



## REPORT

### LIVABLE OAKVILLE (OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW) COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2018

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**FROM:** Planning Services Department

**DATE:** January 29, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Residential Policy Review

**LOCATION:** Residential Areas (Livable Oakville Plan area)

**WARD:** Town wide

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the report entitled *Residential Policy Review*, dated January 29, 2018 be received.

### KEY FACTS

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

- The town's five-year Official Plan Review was launched at Planning and Development Council on May 11, 2015.
- The Residential Policy Review is a component of the Official Plan Review program.
- The review will assess the town's residential areas and consider new or revised policies, as necessary, to ensure the goals and objectives of the residential areas and the Official Plan's overall growth management framework and urban structure, continue to be realized.
- This report provides an overview of the various plans, documents, policies and emerging matters to be considered as part of the Residential Policy Review.
- A key study input will include the Official Plan specific recommendations stemming from the Residential Character Study received by Planning and Development Council on January 15, 2018.

## BACKGROUND

The Livable Oakville Plan (2009 Town of Oakville Official Plan) guides growth and change for lands south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407. The Plan was adopted by Council in 2009 and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), with modifications, in 2011 as it was deemed to conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) and the Halton Region Official Plan, as amended, and to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2005). The plan provides a framework for managing growth to 2031.

The North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans (North Oakville Plans) provide a planning framework for the lands north of Dundas Street and south of Highway 407 between Ninth Line in the east and Tremaine Road in the west. The North Oakville Plans are not part of the Livable Oakville Plan but endure as amendments to the town's 2006 Official Plan.

The North Oakville East Secondary Plan was approved by the OMB as Amendment 272 to the Town's 1986 Official Plan, in January 2008. The North Oakville West Secondary Plan was approved as Amendment 289 to the Town's 2006 Official Plan, in May 2009. The North Oakville Plans are intended to guide development in north Oakville to the year 2021.

In May 2015, the town initiated a five-year Official Plan Review, in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*. As part of this review, a number of studies are currently underway or contemplated, including a review of the policies that guide residential development within the town's residential areas.

### **February 10, 2014 – Planning and Development Council**

A staff report received by Council entitled "Long Range Planning Work Plan" was received and provided an overview of preliminary work required as part of the Official Plan Review. The staff report identified an assessment of the stable residential neighbourhoods is needed. The review was described as "checkup" which would assess how development within the stable residential neighbourhoods is meeting the Livable Oakville Plan's objectives.

In addition to assessing recent development approvals and conducting a policy review, the report indicates that a community consultation program to engage residents in the review and "checkup" process will be provided.

## **May 11, 2015 – Special Meeting of Planning and Development Council**

A special meeting of Planning and Development Council was held to launch the Official Plan Review. A staff report entitled “*Official Plan Review – Special Public Meeting*” was received by Council confirming the need to complete an assessment of the town’s existing residential neighbourhoods. The report stated the following:

“The Stable Residential Neighbourhoods Review will assess the town’s stable residential neighbourhoods and the policies that maintain and protect their existing neighbourhood character. The review will consider new or revised policies, as necessary, to ensure the goals and objectives of the stable residential neighbourhoods; the Official Plan and the overall growth management framework for the town continue to be realized.

During the development of the Livable Oakville Plan, intensification within the Stable Residential Neighbourhoods was not fully contemplated. This review will examine the potential for residential intensification on vacant and underutilized sites.

The review will also assess Provincial and Regional policy conformity, the built context, current development and will include opportunities for public engagement.”

The Official Plan Review is also intended to incorporate the North Oakville Secondary Plans into the Livable Oakville Plan which would result in one Official Plan for the entire town. A review of the North Oakville Secondary Plan policies is being undertaken as a separate study process as part of the Official Plan Review.

## **Livable Oakville Plan Policy Overview**

The Livable Oakville Plan establishes the desired land use pattern for the lands south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407 to 2031. It was developed through a comprehensive process that included several technical studies and policy papers, and extensive public consultation and engagement.

The existing Urban Structure, Schedule A1, of the Plan identifies growth areas, employment areas, and residential areas. The residential area is not a land use designation and provides for a range of uses such as residential, commercial, community, park and open space uses, as well as natural areas, all of which contribute to complete communities.

The Livable Oakville Plan’s growth management framework directs the majority of intensification to the six growth areas. Intensification outside of the growth areas,

within the residential areas, are subject to residential policies contained in Part D, Section 11.

There are three Residential land use designations within the Livable Oakville Plan: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and High Density Residential, which provide for a full range of housing types, tenures, forms and densities. The policies for the residential land uses designations are in Section 11 of the plan.

Section 11.1.8 establishes the locations that may be considered for residential intensification within the residential areas. Section 11.1.9 sets out the evaluation criteria for development within the residential areas to maintain and protect existing neighbourhood character.

Part E Section 26 contains policies for identified Special Policy Areas, including specific residential low density lands (RL1/RL1-0 Zones). This special policy area is intended to protect the unique character of this area within the town, recognizing the special attributes of the large lots and related homes, and limits permitted densities.

### **Urban Structure Official Plan Amendment**

On September 26, 2017, Planning and Development Council adopted a new town-wide urban structure. While not yet approved by Halton Region, the adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA) states that the urban structure “maintains the character of residential communities” and “is the basis for the policies in this Plan and for making planning decisions.” It describes the Residential Areas as follows:

#### **3.9 Residential Areas**

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

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

Although the new urban structure applies town-wide, the residential areas and policies pertaining to the North Oakville Secondary Plans are being reviewed as part of a separate study process pertaining specifically to the North Oakville Secondary Plan area. As noted above, it is the intent through the Official Plan Review to incorporate the North Oakville Secondary Plans into the Livable Oakville Plan which

would result in one Official Plan for the entire town. As such, consideration will be given for how the policies in both plans may work together.

## **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

### **Study Purpose**

The purpose of the Residential Policy Review is to assess the existing residential policies of the Livable Oakville Plan and consider new or revised policies, as necessary, to ensure the goals and objectives of the residential areas and the Official Plan's overall growth management framework and urban structure, continue to be realized.

### **Scope of Review**

In addition to a general review for policy improvement and clarification, the Residential Policy Review will consider a number of inputs, including updated Provincial and Regional plans and initiatives, directions emerging from other town studies and a best practice review.

The scope of the Residential Policy Review can be grouped by the following themes:

- Provincial and Regional plans and initiatives
- Other town studies
- Best practices
- Additional matters

### **Provincial Plans and Initiatives**

The Livable Oakville Plan was adopted in 2009 and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board in 2011. Since that time, a number of updates to provincial legislation, plans and other initiatives, including those by Halton Region, have occurred.

The *Planning Act* requires municipalities to review their Official Plan(s) no less than every five years (unless a new Official Plan is adopted, in which case the timeframe is 10 years) to ensure consistency with the provincial policy framework.

The following subsections provide an overview of the legislation and/or documents which will be reviewed as part of the Residential Policy Review to ensure conformity and consistency.

*Provincial Policy Statement, 2014*

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) sets out the Province's land use vision and overall policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use and development. The principles of the PPS are to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. The PPS came into effect April 30, 2014 and applies to planning decisions made on or after that date. Decisions affecting planning matters are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The PPS states that healthy, livable and safe communities are sustained by, among other matters:

- promoting efficient development and land use patterns which:
  - are financially sustainable;
  - avoid environmental, public health and safety concerns;
  - minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
  - improve accessibility for all people;
  - consider the impacts of a changing climate; and,
- accommodating an appropriate range and mix of uses

The PPS also directs that municipalities provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents.

The policies of the PPS can be complemented and built upon by provincial and municipal plans to provide comprehensive, integrated, place-based and long-term plans that support and integrate the principles of the PPS.

*Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017*

The new Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) came into effect July 1, 2017, replacing the 2006 Growth Plan. The Growth Plan provides the framework for implementing the Province's land use vision for managing growth, and guides policy and land use decision making in the GTHA.

All planning decisions made on or after July 1, 2017 must conform to the Growth Plan, subject to any legislative or regulatory provisions providing otherwise. In the context of this review, the residential policies of the Livable Oakville Plan will be reviewed and updated, where applicable, to conform to the Growth Plan.

### *Greenbelt Plan, 2017*

The Province's updated Greenbelt Plan (2017) also came into effect on July 1, 2017 and introduced an Urban River Valley designation which now applies to lands within the Residential Areas of the town.

Like the Growth Plan, all planning decisions made on or after July 1, 2017 must conform to the Greenbelt Plan. In the context of this review, the residential policies and mapping of the Livable Oakville Plan will be studied and updated, where applicable, to conform to the Greenbelt Plan.

### *Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy*

In 2016, the Province updated its Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy to reflect new research and best practices to support an improved housing system. Resulting from the update was Bill 7, the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*, which received Royal Assent on December 8, 2016. The Bill amended various acts, including the *Planning Act*, enabling municipalities to adopt Official Plan policies and pass by-laws related to inclusionary zoning. Inclusionary zoning allows municipalities to require private sector developers to include affordable housing units as part of their developments. However, policies and by-laws are to be subject to specific regulations which are to be prescribed at a later date and put into force on a day to be proclaimed.

On December 18, 2017, the Province put forward a draft summary of proposed regulations on the Environmental Registry for public comment. The Halton Area Planning Partnership (HAPP) has submitted comments on the proposed regulations. HAPP's comments note that it appreciates the Province's commitment to introducing inclusionary zoning as a planning tool to address moderate affordable home ownership needs. However, under the current proposed regulation, HAPP has significant concerns with the overly prescriptive inclusionary zoning tool and does not consider the regulatory framework effective to increase the supply and integration of affordable housing units in a municipality. Pending the outcome of the regulations put forth by the Province, staff will review them within the town context.

### Halton Region

The Region of Halton is responsible for delivering and administering assisted housing and through its Official Plan has established a policy structure that supports and encourages the provision of affordable housing in meeting the housing needs of the Region's residents.

The Region prepares a number of documents that direct and inform housing policies and programs. These documents often provide recommendations for policies to be included as part of the Regional Official Plan. Where policies are included within the Regional Official Plan, the Town must ensure that these policies are implemented through the local Official Plans. Together, the implementation of the Regional and local Official Plans creates a full partnership in providing a framework which supports a variety of housing options, including affordable housing. The town will review the Region's Comprehensive Housing Strategy, Regional Official Plan, and State of Housing Report to inform the review and policies with regard to housing.

### Other Town Studies

The Age-Friendly Baseline Study (January, 2017), Residential Growth Analysis Study (May, 2017) and the Residential Character Study (December, 2017) will be considered as inputs to the Residential Policy Review. A number of policy directions emerged from these separate studies and are summarized below.

#### *Age-Friendly Baseline Study*

Oakville's Age-friendly Baseline Study, received by Council on April 3, 2017, provides an overview of the town's current "age-friendliness", and sets a direction for moving forward with future age-friendly planning. The Residential Policy Review may use findings from this study to inform future policy development, as applicable.

#### *Residential Growth Analysis Study*

Through the Residential Growth Analysis Study, revised population and housing growth forecasts were developed for the town. The study also assessed how the town may accommodate growth to the year 2041 based on the growth allocated to Halton Region through Amendment #2 to the Growth Plan, and outlined a number of policy directions to be considered through the Official Plan Review. These directions included:

- Consider the implications of anticipated demographic trends on future municipal service and housing needs as well as housing affordability;
- Explore how current local planning policies are assisting the Region in achieving the goals set out in the Region of Halton Comprehensive Housing Strategy Update 2014-2024;
- Explore connections between the Region of Halton Housing Strategy and local planning objectives for housing intensification;



- Explore the use of planning and/or financial tools as well as other policies to attract an increasing share of residents, particularly families, in more compact urban development in order to maintain a steady rate of population growth beyond 2031 and implement the town's long-term vision;
- Explore the impacts of changing lifestyle preferences of millennials and newer generations on future housing demand and community planning in general;
- Explore the impacts of an aging population on housing and municipal service needs; and,
- Identify and examine the limited intensification opportunities within the existing and planned residential areas.

### *Residential Character Study*

The Residential Character Study, received by Planning and Development Council on January 15, 2018, was undertaken to gain a better understanding, with community input, of the elements and qualities that contribute to residential character. The findings of the study informed recommendations for potential improvements to existing policy, urban design direction, zoning and other processes. The Official Plan specific recommendations, which will be considered as part of the Residential Policy Review, were:

- Review the existing Residential Land Use policies in the Official Plan to ensure that building siting, massing, height, landscaping and trees are identified as important elements contributing to the existing character of the residential areas; and,
- Consider incorporating policy language in the Official Plan and design documents which clarifies that existing residential character is to be respected.

### Best Practices Review

A review of Best Practices will be undertaken as part of the Residential Policy Review to understand how other area jurisdictions have or are currently addressing the new provincial policy landscape, growth pressures and other emerging issues in residential areas.

### Additional matters

The review will assess the existing policies for the town's residential areas and consider new or revised policies, as necessary, to ensure that the goals and objectives of the residential areas continue to be realized. In addition to the directions outlined above, the following have been identified by staff for further review as opportunities for potential policy improvement and clarification:

- Residential land use policy objectives
- Residential density ranges
- Housing policies
- Special Policy Areas
- Severance policies
- Vacant and underutilized sites
- Relationship to other town regulations

### **Next Steps**

Comments from the subcommittee regarding the Residential Policy Review are welcomed to identify any matters that have not been identified by staff that should be considered as part of this study process.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

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

Consultation will be an important component of the Residential Policy Review and the public will have many opportunities to provide feedback throughout the study process.

#### **(B) FINANCIAL**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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

Coordination with other departments is ongoing.

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

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- be accountable in everything we do
- be innovative in everything we do
- be the most livable town in Canada

#### **(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

The Residential Policy Review will work to support and enhance the social, economic and built environment of the community.

From: Planning Services Department

Date: January 29, 2018

**Subject: Residential Policy Review**

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