



REPORT

LIVABLE OAKVILLE (OFFICIAL PLAN) COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 2016

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: October 27, 2016

SUBJECT: Employment and Commercial Review - Summary Report

LOCATION: Town wide

WARD: Town wide

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RECOMMENDATION

That the report entitled *Employment and Commercial Review: Summary Report*, dated October 27, 2016, be received.

KEY FACTS

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

- The Employment and Commercial Review, which was initiated in late 2014, is a key component of the Official Plan Review. It is intended to assist the town to proactively plan for employment and commercial growth to 2041.
- At its meeting on March 21, 2016, the Subcommittee referred a report entitled *Employment and Commercial Review: Preliminary Directions* back to staff for further work based on the comments provided.
- Staff held two workshops with the Subcommittee on July 25, 2016 and September 6, 2016 to discuss the technical findings of the Employment and Commercial Review and provide the Subcommittee with an opportunity to provide input and guidance.
- The October 2016 *Employment and Commercial Review – Summary Report* prepared by Dillon Consulting is attached as Appendix 'A' and represents the consultant's Final Report.

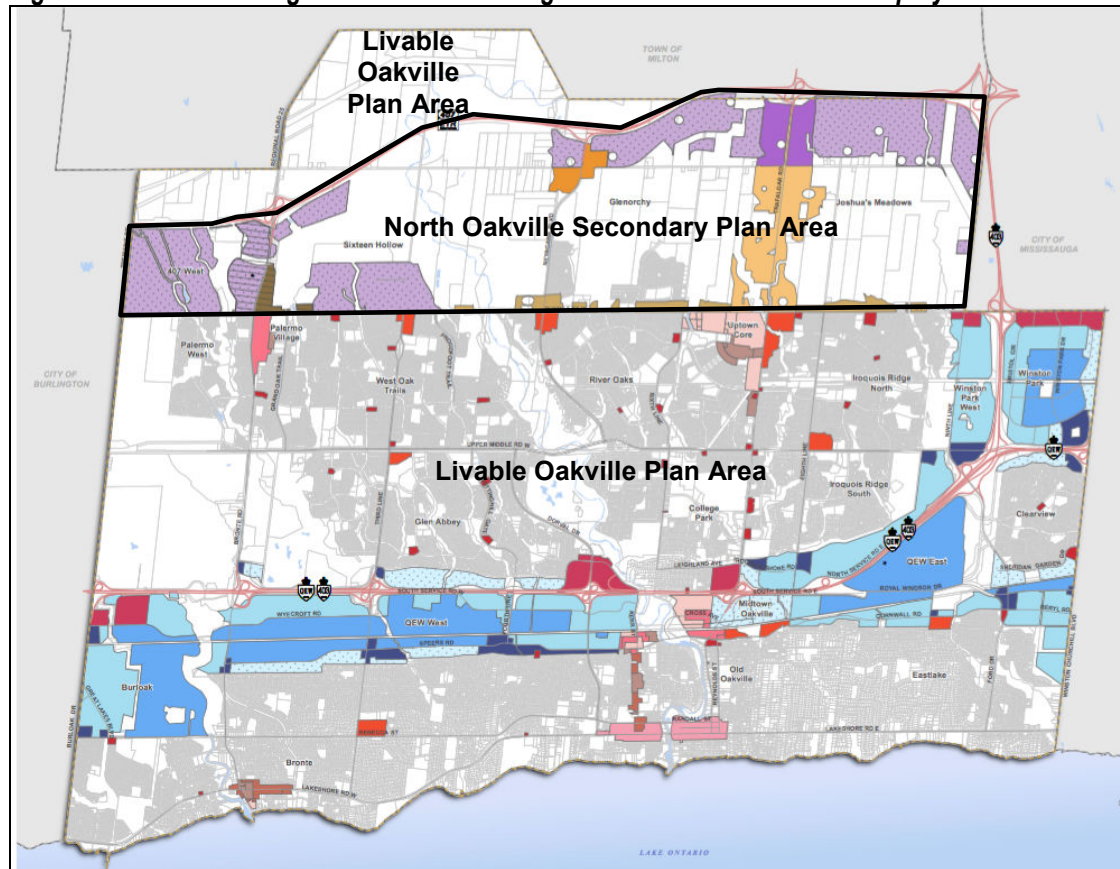
BACKGROUND

The town-wide Employment and Commercial Review is being undertaken as part of the town's Official Plan Review. The study objectives are to:

- confirm the town's employment and commercial land supply and ability to meet projected needs to 2041;
- assess the current employment generating lands use designations and policies;
- identify any lands that are appropriate for employment land conversions; and
- provide policy directions to facilitate the town's goals and objectives for employment and commercial growth.

A multi-disciplinary team led by Dillon Consulting Inc. has been retained to provide technical analysis and policy directions.

Figure 1 – Local Planning Context: Lands Designated for Commercial and Employment Uses

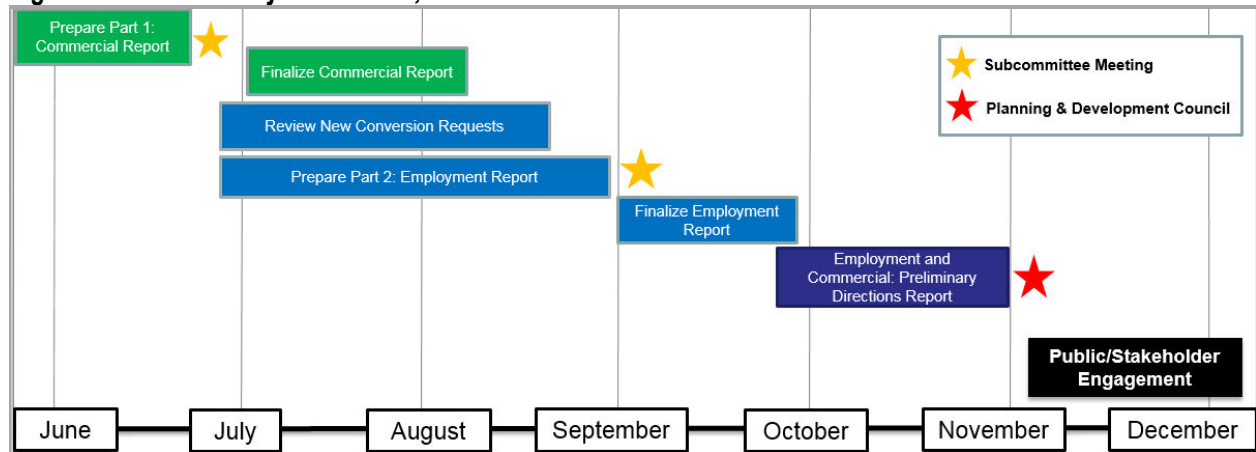


Legend: Employment = shades of blue and purple; Commercial = shades of pink, orange and beige

At its meeting on March 21, 2016, the Subcommittee referred a previous report entitled *Employment and Commercial Review: Preliminary Directions* back to staff for further work based on the comments provided.

The timeline for the Employment and Commercial Review project was adjusted to address the comments from the Subcommittee and any relevant recommendations that may emerge from the Urban Structure Review, which was initiated earlier this year (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Revised Project Timeline, 2016



Town staff held two workshops with the Subcommittee on July 25, 2016 and September 6, 2016 to review the technical findings and policy directions of the Employment and Commercial Review. Staff documented the input from the Subcommittee during both meetings and used the information to update the technical reports. The consulting team has provided a response document attached as Appendix 'B' which address the comments provided by the Subcommittee.

COMMENT/OPTIONS

Employment and Commercial Review – Summary Report

The Employment and Commercial Review - Summary Report provided by Dillon Consulting and attached as Appendix 'A' summarizes the consultants technical study findings, policy directions, and input from the Subcommittee workshops.

Report Highlights

- As a result of the Town's strong attractiveness to knowledge-based sectors, the distribution of employment on employment lands in Oakville has been, and will continue to be concentrated in the office sector.
- The long term demand for new commercial/retail space is forecast to increase to 3.5 million square feet by 2041, requiring an additional supply of commercial land.
- There is a sufficient supply of employment land to meet the Town's long term demand beyond 2041.
- Oakville is approaching full build-out and its boundaries are fixed. As such, the town should reserve priority areas and strategically important lands for employment uses beyond 2041.
- In Oakville, as in many Ontario municipalities, there is increasing pressure to convert designated employment lands to non-employment uses, namely service commercial, retail and residential uses.

Employment Land Conversion Requests

It is the policy of the province, region and town to protect and preserve employment areas for employment purposes to meet the long-term forecasted demand.

Requests to convert lands designated for employment uses to non-employment uses may only be considered by Council as part of a municipal comprehensive review such as the town's Official Plan Review, subject to conditions set out in the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Halton Region Official Plan, and local official plan documents.

Over the summer of 2015, owners of employment lands in the town were notified by mail that the Employment and Commercial Review was underway and that any employment land conversion requests should be submitted with appropriate documentation. The original deadline for submissions was September 4, 2015 but, given project's extended timeline, submissions continued to be accepted and a new deadline of September 9, 2016 was set.

Of the 20 submissions received to date:

- 16 are requests to change from an Employment designation to a non-employment land use designation;
- two are requests to change from one Employment land use designation to another Employment designation; and,
- two are requests for modifications to address irregularities in the Regional Employment Area overlay designation in the Region of Halton Official Plan.

Appendix 'C' to this report provides a summary of the conversion requests received by the Town.

The conversion requests will be evaluated by staff based on the existing local, regional, and provincial requirements. Recommendations will be prepared by town staff using evaluation criteria based on existing policies, additional analysis and consultation, following the confirmation of the urban structure (through the ongoing Urban Structure Review). Any changes to land use designations must be approved by Council.

Next Steps

The revised project timeline shown in Figure 2, above, has been amended slightly. The Summary Report (and appended technical reports) from Dillon Consulting is being provided to the Subcommittee rather than Planning and Development Council. This has been done to align the Employment and Commercial Review with the Urban Structure Review. A consultation period to present the initial findings of both projects to the public and stakeholders, including joint public engagement events, will begin following the Subcommittee meeting on November 1, 2016. Feedback obtained will assist staff in the completion of a final report.

It is anticipated that the final report will be presented to Planning and Development Council by late spring of 2017, following Council's endorsement of the urban structure. Amendments to the Livable Oakville Plan, North Oakville East and West Secondary Plans, Zoning By-law 2014-014 and North Oakville Zoning By-law 2009-189 will be proposed to implement the final recommendations of the Employment and Commercial Review. It is recognized that some changes may require coordination with other projects within the town's Official Plan Review, as well as the Region of Halton Official Plan Review.

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It should be noted that all timelines are subject to change. The timing of changes to the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan arising from the province's ongoing coordinated plan review, in particular, will impact local and regional planning projects, which will be required to address and implement the updated provincial policies when they come into effect.

CONCLUSION

This report and the *Town of Oakville Employment and Commercial Review – Summary Report* (October 2016, Dillon Consulting) attached as Appendix A represent the technical analysis and policy directions for the town's employment and commercial lands.

CONSIDERATIONS

(A) PUBLIC

Stakeholder meetings and public open houses were hosted on June 4, 2015 (at QEPCCC) and June 16, 2015 (at SMCSC) to present the consulting team's initial findings. A total of approximately 50 people attended those sessions. Input received has been incorporated into the *Employment Report* (Appendix A), or will be addressed in subsequent reports (e.g., request to review use permissions on lands adjacent to Bronte GO Station, and specific employment land conversion requests). Additional public consultation events will be held once this report is received by the Subcommittee.

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

(B) FINANCIAL

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

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Both the Planning Services and Economic Development departments are involved in this project. The receipt of this report will not impact other departments and users.

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- continuously improve our programs and services
- be fiscally sustainable
- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

The Employment and Commercial Review will recommend changes to the existing land use designations and policies aimed at ensuring the town's long-term economic sustainability as a balanced community.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Town of Oakville Employment and Commercial Review – Summary Report (October 2016, Dillon Consulting)

Appendix B Employment and Commercial Workshop – Comment and Response Document

Appendix C Employment Land Conversion Request Summary

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