



# REPORT

## Council

**Meeting Date: March 25, 2024**

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**FROM:** Strategy, Policy and Communications Department

**DATE:** March 12, 2024

**SUBJECT:** **Master Plans Overview**

**LOCATION:** Town Hall

**WARD:** Town-wide

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the report entitled “Master Plans Overview”, dated March 12, 2024 from the Strategy, Policy and Communications Department be received.

### **KEY FACTS:**

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

- The town’s strategic, policy, and planning environment includes the Council Strategic Plan, the Official Plan, master plans and the town’s budget.
- The Strategic Plan sets Council’s long-term strategy and the vision for the community, including the identification of strategic priorities that guide all initiatives including services, program delivery, plans and studies.
- Oakville’s Official Plan identifies how the lands should be used and how growth should be managed over the long term and plans in response to forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2051.
- A master plan advances Council’s long-term strategy and vision through medium-term planning that responds to anticipated growth for programs, services and infrastructure and is informed by data analysis, trends, issues analysis, estimates, and future projections.
- Council’s approval of a master plan is an endorsement of the initiatives and recommendations but does not automatically provide approval for resources or budgets.
- Costs associated with master plan implementation must be addressed through the town’s annual budget process to provide Council and the public with a full picture of all priorities and commitments for the upcoming year as well as longer term capital funding.

- Staff intend to bring forward a number of master plans for Council's consideration in the next two years including the Fire Master Plan; the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan; and the Transportation Master Plan. This report sets the context for the master planning process within the broader planning framework at the town.

## BACKGROUND:

The town's broader strategic, policy, and planning environment is summarized as follows:

- Council's [Strategic Plan](#) is the town's highest-level direction-setting document. All town projects, initiatives, studies, and plans are intended to align with the town's strategic priority areas and vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all.
- The town's [Official Plan](#) (OP) is currently under review, and is enabled by the [Planning Act](#), R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13. The OP is the town's primary document that identifies how the town implements provincial plans and interests and sets the vision for how the town will manage growth over the long term. The town's OP establishes an urban structure with identified growth corridors and nodes and establishes population and employment forecasts.
- [Master plans](#) bring to life the vision of the Strategic Plan, respond to Official Plan policies, and are specific to select key service areas with goals and recommendations to advance programs, services and infrastructure provided within those service areas.
- The annual budget documents, including the [Adopted 2024 Budget and Business Plans](#), set out the financial commitments of the town that are aligned with the vision and priorities identified for each program. This process provides accountability and transparency on how the town decides to allocate its financial resources.

### Council Strategic Plan

Council's strategic plan is the highest-level direction-setting document for the town and serves as the framework for Council to guide decision-making, planning and budget allocation. The town's Strategic Plan is Council's commitment to advancing town priorities, strengthening municipal operations, and dedicating resources toward achieving Oakville's vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all. All town projects, initiatives, studies and plans must align with the vision and at least one identified strategic priority.

On [July 11, 2023](#), Council approved the Town of Oakville Council Strategic Plan and 2023–2026 Action Plan with a new vision and new mission to serve the community in a responsible, inclusive way, dedicated to building environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The four strategic priorities focus on what matters most to the community:

- Growth management: Managing growth for a vibrant local economy, meeting infrastructure needs and ensuring we have complete communities and efficient mobility across the town.
- Community Belonging: Enhancing community belonging to ensure all residents are invited to engage in a fulfilling community life that is built to support wellbeing.
- Environmental Sustainability: Ensuring environmental sustainability to meet future needs related to greenspace, natural areas, and act on climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Accountable government: Providing accountable government for excellence in service delivery and responsible management of resources.

### Oakville's Official Plan

An official plan is a legal document containing goals, objectives, and policies intended to guide land use, development and growth in a municipality. Oakville's Official Plan (OP), identifies how the lands should be used and how growth should be managed over the long term and plans in response to forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2051. Oakville's Official Plan is comprised of the Livable Oakville Plan and the North Oakville Secondary Plans. The town's Official Plan is currently under review (5-year review) as per legislative requirements.

These plans must conform or be consistent with a number of provincial plans and policies, as well as Halton Region's Official Plan.

The town's Official Plan is guided by the vision and the Growth Management strategic priority identified in Council's long-term strategy. However, the OP cannot achieve this priority on its own, as its focus is on land-use planning and allocation of growth. Other plans are required to provide more detail and sometimes technical requirements to further advance, and implement, the town's vision (e.g. Transportation Master Plan and Asset Management Plan).

### What is a Master Plan?

A master plan examines key town service areas with a view to maintain or advance the service as growth occurs. It provides greater detail on how the organization expects to deliver its programs, services and infrastructure and is informed by data analysis, trends, issues analysis, estimates, and future projections. Master plans contribute to the background studies for Development Charges and influence the 10-year financial forecast, which sets anticipated priorities and is approved on an annual basis.

The shorter timeframes associated with master plans are beneficial as they allow departments to assess situations on a more frequent basis and manage risks by incorporating new or changed regulatory requirements and legislation. It also allows for departments to consider the changing needs of the community, environmental issues, financial constraints, and other considerations. Frequent reviews also allow for opportunities to innovate in response to emerging issues, trends, and best practices.

While Council approval is an endorsement of a given master plan's intention and proposed recommendations, it's important to note that Council approval of a master plan does not automatically approve potential funding and resource requirements for any of the initiatives in a master plan.

### Annual Budget Process

Once a master plan is approved, staff will prepare an implementation plan with timing and funding needs. Any resources or funding required to advance the recommendations are considered in the 10-year financial forecast, which sets anticipated priorities.

The annual budget process is about offering valued programs and services, making strategic investments in infrastructure and ensuring responsible budgeting and sound long-term financial planning. The process ensures the town's resources are used wisely and brings Council's long-term strategy to life by providing funds to move plans forward. This is the opportunity for the Mayor, in consultation with members of Council and community stakeholders, to decide on the priorities for the upcoming year. The annual budget review allows for the opportunity to adapt to changing community needs and flexibility as priorities evolve.

The budget process provides for a transparent account to the public of what the town's priorities are for the upcoming year, as well as longer-term capital funding.

### Commonalities and Interconnections of Master Plans

The town's master plans together provide the general roadmap of where the town is going and its plans for a livable and vibrant community for all. Foundational to all master plans is community engagement and consultation, so that residents, businesses, community stakeholders and others, are able to provide their thoughts and opinions on how the town provides programs and services that advance the vision.

Implementation of master plan recommendations are considered on an annual basis by each commission as part of workplan reviews and additional resources required to carry out priority initiatives are presented for consideration during the annual budget process.

Progress on master plan implementation is monitored and tracked by each responsible department and regular updates are provided to leadership and Council when appropriate. The evaluation of programs is a key activity by service areas to understand progress and where intervention may be required to ensure effective service delivery and utilization of resources. Where possible, staff are actively looking for efficiencies to improve processes while maintaining service levels and improving customer service. The Strategic Plan dashboard of key community indicators, currently under development, will report on progress for strategic priority areas.

The ongoing review of master plans, typically every five to 10-years, allows the town to review progress and provides an opportunity to conduct another holistic review of what might need to be updated or changed. This iterative review process ensures that Council has up-to-date information to make decisions reflective of community needs and emerging issues and trends. These foundational policy documents are core to the operation of town functions and keep the town accountable to the commitment and vision of Council.

**COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

Collectively, master plans address, enhance and monitor actions that contribute overall to a high quality of life for the town's residents and businesses. The town has a number of active master plans, some of which are set to be updated in the near future and will be brought forward for Council consideration as outlined below.

Currently, the town has multiple master plans: Fire Master Plan; Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan; and Transportation Master Plan (and Active Transportation Master Plan). These plans are currently under review and more information on the scope and timing of these master plan reviews are identified below.

**Fire Master Plan**

In Ontario, the fire master planning process is intended to provide the members of a municipal Council, and town staff, with a strategic planning framework to guide the delivery of fire protection services within their community over a five to 10-year horizon. The proposed framework presented within the updated Fire Master Plan (FMP) has considered the applicable legislation, including the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA), *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), *R.S.O. 1990* and the more recently adopted *Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 378/18 – Community Risk Assessment* and *O. Reg. 343/22 – Firefighter Certification*.

The analysis and methodology presented within the FMP has also been informed by current industry best practices including the fire protection standards authored by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Public Fire Safety Guidelines (PFSGs) authored by the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM). The Oakville

Fire Department has successfully completed and implemented Fire Master Plans for decades.

The FMP is a 10-year plan with a five-year review period.

#### Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan

Town staff are leading an update of the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan.

Staff engaged the community in 2023 and continue to gather information related to demographic data and growth forecasts, participation and usage levels and trends, facility utilization and facility condition, and best practices. Draft recommendations will be shared for community input this spring and a final plan will follow later this year.

#### Transportation Master Plan (TMP)

Town staff are leading a new study which will serve as an update to both the 2018 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and the 2017 Active Transportation Master Plan. The process will use the Urban Mobility and Transportation Study as a lens to develop a new plan to accommodate growth to 2051.

The updated TMP will focus on building walkable, cycle/transit friendly neighbourhoods integrated with accessible transportation choices for all residents. The TMP will recommend a comprehensive, updated set of guidelines to enhance the town's transportation system to address the needs of all stakeholders and establish a path forward for all modes of transportation to support Oakville's vision to be a vibrant and livable community for all. The TMP will be completed at the end of 2024 and shared with the public in early 2025.

Following Council approval of these master plans, staff will identify priority actions and if any additional resources or budgets are required, they will be presented through future budgets for further review and discussion.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **(A) PUBLIC**

Council's Strategic Plan sets out the vision for the town as a vibrant and livable community for all. To achieve this vision, planning for today and the future is essential. Master plans provide a framework so that Council, staff and the public understand alignment to the vision and assist Council in prioritizing initiatives, decision-making and resource allocation.

**(B) FINANCIAL**

There is no direct financial impact as a result of receiving this report. Budgetary implications from any given master plan will be identified as part of the annual budget process.

**(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

There is no impact to other departments as a result of this report. This report is intended to make the connection between Council's long-term strategy and master plans led by the departments. Departments are responsible for submitting resource and funding requests related to master plan implementation through the annual budget process.

**(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

All town master plans should align with the vision of Council's Strategic Plan and at least one strategic priority. Strategic objectives provide additional detail on what the town is trying to achieve. The 2023–2026 Action Plan lists the initiatives and priorities of Council, some of which are master plans.

**(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

One of the town's strategic priorities is "Environmental Sustainability" which is a key consideration in the development of each master plan.

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