

REPORT

SPECIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: MARCH 22, 2021

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: March 9, 2021

SUBJECT: **Regional Official Plan Review - Growth Concepts Discussion Paper - Integrated Growth Management Strategy**

LOCATION: Town of Oakville

WARD: Town wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled *Regional Official Plan Review – Growth Concepts Discussion Paper – Integrated Growth Management Strategy* dated March 9, 2021, be received.
2. That the report titled *Regional Official Plan Review – Growth Concepts Discussion Paper – Integrated Growth Management Strategy* dated March 9, 2021, be forwarded for information to Halton Region, the City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, Credit Valley Conservation, Grand River Conservation Authority and Conservation Halton.

KEY FACTS:

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

- Phase 2 of Halton's Regional Official Plan Review is underway and involves research, technical analysis and community engagement around key themes.
- The key theme of growth management is focused on directing required population and employment growth to achieve conformity with the province's 2019, Growth Plan, as amended.
- Halton Region is planned to 2031 as a result of the last Regional Official Plan Review from 2009.

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- The 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, now requires Halton to plan for an additional 20 years from 2031 to 2051 to accommodate a total population of 1.1 million and total jobs of 500,000.
- Halton is exploring issues and opportunities related to growth management through the Integrated Growth Management Strategy. This is an integral component of the Regional Official Plan Review that will ultimately address where and how Halton grows to 2051.
- As part of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy, Halton has released a series of reports, the latest of which is the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper.
- The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper profiles four Growth Concepts based on 'Local Plans and Priorities' as well as an evaluation of the Concepts and supporting technical analysis.
- This report presents an overview of the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper and provides comments from town staff.

BACKGROUND:

The Regional Official Plan Review (ROPR) is underway in partnership with its local Municipalities of Oakville, Burlington, Halton Hills and Milton. The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper is a critical component of the Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS), which is a key element of Halton's ROPR.

At present, the ROPR is finishing Phase 2 of the program and transitioning to Phase 3, which will see the development of a Preferred Growth Concept and a Policy Directions Report. Appendix A presents the ROPR Timeline and key milestones, including an ongoing reliance on public engagement.

The IGMS is being undertaken within the context of the provincial policy framework for growth management. Central to this framework is the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, which requires the accommodation of forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2051.

The 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, also emphasizes the achievement of complete communities and involves the integration of climate change considerations into growth management and planning decisions.

Halton Region is planned to 2031 as a result of the last ROPR. The 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, now requires that the region plan for an additional 20 years to

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2051, which consists of accommodating a total population of 1.1 million and total employment of 500,000.

Through the ROPR, the region has released a series of reports on the IGMS, including:

Report No. LPS41-19, June 2019 – Growth Scenarios Report

The *Growth Scenarios Report* profiled eight growth scenarios that identified a preliminary range of choices with respect to population and employment growth. Regional staff were authorized to proceed with further analysis and refinement of the four 'Local Plans and Priorities' scenarios in order to produce Growth Concepts.

Report No. LPS44-20, May 2020 – Evaluation Framework

The *IGMS – Local Municipal Consultation on the Evaluation Framework and Status Update Report* in conjunction with preceding *Growth Scenarios Report* released a framework for the evaluation of the Growth Concepts that is organized around four themes based on regional and provincial planning policies:

- Theme 1: Regional Urban System and Local Urban Structure
- Theme 2: Infrastructure and Financing
- Theme 3: Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change
- Theme 4: Growing the Economy and Moving People and Goods

Report No. LPS56-20, July 2020 - Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper

The *Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper* was released for consultation and explored elements of a Regional Urban Structure for accommodating growth and intensification in Halton, aligned to local plans and priorities.

The Discussion Paper also described requirements of the Growth Plan, 2019 to be addressed through the ROPR including implementing Urban Growth Centres (UGCs), Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs), Corridors and other potential strategic growth areas that were identified through local urban structures, as well as consideration for employment areas and employment conversions.

The Discussion Paper also recognized a hierarchy of strategic growth areas to accommodate intensification and transit supportive growth.

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Report No. LPS17-21, February 2021 – draft Regional Official Plan Amendment

Regional staff prepared a draft Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) that identifies elements of a Regional Urban Structure to support strategic local municipal land use plans and priorities.

Draft ROPA 48 proposes direction on implementing urban structure elements such as UGCs, MTSAs, Regional Nodes, and certain strategic employment conversions by removing lands from the Regional Employment Area.

The Town of Oakville staff report on these matters is found elsewhere on tonight's agenda and is titled *Regional Official Plan Review - Draft Regional Plan Amendment 48 - An Amendment to Define a Regional Structure*.

Report No. LPS18-21, February 2021 - Growth Concepts Discussion Paper

The *IGMS – Growth Concepts Discussion Paper* was received by Regional Council on February 17, 2021 and released as a basis for public engagement. The Discussion Paper describes the formation and evaluation of four Growth Concepts based on 'Local Plans and Priorities' and how elements of these concepts will be used to develop the Preferred Growth Concept to accommodate people and jobs to 2051.

The *IGMS – Growth Concepts Discussion Paper* may be viewed as part of the Regional Council Meeting Agenda for February 17, 2021, as Attachment #5 to LPS18-21 at this link:

<https://edmweb.halton.ca/OnBaseAgendaOnline/Meetings/ViewMeeting?id=4196&doctype=1>

Report LPS18-21 was accompanied by several attachments, also found at the above link, and including an Executive Summary of the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper. This summary is attached as Appendix B to this report.

In addition to adopting the recommendations of Report No. LPS18-21, Regional Council adopted additional motions that had the effect of:

- Requesting the province to allow the region to delay its final report on its Official Plan Review until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted on the Growth Concepts and the Preferred Growth Concept;
- Requesting a suspension of the timetable for municipal conformity to the Growth Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement to ensure that the public can fully

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participate in the process of planning their communities for the growth planning period covering 2031 to 2051; and

- Requesting the province to suspend the deadlines for conformity until the Land Needs Assessment can be revisited to adjust to the significant changes to the nature of work that are reducing office space and parking space needs.

While a response from the province is pending, the public engagement period on the Growth Concepts is set at 100 days concluding in May 2021. The engagement opportunities include virtual public meetings, website postings, online surveys, presentation to local Municipal Councils and virtual stakeholder meetings.

Report No. LPS05-21, February 2021 - Phase 2 Initial Consultation Summary

At their meeting of February 17, 2021, Regional Council received the Consultation Summary from Phase 2 of the ROPR. This is available at the link provided above.

Town staff notes that the Consultation Summary Report (Attachment #1 to Report No. LPS05-21) contains a survey to collect feedback on the information shared, what was heard and to help inform next steps.

The survey is open until April 18, 2021 and questions may be directed to regional staff at ropr@halton.ca or by calling 311.

Town of Oakville Engagement in the Regional Official Plan Review

Oakville Council has been engaging with town staff throughout the ROPR by receiving update reports and providing input to the region, including:

- Planning and Development Council, August 19, 2019 – report titled *Halton Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS): an Oakville planning staff discussion paper*. For reference, this paper is attached in Appendix F and discussed later in this report.
- Planning and Development Council, December 2, 2019 - *Halton Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS): Results from the Community Engagement to determine Oakville's weighting of the Evaluation Framework for the Growth Scenarios*.
- Planning and Development Council, September 8, 2020 - *Regional Official Plan Review - Regional Discussion Papers*. At this meeting, Oakville Council also heard an overview presentation on the ROPR by Curt Benson, Director of Planning Services and Chief Planning Official, Halton Region.

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COMMENT/OPTIONS:

This purpose of this report is to introduce Oakville Council to the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper and to provide comments from a town staff perspective.

Town staff notes that while this report is an update on the Region's IGMS and an introduction to the Growth Concepts, there will be future opportunities for Oakville Council to engage in the region's process. This will be through future town staff reports as well as directly with Regional staff who have committed to making presentations to the local Municipal Councils on the IGMS and the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper.

Context for the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper

As mentioned, Halton is required to plan for an additional 20 years from 2031-2051 in order to accommodate a total population of 1.1 million and total employment of 500,000. The figure in Appendix C illustrates population and employment growth in Halton beginning in 2001 and forecasted to 2051.

Presently in 2021, there are 621,000 people and 281,000 jobs in Halton. Accommodating the 2051 forecast means finding room for nearly double the number of people and jobs found in Halton today.

The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper describes four Growth Concepts that have been prepared to show where and how Halton will grow to 2051. The Discussion Paper also provides an evaluation of the concepts and identifies potential settlement area boundary expansions for accommodating different types of growth.

This Discussion Paper and the feedback from public engagement and further analysis will be used to determine a Preferred Growth Concept that will be advanced as part of a future draft Regional Official Plan Amendment.

It is important to note that the determination of a Preferred Growth Concept places Regional Council at the centre of a complex problem. Conformity with the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, will require evaluating trade-offs, finding balance and making difficult decisions that will have a long lasting impacts on the landscape and on Halton's communities.

For example, will Halton grow in place on existing urban lands or convert prime agricultural lands to more urban area? Will Halton mitigate climate change by creating urban, mixed use, pedestrian friendly and transit-supportive complete communities? Alternatively, will Halton aggravate climate impacts by building outwards in suburban, single use, low density, and car dependent areas?

Growth Concepts Discussion Paper – Overview and Key Concepts

The Discussion Paper begins with a history of planning in Halton and the province, and presents information on factors that influenced the Growth Concepts.

The Paper then presents Halton's high-level regional structure elements, including the Regional Natural Heritage System, the Agricultural Area, the Urban Area etc.

Building on that, the Paper reviews Halton's urban structure elements, including:

- Urban Growth Centres (e.g. Midtown Oakville)
- Major Transit Station Areas (e.g. Bronte GO)
- Nodes and Corridors (e.g. Hospital District, Palermo Village).

These are defined as Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) in accordance with the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended. The Discussion Paper continues with chapters covering:

- An overview of growth concepts, employment conversions and allocation of growth to Strategic Growth Areas
- Proposed settlement area boundary expansion areas by Growth Concept
- Analysis and conclusions related to infrastructure and fiscal impact assessment
- Summary of the evaluation of Growth Concepts
- Considerations for draft Preferred Growth Concept

The Discussion Paper is accompanied by a series of Technical Appendices grouped by the type of technical study:

- Development of Growth Concepts
- Growth Concepts Technical Assessment
- Settlement Area Boundary Expansion
- Evaluation of Growth Concepts

The Growth Concepts have been formulated using the province's updated Land Needs Assessment Methodology. Along with the policies of the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, Halton is required to use the methodology to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecasted growth. A key consideration in the methodology is addressing market-based housing in relation to long-term growth.

Recalling that the IGMS is an exercise in planning to accommodate population and employment growth from 2031-2051, the following terms are used to describe aspects of the Growth Concepts and helpful for understanding the similarities and differences between them.

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Intensification

Generally means the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists. The definition implies that there is existing density in an area.

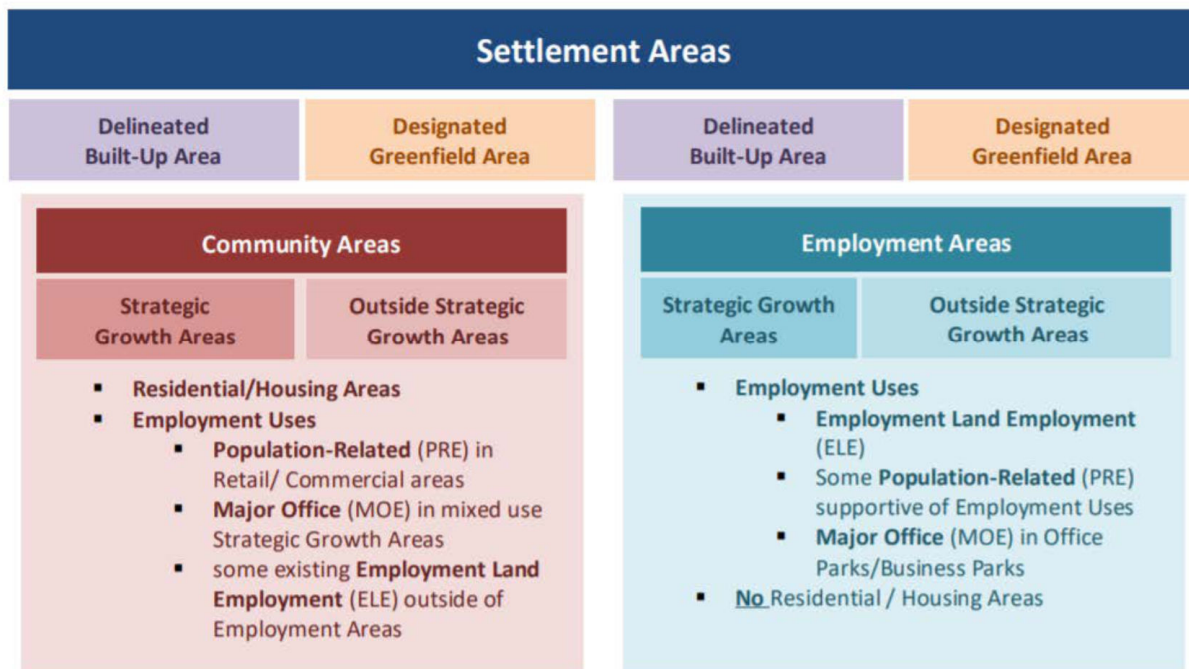
For the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, *intensification* is the amount of development occurring within the *delineated built-up area*. Refer to Appendix D for an illustration of this term.

The Growth Plan sets a minimum *intensification* target of 50% for all residential development to occur annually within the *delineated built-up area*

Densification

This is a term used in Halton's IGMS and means the rate of residential units targeted for *designated greenfield areas* in the region, plus the *intensification* rate mentioned above. The amount of densification is a key difference between the Growth Concepts.

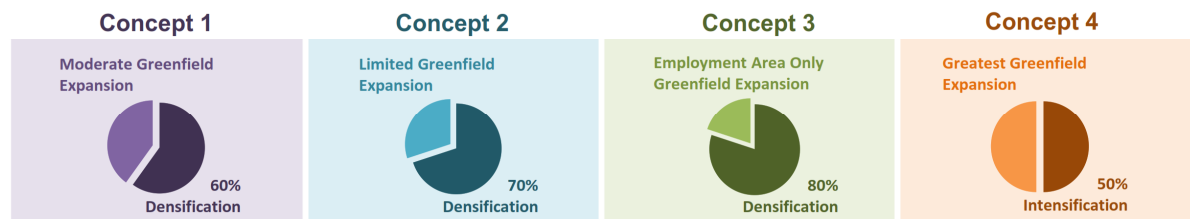
As shown in Appendix D, settlement areas consist of the *designated greenfield area* and the *delineated built-up area*. The region refines these concepts further with the terms *Community Areas* and *Employment Areas*, illustrated in the figure below.



Growth Concepts Overview

The Discussion Paper provides a full description of each concept including the provincial planning policy requirements and underpinning technical work. Appendix B presents a high-level view in the Executive Summary.

Certain key characteristics of the Growth Concepts are highlighted in the following sections. The figure below names the concepts and identifies their relative *densification* and *intensification* rates.



Land Requirements by Concept

Concept 1: 60% Densification/Moderate Greenfield Expansion

New Community Area Land	= 1,460 ha
New Employment Area Land	= 1,170 ha
Total New Land Area (net)	= 2,630 ha
Total New Land Area (gross)	= 3,430 ha

Concept 2: 70% Densification/Limited Greenfield Expansion

New Community Area Land	= 730 ha
New Employment Area Land	= 1,100 ha
Total New Land Area (net)	= 1,830 ha
Total New Land Area (gross)	= 2,320 ha

Concept 3: 80% Densification/Employment Only Greenfield Expansion

New Community Area Land	= 0 ha
New Employment Area Land	= 980 ha
Total New Land Area (net)	= 980 ha
Total New Land Area (gross)	= 1270 ha

Concept 4: 50% Intensification/Greatest Greenfield Expansion

New Community Area Land	= 2,080 ha
New Employment Area Land	= 1,220 ha
Total New Land Area	= 3,300 ha
Total New Land Area (gross)	= 3,900 ha

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Similarities between Concepts

- At least 50% of new residential units are planned to be built within the delineated built-up area.
- New Community Areas in new Designated Greenfield Areas are planned for a minimum density of 65 persons and jobs per hectare.
- The Total New Land Area (gross) includes agricultural lands outside the Key Features of the Natural Heritage System and Parkway Belt.

Differences between Concepts

As shown, higher *densification* rates means that more residential units are accommodated within existing *settlement areas*. This reduces the area required to accommodate growth through potential settlement area boundary expansions.

Higher *densification* rates also means that housing trends towards a greater proportion of apartments located in high density mixed use areas of the community.

For each concept, the share of densification approximates the share of apartments in the mix of total housing growth from 2031-2051. Concepts 1, 2, 3 and 4 include 10%, 17%, 24% and 2.5% of apartments within designated greenfield area, strategic growth areas such as Trafalgar Road in north Oakville and Milton.

Employment Considerations

The regional Employment Forecast shows demand for Major Office remaining steady over the planning horizon and an increasing demand for Employment Land for the period 2021-2051.

The Growth Concepts test various employment land conversion scenarios and their relative impacts on land available for residential and employment uses.

For Oakville, Bronte GO MTSA, Hospital District and Palermo Village were tested in all four Growth Concepts while the Neyagawa Urban Core in North Oakville was tested in Concepts 2 and 3.

Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

As mentioned, the amount of land for settlement area boundary expansions to accommodate required growth varies by concept.

While the location of the expansion lands in terms of Potential New Community Area and Potential New Employment Areas also varies by concept, they can generally be found around the southerly aspects of the existing urban areas of Milton and Halton Hills. For illustrative purposes, Appendix E shows the potential settlement area boundary expansions from Growth Concept 4.

Additional Analysis of the Growth Concepts

The Discussion Paper presents technical analysis of the Growth Concepts in key areas including water and wastewater, transportation, and fiscal impact assessment. See Appendix B for a high-level view in the Executive Summary.

Evaluation Framework

The Discussion Paper uses an Evaluation Framework based around the following themes to evaluate the Growth Concepts:

- Theme 1: Regional Urban System and Local Urban Structure
- Theme 2: Infrastructure and Financing
- Theme 3: Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change
- Theme 4: Growing the Economy and Moving People and Goods

Under each theme, there are a series of measures or criteria to provide an assessment of how each growth concept best achieves the measure, and how the concept performs relative to the other concepts related to each measure.

It's important to note that the purpose of the Evaluation Framework is to explore the trade-offs related to the range of choices when allocating population and employment growth. The evaluation is also intended guide community discussion and public engagement.

The evaluation is not intended to be an exercise where the concepts are ranked or scored without fully understanding what aspects of each concept impact the evaluation results.

Refer to the Growth Concepts Discussion Paper, Chapter 9, for complete findings of the evaluation. See Appendix B for a review of key questions identified through the evaluation of the Growth Concepts that will be brought forward to help identify a draft Preferred Growth Concept.

Key Factors to identify the Preferred Growth Concept through the IGMS

As the ROPR progresses through the next round of public engagement and into Phase 3, a significant component of the IGMS will be to develop a Preferred Growth Concept. Discussion and refinement will focus on these key considerations:

- Growth Management
- Infrastructure
- Fiscal Impact
- Agriculture

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- Mineral Aggregate Resources
- Climate Change
- Natural Heritage and Healthy Watershed
- Multi-Modal Transportation, Transit-Supportive Densities, and Goods Movement

Next Steps in the Integrated Growth Management Strategy

The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper was released from February to May 2021 for consultation. Following that, the IGMS will follow these next steps:

- Feedback on the Growth Concepts will be collected by online questionnaire.
- Notifications will be sent to the public and stakeholders about upcoming Public Information Centers
- Regional staff will have focused meetings with Local Municipal Councils and stakeholders
- The draft Preferred Growth Concept will be developed based on feedback received and further analysis
- Final Growth concept report and conclusion of the IGMS anticipated Fall 2021

Town of Oakville Perspectives

Through the ROPR process and the IGMS, town staff has maintained that a Preferred Growth Concept that supports existing local urban structure while minimizing greenfield expansions will best support efficient use of existing infrastructure, including transportation infrastructure, addressing the climate emergency and support for community energy planning.

Climate Change, Land Use Planning and the Preferred Growth Concept

Climate change and its challenges continue to dominate discussions and influence policy making at all levels of government and in many aspects of society. Oakville Council has shown leadership in this area by declaring a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and adopting a Community Energy Plan in February 2020.

In the context of the IGMS and the determination of a Preferred Growth Concept, the intersection of climate related challenges, growth management and land use planning seem as relevant as ever.

The following is taken from *Halton Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS): an Oakville planning staff discussion paper* attached in Appendix F. Please refer to that document for an expanded discussion of the issues and key messages.

The 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, identifies numerous growth related challenges linked to the number of people coming to this region, including:

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- **climate change impacts**, primarily due to increased carbon emissions and energy in the atmosphere leading to a greater frequency of intense storm events and a greater risk of flooding in our communities;
- **degradation of air quality, water, and natural resources** that often occurs with urban sprawl;
- an **increased demand for** municipalities to provide **major infrastructure**, driven directly by population growth;
- **increased traffic congestion**, which will lead to costly delays in the movement of goods and people;
- **increased rates of obesity, diabetes and cardio-vascular illness**, due in part to rising rates of inactivity linked to low-density, automobile-dependent development patterns;
- an **aging population**, which will require age-friendly community design and transportation options for individuals with reduced mobility; and
- a **finite supply of quality agricultural lands** under pressure for redevelopment as residential and/or employment uses as these are the lands that will be replaced by urban expansion.

In the context of the IGMS and the determination of a Preferred Growth Concept, what characteristics of a concept are best of Oakville when evaluated against the challenges identified above? These are summarized in the following key messages that should help interpret the Phase 3 of the IGMS:

- Building complete communities where people choose to live without a car is one of the most impactful and structurally sustainable ways to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change.
- Saying 'no to growth' will not save Oakville from the effects of growth – infrastructure cost payments, increased traffic congestion, diminished goods movement, isolation of seniors, decreased housing affordability and increased environmental impacts will all be experienced in Oakville if regional growth is directed elsewhere.
- The way forward for Oakville requires a change from the status quo:
 - Higher-order transit must become the preferred method of transportation for a large number of people in Oakville in order to combat traffic congestion;

- Oakville must fully embrace a shift to apartment-style housing from ground-oriented housing as the primary way to accommodate growth, particularly in the town's planned nodes and corridors;
- Embracing the shift to apartment housing built in compact, walkable nodes and corridors oriented towards higher-order transit is the best way to address the identified deficiency in the existing transportation network to accommodate future growth;
- Building apartment housing in compact, walkable nodes and corridors oriented towards higher-order transit is the best way to make housing more affordable;
- Population growth in compact, transit-oriented developments in Oakville will translate to more employment jobs for Oakville;
- Building communities where people choose to live without a car is also the best way to build communities that are ideal for an aging population;
- Building communities where people choose to live without a car is also the best way to build communities that promote a healthy lifestyle and active transportation; and
- No designated greenfield expansion is the best way to protect prime agricultural land and the natural heritage system.

The paper concludes with the following:

“Expanding the existing designated greenfield within Halton does not make sense for Oakville. Redirecting growth that might otherwise occur in Oakville also does not make sense for Oakville.

A growth scenario that does not include any new designated greenfield expansion is the best growth management strategy to address the challenges that Oakville will face because of future population and employment growth. Halton cannot afford to sprawl more than it already has and growth is needed in Oakville's planned nodes and corridors in order to enable viable higher-order transit that will in turn enable a large number of people to prefer to walk, bike, roll or take mass transit rather than use a car.

By choosing the growth scenario that does not propose any designated greenfield expansion, Oakville will be able to structurally reduce carbon emissions in order to combat the climate change crisis. It helps us prevent

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and/or avoid degradation of the environment and our natural heritage. It protects prime agricultural lands that support our food production networks. It gives us the best chance at alleviating the traffic congestion we already experience and avoiding future traffic congestion. It establishes a built environment that facilitates healthy and active lifestyles and embraces an aging population.”

Mixed Use Nodes and Intensifying Employment Opportunities

The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper forecasts increasing demand for Employment Land Employment in Halton for the period 2021-2051. Town staff supports protecting high quality Employment Areas for long-term employment growth as an important consideration for the ROPR. This is consistent with the recommendations from the town's Employment Commercial Review, conducted as background work for the town's ongoing Official Plan Review.

However, town staff is of the opinion that for Oakville, there is an even stronger future for high quality and dense employment opportunities in mixed used developments and through intensification at strategic locations.

In Oakville today, there are high quality and dense office developments resulting from the town's mixed use designations from the Livable Oakville Plan. Examples of this are found in Palermo Village and Uptown Core strategic growth areas.

Looking ahead, the Employment Commercial Review also concluded that:

- There is a sufficient supply of designated employment land to meet the Town's long-term demand beyond 2041.
- The town is an attractor for knowledge based employment sectors, including financial and professional services, digital media, information and communications technology, film, life science and advanced manufacturing.
- Employment in Oakville has, and will continue to be, highly concentrated in the office sector.

Other key findings and recommendations from that study include:

- There is a growing interest/demand for office space within mixed-use environments with proximity/access to labour, amenities and higher-order transit.
- The financial viability of stand-alone urban office development within intensification nodes/corridors is generally less favourable than if part of a mixed-use development.

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- The intensification of employment and commercial uses in appropriate, existing areas that can support compact forms should be encouraged as the town approaches build-out of its greenfield lands.
- Successful development of mixed use nodes in turn, will drive local population growth and the need for population-related employment including retail commercial, personal services and institutional uses.
- The town should explore policy alternatives that provide the flexibility to consider non-employment uses where deemed appropriate, while maintaining the minimum target for people and jobs

Additional evidence in support of mixed use employment opportunities comes from the town's Hospital District Study, also part of the ongoing Official Plan review and a key study in the implementation of the town's urban structure:

- Establish a balance and a mix of land uses and ensure that intensification is of an appropriate scale and built form. Residential and/or retail strategies can ensure that desired targets are achieved.

Town staff is of the opinion that since there is only so much employment to be absorbed, it allows the opportunity for other uses to contribute to the function of the node and the concept of a complete community can be incorporated.

Town staff is part of a network for information sharing and communicating on these issues and recently received a *National State of the Market* presentation by AltusGroup, dated February 18, 2021. That presentation highlighted the following national employment and office trends, among other insights:

- Sustainable investing continues to grow (even though 2021 investment is down, year over year).
- The nature of work continues to evolve; it is adapting to conditions and adopting new practices.
- Office is here to stay, but changing a bit, downsizing is a trend because of work from home.
- Office needs to be the connecting point for employers and their employees to foster collaboration and reinforce company culture.

The foregoing section suggests that high quality and dense employment is possible and is expected to be a strong future presence in Oakville's market. Policy flexibility

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is important, as is monitoring of trends and enabling sustainable opportunities through intensification and re-development within the existing urban area are important factors to consider in planning.

2051 Planning Horizon

As a general perspective, consistent with a chorus of voices in Halton Region, the extension of the planning horizon to 2051 in the 2019 Growth Plan, as amended, is putting unnecessary pressure for converting agricultural and other type lands to urban uses.

At present in Halton and resulting from ROPA 38 in 2009, there remain substantial amounts of existing designated greenfield areas in North Oakville and around the Town of Milton. These lands should be used first to accommodate required growth.

As these lands build out and as the local Municipalities in Halton intensify, the need for additional lands could be evaluated and potential settlement boundary area expansions considered at that time.

In the context of existing, available urban lands to develop, designating land required to 2051 is premature. In addition to the uncertainty around the actual need for these lands, there is a concern that once designated, there will be no turning back. There is also the risk for leapfrog development with so much urban land designated so far out in the future.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS:

The Growth Concepts Discussion Paper described the process to develop and evaluate the four Growth Concepts. The appendices to the Discussion Paper provide considerable additional background information.

Town staff is engaged in the ROPR process and continue to review and report on information provided by the region. As the ROPR progresses, staff will continue this approach with the goal of keeping Oakville Council informed and up to date.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

There are no public considerations and no notice requirements from this report.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial considerations from this report.

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(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Multiple town departments have had the opportunity to provide input into the town's responses to Halton's Regional Official Plan Review.

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

Consideration of the sustainability goals and objectives of the Livable Oakville Plan are part of all town reviews of Regional initiatives.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Regional Official Plan Review TimeLine

Appendix B – IGMS Growth Concepts - Executive Summary

Appendix C – Halton Growth Overview

Appendix D – Growth Plan Land Use Terminology

Appendix E – Potential Settlement Area Boundary Expansions
from Growth Concept 4

Appendix F – Halton IGMS – Town staff discussion paper

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