



## REPORT

### Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: October 20, 2025

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**FROM:** Planning and Development Department

**DATE:** October 7, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation Report – Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment 73 (OPA 73) – Provincial Consistency Exercise (File No. 42.15.67)

**LOCATION:** Town-wide

**WARD:** Town-wide

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#### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the staff report titled “Recommendation Report – Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment 73 (OPA 73), By-law 2025-119 – Provincial Consistency Exercise (File 42.15.67)” be received;
2. That Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment 73 (Provincial Consistency Exercise, File No. 42.15.67) be adopted;
3. That By-law 2025-119, a by-law to adopt an amendment to the Livable Oakville Plan, be passed; and,
4. That notice of Council’s decision reflects that Council has fully considered all the written and oral submission 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:

- The Town’s Official Plan Review was launched at a Special Public Meeting of Planning and Development Council on May 11, 2015. A provincial

consistency exercise is being undertaken as a component of the Town's Official Plan Review.

- Under the umbrella of the Official Plan Review, staff has completed 15 major studies with 18 associated Official Plan Amendments adopted by Council, with an additional four studies currently underway.
- Since the initiation of the Official Plan Review, the provincial policy regime has evolved, with a significant number of changes to a range of planning related legislation, including major changes to Ontario's land use planning framework.
- The provincial consistency exercise is scoped to aspects of the Livable Oakville Official Plan that can be modified for consistency without requiring additional study. It is expected that planned future studies/reviews within the larger Policy Planning work program will also address provincial consistency and conformity.
- A number of *Planning Act* requirements have changed and some of the Livable Oakville Plan policies are out of date.
- The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) was repealed in 2024 and several Livable Oakville Plan policies and concepts reference the Growth Plan.
- A new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 has replaced the former Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and Growth Plan. Updates to Livable Oakville Plan policies and definitions are required to align with this document.
- Major changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* narrowed the Conservation Authorities' scope to primarily natural hazards. Natural heritage and other aspects were previously under their review, and the current policies reflect that relationship, which now require updating.
- The Province has expressed its intent to remove the Parkway Belt West Plan, which is currently a designation in the Livable Oakville Plan.
- As of July 1, 2024, Halton Region is an upper tier municipality without planning authority.
- A draft Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment was presented at a statutory public meeting of Planning and Development Council on September 22, 2025 to solicit public comments.
- Comments received have been considered, and this report brings forward the recommended Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment 73 for Council's consideration and adoption.

## **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this report is to recommend adoption of Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment 73 (OPA 73), which implements the findings of a scoped provincial consistency exercise focused on addressing provincial legislation changes and the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS, 2024). This exercise is a component of the Official Plan Review. The report is to be received and the recommended Official Plan Amendment to be adopted is attached as Appendix A.

The Town's Official Plan Review was initiated in 2015. As part of the Official Plan Review work program, Planning and Development staff have completed 15 major studies and Council has adopted 18 associated Official Plan Amendments (OPAs).

As part of the Official Plan Review, the Employment Areas Review and North Oakville East Commercial Study Implementation are currently on-going, with anticipated completion by the end of 2025.

In addition to the Official Plan Review work program, Planning and Development staff have responded to a changing provincial policy regime, including the 2017 Growth Plan, 2017 Greenbelt Plan, 2020 Growth Plan, Bill 108, Bill 197 and 2020 Provincial Policy Statement.

On October 25, 2022 the Proposed Revocation of the Parkway Belt West Plan notice was published on the Environmental Registry of Ontario via ERO number 019-6167. Originally open for a 66-day public review and comment period, the notice was updated on September 27, 2024 to indicate that there has been no change to the status of the proposal and it is still being considered. The proposal is to revoke the Parkway Belt West Plan, 1978, which would allow land that was once reserved for infrastructure corridors and open space to be used for other purposes.

On November 28, 2022, Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act*, received Royal Assent. It made extensive changes to several acts and regulations. The *Planning Act* was amended to, among other changes, remove most planning functions from certain upper-tier municipalities, including Halton Region, with an implementation date to follow. It also changed the alternative parkland dedication requirements. Significant changes were made to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, impacting how conservation authorities operate and their role in development and natural resource management. The effective date for those changes was April 1, 2024.

On June 6, 2024, Bill 185, the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act*, received Royal Assent. This omnibus bill made changes to a wide range of legislation, including changes to Ontario's land use planning framework. Among other matters, it removed the mandatory pre-consultation requirement for development applications

and identified July 1, 2024 as the effective date of upper-tier planning changes for Halton Region.

On April 6, 2023, the Province released a proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2023 to replace the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). A subsequent draft was released for public comment on June 16, 2023, followed by another draft released on April 10, 2024. The final version of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS 2024) was released on August 20, 2024 and came into effect on October 20, 2024.

Given the numerous legislative changes and the modifications to Ontario's land use planning framework, there are several aspects of the Livable Oakville Plan that are now out of date. Staff has undertaken a scoped provincial consistency review to address as many of these inconsistencies as possible before the end of 2025.

There are elements of the Livable Oakville Plan that will require further amendment to align with provincial policy direction and legislation. However, this work is anticipated in 2026 and beyond, as part of the Policy Planning work program.

A major component of the future work program will be amalgamating the Town's three Official Plans. As an upper-tier municipality without planning responsibility, the Halton Region Official Plan became one of the Town's three Official Plans on July 1, 2024. Within the Town of Oakville, the Livable Oakville Plan, North Oakville East Secondary Plan (1984 Official Plan as parent plan) and Halton Region Official Plan are all applicable. A future process will be required to merge the three plans into a single, unified Official Plan document, accounting for variations in current provincial consistency and alignment, and recognizing the new roles within municipal review.

## **COMMENTS**

A statutory public meeting was held on September 22, 2025 at Planning and Development Council to introduce the draft Official Plan Amendment and receive feedback and comments from the public and Council.

### **Council Comments**

The following table summarizes matters raised by Council for additional consideration with the associated response from staff.

Council Comment	Staff Response
<p>A request was made to explore options to better define the word “significant” in the context of accommodating planned growth.</p>	<p>In the context of planned growth, the term “significant” is undefined in provincial policy.</p> <p>The existing policy references to significant in Section 4: Managing Growth and Change of the Livable Oakville Plan relate primarily to directing population and employment growth to Protected Major Transit Station Areas, including Midtown Oakville and Bronte GO MTSA.</p> <p>“Significant” in this context means the change in population size and density (population and employment) of the area relative to other areas.</p> <p>Opportunities to provide more clarity through terminology will be assessed in the next phase of the Official Plan Review.</p>
<p>A request was made that in relation to item 14, Livable Oakville section 10, Sustainability, staff consider the addition of “and reduce”, so the additional policy text reads “and prepare for and reduce the impacts of a changing climate”.</p>	<p>The Provincial Consistency Exercise is focused on aligning official plan policies with provincial plans and legislation.</p> <p>Staff propose to update the policy text of section 10, Sustainability to reflect wording from policy 2.9.1 of the PPS, 2024 and include reference to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The recommended change (included later in the report within a table summarizing all revisions to the Official Plan Amendment), reads as:</p> <p>“The Town is committed to <i>sustainable development</i> in order to achieve environmental sustainability, <b><u>reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.</u></b>”</p>

<p>A request was made that staff review the criteria outlined in item 24, proposed new Parkway Belt West section 19.1.4 in the context of protection for residential areas adjacent to Parkway Belt lands.</p>	<p>Staff is of the opinion that the criteria outlined in the recommended new section 19.1.4 is comprehensive.</p> <p>Proposed subsection d) requires the consideration of surrounding land uses and existing development context.</p> <p>A planning justification report would also be required as part of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment submission, which provides a detailed professional planning rationale for the change, demonstrating how the proposal aligns with provincial policies and local planning documents.</p>
<p>A request was made that staff consider alternative land acknowledgement language specific to the Official Plan and explore approaches of other municipalities, including Toronto.</p>	<p>Staff recognize that the Town’s current corporate land acknowledgement was not created specifically for the Official Plan. Staff also note that the draft amendment proposed the land acknowledgment at the beginning of the Livable Oakville Plan document, prior to the explanatory notes, which forms part of the non-operative section of the Official Plan. This section can be updated at any time without formal amendment to the Official Plan.</p> <p>The Town’s Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Multi-Year Plan includes a Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan. This will provide direction around Indigenous engagement and inform future updates to the Official Plan.</p> <p>Staff have removed the land acknowledgement in the recommended OPA 73, with the intention to bring forward a revised version in the future.</p>

<p>A request was made that staff consider including Community Improvement Plan and Community Planning Permit System as tools for affordable housing in relation to item 33, section 27.6.10, Bronte GO MTSA.</p>	<p>Town-wide draft housing policies for incorporation in the Livable Oakville Plan were presented to Council on September 8, 2025.</p> <p>The proposed new Section 7, Housing includes policies to support affordability, outlining <i>Planning Act</i> tools such as the development of a Community Improvement Plan and Community Planning Permit System.</p> <p>Public engagement on the draft policies will occur in the fall and a future amendment reflecting the proposed policies will be presented at a statutory public meeting anticipated in Q4 of 2025.</p>
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### **Public Comments**

A comment was submitted outlining concerns related to OPA 34, which was approved at the Ontario Land Tribunal on July 16, 2025. Some of the draft Official Plan Amendment schedules presented at the September 22, 2025 statutory public meeting did not reflect the OPA 34 decision, given a consolidation had not yet occurred. This has been rectified, and the recommended OPA 73 schedules now reflect OPA 34.

A member of the public appeared as a delegation before Council at the September 22, 2025 statutory public meeting. Highlighted in their presentation were concerns about excessive density with lack of supporting transit infrastructure, equitable distribution of growth across all neighbourhoods, reliance on outdated population forecasts, and lack of school capacity. A suggestion was also made to use online news platforms for public engagement.

The Provincial Consistency Exercise is focused on aligning Livable Oakville policies with current provincial plans and legislation. OPA 73 maintains the existing Council-approved Urban Structure and reflects an updated planning horizon to 2051, as required by the PPS, 2024. The updated population and employment forecasts being recommended for inclusion are based on work completed in 2024. Staff will explore future options for additional online platforms for planning related public engagement.

## Agency Comments

Enbridge, a natural gas pipeline company, provided general comments which have been included in Appendix B. They relate more generally to the inclusion of additional pipeline mapping and related policies which are more suited to a review of the Livable Oakville Plan’s physical services policies. These comments will be considered in the next phase of the Official Plan Review work program.

## Revisions to the draft Official Plan Amendment

Minor revisions have been made to the Official Plan Amendment since the draft version presented to Council on September 22, 2025.

Based on additional internal staff review and discussion with Conservation Halton, additional policy changes are being recommended in OPA 73 to further reflect Bill 23 related *Conservation Authority Act* changes and the new roles and responsibilities for the Town and Conservation Authority.

The following table summarizes the additional recommended policy changes included in OPA 73. Text that is **bolded and underlined** is new text to be inserted into the Livable Oakville Plan. Text that is crossed out (“~~strikethrough~~”) is to be deleted from the Plan.

Section	Description of change
10 SUSTAINABILITY	Revise the policy as follows:  The Town is committed to <i>sustainable development</i> in order to achieve environmental sustainability, <b><u>reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate</u></b> . This section provides objectives and policies to implement the principle of sustainability where the Town has jurisdiction.
16.1.6 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Significant Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species  a) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in <del>the significant</del> habitat of endangered <b><u>species</u></b> or threatened species, <b><u>except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements</u></b> .
16.1.7 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Wetlands  c) Unless otherwise directed by the <b><u>Town or</u></b> Conservation Authority, <i>development</i> proposed on lands within 120 metres of an individual wetland area, or on lands connecting individual wetland areas within a wetland complex, which was not considered during a subwatershed study,

	shall require a satisfactory EIS. Where <i>development</i> is proposed on lands within 120 metres of an individual wetland area, or on lands connecting individual wetland areas within a wetland complex, and a subwatershed study has been completed, the Town and Conservation Authority may require a site-specific EIS to demonstrate no negative impact to the features or ecological functions of the wetland.
16.1.8 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Woodlands  c) Unless otherwise directed by the <del>Conservation Authority</del> <b>Town</b> , <i>development</i> proposed on lands within 120 metres of a significant woodland shall require a satisfactory EIS to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the woodland or its ecological function.
16.1.9 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Valleylands  e) No <i>development</i> , alterations to <i>watercourses</i> , or filling, except where permitted by the Conservation Authority <b>and Town</b> , shall be permitted within the valleylands.
16.1.9 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Valleylands  f) Unless otherwise directed by the <b>Town or</b> Conservation Authority, all <i>development</i> on lands within 120 metres of a major valley or directly abutting the top of bank of a minor valley must demonstrate through an EIS that <i>erosion</i> and any adverse impacts to water quality, slope stability, <i>wildlife</i> habitat, existing vegetation and drainage shall be minimized and existing valley slopes shall not be disturbed.
16.1.10 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Significant Wildlife Habitat  b) Unless otherwise directed by the Conservation Authority, development proposed on land within 120 metres of significant wildlife habitat shall require a satisfactory EIS to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the significant wildlife habitat features or functions.
16.1.11 NATURAL AREA General	Revise the policy as follows:  Environmentally Sensitive Areas  a) Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) are identified <b>on Schedule B1</b> by <del>the Region as lands that meet one or more of the ESA criteria set out in the Region's Official Plan.</del>
16.1.11	Revise the policy as follows:

<p>NATURAL AREA General</p>	<p>Environmentally Sensitive Areas</p> <p>b) <i>Development</i> and site alteration within, or adjacent to, an ESA shall be restricted, <b><u>unless it has been demonstrated through an EIS that such development will not have a negative impact on the feature or its ecological functions.</u></b> <del>in accordance with the development policies established in the Region’s Official Plan.</del></p>
<p>16.1.12 NATURAL AREA General</p>	<p>Revise the policy as follows:</p> <p>Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest</p> <p>c) Unless otherwise directed by the <del>Conservation Authority</del> <b><u>Town</u></b>, <i>development</i> proposed on lands within 50 metres of an earth science ANSI, or within 120 metres of a life science ANSI, shall require a satisfactory EIS to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the ANSI or its ecological function.</p>
<p>16.1.13 NATURAL AREA General</p>	<p>Revise the policy as follows:</p> <p>Fish Habitat</p> <p>c) Unless otherwise directed by the <del>Conservation Authority</del> <b><u>Town</u></b>, <i>development</i> proposed on lands within 120 metres of fish habitat, shall require a satisfactory EIS to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the fish habitat or its ecological function.</p>

In the previous draft Official Plan Amendment, staff proposed the following revision to S.16.1.9:

<p>16.1.9 NATURAL AREA General</p>	<p>Revise the policy as follows:</p> <p>Valleylands</p> <p>c) <i>Development</i> or site alteration shall not be permitted within the valley or within 15 metres of the <i>stable top-of-bank</i> of major <b><u>and minor</u></b> valleys and tributaries, <del>and 7.5 metres of the stable top-of-bank of minor valleys and tributaries,</del> except for <i>compatible</i> permitted recreational uses, essential public works and <i>utilities</i> subject to the requirements of this Plan. Greater setbacks may be required as a result of environmental impacts evaluated through an approved EIS.</p>
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Changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* increased the regulatory allowance in minor valley systems to 15 metres, from 7.5 metres. The previous proposed modification reflected this change. While Conservation Halton has a regulatory allowance of 15 metres from the physical/stable top-of-bank, this is not a development limit. The current Conservation Halton regulatory policy permits development activities up to six metres from stable top-of-bank.

Feedback received from Conservation Halton has determined that further review and analysis are required to explore whether additional criteria may be warranted to support a reduction to the 15 metres for minor valleys to address existing lots in the urban area. This will be included in the natural heritage review component of the continued Official Plan Review in 2026-2027. Until that review is complete, staff recommend not proceeding with this previous change and have removed it from the recommended OPA 73.

### **Overview of the recommended Official Plan Amendment 73**

The recommended OPA 73 proposes updated policies and mapping to address provincial legislation changes and the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. The amendment is focused on addressing *Planning Act* changes, the repeal of the Growth Plan, the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, the *Conservation Authorities Act* changes, the intended future revocation of the Parkway Belt West Plan, and the changes to Halton Region’s planning responsibilities.

The effect of the recommended OPA 73 includes changes to:

- Update policies to reflect current *Planning Act* requirements related to parkland dedication, exemptions for post-secondary institutions, pre-consultation, and notice;
- Remove references to, and concepts from, the former Growth Plan;
- Update policies to be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024;
- Update policies to reflect the current *Conservation Authorities Act* requirements;
- Introduce a new policy to address the anticipated removal of the Parkway Belt West Plan; and,
- Revise references to Halton Region, as required.

The recommended OPA 73 will result in changes to the following parts of the Livable Oakville Plan:

- Section 1 (The Livable Oakville Plan);
- Section 3 (Urban Structure);
- Section 4 (Managing Growth and Change);
- Section 10 (Sustainability);
- Section 14 (Employment);
- Section 16 (Natural Area);

- Section 17 (Open Space);
- Section 19 (Parkway Belt West);
- Section 23 (Kerr Village);
- Section 24 (Bronte Village);
- Section 25 (Downtown Oakville);
- Section 27 (Bronte Go Major Transit Station Area);
- Section 28 (Special Policy Areas);
- Section 30 (Implementation);
- Section 31 (Glossary);
- Schedule A1 – Urban Structure;
- Schedule A2 – Built Boundary & Urban Growth Centre;
- Schedule G – South East Land Use;
- Schedule H – West Land Use;
- Schedule I – Central Land Use; and,
- Schedule N1 – Palermo Village Land Use.

A detailed description and rationale for the recommended changes is included in the staff report dated September 9, 2025 and titled “Public Meeting Report – Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment – Provincial Consistency Exercise (File No. 42.15.67)”, which was received at the September 22, 2025 Planning and Development Council meeting ([agenda item 7.1](#)).

## **CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS**

The sweeping changes to Ontario’s legislation and planning framework over the past several years has created the need for an incremental approach to provincial consistency.

The recommended OPA 73 is based on a scoped provincial consistency exercise focused on policy modifications that can be undertaken immediately, without additional study. Elements of the Livable Oakville Plan will require further amendment in the future, to align with provincial policy direction and legislation. This work is anticipated in 2026 and beyond.

A statutory public meeting was held at Planning and Development Council on September 22, 2025 to receive public comments on the draft OPA. Comments

provided by Council, the public, and those submitted by partner agencies have been considered by staff and reflected, where appropriate, in the recommended OPA 73.

This report presents Planning and Development Council with a recommended Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment to the Livable Oakville Plan, being OPA 73. If approved, the amendment will update policies throughout the Livable Oakville Plan, as well as town-wide mapping changes for consistency with provincial plans and legislation.

Following Oakville Council's adoption of Provincial Consistency Exercise OPA 73, an exemption from Minister's approval package will be prepared by staff and forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

Halton Region, the Town's former approval authority, had its planning responsibilities removed via Bill 23 and 185, effective July 1, 2024. As per Section 17 of the *Planning Act*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the approval authority in respect of an Official Plan Amendment. Ontario Regulation 525/97 provides for an exemption from approval of the Minister, subject to conditions, and this regulation applies to the Town of Oakville and forms the basis of the exemption package to be submitted to MMAH.

Following exemption, the adoption date by Oakville Council will be considered the approval date, subject to any appeals received.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **(A) PUBLIC**

Notice of the statutory public meeting was published on the Town's website and emailed to the required agencies on September 2, 2025. It was emailed to the Official Plan Review email distribution list on September 12, 2025. The draft Official Plan Amendment was also made available for review on the Town of Oakville website on September 2, 2025, being 20 days before the statutory public meeting. The draft Official Plan Amendment was presented at a statutory public meeting on September 22, 2025.

Notice of the recommendation meeting was published on the Town's website, mailed to persons who requested to be notified at the statutory public meeting, mailed to persons who made oral or written submission at the statutory public meeting, and emailed to the required agencies on October 6, 2025.

### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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

The recommended Official Plan Amendment was circulated to internal departments for review.

**(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This report addresses Council's strategic priorities by confirming the town's urban structure to manage forecasted growth while protecting natural areas, preserving cultural heritage, and maintaining the character of existing neighbourhoods by way of updated policies and mapping which align with provincial direction.

**(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

The proposed Official Plan Amendment 73 emphasizes the importance of planning for the impacts of a changing climate through new policy references and introduction of a new definition.

**APPENDICES**

Appendix A      By-law 2025-119 – A by-law to adopt an amendment to the Livable Oakville Plan to address consistency with provincial legislation and policy (File No. 42.15.67)

Appendix B      Comments submitted

Prepared by:

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Senior Policy Planner

Recommended by:

Kirk Biggar, MCIP, RPP  
Manager – Policy Planning & Heritage

Submitted by:

Gabe Charles, MCIP, RPP  
Director – Planning and Development