken through the current review offer a strong foundation that may be built upon through continued engagement with the agricultural community (e.g. ROPR mapping viewer, explanatory materials regarding source data, agricultural working group, one-on-one landowner meetings, site visits etc.).

Staff look forward to continuing discussions with the Region to identify further opportunities to distinguish between the urban and rural context as it relates to natural

heritage policies and permitted uses, in relation to the agricultural area. Further study regarding planning tools to implement Environmental Impact Assessment requirements, outside of site plan control, is also recommended.

The directions propose updating the policies of the Regional Official Plan to broaden permissions and allow for more opportunities for agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. Staff support these expanded permissions and appreciate the commitment to allowing for local context in terms of implementation through lower-tier Official Plans. Staff are supportive of efforts to review existing Regional guidelines in relation to Provincial guidelines and recommend that overlap be avoided in any areas that are sufficiently addressed in Provincial materials.

The directions also propose the development of policies to avoid/mitigate impacts between agricultural uses and urban development through edge-planning, direct cemeteries to lands outside of Prime Agricultural Areas, clarify when an Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is required, and enable an enhanced planning and development review process across agencies. Staff are supportive of all of these directions but also recommend the consideration of inter-urban impacts in relation to edge planning, as well as a cumulative approach to Agricultural Impact Assessment informed by baseline data and clearly defined metrics.

It is also noted that some directions reference opportunities to respond to the impacts of a changing climate by supporting on-farm stewardship. While staff support this direction, staff also recommend the consideration of enabling policies to enhance the resiliency of the agricultural sector in relation to the impacts of climate change to agricultural operations (e.g. the introduction of a Community Improvement Plan or other tools to support on-farm climate adaptation).

3.2 Natural Heritage

The policy directions report specifies that it is important that the Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS) remains separate and distinct from the Provincial Natural Heritage System (PNHS). City staff have sought clarification if this direction refers only to mapping exercises or if this would also include how policy is applied to areas where the two systems might overlap. In discussions with Regional Staff, it was inferred that regional official plan (ROP) policies regarding protection of natural heritage resources would continue to be applied within both the PNHS and RNHS. For reference, local/regional Official Plan policies may be more restrictive than provincial policies (NEP, Greenbelt) so long as no policy non-conformities are introduced.

The policy directions paper has suggested that in mapping/updating the RNHS that key features will also be designated in rural areas with the natural heritage system as an 'overlay'. It has been clarified that the feature(s) will likely be identified uniformly as 'key

features' and will not be sub-classified by feature type. City staff have sought clarification on the benefit of this approach, especially in a rural context.

Natural hazards are another policy area the Region is proposing to update to coincide with changes in provincial policy on the matter. City staff have identified concern with how some of the proposed protective policies would be applied in an urban context where development has already occurred or where redevelopment is expected (growth areas). As natural hazards are subject to Conservation Authority's regulatory authority, City Staff have requested the Region consider more enabling language related to development proposed within or adjacent to natural hazards in defined growth areas that highlights avoidance as a main objective but considers mitigation opportunities in line with provincial policy.

The Region has proposed to remove reference of the 'regulatory floodplain' from the current natural heritage system and instead include it within the natural hazards section. City staff identified that prevailing guidance in the province provides that inclusion of floodplains within the natural heritage system represents good ecosystem-based planning due to the ecological characteristics exhibited by floodplains (linkages, riparian areas). Those features, if identified, will still be subject to the applicable natural heritage resource policies of the ROP but may not form part of the RNHS. Clarification has been sought on the impact to mapping this direction may have.

The policy direction report suggests the development of guidelines to aid in the implementation of the natural heritage policies of the ROP. City staff have offered support for such a direction and that they should build on the existing information available provincially, locally, and through existing regional guideline documents. Specifically, City staff are interested in how policies related to linkage and enhancement areas of the RNHS will be clarified within guidance documentation. Approaches to linkages and enhancement must incorporate a systems-based approach recognizing the interconnectivity of natural heritage features.

It has been proposed that the ROP will be updated to recognize the impacts of invasive species on the determination of the significance of woodlands. City staff have reviewed a separate policy discussion paper produced by the Region on introducing a quality component to defining the significance of woodlands. At this time there is no definitive direction regarding how the quality component will be introduced to the definition, nor how that might impact site-specific development proposals. In developing the policy approach, City staff have requested that the provision of ecosystem services be a consideration in defining significance rather than a purely species diversity approach. Additionally, it has been requested that the Region consider competing ROP objectives such as agriculture, where appropriate, in the assessment of significant features, as well as looking at the importance of woodlands in different contexts (urban/rural). It has also been proposed that pre-existing farm operations in the RNHS will be recognized.

Clarification was sought on what components of farm operations could be captured (agricultural buildings, field crops, etc.).

Finally, the Region has proposed that it will introduce a new ROP policy requiring the Region develop an overarching Natural Heritage Strategy. This suggestion is generally well received by City Staff as such a strategy would provide the opportunity to detail many of the natural heritage nuances left unaddressed in ROP policy. It would also provide the ability to incorporate the most recent best management practices applying to natural heritage resource management without being overly prescriptive in ROP policy.

3.3 North Aldershot

The policy directions propose the integration of the North Aldershot planning framework with the Rural and Agricultural System policies in the Regional Official Plan through the application of a 'Rural Land' designation to the lands currently identified as 'North Aldershot Policy Area'. In addition, it is proposed that the policies for urban servicing be aligned with updated Provincial policy direction that requires municipal services to be directed to urban areas by removing the 'Area Eligible for Urban Servicing' overlay on Map 1. Servicing policies for North Aldershot will be integrated with the policies applicable to the Rural and Agricultural System. These changes would occur through the next Regional Official Plan Amendment, which is intended to address all the remaining policy areas highlighted in the directions report.

Staff are supportive of the introduction of a "Rural Land" designation and the removal of the 'Area Eligible for Urban Servicing' overlay for lands within North Aldershot that are not the subject of existing development approvals or Minutes of Settlement that contemplate potential residential development. Specifically, Minutes of Settlement between the City and Paletta International Corporation regarding Paletta's Eagle Heights lands within North Aldershot, which recognize Eagle Heights as an approved residential development.

3.4 Implementation

The Policy Directions report provides proposed policy directions for implementation tools and housekeeping improvements to the Regional Official Plan. The Directions report also acknowledges that there are certain implementation aspects of the ROPR that are being undertaken in the context of the theme area updates and may not be identified in the Implementation section of the Policy Directions report.

Through the Integrated Growth Management Strategy theme review, and implemented through both ROPA 48 and identified in draft ROPA 49, the Region requires that the local municipalities prepare area-specific plans for strategic growth areas. Section 77(5) of the ROP identifies a number of requirements for area-specific plans that have historically been utilized for the planning of areas within a greenfield context. Through

discussions with the Region, City staff have recommended that the requirements for the area-specific planning through Section 77(5) be updated to consider the nuances in planning for a more urban context versus a greenfield context. Regional staff have advised that these policies would be updated through the Phase 3 ROPA that is expected in 2023. Given the direction of ROPA 49 to plan within the existing urban boundary to 2041, consideration in approaches for requirements and planning for strategic growth area-specific plans is necessary to ensure that these areas are appropriately studied in advance of any updates to Section 77(5). City staff look forward to collaborating with regional staff on approaches and practices that will support the city in its area-specific planning work in advance of the Phase 3 ROPA.

The Policy Direction report identifies an implementation policy direction that seeks to update the ROP policies as needed to improve clarity of implementation and intent. Given the direction of ROPA 49 and planning within the existing urban boundary to 2041, the Region needs to review and consider updates to the plan to ensure there is a more robust and comprehensive monitoring program in place to ensure that intensification growth within the Strategic Growth Areas is on track to reaching the ROPA 48 identified targets and that growth is aligned with infrastructure delivery.

Strategy/process

ROPA 49 is being advanced under Section 26 of the Planning Act as part of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review to achieve conformity with the Growth Plan, 2019. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the approval authority of Official Plan Amendments made under Section 26 and the Ministers decision is not subject to appeal.

The Region held a Virtual Public Information Centre on April 6, 2022 and a Statutory Public Meeting on April 13, 2022. The Region is requesting that all comments be received by May 13, 2022 to inform the recommendation report that is targeted for June 15, 2022 in order to achieve the Provincial July 1, 2022 conformity deadline. Should Regional Council adopt ROPA 49, the Region's decision and amendment would be sent to the Province for approval.

Following a decision on ROPA 49 by the Province, the City of Burlington would be required to bring its Official Plan in conformity with the Regional Official Plan as amended by ROPA 49. Staff will consider approaches in achieving conformity with ROPA 49 and provide an update to Council on this process at the appropriate time.

Options Considered

Not applicable.

Financial Matters:

Not applicable

Total Financial Impact

Not applicable

Source of Funding

Not applicable

Other Resource Impacts

Not applicable

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 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 City is also developing Climate Resilient Burlington: A Plan for Adapting to Our Warmer, Wetter and Wilder Weather. The draft plan will be presented to City Council in May and the final in July 2022. Community Planning staff were represented on the staff stakeholder team. The five themes identified include: resilient built and natural infrastructure, thriving natural environment, health and well-being, disaster resilience, and strong and resilient economy.

The Regional Official Plan and Burlington’s Official Plan have roles 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).

Engagement Matters:

Staff consulted with a number of City Departments as well as Burlington Economic Development to gather feedback on ROPA 49 in the preparation of this report. Please see the “Strategy/process” section above for information on the Region’s engagement process.

Regional staff have noted that all comments received by Friday, May 13, 2022 through the consultation on Draft ROPA 49 will be included, together with commentary on how the comments have been considered and assessed, as part of a future recommendation report to Regional Council in June 2022.

Conclusion:

The draft Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 49 implements the results of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy, which directs all growth to 2041 within the existing Regional Urban Boundary and provides a framework for determining how and when growth between 2041 and 2051 will be distributed through a future Regional Official Plan Amendment.

Staff are supportive of the intensification-first approach to accommodating growth within the existing Regional Urban Boundary to ensure that the existing urban areas are serviced first to support the development of complete communities where residents have access to housing, jobs, local services, schools, recreation, open space, as well as public and active transportation options.

Staff are also supportive of the growth monitoring framework proposed by the Region to inform and support planning for growth between 2041 and 2051 and would like to see this monitoring framework broadened in the Region’s OP to ensure all future growth is continually monitored and reported annually within the Region to assess whether the targets and phasing of growth implemented through ROPA 49 are being achieved. It is also important that this monitoring program be prepared collaboratively with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure that the Region is working together with its local municipal partners to plan for growth.

To achieve an intensification first approach, it is imperative that the Region continue to work collaboratively and support the development detailed area-specific plans for Strategic Growth Areas in accordance with the Regional Official Plan. Developing a comprehensive and consistent monitoring program to ensure that growth-related studies and infrastructure master planning is aligned with the planned and actual growth particularly within the Strategic Growth Areas will be critical.

Respectfully submitted,

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Notifications:

Curt Benson, Region of Halton
Town of Oakville
Town of Milton
Town of Halton Hills

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.