



REPORT

Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: July 5, 2021

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: June 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Public Meeting and Recommendation Report – Deferred Items from OPA 34, North West Area and Palermo Village – OPA 37 and OPA 38 – By-law 2021-096 and By-law 2021-097 – July 5, 2021

LOCATION: Northwest Oakville

WARD: Ward 1 , 4 & 7

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report, "Public Meeting and Recommendation Report – Deferred Items from OPA 34, North West Area and Palermo Village – OPA 37 and OPA 38 – By-law 2021-096 and By-law 2021-097 – July 5, 2021," be received.
2. That By-law 2021-096, a by-law to adopt OPA 37 to further modify the Livable Oakville Plan, as amended by OPA 34, to establish area-specific parking and cultural heritage policies for the expanded Palermo Village growth area, be passed.
3. That the Regional Municipality of Halton be requested to either approve OPA 37 or incorporate the policies adopted through OPA 37 into OPA 34 by modification.
4. That Planning staff report back on potential official plan policy updates with respect to parking for the Palermo Village growth area upon completion of the town-wide Parking Strategy.
5. That By-law 2021-097, a by-law to repeal the 1984 Official Plan as it applies to the portion of the North Oakville West Secondary Plan Area adjacent to Bronte Road south of Highway 407, being the lands excluded from OPA 34 by deferral of Council, and adopt OPA 38 to incorporate new policies into the Livable Oakville Plan for that same area, be passed.

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6. That the Regional Municipality of Halton be requested to either approve OPA 38 or incorporate the policies adopted through OPA 38 into OPA 34 by modification.
 7. That Planning staff proactively examine listed (not designated) heritage properties within Palermo Village and, should a property meet the criteria for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, recommend to Council that notice be given to designate the property.
 8. That the notice of Council's decision reflects that Council has fully considered all of the written and oral submissions relating to this matter and that those comments have been appropriately addressed.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- At its meeting of March 22, 2021, Council considered matters related to Official Plan Amendment 34 (OPA 34).
- Council resolved to defer certain matters from the adoption of OPA 34:
 - i. *Items 7a. "Extending the Growth Area North to the 407 Corridor" and 7b. "Shifting the proposed NHS linkage North" be deferred and staff provide further information and research to Council for consideration;*
 - ii. *Section 22.4.2 be deferred and staff be directed to report back to Council with enhanced policies on cultural heritage; and*
 - iii. *Section 22.4.1(r) Parking be deferred and staff be directed to return the policy upon the completion of the Parking Strategy.*
- Note that Item (i) above refers to staff Responses to Comments Received from the Palermo Village Corporation (Newmark Development Ltd. and Argo Development Corp) that were addressed in the *Recommendation Report - Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment – The North West Area and Palermo Village, Excluding the Hospital District (File No. 42.24.23) - By-law 2021-043*, considered at the Special Planning and Development Council Meeting of March 22, 2021.
- Items (ii) and (iii) above refer to cultural heritage and parking policies for the Palermo Village Growth Area proposed by OPA 34.
- The deferred items from OPA 34 are addressed through two proposed Official Plan Amendments:
 - OPA 37 is to establish area-specific parking and cultural heritage policies for the expanded Palermo Village growth area

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- OPA 38 relating to a linkage preserve area and employment lands adjacent to Bronte Road north of the linkage
 - These matters are reviewed through four main sections of the report:
 - Cultural Heritage Conservation in Palermo Village (OPA 37)
 - Parking in Palermo Village (OPA 37)
 - Extending the Growth Area North to the 407 Corridor (OPA 38)
 - Shifting the proposed NHS linkage North (OPA 38)

BACKGROUND:

As part of the town's ongoing Official Plan Review, the North Oakville West Secondary Plan and the Palermo Village Growth Area have been reviewed.

A draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) for the North West Area and Palermo Village, excluding the Hospital District, was presented at a statutory public meeting of Planning and Development Council on November 23, 2020 (Agenda Item 3).

At the meeting, Council heard delegations from the public and identified additional planning matters to be considered as part of a final recommendation to Council.

The staff report provided at the statutory public meeting gave a detailed overview of the study process undertaken, applicable policy frameworks and other matters that were considered when developing the draft OPA.

In particular, the report provided a detailed overview of Halton Region's ongoing Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and its coordination with the town's Official Plan Review. The report highlighted that all of the work being completed through the town's Official Plan Review provides detailed analysis of local priorities for accommodating future population and employment growth in support of Halton Region's MCR.

A Council Workshop for additional discussion on the draft OPA was held at a meeting of Special Planning and Development Council on February 2, 2021 (Agenda Item 2). Comments received were also considered as part of a final recommendation.

At its meeting of March 22, 2021, Council considered matters related to Official Plan Amendment 34 (OPA 34) listed under agenda Item 2: Recommendation Report - Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment - The North West Area and Palermo Village, Excluding the Hospital District (File 42.24.23) - By-law 2021-043.

Council received a submission at the meeting raising questions about the possibility of relocating a natural heritage system linkage and changing certain land uses. A

copy of the submission is attached as background in Appendix J. In addition, questions were raised with respect to the parking and heritage policies generating a request by Council for additional information and research on each of these issues.

At the conclusion of agenda Item 2, Council resolved to defer certain matters from the adoption of OPA 34. The deferred matters follow in this excerpt from the resolution:

1. *That the proposed town-initiated Official Plan Amendment Number 34 (OPA 34) (North West Area and Palermo Village, Excluding the Hospital District, File 42.24.23) be adopted ... save and except the following policies:*
 - iv. *Items 7a. “Extending the Growth Area North to the 407 Corridor” and 7b. “Shifting the proposed NHS linkage North” be deferred and staff provide further information and research to Council for consideration;*
 - v. *Section 22.4.2 be deferred and staff be directed to report back to Council with enhanced policies on cultural heritage; and*
 - vi. *Section 22.4.1(r) Parking be deferred and staff be directed to return the policy upon the completion of the Parking Strategy.*

Council directed staff to report back on items i), ii) and iii). Since changes to the Official Plan amendment were required to address the deferrals, a by-law to adopt OPA 34 as modified by Council was not passed at the meeting of March 22, 2021

A follow-up report and revised adopting by-law were prepared for Planning and Development Council’s consideration on April 12, 2021. At that meeting, Council passed By-law 2021-043 to adopt OPA 34 as modified by Council resolution on March 22, 2021.

The lands which were subject to the questions arising out of the submission were deleted from the modified version of OPA 34. Similarly, the deferred area-specific parking and cultural heritage policies for the expanded Palermo Village growth area were removed from OPA 34 and identified as not forming part of the OPA. OPA 34 was subsequently forwarded to Halton Region for approval.

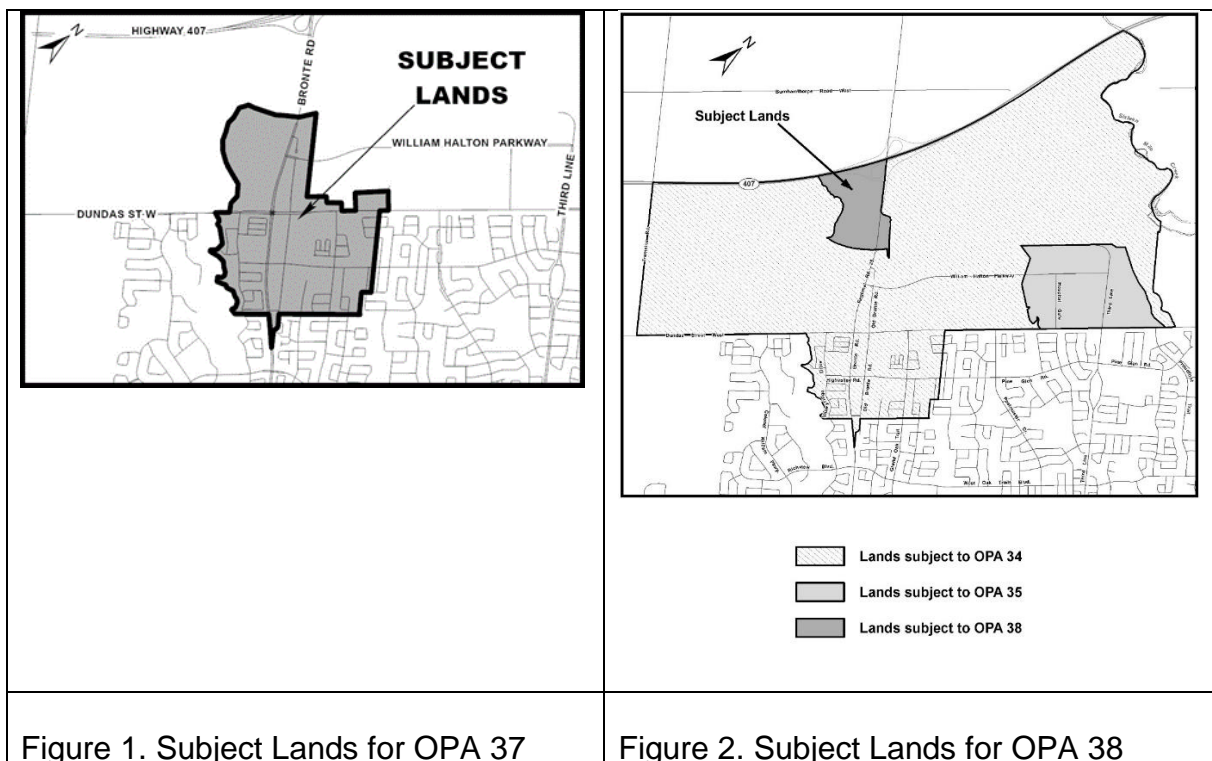
The purpose of this report is to report to Council on the deferred items from OPA 34.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Staff has addressed the deferred items from OPA 34 through two proposed Official Plan Amendments:

1. OPA 37 is to establish area-specific parking and cultural heritage policies for the expanded Palermo Village growth area as originally proposed by OPA 34 prior to its modification by Council on March 22, 2021 (Figure 1).
2. OPA 38 relates to the lands excluded from OPA 34 by deferral of Council on March 22, 2021, including a linkage preserve area and employment lands adjacent to Bronte Road north of the linkage (Figure 2).

OPA 38 is the follow-up to OPA 34 that will bring the last remaining lands in North West Oakville into the Livable Oakville Plan and not leave them orphaned in the 1984 Official Plan.



The adoption of OPA 37 and OPA 38 is an important final step to complete the incorporation of the North Oakville West Secondary Plan into Livable Oakville.

It is a major component of the town's ongoing Official Plan Review to bring the North Oakville West Secondary Plan, along with the North Oakville East Secondary Plan into Livable Oakville so that the town has one official plan document.

It is an important benefit for lands in the North West Area of Oakville to be governed by the Livable Oakville Plan because the policies:

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- are more current with Provincial and Regional planning documents
 - are reflective of a town-wide community-based planning regime

In addition, adoption of these Amendments will provide critical and timely input to the Regional Official Plan Review with a particular focus on draft Regional Official Plan Amendment 48 (ROPA 48).

Draft ROPA 48 is proposed as a component of Halton Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review pursuant to the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended as well as Section 17 and Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

The region held a Public Open House, Wednesday, June 9, 2021, 7:00 PM and a Statutory Public Meeting, Wednesday, June 16, 2021, 8:30 AM in connection with draft ROPA 48.

Cultural Heritage Conservation in Palermo Village (OPA 37)

This is the deferred item from March 22, 2021 used to inform this section of the report and corresponding components of OPA 37 (Appendix A):

“ii) Section 22.4.2 be deferred and staff be directed to report back to Council with enhanced policies on cultural heritage”

The cultural heritage resources of Palermo Village have been the subject of extensive study since 2003, a detailed chronology is set out in the following sections.

North Oakville West Secondary Plan – OPA 289 (2009)

In 2003, Unterman McPhail Associates (UMA) completed a study of the cultural heritage resources in North Oakville. The study assisted in the creation of cultural heritage policies in the North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP).

The NOWSP was adopted by Council in May 2009 as OPA 289 to the 1984 Official Plan and set the planning framework for North West Oakville.

The NOWSP identified lands on the north side of Dundas Street east of Bronte Road as a Special Study Area requiring additional study to address cultural heritage resources in Palermo Village:

8.6.4 SPECIAL STUDY AREA

The Special Study Area designation reflects an area which is intended to develop as a mixed use area that is pedestrian and transit oriented.

The area is subject to a special study to address its cultural heritage features and how these features can be integrated with the proposed new development. New development shall be limited to expansions of existing uses until this Plan is amended to incorporate detailed policy direction for lands in the Special Study Area.

OPA 289 was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (now the Ontario Land Tribunal) and is not in full force and effect as it applies to lands within the area proposed to be subject to OPA 37 and 38.

Palermo Village Heritage Resources Review and Strategy (2009)

The Palermo Village Heritage Resource Review and Strategy was undertaken by staff based on direction in the NOWSP for the Special Study Area.

The strategy was endorsed by Council at its meeting January 12, 2009 and acknowledged that Palermo Village contains groups of significant heritage resources and recommended measures for conserving the heritage aspects of the village.

The strategy concluded that a heritage conservation district was not feasible due to the fragmentation and loss of heritage resources that has occurred in Palermo Village over the past 70 years including the distance between the clusters of resources.

A follow-up report on the feasibility of a conservation district in Palermo Village was also prepared called the Palermo Heritage Conservation District Review, received by council in December 2010. The review concluded also that a heritage conservation district study for Palermo Village was not recommended.

The findings of the reviews, and subsequent staff reports, were used to inform Official Plan Amendment 306, discussed below.

North Oakville Heritage Resources Review and Strategy (2010)

The North Oakville Heritage Resources Review and Strategy was endorsed by Council at its meeting of April 26, 2010. The Strategy provided an update on heritage resources in North Oakville and a strategy for conserving these resources. It recognized the detailed history of work completed for Palermo Village.

The study is used currently as a reference for conserving heritage in North Oakville including the properties in Palermo Village.

Palermo Village North Urban Core Policies – OPA 306 (2011)

At its meeting of January 24, 2011, Council approved OPA 306 to the town's 1984 Official Plan for the lands identified as a "Special Study Area" in the NOWSP.

The proposed policies introduced the Palermo Village North Urban Core Area, and included new heritage policies that were informed by previous work noted above.

OPA 306 contained the following heritage policies:

8.6.4.5 Heritage Policies

- a) *All development proposed within the Palermo Village North Urban Core area will be reviewed by the Town to ensure that the heritage character, attributes and integrity of the Village are retained.*
- b) *To reinforce the heritage nature of the area, cultural heritage resources shall be integrated into new developments. Principles of such integration include*

conserving heritage resources, maintaining their prominence, and ensuring they are connected to new development.

- c) *Development shall be compatible with adjacent heritage resources, and where appropriate, built form and a variety of materials that reflect the existing and lost built heritage of Palermo Village, shall be considered.*
- d) *Where all options for the conservation of heritage resources on their existing sites have been exhausted, the relocation of threatened heritage resources to viable locations elsewhere in the Palermo Village may be considered as a conservation strategy.*
- e) *The Town will encourage awareness and appreciation of Palermo Village through such activities as signage programs, tours and brochures, and will seek opportunities to partner with local community groups in these activities.*

OPA 306 was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (now the Ontario Land Tribunal), and the heritage policies are not in full force and effect.

Livable Oakville Plan (2009, as amended)

In June 2009, Council adopted the Livable Oakville Plan, which replaced the 1984 Official Plan for the lands south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407. The Ontario Municipal Board approved Livable Oakville in May 2011.

Livable Oakville included Section 5, Cultural Heritage with new policies applicable to the Livable Oakville lands, including Palermo Village South.

These policies were updated through OPA 16 (Cultural Heritage Policy Updates), adopted by Council in September 2017 and approved by Halton Region in April 2018. OPA 16 was appealed to the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (now the Ontario Land Tribunal) and is not in full force and effect.

Notwithstanding these appeals, these policies represent the most comprehensive and current set of policies to conserve cultural heritage resources in the town.

Old Bronte Road / Khalsa Gate Streetscape Plan (2012)

In addition to the policies for Palermo Village, staff developed a streetscape plan to guide development along Old Bronte Road and Khalsa Gate. This plan was endorsed by Council at its meeting of April 10, 2012. A key area of guidance for the **streetscape** plan is the integration of cultural heritage resources into the design of the streetscape.

Palermo Village Growth Area Review and OPA 34

The history of cultural heritage resources and planning in Palermo Village, as characterized above, was featured through the Palermo Village Growth Area Review.

The importance of cultural heritage resources in Palermo Village continues to play a role in decision making for development in Palermo Village. This is reflected in OPA 34 by strengthening existing policies, including those from the former OPA 306.

While the policies of OPA 34 are to be read in their entirety, the policy excerpts below highlight additional language specific to cultural heritage resources:

Section 22 – Introduction

... Palermo Village will develop over a number of years with a mix of residential, commercial, office and community uses that are integrated with existing cultural heritage resources...

Section 22.2.1 e) – Objectives

To develop a balanced growth area by... conserving cultural heritage resources and integrating them into new developments;

Section 22.2.2 b) – Objectives

To ensure high quality urban design by... ensuring new developments are compatible with cultural heritage resources;

Section 22.3.1 – Development Concept – Main Street District

...Cultural heritage resources and small urban squares will be integrated into development to retain the area's heritage character, create interest and variety in the streetscape, and enable activity along the street.

Section 22.4.2 – Cultural Heritage

a) New development shall conserve Palermo Village's cultural heritage resources by:

- i) maintaining and integrating cultural heritage resources;*
- ii) ensuring the prominence of cultural heritage resources, particularly in the area northeast of Dundas Street West and Old Bronte Road;*
- iii) employing a combination of measures including but not limited to building setbacks, stepbacks in the built form, and the use of appropriate building materials.*

b) Where all options to conserve a cultural heritage resource on its existing site have been exhausted, it shall be relocated to a suitable location within Palermo Village.

c) *The heritage character of Palermo Village should be documented and commemorated through the development process.*

There are additional policies in OPA 34 linking the conservation of cultural heritage resources to urban design, views and streetscapes, parks and urban squares, and programs and initiatives.

Conclusion and Staff Opinion

Staff notes, with reference to the deferred items from Council on March 22, 2021 and the adoption of OPA 34 through by-law on April 12, 2021, that deferred Section 22.4.2 is the last remaining policy section to be adopted by Council to complete the comprehensive package for cultural heritage conservation in Palermo Village.

Staff also notes that the term “shall” in section 22.4.2 is the strongest language in Livable Oakville and means that the policy is mandatory. This term ensures that future development applications comply with the policy and that previous cultural heritage planning work is carried forward.

In this context, staff recommends that section 22.4.2 forms part of the final approval of OPA 34 as proposed by OPA 37.

The cultural heritage policies, as proposed, represent a strong position for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in Palermo Village.

As a final highlight on the importance of cultural heritage resources in Palermo Village, staff recommends that Council direct heritage planning staff to proactively examine listed heritage properties in Palermo Village and, should a property meet the criteria for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, recommend to Council that notice be given to designate the property. The following properties in Palermo Village are currently listed on the Oakville heritage register:

- 2391-2403 Dundas Street West
- 2457 Dundas Street West
- 2527 Dundas Street West
- 3017 Old Bronte Road
- 2487 Old Bronte Road
- 2460 Old Bronte Road (already subject to a heritage easement agreement)

Parking in Palermo Village (OPA 37)

This is the deferred item from March 22, 2021 used to inform this section of the report and corresponding components of OPA 37 (Appendix A):

“iii. Section 22.4.1(r) Parking be deferred and staff be directed to return the policy upon the completion of the Parking Strategy.”

Updated parking policies were introduced for Palermo Village in OPA 34. These policies were informed by the existing Livable Oakville Plan, the council adopted OPA 306 and guidance from current planning and development activity in the area. With the deferral of this matter from OPA 34 on March 22, 2021, parking policies in Palermo Village remain generic and limited in nature.

Regarding the town-wide wide Parking Strategy, this is underway with the assistance of a consultant and is being completed concurrent to the Official Plan Review process. The Parking Strategy is intended to be a comprehensive, town-wide approach to addressing parking matters and is expected to report on the residential component by end of year 2021 with the overall study completion in April 2022.

Conclusion and Staff Opinion

Since the Parking Strategy will not be completed in the near term, and its outcomes will be provided to Council later this year, staff recommends that the deferred parking policies from OPA 34 be adopted through OPA 37.

These policies will provide an interim approach to parking designed for Palermo Village which can be refined through the results the Parking Strategy, as applicable.

The proposed parking policies from OPA 34 and re-iterated in OPA 37 are as follows:

22.4.1 Transportation ...

...r) Parking

- i. Within the Urban Centre and High Density Residential designations structured parking should be provided. Limited surface parking for commercial and visitor parking may be considered when appropriately sited and screened to minimize the view of the surface parking from the street.*
- ii. The maximum portion of a lot that may be used for surface parking should be approximately 30 percent, except:*
 - a maximum of approximately 50 percent of a lot used for community uses may be occupied by surface parking; and,*
 - a maximum of approximately 75 percent of a lot used primarily for the provision of parking, such as public parking facilities, may be occupied by surface parking.*

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- iii. *Aboveground parking structures should be integrated with development. The maximum portion of a lot that may be used for a freestanding aboveground parking structure should be 50 percent. Aboveground parking structures shall be appropriately sited and screened, and include appropriate landscaping, to the satisfaction of the Town. Aboveground parking structures that abut a public street shall contain active uses at grade facing the street.*
- iv. *Required commercial parking may include on-street parking and the use of public parking facilities, where possible and appropriate, to the satisfaction of the Town.*

Extending the Growth Area North to the 407 Corridor (OPA 38)

This is the deferred item from March 22, 2021 used to inform this section of the report and corresponding components of OPA 38 (Appendix B):

“i. Item 7a. “Extending the Growth Area North to the 407 Corridor” ... be deferred and staff provide further information and research to Council for consideration;”

The following sections present information and research on the Palermo Village Growth Area in two themes:

- 1) Retaining the Palermo Village Growth Area as a focus for managing growth
- 2) Designating and preserving lands for employment near Highway 407

OPA 38 is the follow-up to OPA 34 that will bring the last remaining lands in North West Oakville into the Livable Oakville Plan and not leave them orphaned in the 1984 Official Plan.

1) Retaining Palermo Village as a Focus for Growth

Background and History

Palermo Village is the oldest remaining settlement in present-day Oakville. First settled in 1806, it served as an important stop on the route between Toronto and Dundas. At its peak in the 1920s, Palermo boasted a post office, community hall, blacksmith shop, brick schoolhouse, doctor's office and places of worship.

Land use planning to enable the creation of a high-density mixed use node at Palermo dates back to the early 1990s, when it was identified as a ‘transit node’ by Halton Region, and as a Special Study Area in the town’s Official Plan.

The Palermo Village lands south of Dundas Street West have been steadily urbanizing over the past 15 years. That development is contributing to the creation of a transit-supportive node in accordance with the policies of the Livable Oakville Plan.

The Palermo Village lands north of Dundas Street West have been subject to appeals at the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (now the Ontario Land Tribunal), for over a decade. Those matters, including appeals to Halton’s Regional Official Plan and the town’s North Oakville West Secondary Plan, plus a number of other barriers, must be resolved before development can proceed in this area.

Recent Planning - Palermo Village Growth Area

As part of the town’s ongoing Official Plan Review, Council adopted Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) for a town-wide urban structure their on September 27, 2017:

- OPA 15 introduced a new Section 3 – Urban Structure and Schedule A1 –Urban Structure into the Town’s Official Plan, the Livable Oakville Plan.
- OPA 317 (By-law 2017and OPA 318 (By-law 2017-081) provided for revisions to the North Oakville East Secondary Plan (NOESP) and the North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP) respectively, to align them with the urban structure changes to the Livable Oakville Plan.

Collectively, the three urban structure OPAs provide a town-wide framework for protecting natural heritage, open space and cultural heritage, maintaining the character of established areas, and directing growth to an identified system of nodes and corridors.

It is important to note that despite the long history of appeals to planning instruments in Palermo Village north, the urban structure OPAs including OPA 318 were not appealed for these lands.

The town’s approved urban structure identifies the Palermo Village lands around the intersection of Bronte Road and Dundas Street as “Nodes and Corridors”, “Proposed Regional Transit Node” and “Nodes and Corridors for Further Study”. Bronte Road and Dundas Street are also identified as “Regional Transit Priority Corridors” (Appendix C).

As with the town’s other growth areas, Palermo Village is intended to be a pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive, urban community with a mix of residential, commercial, community and offices uses.

The Palermo Village Growth Area Review, which forms part of the town’s ongoing Official Plan Review, was guided by the town’s approved urban structure. That study has concluded and recommended updated land use policies and designations to

guide development and decision-making in Palermo Village, including lands on the north side of Dundas Street.

The updated policies delineate appropriate boundaries, a mix of land uses and the intensity and scale of development. The public engagement component of the study generally demonstrated broad based support for the directions, opportunities and policies resulting from the Palermo Village Growth Area Review.

A major theme emerging from the public engagement was support for good locations and access to much needed uses and community facilities including recreational facilities, commercial uses including grocery, a transit hub, a range of housing types and a mix of uses.

The Palermo Village component of OPA 34 was informed by the results of the Palermo Village Growth Area Review as well as refinements provided by public comments and input from Council.

Conclusion and Staff Opinion

All four quadrants of Palermo Village have been comprehensively studied and are identified as a growth area with opportunities to create a transit-supportive, complete community within a mixed use context which can accommodate required town facilities, commercial uses, the transit terminal, as well as office and residential uses.

Staff is of the opinion that the Palermo Village Growth Area should be maintained as a node focused at the intersection of Dundas Street West and Bronte Road. The Palermo Village Growth Area should not be extended north to the Highway 407 Corridor.

Staff notes the current configuration of the Palermo Village Growth Area Boundary maintains an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius representing a 10-minute walk to existing public transit service. This is an accepted transit planning standard that is also recognized by the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended. The level of transit of service in Palermo Village is also planned to increase along with development of the planned transit station.

Staff is of the opinion that extending the growth area north to the 407 corridor will dilute the benefits of concentrating growth by increasing walking distances to access existing transit to the point of being impractical. In this instance, reliance on the private automobile will increase for new residents.

In regards to the future 407 Transitway, staff notes that this is a long-term provincial project that may provide mass transit support for growth at the intersection of Bronte Road and Highway 407. At present, the timing for the delivery of this project is

uncertain. Preliminary designs show the transit station located on the east side of Bronte Road on provincially owned lands.

Staff is of the opinion that existing transit along Dundas Street and Bronte Road can be accessed presently and that planned transit improvements including increased level of service, development of a transit station and implementation of the future Dundas BRT by Metrolinx provide for a more certain and reliable transit scenario to support growth in the existing Palermo Village Growth Area.

Staff is also of the opinion that extending the growth area will delay the development of other much needed uses and community facilities to serve the existing and planned population of Palermo Village.

In summary, retaining the Palermo Village Growth Area as a focus for managing growth will:

- Continue to improve walkability and connectivity around the intersection of Bronte Road and Dundas Street West
- Ensure that much needed uses, community facilities and amenities are provided in accessible and appropriate locations
- Benefit from the certainty of existing and planned transit required to support substantial growth occurring in the area and planned future growth

2) Designating and preserving lands for employment near Highway 407

Planning for the Employment Areas along Highway 407 was undertaken locally by Oakville through the planning process for the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans in 2000.

At that time, the Recommended Strategic Land Use Plan from the Strategic Land Use Options Study recommended Employment Land along Highway 407 (Appendix D).

Council adopted the North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP) in May 2009 as OPA 289 to the 1984 Official Plan. The NOWSP designates the lands along Highway 407 as an Employment District (Appendix E) and provides the following objective:

"Providing high quality prestigious employment along provincial freeways."

The status of these lands for employment uses was confirmed by Regional Council when they adopted Regional Official Plan Amendment 38 (ROPA 38) in December 2009. The Regional Official Plan designates the lands along Highway 407 as "Urban Area" and "Employment Area".

Regional policy directs:

“77.1(3) To locate Employment Areas in the vicinity of existing major highway interchanges and rail yards, where appropriate, within the Urban Area.”

Notwithstanding the long-standing appeals to planning instruments on some lands in the area, these Council adopted plans represent a community vision for the orderly development of North West Oakville.

As reported, Council adopted Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) for a town-wide urban structure on September 27, 2017:

- OPA 15 introduced a new Section 3 – Urban Structure and Schedule A1 –Urban Structure into the Town’s Official Plan, the Livable Oakville Plan.
- OPA 317 (By-law 2017and OPA 318 (By-law 2017-081) provided for revisions to the North Oakville East Secondary Plan (NOESP) and the North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP) respectively, to align them with the urban structure changes to the Livable Oakville Plan.

For the lands in Palermo Village north, the urban structure OPAs including OPA 318 have not been appealed.

In parallel to the town’s ongoing Official Plan Review, the Regional Official Plan Review is underway. As reported, the region is advancing draft ROPA 48 as a component of Halton Region’s Municipal Comprehensive Review. Draft ROPA 48 proposes a Regional Urban Structure consisting of Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs), Regional Employment Areas, Built-Up Areas, and Designated Greenfield Area.

Draft ROPA 48 continues to designate the lands along Highway 407 as Urban Area and Employment Area.

In addition to the long-standing approaches in the local and regional Official Plans for designating and preserving lands for employment along Highway 407, the province provides direction in this regard.

The 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, under section 2.2 Policies for Where and How to Grow, specifies:

2.2.5 Employment

2.2.5.5 Municipalities should designate and preserve lands within settlement areas located adjacent to or near major goods movement facilities and corridors, including major highway interchanges, as areas for manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities

Conclusion and Staff Opinion

In the context of sustained and consistent long-term planning and direction at the local, regional and provincial levels, staff is of the opinion that employment lands should remain designated and preserved along the Highway 407 Corridor at the intersection with Bronte Road.

Shifting the proposed NHS linkage North (OPA 38)

This is the deferred item from March 22, 2021 used to inform this section of the report and corresponding components of OPA 38 (Appendix B):

“i. ... Items 7b. “Shifting the proposed NHS linkage North” be deferred and staff provide further information and research to Council for consideration;”

Current Status of the Linkage

The North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP) identifies “the NHS linkage” as a Linkage Preserve Area as shown in Figure 3 below and excepted from Appendix F.

Staff notes that while the text of the deferred item above uses the term “proposed”, the linkage in question is an existing component of the local and regional Official Plans as set out below. There are currently no planning applications received by the town proposing to move the NHS linkage.

The NOWSP provides the following description of Linkage Preserve Areas:

Linkage Preserve Areas include areas which are designed to link the Core Preserve Areas together to maintain and enhance their environmental sustainability. They follow natural features whenever possible and are intended to be of sufficient size and character, including buffers, to ensure the functionality and sustainability of the Natural Heritage component of the System

For context, the NOWSP describes Core Preserve Areas, the foundation of the North Oakville Natural Heritage System (NHS) as follows:

The Core Preserve Areas include key natural features or groupings of key natural features, together with required buffers and adjacent lands intended to protect the function of those features and ensure the long term sustainability of the Natural Heritage component of the System within the urban context.

The Linkage Preserve Area that is the subject of this report has several important characteristics, including:

- Connecting the Core Preserve Area of Fourteen Mile Creek to the Core Preserve Area of Glenorchy Conservation Area
- Containing an Evaluated Wetland feature that is part of the Provincially Significant North Oakville – Milton west Wetland Complex (Appendix G)
- Providing a critical east-west connection in a landscape dominated by a north-south pattern
- Acting as a boundary to the Palermo Village Growth Area and a complementary component to the Parks and Open Space plan for the growth area



Figure 3. Highlighted excerpt of the NOWSP NHS Components

Background and History

Much like the history described previously regarding planning for employment along Highway 407, the North Oakville NHS has been the subject of long-range comprehensive planning also dating back to at least 1999.

This planning was undertaken by Oakville through the planning process for the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans, the following highlights are provided:

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- North Oakville Natural Heritage Inventory and Analysis (LGL Ltd. 1999) provided the technical and policy basis for consideration of environmental lands in North Oakville.
 - The Recommended Strategic Land Use Plan from the Strategic Land Use Options Study (Hemson 2000) (Appendix D) identified the presence of major environmental lands in North Oakville and recommended a range of approaches for securing the preservation of environmental features.
 - The Strategic Land Use Options Study also reported “*In all rounds of the public consultation process, Oakville residents expressed the desire to preserve as much as possible, the environmental features in North Oakville*”.
 - The Planning Authorities Interagency Review (IAR) Phase 1 Report (2003) identified a Preliminary Natural Heritage / Open Space System that incorporated Conceptual Linkages including the NHS linkage at the northern limit of the Palermo Village Growth Area.

Note: The IAR allowed the province, region and town “*to work collectively at a technical level to develop options for a common policy framework with respect to potential elements of the natural heritage/open space system which would be suitable for the urban context of North Oakville, and reflect provincial smart growth principles for input to the Subwatershed Study, which in turn will all be input to the Secondary Plan.*”

- The IAR Phase 2 Report (2006) concluded that the proposed NHS for the North Oakville Secondary Plans was appropriate and identified the Linkage Preserve Area north of Palermo Village as well as other Natural Heritage Components (Appendix F).
- The North Oakville Creeks Subwatershed Study – Management Report (2006) identifies a 100 m wide linkage and associated wetland between Core Area #1, 14 Mile Creek (Main) and Core Area #2, 14 Mile Creek East (ORC Lands) (Appendix H).
- Additional technical work by the province characterised the wetland within the Linkage Preserve Area north of Palermo Village part of the Provincially Significant North Oakville – Milton West Wetland Complex (2006)
- Council adopted the NOWSP (2009) as OPA 289 to the 1984 Official Plan. The NOWSP designates the linkage as Natural Heritage System (Appendix E).
- Regional Council confirms the status of the NHS lands north of Palermo Village when they adopted Regional Official Plan Amendment 38 (ROPA 38) (2009). The

Regional Official Plan designates these lands as Regional Natural Heritage System.

- As reported, as part of the town’s ongoing Official Plan Review, Council adopted a town-wide urban structure through OPAs 15, 317 and 318 on September 27, 2017, confirming these lands as a Natural Heritage System element of the town’s Urban Structure (Appendix C).
- The urban structure OPAs provide a town-wide framework for protecting natural heritage, open space and cultural heritage, maintaining the character of established areas and directing growth to an identified system of nodes and corridors. As noted, the urban structure OPAs 15, 317 and 318 in particular, have not been not appealed for these lands.
- Staff conducted a site visit to the Linkage Preserve Area as part of the research for this report. A photo of the area taken June 2, 2021 is in Appendix I.

Conclusion and Staff Opinion

In the context of sustained and consistent long-term technical, policy and land use planning at the local, regional and provincial levels, staff is of the opinion that the Linkage Preserve Area north of Palermo Village should remain in its current location and not be shifted. In this sense, it is not appropriate to shift the Linkage Preserve Area to the north.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

The recommended Official Plan Amendments 37 and 38 were available for review on the town’s website (<https://www.oakville.ca>) on or after June 10, 2021. Notice of the Public Meeting and Recommendation Report was published in the Oakville Beaver on June 10, 2021.

Notice of these proposed policies was provided through both the original notice regarding OPA 34, and the specific notice with respect to these Amendments, in accordance with the *Planning Act*, as amended. Notice was printed in the Oakville Beaver on June 10 and was served to persons who provided written submissions on OPA 34 as well as the Public Agencies standard list.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The recommended Official Plan Amendments 37 and 38 were circulated to internal departments for review.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to advance Livability, Accountable Government, Mobility and Environment.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

Protecting the town's Natural Heritage System is an action to mitigate Climate Change. Managing and directing required population and employment growth within a defined urban structure consisting of strategic growth areas such as Palermo Village is also an action to mitigate Climate Change.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - OPA 37 - Palermo Village Cultural Heritage and Parking

Appendix B - OPA 38 - North West Area NHS and Growth Area

Appendix C – Town-Wide Urban Structure

Appendix D – North Oakville Strategic Land Use Options

Appendix E – NOWSP Land Use Plan

Appendix F - NOWSP NHS Components

Appendix G - Provincially Significant Wetland Complex

Appendix H - North Oakville Creek Subwatershed Study

Appendix I - Photo of Linkage Area, June 21, 2021

Appendix J – Submission from March 22, 2021

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