

# Urban Structure Review

## Discussion Paper

DRAFT

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# Executive Summary

## Context

The importance of the Town's urban structure is reflected in the fact that it establishes where we live, work and play - those basic features of our daily life which help determine the quality of our lives. It sets out the broad parameters - the big picture - we fill in the rest.

The Town of Oakville is at a moment in time where the community must consider how to accommodate growth given that there is no longer any unplanned greenfield land available for development. The Town has an opportunity through the Official Plan review to evaluate the current urban structure and determine if it still provides the appropriate foundation to allow achievement of the Town's goal "To be the most livable town in Canada."

This evaluation process has to be based on an understanding of how the current structure developed, as well as Provincial policy and other factors and trends which will affect the future. Through this process - this conversation about the basic structure of the community - it will be important to consider potential choices and options for future directions.

As a basis for that discussion, this report summarizes the results of a background analysis of factors and trends which have implications for the urban structure. In addition it identifies a number of potential directions and choices for consideration in terms of their implications for the urban structure. **The report also presents some urban structure options as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation other choices and options may be identified for review and consideration.**

## Directions and Choices

The Town has an identifiable existing and planned urban structure. However, it is not clearly articulated on a Town-wide basis in the Official Plan. This reflects the history of the Town's development with the urban structure of the area south of Dundas having evolved over many years, while the urban structure for North Oakville, as a greenfield area, was established through a general official plan amendment followed by the preparation of detailed secondary plans. As a result, consolidation of key structural matters should include:

- the establishment and integration of an overarching natural heritage system;
- the establishment of a clear understanding of the relationship of the transportation system with the urban structure; and,
- a complete integration of the urban structure developed for North Oakville with other parts of the community and the Region.

Further, the urban structure which has evolved does not fully reflect consideration of a future where development will comprise primarily of infill and intensification.

The background review has identified a number of clear directions which should be considered regarding the Urban Structure both with respect to general Town-wide issues and also for specific components of the Urban Structure. In addition, a range of choices has been identified. These are summarized as follows:

- **Natural Heritage and Open Space**

The North Oakville Secondary Plans identify the establishment and protection of a natural heritage and open space system as a first priority in establishing the Urban Structure of that area. This same approach should be explicitly recognized for the entire Town.

A related direction which builds on this fundamental approach is recognition that the Urban Structure needs to be re-examined with respect to the Town's Urban River Valleys in the context of the proposed revisions to the Greenbelt Plan.

Choices which relate to the Natural Heritage and Open Space component of the urban structure include:

- Whether there is a need to provide for substantive additional areas of public open space as an adaptive/mitigative strategy to reduce the impact of climate change, and does the value of such a strategy offset the costs of such an approach and is it achievable?
- Should existing areas of public open be identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure to ensure their significance is recognized and protected?
- Should the Urban Structure also recognize areas designated as "Cultural Heritage Landscapes"?
- Should the Natural Heritage System south of Dundas Street be reviewed in the context of the Provincial Policy Statement 2014?



- **Major Transportation Corridors**

Land use and transportation planning are inextricably linked. As a consequence, a balanced transportation system including transit and active transportation and existing and planned corridors, is a key building block for the urban structure and should be identified and protected. Related choices include:

- Recognizing that the successful implementation of a balanced transportation system is essential to ensure a livable community, but that it has to be achievable from a financial perspective. Is this objective feasible?
- Are there changes to the Urban Structure which should be considered to reflect the significant changes anticipated in transportation with respect to mobility options?
- Should the Urban Structure consider how barriers to connectivity can be overcome including major roads, natural features and other impediments?

- **Nodes and Corridors (Strategic Growth Areas)**

While Provincial policy now dictates the establishment of strategic growth areas, the establishment of focal points for development has always been fundamental to the Town's urban structure starting with Downtown Oakville, the original Town centre. However, lessons learned based on experience have indicated that the creation of new growth areas and the related shift in development patterns including mixed use development and high density housing forms presents significant challenges. This results in a need for careful consideration of the role of such areas in the future.

The choices which should be considered include:

- Is the current system of nodes and corridors, if developed as planned, sufficient to accommodate mandated growth in the Growth Plan to 2041 – does the existing planned system have the potential to provide the necessary mix of uses and people and jobs combined per hectare? Are there modifications or refinements to the current system that would support accommodating required growth?
- Are there additional nodes and corridors not identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure which should be evaluated with respect to specific criteria and considered for identification as strategic growth areas (e.g.

Bronte GO Station, Health Oriented Mixed Use Node, Oakville Place, Trafalgar Road Corridor, Other Major Commercial Areas, 407 Transitway/Bronte Road, West side of Bronte Road north of Dundas Street - Palermo North);

- The creation of new strategic growth areas presents significant challenges including requirements for substantial new infrastructure for transportation and servicing and related costs; market challenges; and urban design issues. Successful implementation can only occur based on substantial commitment by the municipality as well as the private sector. The Town is already working on a number of fronts to implement its current system of nodes and corridors. In determining whether additional nodes and corridors should be added to the system, the Town must consider its own resources and whether they are sufficient to provide the required support for such development.

- **Employment and Major Commercial Areas**

Oakville has an evolving macro-economy premised on lower industrial growth potential and increased demand in the office sector which differentiates it from other municipalities. The categorization of the Town's employment must be looked at through this lens. In addition, consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of continuing to categorize "Major Commercial Areas" in the HROP as "Employment". Further, there is a range of current trends for commercial development in general which have implications for the role of commercial development in the urban structure.

The choices which should be considered include:

- What is the most appropriate approach for Oakville to the categorization of employment areas? In particular, consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of continuing to categorize "Major Commercial Areas" in the HROP as "Employment."
- The majority of new commercial development south of Dundas will have to be accommodated through intensification. However, there are challenges to mixed use development. These issues will have to be considered in evaluating the potential for redevelopment in Major Commercial Areas and the form and extent of existing and new Growth Area designations.

- **Residential Communities**

Provincial policy anticipates the identification of a hierarchy of intensification with certain locations acting as focal points for such development, while other areas will accommodate limited change. The Town's current Urban Structure identifies Residential Communities as stable areas where limited change is anticipated. This approach continues to be appropriate. However, the following should be considered with respect to such areas:

- Any changes in the number of nodes and corridors and the extent of such areas should consider the impacts on adjacent residential areas.
- Should the Urban Structure recognize areas designated as Heritage Conservation Districts the majority of which apply to Residential Areas?

## Options

To assist in understanding how the identified directions and choices might be considered with respect to a town-wide urban structure (connecting North and South and East and West), three options have been developed. The options are intended as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation, other choices and options may be developed for review and consideration.

The options are outlined on Maps 6-8 of this report and described as follows:

- **Option 1 - Map 6**

Option 1 would maintain the existing and planned urban structure. The components include:

- The Natural Heritage System;
- Major Transportation Corridors;
- Nodes and Corridors;
- Employment Areas;
- Major Commercial Areas; and,
- Residential Communities.

The only significant difference is the inclusion of public parks and open space areas abutting or adjacent to the Natural Heritage System. These are existing public lands which support and enhance the Natural Heritage System. In keeping with the Town's Mission Statement for Livable Oakville and Environment First approach for North Oakville, recognition of these key open space areas as part of the urban structure would appear to be appropriate.

- **Option 2 – Map 7**

Option 2 builds on Option 1 with the objective of providing more choices:

- of places to live and work; and,
- for travel within the community and the region.

In that context, Option 2 would require enhanced coordination of land use and transportation planning and investment and includes:

- Identification of Priority Transit Corridors (and related Nodes and Corridors).
- Nodes and Corridors  
The related Nodes and Corridors which support the optimization of the transit investments and provide more choices to live and work are proposed to include:
  - Midtown Oakville
  - Trafalgar Road Corridor
  - Uptown Core
  - Neyagawa Urban Core Area
  - Palermo Urban Core Area
  - Bronte GO Station Major Node
  - Dorval Crossing
  - Speers/Cornwall Road Employment Mixed Use Corridor
- Main Street Growth Areas  
Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village are recognized as “Growth Areas.” However, their role is quite different than the other Nodes and Corridors. The urban structure should recognize the unique nature of these Growth Areas.
- Identification of Major Active Transportation Connections.
- Lakeshore Road Heritage Corridor.

- **Option 3 – Map 8**

Option 3 builds on the urban structure proposed in Option 2 and further strengthens the Natural Heritage and Open Space System including:

- Complete Parks and Open Space System  
The proposed urban structure in Option 3 would identify all public open space in recognition of the importance of these areas to creating a livable community.
- Permanent Quasi-Public Private Open Space

The Town includes a number of major cemeteries. These represent permanent open space areas which also like the parks and open space system contribute to creating a livable community and represent “green infrastructure.”

- Enhanced Urban River Valleys
- Cultural Heritage Landscapes

The Town is currently assessing its cultural heritage landscapes. Once the study has been completed it is proposed that such areas be considered for inclusion in the urban structure.

### **Starting the Conversation**

The background review and the options are intended as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation, other choices and options may be identified for review and consideration.

In addition to discussions with the community, an evaluation of the options will be carried out using criteria based on the existing policy framework as well as factors related to:

- Transportation;
- Water/wastewater servicing;
- Residential, commercial and employment development trends/market demand;
- Ability to accommodate population and employment; and,
- Other factors such as affordable housing, community facilities, existing high-level financial impacts.

Based on the input from the community and the evaluation, a preferred urban structure will be developed together with related policy directions for consideration as part of the Official Plan Review. This will be reviewed and refined before being finalized.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Context

The Town of Oakville is at a moment in time where the community must consider how to accommodate growth given that there is no longer any unplanned greenfield land available for development. Development within the Town boundary is no longer moving outward from the original harbour/downtown core location (see Figure 1 Historic Map Town of Oakville and Trafalgar Township). It has essentially reached its maximum limit as established by the Town boundaries.

North Oakville, the lands north of Dundas Street, is the last undeveloped or “greenfield” area. While North Oakville is far from built out, the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans provide a complete plan for the future of this area, including the establishment of an urban structure, and development is underway. Thus, the Town essentially has no more unplanned “greenfield” left.

The community must consider the implications of a future where the only new development, other than the completion of greenfield development in North Oakville, will occur in existing built up areas through infill and intensification. It is also a future where other major changes which will impact on the community structure will occur arising from factors such as climate change and demographic changes. In addition, there is a need to strengthen the link between land use and transportation planning while taking into account the implications of anticipated changes in transportation technology (e.g. driverless cars).

What form should such development take and where should it be directed to ensure that Oakville continues to work towards its vision “To be the most livable town in Canada.”? A key part of the answer to these questions requires a reevaluation/reconsideration of the Town’s urban structure in this new context.

## 1.2 What is “urban structure”? Why is it important to the future of Oakville?

Urban structure can be described as the pattern formed by built and unbuilt areas - the various types of development in the community, as well as parks and open space areas and lands which are left undeveloped as part of natural systems and the connections between them – these elements all together comprise the urban structure. They form the foundation for community building. The urban structure is what one sees when



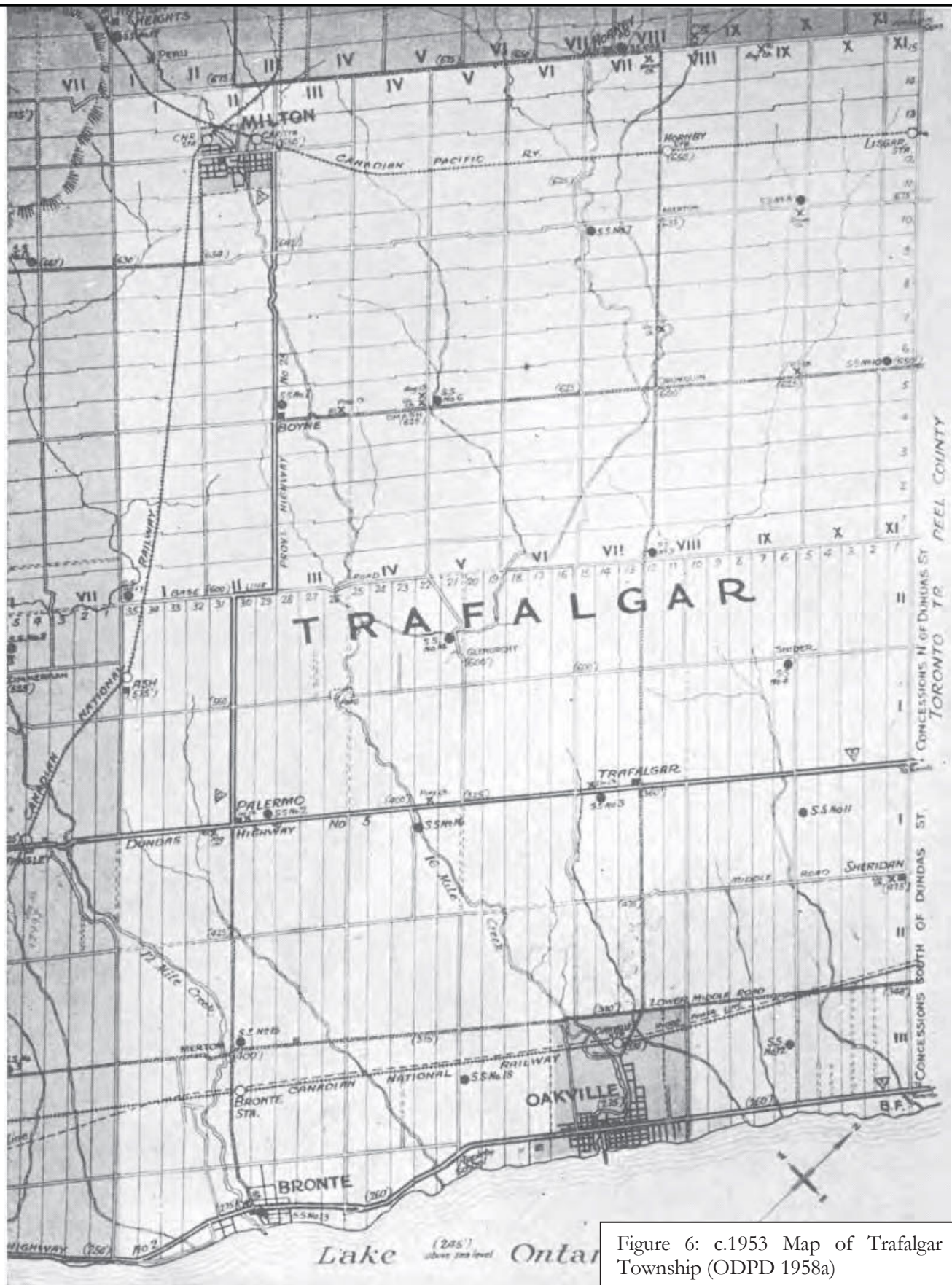


Figure 6: c.1953 Map of Trafalgar Township (ODPD 1958a)

## Figure 1 Historic Map Town of Oakville and Trafalgar Township

Source: The Production of Nature in Planning for Urban Expansion:  
A Cultural Study of New Urban Growth in Oakville Ontario, Figure 6, Trafalgar Township

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considering the community from 15,000 metres in the air – not the details but the broad pieces that, when combined, make up the community as a whole.

The importance of the urban structure is reflected in the fact that it establishes where we live, work and play and as such:

“Urban structure determines many of the things that affect the daily lives of those who live in cities, from the method of and amount of time spent commuting, to access to recreational opportunities outside the city, to property taxes and real estate prices.”<sup>1</sup>

It is also significant because it helps determine where and how the infrastructure, which is required to support development, is built as well as its capacity. This includes not only hard services such as roads, sewers and water, but also green infrastructure such as parks and open space and public service facilities such as schools, libraries and community centres.

The urban structure can also be a major determinate of the livability and sustainability of the community. This is recognized in the importance placed on the control of urban structure through various land use planning documents which “despite criticism, remain the most important instrument available to local government to influence the location, design and functional character of urban growth, and thus indirectly to affect the well-being of their constituents.”<sup>2</sup>

The Provincial *Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (Growth Plan) and the current proposed update to that Plan are significant examples of the importance placed on urban structure. The Growth Plan which provides strong direction with respect to “where and how to grow” is essentially a structural plan for the entire Region. The directions in the Growth Plan seek to create an urban structure across the Greater Golden Horseshoe which is intended to result in “more compact and complete communities, and protecting agricultural lands, water resources and natural areas”<sup>3</sup> which will result in more sustainable development (see Figure 2 to this report, Places to Grow Concept).

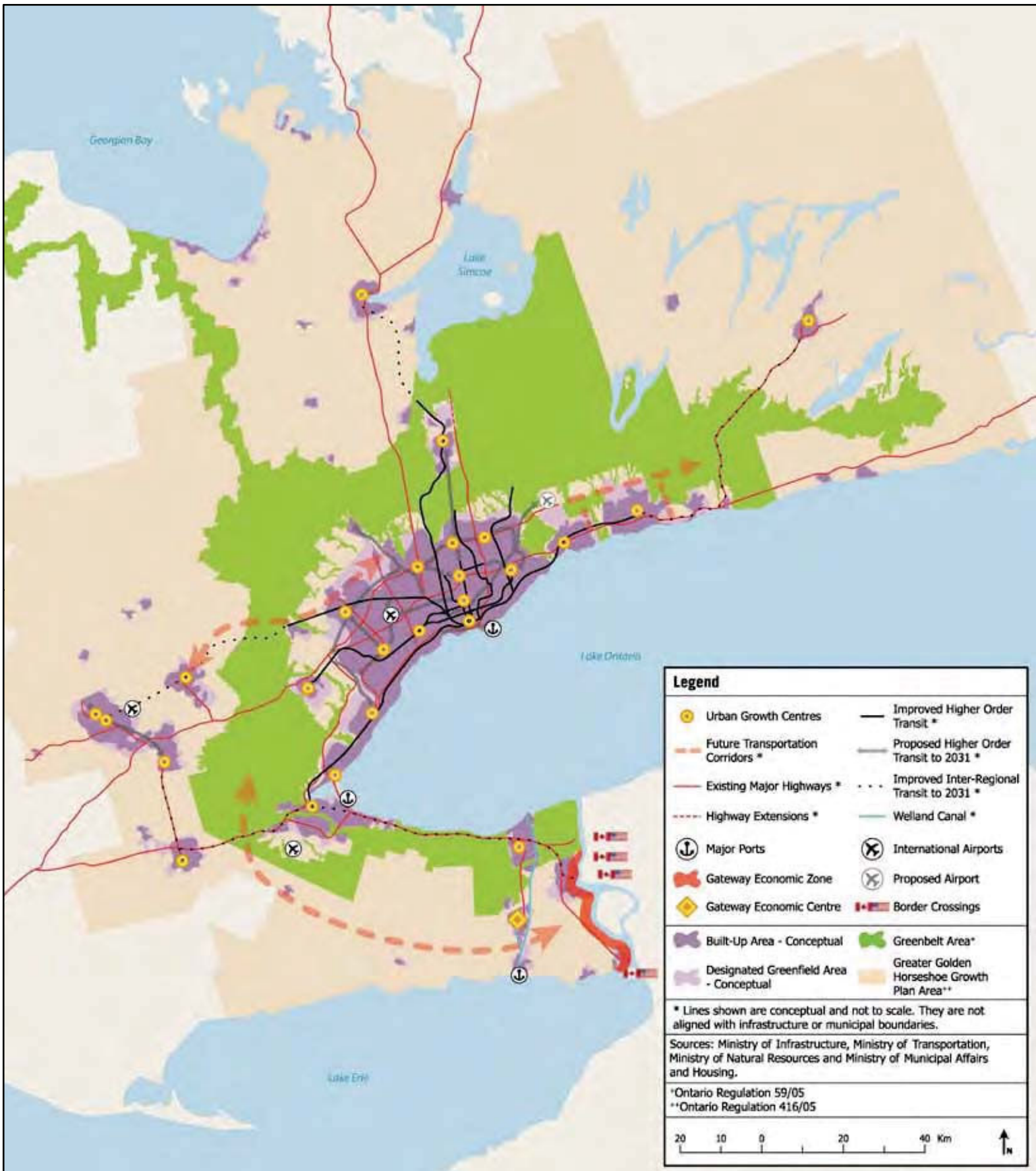
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<sup>1</sup> Blais, Pamela, *Inching Toward Sustainability, the Evolving Urban Structure of the GTA*, Neptis Foundation, July 2000, page 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bourne, Larry S. (1976) *Urban Structure and Land Use Decisions*, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66.4, 531-535, DOI:10.1111/m.1467-8306.1976.tb01108.x, page 533.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. *Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, 2016, May 2016, page 10.





**Figure 2**  
**Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,**  
**2006 - Places to Grow Concept**

### **1.3 Why does the Town need to review/evaluate their urban structure now?**

Oakville originally developed east/west along the Lake Ontario shoreline before moving northward leaping the barrier of the QEW, and then much later, Dundas Street. As that process has evolved, there has been consideration of the overall urban structure through various planning exercises, including through reviews of the Town's Official Plan most notably in the 1970's, and very broadly through the Halton Urban Structure Plan process in the late 1980's and 1990's which proposed the development of the North Oakville lands.

Most recently, the Livable Oakville Official Plan process, building on the Interim Growth Management Policies in Official Plan Amendment 275, gave consideration to the urban structure south of Dundas to the year 2031 and recognized that new growth would be primarily through intensification. Livable Oakville identified/confirmed a variety of different types of growth areas (nodes and corridors) including Midtown Oakville, Uptown Core and Palermo Village which would be the focus for intensification, as well as the main street growth areas of Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village where some limited development can occur. However, the Livable Oakville process was focused on the lands south of Dundas Street and thus did not examine the Town's structure in a comprehensive manner. As a result, the Urban Structure Plan (Figure 3 to this report, Town of Oakville Official Plan Schedule A1, Urban Structure) does not provide, on a Town wide basis, a comprehensive description of what the Town should or could be when it is fully built out. In particular, it does not reflect a comprehensive natural heritage system. Further, while major transportation corridors and stream corridors are shown on the Plan, they are not identified or recognized as part of the urban structure.

Similarly, Section 4 of the Official Plan, Managing Growth and Change, primarily provides direction related to the Town's urban structure south of Dundas. This section establishes:

- population and employment forecasts;
- intensification targets;
- the role of employment areas;
- the need for careful consideration of infrastructure investment to support and facilitate intensification;
- the role of the Growth Areas where the majority of the intensification is to occur;
- the role of Midtown Oakville as an urban growth centre in conformity with the Growth Plan;
- the parameters for residential intensification outside of the Growth Areas;

# SCHEDULE A1 URBAN STRUCTURE

- RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
- GROWTH AREAS
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- LANDS NOT SUBJECT TO THE POLICIES OF THIS PLAN
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION

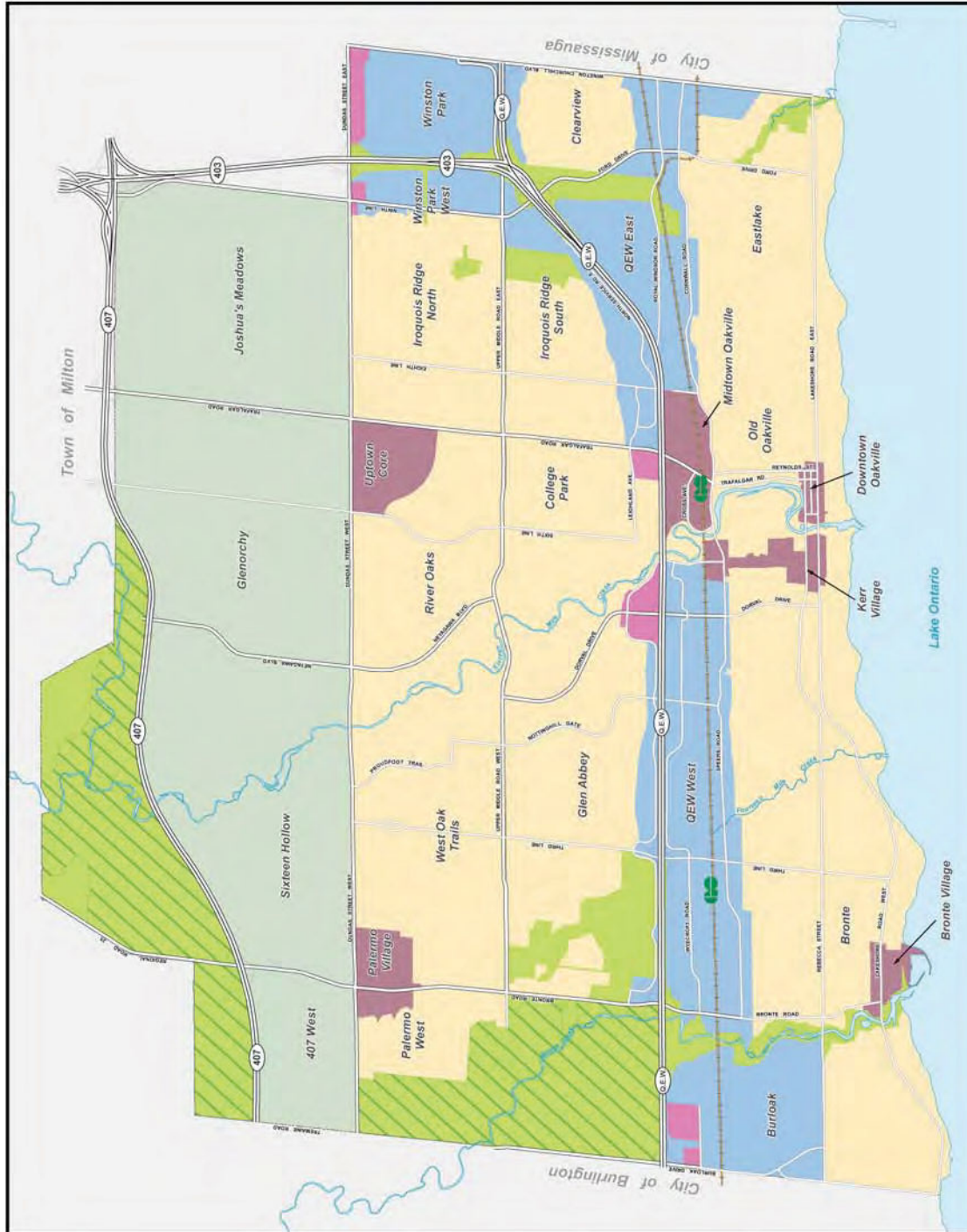
NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



1:50,000

February 23, 2015

ALDRIN/NEW MARKET/2009 DATA/OWNED BY TOWN OF OAKVILLE PLANNING  
LIVABLE OAKVILLE MSH SCHEDULE A1.mxd



**Figure 3**  
**Livable Oakville Plan 2009**  
**Schedule A1 Urban Structure**

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- the approach to the development of greenfield areas south of Dundas Street; and,
- that lands outside the urban area north of Highway 407 are subject to the Parkway Belt West Plan, 1978 and the Greenbelt Plan.

The directions in Section 4 are complemented by Section 2, which identifies the Mission Statement and Guiding Principles. Section 3 provides geographic and historic context for the urban structure south of Dundas, as well describing the land use designations which implement it.

The Livable Oakville Urban Structure provides direction for the existing community south of Dundas Street, and the lands outside the Urban Area north of Highway 407. Livable Oakville builds on an urban structure which has been evolving since the founding of the Town in the 1800's.

The urban structure for North Oakville, however, was developed in a completely different manner. As a greenfield area, the proposed urban structure or “community structure” as it is termed in the North Oakville Secondary Plans evolved through a comprehensive planning process. Using an “Environment First” approach, and based on detailed technical studies and extensive public consultation, the North Oakville Secondary Plans provide a comprehensive urban structure for the lands north of Dundas. A “picture” of what is intended to develop, unlike the lands south of Dundas where most of the components of the urban structure are already largely developed.

Both of these planning exercises examined the urban structure of the Town, but neither of them considered the urban structure on a town wide basis. Further, neither of them considered urban structure in the context of a “built out” community. These reviews also did not consider town-wide what directions with respect to urban structure would mean for the identity of the Town and how to blend the old and the new. In addition, these past reviews did not consider town-wide what urban structure could best support the projected growth financially and from an infrastructure perspective. A review is required by Council within this context as part of the five-year Official Plan Review as adopted in the Planning Services Department Report PD-16-527, Town Wide Planning Studies and an Interim Control By-law for the Glen Abbey Golf Course. The Urban Structure Review would consider, among other matters, the following:

- Population projections;
- Development progress and absorption;
- Locational assessment of existing and potential growth areas/corridors;
- Criteria for evaluation of new growth areas;

- Relationship between growth areas and the delivery of municipal infrastructure;
- Urban structure for the town to accommodate growth until 2041;
- Desired land use pattern;
- Conformity with Provincial/Regional plans and PPS 2014; and,
- Preservation of stable residential areas.

The Review will need to clearly establish where and how the Town will grow over the next 20 years but also what needs to be protected – areas such as the natural heritage and open space systems and stable residential neighbourhoods. The Review will look at and clearly articulate an urban structure that includes a natural heritage and open space system, as well as residential, commercial employment and mixed use areas. Most importantly, it will need to consider whether changes to the urban structure are needed to ensure the required infrastructure and public service facilities can be provided in a manner which maintains overall environmental and fiscal sustainability for the Town.

These questions have to be considered in the context of a range of factors which have the potential to significantly impact on the urban structure, including but are not limited to:

- Potential policy changes arising from the Provincial Coordinated Plan Review;
- Providing for a complete community;
- Changes in the way retail and commercial is delivered with a shift away from “bricks and mortar” stores;
- Slower than anticipated employment development in North Oakville;
- Density and mix of residential development in North Oakville;
- The potential for development of the area surrounding the Bronte GO Station;
- The potential to accommodate development of existing and emerging corridors such as along Trafalgar Road;
- Potential for enhanced transit including electrification of GO and Bus Rapid Transit on Dundas Street, but slow delivery of same;
- The Midtown Strategy;
- Large-scale development proposals outside the Town’s established urban structure;
- Impacts of climate change; and,
- Changes in mobility as a result of rapidly changing technologies.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> WSP, New Mobility, August 2016 update, page 1.

## 1.4 What is the Study Goal?

The Study Goal is:

“Develop an urban structure for Oakville which accommodates transition and change, reflects the identity of the Town and is environmentally sustainable while allowing for environmental protection, the provision of a full range of infrastructure and community service facilities and is fiscally sustainable.”

## 1.5 What is the Study Process?

The achievement of the Study Goal requires a collaborative process that is based on a strong understanding of the current urban structure of the Town today and how a range of factors may have the potential to significantly impact the structure in the future.

The key is finding the right balance between protecting the environment, enhancing the economy and fostering a healthy, sustainable, equitable and complete community in the context of Provincial, Regional and Town policy.

The Study Work Program is designed to reflect this direction and includes the following phases:

Phase	Purpose	Status
Phase 1 Study Initiation	The finalization of a detailed work program and schedule.	Complete
Phase 2 Background Review	A review of background information related to the current urban structure and anticipated changes.	Complete
Phase 3 Option Review & Development	The development and review of urban structure options.	Underway
Phase 4 Urban Structure Framework & Directions	A final preferred urban structure will be developed together with related policy directions as part of the Official Plan Review.	To be completed

## 1.6 What is the purpose of this Discussion Paper?

This Discussion Paper is intended to set out background information and define the directions and choices that form the basis for potential urban structure options. It identifies and describes proposed directions, choices and options for consideration. It is organized as follows:

- Section 2 - What is the Town's Current Urban Structure and how did it evolve?
- Section 3 - How are the Provincial Policy implications for the Urban Structure?
- Section 4 -What Other Factors/Trends have implications for the Urban Structure?
- Section 5 - The Big Picture: Choices and Options

## 2. What is the Town's Current Urban Structure and how did it evolve?

### 2.1 What are the components of the Town's Current Urban Structure?

The Town's Official Plan, as noted, currently does not explicitly provide comprehensive direction with respect to a Town-wide urban structure. To understand the urban structure it is necessary to consider the general context provided by the Provincial Plans including the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan and the Parkway Belt West Plan and the Halton Region Official Plan (HROP). Livable Oakville provides specific direction for the lands south of Dundas Street – an area which is already largely developed with a historic urban structure which has evolved over many years. The North Oakville Secondary Plans establish detailed direction for the lands between Dundas Street and Highway 407. However, the approach is quite different from Livable Oakville. The Secondary Plans were developed for a greenfield area and establish an urban structure which will be implemented over time from the ground up.

A review of Livable Oakville in its entirety, as well as the North Oakville Secondary Plans, the relevant Provincial Plans, the HROP and existing land use, provide some insights which allow for the development of an understanding of what constitutes the current existing and planned structure.

Based on this review, the elements or components of the current existing and planned system as illustrated on Maps 1-5 to this report include:

- The Natural Heritage System and Parkway Belt (Map 1)  
The foundation for the Urban Structure is the Natural Heritage System. This is found in Livable Oakville on Schedule B Natural Features & Hazard Lands. The foundation of the North Oakville Secondary Plans was to establish “as a first priority of the Town, a natural heritage and open space system, within the context of an urban setting” (Sections 7.2.3.1 and 8.2.3.1). This system is found on all the schedules to the Plans, including Figures NOE1 and NOW1, Community Structure.

Map 1, Regional Structure, of the HROP identifies the Town's Natural Heritage System in its entirety. Another input to the identification of the System is the Provincial Parkway Belt and Greenbelt designations on the Town's existing



Urban Structure Plan (Figure 3 to this report) and Map 1A of the HROP, Provincial Plan Areas & Land Use Designations.

- **Major Transportation Corridors (including transit) (Map 2)**  
The major transportation corridors including highways, major arterial roads, major transit routes and rail lines, are also components of the Urban Structure as they provide the “skeleton” on which to build a system of nodes and corridors which serve as a focal point for higher intensity development. In Livable Oakville, the major transportation corridors are found on Schedule C, Transportation Plan, although regard should also be had to Schedule D, Active Transportation Plan. In North Oakville, Figures NOE1 and NOW1, Community Structure establish the major corridors, although Figures NOE4 and NOW4, Transportation Plan, provide additional detail. The HROP, Map 1, also identifies the major corridors, as well as related facilities including “Major Transit Stations” and “Mobility Hub” on Map 1, Regional Structure, and Map 1B, Parkway Belt Transportation and Utility Corridors.
- **Nodes and Corridors (Growth Areas) (Map 3)**  
The concept of the development of nodes and corridors reflects directions in the Growth Plan, the HROP and the current and previous Town Official Plans, as well as the North Oakville Secondary Plans. All of these identify a number of growth areas which take the form of nodes and/or corridors. With respect to Livable Oakville, the following nodes are identified:

#### Growth Areas

- Midtown Oakville (which is also identified as an Urban Growth Centre in the Growth Plan and a Mobility Hub in the HROP and includes the Oakville GO Station which is identified as a Major Transit Station on Schedule A1 to Livable Oakville);
- Uptown Core; and,
- Palermo Village south of Dundas Street.

#### Main Street Areas

- Downtown Oakville;
- Kerr Village; and,
- Bronte Village.

#### Major Transit Station

Bronte GO Station (which is identified as Major Transit Station in HROP as well as Town’s Official Plan).

With respect to North Oakville, the following nodes and corridors are identified as “Urban Core Areas” on Figures NOE1 and NOW 1, Community Structure and Figures NOE2 and NOW2, Land Use Plan:

Corridors

- Trafalgar Urban Core Area; and,
- Dundas Urban Core Area.

Nodes

- Neyagawa Urban Core Area;
- Health Oriented Mixed Use Node; and,
- Special Study Area.

- Employment Areas (Map 4)

The development of Employment Areas is closely linked to major transportation corridors particularly highway and rail corridors. In Livable Oakville, the Employment Areas are clearly identified on Schedule A1, Urban Structure (Figure 3 to this report). The North Oakville Secondary Plans establish “Employment Districts” on Figures NOE1 and NOW1, Community Structure. The HROP establishes the “Employment Areas” as an overlay designation in the Urban Area on Map 1 Urban Structure.

- Major Commercial Areas (Map 4)

The development of Major Commercial Areas is also closely linked to major transportation corridors particularly highway corridors. In Livable Oakville, the Major Commercial Areas are clearly identified on Schedule A1, Urban Structure (Figure 3 to this report). The North Oakville Secondary Plans do not establish any areas identified solely as “Major Commercial.” All major commercial development is intended to be located in the Urban Core Areas. The HROP also does not identify any areas as “Major Commercial.” However it should be noted that all the lands identified as “Major Commercial” in Livable Oakville, other than Dorval Crossing, have an “Employment Areas” overlay designation on Map 1 Urban Structure of the HROP.

- Residential Communities (Map 5)

The residential communities are primarily low rise and low density in character, although low rise medium density development may also be included particularly in new areas such as North Oakville. The residential communities also include a range of community facilities such as parks, schools, places of worship and local convenience commercial uses. In Livable Oakville, the Residential Areas are

identified on Schedule A1, Urban Structure (Figure 3 to this report). The North Oakville Secondary Plans provide more detail on community structure. Figure NOE1<sup>5</sup> identifies “Residential Neighbourhood Boundaries,” as well as Neighbourhood Central Activity Nodes, and five and ten-minute pedestrian sheds. The HROP does not identify residential communities.

Map 5, which reflects the current Urban Structure, was compiled based on the above noted sources. It illustrates a community with an extensive Natural Heritage System largely focused along its many stream valleys that provide connections to Lake Ontario. As a result, this system is primarily oriented in a north/south direction. However, North Oakville includes a system which reflects a greater diversity of natural features and extensive linkages which results in an enhanced east/west orientation.

The transportation system similarly has a strong north/south orientation with the stream valleys forming a barrier to the establishment of east/west routes. Despite this, there are a number of major east/west routes including the QEW and 407 as well as Dundas Street and the rail corridors. There are also a number of other significant routes although they are not continuous. These include Upper Middle Road, Rebecca Street, Speers/Cornwall Roads and the planned realignment of Burnhamthorpe Road. Some of these roads are Town roads such as Rebecca Street, while others are under the control of the Region of Halton such as Upper Middle Road.

The Town has a number of nodes and corridors (identified as “Growth Areas” in Livable Oakville and “Urban Core Areas” in North Oakville) which form focal points for the community south of Dundas and are planned to form focal points in North Oakville. There is no one node or corridor which has primacy, each has its own function in the community. The exception to this is Midtown Oakville which is identified as an Urban Growth Centre in the province’s Growth Plan and is planned to accommodate the majority of Oakville’s intensification.

The nodes and corridors, and Employment and Major Commercial Areas are all focused along the major transportation corridors. South of Dundas, the “Growth Areas” identified in Livable Oakville and the Major Commercial Areas, primarily take a nodal form. In North Oakville, the major “Urban Core Areas” along Trafalgar Road and Dundas Street are planned as mixed use corridors, with nodes represented by the Neyagawa Urban Core and the Health Oriented Mixed Use Node. The Employment Areas, both existing and planned, primarily take the form of corridors along the QEW,

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<sup>5</sup> Note: There are no residential neighbourhoods in North Oakville West which is primarily an employment area.

railway and Highways 403 and 407. The exceptions are Winston Park and Burloak Employment Areas which have developed as traditional business parks.

The Residential Areas form communities bounded by the major transportation corridors as well as components of the Natural Heritage System.

## **2.2 What is the history of the Town's development and the related evolution of its urban structure?**

The Town's current urban structure for the area south of Dundas Street reflects its geography and how it has evolved over time as a result of the decisions made about the development and governance of the community. In addition, major infrastructure investments by the Town, the Region and the Province and other key organizations such as the railways have shaped the current urban structure.

The Town developed initially along the Lake Ontario shoreline. The "natural harbour at Bronte was a commercial port of entry in the early 1800's."<sup>6</sup> In 1827, Colonel William Chisholm purchased 388 hectares (960 acres) of land at the mouth of the Sixteen Mile Creek which had been part of the Mississauga First Nation lands.

Chisholm's business plan included building a harbour, harvesting wood for commercial purposes, harnessing the water power of the Sixteen for a gristmill and a sawmill and manufacturing, building roads to allow farmers to bring their produce to the mills for processing and laying out a town site. The Palmer Plan of Oakville released in 1835 illustrates the planned urban structure for the initial development<sup>7</sup> (Figure 4 Palmer Plan).

The Town of Oakville was incorporated in 1857, and from this initial development,

"□ with its historic main street closely paralleling Lake Ontario, Oakville has grown in bands northwards ever since, hemmed in by neighbouring municipalities to the east and west□ North Oakville is planned to be the final band of development in the town□ "8

Of course this growth took place over time, with much of it occurring in what was Trafalgar Township (See Figure 1). The stages of growth are described as follows:

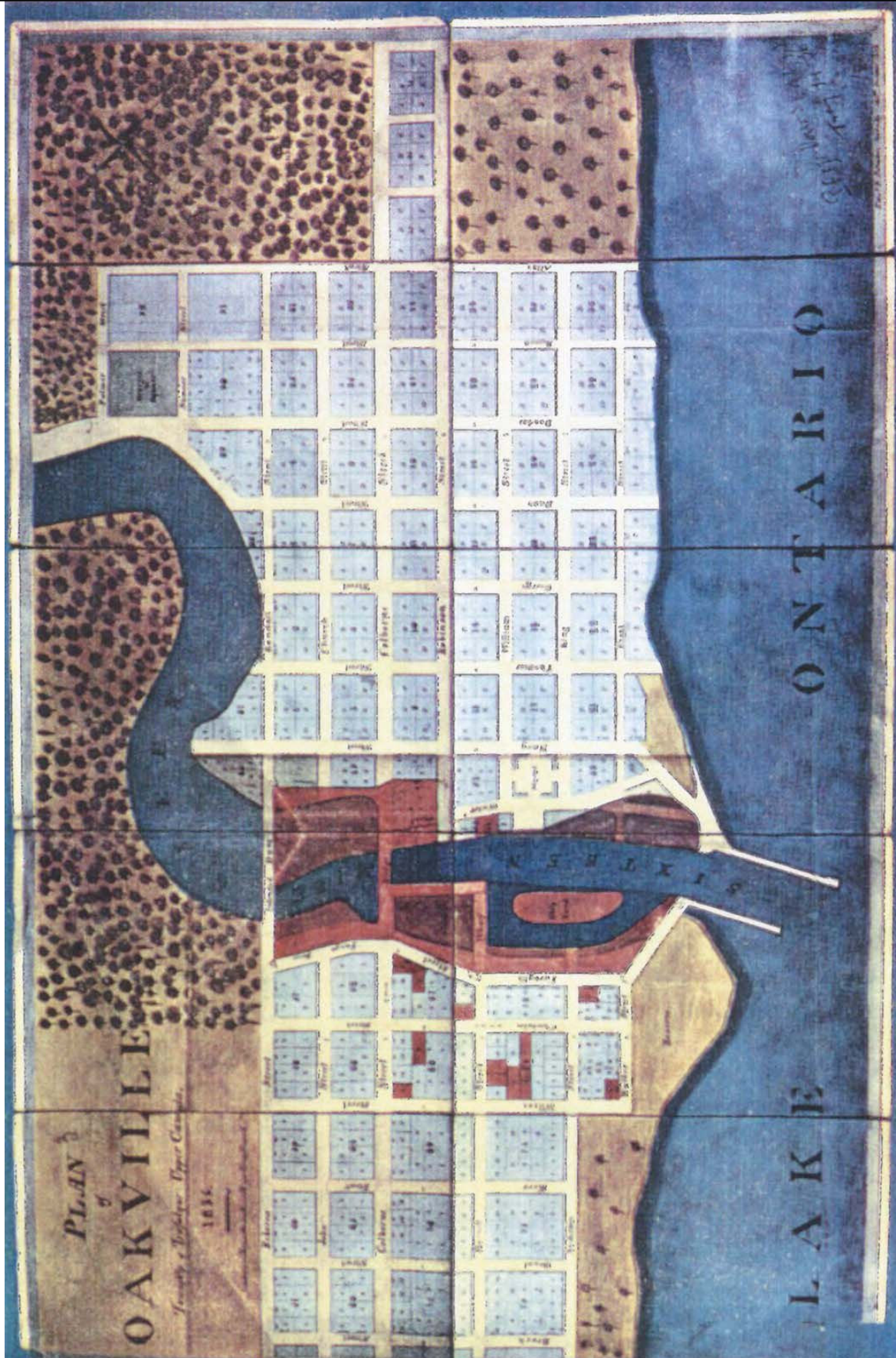
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<sup>6</sup> visitoakville.com, Oakville History.

<sup>7</sup> Images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/15/Exhibit/2

<sup>8</sup> Laura Elizabeth Taylor "The Production of Nature in Planning for Urban Expansion: A Cultural Landscape Study of New Urban Growth in Oakville Ontario", Ph.D. Theses, Graduate Department of Geography, 2007, page 12.





**Figure 4**  
**Palmer Plan**

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“For almost a century following incorporation in the 1850s, Oakville and the rural communities that made up Trafalgar Township remained physically separated from each other by farms and countryside. Although distinct, these communities were economically and socially interdependent.

Populations did not grow appreciably in the 1800s, but shortly before World War I, immigration and urbanization began to increase. Growth accelerated during and after World War II. The area benefited from its strategic location on the main road and rail routes to the US between Toronto and Hamilton. Trafalgar and Bronte have land for industrial and residential development, but Oakville has the core services needed to support growth.

When multinational companies like the Ford Motor Company, oil refineries and other companies chose to locate in Trafalgar in the 1950s, the logic of amalgamation became clear to the municipalities surrounding Oakville – by mutual agreement they merged on January 1, 1962 bringing together 10,200 people in Oakville with the 30,000 in Trafalgar and Bronte. In 1978, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) determined that development should occur “in tiers:” northwards from the lake and both east and west of Sixteen Mile Creek (as it had occurred historically), with room built in for affordable housing, commerce and industry.”<sup>9</sup>

The 1978 OMB decision was critical in terms of future planning for the Town. Similar to the current situation, the Town was at a crossroads and as noted in the Board decision:

““There is the old to protect and the new to pursue”; for it all comes down to that – the one all-encompassing issue in this hearing – how best, in the context of the Official Plan, to protect the old and at the same time pursue the new? For towns like Oakville are always changing and the urban form of a town must be flexible, adaptable and responsive to the changes and at the same time preserve all that is best of development of the past. In our view, Oakville has at this time a unique opportunity to accomplish this, but it can only be done by planning now for the people that will come to this municipality in ever increasing numbers. No municipality is an island unto itself. No municipality in this province has the right to deny people affordable homes, jobs and shopping facilities within the municipality if private or public enterprise is willing and can provide such homes, jobs and shopping facilities without doing violence to sound planning principles. While protecting the old the town must prepare for the new major wave of change

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<sup>9</sup> Town and Township Information Station,  
[www.oakville.ca/culturerec/is-towntownship.html](http://www.oakville.ca/culturerec/is-towntownship.html)



that is coming. It cannot be stopped by a wall and a “go away – I’m all right Jack,” philosophy; that is morally wrong, fiscally irresponsible and against Provincial policy. But the wave of change that is coming, if recognized and accepted, can be channeled into development that will make Oakville a better and stronger community in which to live and work. That was the issue that came through in the evidence – how best, in the context of the Official Plan, to protect the old and at the same time pursue the new? “There is the old to protect and the new to pursue.”<sup>10</sup>

Like the initial development which was facilitated by the infrastructure built by Colonel Chisholm, subsequent development was also facilitated by the construction of major infrastructure. This included:

- The Aberdeen Bridge, 1895, a swing bridge which allowed Lakeshore Road (then Colborne Street) to cross the Sixteen Mile Creek;
- The railways which traverse the Town east/west with the first Canadian Pacific Railway train passing through the Town on June 29, 1897 and the continuing expansion of the use of the rail corridors with the introduction of GO service in 1967 and the on-going expansion of that service to the current day;
- Toronto-Hamilton Highway (Lakeshore) a concrete highway from Toronto to Hamilton completed in 1916;
- Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) which was opened in 1939 and is subject to on-going improvements to this day with the introduction most recently of high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in September 2016;
- Dundas Street originally a Provincial Highway (Highway 5) and now a Regional arterial road;
- Other key arterial roads under the jurisdiction of the Region since its establishment in 1974 including Trafalgar Road, Upper Middle Road, Bronte Road and Winston Churchill Road;
- The construction of Highway 407 in the late 1990’s;
- The sanitary and water systems under the jurisdiction of the Region; and,
- The stormwater management system under the jurisdiction of the Town.

In addition, a variety of public service facilities were developed with a number of places of worship being constructed including one as early as 1835, a medical practice which opened also in 1835 and the initial Oakville Common School constructed in 1850. The original Town Hall was constructed in 1862/63 on the west side of Navy Street.

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<sup>10</sup> Ontario Municipal Board Decision Delivered by W.T. Shrides and A.J.L. Chapman, File Nos. R761870 et.al. , October 24, 1978, pages 10 -11.

The physical evolution of the community south of Dundas is generally illustrated by comparison of the Palmer Plan (Figure 4) to the 1973 Official Plan which was the subject of the 1978 OMB decision (See Figure 5A), the final approved 1978 Plan (See Figure 5B) and the current Official Plan (See Figure 3).

The development of North Oakville of course is quite different with the principle of development north of Dundas originally being established through the Halton Urban Structure Plan as discussed in the following section. An urban structure for this greenfield area was then established through a general Official Plan amendment (Amendment No. 198) followed by the preparation of detailed secondary plans.

### **2.3 What is Oakville's position in the surrounding region?**

The Province has carried out on-going regional planning since the 1960s including most notably *Design for Development: The Toronto-Centred Region*, May 1970 and the work of the Office of the Greater Toronto Area and the Greater Toronto Coordinating Committee which commenced in 1988. The Growth Plan represents the culmination of the Province's regional planning efforts. It recognizes that:

“The *Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)* is one of the fastest growing regions in North America. It is also the destination of choice for many people and businesses relocating from other parts of Canada and around the world.”<sup>11</sup>

The GGH is centred on the City of Toronto which is an international financial centre and it:

“□ ..covers almost 32,000 square kilometers and includes large cities, rapidly growing suburban municipalities, mid-sized centres, small towns and villages, and rural areas.”<sup>12</sup>

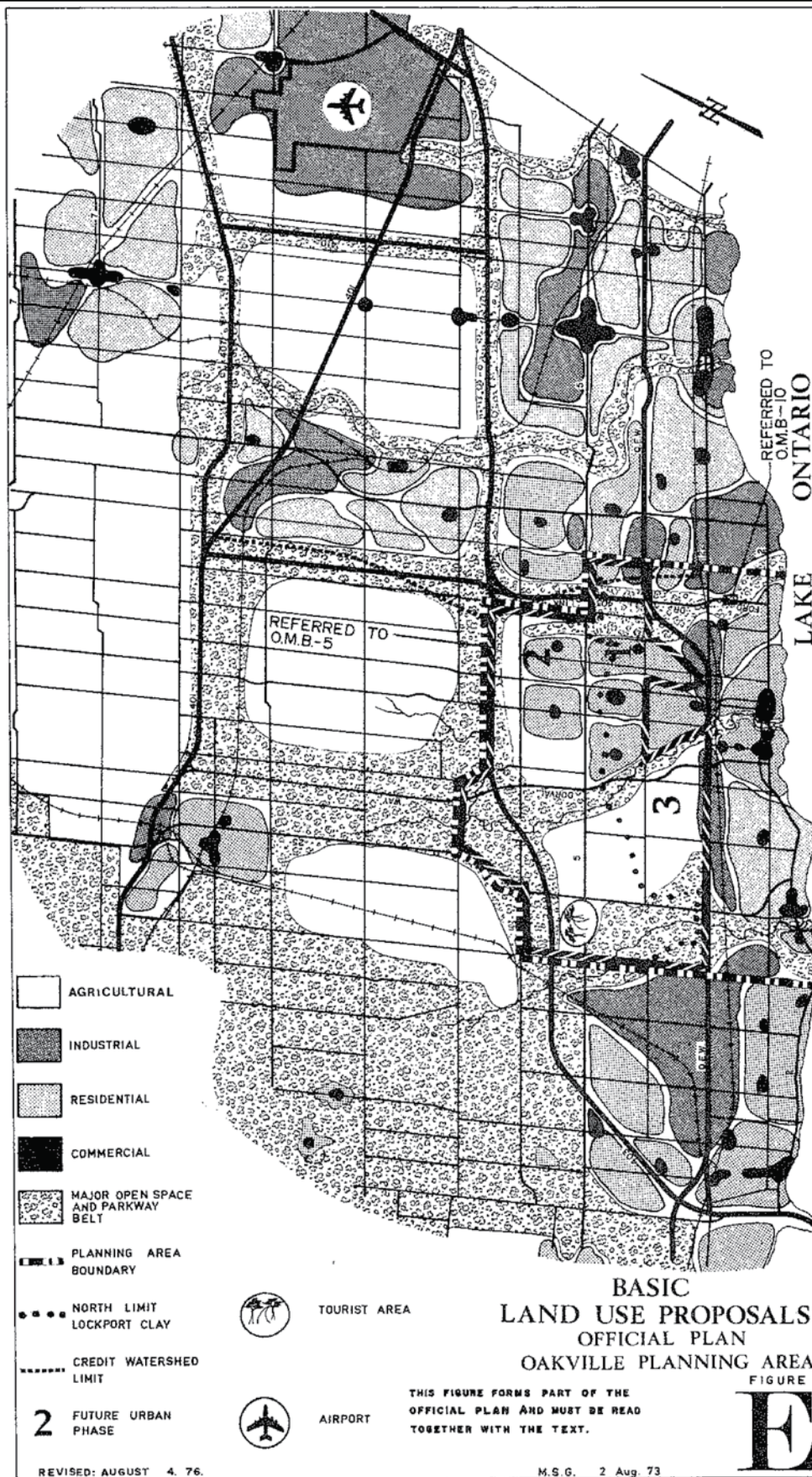
Oakville is identified, as it was in previous Provincial planning programs, as one of those rapidly growing suburban municipalities and a mid-sized centre. Together with other similar communities, as well as a number of big cities it forms part of an urban area focused on the City of Toronto which stretches along the shore of Lake Ontario from Oshawa in the east to Hamilton in the west (See Figure 2).

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<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Infrastructure, Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006, Office Consolidation, June 2013, page 6.

<sup>12</sup> Neptis Foundation, [www.neptis.org/publications/introduction/chapters/context-greater-golden-horsehoe](http://www.neptis.org/publications/introduction/chapters/context-greater-golden-horsehoe)





**Figure 5A**  
**1973 Official Plan**  
**Figure E Basic Land Use Proposals**

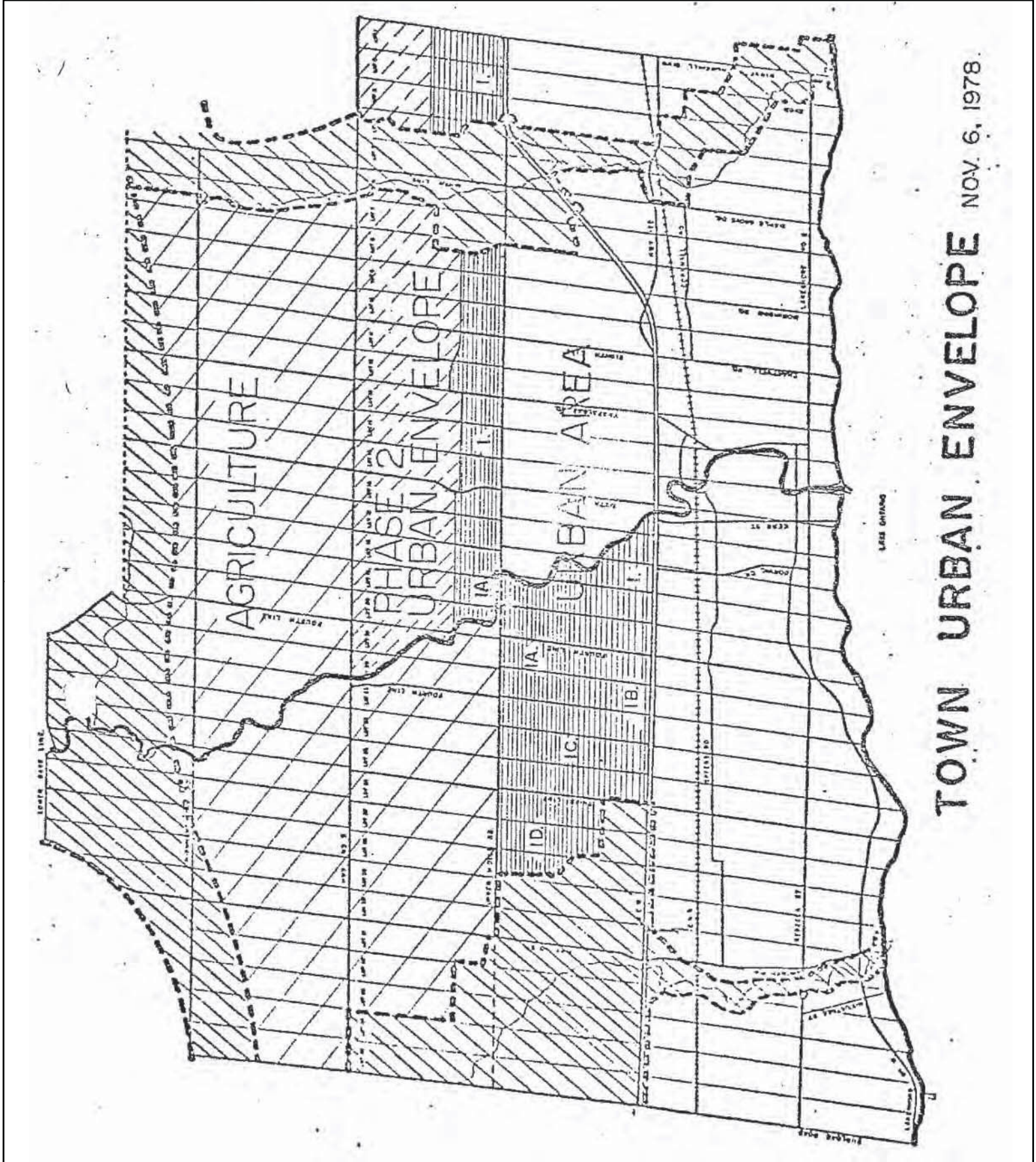
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**Figure 5B**  
**1978 Official Plan Urban Structure**

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The Town should not be considered as a bedroom community for the City of Toronto. It has a strong economy with over 300 national and international corporate headquarters<sup>13</sup>. It also has a range of regional services including a new hospital which is a teaching hospital, Sheridan Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning (Trafalgar Campus), and Halton Regional Centre including the Regional Municipality of Halton Headquarters and the Halton Regional Police Headquarters. Other significant facilities include the Bronte Provincial Park and the Glen Abbey Golf Club which is the home of the Canadian Open, headquarters of Golf Canada, and the Canadian Golf Museum and Hall of Fame.

Within the Region of Halton, the HROP<sup>14</sup> establishes a well-defined “Regional Structure.” The Regional Structure consists of three principal categories of land uses (HROP Section 27):

- Settlement areas with identifiable communities;
- A rural countryside where agriculture is the preferred and predominant activity; and,
- A natural heritage system that is integrated within settlement areas and the rural countryside, to preserve and enhance the biological diversity and ecological functions of Halton.

The Town of Oakville is the most urban of the four municipalities that comprise the Region with no remaining lands in an Agricultural Area designation in HROP. However, significant lands are identified as “Regional Natural Heritage System.” The three remaining municipalities all include major areas designated “Agricultural Area”, “Regional Natural Heritage System” or “Greenbelt.” This includes Burlington the southern portion of which (south of Highway 407) is built out, the Town of Milton with its rapidly growing Urban Area and the Town of Halton Hills with the communities of Georgetown and Acton, as well as the 401 Premier Gateway Employment Area. (see Figure 6, HROP Map 1 Regional Structure).

The Regional Structure is accompanied, as described in Section 55 of HROP, by a growth strategy for the Region:

“based on the distribution of population and employment for the planning horizon year of 2031 as contained in Table 1, and in accordance with the Regional

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<sup>13</sup> Invest in Oakville, [www.oakville.ca/economic/development/invest-in-oakville.html](http://www.oakville.ca/economic/development/invest-in-oakville.html)

<sup>14</sup> Halton Region Official Plan (2009), Interim Office Consolidation, September 28, 2015, Section 27 and pages 13 -19 and Map 1.

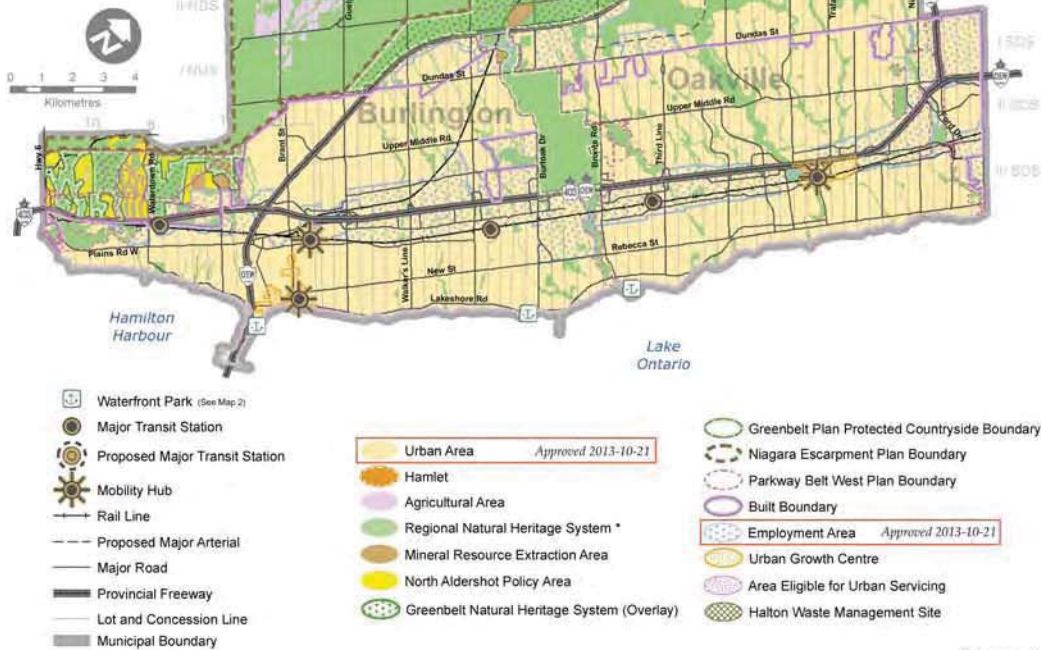


# Map 1 Regional Structure

Approved 2015-09-28

This map should be viewed and interpreted in conjunction with the text of the Official Plan.

\* The Boundaries of the Regional Natural Heritage System may have been refined in accordance with Section 116.1.



September 2, 2015

## Figure 6 Halton Region Official Plan Map 1 Regional Structure

OAKVILLE URBAN STRUCTURE STUDY

October 2016

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phasing outlined on Map 5, as well as by other infrastructure elements such as transportation systems and urban services and other policies of this Plan.”

Table 1 of HROP, Population and Employment Distribution, establishes a population for Oakville of 255,000 by 2031 (up from 172,000 in 2006) and employment of 127,000 (up from 82,000). Table 2, Intensification and Density Targets, establishes the minimum number of new housing units to be added to the Built-Up Area<sup>15</sup> between 2015 and 2031 as 13,500. The minimum overall development density in the Designated Greenfield Area<sup>16</sup> (Residents and Jobs Combined per Gross Hectare) is “46.”

The basis for the current Regional structure<sup>17</sup> was developed through the Halton Urban Structure Review (HUSP) process (see Figure 7). HUSP was a comprehensive process which included the Halton Urban Structure Plan (April 1994), the Water and Wastewater Servicing Master Plan, the Sixteen Mile Creek Watershed Plan, and the Halton Urban Structure Review Phase Two Study Financial Analysis, Implementation Plan & Final Recommendations (June 1994).

The HUSP process was a direct result of the 1978 OMB decision with respect to growth in Oakville as well as a similar decision with respect to Burlington:

“While the OMB gave considerable direction to the amount, location and initial phasing of growth based on the limited existing servicing capacity within both Oakville and Burlington, little consideration was given to the infrastructure required to support the expanded urban envelopes (northerly limits of Hwy. 5) or the means by which this infrastructure could be financed □ in 1978, Halton Council adopted a policy that “the cost of new development not impact on the existing taxpayer.”<sup>18</sup>

This fact and other decisions which had been made with respect to growth in Halton Hills, meant that when Milton Council requested the Region “to investigate ways of expanding the existing stream and well-based system to provide for capacity for

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<sup>15</sup> “Built-Up Area” is defined in Section 220.4 of the HROP as “means all land within the Built Boundary.” “Built Boundary” is defined in Section 220.2 as “means the limits of the developed urban area as identified in the Provincial Paper, Built Boundary for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006, (2008)”.

<sup>16</sup> “Designated Greenfield Area” is defined in the HROP as “means the area within the Urban Area that is not Built-Up Area.”





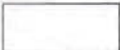

<sup>17</sup> Note: The fundamental structure developed through HUSP is the basis for the structure established through the Region’s Official Plan however it has been updated through various reviews of the Plan carried out since the adoption of the original Official Plan which reflected the results of HUSP.

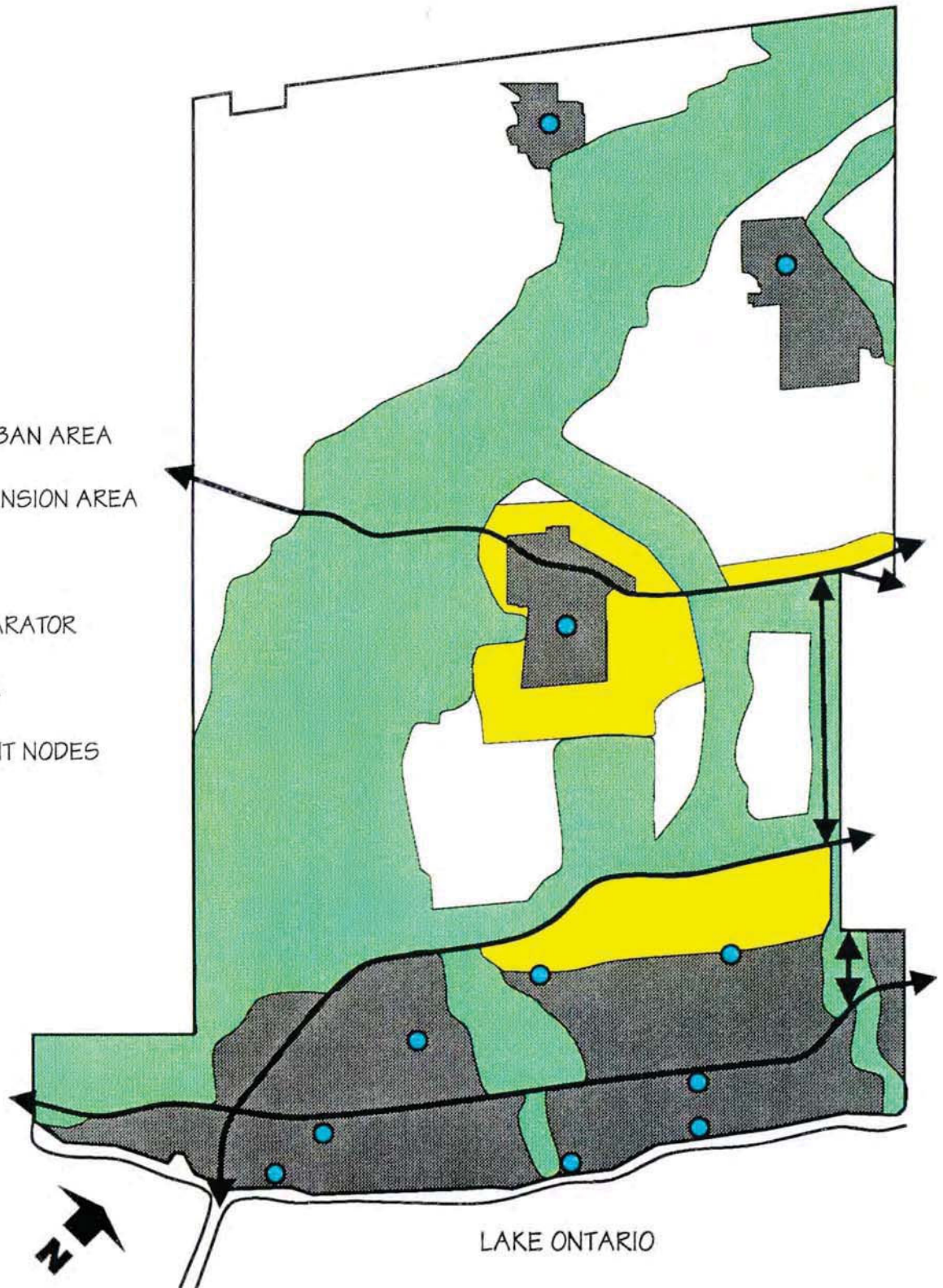
<sup>18</sup> Region of Halton Staff Report FN-65-94/PD-28-94, Halton Urban Structure Region Phase Two Study, Financial Analysis, Implementation Plan & Final Recommendations, June 1994, page 5.



# RECOMMENDED REGIONAL STRUCTURE

## LEGEND

-  EXISTING URBAN AREA
-  URBAN EXPANSION AREA
-  HIGHWAY
-  URBAN SEPARATOR
-  RURAL AREA
-  DEVELOPMENT NODES



**Figure 7**  
**HUSP Recommended Regional Structure**

additional residential and industrial growth”<sup>19</sup>, the Region “determined that growth issues could not be examined in isolation of the rest of Halton Region.”<sup>20</sup> A comprehensive HUSP review was authorized in 1987 to examine not only growth potential, but also servicing options. The HUSP process reflected the fundamental understanding by the Region and the local municipalities of the connection between sustainable growth and the need to support that growth with appropriate infrastructure and a related financial strategy to pay for the required infrastructure. This connection underpins planning in Halton to this day.

## **2.4 Conclusions**

The Town has an identifiable existing and planned urban structure. However, it is not clearly articulated on a Town-wide basis in the Official Plan. This reflects the history of the Town’s development with the urban structure of the area south of Dundas having evolved over many years, while the urban structure for North Oakville, as a greenfield area, was established through a general official plan amendment followed by the preparation of detailed secondary plans. As a result, consolidation of key structural matters should include:

- the establishment and integration of an overarching natural heritage system;
- a clear understanding of the relationship of the transportation system with the urban structure; and,
- a complete integration of the urban structure developed for North Oakville with other parts of the community and the Region.

Further, the urban structure which has evolved does not fully reflect consideration of a future where development will comprise primarily of infill and intensification.

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<sup>19</sup> Region of Halton Staff Report FN-65-94/PD-28-94, *ibid*, page 6.

<sup>20</sup> Region of Halton Staff Report FN-65-94/PD-28-94, *ibid*, page 7.

### 3. What are the Provincial Policy implications for the Urban Structure?

#### 3.1 Context

The Province amended the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) in 2014. The changes provided additional direction with respect to the creation of healthy, livable and safe communities including a stronger focus on:

- the achievement of efficient and resilient development and land use patterns through intensification and redevelopment rather than greenfield development;
- encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support livable and resilient communities;
- planning for infrastructure, including green infrastructure, in a manner which is coordinated and integrated with land use planning and financially viable; and,
- conserving biodiversity, protecting the health of the Great Lakes and protecting natural heritage, water, agriculture, mineral and cultural heritage and archaeological resources from their economic, environmental and social benefits.

The Province is currently carrying out a review of four key Provincial Plans, two of which affect the Town – the Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan. In addition, Metrolinx, which is a Provincial agency, is carrying out a review of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) first Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), *The Big Move*. It is anticipated that updated plans will be approved in 2017.

The other Provincial Plan which affects certain limited lands in the Town, the Parkway Belt Plan West, was approved in 1978 as a development plan under the *Ontario Planning and Development Act*. The Parkway Belt West Plan is not under review in a comprehensive manner, but the Province has been amending it on a site-specific basis in response to amendment applications on an on-going basis.

Ontario has a policy-led planning system<sup>21</sup>, and both the Region's and the Town's Official Plans must be consistent with the PPS, as well as conforming to the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, and the Parkway Belt Plan West. With respect to the RTP, it

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<sup>21</sup> Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 page 1.

“conforms to, and helps implement, these provincial policy directions. The RTP also provides additional direction on land use planning that builds on these policies, and ties together the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe’s urban structure policies with the transportation system envisaged by the RTP. Metrolinx will participate in local, regional and provincial land use planning exercises, where necessary, to ensure that land use planning and transportation decisions are fully integrated” (Section 7.2.7).

Given this policy framework, it is important to understand the directions and challenges/opportunities created for the Town’s Urban Structure by the existing Provincial Plans, as well as the implications of the proposed changes to those Provincial Plans. The following reviews these considerations with respect to each of the components of the Town’s existing Urban Structure<sup>22</sup>.

### **3.2 The Natural Heritage System**

The PPS directs the establishment of a Natural Heritage System, in particular Section 2.1, as does the Growth Plan (e.g. Section 4.2.1). In addition, the Natural System which comprises the Natural Heritage System and the Water Resource System is a fundamental component of the current Greenbelt Plan (Section 3.2).

That Greenbelt Natural System is reinforced in the proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan by the introduction of a range of changes including additional policy direction related to “Urban River Valleys” (Section 6.0) that applies to publicly owned urban river valley lands brought into the Greenbelt by amendment after approval of the Plan in 2005 (Section 1.4.2). These valley corridors “provide a foundation for additional public lands to be added to these areas in the Greenbelt in the future by amendment” (Section 5.7.1.3).

A new goal related to Urban River Valleys is added in Section 1.2.3:

“To integrate the Greenbelt into urban areas which were not in the Greenbelt at the time it was approved in 2005, by promoting the following matters within the Urban River Valley designation:

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<sup>22</sup> Note: The Greenbelt Plan and the Parkway Belt West Plan are primarily relevant to the Natural Heritage System and Major Transportation Corridor components, and the Parkway Belt West Plan also has some relevance to Nodes and Corridors, as a result, those plans are referenced only in the relevant sections.



- Protection of natural and open space lands along river valleys in urban areas which will assist in connecting the rest of the Greenbelt Area to the Great Lakes and inland lakes;
- Protection of natural heritage and hydrologic features and functions along urban river valleys, including coastal wetlands;
- Conservation of cultural heritage resources;
- Provision of a gateway to the rural landscape of the Greenbelt; and,
- Provision of a range of natural settings on publicly owned lands for recreational, cultural and tourism uses including parkland, open space land and trails.”

The HROP Regional Structure provides for a Regional Natural Heritage System comprised of the Regional Natural Heritage System and the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System (Section 50.2, Map 1 Regional Structure). Even the Parkway Belt West Plan, although established in 1978, identifies as a goal a “Linked Open Space Framework” (Section 2.4) including the preservation of “prominent natural features, such as river valleys and the Niagara Escarpment, and protect other features, such as wooded areas, watercourses, and other points of interest” (Section 3.13).

The Town currently identifies key parts of its Natural Heritage System as part of the Urban Structure Plan (Schedule A1) and the remainder of the system on the land use plans for areas outside of North Oakville (Schedules E-Q). The North Oakville Plans were developed with the objective of establishing:

“as a first priority of the Town, a natural heritage and open space system within the context of an urban setting, the majority of which is in public ownership” (Sections 7.2.3.1 and 8.2.3.1).

The Natural Heritage System and key open space areas are identified as part of the North Oakville Secondary Plans Community Structure Plans.

## **Directions**

- **The Town’s Urban Structure as identified in the Official Plan should include explicit recognition of the Natural Heritage System in its entirety as a fundamental component of the Urban Structure.**

The current natural heritage system is not recognized as a fundamental component of the Urban Structure in its entirety. In particular, the full extent of the system is not identified on Schedule A1, Urban Structure. The approach used by the Halton Region Official Plan and in the North Oakville Secondary Plans identifies the establishment and protection of the system as a first priority in establishing the Urban Structure. This approach should be explicitly recognized in the Official Plan for the entire Town.

- **The Urban Structure needs to be reconsidered with respect to the Town's Urban River Valleys in the context of the proposed revisions to the Greenbelt.**

The proposed revisions to the Greenbelt Plan add a new Section 6.0, Urban River Valley policies recognizing the importance of connections to Lake Ontario. Only publicly owned lands are to be subject to these policies which indicate that such areas “may be the setting for a network of uses and facilities including recreational, cultural and tourist amenities and infrastructure, which is needed to support urban areas” (Section 6.0).

The Urban Structure needs to be reconsidered with respect to the Town's Urban River Valleys in the context of the proposed revisions to the Greenbelt Plan. At the structural level, this can be identified conceptually. However, ultimately within the framework of that general direction, greater clarity and consultation on the proposed mapping changes is needed to understand implications and to ensure that relevant and rigorous local data is used to update provincial mapping.

### **3.3 Major Transportation Corridors**

Both the PPS and the Growth Plan (current and proposed) recognize the link between the provision of infrastructure, including transportation infrastructure, and land use planning.

The PPS states in Section 1.6.7.5 that:

“Transportation and land use considerations shall be integrated at all stages of the planning process.”

Section 3.1 of the current Growth Plan states:

“Ready and accessible public infrastructure is essential to the viability of Ontario’s communities and critical to economic competitiveness, quality of life and the delivery of public services.”

Further, both the PPS and the current Growth Plan focus on the establishment of a balanced transportation system. In particular, Section 3.2.2.1 of the current Growth Plan directs:

“The transportation system within the GGH will be planned and managed to:

- a) provide connectivity among transportation modes for moving people and for moving goods
- b) offer a balance of transportation choices that reduces reliance upon any single mode and promotes transit, cycling and walking
- c) be sustainable, by encouraging the most financially and environmentally appropriate mode for trip-making
- d) offer multi-modal access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural and recreational opportunities, and goods and services
- e) provide for the safety of system users.”

Another key consideration is the planning and protection of corridors and rights-of-way for infrastructure, including transportation and transit, to meet current and projected needs (PPS 1.6.8.1, current Growth Plan 3.2.2.3).

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan reinforce these directions, in particular requiring that all decisions on transit planning and investment support strategic growth areas (Section 3.2.3.2). Strategic growth areas are defined as:

“Within settlement areas, nodes, corridors and other areas that have been identified by municipalities and 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 stations areas, mobility hubs and other major opportunities that may include infill, redevelopment, brownfield sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings or greyfields. Land along major roads, arterials or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit services or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as strategic growth areas” (Section 7).

The policies in the Growth Plan with respect to these strategic growth areas are also proposed to be significantly enhanced. In addition to the requirements in the current Growth Plan for the development of Urban Growth Centres including Midtown Oakville,

the proposed updated policies direct development to major transit station areas and higher order transit corridors. The policies provide extensive new requirements for development in these areas in Section 2.2.4 including:

- requiring the delineation of priority transit corridors in official plans;
- prioritizing planning for mobility hubs associated with priority transit corridors including updated zoning;
- requiring upper tier municipalities in consultation with lower-tier municipalities to “determine the size and shape of major transit station areas and delineate their boundaries in official plans”;
- directing that major transit station areas “be planned and designed to be transit-supportive and to achieve multimodal access to stations and connections to nearby trip generators”;
- establishing a minimum gross density target for major transit station areas by 2041 of 160 residents and jobs combined per hectare for light rail transit or bus rapid transit, or 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for those served by express rail service on the GO Transit network, except for lands designated as prime employment lands;
- providing direction on development within major transit station areas including prohibiting land uses and built form that would adversely affect the achievement of the minimum density targets and other policies of the Plan;
- directing that in planning lands adjacent to, or in the vicinity of higher order transit corridors and facilities, municipalities are to identify and protect lands that may be needed for future enhancement or expansion of transit infrastructure, in consultation with Metrolinx, as appropriate; and,
- directing that “lands with easy access to frequent transit service, including higher order transit, should be identified as strategic growth areas and should be planned and developed to be transit supportive, including through setting minimum density targets to reflect existing and planned transit service levels where no minimum density target is specified in this Plan”.

The proposed policies of the Growth Plan also promote better connections of areas with high employment densities to transit, including improving the connectivity of office parks



with transit and active transportation networks, and planning for intensification of employment areas (Section 2.2.5).

The Greenbelt Plan by its very nature is not primarily focused on infrastructure. However, Section 4.2, Infrastructure, recognizes the necessity of existing, expanded and new infrastructure in the Greenbelt and provides direction on planning, design and construction practices.

The Parkway Belt West Plan was in part developed to “link urban areas with each other and with areas outside the region by providing space for the movement of people, goods, energy, and information, without disrupting community integrity and function” (Section 2.2). As such, the Plan provides for the location of linear facilities such as major transportation facilities which “provide physical, identifiable boundaries” (see Figure 8, HROP Map 1B Parkway Belt Transportation and Utility Corridors).

In addition to these policy documents, regard must be given to the RTP, and the changes outlined in the “Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.” Of particular significance to Oakville, the following initiatives should be noted:

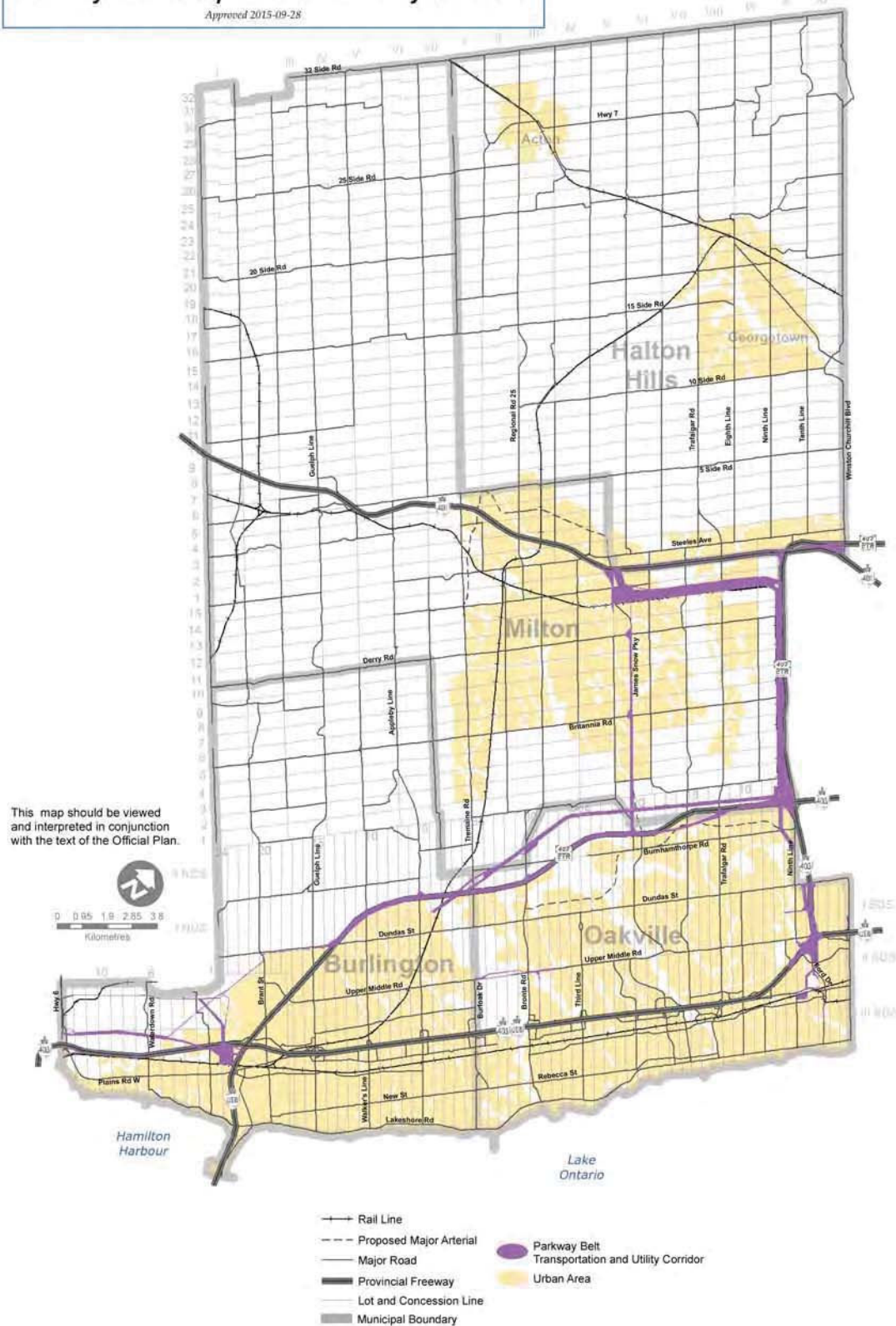
- GO Regional Express Rail (RER) is a fully funded project which will provide 15 minute service on the GO Lakeshore West Line which serves Oakville and upgraded service from diesel to electric engines “will enable faster travel speeds, more frequent service, and reduced operating costs and emissions”(Discussion Paper Section 2.2). It includes Bronte Station Platform and parking rehabilitation and an Environmental Assessment for the construction of an overpass /underpass at Burloak Drive ([www.metrolinx.com/regionalplanning/rer](http://www.metrolinx.com/regionalplanning/rer)); and,
- Planning and design is under way for the Dundas Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service which will connect Brant Street in Burlington with Kipling subway station in Toronto.

In terms of proposed plans, the Discussion Paper notes in Sections 3.2 -3.4:

- “The next RTP will further support development of GO Stations as important hubs for daily activity□ .Increasing commercial and residential densities, in line with the proposed Growth Plan, around station areas and addressing GO station parking lots and facilities will be an important aspect for the systems success”;

## Map 1B Parkway Belt Transportation and Utility Corridors

Approved 2015-09-28



December 16, 2009

## Figure 8 Halton Region Official Plan - Map 1B Parkway Belt Transportation and Utility Corridors

OAKVILLE URBAN STRUCTURE STUDY

October 2016

Prepared by:



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- “□ to optimize the investment in GO RER and maximize potential ridership, it will be necessary to increase the station access transit mode share”, as well as access by pedestrians and cyclists;
- In terms of continuing transit expansion, the Discussion Paper indicates that creating connectivity will be a focus through such changes as minor extensions, addition of missing links and by servicing emerging corridors with high transit ridership potential. Re-enforcing the Growth Plan is also a key direction. Figure 9 to this report (Figure 8 to the Discussion Paper) shows “areas in the GTHA that were dense enough (i.e. having at least 50 residents plus jobs per hectare) to support cost-effective transit service as of 2011 (in dark green), and development areas that were not transit-supportive in 2011 but will be by 2031 (in lightest green). New, sufficiently dense development areas are generally well aligned with existing rapid transit lines, or with future rapid transit or GO RER corridors. The Growth Plan provides policies for Urban Growth Centres and Major Transit Station Areas to align density and transportation.”; and,
- the RTP would offer stronger guidance on improving active transportation plans; creating safer, more complete streets; managing congestion including making more efficient use of roads; moving urban freight; reducing demand for travel; sustainable funding; and new mobility options.

In addition, the Ministry of Transportation has indicated that it will commence an Environmental Assessment for the portion of the 407 Transitway between Mississauga and Burlington in January 2017.

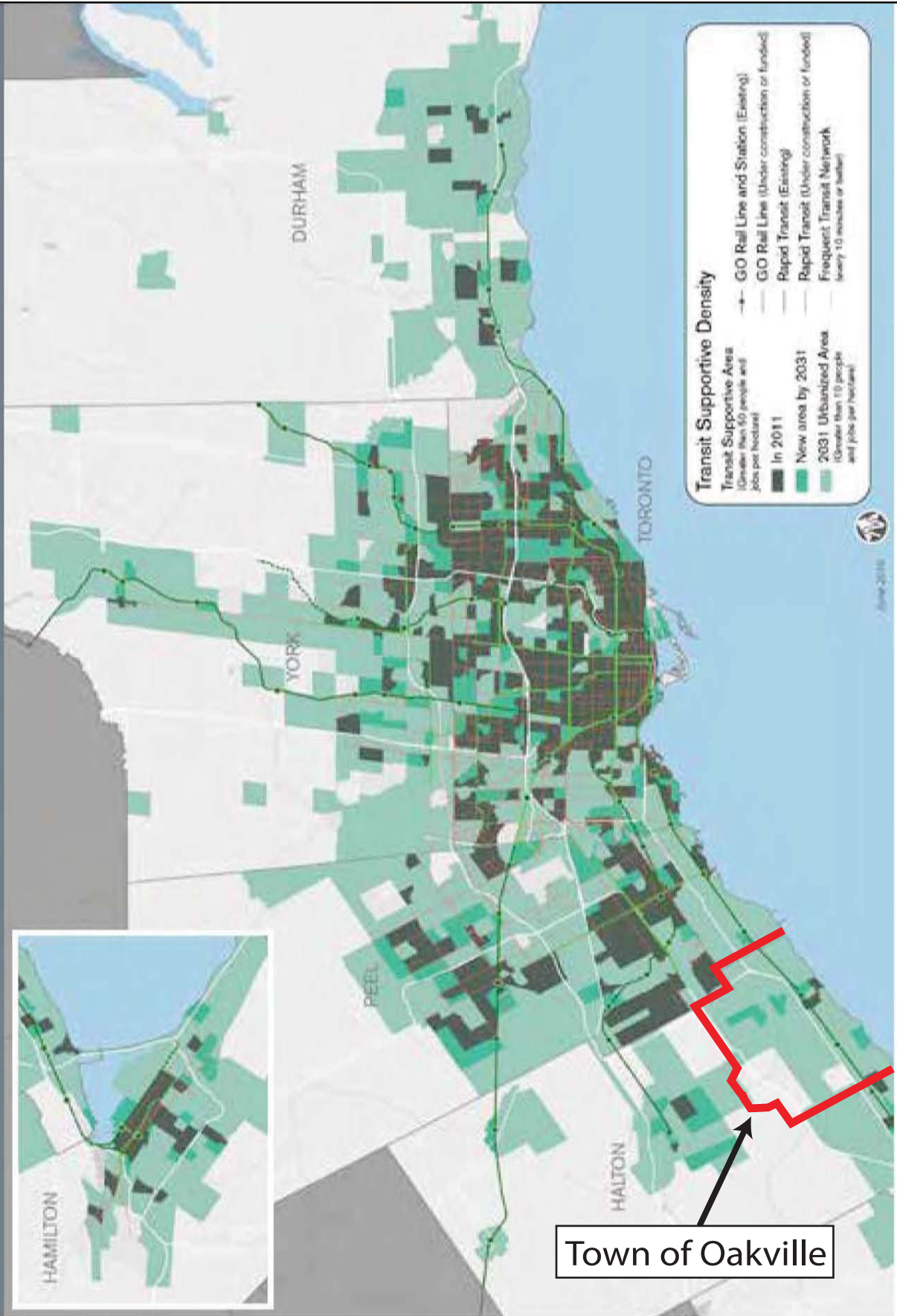
## Directions

- **Key transportation linkages and corridors, including existing and planned corridors, should be identified and protected as part of the Urban Structure.**

The Urban Structure must have as a fundamental building block, a well-connected transportation system which will provide for transit and active transportation as a priority, as well as goods movement. The system must align with the network of nodes and corridors identified as a focus for accommodating intensification and higher-density mixed uses including not just Midtown Oakville, but also major transit stations and higher order transit corridors. Careful consideration will need to be given to the protection of key transportation linkages and corridors, including balancing the need for connections with the



Figure 8: Existing and Future Transit Supportive Areas, GTHA (2011 and 2031)<sup>9</sup>



## Figure 9

Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan  
**Figure 8: Existing and Future Transit Supportive Areas, GTHA (2011 and 2031) with Town of Oakville Boundary**

OAKVILLE URBAN STRUCTURE STUDY

October 2016

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costs and other impacts of crossing physical barriers such as valleys and other major infrastructure.

## Choices

- **The transportation system (infrastructure + services) is critical to a livable community and the successful implementation of Provincial Plans but it has to be achievable from a financial perspective.**

The transportation system is critical to the successful implementation of the Provincial Plans. However, it has to be achievable from a financial perspective as recognized by the Province itself in the proposed modifications to the Growth Plan. These proposed changes highlight the requirement that “planning for new or expanded infrastructure will occur in an integrated manner, including evaluations of long-range scenario-based land use planning and financial planning, and will be supported by infrastructure master plans, asset management plans, community energy plans, watershed planning, environmental assessments, and other relevant studies” (Section 3.2.1.2).

### 3.4 Nodes and Corridors (Strategic Growth Areas)

As noted in the discussion of transportation corridors above, both the PPS and the current Growth Plan mandate the creation of a system of nodes and corridors. These are also identified as “strategic growth areas”<sup>23</sup> in the proposed changes to the Growth Plan. The RTP is designed to support the implementation of such a system. The proposed changes to the Growth Plan and RTP reinforce these directions. In particular, specific density targets are provided not only for Urban Growth Centres as in the current Growth Plan, but also for major transit station areas. Direction is given that minimum targets be established for lands with “easy access to frequent transit service” (Section 2.2.4.8).

The importance of the achievement of these targets for nodes and corridors is reinforced by proposed increases in the general density targets in the Growth Plan including:

- An increase in the minimum intensification target for all upper-tier municipalities from a minimum of 40 percent of all residential development occurring annually

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<sup>23</sup> Strategic growth areas are defined in the proposed changes to the Growth Plan as “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 form....”

within the upper-tier municipality within the built-up area to 60 percent (Section 2.2.2.3); and,

- An increase in the minimum density target over the entire designated greenfield area of an upper-tier municipality, excluding certain areas such as natural heritage features and areas, natural heritage systems and floodplains, certain rights-of-way, and prime employment areas, from 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare to 80 residents and jobs combined per hectare (Section 2.2.7.3).

The Parkway Belt West Plan also plays a role in supporting the concept of nodes and corridors as it was in part developed to “link urban areas with each other and with areas outside the region by providing space for the movement of people, goods, energy, and information, without disrupting community integrity and function” (Section 2.2). As such, the Plan provides for the location of linear facilities such as major transportation facilities which “provide physical, identifiable boundaries” (see Figure 8).

The HROP and the Town’s Official Plan currently establish a system of nodes and corridors (strategic growth areas). South of Dundas Street these areas take the form of existing and planned nodes (See Map 3). In North Oakville, the planned development takes the form of both planned corridors and nodes.

## Choices

- **Is the current system of nodes and corridors, if developed as planned, sufficient to accommodate mandated growth in the Growth Plan to 2041? Does the existing planned system have the potential to provide the necessary mix of uses and people and jobs combined per net hectare?**

The proposed Growth Plan directs growth to a system of nodes and corridors (strategic growth areas) which provide for a mix of uses at densities that will support the planned transit network. The Town has a long established planned system of nodes and corridors, including Midtown Oakville which is identified in the Growth Plan as an Urban Growth Centre. However, the development of nodes and corridors is a challenge. This is evident from Oakville’s own experiences with Midtown Oakville, Uptown Core and North Oakville as discussed in Section 4.5.

The questions that must be addressed regarding the Town’s current system of nodes and corridors therefore include:

- Is this existing planned system sufficient to accommodate the population and jobs targets to 2041 which have now been established by the Province given the challenges to the development of such areas?;
  - Does the Town have the resources to ensure the implementation of the existing system of nodes and corridors to a level which will allow achievement of the population and jobs targets and transit supportive densities? Is the existing planned system sustainable?; and,
  - Does the Town have the resources (staff and financial) to support the development of other nodes and corridors?
- **Are there other existing or potential nodes and corridors not identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure which should be considered for additional development?**

The current Official Plan Urban Structure identifies a number of nodes identified as "Growth Areas" (Map 3A to this report). However, consideration should be given to whether there are existing or potential nodes and corridors which are not currently identified which should be considered for additional development.

The criteria for the identification of such areas based on the current Growth Plan and proposed changes to that Plan, as well as the HROP and Town's Official Plan would place a priority on focal areas for existing and planned major transit infrastructure particularly the regional transit network (e.g. mobility hubs associated with priority transit corridors) which provide opportunities for transit-supportive development. In addition to satisfying this key criteria, such areas would include focal areas;

- where investment in significant public service facilities has occurred or is planned;
- for high-density major employment centres;
- for significant mixed use development including the potential for major commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses; and,
- which do not undermine the planned Urban Structure.

In this context, there are some existing/planned areas which could be considered as nodes and corridors for intensification. These include the following (see Map 3B to this report) recognizing that in many cases, these areas are designated as Employment Area in the HROP and any redesignation must occur through a municipal comprehensive review:

- **Bronte GO Station** – Bronte GO Station is identified in the Official Plan as a Major Transit Station, but its location in an Employment Area, both in the Town's and Region's Official Plan, limits its potential for development. Improvements are planned to GO service generally and to this station in particular, which means that consideration should be given to the potential of the station and surrounding area to serve an expanded role as a new node (Growth Area).
- **Health Oriented Mixed Use Node** – The new Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital is located on the north side of Dundas Street at Third Line. The North Oakville West Secondary Plan identifies this general area in the Employment Area designation as a "Health Oriented Mixed Use Node." The designation permits the hospital and related facilities including supportive housing, long-term care facilities and other similar uses including related retail and service commercial uses.
- **Oakville Place** – Oakville Place is identified as a "Major Commercial Area" on Schedule A1, Urban Structure. However, it is located immediately north of Midtown Oakville, although on the north side of the QEW, at Trafalgar Road. As such, this area has significant potential for intensification in support of Midtown Oakville and the Trafalgar Road Corridor which is a major transit corridor. This potential was recognized in the Trafalgar Road Corridor Study (March 2014).
- **Trafalgar Road Corridor** – In addition to Oakville Place, the Trafalgar Road Corridor Study identifies a number of other sites in the Corridor which could be considered for future intensification. These include the Sheridan College lands along Trafalgar Road, the southeast and northeast corners of Postridge Drive and Trafalgar Road and the southeast corner of Dundas and Trafalgar;
- **Other Major Commercial Areas** – The other existing Major Commercial Areas recognized in the Town's Urban Structure plan should also be considered with respect to potential for intensification which is transit supportive. In particular, the south side of Dundas Street at Highway 403 which is planned to be a major transit corridor. In addition, the Major Commercial node at Dorval Drive and the QEW is well connected by transit to the Trafalgar GO Station;
- **407 Transitway/Bronte Road** – The North Oakville Secondary Plan East designates "Urban Core Areas" at the intersections of both Trafalgar



Road and Neyagawa Blvd and the 407 Transitway route. These will be locations for stations on this major regional transitway route. However, the North Oakville Secondary Plan West does not identify a similar designation at the intersection of Bronte Road and the 407 Transitway.

- **Bronte Road north of Dundas Street (Palermo North)** – A Special Study area is identified in the North Oakville West Plan for this area. The designation of the lands as an Employment area to the west and north has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. Consideration needs to be given to the function and extent of this node given changes in the area that have occurred since its original proposed designations.

Additional growth areas may be identified for consideration and they will be evaluated with respect to the criteria above.

### 3.5 Employment Areas

Under the PPS and proposed Growth Plan, Employment Areas are defined as:

“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” (PPS Section 6, proposed Growth Plan Section 7).

The key direction in both documents, is “to plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and future needs” (Section 1.3.2.1). Conversion is only permitted through a municipal comprehensive review and for the purposes of such a review major retail uses are considered non-employment uses.

At the same time, the PPS and the proposed Growth Plan recognize that employment uses occur outside employment areas and encourage “compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support livable and resilient communities” (PPS Section 1.3.1).

The recognition of the need to create a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses is reinforced in the proposed changes to the Growth Plan. These changes:

- Differentiate between prime employment areas which are primarily “adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, major goods movement facilities and corridors, including major highway interchanges” (Section 2.2.5.3) which are to be protected for employment uses over the long term, and employment areas where there is some greater flexibility particularly for commercial uses and sensitive uses other than residential which are still prohibited (Section 2.2.5.6);
- Direct major office and appropriate major institutional development to urban growth centres, major transit station areas or other strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service (Section 2.2.5.9); and,
- Direct that existing office parks should be supported through a variety of actions including intensification of employment uses (Section 2.2.5.10).

## Choices

- **What is the most appropriate approach for Oakville to the categorization of employment areas?**

Oakville has an evolving macro-economy premised on lower industrial growth potential and increased demand in the office sector which differentiates it from other municipalities. As noted in the Employment and Commercial Review:

“This trend includes growth in financial services, research and development, professional and scientific services, information technology, health and social services, education and the broader public sector □ . These sectors are largely accommodated within office developments and typically located in prestige employment areas. This also means that employment areas must be planned to achieve a compact, transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented environment with amenities, entertainment and cultural activities and a mix of land uses. As such, there is increasing demand to accommodate employment-supportive commercial and community uses on employment lands, particularly in business parks, which offer amenities and services convenient to local businesses and their employees. Ultimately, a key goal for the Town is to develop its employment areas with sufficient critical mass, density and diversity to create a sense of place and vibrancy that will continue to attract industry, investment and talent to this area.” (Employment and Commercial Review pages 96 and 97).

The categorization of the Town's employment areas must be looked at through this lens. There is still a need for areas of traditional industrial development, but much less so than in other municipalities. In particular, the Speers/Cornwall Roads corridor is already accommodating a mix of uses which do not reflect traditional industrial development. In terms of the urban structure, does the unique nature of this area need to be recognized? In addition, should consideration be given to the appropriateness of continuing to categorize "Major Commercial Areas" in the HROP as Employment Areas?

### 3.6 Major Commercial Areas

With respect to Major Commercial Areas, as noted in the discussion of Nodes and Corridors, the location of many of these areas on major transportation corridors which include frequent existing and/or planned transit, suggests that re-evaluation of the future of these areas should be considered. However, the designation of all such areas in the HROP with the exception of the Dorval Drive node as "Employment Area," requires that any final direction occur through a municipal comprehensive review.

#### Choices

- **Do some Major Commercial Areas have the potential for other uses?**

Each Major Commercial Area plays a different role and is located in a different land use context. Oakville Place, although designated "Employment" in the HROP is located adjacent to significant residential development and major transit facilities including the Oakville GO Station. Careful consideration through the Trafalgar Road Corridor Planning Study has identified significant potential for mixed use development. Dorval Crossing is also adjacent to residential development and while not as well served by transit is still in proximity to both GO Stations. It also does not have an Employment designation in the RHOP. The other two Major Commercial designations however, are surrounded by employment and as a result, the potential for mixed use development is much more limited in the foreseeable future, despite the major transit planned for Dundas Street.

### 3.6 Residential Communities

Provincial policy as established through the PPS and the existing Growth Plan, anticipates the identification of a hierarchy of intensification with certain locations (i.e. Urban Growth Centres such as Midtown Oakville) acting as focal points for such

development, while other areas will accommodate limited change. The HROP also reflects this general direction. This approach is summarized in the PPS which directs that:

“Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs” (Section 1.1.3.3).

The proposed changes to the Growth Plan expand the areas which serve as focal points for development as discussed above, but still recognize that there will be other areas which accommodate limited change.

The current urban structure for Livable Oakville identifies “Residential Areas” and describes the Residential land use designation as:

“The majority of the residential neighbourhoods in the Town are designated for low density residential uses to ensure a continuation of the existing neighbourhood structure. Medium and high density areas are also provided for in existing communities primarily to reflect developments that are already in place” (Section 3.1).

Section 11, Residential, elaborates on this direction stating:

“The lands identified as Residential Areas on Schedule A1, Urban Structure, represent areas that provide for stable residential communities. A variety of residential uses is accommodated through the three Residential land use designations□ ..These designations provide for a full range of housing types, forms and densities.

Similarly in North Oakville, residential neighbourhoods in North Oakville East (NOE) are planned to be primarily residential in character (NOE Section 7.5.12) and are being developed to provide “a strong and identifiable sense of place for residents” (NOE Section 7.2.3.2).

The majority of intensification and development within the Town is to occur within the nodes and corridors as described in Part E of Livable Oakville and in Sections 7.3.2 and 8.3.2 of the North Oakville Secondary Plans. Intensification outside the nodes and



corridors within the stable residential communities south of Dundas Street and the residential neighbourhoods in North Oakville will be subject to policies that are intended to maintain and protect the character of those areas.

The policy approach in the Livable Oakville and the North Oakville Secondary Plans reflects the general direction in the PPS, Growth Plan and HROP. It was evolved as a result of detailed review and analysis as part of the Livable Oakville Plan and North Oakville Secondary Plan processes.

## Choices

- **Any changes in the number of nodes and corridors and the extent of existing nodes and corridors should consider the impacts on adjacent residential neighbourhoods.**

The key direction with respect to existing Residential Areas in Livable Oakville is that any intensification “will be subject to policies that are intended to maintain and protect the existing character of these communities.” Similarly, in North Oakville, the intent is that Residential Neighbourhoods once developed shall be maintained with a “strong and identifiable sense of place.” Any changes to the number of nodes and corridors and the extent of existing nodes and corridors should be carefully assessed to ensure that the changes can be appropriately integrated with the adjacent stable residential areas.

## 3.7 Future Directions

The Town of Oakville is subject to the PPS, the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan and the Parkway Belt West Plan, as well as the RTP. The general directions in these plans have been well established. The directions which appear to be evolving as a result of the on-going review of the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan and the RTP reinforce the existing directions in these Plans. In particular, for urban areas like Oakville, these directions indicate:

- Establishment of a linked Natural Heritage System is a critical component of the Urban Structure, including inclusion of the Greenbelt Natural System;
- A balanced transportation system including transit and active transportation is also a key building block for the Urban Structure;
- Land use and transportation planning are inextricably linked;

- All decisions on transit planning and investment must support the development of nodes and corridors;
- Strategic growth areas comprise a system of nodes and corridors which must be planned to achieve minimum targets for population and employment;
- Employment areas must be protected, at the same time there is a need to create a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses particularly given the nature of the Town's economy; and,
- The proposed changes to the Growth Plan expand nodes and corridors, but at the same time recognize that there are residential areas which will continue to experience limited change.

Choices which require consideration with respect to the Town's Urban Structure arising from Provincial Policy directions include:

- Ensuring the transportation system is fiscally sustainable;
- Evaluating the existing system of nodes and corridors to determine if it will be sufficient if developed as planned, to accommodate mandated growth in the Growth Plan to 2041;
- Are there additional nodes and corridors not identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure which should be evaluated with respect to specific criteria and considered for identification as strategic growth areas (e.g. Bronte GO Station, Health Oriented Mixed Use Node, Oakville Place, Trafalgar Road Corridor, Other Major Commercial Areas, 407 Transitway/Bronte Road, West side of Bronte Road north of Dundas Street - Palermo North);
- Consideration of the most appropriate approach for Oakville to the categorization of employment areas;
- Consider whether some Major Commercial Areas have the potential for intensification through the introduction of other uses; and,
- Any changes in the number and extent of nodes and corridors should consider the impacts on adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

## **4. What Other Factors/Trends have implications for the Urban Structure?**

### **4.1 Context**

The Provincial Plans and proposed changes to them will be key factors influencing planning for the Town's urban structure. However, there are a number of other key factors and trends which also require consideration in terms of their implications for the urban structure. The following reviews general considerations with broad implications for all components of the urban structure as well as more specific issues with respect to each component of the urban structure.

### **4.2 Town-wide Considerations**

#### **4.2.1 Climate Change**

The Province released their "Climate Change Strategy" in 2016. It sets out "the transformative change required to reduce green-house gas emissions by 80 per cent below the 1990 levels by 2050."<sup>24</sup> The strategy will be supported by a series of five-year action plans, with the first to be released in 2016.

The Town of Oakville has long acknowledged the impacts of climate change and taken action to increase the resiliency of the community to deal with those impacts. Central to the Town's approach is its Climate Change Adaption Initiative. This includes the Town's Climate Change Strategy which was endorsed by Council in September 2014; the Climate Change Strategy – Technical Report which enabled integration of climate change considerations across Town operations and programs; the public education document "Climate Change Primer" and the Climate Change Strategy – Implementation Report, October 20, 2015.

As identified in the Technical Report, the Town has a range of projects, procedures, policies and by-law which address climate change impacts. The Technical Report identified 39 impacts with 400 actions planned, underway or ongoing in response to those impacts.

These actions generally do not involve decisions about the Town's urban structure. Rather they provide mitigation and adaption strategies that respond to the climate

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<sup>24</sup> Province of Ontario, Ontario's Climate Change Strategy, page 12.

change impacts in the context of the Town's current Urban Structure and development form. For example, one of the impacts identified is "extreme summer temperatures will result in increased heat and air quality alerts and related illnesses." Adaptive Actions include tracking the progress made on meeting goals and objectives related to climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Official Plan and Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan and preparation for increased enactment of the Extreme Weather Protocol – Heat and Smog and continue to partner and share information to develop the 2015 Cooling Centre smartphone app.

There is one identified impact though which does have implications for the Town's Urban Structure. This is:

"increased use of and need for public green space, recreation centres, libraries, parks, splash pads and pools."

As acknowledged in the Technical Report, in 2014 Oakville offered:

"1,420 hectares of parkland, over 300 kilometres of trails, and more than 200 parks, garden plots, off-leash dog parks, playgrounds, skateboard parks, splash pads, sports fields, tennis courts, two harbours and 31 waterfront parks."

Despite this, the Report indicates "increasing development and population growth is one reason for the increased need for recreation facilities but extreme weather including extreme temperatures is another."

The acquisition of additional parkland, as well as preserving, protecting and enhancing unique natural features are identified as responses to this. The link to water sustainability is also recognized. The Town's Water Sustainability Plan-2014 is identified with Adaption Actions including tracking the development of the WSP and monitoring the results of improved environmental performance in water conservation and pollution reduction.

This recognition of the importance of green space, and more generally green infrastructure<sup>25</sup>, as one component of an overall strategy for mitigating/adapting to the

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<sup>25</sup> Green Infrastructure is defined in the PPS as "means natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. Green infrastructure can include components such as natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs."



impacts of climate change has been recognized.<sup>26</sup> Generally the overall strategy, similar to what is being implemented in Oakville, focuses on a number of mitigation/adaption actions. This includes, in Oakville, the establishment and implementation of the Town's Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan which has resulted in increases in tree planting and survival, and establishment of an Extreme Weather Protocol. These are matters which, as noted, do not involve decisions about the Town's urban structure. Rather they provide mitigation and adaption strategies that respond to the climate change impacts in the context of the Town's current Urban Structure and development form.

However, the provision of additional green space both for its ability to moderate temperature and reduce surface water runoff particularly any substantial areas would have an implication for the urban structure of the community.

## Choices

- **Is the provision of substantive additional areas of public open space as an adaptive/mitigation strategy to reduce the impacts of climate change in conformity with Provincial policy direction?**

As discussed in Section 2, Provincial policy direction as outlined in the PPS and the Growth Plan, seeks to address climate change by directing that development in urban areas be more efficient and resilient. More specifically, the policies encourage intensification and redevelopment - so denser development with less open space and the establishment of substantive density targets for any new greenfield development.

There is no explicit recognition that such changes in the approach to development may also require reconsideration of the approach to open space and to water management. However, proposed changes to the Growth Plan would require stormwater master plans for serviced settlement areas informed by watershed planning which would "examine the cumulative impacts of stormwater from existing and planned development, including an assessment of how extreme weather events will exacerbate these impacts", and incorporate "appropriate low impact development and green infrastructure". In addition, large-scale development proposals would also be supported by a stormwater management plan which aligns with the stormwater master plan for the

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<sup>26</sup> S.E. Gill et. al., "Adapting Cities for Climate Change: The Role of Green Infrastructure", Built Environment Volume 33, No. 1  
Katie Williams et. Al., "Adapting to Climate Change in the Compact City: The Suburban Challenge", Built Environment Volume 36 No. 1.

settlement area. (Section 3.2.7) It would appear therefore that where such a stormwater master plan identified the need for substantive areas of open space to be maintained that such an approach would conform with the Growth Plan if the changes as currently proposed were approved. The Town is currently undertaking a Stormwater Master Plan.

- **Is the value of the provision of substantive additional areas of public open space within the Town as an adaptive/mitigation strategy to reduce the impacts of climate change such that it will offset the costs of such a strategy, and is it achievable?**

Given that the only new development, other than the completion of development in North Oakville, will occur in existing built up areas through infill and intensification, the introduction of substantial new areas of public open space requires the acquisition of private lands which have been designated for development or have potential for development. As such, the land values will be substantial and the funds available to acquire such lands would primarily have to be sourced from the cash-in-lieu of parkland or the general revenue stream. The cost/benefit of the acquisition of such lands will have to be determined after detailed technical evaluation as part of the stormwater master planning process.

- **Are there existing areas of public open space which should be identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure to ensure that their significance is recognized and protected?**

The Town has a number of public open spaces which are outside the Natural Heritage System which are not recognized in the current Livable Oakville Urban Structure. These include major parks south of Dundas (e.g. Shell Park, Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre). These are significant community assets and focal points as well as providing major green infrastructure components. In North Oakville, the importance of these areas is recognized by identifying major open space areas such as North Park as part of the urban structure. Is it appropriate for the importance of such areas throughout the Town to be recognized by identifying them as part of the Town's Urban Structure?

#### **4.2.2 Housing Needs**

Key elements of the urban structure are nodes and corridors which contain a significant residential component, and residential communities. Housing needs affect how future

form of both these areas. As a basis for consideration of housing needs, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. has prepared an analysis “Forecast Housing Demand in Suburban GTHA Municipalities – Focus on the Town of Oakville” which is found in Appendix A.

The analysis concludes:

“The Town of Oakville is expected to experience strong population and employment growth over the next 25 years. This growth is expected to be accommodated largely within the Town’s greenfield areas in North Oakville, as well as through intensification within its built up areas (i.e. South Oakville). Population and housing growth in Oakville will largely be influenced by the rate of economic expansion within the regional economy. In addition to the associated economic impacts of local and regional employment growth, quality of life and other “soft” factors (e.g. access to highly rated public and private schools, opportunities related to indoor/outdoor recreation, access to shopping, dining, arts and culture and other urban amenities) also represent key drivers which will continue to attract new people and businesses to the Town over the long term. To accommodate this steady rate of forecast population growth, a broad range of new housing will be required by housing density type, built form and price.

As the Town’s designated urban lands continue to mature and build out, a growing share of new residential and non-residential development is expected to occur within the Town’s Growth Areas and other redevelopment areas within existing and planned urban corridors. This shift in development patterns is anticipated to result in a steady increase in the share of high-density housing forms (i.e. low- and high-rise apartments) over the medium and long term (i.e. post 2021).

In addressing the Town’s future urban structure requirements, it is also important to recognize that the demographic and socio-economic characteristics within the Town’s neighbourhoods are not homogenous. Understanding demographic and socio-economic trends at the neighbourhood level is particularly important for the Town of Oakville. As the Town continues to diversify, these evolving trends will have broad implications on the amount, type and density of future housing needs associated with population growth, as well as demands for public infrastructure, municipal services, schools and amenities.”

## Directions

- **The Urban Structure should recognize a shift in development patterns which will result in an increase in high-density housing forms, while also recognizing that the Town’s neighbourhoods are not homogenous.**

The Town's future urban structure must provide for additional high-density housing forms in the system of existing nodes and corridors and potentially some expansion of that system. At the same time, it must be recognized that each neighbourhood has its own demographic and socio-economic characteristics which will require provision of a diversity of options with respect to future housing needs, as well as public service facilities. Each neighbourhood is also in part defined by the surrounding land uses which provides context and contributes to the character of the neighbourhood.

#### **4.2.3 Cultural Heritage**

The Town is committed to recognizing and protecting its cultural heritage. In support of this, four heritage conservation districts have been established. The first of these was the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District (HCD) which was established in 1981, and was one of the first such Districts in Ontario. The other Districts are the First and Second Street HCD, the Trafalgar Road HCD and the Downtown Oakville HCD (See Figure 10).

In January 2014, the Town:

“adopted the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy, which set the foundation for the primary identification of candidate cultural heritage landscapes and the future inventory and evaluation of significant cultural heritage landscapes<sup>27</sup>. It also developed a formal process for addressing the conservation of cultural heritage landscape resources in the Town of Oakville.”<sup>28</sup>

In February 2015, Town Council “requested staff to undertake a review of the town's major open space areas in order to determine if they should be appropriately designated as a cultural heritage landscape□.”<sup>29</sup> The Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy Implementation is being carried out in three phases. After the initial assessment in Phase One, eight high priority properties were identified, many of relating to significant land areas for an urban setting including Bronte Harbour and the Glen Abbey Golf Course. Additional research and assessment of the High Priority properties, as well as additional consultation is currently being carried out. Once the assessments

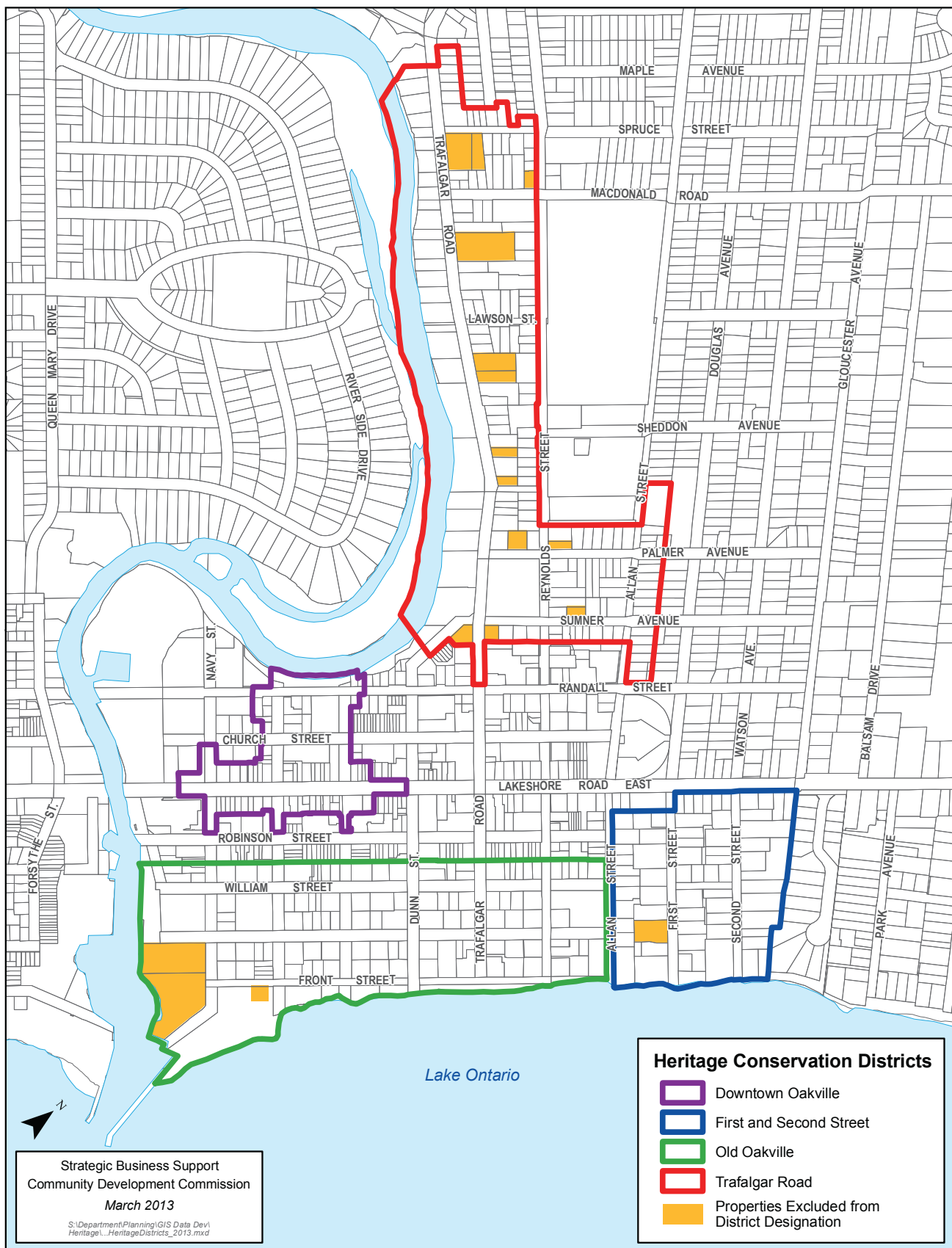
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<sup>27</sup> Cultural Heritage Landscapes are defined in the PPS as “a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community including an Aboriginal community. This area may involve features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association.”

<sup>28</sup> Town of Oakville Planning Services Department, Planning and Development Council Report, Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy Implementation: Phase One Inventory, January 27, 2016, pages 1-2.

<sup>29</sup> Town of Oakville Planning Services Department, op. cit., page 2.





**Figure 10**  
**Town of Oakville Heritage Conservation Districts**

are complete in Phase Two, “further and more detailed recommendations on how best to implement protection measures that are best suited for the CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE”<sup>30</sup> will be provided.

## Choices

- **Should the Urban Structure recognize areas designated as Heritage Conservation Districts?**

The four Heritage Conservation Districts are concentrated in the oldest part of Oakville. The majority of the lands are identified as “Residential Areas” on the Town’s Urban Structure plan. However, lands in the Downtown Oakville HCD are in the Downtown Oakville Area. Consideration should be given to whether the level of protection in the HCD’s is such that they should be specifically recognized as part of the Urban Structure or are the general limits on development implicit in the Downtown Oakville Growth Centre and Residential Communities components of the Town’s Urban Structure sufficient.

- **Should the Urban Structure recognize areas designated as Cultural Heritage Landscapes?**

Many of the eight high priority areas currently being reviewed in Phase Two of the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy Implementation affect significant land areas for an urban setting and most of these areas are currently in private ownership. Depending on the level of protection recommended, if approved, there could be an impact on the overall Urban Structure. Should such areas be specifically recognized?

### 4.2.4 Connectivity

As part of the development of the North Oakville Secondary Plans, careful consideration was given to attempting to ensure the integration of the North Oakville area with the existing community given the significant barrier created by Dundas Street as well as the form of development along much of the south side of Dundas (i.e. berms). This approach is fundamental to the creation of a livable community. The approach applies in considering all barriers to connectivity throughout the Town be they created by major roads, natural features or other impediments.

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<sup>30</sup> Town of Oakville Planning Services Department, op. cit., page 3.

## Choices

- **How should the urban structure address barriers to connectivity?**

A connected community is a livable community where residents can easily live, work and play. The urban structure should consider how barriers to connectivity can be overcome including major roads, natural features and other impediments.

### 4.3 Natural Heritage System

The planning for North Oakville established:

“as a first priority for the Town, a natural heritage and open space system, within the context of an urban setting, the majority of which is in public ownership.” (Sections 7.2.3.1 a) and 8.2.3.1 a) North Oakville Secondary Plans)

The System was recognized from the beginning as a fundamental component of the urban structure. It was developed after detailed study and was carefully designed to “protect the natural environment, provide balance between active and passive recreation needs and contribute to the quality of life in North Oakville and the Town as a whole” (Sections 7.2.2 and 8.2.2 North Oakville Secondary Plans).

This process contrasts with the natural heritage system south of Dundas Street. As part of the Livable Oakville process, the Natural Heritage System was updated for the lands south of Dundas Street. However, it is recognized that the “System” is not a linked Natural Heritage System such as was developed for North Oakville or such as is now mandated by the PPS<sup>31</sup>. Rather much of the system reflects a historical situation which evolved over time. In many of the older areas as a result, the “System” is composed of individual features such as river valleys or remnant wooded areas which were considered undevelopable. Later as the planning system evolved, specific features and buffers were identified for protection through the planning process but there was no focus on the creation of linkages. This reflects the fact that it is only been more recently that the importance of the creation of a linked Natural Heritage System to ensure the

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<sup>31</sup> PPS defines Natural heritage system as “means a system made up of natural heritage features and areas, and linkages intended to provide connectivity (at the regional and site level) and support natural processes which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species, and ecosystems. These systems can include natural heritage features and areas, federal and provincial parks and conservation reserves, other natural heritage features, lands that have been restored or have the potential to be restored to a natural state, areas that support hydrologic functions, and working landscapes that enable ecological functions to continue. The Province has a recommended approach for identifying natural heritage systems, but municipal approach that achieve or exceed the same objective may also be used.”

long term sustainability of such a System in an urban setting has been recognized and entrenched in policy.<sup>32</sup>

## Choices

- **Should the Natural Heritage System south of Dundas be reviewed in the context of the PPS 2014?**

It is difficult and costly to establish/reestablish linkages in a developed urban area. However, reconsideration of the current System could be undertaken to identify areas where there may be such opportunities. In addition, consideration could be given to areas where enhancement of the System would strengthen its viability. This review would reflect the significant amount of work already undertaken by the Town including its Biodiversity program and Wildlife Strategy. It could also be undertaken in conjunction with the preparation of the Town's ongoing Stormwater Master Plan and updates to the floodplain mapping which are planned to be carried out by Conservation Halton.

## 4.4 Major Transportation Corridors

The Town's Transportation Master Plan Update (TMP), *Switching Gears*, was completed in 2013. It provides a long-term plan "to guide the town's transportation system to meet the needs of anticipated growth to 2031. It is designed to "help create a more balanced transportation system" including public transit and network improvements, active transportation (pedestrian and cycling) and road network capacity improvements that highlight public transit opportunities. It also considers transit-supportive land use planning and travel demand policies.<sup>33</sup> The TMP considers not only the Town's transportation system, but also the Provincial and Regional systems.

Since that time, there have been significant indications of future changes in transportation technology. Changes outside the Town may also have implications for the transportation system (e.g. proposed CN Intermodal in Milton, GTA West Corridor Review). The next full TMP will consider the implications for the Town of some of these changes, including the major anticipated changes to transportation technology including:

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<sup>32</sup> Note: The PPS 2005 references natural heritage systems in addition to the protection of individual features, but it was not until the PPS 2014 a strong direction was provided that "natural heritage systems shall be identified in Ecoregions 6E & 7E, recognizing that natural heritage systems will vary in size and form in settlement areas, rural areas, and prime agricultural areas."

<sup>33</sup> Town of Oakville/Cole Engineering Group Ltd., *Switching Gears* Final Report, February 2013, page 1.

- Autonomous Vehicles – these vehicles are also known as “self-drive or driverless vehicles” and are anticipated to be more widely available in the foreseeable future allowing the elderly to regain mobility, the decline of traffic congestion, improvements in safety and fuel efficiency, the commonplace provision of on-demand services and deliveries; and a reduction in the areas required for parking;
- Connected Vehicles – such vehicles are connected with other vehicles and with infrastructure reducing congestion and vehicle accidents as well as allowing for predictive and preventative maintenance;
- Shared vehicles – services like Uber and ZipCar allow everyone to have on-demand mobility without the expense of purchasing a vehicle;
- Electric vehicles – electric vehicles including buses and delivery trucks are quickly becoming “more powerful, compact, and efficient than the fossil-fueled alternative”;
- Efficient Multi-modal Network – the use of technology to automatically plan the most efficient trip using real-time data solving the “last mile” challenge of public transit; and,
- New materials – “new automotive manufacturing technologies, including 3d printing, will change the way vehicles are designed and assembled to enable higher performance, lighter weight and novel design”.<sup>34</sup>

A recent report for Metrolinx by WSP looks at “how “new mobility” could impact on the GTHA” as a whole. It looks at key trends related to technology, government, individual users and the built environment and their impacts so far; different future scenarios and how they might emerge and concludes by looking at how the region can prepare for the impending changes.<sup>35</sup> It confirms that significant changes are coming, many of which could be in place as soon as the next five to ten years.

These changes could have impacts on the urban structure particularly the trend to personal transport without personal ownership which could result in a significant reduction in the amount of parking required at home, work and other locations. Other impacts which could apply to Oakville include a shift in urban form depending on how mobility markets develop either toward re-urbanization or re-suburbanization (“the

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<sup>34</sup> Brook Porter et. al, “Six Transportation Trends That Will Change How We Move,” [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com) ; Dr. Peter Viechnicki et.al. “Smart Mobility: reducing congestion and fostering faster, green, and cheaper transportation options“, May 18, 2015, <http://dupre.deloitte.com>; Scott Corwin et. al., “The future of mobility: What’s next? September 14, 2016, <http://dupress.deloitte.com>; “ Jeff McMahon, “How Driverless Cars Will Take Over Roads, Hearts and Minds, June 12, 2016, [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com).

<sup>35</sup> WSP, op. cit., page 3.



promise of a more productive suburban commute in self-driving vehicles could tempt many who struggle with the higher cost of living in urban centres”<sup>36</sup>).

## Directions

- **The Urban Structure should reflect the additional links in the network recommended by the TMP.**

In terms of the Urban Structure, the primary consideration relates to the protection of a strong connected network of major transportation corridors. Regardless of what type of movement occurs in those corridors, a system of corridors must be maintained to ensure that connectivity within the community and the Region for residents and businesses.

The TMP confirmed the appropriateness of the existing transportation network, and recommended new barrier crossings to address capacity needs across Sixteen Mile Creek and Highway 403:

- Crossing of Sixteen Mile Creek (either North Service Road or a further widening of the QEW); and,
- Highway 403 mid-block crossing north of Upper Middle Road (Ninth Line to Bristol Circle).

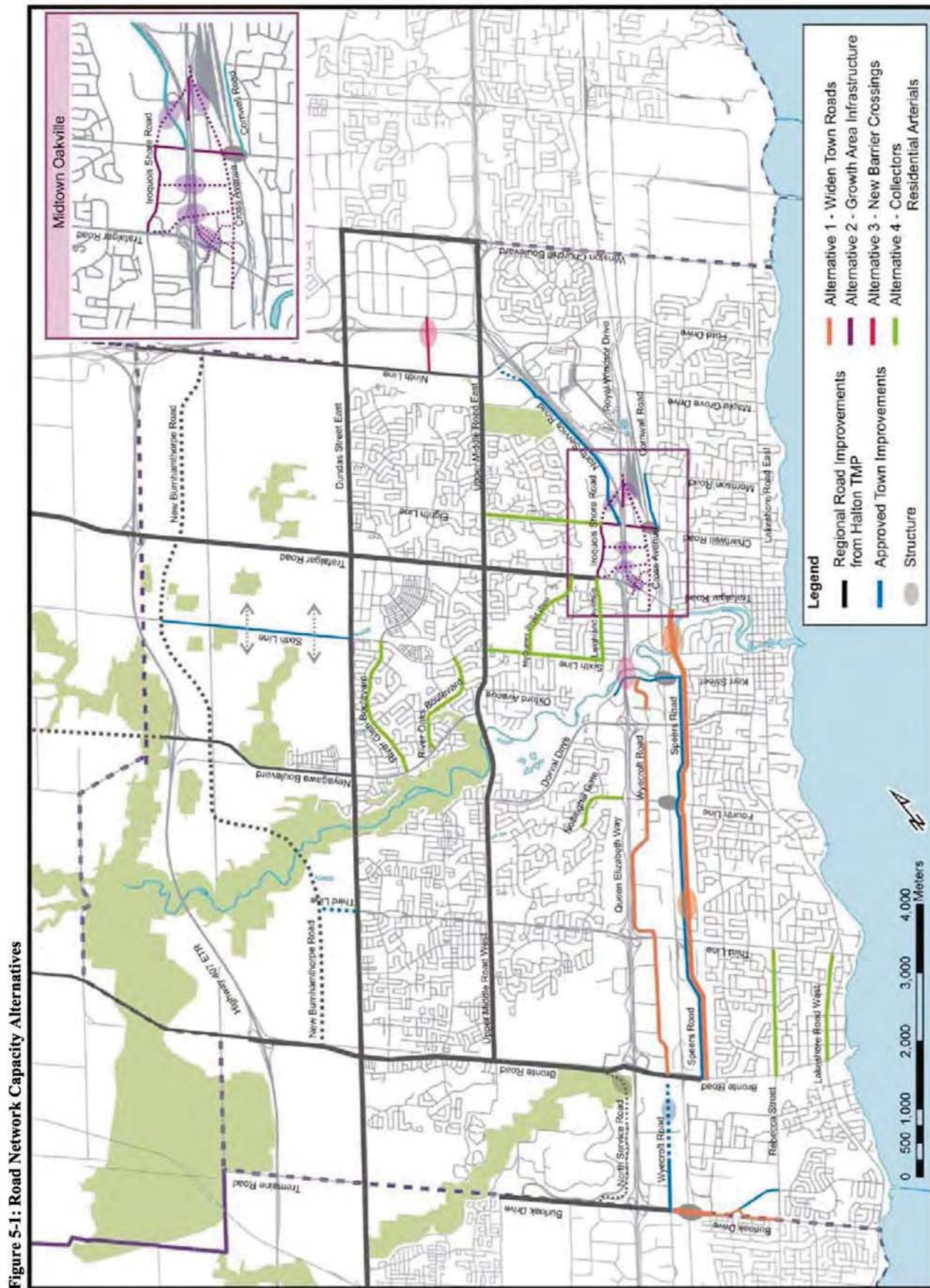
The completed Midtown Oakville EA recommended additions (See Figure 11) that are largely designed to support the development of the Midtown Oakville Growth Area. Related new links include:

- Cross Avenue Extension from Trafalgar Road to Royal Windsor Drive;
- Iroquois Shore Road Extension to Royal Windsor Drive, new 4 lane roadway;
- New QEW crossing (Iroquois Shore Road to Cross Avenue); and,
- New priority lane/active transportation crossing of the QEW (Iroquois Shore Road to Cross Avenue).

These recommendations should be reflected in the Town’s Urban Structure.

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<sup>36</sup> WSP, op. cit., page 17.



**Figure 11**  
**Town of Oakville Transportation Master Plan**  
**Switching Gears Final Report, February 2013**  
**Figure 5-1: Road Network Capacity Alternatives**

## Choices

- **Are there changes to the Urban Structure which should be considered to reflect the significant changes anticipated in transportation with respect to mobility options?**

The proposed changes will increase mobility options while potentially reducing congestion. However, the need for residents to travel to work, education, shopping, recreation, social interaction and other locations will not decrease. As a result, the transportation network will still be needed. The potential reduction in the need for on-site parking as a result of the use of autonomous vehicles and ride-sharing programs as well as increased use of transit and active transportation may allow for an increase in density in nodes and corridors and other intensification areas with land otherwise being used for parking available for development. In addition, the amount of parking would be potentially reduced allowing for a reduction in the cost of development. This should allow for more efficient use of the lands in such areas.

- **Should the unique character of Lakeshore Road be recognized as part of the Urban Structure?**

Lakeshore Road serves as a major east/west transportation corridor. However, the nature of this corridor because of the historic development along it differs from other major corridors in the community. Should this unique character be recognized as part of the Urban Structure?

### 4.5 Nodes and Corridors

Section 3.4 of this Report discusses the background, and some of the challenges and opportunities, related to implementation of the Town's system of nodes and corridors within the context of Provincial policy. However, while Provincial policy now dictates the establishment of such strategic growth areas, the establishment of focal points for development has always been fundamental to the Town's urban structure starting with Downtown Oakville, the original Town centre.

As the Town developed and the planning system evolved, existing centres - Bronte Village, Kerr Village and Palermo Village - were recognized and plans to reinforce their individual roles were reflected in the Official Plan. In addition, new strategic growth areas, again each with their own roles, were designated through the planning process – Uptown Core, Oakville Place, Midtown Oakville and the North Oakville Core Areas.

This historical experience demonstrates the Town's recognition of the important role such centres serve including providing a central location for public service and shopping facilities, as well as a location for higher density housing and for employment uses in offices. The role of these centres has been intrinsic to the Town's urban structure in the past and will continue to be in the future. The issue to be considered is not should there be such centres but what form the system should take to best serve the Town's objectives.

Lessons learned based on past experience can assist in making the determination of how to approach the planning for nodes and corridors in the future in terms of the urban structure:

- Historic Main Street Areas

Historic Main Street Areas such as Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village have an established context and are surrounded by older low density neighbourhoods. As such, any new development has to be carefully considered with respect to density and height. In addition, its relationship to existing uses both within the node and adjacent to it, is also a factor. Provision of infrastructure to support significant development may be a challenge, including parking, sewer, water and stormwater.

- New Planned Nodes and Corridors

The development of new planned nodes and corridors, including those in greenfield areas, also creates significant challenges. For example:

- Uptown Core – Uptown Core is located south of Dundas Street and is centred on Trafalgar Road. This area was originally designated through Official Plan Amendment No. 14 in 1987 with the objective of being “the commercial, cultural, institutional, and recreation heart of the Town of Oakville, north of the Queen Elizabeth Way”, as well as to provide locations for “high density and medium density residential development”.<sup>37</sup> It took many years for any significant higher density development to occur as evidenced by a review carried out in 2009 by the Town which concluded that the area still had significant existing large format commercial development which had resulted in piecemeal development which is not pedestrian friendly and not supportive of transit including the

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<sup>37</sup> The Planning Partnership et. al., Town of Oakville Uptown Core Review, Final Report, February 2009, page 13.



transit station in the area. The lack of a strong civic and public presence was also noted as public amenities had not been completed, and some office uses had been introduced but this component had “struggled to prosper”.<sup>38</sup> The 2009 Review also identified with respect to servicing that “based on the development options, overall servicing improvements may need to be investigated as they relate to water and wastewater component (sic).”<sup>39</sup> Finally, the Review carried out a market overview “to bring a “market reality check” to the process to ensure the vision created through this exercise may be ultimately supportable by investment market conditions.” This examination indicated that “Uptown Core is unlikely to attract significant large-scale new office development,” however it was considered “positioned to attract continued interest from condominium developers.”<sup>40</sup>

- Midtown Oakville – The size and location of this centre was identified by the Province in the 2006 in the Growth Plan. It is approximately 100 hectares in size. Detailed planning commenced in 2013 and included the Midtown Oakville Transportation and Stormwater Municipal Class Assessment, Midtown Oakville Parking Strategy and Designing Midtown Oakville, urban design guidelines. This work has identified significant challenges to the ultimate development of these lands. In particular, the need for major changes to the transportation system including a new North-South Crossing of the QEW with designated transit lanes, Cross Avenue Extension, improvements to the Trafalgar Road QEW and Royal Windsor interchanges, improvements to transit connections and new transit facilities, and new pedestrian/cycling connections and facilities. Town staff has advised that the required infrastructure, as well as the achievement of the water balance objective established for this area. Town staff has advised that the required infrastructure improvements and related costs are proving to be a major barrier to new development.<sup>41</sup>
- North Oakville – As with most greenfield areas initial development has occurred in the low density residential areas. Development of the Core Areas is occurring slower than anticipated; the proposals to date do not reflect the high density mixed use transit supportive development which was planned.

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<sup>38</sup> The Planning Partnership et. al., op. cit., page 24.

<sup>39</sup> The Planning Partnership et. al., op. cit., page 46.

<sup>40</sup> The Planning Partnership et. al., op. cit., pages 50-58.

<sup>41</sup> Strategic Advisory Committee – Meeting #1, August 17, 2016.



## Choices

**The creation of new strategic growth areas presents significant challenges and the development of such areas takes many years before the goal of a dense mixed use transit-supportive centre is achieved. Despite the direction in Provincial policy towards intensification and the fact that the Town has limited greenfield lands, does the community have the resources to support the development of additional nodes and corridors?**

Oakville and other municipalities such as Mississauga and Markham have been working to develop urban mixed use centres for many years. The challenges to the successful implementation of such plans include requirements for the provision of substantial new infrastructure for transportation and servicing and the related costs; market challenges; and urban design issues. Successful implementation can only occur based on substantial commitment by the municipality as well as the private sector. The Town is already working on a number of fronts to implement its current system of nodes and corridors. In determining whether additional nodes and corridors should be added to the system, the Town must consider its own resources (staff and financial) and its ability to provide required infrastructure, both and whether this is sufficient to provide the required support for such development.

### 4.6 Major Commercial Areas

As discussed in Section 3.5, the categorization of both the Town's Employment and Major Commercial Areas should be reviewed and reconsidered. In that context, the implications of current trends for commercial development in general should also be evaluated. As noted in the Town's Employment and Commercial Review:

"The retail sector is dynamic and constantly changing in response to the marketplace."

As such, the Review identifies a number of issues with implications for the urban structure:

- There will be a demand for additional commercial development in Oakville;
- The North Oakville policy framework provides some opportunities for new commercial development but this has not yet been fully achieved;

- The majority of future demand for commercial development south of Dundas Street will have to be accommodated through redevelopment and/or intensification and there are opportunities for such development; and,
- Shopping habits are changing which may result in new built form. Retail trends such as e-commerce and demographic trends such as the ageing population will have a significant impact on retail spending trends and the resulting built form.

Other studies have reached similar conclusions. In particular, a study done for York Region<sup>42</sup> which has municipal commercial structures similar to Oakville concludes:

- The Region's existing retail network was developed based on reliance on auto-oriented travel by its consumers. Traditional location characteristics such as access, visibility, exposure to high traffic volumes, ease of mobility, and proximity to the market have been, and will continue to be, the primary factors influencing the best retail locations in the Region. In addition, accessibility by non-auto modes of transportation is now also an important location characteristic of the best retail locations. These factors reinforce that the sites with the strongest location characteristics will remain at the top tier of the retail hierarchy.
- Demand for a variety of shopping formats is also expected to continue. A number of the major chain retailers currently have a strong preference for operating in more affordable retail space formats such as the freestanding box store. While other major chain retailers operate on multiple retailing platforms having store prototypes ranging from full service flagship stores to discount formats; or urban market concepts versus small market concepts.
- The effects of online retailing such as e-commerce and mobile commerce are also changing how consumers shop. However, their impact on the 'bricks & mortar' retailing has been, and is expected to be, gradual. In many cases, retailers are reporting that these alternative retailing platforms complement the in-store sales experience and contribute to increasing the overall sales volumes of the retailer. Retail vacancy rates have not increased as a result of e-commerce. However, it is anticipated that while retail space will continue to increase in the future, the rate of increase will be reduced from historic levels.
- Mixed use retail formats will not be viable everywhere, although there is potential for it to occur. Challenges include the limited number of retailers prepared to

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<sup>42</sup> Tate Economic Research Inc. and Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd., "Retail Trends Study "Shift the Market and Market the Shift" Consolidated Summary Report, The Regional Municipality of York, January 2015.

locate in such projects, the costs of development and potential for difficulties with financing, market constraints, and design and logistical challenges. More specifically:

- Mixed use development with ground floor retail does not work everywhere and is limited to locations offering the best site locations which in the foreseeable future will be the Region's Centres and Corridors, particularly in the vicinity of transit nodes;
- There are a limited number of developers who are prepared to undertake such development and who see the benefits of creating an attractive, lifestyle oriented environment which will maximize the use of the land. However even such developers see the need for some flexibility in approach which will allow interim development to occur with intensification in the future; and,
- There are a range of barriers to the successful implementation of such projects including the reluctance of retail tenants to locate in such development particularly residential developments because of conflicts due to noise, odours, the lack of flexibility of the built form to accommodate prototype design and the high costs of development.
- There was recognition that the Region and local municipalities can assist in encouraging greater mixed use development. This includes the provision of fiscal incentives, investment in infrastructure, consideration of operational features which could benefit development, review of parking standards and approaches and the development of policies that allow for interim development and the ability to respond to specific proposals in a more flexible manner.

## Choices

- **The majority of new commercial development south of Dundas will have to be accommodated through intensification. These issues will have to be considered in evaluating the potential for redevelopment in Major Commercial Areas and the form and extent of existing and new nodes and corridors.**

New commercial development south of Dundas will have to be primarily accommodated through intensification. The primary locations which provide such opportunities will be in nodes and corridors where mixed use development is encouraged. However, there are challenges to mixed use development which

include the limited number of retailers prepared to locate in such projects, the costs of development and potential for difficulties with financing, market constraints and design and logistical challenges. These issues will have to be considered in evaluating the potential for redevelopment in Major Commercial Areas and the form and extent of existing and new nodes and corridors.

#### **4.7 Residential Communities**

In reviewing the trends identified for the other components of the urban structure, there are some which have implications for changes within the residential communities, but none which seem to require changes in the concept of maintaining established residential communities both north and south of Dundas Street. In particular, the projected demographic changes may change how existing homes are used (e.g. accommodations for the elderly) or increase the potential for redevelopment and infill, but do not indicate a need for major changes in development form. Similarly, mobility trends which allow for enhanced accessibility may allow older residents to remain in their homes and enhance affordability for new residents who will not have to own their own vehicle even if they purchase homes which are not easily accessible to transit. As a result, the current directions with respect to the residential communities in both Livable Oakville Plan and North Oakville should be maintained despite some issues because of an apparent increase in car ownership. Monitoring of the situation should be undertaken before any changes are made given the potential trends in transportation technology.

#### **Directions**

- **Maintain the current directions with respect to residential communities.**

The lands identified as residential areas in both north and south of Dundas Street represent areas that provide for stable residential communities. This approach continues to be appropriate.

#### **4.8 Future Directions**

In addition to the future directions which appear to be evolving based on current and evolving Provincial policy, there are a number of other factors and trends which also require consideration in terms of their implications for the Town's urban structure.

Specific directions include recognizing that:

- there will be a shift on development patterns which will result in an increase in high – density housing forms generally, although this will not apply equally across the Town, as the Town’s neighbourhoods are not homogeneous. Instead this type of housing will focus in the nodes and corridors;
- the Urban Structure should reflect additional links in the transportation network recommended by the Transportation Master Plan to ensure connectivity in the system; and,
- current directions which recognize the importance of protecting residential areas as an important component of the Urban Structure should be maintained.

With respect to choices:

- **Climate Change**  
There is a need to examine the value of providing for substantive additional areas of public open space as an adaptive/mitigation strategy to reduce the impacts of climate change while recognizing the substantive costs of implementation. In that context, consideration should be given to where existing areas of major public open space should be identified as part of the Town’s Urban Structure.
- **Cultural Heritage**  
With respect to cultural heritage, consideration should be given to recognition of areas designated as “Heritage Conservation Districts” and priority cultural heritage landscapes as part of the Urban Structure.
- **Connectivity**  
A connected community is a livable community one where residents can easily live, work and play. The urban structure should consider how barriers to connectivity can be overcome including major roads, natural features and other impediments.
- **Natural Heritage**  
The natural heritage system south of Dundas Street is not as robust as the system in North Oakville. Should it be reviewed with respect to the potential for strengthening the system, recognizing the challenges of modifying a system in an existing developed area?



- **Transportation System**  
Significant changes in mobility options are potentially anticipated in the next five to ten years are there changes to the Urban Structure which should be considered in response to these potential changes. Within this context, should the unique character of Lakeshore Road be recognized?
- **Nodes and Corridors (Strategic Growth Areas)**  
The creation of new nodes and corridors presents significant challenges and takes many years to implement. Despite the direction in Provincial policy towards intensification and the fact that the Town has limited greenfield lands, does the community have the resources to support the development of additional nodes and corridors?
- **Commercial Development**  
The majority of new commercial development south of Dundas will have to be accommodated through intensification. These issues will have to be considered in evaluating the potential for redevelopment in Major Commercial Areas and the form and extent of existing and new nodes and corridors.

## 5. The Big Picture: Choices and Options

### 5.1 The Big Picture

The importance of the urban structure is reflected in the fact that it establishes where we live, work and play - those basic features of our daily life which help determine the quality of our lives. It sets out the broad parameters - the big picture - we fill in the rest.

The Town of Oakville is at a moment in time where the community must consider how to accommodate growth given that there is no longer any unplanned greenfield land available for development. The Town has an opportunity through the Official Plan review to evaluate the current urban structure and determine if it still provides the appropriate foundation to allow achievement of the Town's goal "To be the most livable town in Canada."

This evaluation process has to be based on an understanding of how the current structure developed, as well as Provincial policy and other factors and trends which will affect the future. Through this process - this conversation about the basic structure of the community – it will be important to consider potential choices and options for future directions.

As a basis for that discussion, this section summarizes the potential directions and choices which have been identified based on the review in Sections 1-4. **It also presents some urban structure options as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation other choices and options may be identified for review and consideration.**

### 5.2 Directions and Choices

The Town has an identifiable existing and planned urban structure as illustrated on Map 5 to this report. However, it is not clearly articulated on a Town-wide basis in the Official Plan. This reflects the history of the Town's development with the urban structure of the area south of Dundas having evolved over many years, while the urban structure for North Oakville, as a greenfield area, was established through a general official plan amendment followed by the preparation of detailed secondary plans. As a result, consolidation of key structural matters should include:

- the establishment and integration of an overarching natural heritage system;

- the establishment of a clear understanding of the relationship of the transportation system with the urban structure; and,
- a complete integration of the urban structure developed for North Oakville with other parts of the community and the Region.

Further, the urban structure which has evolved does not fully reflect consideration of a future where development will comprise primarily of infill and intensification.

The background review has identified a number of clear directions which should be considered regarding the Urban Structure both with respect to general Town-wide issues and also for specific components of the Urban Structure. In addition, a range of choices has been identified. These are summarized as follows:

- **Natural Heritage and Open Space (see Map 1)**

The North Oakville Secondary Plans identify the establishment and protection of a natural heritage and open space system as a first priority in establishing the Urban Structure of that area. This same approach should be explicitly recognized for the entire Town.

A related direction which builds on this fundamental approach is recognition that the Urban Structure needs to be re-examined with respect to the Town's Urban River Valleys, in the context of the proposed revisions to the Greenbelt Plan. At the structural level, this can be identified conceptually. However, ultimately within the framework of that general direction, greater clarity and consultation on the proposed mapping changes is needed to understand the implications and to ensure that relevant and rigorous local data is used to update provincial mapping.

Choices which relate to the Natural Heritage and Open Space component of the urban structure arise from consideration of the implications of climate change and changes which have occurred in Provincial policy. These choices include:

- Whether there is a need to provide for substantive additional areas of public open space as an adaptive/mitigative strategy to reduce the impact of climate change, and does the value of such a strategy offset the costs of such an approach and is it achievable?
- Related to the issue of the acquisition of additional public open space, is the question of whether existing areas of public open space should be

identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure to ensure their significance is recognized and protected?

- Should the Urban Structure also recognize areas designated as "Cultural Heritage Landscapes" given that such areas may include significant land areas for an urban setting, albeit lands which are currently in private ownership?
- Should the Natural Heritage System south of Dundas Street, which was developed prior to the establishment of current Provincial policy which recognizes the importance of a linked natural heritage system, be reviewed in the context of the PPS 2014?

- **Major Transportation Corridors (see Map 2)**

Land use and transportation planning are inextricably linked. As a consequence, a balanced transportation system including transit and active transportation and existing and planned corridors established by the TMP, is a key building block for the urban structure and should be identified and protected. A connected system allows residents to move freely between live, work and play. The current congestion in the transportation system in the Town and the GTA as a whole significantly impacts on livability.

Related choices include:

- Recognizing that the successful implementation of a balanced transportation system is essential to ensure a livable community, but that it has to be achievable from a financial perspective. Is this objective feasible?
- Are there changes to the Urban Structure which should be considered to reflect the significant changes anticipated in transportation with respect to mobility options?
- A connected community is a livable community. Should the Urban Structure consider how barriers to connectivity can be overcome including major roads, natural features and other impediments?

- **Nodes and Corridors (Strategic Growth Areas) (see Maps 3A and 3B)**

While Provincial policy now dictates the establishment of strategic growth areas, the establishment of focal points for development has always been fundamental

to the Town's urban structure starting with Downtown Oakville, the original Town centre. However, lessons learned based on experience have indicated that the creation of new growth areas and the related shift in development patterns including mixed use development and high density housing forms presents significant challenges. This results in a need for careful consideration of the role of such areas in the future.

The choices which should be considered include:

- Is the current system of nodes and corridors, if developed as planned, sufficient to accommodate mandated growth in the Growth Plan to 2041 – does the existing planned system have the potential to provide the necessary mix of uses and people and jobs combined per hectare? Are there modifications or refinements to the current system that would support accommodating required growth?
  - Are there additional nodes and corridors not identified as part of the Town's Urban Structure which should be evaluated with respect to specific criteria and considered for identification as strategic growth areas (e.g. Bronte GO Station, Health Oriented Mixed Use Node, Oakville Place, Trafalgar Road Corridor, Other Major Commercial Areas, 407 Transitway/Bronte Road, West side of Bronte Road north of Dundas Street - Palermo North);
  - The creation of new strategic growth areas presents significant challenges including requirements for substantial new infrastructure for transportation and servicing and related costs; market challenges; and urban design issues. Successful implementation can only occur based on substantial commitment by the municipality as well as the private sector. The Town is already working on a number of fronts to implement its current system of nodes and corridors. In determining whether additional nodes and corridors should be added to the system, the Town must consider its own resources and whether they are sufficient to provide the required support for such development.
- **Employment and Major Commercial Areas (Map 4)**

Oakville has an evolving macro-economy premised on lower industrial growth potential and increased demand in the office sector which differentiates it from other municipalities. The categorization of the Town's employment must be looked at through this lens. In addition, consideration needs to be given to the



appropriateness of continuing to categorize “Major Commercial Areas” in the HROP as Employment. Further, there is a range of current trends for commercial development in general which have implications for the role of commercial development in the urban structure.

The choices which should be considered include:

- What is the most appropriate approach for Oakville to the categorization of employment areas? There is still a need for areas of traditional industrial development, but much less so than in other municipalities. In addition, consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of continuing to categorize “Major Commercial Areas” in the HROP as “Employment.”
  - The majority of new commercial development south of Dundas will have to be accommodated through intensification. The primary locations which provide for such opportunities will be in Growth Centres where mixed use development is encouraged. However, there are challenges to mixed use development (e.g. limited number of retailers prepared to locate in such projects, costs of development, logistical challenges). These issues will have to be considered in evaluating the potential for redevelopment in Major Commercial Areas and the form and extent of existing and new Growth Area designations.
- **Residential Communities (Map 5)**

Provincial policy anticipates the identification of a hierarchy of intensification with certain locations acting as focal points for such development, while other areas will accommodate limited change. The Town’s current Urban Structure identifies Residential Communities as stable areas where limited change is anticipated. This approach continues to be appropriate. However, the following should be considered with respect to such areas:

    - Any changes in the number of nodes and corridors and the extent of such areas should consider the impacts on adjacent residential areas.
    - Should the Urban Structure recognize areas designated as Heritage Conservation Districts the majority of which apply to Residential Areas?

### 5.3 Options

To assist in understanding how the identified directions and choices might be considered with respect to a town-wide urban structure (connecting North and South and East and West), three options have been developed. The options are intended as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation, other choices and options may be developed for review and consideration.

The options are outlined on Maps 6-8 of this report and described as follows:

- **Option 1 - Map 6**

Option 1 would maintain the existing and planned urban structure as identified on Map 5 and described in Section 2.1 of this report. The components include:

- The Natural Heritage System;
- Major Transportation Corridors;
- Nodes and Corridors;
- Employment Areas
- Major Commercial Areas; and,
- Residential Communities.

The only significant difference is the inclusion of public parks and open space areas abutting or adjacent to the Natural Heritage System. These are existing public lands which support and enhance the Natural Heritage System. In keeping with the Town's Mission Statement for Livable Oakville and Environment First approach for North Oakville, recognition of these key open space areas as part of the urban structure would appear to be appropriate.

- **Option 2 – Map 7**

Option 2 builds on Option 1 with the objective of providing more choices:

- of places to live and work; and,
- for travel within the community and the region.

In that context, Option 2 would require enhanced coordination of land use and transportation planning and investment and includes:

- Identification of Priority Transit Corridors (and related Nodes and Corridors)

The proposed Priority Transit Corridors include:

- 407 Transitway;

- Trafalgar Road;
  - Dundas Street;
  - Speers/Cornwall Roads; and,
  - Bronte Road.
- Nodes and Corridors
- The related Nodes and Corridors which support the optimization of the transit investments and provide more choices to live and work are proposed to include:
- Midtown Oakville  
Proposed expansion of Growth Area which is recognized as an Urban Growth Centre and Major Transit Station in the Growth Plan to include lands on the north side of the QEW. The expansion lands include Oakville Place as recommended by the Trafalgar Road Corridor Planning Study<sup>43</sup> well as lands to the east of Trafalgar Road which are currently developing as a mixed use employment oriented area.
  - Trafalgar Road Corridor  
Trafalgar Road has long been recognized as a major transportation corridor and the Trafalgar Road Corridor Planning Study identifies the potential for significant intensification along that corridor which should be recognized as part of the urban structure.
  - Uptown Core  
A modification to delete certain lands in the southwest quadrant which are developed in a form which does not reflect a density anticipated as part of a node is recommended. This is balanced by an expansion of the node on the east side of Trafalgar to recognize the potential for intensification in the long term of this commercial area.
  - Neyagawa Urban Core Area  
A modification to extend the node northerly to better support the 407 Transitway.
  - Palermo Urban Core Area  
A modification to extend the node northerly and westerly north of Dundas Street to better support the 407 Transitway, the proposed

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<sup>43</sup> Town of Oakville, Livable Oakville Trafalgar Road Corridor Planning Study, Final Report, February 2014, page 11.

Transit Corridors along Bronte Road and Dundas Street. A corresponding deletion south of Dundas to reflect the fact that certain lands west and east of Bronte Road are developed in a form which does not reflect a density anticipated as part of a node.  
Health Oriented Mixed Use Node

Recognition of the existing health oriented node which is developing around the hospital to better support the Transit Corridors along Dundas Street and maximize public investment in the hospital, while providing opportunities to live and work in close proximity to this key community facility.

- Bronte GO Station Major Node  
Recognition of the potential for the creation of a more significant node around this key transit station is important given the improvements proposed to the station and GO service. Currently the lands are underutilized and optimization of the investment in the GO facilities is an important consideration in the development of the Town's urban structure.
- Dorval Crossing  
This Node is currently identified as a Major Commercial Area. Its location on the QEW in close proximity to both the Bronte and Midtown GO Stations requires consideration of the intensification of this area, including the potential for mixed-use development.
- Speers/Cornwall Road Employment Mixed Use Corridor  
The Speers/Cornwall Road Corridor is recognized as an area with a diversity of employment and commercial uses. Given its character, it should be recognized as a unique employment mixed use area in the urban structure. The Speers Road Corridor Study which is to commence in 2016 should consider also the Cornwall Road Corridor. That process will confirm long-term land uses and intensification opportunities in support of transit and other objectives of the Town related to urban design and streetscape options.
- Main Street Growth Areas  
Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village are recognized as "Growth Areas." However, their role is quite different than the other Nodes and Corridors. Any new development must be carefully and sensitively

integrated with the character of these special parts of the community. The urban structure should recognize the unique nature of these Growth Areas.

- Identification of Major Active Transportation Connections  
Active transportation (e.g. walking, biking) will be a consideration in the detailed design of all components of the transportation system. However, recognition of major routes solely for active transportation is important. This reflects the importance of active transportation in the creation of a livable community. A major east/west route is identified as well as the potential for a route through Bronte Provincial Park.
- Lakeshore Road Heritage Corridor  
Lakeshore Road was first east west route linking the Town as a whole. This iconic route has a special status in the community and should be recognized as unique – with any changes to be carefully considered in the context of its history.

- **Option 3 – Map 8**

Option 3 builds on the urban structure proposed in Option 2 and further strengthens the Natural Heritage and Open Space System including:

- Complete Parks and Open Space System  
The proposed urban structure in Option 3 would identify all public open space in recognition of the importance of these areas to creating a livable community. Their role is not only with respect to recreation but also as “green infrastructure” which provides for ecological and hydrological functions and processes.
- Permanent Quasi-Public Private Open Space  
The Town includes a number of major cemeteries. These represent permanent open space areas which also like the parks and open space system contribute to creating a livable community and represent “green infrastructure.”
- Enhanced Urban River Valleys  
The Town has a number of Urban River Valleys. These are a key part of the Town’s Urban Structure. However, particularly south of the QEW historic development has restricted the role and function of these valleys.



The need for enhanced valley systems is proposed to be recognized as part of the urban structure.

- Cultural Heritage Landscapes

The Town is currently assessing its cultural heritage landscapes. Once the study has been completed it is proposed that such areas be considered for inclusion in the urban structure.

## **5.4 Starting the Conversation**

The background review and the options are intended as a starting point for a conversation with the community about what the future urban structure should look like and how it should function. Through this conversation, other choices and options may be identified for review and consideration.

In addition to discussions with the community, an evaluation of the options will be carried out using criteria based on the existing policy framework as well as factors related to:

- Transportation;
- Water/wastewater servicing;
- Residential, commercial and employment development trends/market demand;
- Ability to accommodate population and employment; and,
- Other factors such as affordable housing, community facilities, existing high-level financial impacts.

Based on the input from the community and the evaluation, a preferred urban structure will be developed together with related policy directions for consideration as part of the Official Plan Review. This will be reviewed and refined before being finalized.

# MAP 1 EXISTING URBAN STRUCTURE - NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AND PARKWAY BELT

DRAFT

## LEGEND

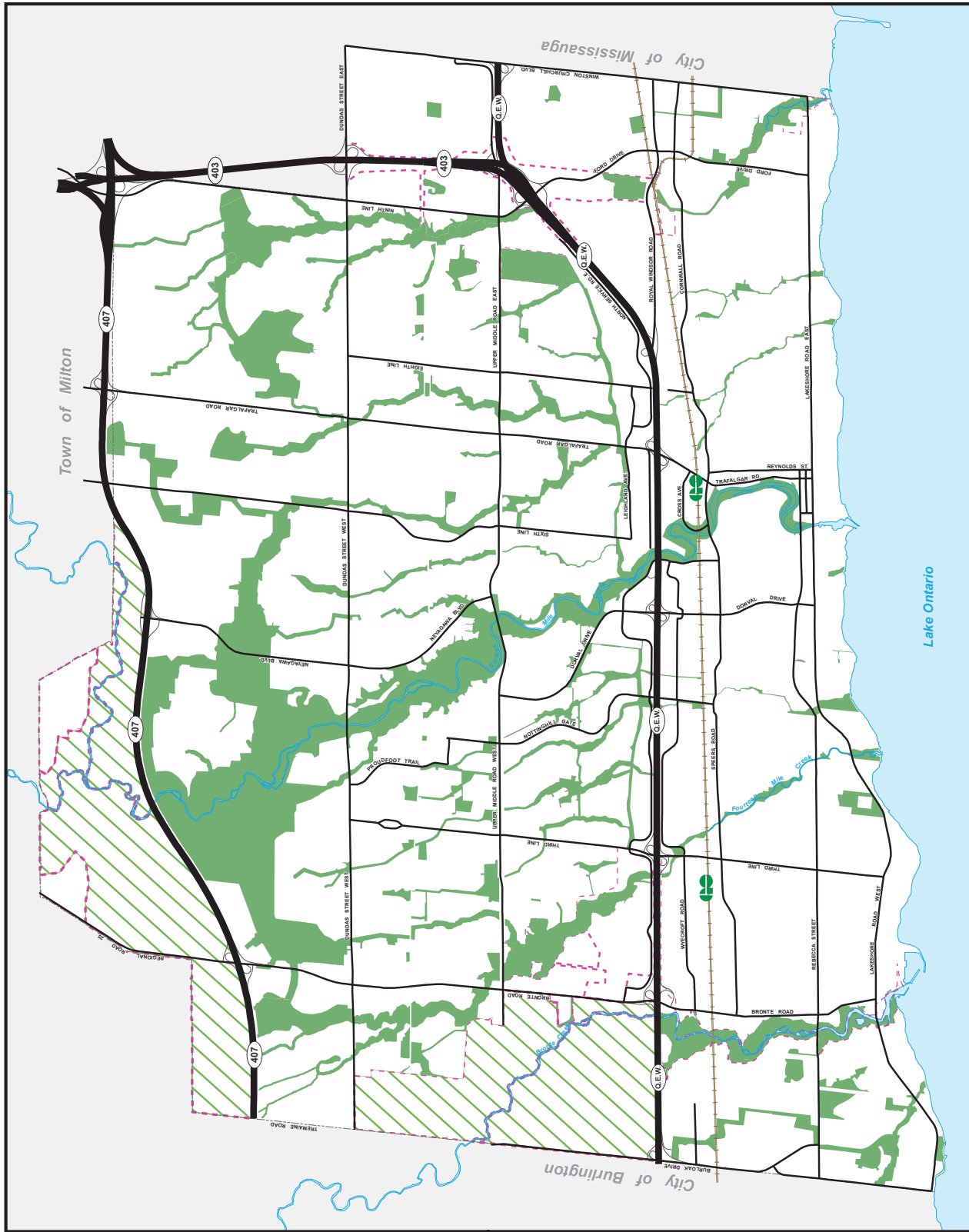
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- MAJOR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
- STREAM CORRIDORS

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



1:50,000  
October 2016

Mapping Source: Town of Oakville



# MAP 2 EXISTING URBAN STRUCTURE - MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS (including transit) COMPONENT

DRAFT

## LEGEND

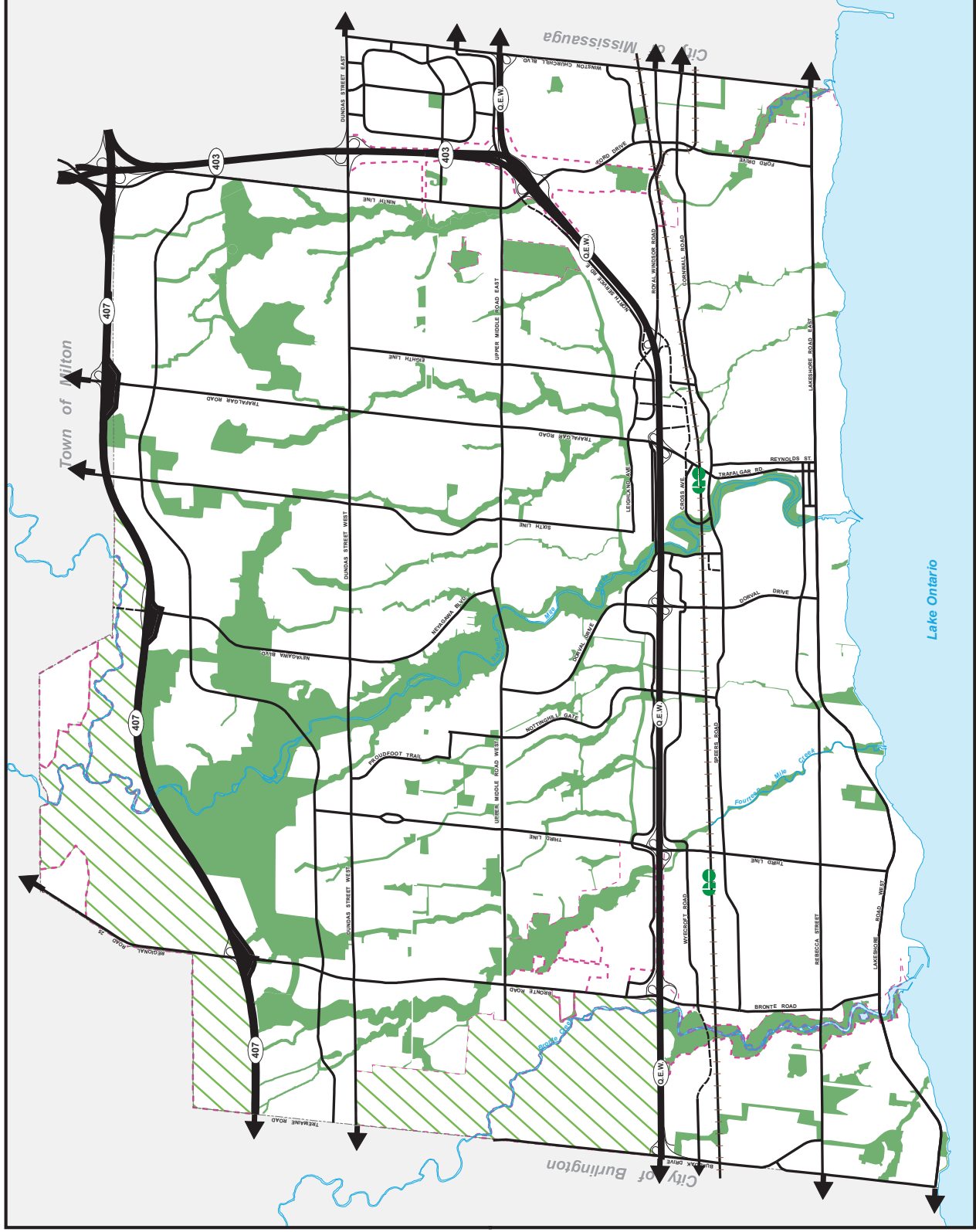
- MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- CONNECTIONS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDORS

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



1:50,000  
October 2016

Mapping Source: Town of Oakville



# MAP 3A CURRENT URBAN STRUCTURE - GROWTH AREA COMPONENTS

DRAFT

## LEGEND

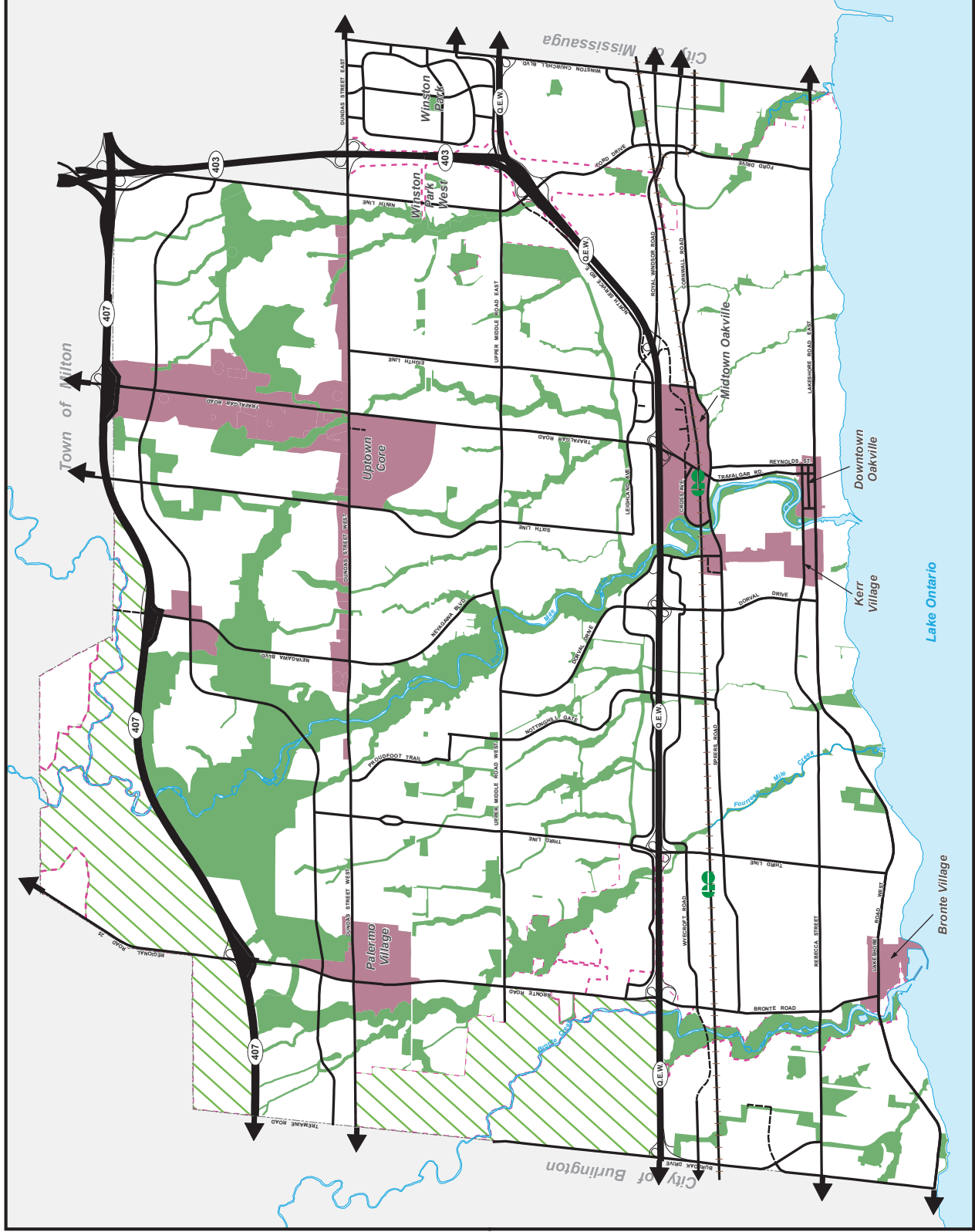
- GROWTH AREAS
- MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- CONNECTIONS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDORS

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



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October 2016

Mapping Source: Town of Oakville







# MAP 4

## CURRENT URBAN STRUCTURE - EMPLOYMENT/MAJOR COMMERCIAL COMPONENTS

### DRAFT

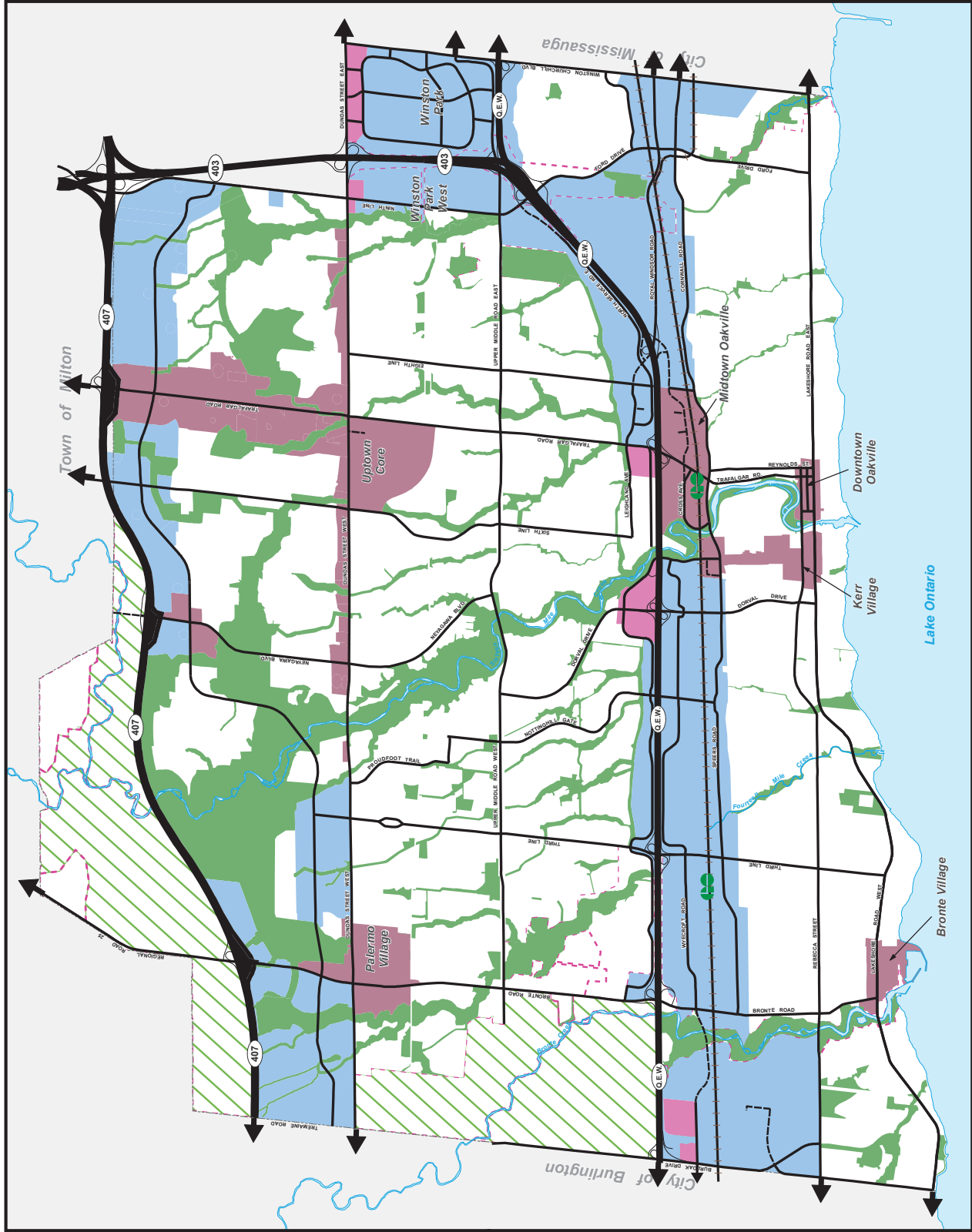
#### LEGEND

- EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
- GROWTH AREAS
- MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS
- CONNECTIONS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDOR

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations

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October 2016



# MAP 5

## CURRENT URBAN STRUCTURE - ALL COMPONENTS INCLUDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### DRAFT

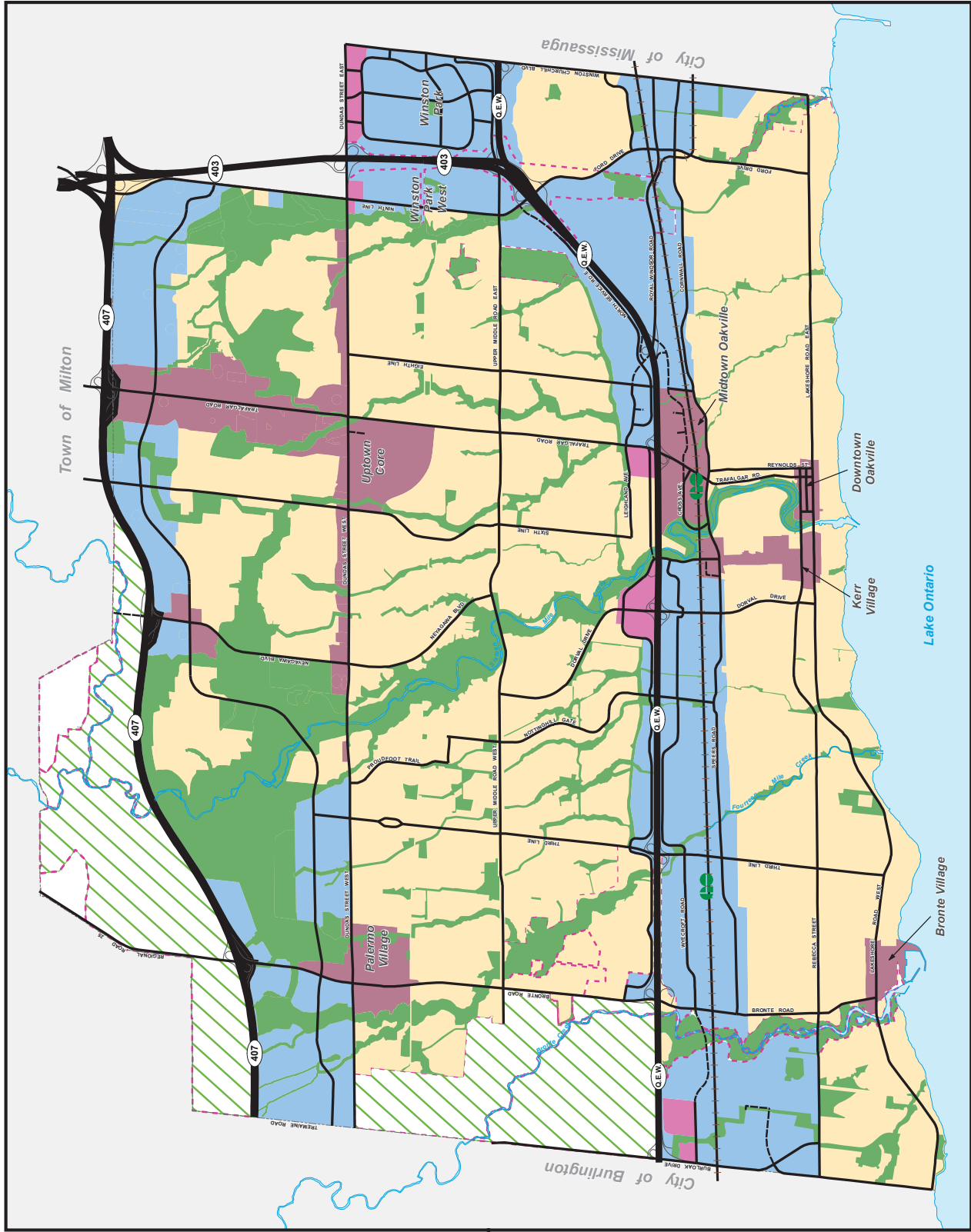
#### LEGEND

- RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
- GROWTH AREAS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDOR

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations

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# MAP 6 OPTION 1 MAINTAIN EXISTING URBAN STRUCTURE

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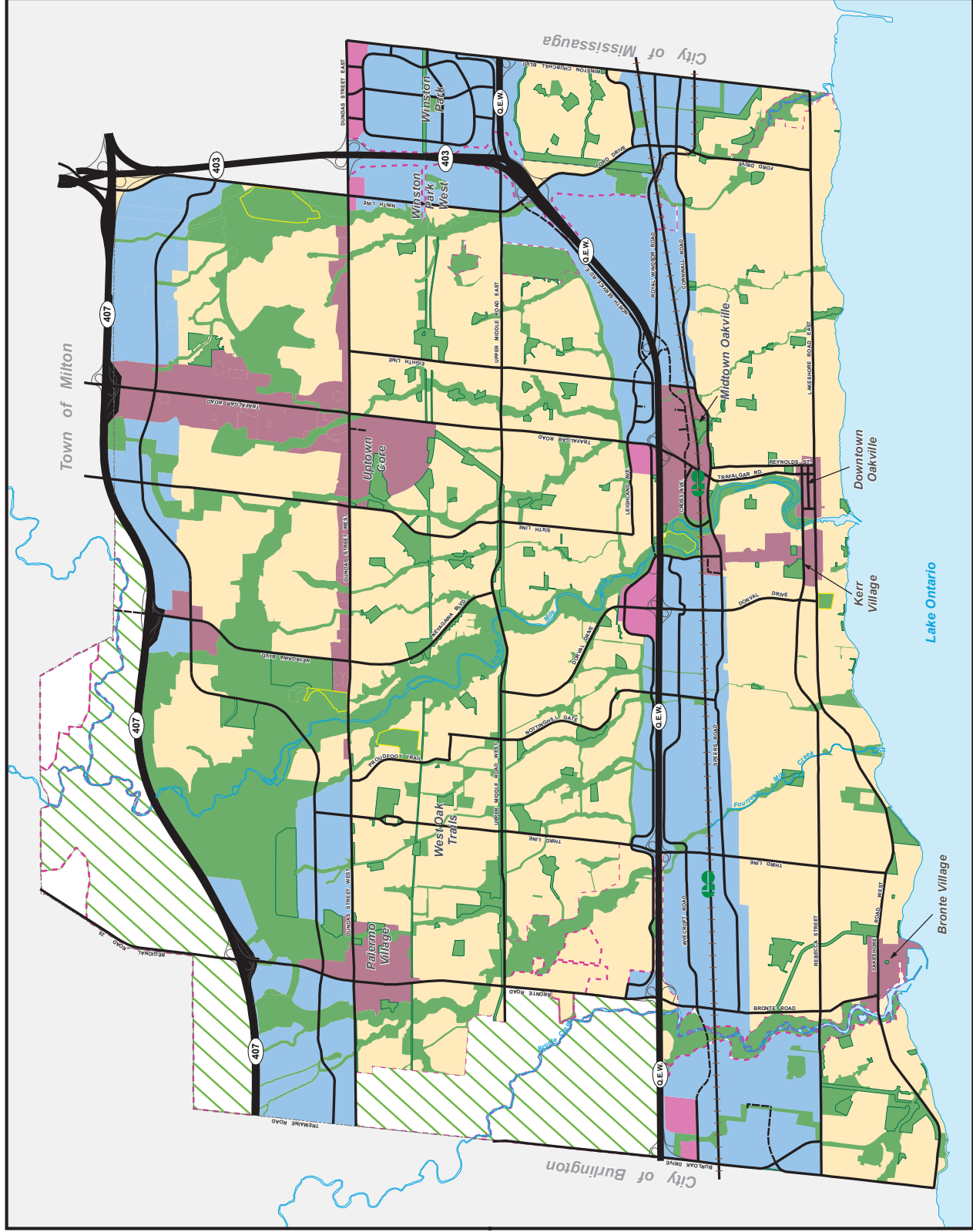
## LEGEND

- RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
- GROWTH AREAS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
- PRIVATE OPEN SPACE
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDOR

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



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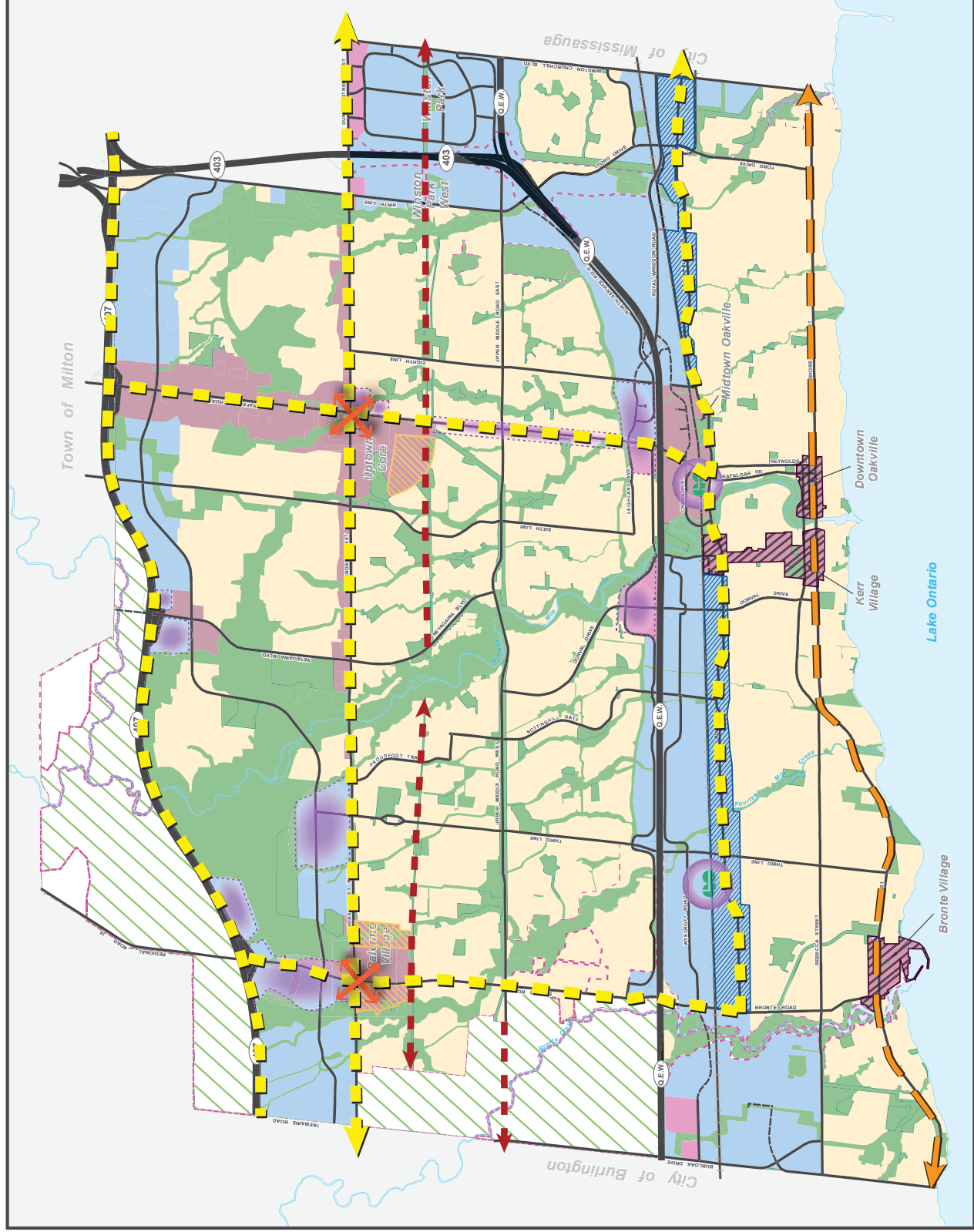
# **MAP 7** **OPTION 2** **DRAFT**

- LEGEND**
- MAIN STREET AREA
  - EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREA
  - EMPLOYMENT MIXED USE CORRIDOR
  - PRIORITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR
  - MAJOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS
  - HERITAGE CORRIDOR
  - ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY
  - MAJOR NODE (MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS)
  - NEW NODE/Node OR CORRIDOR EXPANSION
  - RESIDENTIAL AREAS
  - EMPLOYMENT AREAS
  - MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
  - GROWTH AREAS
  - NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
  - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
  - PARKWAY BELT
  - GREENBELT
  - RAILWAY LINE
  - MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
  - STREAM CORRIDOR

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



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# MAP 8 OPTION 3 DRAFT

## LEGEND

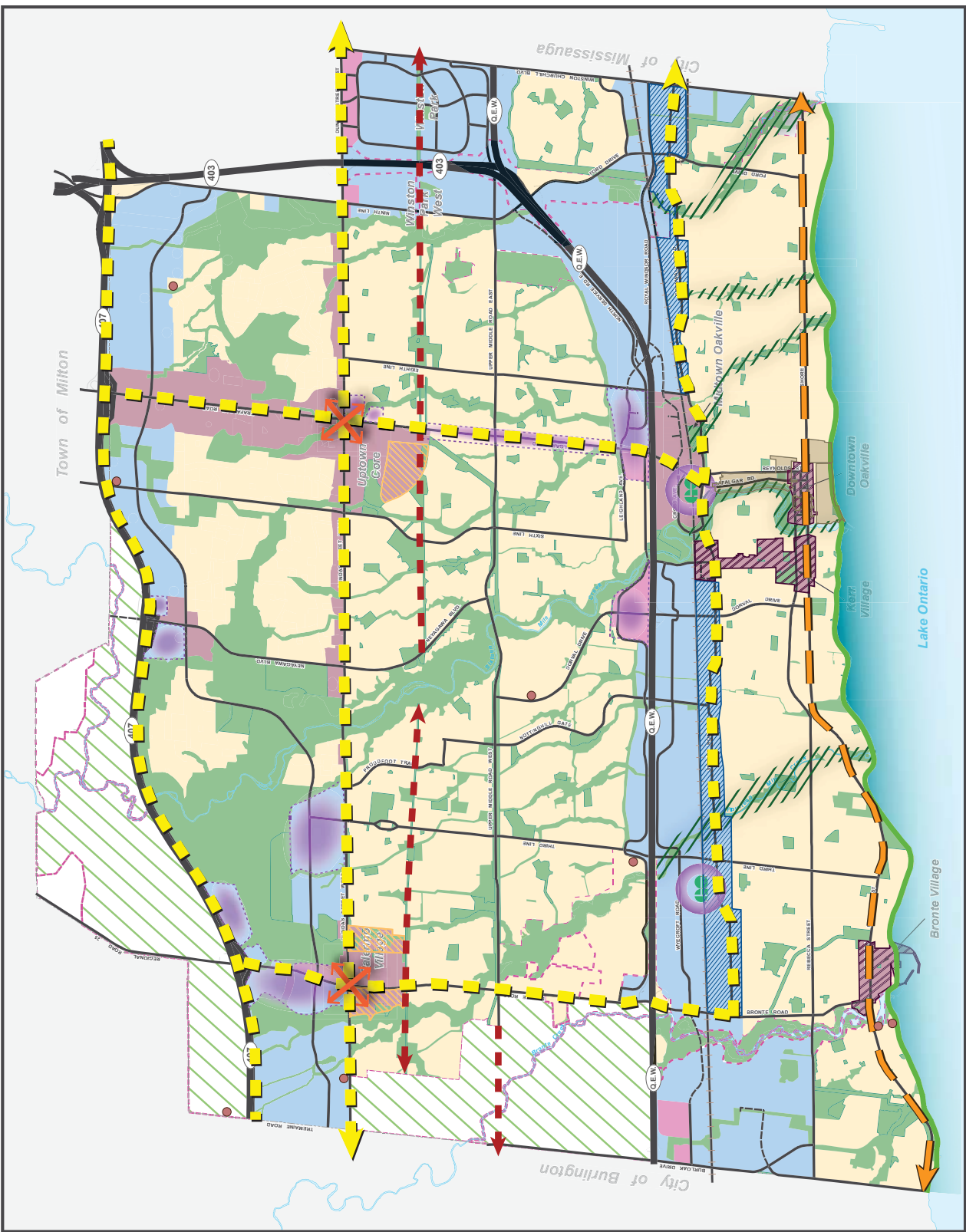
- WATERFRONT ENHANCEMENT AREA
- ENHANCED URBAN RIVER VALLEYS
- MAIN STREET AREA
- EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREA
- EMPLOYMENT MIXED USE CORRIDOR
- PRIORITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR
- MAJOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS HERITAGE CORRIDOR
- ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY
- MAJOR NODE (MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS)
- NEW NODE/NODE EXPANSION
- NATURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPES (Note: To be considered for inclusion upon completion of town's assessment)
- HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
- RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS
- GROWTH AREAS
- NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM AREA
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
- CEMETERIES
- PARKWAY BELT
- GREENBELT
- RAILWAY LINE
- MAJOR TRANSIT STATION
- STREAM CORRIDOR

NOTE: This Schedule does not represent land use designations



1:50,000  
October 2016

Mapping Source: Town of Oakville





## **Appendix A**

## **Appendix A Town of Oakville Urban Structure Study Discussion Paper**

### **Forecast Housing Demand in Suburban GTHA Municipalities – Focus on the Town of Oakville**

September 19, 2016



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 **Planning for growth**

## ***Introduction***

The continued rapid urbanization of existing and planned greenfield across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), combined with targeted intensification within built-up urban areas is anticipated to present a myriad of growth management opportunities and challenges for this area. This discussion paper assesses the impacts of long-term demographic and economic trends on housing needs in the GTHA, with a particular focus on the Town of Oakville, Ontario. More specifically, the analysis assesses how future demographic and economic trends are expected to impact housing preferences, housing choice and affordability, future densities and land-use development patterns at the regional and local level.

## ***Understanding Recent Oakville Housing Trends within the GTHA Context***

In many respects, Oakville's long-term population and economic growth potential is largely tied to the success of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) as a whole. The GTHA represents the economic powerhouse of Ontario and the centre of a large portion of the economic activity in Canada. The GTHA is also economically diverse with most of the top 20 traded industry clusters throughout North America having a strong presence in this region.

With a robust economy and diverse mix of export-based employment sectors, the GTHA is highly attractive on an international level to new businesses and investors. The GTHA also has a strong appeal given the area's regional infrastructure, access to labour force, post-secondary institutions and proximity to the U.S. border. In turn, this continues to support steady population and housing growth within the City of Toronto and the GTHA "905" municipalities, largely driven by international and inter-provincial net migration to this region.

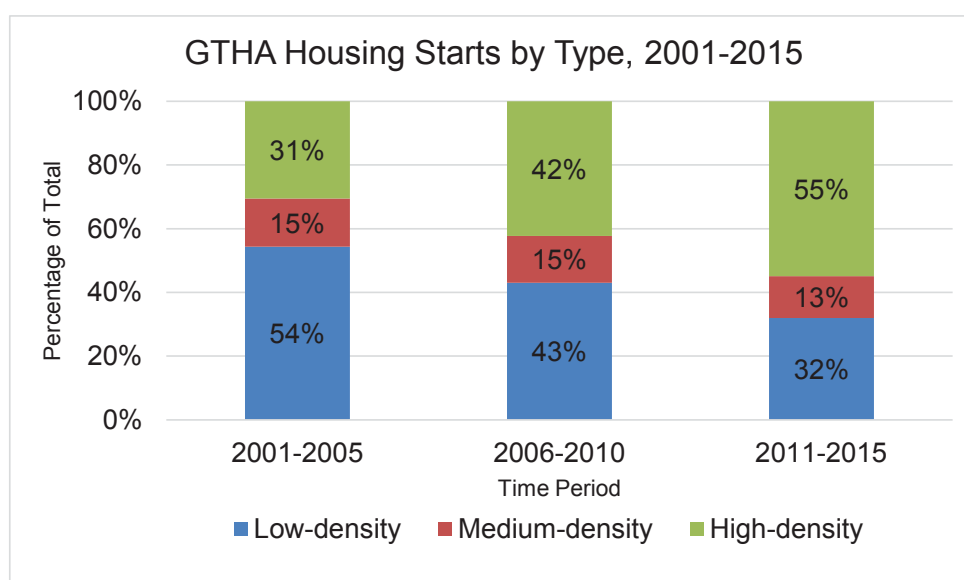
Over the past decade, the GTHA has experienced strong population growth, averaging approximately 100,000 persons per year, driven largely by net migration. During this time, the type and location of housing developed to accommodate this population growth has changed significantly. New housing development activity in the GTHA is becoming increasingly dense, with a greater share of new housing development occurring through more compact medium- and high-density housing forms. At the same time, traditional ground-oriented housing forms (i.e. single detached, semi-detached and townhomes) are increasingly being replaced by more compact housing types (i.e. small lot singles, townhomes, apartments, secondary suites, etc.).

Over the past 15 years, low-density housing development in the GTHA as a share of total housing development has decreased significantly, from 54% in 2001-2005 to 32% in 2011-2015, as shown in Figure 1. While overall housing development activity has remained relatively stable since 2001, the number of low-density units constructed annually has declined substantially over the period, as shown in Figure 2. In 2001, low-density development activity in the GTHA averaged approximately 30,000 units per year. Since then, development activity has declined by two-thirds to approximately 10,000 units per year. This trend has largely been driven by both a tightening of

greenfield housing supply across the GTHA, combined with reduced housing affordability and demographic change.

Across the GTHA, the inventory of new low-rise units on the market hit a record low in 2015. In 2015, the inventory of new units on the market was less than one-third of the level in 2006, at 5,170 units compared to approximately 17,500.<sup>44</sup> With respect to the resale housing market, the inventory of MLS resale ground-related homes in December 2015 in both the City of Toronto and the “905” area stood at just 1.4 months, considerably below the 5 months indicative of a balanced market – this has been falling steadily since 2012.<sup>45</sup>

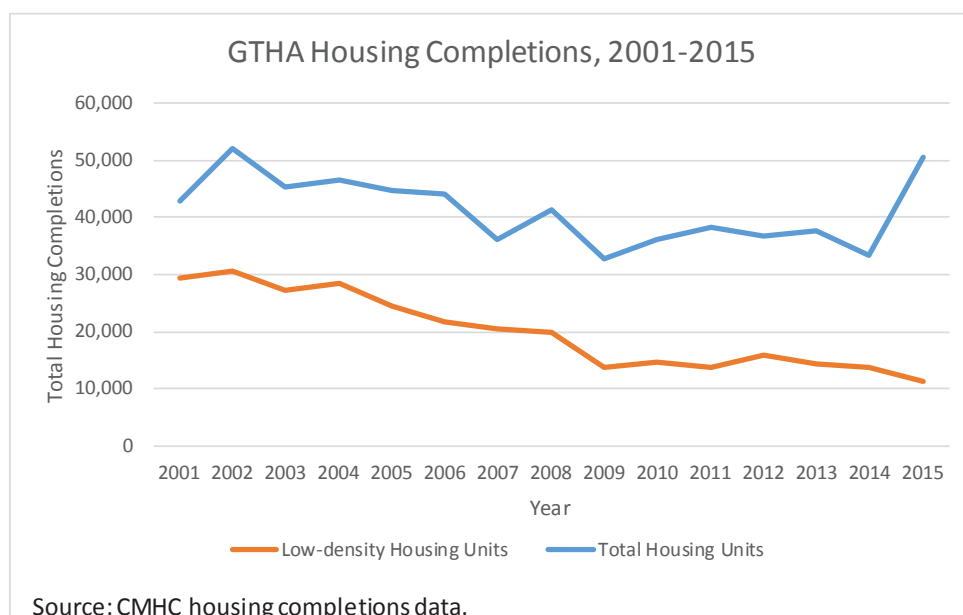
**Figure 1**



<sup>44</sup> GTA 3.0 A new Era of Complexity in the Property Market presentation, RealNet, June 16, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> GTA 905/416 Charts: Resale (MLS) Housing Market 2012-2015

**Figure 2**



In the face of recent housing market conditions and demographic change, a growing share of GTHA development activity has been accommodated through intensification in high-density housing forms. At the same time, greenfield development in suburban GTHA markets is occurring at increasing densities and through a broader mix of housing types.<sup>46</sup> For suburban GTHA housing markets, demand for higher-density housing forms is anticipated to be strongest in area which offer proximity to pedestrian-oriented office environments that feature mixed-use development and access to high-order transit.

Within the Town of Oakville, residential building permit activity over the past 10 years has been strongly weighted towards ground-oriented housing forms (i.e. single/semi-detached and townhomes), however, during this time period, the share of residential building permits issued for high-density housing forms has steadily increased. Recent residential building permit trends within the Town of Oakville have been influenced by both broader demographic and socio-economic trends as well as the Town's diminishing supply of "shovel-ready" greenfield residential land supply. The opening of North Oakville is expected to provide opportunities for additional ground-oriented housing in Oakville to the year 2031. As of mid-2015, North Oakville is estimated to have a potential supply to accommodate approximately 11,300 new ground-oriented housing units.

As the larger urban centres within the GTHA, including the Town of Oakville continue to mature, there is an increasing need to increase the utilization of available land resources to accommodate new development. This represents both an opportunity and a challenge for the Town of Oakville and its residents. On the one hand, population

<sup>46</sup> Growing Pains, Understanding the New Reality of Population and Dwelling Patterns in the Toronto and Vancouver Regions, the Neptis Foundation, 2015



growth and increased urbanization is likely to bring new urban amenities and municipal services (i.e. increased transit services, indoor recreation facilities, shopping centres, arts and cultural facilities, etc.) as well as local employment opportunities, which will benefit local residents. On the other hand, the finite supply of ground-oriented housing forms within the Town and surrounding regional market area will continue to place upward pressure on housing prices and continue to erode housing affordability.

### ***GTHA Housing Price Appreciation and Affordability***

Over the past two decades, the GTHA has experienced a steady increase in housing prices driven by rising land prices, strong population growth, a robust regional employment market and low mortgage rates. Over the 2006-2015 period, average new home prices in the low-rise sector have nearly doubled, having increased from approximately \$390,000 to \$775,000.<sup>47</sup> Much of this price appreciation has occurred since 2011. Over the same period, the price appreciation in new high-rise dwellings has been more moderate, increasing from approximately \$300,000 in 2006 to \$450,000 in 2015.<sup>48</sup> The price difference between new low-rise and high-rise products in the GTHA has accelerated to a record of \$327,000. The cost of low-density housing in Oakville has historically been higher than the GTHA average, and in 2015, new single-detached home prices were 65% higher in Oakville than the GTHA average.<sup>49</sup> While average household income levels in Oakville are well above the provincial average, household incomes have not kept pace with rising resale and new housing prices in Oakville. As a result, affordable housing needs in Oakville have steadily increased over the past several years.

Due to the significant price appreciation in new homes over the past decade, housing affordability in the GTHA has been significantly eroded. This has been most apparent for single family homes where housing costs as a share of median income have increased from approximately 50% in 2006 to 71% in 2015.<sup>50</sup> In contrast, condominium ownership costs are significantly lower at 37% of median income, and have increased only marginally from 30% over the past decade.<sup>51</sup> While housing affordability has traditionally been a problem in lower income brackets, the problem of affordability has spilled over to residents in higher income levels and to those in homeownership.<sup>52</sup>

As a result of this upward pressure on housing prices, there is a need to ensure that sufficient opportunities exist to accommodate a range of housing types for all income levels in Oakville, including market, affordable, assisted and emergency housing.<sup>53,54,55</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> GTA 3.0 A new Era of Complexity in the Property Market presentation, RealNet, June 16, 2015.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> CMHC new absorbed home price data for single detached dwellings.

<sup>50</sup> RBC Economics, Housing Trends and Affordability, February 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> GTA HOUSING BOOM MASKS GROWING STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES, TD Economics Special Report, January 19, 2015.

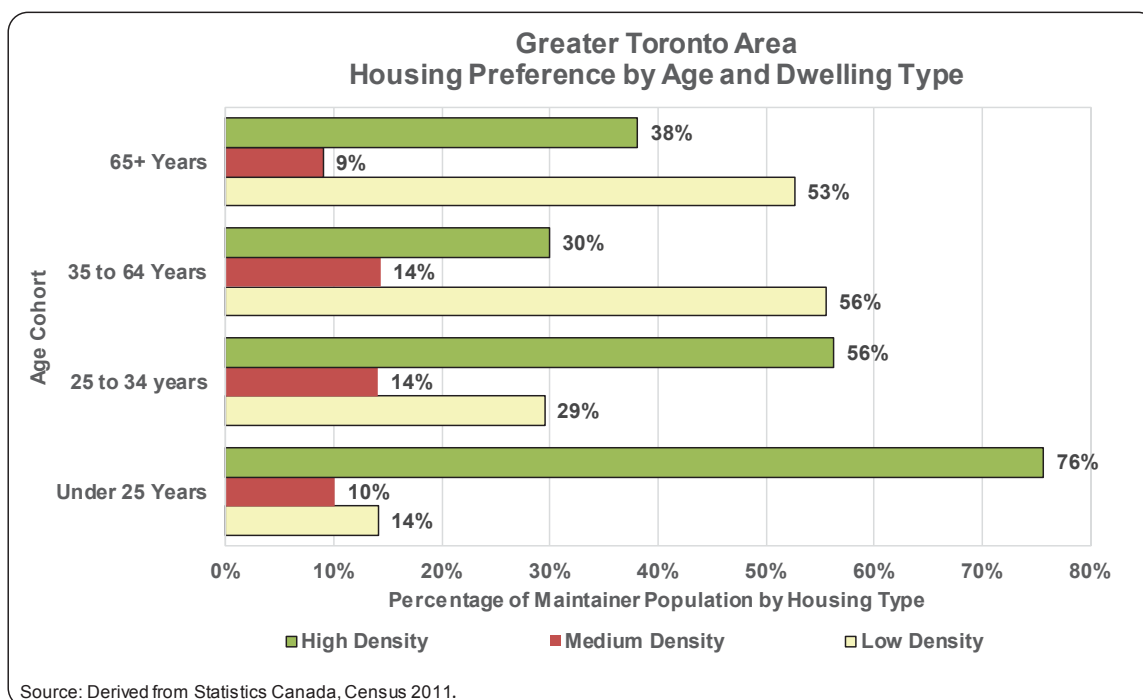
<sup>53</sup> Affordable housing is defined as housing with a market price or rent that is affordable to households of low to moderate income, spending no more than 30 percent of their gross income without government subsidies, with sufficient income remaining to meet other daily living needs. As of 2013, the affordable housing income threshold in Halton was \$98,410.

## Demographic and Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Housing Preferences

Demographic and socio-economic trends strongly influence both housing need and form. Trends in household occupancy and age structure are particularly important statistics for planners, as these trends have broad implications on the amount and type of future housing needs associated with population growth.

Housing preferences vary considerably by age cohort as a result of varying household income, lifestyle and stage in life cycle. Across the GTHA, the demand for high-density dwellings is highest among those under the age of 35, as illustrated in Figure 3. For those aged 35+, a stronger preference is identified for low- and medium-density dwellings, with the preference for high-density dwellings increasing substantially for the 65+ age group. This increase in the preference for high-density housing forms is most notable in the 75+ age group. The physical and socio-economic characteristics of the 75+ age group (on average) are considerably different than those of younger seniors, empty-nesters and working-age adults. On average, older seniors have less mobility, less disposable income and have relatively more health issues compared to younger seniors. Typically, these characteristics associated with this age group drive their relatively higher propensity for medium- and high-density housing forms which are in proximity to urban services and amenities (e.g. hospitals/health care facilities and other community facilities geared towards seniors).

Figure 3



<sup>54</sup> Assisted housing is defined as housing that is available to low and moderate income households for rent or purchase where part of the housing cost is subsidized through a government program.

<sup>55</sup> Emergency housing refers to shelters, supportive housing, transitional housing, etc.

## ***Planning for an Aging Population***

In 2016, the oldest of the Babyboomers (born 1946-1964) turned 70 years old. Today, Babyboomers are healthier, more affluent and more active than any previous generation within this age group. Throughout history, Babyboomers have strongly influenced consumer spending patterns, economic trends and housing preferences. As the Babyboomers plan for the coming decades, they will be seeking a different lifestyle and ultimately different retirement plan than their parents.

Similar to the Province as a whole, the GTHA population is also getting older. Between 2011 and 2041, the percentage of the GTHA population which is 65 years of age and older will increase from 13% to 21%. Within the Town of Oakville, the number of seniors 65+ is anticipated to increase by approximately 33,000 persons between 2016 and 2041. This represents approximately 44% of total population growth during this time period. The majority of the growth in the senior population in Oakville is expected from the existing population and, to a lesser extent, through net migration.

Not only is the Babyboom age group large in terms of population, it is also extremely diverse with respect to age, income, health, mobility, and lifestyle/life stage. Accommodating older seniors continues to be a key planning issue across the GTHA, including Halton Region and the Town of Oakville, as a growing percentage of the population will reach 75 years of age and older over the next 15 years. This is anticipated to drive the need for a range of housing forms geared to an aging population (i.e. affordable housing, adult lifestyle housing, assisted living, etc.) which will allow individuals the ability to transition within their respective housing accommodations as they age. Despite these predictions, the housing choices that the Babyboomer generation will make in their senior years is broad and challenging to predict due to the diverse nature of the age cohort and the multiple factors driving their housing preferences.

Considerable research has been undertaken in recent years regarding the aging population and its impact on housing needs over the long term. The majority of literature and commentary regarding the housing needs of older Canadians suggests that a large percentage of seniors are choosing to “age in place”; that is, to continue to live in their current home and/or community for as long as possible even if their health changes.<sup>56</sup> While there is strong rationale to support “aging in place” as a general concept, it is important to address the specific circumstances within the regional housing market as well as the economic and socio-economic factors (i.e. income, wealth, mobility, health, etc.) which will influence future housing preferences within the Town of Oakville as the Babyboomer population ages. This includes the characteristics of the local and regional housing stock in terms of market choice by housing size, built-form, affordability and location. These factors are important to recognize when comparing housing preferences of Babyboomers as well as Millennials with previous generations. It is also important to recognize that concept of aging in place should emphasize the goal to age with some level of independence “within the community,” as opposed to simply aging at home. The overarching message around aging in place is that seniors require choice when

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<sup>56</sup> Canadian Housing Observer 2011. CMCH. 2011.

determining their future living arrangements.<sup>57</sup> A recent study prepared by CMCH identifies that creating new housing through infill or intensification within established areas can facilitate aging in place by providing housing options which allow seniors to remain in their communities when responding to life changes.<sup>58</sup>

### ***Attracting the Millennials and Future Generations***

Future housing needs in Oakville will also be increasingly impacted by the Millennial generation. While there is no standard age group associated with the Millennial generation, persons born between 1980 and 1992 best fit the definition of this age group. This cohort represents a large and growing percentage share of the GTHA population. The Millennials are a large age cohort, rivaling the Babyboomer generation in terms of size, and their preferences and life choices are proving to have a significant impact on future housing demand and urban development patterns.

Within the GTHA context, currently, a high percentage of Millennials are choosing to live in urban locations, within the City of Toronto core over suburban City of Toronto and “905” locations given the proximity of downtown Toronto to amenities, entertainment and employment. Based on recent survey data, 62% of Millennials prefer to live in the mixed-use environment that urban centres offer which includes proximity to amenities and employment.<sup>59</sup> As a result of these preferences, Millennials place a higher preference for walkability and access to public transit than other age groups, including Babyboomers.<sup>60</sup>

Over the 2011-2014 period, average annual population growth in the Millennial generation in the GTHA averaged 40,000 per year.<sup>61</sup> Of this, nearly two-thirds of the population growth in the Millennial cohort was accommodated in the City of Toronto.<sup>62</sup> Between 2011 and 2014, Millennials accounted for 76% of population growth in the City of Toronto.<sup>63</sup> In comparison, population growth of Millennials in Halton Region was 24% over this same period.<sup>64</sup>

Various polls and surveys have identified that home ownership is considered important by the majority of Millennials.<sup>65</sup> As they age, the housing preferences of Millennials are expected to gradually shift from urban to suburban locations where home ownership is more affordable and housing options are broader. A recent Canadian survey found that more than half the Millennials planning to purchase their next residence intend to purchase in the suburbs (56%) compared to the downtown core of a city (22% per

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<sup>57</sup> The Meaning of “Aging in Place” to Older People. The Gerontologist, Vol. 52, No. 3, 2012.

<sup>58</sup> Housing for Older Canadians: The Definitive Guide to the Over-55 Market. CMCH. Canada. 2012. Pg. 18.

<sup>59</sup> Millennials – Breaking the Myths, Nielsen, 2014

<sup>60</sup> Emerging Trends in Real Estate, Canadian Edition, PwC and ULI, 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Population Dynamics in the Greater Golden Horseshoe – Millennials vs. Baby Boomers, Centre for Urban Research and Land Development, Ryerson University, November 19, 2015.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> CIBC online poll, March 2016;

cent).<sup>66</sup> The same survey found that 70% of respondents have a preference for a low-density home for their next home compared to 16% wanting a condominium/apartment.<sup>67</sup> Much of this demand for a future home appears to be the desire for additional floor space and a yard, in many cases to accommodate a growing family.

This anticipated shift in housing preferences by the Millennial population is anticipated to influence future housing demand in suburban municipalities such as Oakville providing they are able to attract a larger share of this age group than it has to date. Oakville currently has a relatively low concentration of Millennials and this age group has represented a relatively small share of recent net migration to the Town. The extent to which the Town of Oakville can capitalize on this shift is subject to a number of factors, including economic and socio-economic variables (e.g. relative housing costs/affordability, fuel costs, local employment opportunities, lifestyle preferences and perceived quality of life between urban and suburban neighbourhoods).

To attract a share of the Millennial population, there is a need for more competitively priced housing forms which can ultimately accommodate their growing families. For first-time homeowners and move-up buyers, housing demand is expected to be strongest in the form of medium-density and high-density development – such as mid-rise condominiums, row townhouses, stacked/back-to-back townhouses. Within the Town of Oakville and other GTHA municipalities of similar demographic and socio-economic make-up, housing demand from Millennials is expected to be strongest in established neighbourhoods, around mobility hubs, on under-developed avenues and along new transit lines.<sup>68</sup>

Given the age and size of this cohort, Millennials play a key role with respect to labour force supply. As such, this cohort continues to be an important part of the labour force pool, particularly with respect to knowledge-based sectors. A recent survey of Millennials planning to purchase their next residence found that 47% of respondents indicated that proximity to work was an important feature/attribute of their next home.<sup>69</sup> While there is strong interest by Millennials in purchasing ground-oriented housing in suburban locations, there is strong desire to be in proximity to services and amenities.<sup>70</sup> For employers, effectively attracting Millennials requires locating in proximity to where they reside.

### ***Increasing Ethnic Diversity***

The changing ethnic make-up of Halton Region and the Town of Oakville is also anticipated to influence future housing needs associated with population growth. Between 2001 and 2011, the percentage of visible minorities in Halton Region almost doubled. This increase was greatest in the Town of Oakville and the Town of Milton. In

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<sup>66</sup> Royal LePage National Survey, 2013.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Location-Efficient Choices for GTA Homebuyers. A policy supplement to Priced Out, Pembina Institute, 2012.

<sup>69</sup> Royal LePage National Survey, 2013.

<sup>70</sup> Millennials and Their Homes: Still Seeking the American Dream, Demand Institute, 2013.



planning Oakville's future neighbourhoods, it will be increasingly important to understand the needs and preferences of visible minorities with respect to housing requirements, municipal services and amenities.

### ***The Impacts of Multi-Generational Living***

Across the GTHA, the number of multi-generational households has increased considerably over the past decade, with a strong increase during the economic recession of 2008/09.<sup>71</sup> This trend is partially attributed to the influence of Millennials who are living in multi-generational households. This increase in the percentage of multi-generational households is believed to be a driving force behind higher average housing occupancies in recently constructed units across most GTHA municipalities. Further, this trend is also believed to be a factor contributing to a slower decline in the average number of persons per unit across many GTHA municipalities, including the Town of Oakville, in comparison to previous forecasts (e.g. 2011 Halton Region Best Planning Estimates). Future patterns regarding multi-generational housing are important to recognize, as they will have a direct impact on future housing needs in relation to forecast population growth.

### ***The Evolution of the GTHA Suburban Housing Market - Case Study on Markham Centre***

Within the suburban GTHA market, Markham Centre in the Town of Markham is a good example of a highly successful urban mixed-use community which has developed within the GTA "905" over the past decade. As one of York Region's four Regional Centres, the area has excellent access/visibility to Highway 407 and is served by Viva, York Region's bus rapid transit service, as well as GO Transit regional train service. Markham Centre has experienced extensive high-density residential and commercial development over the past number of years with significant additional development planned. Markham Centre is projected to ultimately be home to 41,000 residents and 39,000 employees.<sup>72</sup> This area has attracted a large concentration of Millennials, with nearly half the residents in this area under the age of 35.

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<sup>71</sup> In Post-Recession Era, Young Adults Drive Continuing Rise in Multi-generational Living, PEW Research Center, July 17, 2014.

<sup>72</sup> Markham Centre Fast Facts, City of Markham.



*Markham Centre, Markham, Ontario*

Markham Centre has an employment base of 9,500 with a significant concentration of employment in knowledge-based sectors, including professional, scientific and technical services within the Information and Communication Technology cluster.<sup>73</sup> The area has a ratio of approximately 1:1 jobs to population, which offers strong potential for local live/work opportunities. Major employers including Honeywell Canada and IBM, Worleyparsons and Hydro One Networks. The area contains 2 million sq.ft. of non-residential GFA, of which approximately 1.2 million sq.ft is major office.<sup>74</sup> Markham Centre is home to a number of major amenities, including the City of Markham Civic Centre, the Markham Theatre for the Performing Arts, Markham Pan Am Centre and Markham YMCA Rudy Bratty Centre. Major educational institutions include the Unionville High School for the Arts and York University's Markham campus which is expected to open in 2020.

Emerging mixed-use communities such as Markham Centre in Markham have successfully integrated office, residential and retail development into a compact urban community within a transit-oriented design. The area has experienced strong office development activity characterized by strong market rents and low vacancy rates, exemplifying that office development within a mixed-use urban setting can work and be successful in a suburban environment.

## **Conclusions**

The Town of Oakville is expected to experience strong population and employment growth over the next 25 years. This growth is expected to be accommodated largely within the Town's greenfield areas in North Oakville, as well as through intensification within its built up areas (i.e. South Oakville). Population and housing growth in Oakville will largely be influenced by the rate of economic expansion within the regional economy. In addition to the associated economic impacts of local and regional

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<sup>73</sup> Derived from 2013 York Region Employment Survey by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

<sup>74</sup> Non-residential building GFA derived from 2013 York Region Employment Survey by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. Major office estimate based on data from York Region Office Space Financial/Market Analysis and Marketing Plan Study, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2015.

employment growth, quality of life and other “soft” factors (e.g. access to highly rated public and private schools, opportunities related to indoor/outdoor recreation, access to shopping, dining, arts and culture and other urban amenities) also represent key drivers which will continue to attract new people and businesses to the Town over the long term. To accommodate this steady rate of forecast population growth, a broad range of new housing will be required by housing density type, built form and price.

As the Town’s designated urban lands continue to mature and build out, a growing share of new residential and non-residential development is expected to occur within the Town’s Growth Areas and other redevelopment areas within existing and planned urban corridors. This shift in development patterns is anticipated to result in a steady increase in the share of high-density housing forms (i.e. low- and high-rise apartments) over the medium and long term (i.e. post 2021).

In addressing the Town’s future urban structure requirements, it is also important to recognize that the demographic and socio-economic characteristics within the Town’s neighbourhoods are not homogenous. Understanding demographic and socio-economic trends at the neighbourhood level is particularly important for the Town of Oakville. As the Town continues to diversify, these evolving trends will have broad implications on the amount, type and density of future housing needs associated with population growth, as well as demands for public infrastructure, municipal services, schools and amenities