



OAKVILLE

## REPORT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: APRIL 16, 2018

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** March 22, 2018

**SUBJECT:** **Public Meeting and Recommendation Report - Employment and Commercial Review and Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment (Livable Oakville) - By-law 2018-054 (OPA No. 26) - File No. 42.15.49**

**LOCATION:** Town wide

**WARD:** Town wide

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### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the proposed town-initiated official plan amendment (File No. 42.15.49, Employment and Commercial Review) be approved on the basis that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, conforms to all applicable Provincial Plans, Halton's Regional Official Plan and the Livable Oakville Plan, has regard for matters of Provincial interest, and represents good planning for the reasons set out in the report from the Planning Services department dated March 22, 2018;
2. That By-law 2018-054, a by-law to adopt Official Plan Amendment Number 26 (OPA 26) to the Livable Oakville Plan be passed;
3. 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.
4. That Appendix F to the report from Planning Services Department dated March 22, 2018 be endorsed as Council's position with respect to the employment land conversion requests originally submitted to the town, and that it be provided along with the relevant supporting material as input to Halton Region's municipal comprehensive review.

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5. That staff be directed to:

- a) proceed with the preparation of an implementing zoning by-law amendment to Zoning By-law 2014-014 once OPA 26 is approved; and,
- b) study the potential intensification of sites within the Community Commercial designation considering the town's adopted Urban Structure, local development interest and land use policy changes proposed by neighbouring municipalities for similar sites.

**KEY FACTS:**

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

- The Employment and Commercial Review is part of the town's ongoing Official Plan Review to ensure that the town's employment- and commercial-related land use policies conform with the latest provincial and regional land use policies, as well as the town's updated urban structure (Appendix A), to meet the needs of the community to the year 2041.
- Through this final report, the Employment and Commercial Review is concluded with the following outcomes:
  - a recommended official plan amendment to the Livable Oakville Plan (OPA 26; By-law 2018-054, listed separately on the agenda);
  - the policy directions for related projects (e.g., North Oakville Secondary Plans Review) received by Planning and Development Council on November 6, 2017 (Appendix C);
  - a recommended Council position with respect to the employment land conversion requests originally submitted to the town (Appendix F); and,
  - a recommendation for additional work to be undertaken, as set out above.
- On November 6, 2017, Planning and Development Council hosted the first statutory public meeting about the proposed OPA (original draft) and received information from a number of parties who either spoke at the meeting or provided written submissions via the Clerk. Since that time, additional input has been provided by landowners, and planning staff from Halton Region.

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- The comments received throughout 2017 up to the date of this report are summarized in Appendix D, and the original written submissions are included in Appendix E.
- Due to the extent of the revisions to the proposed OPA, as highlighted in Appendix B, a second statutory public meeting is being held where further public comments may be provided.
- The policy directions for related projects and proposed OPA are consistent with the town's Economic Development Strategy and support continued growth within the key sectors of: financial and professional services, digital media, information and communications technology, film, life science and advanced manufacturing.
- This report provides the basis and rationale for a proposed OPA to modify the text and schedules (maps) of the Livable Oakville Plan to implement the findings of the Employment and Commercial Review. It would result in changes to the following parts of the Plan: Sections 12 (Mixed Use), 13 (Commercial), 14 (Employment), 26 (Special Policy Areas) and 29 (Interpretation), as well as Schedules F (South West Land Use), G (South East Land Use), H (West Land Use), I (Central Land Use) and J (East Land Use).
- This report is divided into the following parts:
  - **Background** (page 3) highlights the local land use planning work that provides context for the recommendations.
  - **Policy and Regulatory Framework** (page 6) details the provincial, regional and local legislative and policy basis for the recommendations.
  - **Comment / Options** (page 27) describes the project outcomes, including the effect of the proposed OPA.
  - **Conclusion** (page 35) outlines the recommendations.

**BACKGROUND:**

The town-wide Employment and Commercial Review is a key component of the overall official plan review. It is intended to assist the town to proactively plan for employment and commercial growth to 2041 and beyond. The objective of the project is to:

- confirm the town's employment and commercial land supply and ability to meet projected needs to the year 2041;

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- assess the current employment generating land use designations and policies;
- identify any lands that are appropriate for employment land conversions; and
- provide policies and directions to facilitate the town’s goals and objectives for employment and commercial growth to 2041.

**Previous Related Reports**

The Employment and Commercial Review was initiated at the end of 2014 when a multi-disciplinary team led by Dillon Consulting was retained to provide technical analysis (e.g. employment and commercial demand and supply analysis) and policy directions.

Planning staff worked with the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee (LOCS), established in 2016, who provided guidance and input as reports about the technical analysis and preliminary directions were brought forward.

**Table 1: Previous Related Reports**

Meeting (Link to Agenda)	Report Title
<a href="#">May 11, 2015</a> Planning and Development Council	<i>Official Plan Review - Special Public Meeting</i>
<a href="#">January 18, 2016</a> Planning and Development Council	<i>Subcommittee of Council - Livable Oakville (Official Plan Review)</i>
<a href="#">February 16, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Urban Structure Review</i>
<a href="#">June 13, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Official Plan Review Work Program - Spring 2016 Update</i>
<a href="#">March 21, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Employment and Commercial Review: Preliminary Directions Report</i>
<a href="#">July 25, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Employment and Commercial Review: Commercial Demand and Supply Analysis</i>
<a href="#">September 6, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Employment and Commercial Review: Employment Land Demand and Supply Analysis</i>
<a href="#">November 1, 2016</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Urban Structure Review - Discussion Paper</i> <i>Employment and Commercial Review - Summary Report</i>

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Meeting (Link to Agenda)	Report Title
<a href="#">September 11, 2017</a> Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee	<i>Employment and Commercial Review - Draft Policy Changes and Directions for Related Studies</i>
<a href="#">September 26, 2017</a> Planning and Development Council	<i>Public Meeting and Recommendation Report - Town-Initiated Official Plan Amendments - Urban Structure Review - File No. 42.15.52</i>
<a href="#">November 6, 2017</a> Planning and Development Council (first statutory public meeting re: OPA)	<i>Public Meeting Report - Town-initiated Official Plan Amendment: Employment and Commercial Review (Livable Oakville) - File No. 42.15.49</i>

On November 1, 2016, the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee (LOCS) received a report entitled *Urban Structure Review – Discussion Paper*, which described the evolution of the town’s urban structure and provided an analysis of current and emerging factors that will shape the town’s future urban structure. At the same meeting, the LOCS received a report entitled *Employment and Commercial Review: Summary Report*, which included Dillon Consulting’s final report. The background information, technical analysis, and policy directions provided in the *Summary Report* were the culmination of Dillon’s work and provided the basis for the draft policies and directions prepared by town staff.

On September 11, 2017, the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee received a report entitled *Employment and Commercial Review - Draft Policy Changes and Directions for Related Studies*, which provided draft policy changes and policy directions developed by Staff that incorporated the consultant’s findings and the updated policies from the 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

On September 26, 2017, Planning and Development Council, adopted amendments to the Livable Oakville Plan and North Oakville Secondary Plans to establish a revised urban structure (Appendix A) and associated policies. The amendments, which are currently being considered for approval by Halton Region, provide a framework for how the town will accommodate required growth to the year 2041, while protecting natural heritage, open space and cultural heritage, maintaining the character of residential areas and directing growth to an identified system of nodes and corridors. The adopted urban structure recognized the town’s existing employment areas (in conformity with Halton’s Regional Official Plan), but further identified the employment lands:

- along Speers Road as an ‘Employment Mixed Use Corridor’;
- along Cornwall Road as a ‘Corridor for Further Study’; and,

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- at the intersections of Bronte Road and Dundas Street, Third Line and William Halton Parkway, and Neyagawa Boulevard and Burnhamthorpe Road, as 'Nodes for Further Study'.

On November 6, 2017, Planning and Development Council hosted the first statutory public meeting with respect to a proposed town-initiated official plan amendment to the Livable Oakville Plan to implement policy directions from the Employment and Commercial Review. At that meeting, Council received comments from the public and also received a set of policy directions for related projects (Appendix C).

### **POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:**

Since the Livable Oakville Plan came into effect in 2011, new provincial policies have been established, which municipal official plans must be consistent with (i.e., 2014 Provincial Policy Statement) or conform to (e.g., 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe). Planning staff are working toward complete consistency and conformity with Provincial policies by recommending official plan amendments for Council adoption through the town's various Official Plan Review projects.

The final conformity review and recommendation of any associated official plan amendments will take place following Halton's Regional Official Plan Review process, which was recently initiated.

The following policy and regulatory framework provides the basis for the recommendations detailed on the following pages:

- *Planning Act*
- 2014 Provincial Policy Statement
- 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- Halton's Regional Official Plan
- Town of Oakville Official Plan
  - Livable Oakville Plan
  - North Oakville Secondary Plans

### **Planning Act**

According to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs' website ([www.mah.gov.on.ca](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca)), "The Planning Act sets out the ground rules for land use planning in Ontario and describes how land uses may be controlled, and who may control them." It also provides the basis for, among other things, the preparation of official plans and zoning by-laws, and the consideration of amendments to those instruments.

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Section 1.1 of the *Planning Act* sets out its purposes, as follows:

The purposes of this Act are,

- (a) to promote sustainable economic development in a healthy natural environment within the policy and by the means provided under this Act;
- (b) to provide for a land use planning system led by provincial policy;
- (c) to integrate matters of provincial interest in provincial and municipal planning decisions;
- (d) to provide for planning processes that are fair by making them open, accessible, timely and efficient;
- (e) to encourage co-operation and co-ordination among various interests;
- (f) to recognize the decision-making authority and accountability of municipal councils in planning.

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* sets out matters of provincial interest to which the town must have regard in making decisions under the *Planning Act*, including:

- (a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;...
- (f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;...
- (i) the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities;...
- (k) the adequate provision of employment opportunities;
- (l) the protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities;
- (m) the co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies;...
- (p) the appropriate location of growth and development; and
- (q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians.

It is staff's opinion that the proposed OPA has regard for the matters of provincial interest.

Section 3 of the *Planning Act* provides the key mechanism for provincial policy to lead the land use planning system. It provides that provincial or municipal decision making that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the provincial policy statement and conform with provincial plans.

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## **2014 Provincial Policy Statement**

On February 24, 2014, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued a new Provincial Policy Statement ('PPS') under Section 3 of the *Planning Act*. The new PPS replaced the 2005 statement and came into effect April 30, 2014. All planning decisions must be consistent with the PPS.

The 2014 PPS is intended to promote a policy led system, which recognizes that there are complex relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning.

### ***Relevant Definitions***

Section 6.0, Definitions, of the 2014 PPS defines a number of terms used throughout the document. The following definitions are relevant to planning for employment and commercial uses:

**Brownfield sites:** means undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

**Comprehensive review:** means... for the purposes of... [policy] 1.3.2.2, an official plan review which is initiated by a planning authority, or an official plan amendment which is initiated or adopted by a planning authority, which:

1. is based on a review of population and employment projections and which reflect projections and allocations by upper-tier municipalities and *provincial plans*, where applicable; considers alternative directions for growth or development; and determines how best to accommodate the development while protecting provincial interests;
2. utilizes opportunities to accommodate projected growth or development through *intensification* and *redevelopment*; and considers physical constraints to accommodating the proposed development within existing *settlement area* boundaries;
3. is integrated with planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, and considers financial viability over the life cycle of these assets, which may be demonstrated through asset management planning;
4. confirms sufficient water quality, quantity and assimilative capacity of receiving water are available to accommodate the proposed development;
5. confirms that sewage and water services can be provided...; and
6. considers cross-jurisdictional issues.



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**Employment area:** means those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

**Transit supportive:** in regard to land use patterns, means development that makes transit viable and improves the quality of the experience of using transit. It often refers to compact, mixed-use development that has a high level of employment and residential densities. Approaches may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives.

The Livable Oakville Plan already includes definitions that are identical or consistent with the terms listed above.

### ***Relevant Land Use Policies***

Through Section 1.0, Building Strong Healthy Communities, the 2014 PPS promotes efficient development and land use patterns by directing growth to settlement areas and by promoting a compact development form. It includes the following policies:

- Section 1.1 – Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns – states that:

1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:...

- b) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential (including second units, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;...

Further, section 1.1.2, states that, “Sufficient lands shall be made to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years” or an alternate time period established for a specific area in a provincial plan (e.g., to the year 2041 as required by the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe).

- Section 1.2 – Coordination – states that:

1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within

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municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards including:

- a) managing and/or promoting growth and development;
- b) economic development strategies;...
- g) population, housing and employment projections, based on *regional market areas*;...

1.2.4 Where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality in consultation with lower-tier municipalities shall:

- a) identify, coordinate and allocate population, housing and employment projections for lower-tier municipalities. Allocations and projections by upper-tier municipalities shall be based on and reflect *provincial plans* where these exist;
- b) identify areas where growth or development will be directed, including the identification of nodes and the corridors linking these nodes;
- c) identify targets for *intensification* and *redevelopment* within all or any of the lower-tier municipalities, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of *settlement areas* is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8;
- d) where transit corridors exist or are to be developed, identify density targets for areas adjacent or in proximity to these corridors, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of *settlement areas* is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.8; and
- e) identify and provide policy direction for the lower-tier municipalities on matters that cross municipal boundaries.

- Section 1.3 – Employment – states that:

1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment and institutional uses to meet long-term needs;
- b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for

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employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;

- c) encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities; and
- d) ensuring the necessary *infrastructure* is provided to support current and projected needs.

1.3.2.1 Planning authorities shall plan for, protect and preserve *employment areas* for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary *infrastructure* is provided to support current and projected needs.

1.3.2.2 Planning authorities may permit conversion of lands within *employment areas* to non-employment uses through a *comprehensive review*, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion.

1.3.2.3 Planning authorities shall protect *employment areas* in proximity to *major goods movement facilities and corridors* for employment uses that require those locations.

1.3.2.4 Planning authorities may plan beyond 20 years for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon identified in policy 1.1.2.

- Section 1.7 – Long-Term Economic Prosperity – states that:

1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

- a) promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness;
- b) optimizing the long-term availability and use of land...
- c) maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets;
- d) encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form...
- e) promoting the redevelopment of *brownfield sites*;
- f) providing for an efficient, cost-effective, reliable *multimodal transportation system* that is integrated with adjacent systems

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and those of other jurisdictions, and is appropriate to address projected needs to support the movement of goods and people;

- g) providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development;...
- Section 1.8 – Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change – states that:
  - 1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns which:
    - a) promote compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors;
    - b) promote the use of *active transportation* and transit in and between residential, employment (including commercial and industrial) and institutional uses and other areas;
    - c) focus major employment, commercial and other travel-intensive land uses on sites which are well served by transit where this exists or is to be developed, or designing these to facilitate the establishment of transit in the future;
    - d) focus freight-intensive land uses to areas well served by major highways, *airports*, *rail facilities* and *marine facilities*;
    - e) improve the mix of employment and housing uses to shorten commute journeys and decrease transportation congestion;...
- Section 4.0, Implementation and Interpretation, of the 2014 PPS sets out a number of policies to provide additional guidance with respect to land use planning.
- Section 4.4 states that, “This Provincial Policy Statement shall be read in its entirety and all relevant polices are to be applied to each situation.”
- Section 4.7 states that:
 

The official plan is the most important vehicle for implementation of this Provincial Policy Statement. Comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning is best achieved through official plans.

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Official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. To determine the significance of some natural heritage features and other resources, evaluation may be required.

Official plans should also coordinate cross-boundary matters to complement the actions of other planning authorities and promote mutually beneficial solutions. Official plans shall provide clear, reasonable and attainable policies to protect provincial interests and direct development to suitable areas.

In order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to-date with this Provincial Policy Statement. The policies of this Provincial Policy Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of an official plan.

- Section 4.12 of the PPS provides that, “*Provincial plans* shall be read in conjunction with this Provincial Policy Statement and take precedence over policies in this Provincial Policy Statement to the extent of any conflict, except where legislation establishing *provincial plans* provides otherwise.” This is reinforced by Part III: How to Read the Provincial Policy Statement, which also provides that:

#### Policies Represent Minimum Standards

The policies of the Provincial Policy Statement represent minimum standards.

Within the framework of the provincial policy-led planning system, planning authorities and decision-makers may go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of importance to a specific community, unless doing so would conflict with any policy of the Provincial Policy Statement.

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed OPA is consistent with the 2014 PPS.

### **2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

On May 18, 2017, the 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (‘Growth Plan’) was released and it came into effect on July 1, 2017, replacing the 2006 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan is a long-term plan that works together with the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan to manage growth, build complete communities, curb sprawl and protect cultural heritage resources and the natural environment.

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All planning decisions made on or after July 1, 2017 in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter are required to conform to the 2017 Growth Plan.

The Growth Plan provides policies about where and how to grow (e.g., managing growth, urban growth centres, minimum intensification and density targets), infrastructure to support growth (e.g., integrated planning, transportation), and protecting what is valuable (e.g., cultural heritage resources, water resource systems, natural heritage systems, public open space, agricultural systems). It encourages the efficient use of land and intensification within delineated built up areas.

- Section 2.1, Context, includes the following statements:

To better co-ordinate planning for growth across the region, this Plan provides population and employment forecasts for all upper- and single-tier municipalities in the *GGH*. These growth forecasts are a foundational component of this Plan. They are to be reviewed in consultation with municipalities at least every five years...

To support the achievement of *complete communities* that are healthier, safer, and more equitable, choices about where and how growth occurs in the *GGH* need to be made carefully. Better use of land and *infrastructure* can be made by directing growth to *settlement areas* and prioritizing *intensification*, with a focus on *strategic growth areas*, including *urban growth centres* and *major transit station areas*, as well as *brownfield sites* and *greyfields*. Concentrating new development in these areas provides a focus for investments in transit as well as other types of *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* to support forecasted growth, while also supporting a more diverse range and mix of housing options...

This Plan recognizes transit as a first priority for major transportation investments. It sets out a regional vision for transit, and seeks to align transit with growth by directing growth to *major transit station areas* and other *strategic growth areas*, including *urban growth centres*, and promoting transit investments in these areas. To optimize provincial investments in *higher order transit*, this Plan also identifies *priority transit corridors* and the Province expects municipalities to complete detailed planning for *major transit station areas* on these corridors to support planned service levels...

There is a large supply of land already designated for future urban development in the *GGH*. In some communities, there may be more land designated for development than is required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. It is important to optimize the use of

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the existing urban land supply as well as the existing building and housing stock to avoid further over-designating land for future urban development. This Plan's emphasis on optimizing the use of the existing urban land supply represents an *intensification* first approach to development and city-building, one which focuses on making better use of our existing *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, and less on continuously expanding the urban area.

- Section 2.2.1.4, Managing Growth, states that:

Applying the policies of this Plan will support the achievement of *complete communities* that:

- a) feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and *public service facilities*;...
- d) expand convenient access to:
  - i. range of transportation options, including options for the safe, comfortable and convenient use of *active transportation*;...

As noted in the first statutory public meeting report, significant changes have been made to the Growth Plan's employment area policies. The updated employment policies focus on the regional significance of employment areas and require a regionally coordinated approach. An overview of the employment-related policies is provided below.

### ***Relevant Definitions & New Employment Types***

The Growth Plan relies on many of the same definitions as the 2014 PPS, including the definition of 'employment area' (quoted above). The following terms from section 7, Definitions, of the Growth Plan are also relevant to planning for employment and commercial uses:

#### **Major Transit Station Area**

The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station or stop within a *settlement area*; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. *Major transit station areas* generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

#### **Municipal Comprehensive Review**

A new official plan, or an official plan amendment, initiated by an upper- or single-tier municipality under section 26 of the *Planning Act* that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of this Plan.

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### **Strategic Growth Areas**

Within *settlement areas*, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating *intensification* and higher-density mixed uses in a more *compact built form*. *Strategic growth areas* include *urban growth centres*, *major transit station areas*, and other major opportunities that may include infill, *redevelopment*, *brownfield sites*, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or *greyfields*. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned *frequent transit service* or *higher order transit corridors* may also be identified as *strategic growth areas*.

Further, to address the potential scale and mix of employment uses, the 2017 Growth Plan introduces the concepts of 'office parks' and 'prime employment', and modifies the previous definition of 'major office.' It is expected that Halton Region will provide further guidance with respect to identifying and planning for these types of employment uses through its Official Plan Review. Until then the proposed OPA does not include definitions of 'office parks' or 'prime employment'. The definition of 'major office' is proposed to be updated to conform with the 2017 Growth Plan definition.

- 'Office Parks' is a new term to define employment areas with high concentrations of offices with high employment densities. These areas are to be supported with connectivity with transit, a mix of amenities and open space to support the labour force, and transportation demand measures to reduce the reliance on single occupancy vehicles.

#### **Office Parks**

*Employment areas* designated in an official plan where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities.

Planning staff is of the opinion that Oakville does not have any office parks as defined by the Growth Plan. Winston Park, for example, primarily consists of manufacturing and warehouse uses. There are a few areas in Mississauga with concentrations of large office buildings that may be considered 'office parks'.

- 'Prime employment' is a new concept intended to protect low density, land intensive, employment areas such as manufacturing, logistics or warehousing.

#### **Prime Employment Area**

Areas of employment within *settlement areas* that are designated in an official plan and protected over the long-term for uses that are land



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extensive or have low employment densities and require locations that are adjacent to or near *major goods movement facilities and corridors*. These uses include manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics, and appropriate associated uses and ancillary facilities.

In Oakville, an example of 'prime employment' may be the Suncor Bronte Distribution Terminal on Rebecca Street.

- The definition of 'major office' has been modified by reducing threshold for major office development from 10,000 square metres or 500 jobs (2006 Growth Plan) to 4,000 square metres or 200 jobs. The supporting policies that identify where major office development should be located have also been strengthened to direct major office development to strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit.

#### **Major Office**

Freestanding office buildings of approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with approximately 200 jobs or more.

Based on this reduction, many existing office buildings in Oakville would be considered to be major office.

#### ***Employment Strategy***

Upper- and single-tier municipalities are now required to complete an employment strategy in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the province and appropriate stakeholders. The strategy will establish minimum density targets for employment areas that reflect the type and scale of employment and identify opportunities to intensify employment areas that can be accessed by transit or active transportation.

The town will work with Halton Region to ensure that the required Regional employment strategy reflects the form, scale, density, and type of employment in existing and planned employment areas and is consistent with the town's employment land use policies and regulations. Likewise, the next update to the town's Economic Development Strategy should make clear links to the Regional employment strategy and Regional and local policies implementing the 2017 Growth Plan.

#### ***Municipal Comprehensive Reviews & Employment Land Conversions***

The definition of a municipal comprehensive review (quoted above) has been scoped to apply only to upper- and single-tier municipalities. For lower-tier (local) municipalities in Halton Region, this means that the

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evaluation/justification of conversion requests must now be completed by the Region and considered in the regional context.

Halton Region currently has an Employment Area overlay identified in its Official Plan, and lands under the protection of that overlay may only be converted to non-employment uses through a Regional Official Plan Amendment ('ROPA'). As such, potential opportunities for employment land conversions at the local level were already limited.

Staff have prepared for Council's consideration analysis and recommendations with respect to the conversion requests originally submitted to the town (Appendix F). If acceptable to Council, Appendix F, along with the relevant supporting material will be provided as input to Halton Region's municipal comprehensive review.

### ***Major Retail uses in Employment Areas***

The 2017 Growth Plan provides increased flexibility when planning for retail uses in employment areas. Municipalities now have the flexibility to establish maximum size and scale threshold limits for major retail uses in employment areas. Within the Oakville context, major retail uses in an employment area designation will continue to be prohibited, in conformity with Halton's Regional Official Plan.

### ***Growth Plan Implementation and Interpretation***

In addition to section 1.2.3, How to Read this Plan, section 5 of the 2017 Growth Plan sets out a number of implementation and interpretation policies to provide additional guidance.

Section 1.2.3 notes that the *Places to Grow Act* provides that the Growth Plan prevails in the case of conflict between the Growth Plan, an official plan, a zoning by-law or the PPS. The only exception is that, with respect to a matter relating to the natural environment or human health, the direction that provides more protection to the natural environment or human health prevails.

Section 5.1, Context, addresses the significant work and coordination required for upper- and lower-tier official plans to be amended to conform with the Growth Plan. "While it may take some time before all official plans have been amended to conform with this Plan, the *Planning Act* requires that all decisions in respect of planning matters will conform with this Plan as of its effective date [July 1, 2017]."

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Section 5.2.1 states that, “The policies and schedules of this Plan should be read in a manner that recognizes this Plan as an integrated policy framework.”

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed OPA conforms with the 2017 Growth Plan.

### **Halton’s Regional Official Plan**

The Ontario Municipal Board (‘OMB’) has issued a series of decisions regarding the partial approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment 38 (ROPA 38) to Halton’s Regional Official Plan (‘Regional Plan’). The policies of ROPA 38 to the Regional Plan are in force with the exception of site-specific matters unrelated to the proposed OPA.

The Regional Plan designates the majority of Oakville as Urban Area (Figure 1). Section 74 of the Regional Plan states that:

The Urban Area consists of areas so designated on Map 1 where *urban services* are or will be made available to accommodate existing and future urban *development* and amenities. Within the Urban Area, *Employment Areas* and *Urban Growth Centres* are identified on Map 1 as overlays on top of the Urban Area, for which specific *policies* apply.

Some of the objectives of the Urban Area from section 72 of the Regional Plan are:

To support a form of growth that is compact and supportive of transit usage and non-motorized modes of travel, reduces the dependence on the automobile, makes efficient use of space and services, promotes live-work relationships and fosters a strong and competitive economy...

To plan and invest for a balance of jobs and housing in communities across the *Region* to reduce the need for long distance commuting and to increase the modal share for transit and *active transportation*...

To provide for an appropriate range and balance of employment uses including industrial, office and retail and institutional uses to meet long-term needs.

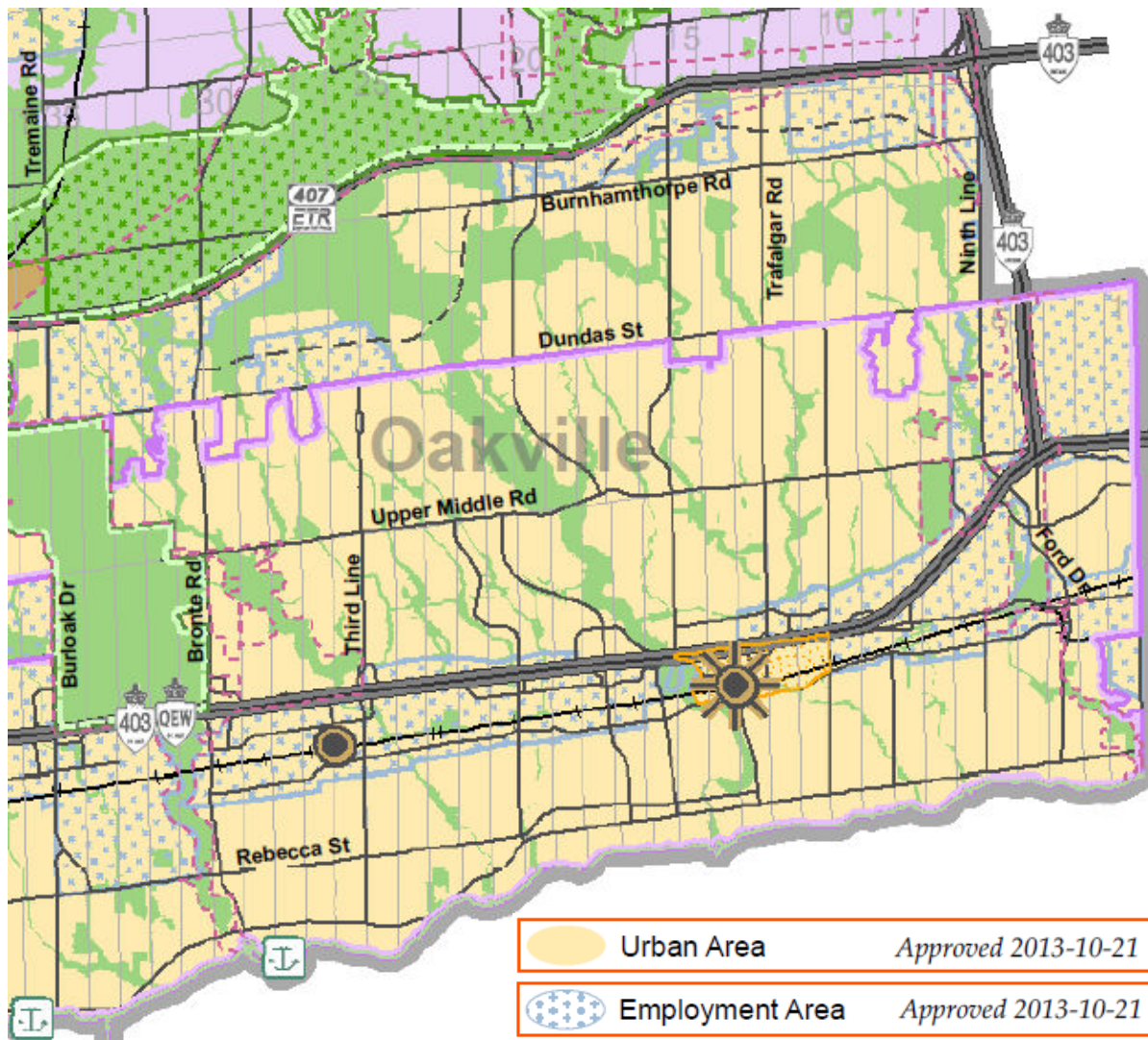
To direct where employment uses should be located and to protect areas designated for such uses...

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**Figure 1: Excerpt of Map 1, Regional Structure, from Halton's Regional Official Plan**



**Employment Area**

Within Oakville, the Regional Plan's Employment Area overlay applies to the town's employment lands, with a few exceptions (Figure 1). For example, it does not apply to the locally designated employment lands east of Trafalgar Road within the Midtown Oakville urban growth centre, but it does apply to the Oakville Place property, which is designated Core Commercial in Livable Oakville. Through the Region's municipal comprehensive review, the town will work to ensure alignment between the Regional Employment Area overlay and the town's official plan mapping.

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It is an objective of Regional Plan that Employment Areas provide for a fully-diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses, which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses (s. 77.1). It is a policy of the Regional Plan to plan for, protect and preserve Employment Areas for current and future use (s. 77.4(2)).

The Region requires local municipalities to promote intensification and increased densities in Employment Areas by facilitating compact, transit-supportive built form and minimizing surface parking (s. 77.4(5)). Further, the Regional Plan prohibits residential and other non-employment uses including major retail uses in Employment Areas (s. 77.4(1)). The conversion of Employment Areas to non-employment uses including major retail uses is also prohibited unless considered through a municipal comprehensive review (s. 77.4(4)). The Regional Plan's policies requiring local employment land conversion policies are superseded by the 2017 Growth Plan policies with respect to conversions, and its scoped definition of municipal comprehensive review (now a Regional responsibility).

Section 81(10.1), Intensification Areas, of the Regional Plan states that it is the policy of the Region to:

Require the Local Municipalities to direct *major office*, retail and appropriate major institutional *development* to *Urban Growth Centres*, *Major Transit Station Areas* (including Metrolinx-designated *Mobility Hubs*), areas with existing frequent transit services, or existing or planned *higher order transit* services.

It is staff's opinion that the proposed OPA conforms to the Regional Official Plan.

### **Town of Oakville Official Plan**

The Livable Oakville Plan applies to the lands south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407. The North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans apply to the lands between Dundas Street and Highway 407. Together, the documents comprise the town's official plan. Figure 2 (below) illustrates the lands within the town that are designated for employment and commercial land uses. The related policies are described below in more detail.

The proposed OPA only affects the Livable Oakville Plan area and it is staff's opinion that it conforms to the policies of the Livable Oakville Plan. It is noted that the policy directions from the Employment and Commercial Review related

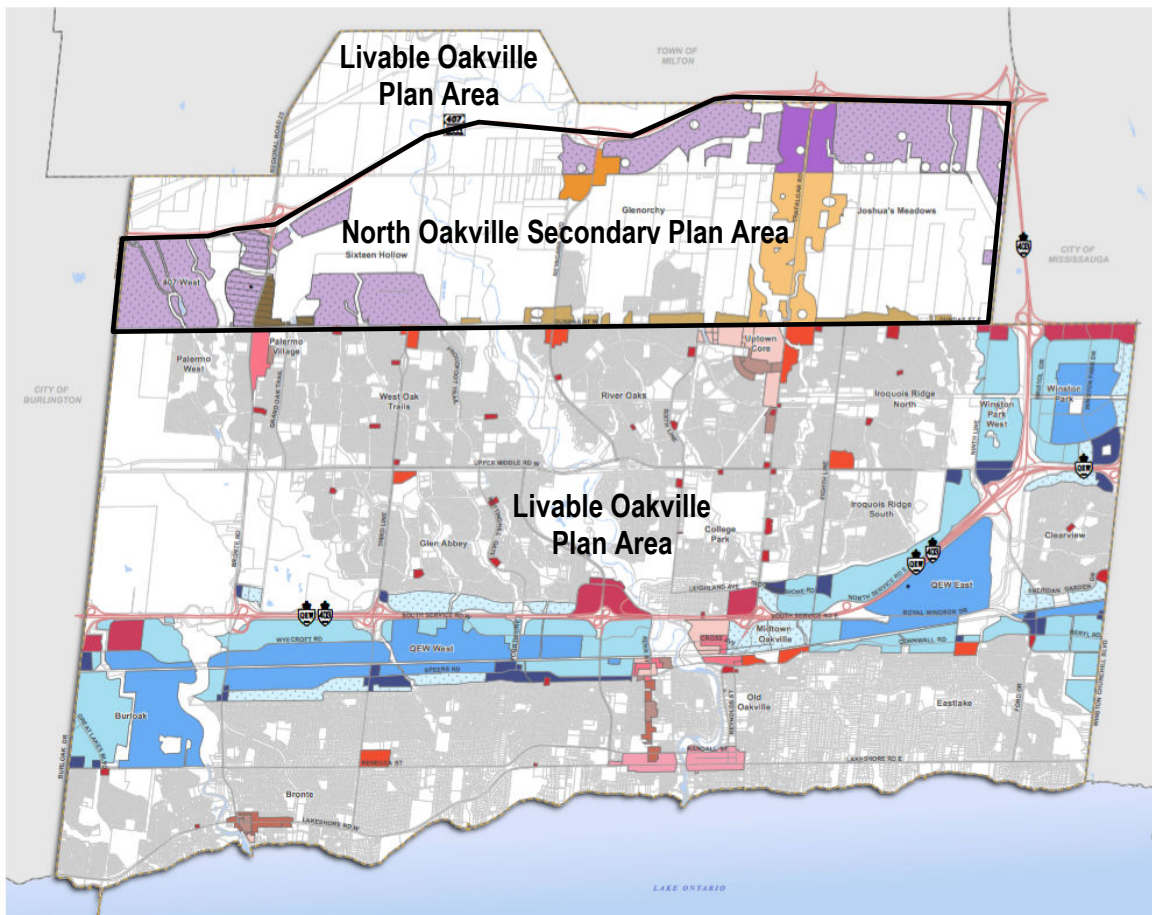
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to the North Oakville Secondary Plan Area are to be considered as part of the North Oakville Secondary Plans Review.

**Figure 2: Local Planning Context: Employment and Commercial Lands**



**Existing Commercial Land Use Policies – Livable Oakville**

The hierarchy of Commercial land use designations and the associated policies in Livable Oakville are based on the hierarchy established in the 1984 Town of Oakville Official Plan and the *Town of Oakville Retail and Service Commercial Policy Review* (June 2006, urbanMetrics Inc. and Meridian Planning Consultants Inc.). Within the Livable Oakville Plan area there are a range of locations designated and developed for concentrations of retail and service commercial uses. The four Commercial designations are: Neighbourhood Commercial, Community Commercial, Core Commercial and Central Business District.

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Additional commercial use permissions are provided for in the Mixed Use designations and two of the Employment designations. The Mixed Use designations – Main Street 1, Main Street 2, Urban Centre and Urban Core – provide areas where residential, commercial and office uses are integrated in a compact urban form at higher development intensities. The Business Commercial and Business Employment designations provide for retail and service commercial uses to serve employment areas and the travelling public.

**Table 2: Livable Oakville Land Use Designations with Commercial Permissions**

<b>Designation</b> (section of Plan)	<b>Purpose / Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Neighbourhood Commercial (s. 13.5)	intended to provide for a range of retail and service commercial uses primarily to service local convenience needs of the adjacent neighbourhood	Abbeywood Plaza Sixth Line Plaza Sheridan Gardens (at Winston Churchill Blvd.)
Community Commercial (s. 13.4)	intended to provide a variety of retail and service commercial uses primarily servicing the local surrounding community	South Oakville Centre Maple Grove Shops Upper Oakville Shopping Centre
Core Commercial (s. 13.3)	provide major concentrations of commercial facilities serving the broader regional community	RioCan Burloak Dorval Crossing Oakville Place
Central Business District (s.13.2)	intended to serve as a downtown centre with a main street function and, at the same time, provide community shopping facilities for the surrounding communities	Downtown Oakville Lower Kerr Village District
Main Street 1 (s. 12.2)	represents small-scale mixed use development along main streets and is intended to reflect a pedestrian-oriented, historic main street character; generally 2-4 storeys	portions of Bronte Village and Kerr Village Main Street Districts
Main Street 2 (s. 12.3)	provides for mixed use development characterized by high quality design standards and appropriately scaled pedestrian environment; generally 4-6 storeys	portions of Bronte Village and Kerr Village Main Street Districts
Urban Centre (s. 12.4)	intended to incorporate a mix of uses including retail and service commercial, office and residential uses; generally 6-8 storeys	portions of Upper Kerr Village and Midtown Oakville (undeveloped)

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Designation (section of Plan)	Purpose / Description	Examples
Urban Core (s. 12.5)	intended to have a strong urban focus and incorporate retail and service commercial, office and residential uses; generally 8-12 storeys	portions of Upper Kerr Village, Midtown Oakville and Uptown Core (undeveloped)
Business Commercial (s. 14.6)	provide for service commercial and convenience retail uses to support the surrounding employment areas and the travelling public	Speers Rd. and Fourth Line Royal Windsor Dr. and Ford Dr.
Business Employment (s. 14.4)	provide for a wide range of business uses and light and service industrial operations, predominantly within enclosed buildings some service commercial uses (limited to restaurants, financial institutions and drive through facilities) are also provided for to support the primary employment function of the designation	portions of Great Lakes Business Park, Speers Rd., Cornwall Rd. and Winston Park

***Existing Commercial Land Use Policies – North Oakville East***

Within the North Oakville East Secondary Plan (NOESP) area, the Urban Core designations are intended to provide for the majority of commercial development. These designations – along Trafalgar Road, the north side of Dundas Street, and the intersection of Neyagawa Boulevard and Burnhamthorpe Road – allow the densest development and the highest order activities, including a full range of residential, retail and service commercial, entertainment, cultural, business and institutional uses. It is ultimately intended that Urban Core lands will become true mixed use urban neighbourhoods.

Within the residential neighbourhoods, lands identified as Neighbourhood Centre Areas on the NOESP’s Appendix 7.3 (Master Plan) were planned to be central activity nodes. Though primarily residential, these area were intended to include a range of convenience and service commercial, civic, institutional and live-work functions in buildings at a scale and with a design appropriate to the area.

Within the Transitional Area designation, along the north side of Burnhamthorpe Road between the Neighbourhood Area and the Employment District, “small scale convenience retail, personal service and business activity” is also permitted.



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There are no sites within the NOESP that exclusively permit commercial development, or where a commercial component is required. As such, commercial development to date has been limited to the Dundas Street Urban Core Area site on the east side of Neyagawa Boulevard (i.e., Fortino’s, etc.), and the live/work retail and service commercial units on Preserve Drive near Kaitting Trail.

***Existing Commercial Land Use Policies – North Oakville West***

Within the North Oakville West Secondary Plan (NOWSP) area, limited retail and service commercial uses designed to serve the businesses and employees are permitted at the intersections of arterial roads and avenues within the Employment Districts. Additional commercial permissions may be provided through the Palermo Village North Urban Core Area policies currently under appeal. There has been no commercial development within the NOWSP area to date.

***Existing Employment Policies – Livable Oakville***

The existing hierarchy of Employment land use designations and the associated policies are the result of work completed through the town’s 2008-2009 Employment Land Review Study, including the report entitled *Employment Land Review* (February 2009, Hemson Consulting Ltd.), as well as amendments approved by the OMB since the Plan’s adoption by Council.

Within the Livable Oakville Plan area there are a range of locations – primarily along the QEW and Highway 403 corridors – designated and developed for concentrations of industrial, business and office activities. The four Employment land use designations are: Office Employment, Business Employment, Industrial, and Business Commercial.

***Table 3: Livable Oakville Employment Land Use Designations***

<b>Designation</b> (section of Plan)	<b>Purpose / Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Office Employment (s. 14.3)	intended to provide primarily for prestige office uses adjacent to the QEW and Highway 403 corridors	north side of North Service Road, between Third Line and Dorval Crossing
Business Employment (s. 14.4)	intended to provide for a wide range of business and industrial uses, primarily within enclosed buildings, as well as limited service commercial uses	Great Lakes Business Park Cornwall Road between Chartwell Rd. and Maple Grove Dr.

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Designation (section of Plan)	Purpose / Description	Examples
Industrial (s. 14.5)	intended to provide for heavy industrial operations	Ford Motor Company Suncor Energy
Business Commercial (s.14.6)	intended to provide for service commercial and convenience retail uses to support the surrounding employment areas and the travelling public	Speers Rd. and Fourth Line Royal Windsor Dr. & Ford Dr.

***Existing Employment Policies – North Oakville East and West***

Within the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans the primary employment designation is Employment District, which applies to areas along the south side of Highway 407 and along the north side of Dundas Street, west of Sixteen Mile Creek. This designation permits a range of uses including offices, light/heavy manufacturing, warehousing and wholesaling, plus supporting service commercial uses. In addition, the land use policies applicable to Trafalgar Urban Core 1 (at the intersection of Trafalgar Road and Burnhamthorpe Road) allow for employment based uses such as offices and prestige Industrial.

The North Oakville Secondary Plans establish employment targets for the respective planning areas. The East secondary plan has a target of 300 net hectares of employment land and 16,500 jobs at capacity. The West secondary plan has a target of 250 net hectares of employment land and 10,000 jobs at capacity. The employment land density target average identified in the North Oakville Secondary Plans is 55 employees per net hectare. In addition, the plans identify 8,700 jobs to be accommodated through population related employees (8,500 in the east and 200 in the west).

***Employment Land Conversion Policies***

It is the policy of the province, region and town to protect and preserve employment areas for employment purposes to meet the long-term forecasted demand. Requests to convert lands designated for employment uses to non-employment uses may now be considered by Halton Region as part of a municipal comprehensive review as set out in the 2017 Growth Plan.

Section 14.2 of the Livable Oakville Plan includes policies to address the potential conversion of employment lands to non-employment uses. The proposed OPA updates these policies to conform with the 2017 Growth Plan.

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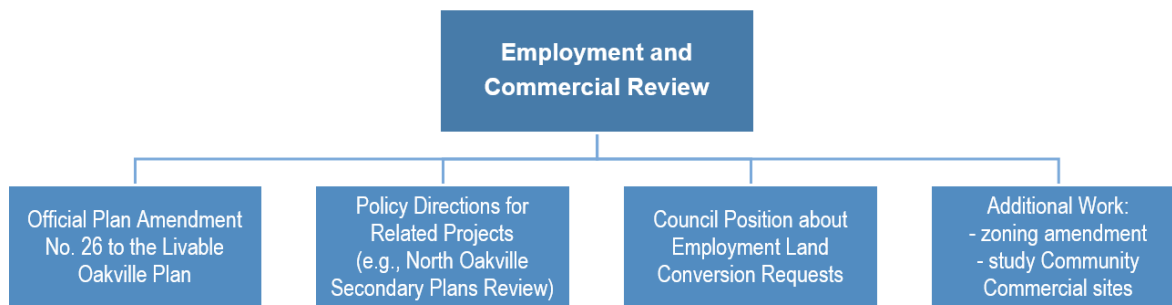
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**COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

The technical analysis and policy directions provided by the team led by Dillon Consulting (as documented in previous reports ), and input from stakeholders, the LOCS, Halton Region and Planning Services staff, informed the Employment and Commercial Review outcomes (Figure 3), including the recommendations of this final report. The project outcomes, which are discussed in more detail below, are:

- the original draft and revised draft / recommended **OPA 26 to the Livable Oakville Plan** (Appendix B and By-law 2018-054);
- the **policy directions for related projects** (Appendix C), which were received by Council on November 6, 2017;
- the recommended **Council position with respect to the employment land conversion requests** originally submitted to the town (Appendix F); and,
- the recommended **additional work to be undertaken**, specifically an amendment to Zoning By-law 2014-014 to implement OPA 26 and a study of the potential intensification of sites within the Community Commercial designation.

**Figure 3: Employment and Commercial Review Outcomes**



**Details of Recommended Outcomes, Organized by Theme**

As noted in the first statutory public meeting report, the official plan amendment and policy directions for related projects are intended to support the town’s employment and commercial growth to the year 2041.

The revised draft / recommended OPA 26 (By-law 2018-054) represents the updates to town’s employment- and commercial-related land use policies and designations that, in staff’s opinion, may proceed in advance of the completion of the Regional Official Plan Review. Staff are also recommending that Council

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provide direction to proceed with the preparation of an implementing zoning by-law amendment to Zoning By-law 2014-014 once OPA 26 is approved.

The policy directions for related projects (Appendix C), which were previously received by Council, are most appropriately addressed through other projects, based primarily on timing (e.g., dependent on the Regional Official Plan Review) or the area affected (e.g., a node or corridor to be specifically studied).

Details related to the recommended project outcomes are provided below, organized under the six themes of the Employment and Commercial Review.

### **1. Protect Employment Lands**

The town should protect and preserve strategically important employment lands for future employment purposes well beyond the next 20 years.

- **OPA 26, s. 14.1.6** – Update policies to prohibit major retail uses in employment areas to reflect the 2017 Growth Plan.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.2** – Update policies on employment land conversions to reflect the new policies in the 2017 Growth Plan.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.6** – Update the ‘Business Commercial’ policies to clarify the employment-supportive function of the designation, the uses that may be permitted, and the limited scale of retail and service commercial uses. Also discourage severances within the ‘Business Commercial’ designation and set out criteria for the consideration of new ‘Business Commercial’ sites.
- **OPA 26, Schedule H and s. 27.3.9** – Redesignate the lands at the intersection of North Service Road and Bronte Road, which are occupied by a number of Region of Halton facilities and no longer subject to the province’s Parkway Belt West Plan, as ‘Office Employment’ and ‘Business Employment.’ Also provide for the existing motor vehicle related uses to recognize the Region’s existing operations.
- **OPA 26, s. 29.5** – Add the definitions of ‘frequent transit’ and ‘major retail’ from the 2017 Growth Plan to the Livable Oakville Plan.
- **Policy Direction > North Oakville Secondary Plans Review** – The employment area policies should be updated to conform to the employment land conversion policies in accordance with the 2017 Growth Plan.

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- **Policy Direction > Speers Road Corridor Study** – Consider the function of Speers Road as a transitional area and identify suitable uses to accommodate an appropriate and compatible range of arterial commercial and service uses within an Employment designation. A report about the Speers Road Corridor Study, including recommended OPA 27 (By-law 2018-055), is also being considered by Planning and Development Council on April 16, 2018.
  - **Policy Direction (General)** – Work with Halton Region, through the Regional Official Plan Review, to establish minimum density targets for employment areas to ensure the town’s goals and objectives for employment areas are reflected.

It is noted that Council’s future decisions and directions with respect to other local Official Plan Review projects affecting employment lands (e.g., North Oakville Secondary Plans Review, Palermo Village Growth Area Review and Midtown Oakville Growth Area Review) will also be provided as input to the Region’s municipal comprehensive review.

- **Policy Direction (General)** – Update the land use policies and regulations for employment areas as part of the town’s future conformity review upon completion of the Regional Official Plan Review.
- **Limited Employment Land Conversions** – As noted in previous reports, the town received 20 submissions seeking changes to existing employment designations before the 2017 Growth Plan made Halton Region responsible for the evaluation/justification of conversion requests. Not all of the submissions are considered to be true “conversion requests” based on the Livable Oakville Plan’s employment policy structure, and some changes (e.g., select redesignations from ‘Business Employment’ to ‘Business Commercial’) are recommended through OPA 26. The recommendations for Council’s consideration with respect to the conversion requests originally submitted to the town are provided in Appendix F. If acceptable to Council, Appendix F would be provided along with the relevant supporting material as input to Halton Region’s municipal comprehensive review.

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## **2. Identify Priority Areas for Major Office Uses**

To attract and retain office investment the town will need to ensure the office sector is accommodated in areas with locational qualities and attributes (i.e., proximity to transit, amenities, and services). The town should identify priority areas for office development that are supportive of locational qualities and attributes desired for office investment.

- **OPA 26, s. 12.4 and s. 12.5** – Permit major office uses in the ‘Urban Core’ and ‘Urban Centre’ designation to support higher density employment uses in Growth Areas that are strategically located and have access to planned or existing frequent transit.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.1.8 and 14.4.1(b)** – Direct new major office buildings to Midtown Oakville, major transit station areas and strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service, but also allow for the consideration of other high visibility locations with excellent accessibility to highways.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.3** – Modify the ‘Office Employment’ land use designation to recognize the intent of the designation to primarily accommodate major office uses supported by transit with access to a range of employment-supportive amenities.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.3.3 and Schedules F, G, H, I and J** – Redefine the ‘Office Employment’ designation as a priority area for major office and office uses by redesignating ‘Office Employment’ lands that function as a transitional / buffer to neighbouring residential areas. These lands are to be redesignated as ‘Business Employment’ subject to additional policies that restrict outdoor storage and other incompatible land uses adjacent to residential areas.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.4** – Redefine the ‘Business Employment’ designation to address the redesignated ‘Office Employment’ lands by including office uses in the description, and adding some area-specific motor-vehicle related use permissions. Also address land use compatibility adjacent to residential areas by limiting motor vehicle related uses and not allowing outdoor storage.
- **OPA 26, s. 29.5** – Update the definition of major office to match the one in the 2017 Growth Plan.

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- **Policy Direction > Nodes and Corridors** – The area-specific node and corridor studies to be completed through the town’s Official Plan Review should examine how major office uses may be secured in a mixed use context to encourage vibrant and pedestrian-oriented areas that are also transit-supportive.
- **Policy Direction > North Oakville Secondary Plans Review** – Identify and designate lands within North Oakville that would be appropriate to support major office development in accordance with the policies of the 2017 Growth Plan.

### **3. *Encourage the intensification of employment and commercial uses in existing areas***

As the town approaches build-out of its greenfield lands. The majority of new employment and commercial growth (south of Dundas Street) will have to be accommodated through intensification. The town will have to direct these opportunities to appropriate areas that can support compact forms.

- **OPA 26, s. 14.1.7** – Provide a general employment policy to direct employment intensification to areas supported by existing or planned transit and active transportation.
- **OPA 26, s. 14.1.8** – Provide a general policy that encourages the intensification of existing areas with higher office densities and complements them with services and amenities to support the workforce.
- **OPA 26, s. 12.2.1(a), 12.3.1(a), 13.2.1, 13.3.1, 13.4.1, 13.5.1, 14.4.1(a)** – Allow for places of entertainment, indoor sports facilities and hotels within Mixed Use, Commercial and Employment designations.
- **OPA 26, s. 13.4.6 + Study of Community Commercial Sites** – As an interim measure, pending the completion of the recommended study of the town’s ‘Community Commercial’ sites, provide guidance for site-specific official plan amendments affecting lands within the ‘Community Commercial’ designation. This policy references the adopted policies regarding official plans and official plan amendments in OPA 15 (Urban Structure), and requires submissions to demonstrate that the planned commercial function of the site would be maintained and that the proposed development would be transit-supportive.

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Staff is recommending a study of the potential intensification of Community Commercial sites because of a number of landowner inquiries in recent years about the potential for redevelopment. The town's neighbouring municipalities are already considering policy changes for similar sites, which is expected to increase development interest in Oakville.

- The [draft City of Burlington Official Plan \(February 2018\)](#) designates such sites as 'Neighbourhood Centres' that "are intended to provide for the day-to-day and weekly goods and service needs of residents within the Neighbourhood Centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods" (s. 8.1.3(4.2)). The proposed Neighbourhood Centre policies provide for a mix of retail, service commercial residential, office, entertainment and recreation uses. They also encourage a minimum building height of two storeys and set a maximum building height of six storeys to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential areas. However, the proposed policies also contemplate the development of buildings up to 11 storeys through site-specific zoning by-law amendments, subject to the fulfilment of criteria related to reduced surface parking and high quality urban design.
- The City of Mississauga has a study underway in partnership with the Region of Peel called [Reimagining the Mall](#), which is intended to guide the long-term evolution of five areas of the City anchored by indoor shopping malls. According to the project webpage:
 

The study will help to ensure that future intensification in these areas is done in a way that fosters healthy, mixed-use communities. The idea being that you can live, work, play and raise a family all within your own "complete community". The purpose of the project is to make sure that land use policy is proactively in place should a landowner choose to redevelop in the future.
- **OPA 26, s. 26.6** – Identify the 'Neighbourhood Commercial' lands southeast of the intersection of Cornwall Road and Trafalgar Road as an area for further study (i.e., on Inglehart Street North and the north end of Reynolds Street). Planning staff have received inquiries about potential redevelopment in this area, including concepts to replace medical office space, under-occupied since the hospital relocated, with new uses.
- **Policy Direction > Transportation Policy Discussion Paper** – The minimum and maximum parking standards in employment and



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commercial areas that have access to existing or planned transit, active transportation, and in areas that can accommodate higher density uses should be reviewed through the town's Official Plan Review.

#### **4. Provide opportunities to secure commercial development to support the development of complete communities**

The 2017 Growth Plan places additional emphasis on the development of complete communities that support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living (i.e., a mix of jobs, local stores, and services).

The commercial land supply and demand analysis completed by Dillon Consulting identified an estimated shortfall of approximately 25 hectares of commercial lands to accommodate growth to 2041. It also indicated that the northwest area of Oakville is under-stored relative to the town.

In addition, the flexible nature of the land use designations in the North Oakville Secondary Plans allow for mixed use development in North Oakville, but does not require it, and may not result in the provision of needed commercial/retail space.

- **OPA 26, s. 29.5** – Update the definition of complete communities in the Livable Oakville Plan match the one in the 2017 Growth Plan.
- **OPA 26, Schedules F, G, I and J and s. 27.4.7** – Redesignate certain employment sites as 'Business Commercial' to recognize their existing function or zoning, or to provide for additional employment-supportive retail and service commercial uses based on location and lot size.
- **OPA 26, Schedule I and s. 27.4.8** – Recognize the existing motor vehicle repair facility in the Canadian Tire store at 400 Dundas Street East.
- **Policy Direction > North Oakville Secondary Plans Review** – The provision of commercial development in North Oakville should be secured to ensure the development of complete communities, and the definition of complete communities from the 2017 Growth Plan should be added to the secondary plans.
- **Policy Direction > Bronte Road and Dundas Street Area** – The lands located at the northwest corner of Dundas Street and Bronte Road are subject to OMB appeals with respect to the Regional Official Plan and North Oakville West Secondary Plan. Due to the outstanding

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appeals, the lands are not subject to Regional or local employment policies. There may be an opportunity to further evaluate whether this is a suitable location to accommodate the commercial land shortfall, and deficiency in retail stores in the northwest, on a portion of these lands. The lands are also identified as part of a 'Node for Further Study' on the adopted urban structure (OPA 15).

**5. Develop a monitoring program that recognizes the evolving nature of employment and commercial lands**

The technical analysis completed by Dillon Consulting identified that the nature of employment and commercial development is evolving. The shift to knowledge-based employment and the increased prominence of on-line retail may have an impact on how the town plans for employment and commercial uses. Trends in employment and commercial development should be monitored to allow for proactive and dynamic decision-making and policy development.

The Livable Oakville Plan's existing monitoring policies (s. 28.19) also require practical indicators to assist in assessing the effectiveness and relevance of the Plan's policies and responding to changing conditions (e.g., economic, technological, demographic) and emerging priorities and initiatives.

- **Policy Direction > Monitoring / Implementation Discussion Paper** – The town should develop a comprehensive monitoring program through the Official Plan Review that identifies and defines the key indicators to measure the performance of the town's employment and commercial objectives and policies. This includes using existing resources such as Halton Region's Employment Survey, building permit data and other available resources.

For example, section 14.1.2 of the Livable Oakville Plan states that

It is a key policy of this Plan to provide a balance of population and employment in the Town in order to maximize the opportunity for residents to work in Oakville, to maintain a healthy tax base, and to achieve the goal of a balanced and *complete community*. The Town will monitor the rate of employment growth and the utilization of employment lands to ensure that sufficient employment land is designated to meet these objectives.

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An indicator that measures the ratio of population to employment would be required using sources such as Halton Region's Employment Survey and population estimates.

- **Policy Direction (General)** – The province has committed to developing performance indicators to evaluate the 2017 Growth Plan and an updated land budget methodology. The town should work collaboratively with the Region and Province on the development of these tools.

## **6. Harmonize Employment Area Planning Policies**

The North Oakville Secondary Plans and Livable Oakville Official Plan are under separate land use policy frameworks. Inconsistencies between the plans make it difficult to plan comprehensively for a town-wide set of goals and objectives. The town's Official Plans should be harmonized to create one land use policy framework.

- **Policy Direction > North Oakville Secondary Plans Review** – The employment area planning policies from the Livable Oakville Plan should be harmonized with those in the North Oakville Secondary Plans.

### **Comments Received**

Provided for Council's information is a summary of the comments received in relation to the Employment and Commercial Review and the original draft OPA along with staff responses (Appendix D). Comments where staff proposed an action, such as making a change in the OPA or providing direction to a related study, are also captured in the details of the recommended project outcomes above.

Also provided for Council's information are the written submissions provided to Council and staff throughout 2017 and up to the date of this report (Appendix E).

### **CONCLUSION:**

Considering the foregoing, it is staff's opinion that the proposed OPA represents good planning, is consistent with the 2014 PPS and in conformity with the 2017 Growth Plan, the Regional Plan and the Livable Oakville Plan (in force and as amended by OPA 15, Urban Structure). Further, approval of the proposed OPA would be in the public interest. Accordingly, it is recommended:

1. That the proposed town-initiated official plan amendment (File No. 42.15.49, Employment and Commercial Review) be approved on the basis that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, conforms to all applicable

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Provincial Plans, Halton's Regional Official Plan and the Livable Oakville Plan, has regard for matters of Provincial interest, and represents good planning for the reasons set out in the report from the Planning Services department dated March 22, 2018;

2. That By-law 2018-054, a by-law to adopt Official Plan Amendment Number 26 (OPA 26) to the Livable Oakville Plan be passed;
3. 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.

Also considering the foregoing discussion, it is further recommended:

4. That Appendix F to this report be endorsed as Council's position with respect to the employment land conversion requests originally submitted to the town, and that it be provided along with the relevant supporting material as input to Halton Region's municipal comprehensive review.
5. That staff be directed to:
  - a) proceed with the preparation of an implementing zoning by-law amendment to Zoning By-law 2014-014 once OPA 26 is approved; and,
  - b) study the potential intensification of sites within the Community Commercial designation considering the town's adopted Urban Structure, local development interest and land use policy changes proposed by neighbouring municipalities for similar sites.

**CONSIDERATIONS:**

**(A) PUBLIC**

Stakeholder meetings and public open houses were hosted on June 4, 2015 and June 16, 2015 to present the Employment and Commercial Review consulting team's initial findings. The consulting team and planning staff provided follow-up reports to the Livable Oakville Council Subcommittee throughout 2016 and 2017.

Notice of three public information meetings, as well as the first statutory public meeting, was published in the Oakville Beaver on October 12, 2017. Notice was also provided to the agencies and public bodies prescribed by the *Planning Act*, and the town's Official Plan Review email distribution list. The original draft OPA was available for public review in the Planning

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Services Department and on the town's website as of October 17, 2017. The public information meetings were held on October 24, 2017 and November 6, 2017. The first statutory public meeting (about the original draft OPA) was hosted by Planning and Development Council on November 6, 2017.

A second statutory public meeting is being held because of the extent of the changes made to the original draft OPA. Notice of the April 16, 2018 statutory public meeting and recommendation report was published in the Oakville Beaver on March 22, 2018. Notice was also provided to the agencies and public bodies prescribed by the *Planning Act*, the town's Official Plan Review email distribution list, and the project contact list.

The revised draft OPA will be available for public review on the town's website and in-person in the Planning Services department as of March 23, 2018, being at least 20 days before the second statutory public meeting.

To receive updates about the town's Official Plan Review projects, members of the public are encouraged to visit the town's website to join the email list: <http://www.oakville.ca/planoakville/official-plan-review.html>

**(B) FINANCIAL**

The costs associated with the Employment and Commercial Review have been considered as part of the town's capital budget. Planning for an appropriate long-term supply of designated employment and commercial land will make the town a balanced and complete community, maximize opportunities for residents to work in Oakville, and maintain a healthy tax base.

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

Staff from the Planning Services and Economic Development departments oversaw the background work and technical analysis provided by the consulting team. The proposed OPA was circulated to internal departments and external agencies for technical review and feedback. Halton Region planning staff provided a detailed review of the original draft OPA, and their comments were considered in the preparation of the revised draft OPA.

**(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- continuously improve our programs and services
- provide outstanding service to our residents and businesses
- be the most livable town in Canada

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**(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

The proposed official plan amendment complies with the sustainability objectives of the Livable Oakville Plan.

**APPENDICES:**

- Appendix A Urban Structure (adopted through OPA 15)
- Appendix B Excerpt of the Revised Draft OPA
- Appendix C Policy Directions for Related Projects
- Appendix D Comments Analysis
- Appendix E Written Submissions, 2017 - Present
- Appendix F Analysis of Employment Land Conversion Requests with Recommendations

**BY-LAW:**

The following by-law, recommended for passage by this report, is listed separately on the April 16, 2018 Planning and Development Council agenda:

- 2018-054 A by-law to adopt an amendment to the Livable Oakville Official Plan, Official Plan Amendment Number 26 (Town of Oakville; Employment and Commercial Review; File 42.15.49)

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