

Preserving and Creating a Livable Town

3. URBAN STRUCTURE

The urban structure sets out the framework for where and how the Town will grow and how to determine Oakville's *character* and form.

Urban structure elements are not intended to be land use designations, and are not intended to grant *development* rights or to predetermine the specific land uses that will be permitted on any particular parcel of land.

The Town's urban structure has been shaped by the shoreline of Lake Ontario, its environmental features, historic routes and original settlements. The lake, together with Sixteen Mile Creek, Bronte Creek and other tributaries, provided for the original harbours and their associated commercial centres, resources, trade and manufacturing industries. The lake, creek valleys and tributaries have been used as travel routes for centuries and today form a network of green connections across the Town.

Historic routes include Dundas Street, one of Ontario's earliest military and colonization roads, Lakeshore Road and the CN railway. These routes, in addition to the grid of former township roads, the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW), Highway 403 and Highway 407, have contributed to Oakville's existing *development* pattern.

The Town is a growing and attractive destination for businesses and residents. This appeal comes from a high quality of life and from its location within the *Greater Golden Horseshoe* and southern Ontario. The range of available lifestyle choices will continue to make the Town a place to which residents and businesses feel a sense of pride and connection.

The urban structure builds on these attributes and provides for the long-term protection of natural heritage, public open space and cultural heritage resources, maintains the character of Residential Areas and is the foundation to direct growth to identified nodes and corridors. The Town's urban structure is comprehensive and provides certainty to guide major *infrastructure* investment and to maximize cost effectiveness. It is the basis for the policies in this Plan and for making planning decisions.

The urban structure consists of a number of distinct and interconnected elements shown on Schedule A1, Urban Structure.

3.1 Natural Heritage System

The Natural Heritage System recognizes a linked system of natural areas including natural features, *hazard lands*, buffers and linkages. It is intended that these natural areas be protected from *development* and preserved for the long term in order to promote sustainability and contribute to the quality of life in the Town.

3.2 Mixed Use

The Mixed Use designations are to be primarily focused within the Growth Areas and in specified locations reflective of an area's planned function. The seven Growth Areas provide for a concentration of mixed use, higher density, *development*: Midtown Oakville (*urban growth centre*), Uptown Core, Palermo Village, Downtown Oakville, Bronte Village, Kerr Village, and Hospital District. Policies for all seven Growth Areas are found in Part E.

3.3 Parkway Belt and Greenbelt

The Parkway Belt and the Greenbelt are areas within the Town where *development* is limited in accordance with Provincial policy. Lands in the Parkway Belt in Oakville are primarily designed to provide a linked system of open space and recreational facilities and to achieve other objectives including, but not limited to, the protection of infrastructure corridors, utilities, and an inter-urban transitway. Lands in the Greenbelt are part of a broad area of land that is permanently protected, primarily for the purpose of protecting the natural heritage and water resource systems within. Lands in the Greenbelt that are also within the Parkway Belt are only subject to Greenbelt Plan policies 3.2 Natural System and 3.3 Parkland, Open Space and Trails.

3.4 Greenbelt – Urban River Valleys

Greenbelt - Urban River Valley areas are part of the Greenbelt and assist in protecting key enhanced river valley corridors and recognizing their importance as connections between the rest of the Greenbelt and Lake Ontario.

3.5 Waterfront Open Space

Waterfront Open Space recognizes the Town's waterfront and its important contribution to environmental protection and the provision of recreational opportunities.

3.6 Parks, Open Space and Cemeteries

Parks, Open Space and Cemetery areas include publicly accessible land and locations for recreational opportunities and physical linkages that enhance the Town's *character* and quality of life, as well as contributing to sustainability.

3.7 Nodes and Corridors

Nodes and Corridors are key areas of the Town identified as the focus for mixed use *development* and intensification.

Nodes and Corridors shown on Schedule A1 – Urban Structure are referred to in this Plan as Growth Areas and corridors and include Midtown Oakville, Uptown Core, Palermo Village, Hospital District, Kerr Village, Bronte Village, Downtown

Oakville, Trafalgar Road Corridor (QEW to Dundas Street) and the corridors along Dundas Street and Speers Road. This Plan also identifies Nodes and Corridors through the defined terms *intensification areas* and *intensification corridors*.

Nodes and Corridors are identified in the North Oakville East Secondary Plan as urban core areas and include Trafalgar Urban Core Area, Dundas Urban Core Area and Neyagawa Urban Core Area.

The Nodes and Corridors identified in this Plan and in the North Oakville East Secondary Plan comprise the Town's *strategic growth areas* as that term is defined in the Growth Plan.

Midtown Oakville is identified as an *Urban Growth Centre* in the *Growth Plan* and is planned to accommodate a significant portion of Oakville and Halton's required intensification.

Bronte GO Station is identified as a *Major Transit Station Area* by the *Growth Plan* and is intended to accommodate *transit-supportive* growth and intensification.

The remaining Nodes and Corridors each have a unique existing and planned *character*, scale and potential to accommodate growth.

Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village are intended to develop as mixed use centres with viable main streets.

They are recognized in the urban structure as Main Street Areas for their distinctive *character* and are intended to accommodate lesser amounts of intensification.

This Plan, along with the North Oakville East Secondary Plan, provides detailed policies for the *development* of the identified Nodes and Corridors.

For those areas identified on Schedule A1 – Urban Structure as Nodes and Corridors for Further Study, future review shall provide updated and new policies to delineate boundaries, the mix of land uses and the intensity and scale of *development*.

3.8 Employment Areas

Employment Areas provide for a mix of employment uses including industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. The *Employment Areas* are generally located along the Provincial Highways including the QEW, the 403 and the 407. The Employment Mixed Use Corridor along Speers Road and Cornwall Road is identified for its mix of non-traditional employment *development*. An Employment Mixed Use Corridor is an *Employment Area* in which a broader range of employment uses may be permitted in order to support the function of the *Employment Area* as a *strategic growth area*.

It is anticipated that *development* in the *Employment Areas* shall continue to reflect an evolving Town-wide macro-economy premised on decreased industrial and manufacturing growth and increased demand in the office sector. *Employment Areas* shall be planned to accommodate a more compact, *transit-supportive* and pedestrian-oriented environment, with a range of employment-supportive amenities.

3.9 Major Commercial Areas

Major Commercial Areas provide concentrations of commercial facilities serving a broader area within the region. These areas are located at the intersection of major arterial roads with proximity to highway access.

3.10 Residential Areas

Residential Areas include low, medium and high density residential uses as well as a range of compatible facilities such as schools, places of worship, recreational and commercial uses that serve the residents of the Town.

Some growth and change may occur in the Residential Areas provided the *character* of the area is preserved and the overall urban structure of the Town is upheld. The *character* of the Residential Areas will be significantly influenced by their relationship to the Natural Heritage System, parks and open space areas.

3.11 Cultural Heritage Resources

The Town has a long tradition of identifying and conserving *cultural heritage resources*, and is required to do so under Provincial Policy.

Heritage Conservation Districts and *cultural heritage landscapes* are elements of the urban structure and are shown on Schedule A1, Urban Structure. Other *cultural heritage resources* are important features of the Town but due to their size are not identifiable at the scale of the urban structure.

As additional Heritage Conservation Districts *and cultural heritage landscapes* are protected and registered under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, they shall be added to Schedule A1, Urban Structure.

3.12 Major Transportation Corridors, Provincial Priority Transit Corridors and Utility Corridors

The future of transportation is based on the principle of “mobility-as-a-service” and a focus on a multi-modal transportation system. Major Transportation Corridors as well as Proposed Major Transportation Corridors are identified in the urban structure as the foundation of the Town’s multi-modal transportation system. These major elements include arterial roads and major collector roads.

The *Provincial priority transit corridor*, Utility Corridors and Provincial Highways are also identified in the Town's urban structure in support of the transportation system.

The function of this transportation system is to provide connectivity locally, between the Town's Nodes and Corridors and throughout the Region. This connectivity shall be achieved by delivering a full range of multi-modal facilities.

3.13 Regional Transit Priority Corridors and Mobility Links

Regional transit priority corridors and *mobility links* are identified in a Town-wide grid network that is key to connecting people via transit throughout the region as well as to local destinations including nodes, mobility hubs, *major transit station areas* and *Employment Areas*.

Regional transit priority corridors provide a key focus for *transit-supportive development*.

3.14 Major Active Transportation Connections

Major Active Transportation Connections are recognized as an element of the urban structure and an essential component of the transportation system to provide for sustainable and viable transportation choices as alternatives to the car.

3.15 Scenic Corridor

Scenic Corridors are recognized for their scenic value and for their natural and cultural heritage features. These important features need to be maintained or restored since they add value and contribute to the Town's *character*.

3.16 Major Transit Station, Regional Transit Node and Proposed Transit Node

Major Transit Stations, Regional Transit Nodes and Proposed Transit Nodes are at key locations to integrate with the Town-wide transportation system and to provide a focus for *transit-supportive development* that facilitates first mile-last mile connections and solutions.

11. RESIDENTIAL

The lands identified as Residential Areas on Schedule A1, Urban Structure, represent the areas that provide for stable residential communities.

A variety of residential uses is accommodated through the three Residential land use designations: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential. These designations provide for a full range of housing types, forms and densities.

The majority of *intensification* and *development* within the Town is to occur within the Growth Areas as described in Part E. *Intensification* outside of the Growth Areas within the stable residential communities will be subject to policies that are intended to maintain and protect the existing *character* of those communities.

Special Policy Areas may be defined on lands or areas which are designated Residential and which require further study and/or additional policies as set out in Part E.

The following objectives shall apply to all Residential Areas:

- a) maintain, protect and enhance the *character* of existing Residential Areas;
- b) encourage an appropriate mix of housing types, densities, design and tenure throughout the Town;
- c) promote housing initiatives to facilitate revitalization, *compact urban form* and an increased variety of housing alternatives;
- d) promote innovative housing types and forms to ensure accessible, *affordable*, adequate and appropriate housing for all socio-economic groups;
- e) encourage the conservation and rehabilitation of older housing in order to maintain the stability and *character* of the existing stable residential communities; and,
- f) discourage the conversion of existing rental properties to condominiums or to other forms of ownership in order to maintain an adequate supply of rental housing.

11.1 General

- 11.1.1 The Town will continue to work directly with the Region to provide opportunities for housing for a wide array of socio-economic groups and those with differing physical needs using all available planning mechanisms and tools and to develop a housing strategy, including preparation of Municipal Housing Statements, which will establish and implement *affordable housing* targets.

- 11.1.2 The Town will seek a balance in housing tenure. Conversions of existing rental accommodation to condominium or other forms of ownership shall be discouraged.
- 11.1.3 The Town will provide for the creation of additional dwelling units through regulations in the Zoning By-law.
- a) Additional dwelling units shall not be considered as dwelling units for the purpose of calculating density.
 - b) Additional dwelling units may be permitted in accordance with other applicable by-laws, guidance, or requirements.
- 11.1.4 *Development* shall conform with the policies relating to urban design and sustainability set out in Part C.
- 11.1.5 *Development* on private roads shall be discouraged. Where it is demonstrated that a public road is not warranted, to the satisfaction of the Town, *development* through plans of condominium on private roads may be permitted provided all required services are appropriately accommodated and all applicable policies of this Plan are satisfied.
- 11.1.6 *Special needs housing* may be permitted through a range of housing types in all residential land use designations in accordance with section 11.1.9 and where adequate residential amenities and services are provided.
- 11.1.7 Home occupations and bed and breakfast establishments may be permitted in accordance with section 11.1.9 and the Town's Zoning By-law and any other applicable by-laws or requirements.
- 11.1.8 *Intensification* within the stable residential communities shall be provided as follows:
- a) Within stable residential communities, on lands designated Low Density Residential, the construction of a new dwelling on an existing vacant lot, *land division*, and/or the conversion of an existing building into one or more units, may be considered where it is *compatible* with the lot area and lot frontages of the surrounding neighbourhood and subject to the policies of section 11.1.9 and all other applicable policies of this Plan;
 - b) Within the stable residential communities, on lands designated Low Density Residential, there may also be sites at the intersection of arterial and/or collector roads, or sites with existing non-residential uses, that have sufficient frontage and depth to accommodate appropriate *intensification* through *development* approvals. *Intensification* of these sites may occur with Low Density Residential uses in accordance with section 11.1.9 and all other applicable policies of this Plan; and,

- c) Within the stable residential communities, on lands designated Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential, there may be underutilized lands on which additional *development* may be appropriate. *Intensification* of these lands may occur within the existing density permissions for the lands and may be considered subject to the requirements of section 11.1.9 and all other applicable policies of this Plan.

11.1.9 *Development* within all stable residential communities shall be evaluated using the following criteria to maintain and protect the existing neighbourhood *character*:

- a) The built form of *development*, including scale, height, massing, architectural *character* and materials, is to be *compatible* with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- b) *Development* should be *compatible* with the setbacks, orientation and separation distances within the surrounding neighbourhood.
- c) Where a *development* represents a transition between different land use designations or housing forms, a gradation in building height shall be used to achieve a transition in height from adjacent *development*.
- d) Where applicable, the proposed lotting pattern of *development* shall be *compatible* with the predominant lotting pattern of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- e) Roads and/or municipal *infrastructure* shall be adequate to provide water and wastewater service, waste management services and fire protection.
- f) Surface parking shall be minimized on the site.
- g) A proposal to extend the public street network should ensure appropriate connectivity, traffic circulation and extension of the street grid network designed for pedestrian and cyclist access.
- h) Impacts on the adjacent properties shall be minimized in relation to grading, drainage, location of service areas, access and circulation, privacy, and microclimatic conditions such as shadowing.
- i) The preservation and integration of heritage buildings, structures and uses within a Heritage Conservation District shall be achieved.
- j) *Development* should maintain access to amenities including neighbourhood commercial facilities, community facilities including schools, parks and community centres, and existing and/or future public transit services.
- k) The transportation system should adequately accommodate anticipated traffic volumes.

- l) *Utilities* shall be adequate to provide an appropriate level of service for new and existing residents.

11.1.10 *Special Policy Areas* that are designated for residential uses are also described in Part E and are also subject to policies set out in Part E.

11.1.11 Residential uses shall comply with the land use compatibility and appropriate mitigation measures, such as setbacks and buffers, defined by the Ministry of the Environment.

11.2 Low Density Residential

11.2.1 Permitted Uses

The Low Density Residential land use designation may permit a range of low density housing types including detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and duplexes.

11.2.2 A density of up to 29 dwelling units per *site hectare* may be permitted in areas designated Residential Low Density.

11.3 Medium Density Residential

11.3.1 Permitted Uses

The Medium Density Residential land use designation may permit a range of medium density housing types including *multiple-attached dwelling* units, apartments, retirement homes and long-term care homes. Existing detached and semi-detached dwellings are permitted.

11.3.2 The density range is to be between 30 to 50 dwelling units per *site hectare*.

11.4 High Density Residential

11.4.1 Permitted Uses

The High Density Residential land use designation may permit a range of high density housing types including *multiple-attached dwelling* units, apartments, retirement homes and long-term care homes.

11.4.2 The density range is to be between 51 to 185 units per *site hectare*.