

Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: Request for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to Issue
a Ministerial Zoning Order to Protect Green Space in the Millcroft
Community

TO: council

From: Councillor Angelo Bentivegna

Seconded by (for Council only): Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

Date to Committee: N/A

Date to Council: June 17, 2025

CIP Date: N/A

Motion for Council to Consider:

Whereas the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) issued a decision and interim order to approve applications to facilitate the redevelopment of parts, referred to as Areas A to D, of the Millcroft Golf Course by the Millcroft Greens Corporation on June 12, 2024;

Whereas following that decision, Burlington City Council submitted a Ministerial Zoning Order (MZO) request through the provincial zoning order framework seeking to maintain the zoning permissions for Areas A to D of the proposed development of the Millcroft Golf Course as they existed prior to the June 12, 2024 OLT decision;

Whereas former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Honourable Paul Calandra, denied this request on August 16, 2024, therefore Premier Doug Ford was requested to review and issue the MZO;

Whereas since then, the City has continued to advocate that the province issue the MZO and in the interim there has been an election and new minister, with Honourable Rob Flack appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing;

Whereas the City's original MZO request was forwarded to Minister Flack who has yet to respond;

Whereas Burlington Council is not requesting interference with the previous OLT process or ruling and planning staff will continue to proceed with finalizing the planning instruments in accordance with the OLT order;

Whereas issuing an MZO would not set a precedent for other golf courses in Ontario, given that the parks and open space currently operating as the Millcroft Golf Course is unique among golf courses; it is in an urban area, designed as a figure eight weaving among houses, functioning as natural storm water conveyance, and we know of no other golf course with these set of conditions;

Whereas Halton Regional Council unanimously approved a similar resolution supporting the City of Burlington's resolution for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to protect the vital Millcroft Golf Course greenspace and Burlington North-Oakville MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos also issued a letter to the Minister and presented a petition in the legislature signed by several thousand concerned residents;

Whereas the balance of the Millcroft golf course that was not the subject of the original MZO request is potentially at risk to an application for redevelopment and is not subject to any current development application or OLT ruling;

Whereas the protection of existing greenspace within the City of Burlington is crucial for the municipality to provide opportunities for access to both public and private green space for current residents and future generations;

Whereas the City of Burlington has an abundance of lands contemplated for intensification to achieve provincially mandated growth targets towards accomplishing the province's goal of 1.5 million new homes by 2031, and it is not required to sacrifice greenspace or build on critical floodplains to accommodate Burlington's share of housing as referenced in the 2022 – 2026 Burlington's Work Plan: From Vision to Focus, Focus Area 1 Designing and Delivering Complete Communities;

Whereas the City of Burlington has 44,483 units in our planning pipeline, including 21,252 under review and of those 7,119 having received planning approvals; last year the City hit a 10-year high in foundations poured;

Whereas the City of Burlington has a deficit of urban greenspace of approximately 104 hectares to accommodate planned population growth for 2051;

Whereas the City of Burlington can accommodate its share of new housing units in provincial priority areas such as GO stations, aging retail plazas, select growth areas, and major transportation station areas such as Plains Road and Fairview Street corridors;

Whereas the needs and interests of Burlington residents are captured in the City's Official Plan as adopted by Council in 2022 to provide clarity and certainty about planned future housing development sites, and does not include any requirements or need to redevelop the Millcroft Golf Course;

Whereas the City of Burlington desires to pursue mechanisms available to protect the remaining balance of the Millcroft Golf Course, apart from Areas A to E, from future development to ensure sufficient green space and ensure long-term predictability for area residents and stakeholders;

Whereas the remaining golf course lands not only provide green space for residents and wildlife in an urban setting, but also provide areas for infiltration to reduce the impact of climate change on the City's urban area having portions of Appleby and Sheldon creeks running through them, and reducing areas of infiltration puts more pressure on these creeks to carry the significant water flows arising from the more significant weather events occurring as a result of climate change;

Whereas an MZO on the remaining Millcroft Golf Course lands would help avoid these impacts while focusing development on lands that can accommodate projected population growth;

Whereas given the unique characteristics of the property, its circumstances do not risk creating a new precedent for the province in its issuance of MZOs, but rather, issuance of the order would demonstrate a concerted effort to come to the table and work together with municipalities as a partner to make mutually informed and beneficial decisions to help the province achieve its goal of building one and a half million homes by 2030.

Now therefore be it resolved that Burlington City Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, through its zoning order framework process, to issue a Ministerial Zoning Order to restrict the uses permitted on the remainder of the Millcroft Golf Course to those currently permitted by the City of Burlington Zoning By-law;

Be it further resolved that the Clerk forward the resolution to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General, the Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Halton MPPs, Halton Local Municipalities, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for their information.

Reason:

As described in this motion memo, a Ministerial Zoning Order would protect the balance of the Millcroft Golf Course from redevelopment and ensure that the uses permitted in the zoning for the golf course lands (save and except those already amended by the Ontario Land Tribunal) would be restricted to the existing permitted uses. Such an order would preserve this unique greenspace feature.

Outcome Sought:

Council approval of a motion to request a Ministerial Zoning Order for the Millcroft Golf Course lands located outside of Areas A to E, as approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Implications:

N/A

References:

N/A

Strategic Alignment

- ☒ Designing and delivering complete communities
 - ☐ Providing the best services and experiences
 - ☒ Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - ☐ Driving organizational performance
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Approved as per form by the City Clerk